Section One

Introduction

Background and Rationale

Music is an important part of the human experience. It is a means of understanding ourselves and others in a way not possible in other disciplines. The ability to perform, listen to, and create music with understanding is a highly desirable and important part of the human experience for every member of society. It is a universal language, a tangible means of communication for all humans. Music provides an outlet for creativity and self expression. It engages our imaginations and allows us to explore our own identities. With its unique body of knowledge, skills, and ways of thinking, music is worth knowing. The development of musical potential, along with linguistic, physical, and others, exists in every individual and is one of the basic tenets of education. The K-12 music program provides the opportunity for students to develop this potential.

The 7-9 music curriculum is based upon the *Foundation for the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Education Curriculum Document* and *Foundations Framework for Music Education* which provide the framework for music education as derived from current research and classroom practice. These documents include the Essential Graduation Learnings, General Curriculum Outcomes, and Key Stage Curriculum Outcomes for arts education in the Atlantic Provinces.

Key Features of the Intermediate Music Curriculum

Music is an essential part of the intermediate curriculum and provides experiences that are relevant, meaningful and enjoyable to the adolescent learner. It promotes growth in the three major areas of learning: the affective, cognitive, and psychomotor. The intermediate music curriculum is learner-based, flexible and builds upon the skills and knowledge acquired in the primary/elementary grades. It is designed to facilitate and nurture both the discovery and mastery of musical concepts and skills appropriate to this level. The curriculum promotes the development of leadership skills and prepares students for future studies and career possibilities.

Outcomes Shape Intermediate Musical Experiences

Mandated outcomes identified in this curriculum guide provide the basis for both administrative and pedagogical decisions relating to the delivery of intermediate music education. They inform all aspects of administration, instruction, evaluation and assessment.

Music for ALL

The musical development of ALL students is the foundation of the intermediate music curriculum. This curriculum provides a wide range of musical experiences as implemented in classroom, choral and instrumental settings. All students will be provided the opportunity to engage in meaningful learning through performing, listening to and creating music that represents a variety of styles, genres, mediums and practices.

Musical and Cultural Expression

Musical expression is an integral part of all cultures and societies. Through experiencing and learning about many musical traditions, students will be provided opportunities to engage in expression and creation through musical composition and performance. Experiences will guide students toward the acquisition of understandings of both local and global musical cultures and ultimately nurture values and beliefs about their own musical and cultural identities and traditions. Students are encouraged to recognize the power of creativity in constructing, defining, and shaping knowledge; in developing beliefs, traditions, attitudes and skills; and in extending these new learnings in a variety of social and cultural contexts.

Making Connections

This curriculum is designed to provide opportunities for students to learn in, through, and about music. When students learn in music, they develop specific skills and understandings necessary for self expression. As they gain confidence in these skills, they are able to learn through and about music. They discover ways to apply their skills in other art forms as well as other subject areas, making cross-curricular connections, solving problems, and using musical modes of expression to demonstrate learning in a variety of settings.

The following are examples for cross curricular connections:

French: folk song, vocabulary.

Guidance: career opportunities, ethical behaviour, leadership

Language Arts: language use in song lyrics.

Mathematics: internalization of the feeling of subdivision of note values in relation to the beat; determining the value of notes and rests.

Physical Education: creative movement; dance; action games; dance, rhythmic activity.

Science: use of physics and vibration to determine pitch accuracy; sound production

Social Studies: multicultural folk song and dance; historical significance of the music; 'musical' record of historical events

Technology Education: electronic composition, software packages; video and audio recording and editing

Student Engagement and Learning

The importance of student engagement in all aspects of learning is emphasized throughout this curriculum. It is designed to actively engage students in a wide range of experiences including performing, listening, creating, and responding within a variety of musical settings. (e.g. classroom, choral, and instrumental) These musical settings are intended to address different learning styles and to provide students with learning opportunities that might be relevant to their own individual needs, interests and/or preferences.

