

Band Curriculum (Parent Edition)

The following is a curriculum designed for learners of all ages. All concepts stack (i.e., level 2 students have achieved the level 1 goal, while level 3 students have achieved the level 2 and 1 goals). Level 1 will often refer to someone who is in their first year of instrumental music instruction, regardless of age. This may also refer to a student who is not in their first year of instruction, but has barely progressed in regard to a particular concept. Levels 1-5 can be thought of as the ideal progression of students from beginning through junior high, Levels 6-9 high school, and Levels 10-15 collegiate through top tier professional. At Level 8 students would most likely be ready for low level collegiate band or hard community band literature. For comparison, a high level undergraduate collegiate student/semi-professional would probably be at a Level 12 on this scale, while a top tier professional would be at a Level 15. It is also worth noting that students often do not progress at an even rate in all areas. For example, they may be at Level 5 on notes, but still be at Level 3 or 4 in a more challenging concept like improvisation.

Rhythm/Meter

| Level | Goal(s) for Student Differentiated by Level |
|-------|--|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define, identify, and count <i>whole notes, whole rests, half notes, half rests, quarter notes, and quarter rests</i>. • Student will be able to define the 4/4 time signature. |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define, identify, and count <i>eighth notes, eighth rests, and tied rhythms</i>. • Student will be able to define the 2/4 time signature. |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define, identify, and count <i>dotted half notes, and dotted quarter notes</i>. • Student will be able to define the 3/4 time signature. |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define, identify, and count simple <i>sixteenth note</i> rhythms. • Student will be able to define the 2/2 time signature. |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define, identify, and count simple <i>triplet</i> rhythms and easy <i>syncopated</i> rhythms. • Student will be able to define the 6/8 time signature. |
| 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define, identify, and count <i>dotted sixteenth notes</i>. • Student will be able to define the 9/8 time signature. |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define, identify, and count typical <i>syncopated</i> rhythms. • Student will be able to understand easy changing meters. |
| 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define, identify, and count all typical rhythms in duple meters. • Student will be able to understand typical changing meters and define the 3/8 meter. |
| 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define, identify, and count all typical rhythms in triple meters. • Student will be able to define the 5/8 and 7/8 meters. |

Key Signatures

| Level | Goal(s) for Student Differentiated by Level |
|-------|---|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student will be able to play in the concert Bb major key signature with all sharps or flats in the key written before notes. |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student will be able to identify the concert Bb major key signature and play without sharps or flats in the key written before notes. |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student will be able to identify and play in the concert Eb major key signature.• Student will be able to identify and play in the concert F major key signature. |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student will be able to identify and play in the concert C major key signature. |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student will be able to identify and play in the concert Ab major key signature.• Student will be able to identify and play in the concert G minor key signature. |
| 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student will be able to identify and play in all the relative minor key signatures of major keys that they are familiar with.• Student will be able to identify and play in the concert Db major/Bb minor key signature. |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student will be able to identify and play in the concert G major/E minor key signature.• Student will be able to identify and play in the concert D major/F minor key signature. |
| 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student will be able to identify and play in the concert Gb major/Eb minor key signature.• Student will be able to identify and play in the concert A major/F# minor key signature. |
| 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student will be able to identify and play in the concert E major/C# minor key signature. |

Notes (pitches)

