

## Strings Program – Gr 3-12 Curriculum Benchmarks

### Grade 3

- Weekly 45 minute group lesson
- Study and practice correct posture and basic playing technique
- Establish good practice habits and consistent practice routines
- Develop active listening, self-reflection, and critical thinking skills
- Basic music theory with emphasis on note reading in D major

### Grade 4

- Weekly 45 minute group lesson
- Expanded scale areas to three or more keys
- Playing on all strings
- Expansion of rhythmic patterns
- Additional bowing and finger patterns
- Extended note reading practice and two or more part playing
- Refining posture, tone and intonation

### Grade 5

- Weekly 45 minute group lesson with addition of weekly orchestra rehearsal before school
- Extension of music theory and playing knowledge into four or more keys
- Emphasis on musical expression, ensemble playing skills and more advanced playing technique
- Development of collaborative skills
- Grade 1 or higher string orchestra literature

### Grade 6

- Weekly 45 minute group lesson and additional weekly 60 minute orchestra rehearsal
- Refinement of a variety of articulations and bowing techniques
- Advancing playing concepts including shifting and two octave scales
- Grade 1.5 or higher string orchestra literature
- Emphasis on playing in the Baroque style
- Introduction to tuning concepts
- Introduction to orchestral leadership skills and roles

### Grade 7

- Weekly 45 minute group lesson and additional weekly 60 minute orchestra rehearsal
- Expansion of tuning concepts and introduction of the harmonic series
- Grade 2 or higher string orchestra literature
- Emphasis on playing in the Classical style
- Use and identify the fundamentals of music
- Opportunity to audition for the MMEA Junior District Orchestra
- Development of ensemble leadership skills and independent musicianship skills

### Grade 8

- Weekly 45 minute group lesson and additional weekly 60 minute orchestra rehearsal
- Extension of rhythmic patterns and meters
- Use and identify the fundamentals of music
- Development of advanced music theory skills such as form and analysis
- Grade 2.5 or higher string orchestra literature
- Emphasis on playing in the Romantic style
- Opportunity to audition for the MMEA Junior District Orchestra
- Advancement of ensemble leadership skills
- Community performance
- Refinement of all areas of musicianship

### **Orchestra/Philharmonia**

- Perform appropriate literature level 3 to 5 from a wide variety of genres and styles in the Fall, Spring, and Holiday concerts annually.
- Expand student level of detail in performing dynamics, playing in tune, realizing expressive markings, and playing expressively.
- Sequential study of basic music theory

- Discuss and employ a variety of bowings including, staccato, spiccato, and pizzicato
- Expand their left hand technique through study of shifting and double stops.
- Advance technical facility through study of scales, arpeggios and etudes.

Form a small ensemble and arrange three public performances

## **WESTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

### **Curriculum Benchmarks**

### **Grades 3-12**

### **String Instrumental Music**

Compiled by Curriculum Task Committees  
under the direction of  
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*“Shaping the future one child at a time”*

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