

THE JOURNEY OF EL SISTEMA AT CONSERVATORY LAB CHARTER SCHOOL

Lessons Learned
and Guiding Questions

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CENTER *for* ARTISTRY
and SCHOLARSHIP

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INTRODUCTION

For Whom is This Document Intended?

We wrote this document with several music staff members, along with Linda Nathan and the Center for Artistry and Scholarship, with the intention of describing the whole seven year history of El Sistema at Conservatory Lab Charter School. Our model is ever-changing. We hope that this document is illuminating and inspirational for your school's stakeholders. Executing such an innovative school model has substantial implications for a school's design, curriculum, pedagogy, physical plant, administration, and countless other aspects. We hope that with this guide, your school can develop a clearer, more cohesive understanding of its unique challenges, assets, and goals.

Just as there is no perfect school model in general, there is no perfect implementation of the Conservatory Lab Model. However, in this model there are significant departures from typical American schools, and so we strongly encourage continuous, iterative discussions with school board members, potential parents, community leaders, and faculty. The (not so) secret to success through the Conservatory Lab Model is a shared commitment to the El Sistema principles espoused by José Antonio Abreu, animated by the years of research and practice at Conservatory Lab Charter School, and codified in this guide.

A growth mindset is key; it is likely, for example, that not all your administrators or parents have had formal musical training, and it is equally possible that those who have will struggle to adapt their background in exclusive, audition-oriented training to this full-community approach.

How to Use This Document

This document should guide you through at least three stages of the design process:

- planning and designing the fundamentals of a music-infused school
- discussing and refining the design of your school to stakeholders
- course-correcting, tweaking, or refreshing your program on a regular basis if your organization has committed to experimenting with or implementing or the Conservatory Lab Model.

In short, we hope that this document brings new value at each stage in your school's designing process.

THE CONSERVATORY LAB MODEL

Many school leaders, classroom teachers, and music educators are committed to rigorous, researched-based performing arts programs with a deep, authentic focus on equity rather than exclusion. After more than a decade of development at Conservatory Lab Charter School in Boston, Massachusetts, the Conservatory Lab Model delivers on this vision in a dynamic, powerful way.

About Conservatory Lab Charter School

From its inception, Conservatory Lab Charter School has aspired to serve as a national model of music-infused elementary education. Music at this school is like a heart that pumps and beats to infuse vitality into all the aspects of the school community. El Sistema was incorporated into the school day in September 2010 and has since greatly strengthened the artistic and communal core of the school.

The mission of El Sistema at Conservatory Lab embraces much of the philosophy of El Sistema founder Dr. Antonio Abreu, and many of the programmatic choices were inspired by Venezuela; however, the program itself serves the needs of the school and responds to the interests and skills of its teachers. While El Sistema in Venezuela is after school, El Sistema at Conservatory Lab is completely immersed into the school day, with classes scattered throughout the morning and afternoon. These classes include seven orchestras, three wind ensembles and a percussion ensemble, music literacy, and instrumental technique classes with Resident Artists, professional musicians who are both accomplished performers and passionate teachers. In K1 and K2, students are immersed in a pre-orchestral early childhood program, culminating in the construction of a papier-mâché orchestra at the end of their K2 year. In 1st grade, all students begin with a stringed instrument. Flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, and percussion are offered as students progress to grades 4 and up. As in Venezuela, students use their newfound knowledge to contribute to their community by performing frequently for their peers and throughout the local and regional community, and teaching each other.

What is the Conservatory Lab Model?

Rather than approaching music education as an activity for “some students” in a school, as often found in traditional band, orchestra, or even choral programs, or in audition-protected environments, the Conservatory Lab Model is an integrated approach for authentic music performance for every student in your school from pre-Kindergarten to grade 8.

Our philosophy asserts that all students can perform at a high level if provided with an excellent set of resources and a nurturing environment. In the Conservatory Lab Model all students are treated as both serious musicians and serious scholars, and music is infused deeply into the school’s schedule, curriculum, and culture.

