

A Guide to the Colorado Academic Standards



Generalist Pathway/Academic
(Music Theory)
High School

Working Together

To support families and teachers in realizing the goals of the Colorado Academic Standards, this guide provides an overview of the learning expectations for high school music education and offers some possible learning experiences students may engage in during this time.

Why Standards?

Created by Coloradans for Colorado students, the Colorado Academic Standards provide a grade-by-grade road map to help ensure students are ultimately successful in college, careers, and life. The standards aim to improve what students learn and how they learn in ten content areas, emphasizing critical-thinking, creativity, problem solving, collaboration, and communication as important life skills in the 21st century.

Music Education for High Schools (9-12)

Generalist Pathway for Academic Courses

The generalist pathway for academic courses in the high school music standards focus on musical knowledge and skills for participating in classes that might include, but are not limited to theory, composition and/or music appreciation. In each high school grade, students learn about various musical styles and genres (classical, jazz, pop, heavy metal), examine the language of music through identifying and writing music notation, consider musical composition processes, create their own music through improvisation (inventive changes to musical phrases), expand their ability to describe personal musical preferences, and strengthen their ability to constructively critique the music of others.

Where can I learn more?

- Contact your school district regarding local decisions related to standards, curriculum, resources, and instruction.
- Colorado Academic Standards Booklets: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/GradeLevelBooks.asp>
- Karol Gates, Colorado Arts Content Specialist at 720-202-9268, Gates_k@cde.state.co.us



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At the end of High School, students can...



Music

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The Colorado Academic Standards in Music are organized by elements of the Creative Process:
Perform/Present → Create → Know/Comprehend → Critique/Evaluate/Refine

Music Education Learning Expectations for Generalist Pathway/Academic Course (Music Theory)

Expression of Music (Perform/Present)

Present music compositions by singing or playing instruments in a variety of ways.

Creation of Music (Create)

Explore ways to improvise vocal or instrumental music using current technology that includes appropriate accompaniments (playing along to a melody); demonstrate musical compositions using original or borrowed musical sounds and sources; explore ways to sequence, mix, overdub, or layer sounds (varied techniques found within music mixing/recording software).

Theory of Music (Know/Comprehend)

Apply knowledge about the language of music (music notation) by reading, performing, and describing music appropriate to an instrument or voice part; apply understanding of attributes used to classify genres of music to unfamiliar examples (rock, jazz, classical), including classifications based on historical periods and a variety of cultures.

Aesthetic Valuation of Music (Critique/Evaluate/Refine)

Develop criteria to make informed musical judgments and to respect the preferences of others; use accurate music vocabulary to describe different aesthetic qualities and impressions of music; articulate a variety of ways to engage with music as a career or hobby.

Throughout a Music Theory course, you may find students successfully applying the elements of the creative process by...

- Presenting music in class by performing or using technology that includes their own original music melody/harmony or borrowed musical material from popular songs and adapting them in some way; participating in music-making activities ("a garage band", cultural or religious musical group, family get-together, community ensemble, classroom interdisciplinary group project, individual music-making effort, music-technology-based project).
- Improvising instrumental or vocal solos over appropriate harmonic progressions (chords); creating musical projects that include original or borrowed sounds that may include sequencing, mixing, overdubbing, and layering.
- Demonstrating comprehension of the language of music (music notation) by reading, performing, and analyzing basic musical notation; describing music examples using appropriate music vocabulary from genres (classical, jazz, rock).
- Evaluating musical performances based on a set of self-developed criteria; comparing how music they listen to relates to various music genres (jazz, heavy metal, hip hop); describing how an audience at a rock concert may behave differently than one at a symphony concert; identifying different ways music might impact them in the future such as the ability to listen to extended sections of music may help them to listen to extended lists of directions or tasks.