| Level | Goal(s) for Student Differentiated by Level |
|-------|--|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to play a 1 octave major scale on their instrument. • Student will have a note range of about 1 octave. This includes a useable tessitura of about 3/4 of an octave. |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will have a note range of about 1 1/4 octaves. This includes a useable tessitura of about 1 octave. |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to play a few chromatic pitches within the first octave of their instrument. • Student will have a note range of about 1 1/2 octaves (ignoring chromatic pitches that they do not yet know). This includes a useable tessitura of about 1 1/4 octaves. |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to play all chromatic pitches within the first octave of their instrument. • Student will be able to play a one octave chromatic scale. • Student will have a note range of about 1 3/4 octaves (ignoring chromatic pitches that they do not yet know). This includes a useable tessitura of about 1 1/2 octaves. |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to play most chromatic pitches in their range. • Student will have a note range of about 2 octaves (ignoring chromatic pitches that they do not yet know). This includes a useable tessitura of about 1 1 3/4 octaves. |
| 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to play all chromatic pitches in their range. • Student will have a note range of about 2 1/4 octaves or student should be able to play at least 75% of the typical range of their instrument. This includes a useable tessitura of about 2 octaves. |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will have a note range of about 2 1/2 octaves. This includes a useable tessitura of about 2 1/4 octaves. |
| 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to play the typical full range of their instrument. |
| 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will begin to develop advanced range or range that involves extended techniques. |

*ranges will vary based upon instrument

Aural Skills

| Level | Goal(s) for Student Differentiated by Level |
|-------|---|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to identify when they play a noticeable incorrect note (pitch). • Student will be able to match a single note through singing. |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to identify when they incorrectly play a simple rhythm from level 1. • Student will be able to identify when they play incorrect notes (pitches). • Student will be able to sing a 5 note scale. • Student will be able to demonstrate the basics of how to properly tune on “tuning notes”. |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to identify when they incorrectly play a rhythm from level 2. • A brass player will be able to identify when they are on the wrong shelf. • Student will be able to sing a major scale in a comfortable octave for their voice. • Student will know that, in general, <i>major</i> sounds happy and <i>minor</i> sounds sad. • Student will notice when they are not playing the same tempo as most of the band. |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to identify when they incorrectly play a rhythm from level 3. • Student will be able to identify when “tuning notes” are out of tune and fix them during rehearsal. • Student will be able to sing an easy melody. • Student will begin to be able to identify <i>major</i> vs <i>minor</i> triads. • A percussionist will understand how to tune timpani. |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to identify when they incorrectly play a rhythm from level 4. • Student will be able to identify when important notes are out of tune and fix them during rehearsal. • Student will begin to be able to identify and differentiate the sound of <i>major</i> and <i>minor</i> triads. • Student will begin to listen to how their part fits with others in the room or identify others who have their part. |
| 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to identify when they incorrectly play a rhythm from level 5. • Student will listen for tuning and make adjustments with their embouchure or fingerings to compensate on “non-tuning notes”. • Student will begin to be able to identify <i>diminished</i> triads. • Student will be able to sing a <i>natural minor</i> scale. • Student will notice when they are not playing the same tempo that the conductor is displaying. |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to identify when they incorrectly play a rhythm from level 6. • Student will begin to identify when they played a wrong note based upon how it sounds with other harmonic notes. • Student will be able to identify <i>diminished</i> triads. • Student will begin to be able to identify <i>augmented</i> triads. • Student will be able to sing a <i>harmonic</i> or <i>melodic minor</i> scale. • Student will be able to sing a typical melody. |
| 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to identify when they incorrectly play a rhythm from level 7. • Student will begin to identify when they played a wrong note based upon how it sounds in a triad. • Student will be able to identify <i>augmented</i> triads and differentiate them from the sound of <i>diminished</i> triads. • Student will be able to sing their part in a <i>chorale</i>. • Student will begin to be able to identify <i>dominant 7th</i> chords, <i>major 7th</i> chords, and <i>minor 7th</i> chords. • Student will notice when they are moderately fluctuating in tempo. • Student will be able to <i>transcribe</i> easy music. |