Along with being a laboratory school, the El Sistema music pedagogy guides our work. The combination of artistry and scholarship can overcome both cognitive and socioemotional barriers for a broad range of students left underserved by traditional school models. Focusing on excellence through equity rather than excellence instead of equity, we have found that attaining both are possible in real, measurable ways; this is supported by quantitative and qualitative data¹.

This guide is the product of the realization that Conservatory Lab Charter School and the Center for Artistry and Scholarship have, through intentional planning and hard-won organic learning, developed a model that can be adapted and molded to fit the needs of communities and learners nationwide.

This model is a living, breathing entity and is designed to be fluid and adaptable. While our El Sistema-inspired pedagogies, curricula, and methods are fluid and adapted in many different ways, they are also vetted and time-tested. We are available to assist any school or program to replicate this model, in part or in full, through partnerships, consultancies and workshops coordinated through the Center for Artistry and Scholarship. It is our sincere hope that your shared expertise and time will breathe a renewed energy and vigor into the Conservatory Lab Model and that we may share each other’s best practices and collaborate on improving this model moving forward.

From 1999, when Conservatory Lab Charter School first opened as a school with 60 students in kindergarten through grade 5, learning through music was the curricular focus. Academic subjects were infused with musical content, and vice versa. After 11 years of experimentation with different approaches to music and academic learning, the school adopted the El Sistema approach in 2010.

Here are some of the critical questions that have guided our work:

- What are the essential student expectations needed for success?
- What habits and skills are critical in the foundational realms of music performance?
- What level of music literacy do we expect from our students?
- How much are students aware of their own thinking, performance, and progress?
- What are authentic ways we can connect musical and academic learning?

El Sistema

El Sistema is not a replicable program or pedagogy. Rather, it is an inquiry into the most effective ways to achieve youth development goals through intensive investment in the positive social impact of music ensemble creation, rehearsal, and public performance.

Founded in Venezuela in 1975 by Dr. José Antonio Abreu, El Sistema is a model for how the use of intensive music training can create conditions for social change. A further goal of this program is to create great musicians and dramatically change the life trajectory of hundreds of thousands of a nation's most under-resourced children, deeply benefitting youth from all backgrounds. It now teaches music to more than 500,000 of Venezuela's most vulnerable children, and hundreds of thousands more young people around the globe.

El Sistema's rapid growth and success in Venezuela caught the attention of music and education leaders in the U.S. in the early 2000's. Since then, the El Sistema movement in the U.S. has grown across the country. While every El Sistema program works to create social change through teaching and performing music, each is distinctive in its approach due to the individual nature of the unique community that they serve.

Mission and Vision

Your school's mission and vision need not precisely match the stated mission and vision of Conservatory Lab Charter School. But to understand the Conservatory Lab Model itself, it is important to understand the specific context from which it has arisen. We offer the mission and vision of Conservatory Lab for your reference. Your school will, of course, develop and mold its own unique mission and vision.

Our Mission

Conservatory Lab Charter School empowers a diverse range of children as scholars, artists, and leaders through a unique and rigorous academic and music education. We enrich the larger community through performance, service, and collaboration. As a laboratory school, we develop and disseminate innovative educational approaches that will positively impact children in other schools and programs.



The Dudamel Orchestra performs at the Massachusetts State House.

Our Vision

At Conservatory Lab, we believe in the power of music and learning to transform the lives of our students and their families. At the core of our pioneering curriculum is the hybrid of two proven and exemplary programs: El Sistema and EL (formerly Expeditionary Learning). Both programs emphasize the experience of breaking through barriers in the pursuit of excellence and creating a culture and habit of perseverance.

In our experience, these two programs motivate and nurture our students to become dedicated scholars, compassionate leaders, and skilled musicians.

History of Conservatory Lab

Since opening its doors in September 1999, Conservatory Lab has always believed in the power of music to transform children's lives. From its inception, the school has aspired to serve as a national model of music-infused elementary education. An El Sistema-inspired music program was incorporated into the school day in September 2010.

