Music Year At A Glance

Teacher: Nicholas O'Donnell

	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
Kindergarten	Concepts; Beat Vs. Rhythm, Sing vs. Speak, Clapping, Patting, Singing Games. Focus on music for various holidays/seasons like Autumn, Halloween, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving. (NOTE: Instruments used throughout the year include, but not limited to: Shakers, rhythm instruments; tambourines, hand drums, rhythm sticks, xylophones)			Focus on Christmas Music for January advent program; religious songs. Rhythm skills, exploring on various instruments. Also MLK songs.		Concepts of rhythm, pitch, listening, form, etc. Explore through singing and on instruments. Learn songs for holidays, including St. Valentine, St. Patrick's Day, and songs for spring & year's end.		Continue exploring music through song & dance, and active listening. Learn songs for spring & year end, both with and without instruments.		
1st Grade	Beat/Rhythm, Elements of rhythm notation (quarter notes, eighth notes), Clapping, Patting, Singing Games. Focus on music for various holidays/seasons like Autumn, Halloween, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving. (NOTE: Instruments used throughout the year include, but not limited to: Shakers, rhythm instruments; tambourines, hand drums, rhythm sticks, xylophones, boomwhackers)			Focus on Christmas Music for December Christmas program; religious songs. Rhythm skills, exploring on various instruments. Also MLK songs.		Focus on songs/lessons themed to holidays (St. Valentine, St. Patrick's day), discuss the "form" of the music (ABA, theme, etc), body percussion, "feeling" the music.		Continue exploring music through song, and active listening. Learn songs for spring & year end, both with and without instruments.		
2nd Grade	Exploring rhythm/tempo, notation in quarter & eighth notes, clapping/patting. Focus on music for various holidays/seasons like Autumn, Halloween, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving			Focus on Christmas Music for December Christmas program; religious songs. Rhythm skills, simple patterns connected to songs, that they also explore on various instruments. Also MLK songs.		Focus on songs/lessons themed to holidays (St. Valentine, St. Patrick's day), discuss the "form" of the music (ABA, theme, etc), body percussion, "feeling" the music.		Continue exploring music through song, and active listening. Learn songs for spring & year end, both with and without instruments.		
3rd Grade	Students continue to expand on their musical concepts of rhythm, notation, and various forms of active listening to get started. Students will focus on music for various holidays/seasons like Autumn, Halloween, Veteran's Day (Assembly), Thanksgiving			Focus on Christmas Music for December Christmas program; religious songs. Rhythm skills, patterns connected to songs, that they also explore on various instruments, including Orff Instruments (Xylo/Metallophone). Students learn to play chordal accompaniment, and playing 2-3 parts of a song.		Focus on songs/lessons themed to holidays (St. Valentine, St. Patrick's day), discuss the "form" of the music (ABA, theme, etc), body percussion, "feeling" the music. Students continue their learning of Orff Instruments, along with drums, boomwhackers, rhythm instruments, and more.		Explore music through song, and learn various folk songs from around the world, and many cultures. Learn songs for spring & year end, both with and without instruments.		
4th Grade	Recorders! We will be starting the Recorder Karate Program, a highly motivational program that utilizes a series of progressively more challenging recorder tunes, with a belt reward when the song is mastered. This program is very popular! We will take a break from the program to work on Christmas songs for the Christmas Program.			We finish up the Recorder Karate Program, and begin to transition to learning and playing recorder pieces as a group.		We begin to play more advanced rhythmic and melodic material as a group, becoming a Recorder Choir. We prepare material for the Spring Showcase.		We focus on more challenging material, including two and possibly three-part Recorder Choir pieces, preparing students for 5th Grade Beginning Band.		
5th Grade Band	Band Class! For the month of September we will be focusing on the intricacies of reading music, reviewing notes on the staff and rhythms. Once students choose their instruments, we will be learning the basic techniques of each instrumental group, and playing our first notes!			Band will continue in Essential Elements book, learning more 5 note songs, rhythms, honing their technique/sound production on their instruments. Students should be able to play through at least a few pages in the book, and should be comfortable with whole, half, quarter notes. By January, students should be able to play 8th notes, and we usually start their 1st piece of sheet music.		Band will continue building their knowledge on their instruments. All instruments will demonstrate good tone, knowledge of basic 5-6 note scales, and lower notes below concert B-flat. They will be able to demonstrate all rhythms, and sheet music at about 0.5 grade level.		Band will finish off the year with as much of the tunes learned in their book as they can play, various pieces of sheet music, and possibly performances. Good sound, knowledge of at least 7-8 notes learned on their instrument. Sheet music should be about grade 0.5 to 1.0, per difficulty level.		