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|---|---|
| 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student will be able to identify when they incorrectly play a rhythm from level 8.• Student will be able to identify when they played a wrong note based upon how it sounds within a chord (including basic 7th chords).• Student will be able to sing individualized parts that may differ in pitch and/or rhythm from other parts.• Student will be able to identify and differentiate the sound of <i>dominant 7th</i> chords, <i>major 7th</i> chords, and <i>minor 7th</i> chords.• Student will begin to be able to identify <i>fully</i> and <i>half diminished 7th</i> chords. Students will begin to hear <i>overtones</i>.• Student will be able to <i>transcribe</i> a moderate level solo melody or simple song with 2 parts (melody and bass). |
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Tone

| Level | Goal(s) for Student Differentiated by Level |
|-------|--|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wind player will be able to demonstrate proper tone production on their instrument. • A percussionist will be able to demonstrate correct grips/strokes for mallets, snare drum, and bass drum, as well as basic dampening technique on applicable instruments. |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to change <i>dynamics</i> without sacrificing proper tone production. • A percussionist will be able to demonstrate correct tone production on suspended and crash cymbals. |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wind player will be able to raise and lower the pitch of their instrument by manipulating their embouchure. • A percussionist will understand which mallets/sticks are appropriate for which instruments or note range on certain mallet instruments. • A percussionist will be able to demonstrate correct tone production on simple auxiliary instruments such as triangle, tambourine, and woodblock. |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wind player will begin to develop a more mature (usually darker) sound. • A percussionist will begin to demonstrate proper tone production on timpani. • A percussionist will begin to discern which mallets/sticks work best for different sounds, dynamics, or colors. • A percussionist will also be able to demonstrate correct tone production on a multitude of auxiliary instruments. |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wind player will continue to develop a more mature sound. • A percussionist will develop greater control over their tone production on timpani. |
| 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wind player will continue to develop a more mature sound. • A wind player will begin to learn how to develop <i>vibrato</i> while maintaining proper tone production (if <i>vibrato</i> is commonplace on their instrument). • A percussionist will begin to learn more advanced techniques (such as different grips) for playing drum instruments. • A percussionist will begin to learn how to play with four mallets. • A percussionist will know which mallets/sticks work best for different sounds, dynamics, or colors. |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wind player will continue to develop a more mature sound by imitating professionals. • Student will begin to learn common <i>extended techniques</i> on their instrument that involve manipulation of tone. • A percussionist will improve their four mallet skills to the extent that they can play each mallet independently. |
| 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wind player will continue to develop a more mature sound by imitating professionals. • Student will be able to change their tone depending on the <i>style</i> of the piece, when it is appropriate to do so. • A wind player will gain greater control over their <i>vibrato</i> while maintaining proper tone production (if <i>vibrato</i> is commonplace on their instrument). |
| 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wind player will continue to develop a more mature sound by analyzing their tone on recordings and comparing it to professionals. • Student will improve their execution and breadth of extended techniques on their instrument that involve manipulation of tone. • A percussionist will improve their four mallet skills to the extent that they are ready for collegiate level music (this includes techniques such as <i>ripples/sequences</i> and knowledge of both <i>Burtens and Stevens</i> four mallet grips). |