Process and Product

This curriculum recognizes the need to achieve a balance between process and product. Through performing, listening to and creating musical works, opportunities for reflection, dialogue, assessment and performance enable students to understand the relationship between process and product.

Individual and Group/ Ensemble Experiences

The curriculum provides for both individual and group learning opportunities. Both are central to a student's development of musicianship skills, independently and interdependently. While solo study promotes musical leaderhips and independence, ensemble settings recognize that some learning and performing outcomes are often only realized with others.

Music of Newfoundland and Labrador

This curriculum exposes students to the musical traditions and practices in Newfoundland and Labrador. Students will develop an awareness of and respect for the unique heritage of the province; the role of music and the arts; and the contributions of individuals and groups, both past and present, to these musical traditions and practices. Building upon the K-12 Provincial Arts and Cultural strategy, teachers and students are encouraged to connect with community musicians and artists.

Global Music

This curriculum, reaches beyond the provincial scope, to make connections between local, regional and global communities. Multiculturalism and global music is embraced and recognized through the context of world dances, songs and games.

Foundational Principles of the Intermediate Music Curriculum

This curriculum guide for intermediate music education is derived from the following principles of teaching and learning in music:

1.   All students need to have equal opportunity and access to a sequential and comprehensive music education in the intermediate grades.

2.   A variety of experiences (e.g., singing, playing, reading, writing, creating…) in music teaching and learning is essential in order to achieve the goals and outcomes for music education.

3.   All students need to have access to opportunities for musical experiences in a variety of settings (e.g., choral, instrumental, classroom)

4.   The continued development of musical literacy, expression and communication remains an integral component of all musical experiences and settings.

5.   Students need to be actively engaged in constructing their own forms of knowledge and understandings through critical processes such as dialogue, reflection, questioning, analyzing, problem-solving and decision making.

6.   Continuous and comprehensive assessment and evaluation of teaching and learning is a vital and necessary component within all settings of intermediate music education.

Settings for Teaching and Learning

Curricular Settings

The intermediate music curriculum is designed to be delivered through a variety of settings, e.g., classroom, choral, instrumental. Core outcomes will be met through one, or a combination of, these settings. A variety of teaching and learning strategies and modes of evaluation and assessment will be used. This flexible approach to curriculum implementation will provide opportunities for varied school configurations to meet the expectations of the prescribed curriculum in adaptive and creative ways.

Classroom Setting   The classroom setting provides an excellent site in which the intermediate music curriculum can be implemented. Through a variety of strategies and experiences, (e.g., performing, listening, creating) and the incorporation and adaptation of components from the other musical settings, mandated core classroom outcomes can be met.

