

ASSESSMENT AND MUSIC EDUCATION

In the *National Standards for Arts Education*, the following is stated: “Because arts education places a high value on personal insight, individual achievement and group performance, educators must be able to assess these things. . . (p.15)

A broad spectrum of assessment tools must be used for measurement in music. These tools must be sensitive to the students’ learning context and the particular area of musical study. In elementary music education, many times the measurement may be through informed critical judgement. Often, the measurement will be in terms of assessment of performance skills. As in other areas of the curriculum, assessment can be through paper and pencil techniques. However, music teachers will be in tune with the fact that most assessments in music must involve a more subtle and varied approach – including demonstrations, performance tasks, and aural and/or oral assessments.

Activities in the curriculum are suggested for use in teaching the objectives. A Teacher would need to develop personal assessment tools based on the objectives and needs of students in the class. Some possible assessments are:

Singing Concepts and Skills

- ◆ Performance in large and/or small groups
- ◆ Individual performance where appropriate
- ◆ Aural examples of proper/improper singing techniques for students to evaluate

Rhythm and Notation

- ◆ Paper/pencil activities involving rhythm dictation
- ◆ Paper/pencil activities where students create rhythms
- ◆ Student demonstrations using manipulatives to create rhythm patterns
- ◆ Performance of rhythms on classroom instruments
- ◆ Use of computer software to create a product for assessment

Listening Skills/History

- ◆ Demonstration of appropriate audience etiquette during a live school performance
- ◆ Performance or dramatization
- ◆ Signaling during listening examples to demonstrate an understanding of melody and accompaniment and musical contrasts

Physical Movement/Response

- ◆ Performance-based assessment of movement and /or instrumental activities

These performance-based assessments will involve movement and instrumental activities performed by individuals, and /or large groups of students. Most of the objectives in this area of musical study would be stated in terms of performance or demonstration.