Improvisation

| Level | Goal(s) for Student Differentiated by Level |
|-------|--|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will have the knowledge to attempt a brief improvisation using one or two pitches, focusing on rhythmic ideas. • Student will be confident enough to play something when it is their turn to solo. |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to improvise using a small scale (i.e., a <i>pentatonic</i> scale). • Student will be more comfortable with improvisation than they were at level 1. |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to demonstrate a greater breadth of rhythmic ideas (appropriate to level 2 rhythms). • Student will be able to use notes in a simple scale in different patterns (not just up and down the scale). • Student will be able to improvise for a longer period of time (such as one full chorus). |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to demonstrate a variety of rhythmic ideas (appropriate to level 3 rhythms). • Student will begin to learn how to <i>swing</i>. • Student may begin to put <i>expression</i> into their improvisations. |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to demonstrate a greater variety of rhythmic ideas (appropriate to level 4 rhythms). • Student will become more comfortable with <i>swing</i>. • Student will use multiple simple scales that adhere to simple <i>chord changes</i>. • Student will know basic <i>chord symbols</i> such as <i>major</i> and <i>minor</i>. • Student will attempt to put <i>expression</i> into their improvisations. |
| 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to demonstrate a wide variety of rhythmic ideas (appropriate to level 5 rhythms). • Student's <i>swing</i> will begin to sound more natural (less of a hard triplet feel). • Student will know basic 7th <i>chord symbols</i> such as <i>dominant 7th</i>, <i>major 7th</i>, and <i>minor 7th</i>. • Student will use <i>guide tones</i> in their simple scales to ensure smooth transitions between <i>chord changes</i>. • Student will begin to use larger and more complex scales such as <i>bebop</i>, <i>dorian</i>, and <i>mixolydian</i>. |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will begin to imitate rhythmic ideas that they hear in professional improvisations. • Student will begin to imitate the natural sound of <i>swing</i> heard in professional improvisations. • Student will become more comfortable with larger scales such as <i>bebop</i>, <i>dorian</i>, and <i>mixolydian</i>. • Student will begin to improvise over a variety of standard <i>chord changes</i>. • Student will be able to improvise with <i>expression</i>. |
| 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to imitate many rhythmic ideas that they hear in professional improvisations. • Student will be able to imitate the natural sound of <i>swing</i> heard in professional improvisations. • Student will be able to use the <i>lydian</i> scale. • Student will be able to play easy transcribed solos from jazz masters on their instrument. • Student will be able to improvise with a particular expressive intent in mind (they will try to convey an idea or emotion). |
| 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will begin to think about motivic development of rhythms, pitches, and intervals. • Student will begin to use more advanced scales such as <i>locrian #2</i> and <i>octatonic/diminished</i>. • Student will be able to improvise over advanced <i>chord changes</i>. • Student will be able to play intermediate level transcribed solos from jazz masters on their instrument. |

Dynamics/Expression

| Level | Goal(s) for Student Differentiated by Level |
|-------|--|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student will play at a dynamic level that appropriate for making music in an ensemble (no blasting or playing so quiet that no sound comes out). |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student will be able to define the term <i>dynamics</i>. Student will know and be able to demonstrate the terms <i>piano</i> and <i>forte</i>. Student will be able to identify the symbols for <i>piano</i> and <i>forte</i>. |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student will know and be able to demonstrate the terms <i>crescendo</i> and <i>diminuendo/decrescendo</i>. Student will be able to identify the symbols for <i>crescendo</i> and <i>diminuendo/decrescendo</i>. |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student will know and be able to demonstrate the terms <i>mezzo-forte</i> and <i>mezzo-piano</i>. Student will be able to identify the symbols for <i>mezzo-forte</i> and <i>mezzo-piano</i>. |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student will be able to play their dynamics with the concept of simple balance in mind. |
| 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student will know and be able to demonstrate the terms <i>pianissimo</i> and <i>fortissimo</i>. Student will be able to identify the symbols for <i>pianissimo</i> and <i>fortissimo</i>. Student will be able to use dynamics to shape a simple phrase based upon upwards or downwards <i>contour</i> of notes. |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student will know and be able to demonstrate the terms <i>sforzando</i> and <i>forte-piano</i>. Student will be able to identify the symbols for <i>sforzando</i> and <i>forte-piano</i>. Student will be able to play their dynamics with the concept of typical ensemble balance in mind. |
| 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student will know and be able to demonstrate the terms <i>pianississimo</i> and <i>fortississimo</i>. Student will be able to identify the symbols for <i>pianississimo</i> and <i>fortississimo</i>. |
| 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student will begin to shape phrases based upon concepts that support or frame the melody such as <i>harmonic tension, style, contour, motivic importance/development</i>. |

