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The 2009 Music Curriculum Guidelines for the Archdiocese of Denver Catholic Schools were updated and revised in 2015. These guidelines are provided by the Office of Catholic Schools as a framework for the education of students in the basics of music. Teachers of music from schools in the Archdiocese came together to contribute their classroom experience, their teaching expertise, and their knowledge of music to this important work.

The goal of the Music Curriculum Guideline is to provide direction and guidance for the teaching of music from preschool through high school. In this edition, the preschool objectives were incorporated into the Learner Objectives and do not stand alone as in previous documents.

**There are eight content strands:**

- I. Sing alone and with others
- II. Performs on instruments alone or with others
- III. Improvise melodies, variations, and accompaniments
- IV. Compose and arrange music within specific guidelines
- V. Reading and notating music
- VI. Listen to, analyze, respond to, and describe music
- VII. Understanding relationship between music and other disciplines
- VIII. Understanding the relationship between music history, culture, and the Catholic faith

These content strands mirror the divisions of the National Standards for Music Education. The committee was conscious of identifying ways that music might be integrated into the regular classroom even when the services of a music specialist are limited. Music is an important subject in its own right but can also assist children in learning other content.

Beginning with the 2009 guidelines, the committee reviewed what worked well in the current guidelines and what objectives needed clarification or expansion. They referenced the following resources in the review and revision of the curriculum: National Standards for Music Education published by the National Association for Music Educators, National Music Standard published by ArtsEdge, The Kennedy Center, The Colorado Academic Standards for music education published by the Colorado Department of Education and National Standards for Music Education: a New Vision ([www.menc.org/resources/view/the-school-music-program-a-new-vision](http://www.menc.org/resources/view/the-school-music-program-a-new-vision)). Few changes were needed. The committee encourages teachers to increase their use of electronic resources – such as interactive white boards and other computer assisted applications – to provide a richer and more fertile music experience for students, especially in schools with limited resources.

Many thanks to the following teachers who served on the committee, for their creative efforts and diligence:

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Music is pervasive in the world. It is a universal means of individual expression that transcends language. It is a part of every culture and of all creation. Music is a means of individual expression, of communal sharing, and of worship. It is a means of transmitting culture and knowledge across the vast spectrum of human history. It is especially important in the history of the Catholic Church. “The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as a combination of sacred music and words, it forms a necessary or integral part of solemn liturgy” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1156). Schools that value the education of the total person cannot neglect education in the area of music.

Music education is an investment in the well-being of children. It empowers them to express what cannot be put into words alone. The curriculum addresses the fundamental music process in which humans engage; performing, creating and responding to music. Education allows students to express themselves in music, to enjoy music created by others, to be more discriminating consumers of commercially produced music, and to value a variety of musical expression.

The richness of music from world cultures, from historical times, and as an expression of social movements and ideologies informs studies in history, literature, economics and language. The study of music is integral to a well-rounded education. Music is not an “extra” subject that can be dropped because of economic difficulties or limited time availability. Music is not just a background for other subjects in a school day; it is important in its own right. Because of the value that it has in educating the whole child and because of the power that it has to bring people to God, music education is integral to the school program in the Archdiocese of Denver Catholic Schools.