Choral Setting   The choral setting provides another potential site for the implementation of the intermediate curriculum. Curriculum outcomes include a combination of both core and choral-specific outcomes. In this setting, mandated curriculum outcomes will be achieved primarily through a choral/singing medium.
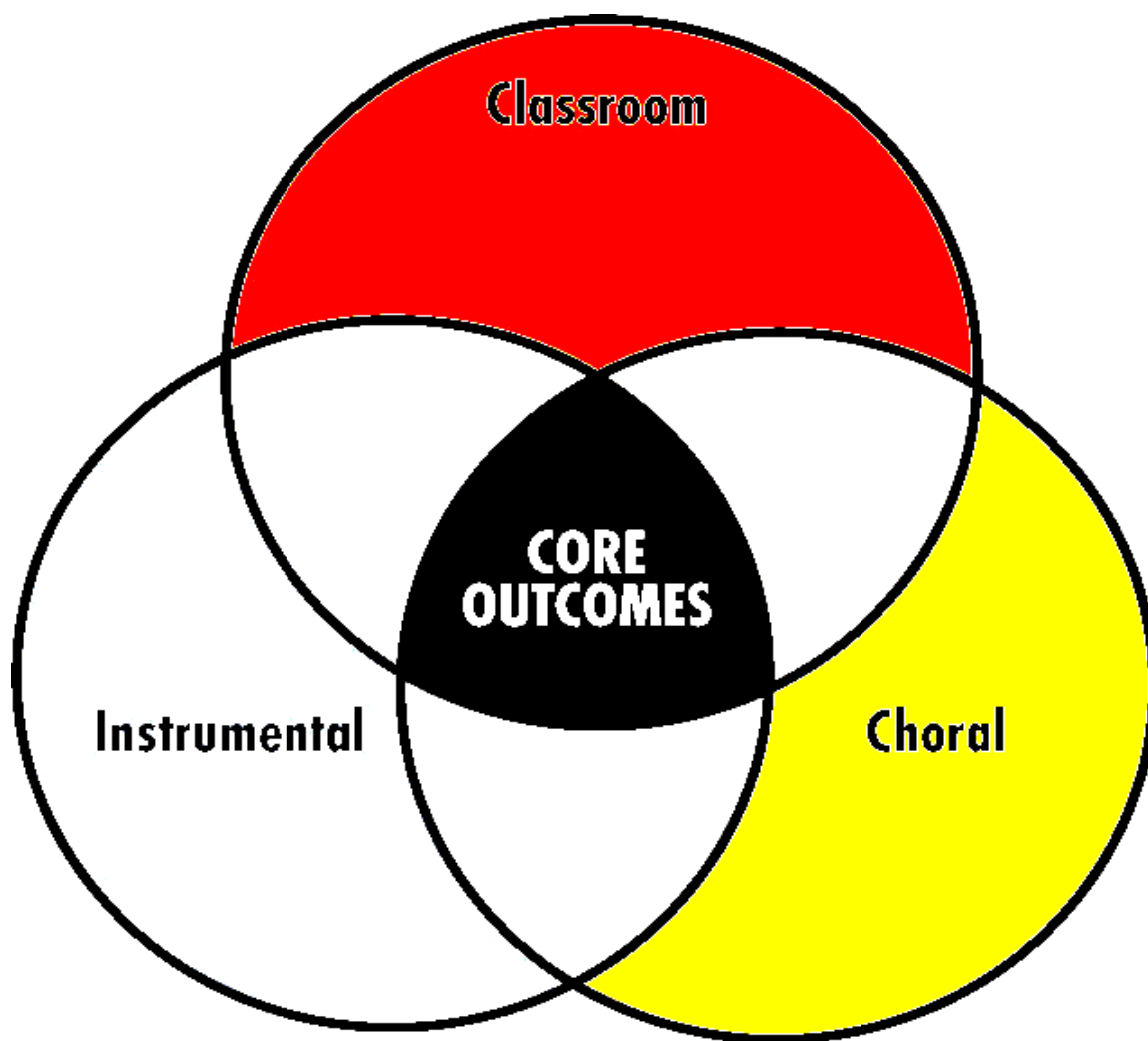
Instrumental Setting   The instrumental setting provides yet another potential site for the implementation of the intermediate curriculum. Curriculum outcomes include a combination of both core and instrumental-specific outcomes. In this setting, mandated curriculum outcomes will be achieved primarily through an instrumental medium.e.g., band, string orchestra, guitar, traditional ensembles.

Note: Print copies of the intermediate music curriculum for alternate settings, are available upon request from Learning Resource Department Centre.

Co-Curricular Settings

A variety of settings may exist for co-curricular musical experiences that are designed to enhance, augment and/or extend the mandated curriculum in classroom, choral and instrumental settings. These could include, but are not limited to, a variety of other musical experiences: jazz ensemble, pop/rock ensembles, flute choir, media/sound technology and production, song writer's circle, world music ensembles, vocal ensembles, chamber choir, musical theatre, guitar club, traditional music club.

Relationship Between Outcomes and Settings

At the centre of all three settings are core outcomes. These outcomes will be addressed in any one or combination of the three settings - classroom, choral, instrumental. The core outcomes provide the foundation on which each of the three settings is built. The core outcomes are expanded upon via medium-specific outcomes that relate to setting choice.

Sample Setting Configurations

Several sample scenarios are described below to demonstrate possible setting configurations. These sample scenarios do not represent all potential configurations of settings and/or time allotment.