6th Grade Rock and Roll History	The Origins of Rock and Roll, and the Originators. We learn about the musical styles of the 1940s, starting with swing, and then Delta blues. We discuss the historical and social events that led to the development of these styles, including the sharecropping system in the rural South, and then explore their rhythms and sounds on instruments, including drums, guitars, ukuleles, and more. We meet the originators of the forms. Lots of listening, playing, discussing, and writing about the history, and song examples.			We learn about the Great Migration of rural Southerners moving to the urban centers like Chicago. We discuss the impact of the electric guitar, and electricity in general, on blues music. We experiment in class with guitars, electric and acoustic, and learn about how to get the achieve the sounds of electric blues guitar. Lots of playing, discussing, and listening.		The Forties Transition! We learn about the historical events that shaped the development of rock and roll: WW2's impact on America, the decline of big bands, and the recording strike that shifted the course of popular music. We then explore the rhythms of this new musical landscape with drums: bucket drums, a drumkit, hand drums, and more. The world is changing!		Rock and Roll! We arrive at our destination! We learn all about the musical style that fired up the youth of the 1950's. We explore the sounds, rhythms, and lyrical themes, and we culminate with a song project: turning the whole class into a band to play a rock and roll song. Hooray!		
6th Grade 2nd Year Band	We will begin the year by reviewing fundamentals—note reading, rhythms, tone production, and ensemble rehearsal skills. Students will extend their range beyond the first octave, working toward 7–9 notes comfortably, and will review scales beginning with concert B♭ and E♭. We will also introduce dotted rhythms and more complex articulation markings (slurs, staccato, accents).			Band will continue in Essential Elements, advancing into longer exercises and pieces that combine different rhythms, rests, and articulations. By winter break, students should be able to play in the keys of B♭ and E♭, with work beginning in concert F. They will prepare holiday or winter concert repertoire at grade 0.5–1.0 level, with emphasis on ensemble balance, dynamic contrast, and playing with steady tempo.		We will focus on building ensemble awareness and musicianship. Students will continue developing range and tone, begin working with sixteenth notes and syncopated rhythms, and refine their ability to play scales (two major scales plus chromatic). Students will prepare their first graded performance piece at approximately grade 1.0 difficulty. Solo and small-group work may be introduced to encourage independence and confidence.		Band will finish the year with increasing independence on their instruments, demonstrating clear tone, steady rhythm, and awareness of dynamics. They should be comfortable in at least three major scales (B♭, E♭, F), with some exposure to others. We will perform grade 1.0–1.5 concert pieces for our spring performance, emphasizing ensemble listening skills, phrasing, and expressive playing. By year's end, students should be ready for middle school band literature at grade 1.5–2.0 difficulty.		
7th Grade	Ukuleles! We learn the basics of this popular instrument. How to hold the ukulele, basic chords, strumming techniques, simple songs.			We continue the exploration of the ukulele, starting to read notes, playing more complicated rhythms and strumming patterns, and playing songs with a greater range of chords (including some Christmas favorites).		Lots of note reading! We can play the notes of the C major scale in open position on the ukulele, and sight read melodies using those notes. We strum and sing many popular songs.		We can strum through songs in several keys, using many different rhythms and strumming patterns, and we can read and play syncopated rhythms and note subdivisions.		
8th Grade	Guitars! We will begin the year focusing on the basics of this versatile instrument, how to hold it, proper strumming techniques and rhythms, and lots of songs!			Students will learn chords, melodies, and rhythms of popular songs, Christmas songs, and classic tunes, and will learn how to sing and strum at the same time.		Students will start learning theory, ear training; major, minor, and 7th chords, scale positions, and will begin learning standard song structure.		Class will begin our end-of-year Composition Project, showcasing students' understanding of standard song forms. This composition may be performed, recorded, or created on iPad using Apple Loops.		