El Sistema's philosophy reflects core elements of Conservatory Lab's mission. We support each of our children, not only academically and musically, but also socially and emotionally. We believe in respecting every child and providing all children with opportunities to contribute to the community. We hold high expectations for our students and share with El Sistema the conviction that each one of them can learn to express and experience music deeply. In our daily teaching and learning, we provide multiple opportunities for "ensemble" work; frequent performances emerge in both music and academic classes, providing moments for whole community growth. The processes emphasized in El Sistema reinforce the whole-child approach and project-based learning of Responsive Classroom and EL (Expeditionary Learning), both of which animate our school culture and pedagogy. While the mission of El Sistema at Conservatory Lab embodies and is inspired by the philosophy of Dr. Abreu, the program serves the needs of the school and responds to the interests and skills of its teachers. While El Sistema in Venezuela is primarily after school, El Sistema at Conservatory Lab is seamlessly infused throughout the school day. Classes include orchestra (or large multi-instrument ensemble) rehearsals and sectionals (instrument/instrument family specific instruction). In preschool and Kindergarten, students are immersed in a pre-orchestral early childhood program consisting of singing, movement, and percussion in conjunction with a social-emotional component where students learn how to respect and work together in an ensemble. All of this scaffolded work culminates in the construction of a papier-mâché orchestra at the start of their grade 1 year, called the Paper Orchestra. After the Paper Orchestra process, our grade 1 students begin instrumental instruction with string instruments. Flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, and percussion are offered to students as they get older. As in Venezuela, students use their newfound knowledge to contribute to their school by mentoring each other and to their local community by frequent public performances.

With El Sistema at Conservatory Lab, our community experiences the transformative power of music, and our children grow as musicians, as students, as teachers, and as community members.

Theory of Change

Theoretical Orientation

This section is motivated by social learning theories which frame learning as a process of guided participation over time, in which individuals develop new knowledge, skills, and attitudes through membership in a community of practice². Within this view, learning is synonymous with practice, and an emerging sense of identification with one's community of practice, and evidence of learning manifests itself in more sophisticated forms of practice over time.

From this perspective, individual learning and community are mutually reinforcing constructs. It is understood that individuals benefit from learning in community because communities provide access to knowledgeable mentors, relevant peer groups, and opportunities to demonstrate evolving competence within the community. It is further understood that the new knowledge, skills, and attitudes developed through practice form the basis of one's identity as a strong, empowered learner, and that fostering students' sense of musical competence, autonomy, and sense of belonging is crucial to motivating engaged participation in the surrounding community.

This theoretical orientation translates to the following theory of change:

Theory of Change

Conservatory Lab Charter School is a learning community centered around music, and students at Conservatory Lab develop intellectual, technical, and social competencies through their engagement in the surrounding musical community. These competencies form the basis of students' emerging identities as strong, empowered learners. This empowerment manifests itself along two dimensions: personal empowerment, meaning empowerment through ability and self-efficacy; and civic empowerment, meaning empowerment through an enhanced sense of belonging and productive citizenship within the musical community.

Identity Outcomes

1. Intellectual Competencies
 - a. Musical literacy
 - b. Learning how to practice
 - c. Self-directed learning
2. Technical Competencies
 - a. Instrumental technique
 - b. Aural skills
3. Artistic Competencies
 - a. Creativity
 - b. Expression
4. Social Competencies
 - a. Participation
 - b. Ensemble skills
 - c. Productive citizenship

The identity development outcomes outlined above provide the foundation for the following empowerment outcomes outlined below:

Empowerment Outcomes

1. Personal Empowerment
 - a. Agency, i.e. sense of autonomy and development of voice in learning
 - b. Self-efficacy, i.e. enhanced ability to achieve goals
2. Civic Empowerment
 - a. Within Conservatory Lab: Leadership in the musical community
 - b. Beyond Conservatory Lab: Ability to define new goals, pursue new opportunities, and participate effectively in new learning communities

CORE PRINCIPLES

More than a set of specific pedagogical tools or methodologies, the Conservatory Lab Model is the living realization of a core set of beliefs and commitments. Animated by the passion and expertise of faculty, directors, and resident artists, these principles serve as ways to measure curricula and lessons against a clearly defined, stable vision.