Scenario A:
In school A, there is one music teacher allocation. Grades 7, 8 and 9 music education could consist of one of the following possibilities:

a) Classroom setting only.

Or

b) Instrumental or choral setting only.

Or

c) Combinations of a, and b. Example. Classroom setting (2/3) Instrumental or Choral setting (1/3)

Scenario B:
In school B, there is a 1.5 music unit allocation. Grades 7, 8 and 9 music education could consist of one of the following possibilities:

a) Classroom setting (3/4) and either i) choral setting (1/2) or ii) instrumental setting (1/2). There is a full-time music teacher with possible instrumental concentration, and a part-time music teacher, with possible choral concentration.

Or

b) Instrumental setting (3/4) and classroom (3/4). There is a full-time music teacher, with possible choral concentration and part-time music teacher, with possible instrumental concentration.

Or

c) Classroom setting (1/2), instrumental setting (1/2) and choral setting (1/2). Two teachers share the 1.5. teaching workload and evaluation and assessment in a combination of areas.

Scheduling

The scheduling of music classes, and the implementation of music programs in general, needs to be given careful consideration when planning teaching/workload allocations of music teachers. Music classes should be scheduled within a cycle so that they fall at regular intervals. Long intervals between classes impede sequential and developmental learning, retention, and skill acquisition. As the intermediate music curriculum requires long-term developmental teaching and learning opportunities, it has been designed to be best delivered over the course of a academic year at each grade level. Long-term developmental programming and teaching and learning opportunities is crucial for both skill development and concept solidification.

Teachers allocated teaching responsibilities in more than one school face unique challenges that require the attention and support of school and district-based administrations. For example, scheduling accommodations should be made to provide a block of time in one school. (i.e., day 1 in school A, day 2 in school B) to enable the teacher to be 'on site' for a period of time to effectively and efficiently address administrative and pedagogical responsibilities. Such scheduling will reduce teacher time lost to the travel and set up in different locations. It will also facilitate student access to the teacher and while enabling the teacher to schedule regular rehearsals for both curricular and co-curricular ensembles and classes.

There needs to be a flexible approach to scheduling of both curricular and co-curricular musical experiences. Variances in scheduling will reflect the needs of local school contexts.

Differentiated Instruction

The aim of differentiated instruction is to maximize each student's growth by creating developmentally appropriate learning opportunities. This means meeting each student where he or she is, and helping the student to progress by offering a continuum of choices within openended activities.

Learning activities and materials may be varied by difficulty and pace to challenge students at different readiness levels, by topic in response to students' interests, and by students' preferred ways of learning or expressing themselves.

Differentiated instruction, therefore, is based on the following beliefs.
- Students differ in their learning profiles.
- Curriculum needs to be varied in content, process, and product.
- Classrooms in which students are active learners, decision makers, and problem solvers are more natural and effective than those in which students are served a "one-size-fits-all" curriculum and treated as passive recipients of information.

The key to a differentiated music classroom is that all students are regularly offered choices and students are matched with tasks compatible with their individual learner profiles.

Implementing Differentiated Instruction in The Classroom

Differentiating Content

Content can be described as the knowledge, skills, and attitudes we want children to learn. Differentiating content requires that students are given choices in topics of interest or are pre-tested so one can identify appropriate curriculum for groups of students.

Differentiating Process

Varying learning activities or strategies provides appropriate methods for students to explore concepts. This is the most common way to differentiate process. It is important to give students alternative ways to approach concepts. For example, students, working in cooperative or flexible groupings, may use graphic organizers, a listening centre, maps, diagrams, or charts. Varying the complexity can very effectively facilitate differing levels of cognitive processing for students of differing ability.

Differentiating Product

Differentiating the product means varying the complexity or type of product/response that students create to demonstrate mastery of the skills and/or concepts. Allowing students to "show what they know" through multiple modalities allows students who struggle with written work to demonstrate mastery. Role-plays, demonstration experiments, posters, and electronic musical compositions are alternatives to written reports that allow students with differing learning profiles to be successful.