Articulations

| Level | Goal(s) for Student Differentiated by Level |
|-------|---|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to <i>tongue</i>. • Student will use <i>tonguing</i> as the default articulation, rather than <i>slurring</i> or utilizing a “breath attack”. |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to play an <i>accent</i> and <i>staccato</i>. • Student will be able to explain/vocally demonstrate how an <i>accent</i> and <i>staccato</i> sounds. • Student will be able to identify the symbols for <i>accent</i> and <i>staccato</i>. |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to properly <i>slur</i>. • Student will be able to explain/vocally demonstrate how a <i>slur</i> sounds. • Student will be able to identify the symbols for <i>slur</i>. |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to play a <i>marcato</i> (also known as a housetop accent). • Student will be able to explain/vocally demonstrate how a <i>marcato</i> sounds. • Student will be able to identify the symbols for <i>marcato</i>. |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to play a <i>tenuto</i>. • Student will be able to explain/vocally demonstrate how a <i>tenuto</i> sounds. • Student will be able to identify the symbols for <i>tenuto</i>. |
| 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to <i>legato tongue</i>. • Student will be able to explain/vocally demonstrate how <i>legato tonguing</i> sounds. • Student will be able to explain what to look for in the sheet music when deciding that they should <i>legato tongue</i> instead of <i>slur</i>. • Student will begin to develop jazz versions of articulations. |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be more comfortable with jazz versions of articulations. • Student will begin to learn articulations unique to jazz such as <i>scoops</i> and <i>falls</i>. • Student will be able to identify the symbols for <i>scoops</i> and <i>falls</i>. • Student will be able to play a combination of articulations in quick succession. |
| 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will begin to adjust their articulations based upon different <i>styles</i> of music. • Student will be more comfortable with articulations unique to jazz such as <i>scoops</i> and <i>falls</i>. |
| 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to adjust their articulations based upon a small number of standard <i>styles</i>. • Student will be able to play a combination of articulations simultaneously. |

Literacy (not covered in other categories)

| Level | Goal(s) for Student Differentiated by Level |
|-------|---|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define and play the tempo markings <i>Andante</i> and <i>Moderato</i>. • Student will know where to find the <i>composer</i>, <i>title</i>, and <i>tempo/style</i> markings. • Student will be able to define and play the term <i>repeat sign</i>. • Student will be able to identify the symbol for a <i>repeat sign</i>. |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define and play the term <i>fermata</i>. • Student will be able to identify the symbol for <i>fermata</i>. • Student will be able to define and play the term <i>first and second endings</i>. • Student will be able to identify the symbol for <i>first and second endings</i>. |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define and play the tempo marking <i>Allegro</i> and <i>ritardano</i>. • A percussionist will be able to define and play a <i>single measure repeat sign</i>. • Student will be able to define and play a <i>D.C. al Fine</i>. |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define and play the tempo marking <i>Adagio</i>. • Student will be able to define the tempo marking <i>accelerando</i>. • Student will be able to define and play simple expression modifiers such as <i>molto</i>, <i>poco</i>, and <i>subito</i>. • Student will be able to define and play a <i>D.S. al Fine</i>. • Student will be able to define and play the ornament <i>trill</i>. • Student will be able to identify the symbol for a <i>trill</i>. |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define and play the tempo marking <i>Largo</i>. • Student will be able to define and play simple expression markings such as <i>dolce</i>, <i>maestoso</i>, and <i>simili</i>. • Student will be able to define and play the terms <i>solo</i> and <i>tutti</i>. • A wind player will be able to define and play a <i>single measure repeat sign</i>. • Student will be able to define and play a <i>D.S. al Coda</i>. • Student will be able to define and play the ornament <i>grace note</i>. • Student will be able to identify the symbol for a <i>grace note</i>. |
| 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define and play the tempo marking <i>A tempo</i>. • Student will be able to define the term <i>cadenza</i>. • Student will be able to play multiple <i>grace notes</i> together in one ornament. • Student will be able to define and play the ornament <i>mordant</i>. • Student will be able to identify the symbol for a <i>mordant</i>. |
| 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define and play the tempo markings <i>presto</i>, <i>ritenuto</i>, and <i>stringendo</i>. • Student will be able to define and play common expression modifiers such as <i>con</i>, <i>meno</i>, <i>non</i>, and <i>piu</i>. • Student will be able to define and play common expression markings such as <i>animato</i>, <i>cantabile</i>, <i>espressivo</i>, <i>furioso</i>, <i>misterioso</i>, <i>pesante</i>, <i>scherzando</i>, <i>secco</i>, and <i>sostenudo</i>. |
| 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define and play intermediate level expression markings such as <i>agitato</i>, <i>ad libitum</i>, <i>allargando</i>, <i>arioso</i>, <i>grandioso</i>, <i>morendo</i>, <i>pastorale</i>, <i>rubato</i>, <i>religioso</i>, <i>tranquillo</i>, <i>troppo</i>, and <i>vivo</i>. • Student will be able to define and play the ornament <i>turn</i>. • Student will be able to identify the symbol for a <i>turn</i>. |
| 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student will be able to define and play advanced expression modifiers such as <i>alla</i>, <i>assai</i>, <i>il</i>, <i>la</i>, <i>sempre</i>, <i>senza</i>, and <i>quasi</i>. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student will be able to define and play advanced level expression markings such as <i>appassionato</i>, <i>brillante</i>, <i>delicate</i>, <i>doppio movimento</i>, <i>giocoso</i>, <i>impetuoso</i>, <i>lacrimoso</i>, <i>leggiero</i>, <i>marziale</i>, <i>risoluto</i>, <i>somber</i>, <i>sotto voce</i>, <i>spiritoso</i>, <i>strepitoso</i>, and <i>vigoroso</i>. |
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Explanation of Scale