Core Beliefs

Many schools of thought – particularly those that motivate traditional music conservatories, auditioned high school ensembles, and other competitive groups – abide by the idea that schools exist to teach students music as its own end. Another way of looking at music in schools is that music programming exists to facilitate other, broader learning. The Conservatory Lab Model identifies this dilemma as a false dichotomy: we believe that teaching students through music results in improving academic and social emotional outcomes and overall performance.

Authentic socioemotional learning can be facilitated through participation in musical ensembles and the development of mature ensemble skills. In both universities and K-12 schools throughout the country, researchers and practitioners are identifying socioemotional skills as a central area of focus for developing twenty-first century competencies. The Conservatory Lab Model explicitly addresses these needs by turning the daily attention of music educators towards socioemotional learning via ensemble skills such as listening across the room. Students are prompted to critique one another's performance, and translate peer-critiques into actionable and audible improvements. While traditional bands and orchestras can sometimes implicitly facilitate socioemotional learning, our methods, curricula, and informal assessment tools provide frameworks within which educators and administrators can ensure intentional socioemotional learning over time.

Below is a list of the seven core beliefs that guide our administrators and educators in shaping our program.

1. At Conservatory Lab Charter School, music teaching artists are given the same access to students' academic profile (including relevant 504 plans, IEPs) as the academic teachers, our music educators become part of the education of the whole child.
2. Every student performs in an ensemble at an appropriately high level with the proper balance of quality instruction, robust scaffolding, and high expectations. No student at Conservatory Lab is excluded from performing in ensembles on the basis of an audition. This model is designed for schools and systems that intend to immerse each one of their students in their music program with ensembles being the primary vehicle for this. Through the methodologies and structures detailed in this guide, our multi-year process ensures that the performance competencies of all musicians are addressed gradually, thoughtfully, and specifically. Professional development is provided on these issues as well.
3. At the core of student instruction, we emphasize the importance of a growth mindset coupled with continual reflection, self-critique, and peer critique on the part of instructors. Increased competency on their instrument and in performance is due to focused, consistent work, rather than the idea of intrinsic talent.
4. Metacognitive³ skill development drives many of our practices. A good musician critically thinks about his or her actions and how they affect themselves and the ensemble; a good artist asks why they are creating something and what it is for. Metacognitive skill development is deeply embedded in the detailed work we ask our students to accomplish every day in rehearsal as we interpret and analyze written music and sound. Both metacognition and growth development are fostered powerfully in a well-run ensemble rehearsal, where students are continuously encouraged and trusted to make decisions about their playing and how to improve. We believe that if our academic and music teachers are given a space to nurture this transfer and build strong relationships as colleagues and collaborators, these skills will eventually transfer not only into their academic subjects, but other aspects of their lives as well.

5. Music as a social justice tool: El Sistema was founded in Venezuela as a tool to improve and nourish communities in which children were given few creative outlets and sub-par educational opportunities. It focused on uniting extremely large numbers of children from some of the most desperate neighborhoods through the practice of Western classical music; this genre was specifically chosen in order to counter the long-held belief that such music could only be truly realized by conservatory-trained foreigners. From humble beginnings, it grew to include tens of thousands of children, affording them private lessons on instruments paid for by the government and participation in orchestras that gained world renown for their interpretations of classical greats as well as traditional Venezuelan and South American music. Through the extra-long hours of practice and frequent performances, many children were able to overcome their precarious home environments and avoid the plague of gangs, drugs, and violence rampant in the impoverished parts of Venezuela and South America. This model of music as a social justice tool has spread throughout the world and has inspired the Conservatory Lab Model in many ways. Specifically, we have adopted the practice of providing open, equal access to high-quality instruction to all our students free of cost and have also provided many performance opportunities within their own communities.
6. Creativity and innovation are specific pedagogical targets that are either implicitly present in a performing ensemble nor the exclusive claim of the fine and performing arts. It is unfortunately possible to teach music in such a way that is neither artistic nor creative. Recognizing this danger, beginning in pre-Kindergarten, Conservatory Lab teachers emphasize improvisation, arranging, composition, and other specifically creative musical skills.
7. Many schools assume that creativity is solely the responsibility of arts classes, but the Conservatory Lab Model encourages schools to be structured such that both music instructors and classroom teachers understand the cross-domain nature of creativity. With its dual focus of El Sistema music program and Expeditionary learning, Conservatory Lab Charter School imbues its entire curriculum with design thinking, creative problem solving, and innovation.

