

*Connecticut State Department of Education*

Music Standards  
High School Grades 9-12

**Music Standards**

***Vocal***

**Students will sing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of songs.**

Students will sing with expression and technical accuracy a large and varied repertoire of vocal literature with a level of difficulty of 4, on a scale of 1 to 6, including some songs performed from memory.

Students will sing ensemble music for up to four parts, with and without accompaniment.

Students will demonstrate well-developed ensemble skills

***Instrumental***

**Students will play, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of instrumental music.**

Students will perform with expression and technical accuracy a large and varied repertoire of instrumental literature with a level of difficulty of 4, on a scale of 1 to 6.

Students will perform an appropriate part in an ensemble, demonstrating well-developed ensemble skills.

Students will perform in small ensembles with one student on a part.

***Improvisation***

**Students will improvise melodies, variations and accompaniments.**

Students will improvise stylistically appropriate harmonizing parts.

Students will improvise rhythmic and melodic variations on given pentatonic melodies and melodies in major and minor keys.

Students will improvise original melodies over given chord progressions, each in a consistent style, meter and tonality.

***Composition***

**Students will compose and arrange music.**

Students will compose music in several distinct styles, demonstrating creativity in using the elements of music for expressive effect.

Students will arrange pieces for voices or instruments other than those for which the pieces were written in ways that preserve or enhance the expressive effect of the music.

Students will compose and arrange music for voices and various acoustic and electronic instruments, demonstrating knowledge of the ranges and traditional usage of the sound sources.

### *Notation*

**Students will read and notate music.**

Students will demonstrate the ability to read an instrumental or vocal score of up to four staves by describing how the elements of music are used.

Students will sight-read, accurately and expressively, music with a level of difficulty of 3, on a scale of 1 to 6.

### *Analysis*

**Students will listen to, describe and analyze music.**

Students will analyze aural examples of a varied repertoire of music, representing diverse genres and cultures, by describing the uses of elements of music and expressive devices.

Students will demonstrate extensive knowledge of the technical vocabulary of music.

Students will identify and explain compositional devices and techniques used to provide unity and variety and tension and release in a musical work and give examples of other works that make similar uses of these devices and techniques.

### *Evaluation*

**Students will evaluate music and music performances.**

Students will evolve specific criteria for making informed, critical evaluations of the quality and effectiveness of performances, compositions, arrangements and improvisations and apply the criteria in their personal participation in music.

Students will evaluate a performance, composition, arrangement, or improvisation by comparing it to similar or exemplary models.

### *Connections*

**Students will make connections between music, other disciplines and daily life.**

Students will explain how elements, artistic processes and organizational principles are used in similar and distinctive ways in the various arts and cite examples.

Students will compare characteristics of two or more arts within a particular historical period or style and cite examples from various cultures.

Students will explain ways in which the principles and subject matter of various disciplines outside the arts are interrelated with those of music.

Students will apply music knowledge and skills to solve problems relevant to a variety of careers.

*History And Cultures*

**Students will understand music in relation to history and culture.**

Students will classify by genre or style and by historical period or culture unfamiliar but representative aural examples of music and explain the reasoning behind their classifications.

Students will identify sources of American music genres, trace the evolution of those genres, and cite well-known musicians associated with them.

Students will identify various roles that musicians perform, cite representative individuals who have functioned in each role, and describe their activities and performances.

## **Glossary for Music Standards**

*Alla breve.* The \*meter signature C (with a vertical slash through the C) indicating the equivalent of 2/2 time.

*Articulation.* In performance, the characteristics of attack and decay of tones and the manner and extent to which tones in sequence are connected or disconnected (such as legato, staccato, and marcato).

*Classroom instruments.* Instruments typically used in the general music classroom, including, for example, recorder-type instruments, chorded zithers, mallet instruments, simple percussion instruments, \*fretted instruments, keyboard instruments, and electronic instruments.

*Diction.* The \*articulation or pronunciation of words when singing, including both vowel and consonant sounds.

*Dynamic levels, dynamics.* Degrees of loudness.

*Elements of music.* Pitch, \*rhythm, \*harmony, \*dynamics, \*timbre, \*texture, \*form.

*Expression, expressive, expressively.* With appropriate \*dynamics, phrasing, \*style, and interpretation and appropriate variations in dynamics and tempo.

*Form.* The overall structural organization of a music composition (e.g., AB, ABA, call and response, rondo, theme and variations, sonata-allegro) and the interrelationships of music events within the overall structure.

*Fretted instruments.* Instruments with frets (strips of material across the fingerboard allowing the strings to be stopped at predetermined locations), such as guitar, ukulele, mountain dulcimer, and sitar.

*Genre.* A type or category of music (e.g., sonata, opera, oratorio, art song, gospel, suite, jazz, madrigal, march, work song, lullaby, barbershop, Dixieland).

*Harmony.* The chordal or vertical combination of pitches.

*Intonation.* The degree to which pitch is accurately produced in performance, such as among the players in an ensemble.

*Level of difficulty.* For purposes of these standards, music is classified into six levels of difficulty:

Level 1—Very easy. Easy keys, \*meters, and rhythms; limited ranges.

Level 2—Easy. May include changes of tempo, key, and meter; modest ranges.

Level 3—Moderately easy. Contains moderate technical demands, expanded ranges, and varied interpretive requirements.

Level 4—Moderately difficult. Requires well-developed \*technical skills, attention to phrasing and interpretation, and ability to perform various meters and rhythms in a variety of keys.

Level 5—Difficult. Requires advanced technical and interpretive skills; contains key signatures with numerous sharps or flats, unusual meters, complex rhythms, subtle \*dynamic requirements.

Level 6—Very difficult. Suitable for musically mature students of exceptional competence.

(Adapted with permission from NYSSMA Manual, Edition XXIII, published by the New York State School Music Association, 1991.)

*Meter.* The grouping in which a succession of rhythmic pulses or beats is organized; indicated by a \*meter signature at the beginning of a musical work or section.

*Meter signature.* An indicator of the \*meter of a musical work, usually presented in the form of a fraction, the denominator of which indicates the unit of measurement and the numerator of which indicates the number of units that make up a measure.

*MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface).* Standard specifications that enable electronic instruments such as the synthesizer, sampler, sequencer, and drum machine from any manufacturer to communicate with one another and with computers.

*Ostinato.* A short musical pattern (rhythm, melodic phrase, or bass line) that is repeated consistently throughout a composition.

*Rhythm.* The durations in time of a series of musical notes.

*Staves.* Plural of staff (the five parallel lines on which music is written).

*Style.* The distinctive or characteristic manner in which the \*elements of music are treated. In practice, the term may be applied to, for example, composers (the style of Copland), periods (Baroque style), media (keyboard style), nations (French style), \*forms or types of composition (fugal style, contrapuntal style), or \*genres (operatic style, bluegrass style).

*Technical accuracy, technical skills.* The ability to perform with appropriate \*timbre, \*intonation, and \*diction/\*articulation, and correct pitches and \*rhythms.

*Texture.* The manner in which musical lines or notes are interwoven in a section or work.

*Timbre.* The character or quality of a sound that distinguishes one sound source (such as instrument or voice) from another.

*Tonality.* The harmonic relationship of tones with respect to a definite center or point of rest; fundamental to much of Western music from ca. 1600.