

NORTH BRANFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Essential Curriculum

Music

Grades 9-12

Secondary Music

Students will be provided with the opportunities for instrumental, vocal, and academic experiences, through a variety of elective courses. Students may elect these courses at any grade level, though they are encouraged to begin in the ninth grade. High School elective courses are based on previously learned materials, which allow for advanced growth and development of the music student. Upon completion of Grades 9-12, students will be able to:

Chorus and Vocal Ensembles

Through rehearsal and performance in a large group setting, students will gain a better understanding of choral music in the following ways:

1. Learning elements of singing and ability to distinguish a good vocal quality.
 - Utilization of correct breathing techniques
 - Sing using proper diction and intonation
 - Recognizing and using acoustical factors in the vocal instrument
 - Importance of proper posture for vocal quality
 - Proper vocal placement and tone protection
2. Reading music as it relates to various choral settings
 - Reading music within individual voice parts (SATB)
 - Review and study common meter signatures utilized in choral music
 - Instill an understanding of rhythmic patterns and rhythm in general
 - Sight reading on a regular basis to reinforce music reading skills
 - Study of musical symbols and terminology and how it relates to vocal music
3. Studying musical styles and forms through the singing of various choral works.
 - SATB (soprano, alto, tenor, bass), men's chorus, SAA (2-part soprano, alto), women's chorus, TTBB (2 part tenor, 2 part bass), men's chorus-music arrangements
 - A cappella (unaccompanied) - music arrangements
 - Popular, classical, jazz compositions and correct stylistic performance of choral works with solo performance
4. Developing good listening skills.
 - Learning to blend individual vocal quality within the group
 - Learning to recognize intonation problems and how to correct them. (singing and pitch)
 - Ability to learn music by rote in addition to reading
 - Importance of listening skills and how they relate to proper vocal production in reinforced in all vocal rehearsals
5. Developing proper performance skills.
 - Stressing posture and the importance it plays in the overall vocal performance
 - Music preparation (individually) and practice techniques
 - Developing a positive and optimistic attitude for a successful performance
 - Proper dress and its relation to the overall vocal performance

Beginning Guitar

A group approach to learning the guitar using Alfred's Basic Guitar Method, Book 1. The course is designed for students with no guitar background, or limited experience on the instrument.

Upon completion of Beginning Guitar, students will be able to:

- Develop and strengthen music reading skills using notes in the treble and bass clefs.
- Develop their guitar technique as it relates to hand position and the use of the pick.
- Learn basic chords in both major and minor tonalities.
- Learn music theory as it relates to the guitar as well as applicable music terminology.
- Develop good practice habits and a sense of self-discipline as it relates to instrumental performance.
- Develop listening skills through the use of exercises dealing with intonation and part playing (i.e.: duets with instructor and/or other students).
- Study major scales which will be incorporated for students to both understand their structure and to improve the student's technical facility.
- Learn proper care and maintenance of the instrument.
- Be evaluated through performance, both group and solo, as well as written examinations.

Music Theory

Students electing this course will begin an in-depth study of the musical concepts introduced in grades K-8.

Upon completion of Music Theory, students will be able to apply:

1. Elements of music: rhythm, melody, harmony, tone color and form.
2. Musical notation: students will further their understanding of musical notation through basic compositional techniques.
3. Music reading as it applies to their particular instrument and/or voice.
 - Students will study notes and their relationship to the staff in both treble and bass clef
 - Students will develop an understanding of scales, chords, harmony and key signatures and how to relate to major and minor tonalities.
 - Students will develop an understanding of meter and meter signatures (simple and compound)
4. Ear training: students will aurally discriminate and understand the differences between rhythm, melody and harmony.
 - Students will transcribe rhythmic examples as played on the piano, by aural discrimination
 - Students will transcribe simple melodic examples with correct rhythm as played on piano, by aural discrimination
5. Transposition: students will develop the ability to notate music in a different key from which it was originally written .
6. Rules of traditional harmony in four part writing.
 - Students will study the rules of traditional harmony as outlined in book one, "A Course in Traditional Harmony" by Paul Hindemith
 - Students will harmonize in four parts (soprano, alto, tenor, and bass) in treble and bass clef, a given melody or bass line (writing)
 - Students will aurally discriminate simple chord progressions played on the piano in four parts (listening)
7. Musical concepts of theory on their respective instruments.
 - Students will demonstrate an understanding of musical concepts learned in class through instrumental performance
 - Students who do not play a musical instrument have the option of demonstrating their understanding of theory concepts by voice/and or musical composition (writing)
8. Musical concepts of theory as it relates to musical composition.
 - Students will utilize their knowledge of music theory and rules of notation to create musical compositions
 - Compositions are compared throughout course (early on in course as opposed to those later in the students' study) for the student to be able to identify personal progress as they become more familiar and comfortable with the elements of music
9. Style: students will discuss, identify and interpret various musical styles.

- CD and recorded examples from classical, popular, jazz, folk and ethnic music
- Students are encouraged to perform often as the purpose of studying music theory is to provide a greater understanding of music and, ultimately, to become more proficient musically

Concert Band and Instrumental Ensembles

Upon completion of Concert Band and Instrumental Ensembles, students will be able to develop a further understanding of their ongoing study of aural and instrumental skills by learning to:

1. Identify and perform notation in all metric units; common time, compound time, cut time meter signatures.
2. Interpret tempi and dynamic markings
3. Perform a wide range of scale structures; major, minor and chromatic
4. Perform music using contemporary techniques; atonal aleatoric, electronic.
5. Identify and perform examples of traditional thematic development (i.e. :variety and repetition, motif, extensions, other compositional devices)
6. Identify and interpret musical form as:
 - Compositional shape (i.e.: song, overture, march)
 - The cohesive element used in the interrelationship between all musical elements to achieve the final structure
7. Improvise music using techniques including:
 - Aleatoric or chance compositions
 - Theme and variations
 - Jazz
8. Identify and interpret examples of contemporary and traditional compositions
9. Interpret conducting patterns for meter, rhythm, dynamics, etc.
10. Realize relationships between the performing musician, the conductor, the composer, and the audience.
11. Utilize, reinforce and perfect rehearsal and performance techniques.
12. Identify and utilize proper practice techniques to maximize learning and allow for efficient use of practice time.
13. Physically maintain rank and file on the occasions the band marches. *
14. Demonstrate control of music quality while in marching position. *
15. Modify techniques for outdoor performance.

Concert music and pep band music serves as a text for the instrumental performing groups. The band performs level 3 and 4 music which is designated as high school level by nationally used standards. On occasion the band also performs level 5 music. Levels 5 and 6 are generally rated college professional.

* At the present time, a dedicated marching band program is not implemented in the district.