Core Pedagogical Principles

As with El Sistema itself, the Conservatory Lab Model is better defined by its pedagogical cornerstones and beliefs rather than particular methodologies or teaching techniques. It is possible to take many instructional approaches within any given classroom in the Conservatory Lab Model. Resident artists with a wide variety of artistic, musical, and educational backgrounds contribute to these approaches as a staff and share best practices with each other. This process aids in fostering innovative practices that result in a style which will, in the end, become unique to your school or program.

While later chapters of this document will provide a starting point for classroom and instrumental methods, these pedagogical principles are of far greater importance than any one teaching technique. Teachers, teaching teams, administrators, and other stakeholders should constantly revisit these design principles. This iterative and cyclical re-visitation becomes itself a design principle that allows the Conservatory Lab Model to grow with the school, and, ideally, the method itself flows primarily up from the students rather than down from the administration.

1. An early and enduring thirst for music: The Conservatory Lab Model explicitly cultivates a sustainable, lifelong love of music and the arts, immersing students in a progressive music and arts curriculum. At Conservatory Lab, students begin their journey in pre-Kindergarten with general music classes that incorporate standard music pedagogies designed to establish a foundation of music appreciation, and opportunities to experience joy in music-making. As students progress, they continue to cultivate ensemble skills, starting with a papier-mâché orchestra in their Kindergarten year, string orchestra in grades 1 to 3, and eventually full orchestra with woodwind, brass, and percussion options from grade 4 on. This organic progress from pre-K through grade 8 is designed to provide students with the fundamental appreciation and respect for ensemble-based musical studies. Students are offered guided choices at appropriate ages that challenge them and foster a joy for music.
2. An emphasis on consistent structure: At Conservatory Lab, structured rehearsal habits are enforced as early as pre-K. For example, first and second graders enter the classroom “in time” with music, as their instructor plays her own instrument or as recorded music is playing. Students then collect their instruments – one or two at a time – and find their pre-assigned seats. They begin mimicking their teacher’s gestures, which can be simple hand

motions, Curwen hand signs, or other gestures. More important than what structures are in place in any given classroom is the mere fact that structures are in place. Students should have clear expectations associated with “macro” habits (where to walk in the room or what game song the beginning of class could entail) that set the stage for a safe learning space.

3. The importance of creating high quality sound: A natural extension of early artistry and expression is an emphasis on quality of sound or timbre. Even as students are learning hand positions, fingerings, and note names, students are held to a high standard of sound quality and pitch-matching that ensures the associated cognitive processes are not ignored. In other words, the Conservatory Lab Model places a premium on sound quality relative to other skills, based on the assumption that other skills should be in service of a great sound.
4. The pursuit of artistry: American music education in the K-12 arena tends to conceive of musicianship, artistry, and expression as skills for intermediate or advanced players as if they are the function of other, more basic skills. The Conservatory Lab Model asserts that these are, in fact, foundational skills upon which all other training is built, and so students at Conservatory Lab are encouraged to play with passion, vigor, and emotion from day one.
5. Adaptive, creative problem solving: True to its El Sistema roots, the Conservatory Lab Model challenges both teachers and students to approach their learning environment with flexibility and creative problem solving within the limits of time and available resources. This “kinetic” quality, as one Resident Artist describes it, helps to promote a learning environment that is ever-changing to meet the growing needs of the students.
6. Thirst for passion and joy: Recalling the first pedagogical principle, it is critical that music performance, rehearsal, and practice remain both fun and joyful for students and teachers. This does not deny the rigorous nature of instrumental music development, but rather emphasizes that a music education not characterized by happiness is one hardly worth pursuing.
7. Community around music: Building and connecting communities through music plays a vital role in the Conservatory Lab Model. This takes shape through in-school performances for fellow classmates and families; authentic music-infused academic projects; and community events throughout Dorchester and greater Boston.