Below is a continuum of learning that commences with beginners on an instrument and concludes with top tier professionals. I have chosen to use “levels” instead of “grade year in school” because I feel it is a more accurate appraisal of student ability and can be applied to a learner of any age. For example, you may have a beginner who is a freshman in high school. In this case it would be very difficult to apply traditional high school level curricular goals to this student. Instead, they would start at Level 1 and progress rapidly due to the advanced cognitive and motor skill abilities associated with a student of their age. Note: see **Key** at the bottom of this section for an explanation of +, -, and -- symbols.

Ideal Path of Progress

| Level | Grade | Grade Detail | Year in Student's Education/Type of Ensemble |
|-------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1 | .5 | | 5 earlier in the year, 6-- |
| 2 | 1 | easy grade 1 concepts | 5 later in the year, 6-, 7-- |
| 3 | 1-1.5 | hard grade 1 concepts | 5+ later in the year, 6, 7-, 8-- |
| 4 | 1.5-2 | easy grade 2 concepts | 6+, 7, 8-, 9-- |
| 5 | 2-2.5 | hard grade 2 concepts | 7+, 8, 9-, 10--, very easy community band |
| 6 | 2.5-3 | easy grade 3 concepts | 8+, 9, 10-, 11--, easy community band |
| 7 | 3-3.5 | hard grade 3 concepts | 9+, 10, 11-, 12--, medium community band |
| 8 | 3.5-4 | easy grade 4 concepts | 10+, 11, 12-, basic collegiate band open to all students and hard community band |
| 9 | 4-4.5 | hard grade 4 concepts | 11+, 12, low collegiate band, basic collegiate band open to all students, challenging community band |
| 10 | 4.5-5 | easy grade 5 concepts | 12+, medium collegiate band, low collegiate band |
| 11 | 5-5.5 | hard grade 5 concepts | high collegiate band, medium collegiate band, possible low tier semi-professional |
| 12 | 5.5-6 | | high collegiate band, semi-professional |
| 13 | Masters Recital | | high tier semi-professional, possible low tier professional |
| 14 | 6+ Doctorate Recital | | professional |
| 15 | | | top tier professional |

Key

+ indicates that a student is advanced in development for their grade.

- indicates that a student is behind in development for their grade.

-- indicates that a student is severely behind in development for their grade.

Grade numbers refer to the *American Band College Music Grading Chart* (Note: This means that grade 1 music does not refer to students in first grade, but rather students playing music of a very low difficulty level. On the opposite end of the chart, Grade 6 music refers to professional

level literature.)