WHAT MAKES THE CONSERVATORY LAB MODEL UNIQUE?

There are as many ways to teach music as there are schools. Rather than a predefined collection of methods or requirements, the Conservatory Lab Model is a set of goals, design principles, best practices, and starting points to nurture the development of your program. Taking on the Conservatory Lab Model is a substantial commitment for a school and its stakeholders, and, at some point, it is necessary to draw lines in the sand about what the Conservatory Lab Model is or is not. This section touches upon the boundaries and practices that we find most necessary, effective, and helpful.

Schoolwide Ensemble Participation

Every student in a Conservatory Lab Model school participates in either a fully-fledged orchestral ensemble or an elementary music class taught by a qualified music professional. This non-negotiable component of the Conservatory Lab Model differentiates it significantly from most school music programs.

Social Emotional Learning Focus

- One of the most valuable aspects of arts education is teaching students to think like artists, meaning they must constantly experiment, analyze, and make their own aesthetic choices. Purposeful teaching of these **metacognitive practices** allows students to be aware of their own thought processes and how to change/shape them.
- Engaging in rigorous and in-depth arts training can be mentally taxing. A **growth mindset** is inherent to our curriculum as a school, to teach our students how to persevere through challenging demands.
- Inherent in the nature of music ensembles is the need for **cooperation and team work**. Bringing together our students in one room for the sole purpose of creating art requires a basic understanding of social skills, including waiting your turn, patience, assuming best intent, prolonged focus, and the willingness to prioritize the good of the greater whole over one's individual desires.

Community Service Mission

A well-rounded community service mission will include:

- Community outreach
- Performances
- Social justice orientation

Commitment to Music Alongside Academic Learning

Both music and academic staff must have mutual respect, empathy, and understanding of the importance and purpose of each other's programs. All faculty members must have a basic appreciation of music as an active tool of education and social activism. At times, professional development should include all staff, both music and academic. PD should seek to improve teaching methods and push staff understanding of current issues in science, the arts, and civics relevant to their craft. Specific PD is also provided for both academic and music staff. Finally, classroom teachers and music teachers should seek out ways to integrate their disciplines whenever possible, whether that be through relating the musical history of the United States to studying jazz and blues, or connecting science classes in technology to rhythm. Teachers should ask each other questions, collaborate on projects, and respect each other's mastery of their respective disciplines.

Comparisons with Other Pedagogies

One of the most important aspects of the El Sistema philosophy, when it comes to pedagogy, is that it is not bound to any one tradition or methodology. It is instead a compilation of multiple best practices from different traditions and methods. Some of the methods we use at Conservatory Lab Charter School include Essential Elements, Suzuki, and Kodaly, in combination with exercises and



Friday Finale, a monthly musical gathering.

arrangements that our own faculty members have constructed to address specific concerns in their classrooms. This flexibility has allowed many different programs around the world to tailor the pedagogical needs of their students and train their existing faculty and staff to be actively engaged in the process of creating curriculum that is meaningful and unique.

The aggregate of different methods used at Conservatory Lab Charter School include a strong philosophical connection to the Suzuki approach for developing beginners. Suzuki's emphasis for beginning students is to play first, read later, and this has proven extremely effective in getting students motivated and engaged with their instruments.

OPERATIONAL AND PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS

At an operational level, a Conservatory Lab Model school must make many unique considerations regarding hiring, organizational structure, budgeting, etc. These challenges can only be effectively addressed through collaborative means, and it is crucial that administrators, board members, teachers, and staff have a functional understanding of their own relationship to each of these challenges. The 2016-2017 organizational chart can be found in the Appendix.

Governance Considerations

Our school operates as a Massachusetts Commonwealth Charter School⁴. This means that we are governed by a Board of Trustees and have a great deal of autonomy in deciding on our schedule, calendar, length of year, curriculum, assessment, use of budget, and the hiring of faculty and staff. Nevertheless, we are bound by all state and federal laws and our students take the same tests as all public school students. We were founded as a Laboratory school, which means that our charter includes the principles of experimentation and dissemination. Our charter also describes the importance of the role of music in our school, but it does not specify the way instruction should be delivered. It has never been of top importance that our music instructors be certified teachers. They are Resident Artists who teach. This is a choice we have made that has worked out positively in our circumstances. We encourage others to think about how they want to integrate music into the daily lives of their students and schools.

Our Board of Trustees has played an important role in the life of our school. They have been staunch advocates of and fundraisers for our music program. Schools that want to introduce El Sistema-inspired music programs might want to consider having an advisory board that can support the implementation and growth of such a program. It has been important in our growth to have a board that argues for and supports daily music instruction in the school.

Budgeting and Resources

Faculty and Staff

The music staffing model has varied for Conservatory Lab Charter School almost every year and is always subject to the financial and scheduling needs of the school. For example, we have had certain schedules where music classes were concentrated toward the last few periods of the day, which meant that hiring more part-time staff to teach at the end of the day was necessary. We have had schedules where having music throughout the entire day or mid-morning till the end of the day necessitated music staff that are compensated full-time. Scheduling and staffing are forever intertwined in this model.

Currently we have 13 music teachers that teach multiple grade levels (between two and six different grade levels per teacher). We made the decision to have our music classes be staggered throughout the school day, in order to maximize our limited amount of space (music classes happen in the same few rooms). As a result of this staggering we can also employ most of our music teachers to be full-time, which demands a higher level of commitment from the teacher and also allows the school to recruit skilled teachers and artists.

The move to having full-time music staff has allowed our music program to have a deeper impact on our school community, and has allowed music and academic teachers to collaborate more and create a unified school culture.

Inventory and Equipment

At Conservatory Lab, we offer instrumental instruction on a selection of orchestral instruments including strings (violin, viola, cello, bass), woodwinds (flute, clarinet), brass (trumpet, trombone, euphonium, French horn), and percussion. The tradition of orchestral training dates back to the original concept of El Sistema in Venezuela, where the orchestra has been used as the original model for an equal, socially just community.

The benefits of having an orchestra as the primary ensemble for music learning are inherent in the nature of the grouping itself: 11 or more different instruments all come together for the purpose of agreeing, working, and producing one product that everyone has a stake in. Striving towards excellence as a large group produces a unique type of energy that is palpable and real to the students.

It is a tall order to supply instruments to an entire school's student population. Financially, many programs have major challenges providing this service, and access to high quality instruments is another obstacle schools face, especially if they are not within the immediate vicinity of a metropolitan area.

The Johnson String Instrument (JSI) company provides the program with rental instruments⁵ in bulk at lower price, a feature they provide to most school rental programs. In addition, JSI provides free repairs and strings, access to high quality instruments that get serviced and rotated out of use every year, and on-site delivery on demand. While this might seem at the outset to be a more expensive approach than acquiring instrument donations, it is cost-effective when one factors in these other considerations.

Our wind, brass, and percussion instruments are purchased through the Music & Arts company, which services school districts nationally and also provides maintenance, rentals, and on-site services. Similarly to our string instrument rental deal with JSI we have found that renting our winds and brass instruments may cost a bit more in the short run, however absent affordable avenues for addressing maintenance and repairs and on demand services, the cost is more than worthwhile.

We strongly encourage each child to have their own instrument, so they can have ownership of and pride in their work. We also encourage students to bring their instruments home to practice (this is not currently a requirement) so they have some time where they can take ownership of their own learning, apply what they have learned at school in an individual way, and share the fruits of their labor with family and friends.

Rehearsal Space

Rehearsal space is determined by what's available. We have some designated spaces for music, but adequate space is in constant demand. In practice, this means that music and academic teachers work with each other to see how they might share spaces, including how instruments can be stored without taking precedence over academic learning space, what can we do to support transitions between spaces, and how to leave spaces we have shared. Students are put in the best space possible, but it's not necessarily a traditional orchestral rehearsal setting.

Ensemble size has also been determined based on the sizes of our available spaces. This means that from year to year, ensembles might be composed differently, and instructors are called upon to choose or create appropriate music for that ensemble, which not only includes all the instruments but also fosters continued growth in returning students.

Scheduling

Time is the most precious resource in any school, and how it is used is a reflection of an institution's priorities. The music program at Conservatory Lab Charter School's schedules have taken various iterations since the school's inception.

Since we began our El Sistema-inspired program, we have changed our schedule eight times in the past seven years. The schedule changes were based on finding the optimal balance of commitment and flexibility for our students and teachers. We see schedule changes as a positive indicator of our desire to always put students' best interests first.

Music rehearsals have traditionally been split into two distinct classes, orchestra (large ensemble rehearsal) and sectionals (smaller, instrument-specific instruction). All of the learning is prioritized to service the orchestra rehearsals, so the sectional work mainly focuses on getting the students ready and comfortable to play the music in orchestra. Additional individual support (private lessons) is not part of this structure, but can be provided when there are extra staff members present or when teachers have some time during the day to find a student on a break, such as during recess or lunch.

Initially in Conservatory Lab Charter School's history, time allotted for music instruction added up to two and half hours a day. That has had to decrease over the years, so our current schedule allots one and a half hours a day, allotted in two 45-minute periods. We are moving towards having one hour per day of orchestral instruction with more music integration throughout the day with academic teachers. These changes resulted from our observations that the originally scheduled day was too long for young children and teachers.

In all of our years experimenting with scheduling, we have found that the amount of class time is not a direct indicator of student success. In some cases, a too-long class period is counterproductive and harmful to the classroom culture and quality of the learning. Successful teaching will always lay in the hands of compassionate, experienced, and skillful teachers that have a deep understanding and passion for the content and can deliver it to students in a thoughtful, effective, and efficient way.



Ms. Sulbaran, a strings teacher, shows his colleagues how to play the bass in a professional development session.

Professional Development

Conservatory Lab believes that establishing a true community of learning means that all children and adults in the building must be constantly engaged in learning new skills, expanding their perspectives, and sharing best practices with each other.

Professional development is scaffolded to meet the needs of our teachers. For new teachers, it is most important to observe and learn from more experienced teachers.

Additionally, new teachers need to focus on creating classroom environments that embody our El Sistema-inspired mission and vision as well as our school's values and expectations for learning. Experienced teachers should always be enhancing and adapting their existing skills as teachers and artists. Professional development should appropriately mix academic and music staff, as well as administrative and operational staff, to create a sense of community. PD should be geared toward strengthening our teacher's relationships and commitment to specific types of learning, but each team (academic or musical) should also be given space to explore their own topics related to professional growth.

If possible, PD should include a broad array of topics spanning child development to current events, cutting edge innovative practices and data that can directly affect the educational and artistic outcomes of the student body. If possible, professional development should also include guest speakers to enhance what is already a skilled and inspired music staff. Some examples of teacher-led PD's include presentations of scope and sequence, lesson planning, and behavior management strategies. These serve as opportunities for teachers to grow as lead educators within the school community.

Conferences have always been a part of teacher development at Conservatory Lab Charter School. Teachers create a new and innovative way of teaching a particular part of their curriculum are encouraged to share their methods with the larger educational world; however, music and academic teachers historically have not participated in many conferences together. This could very well happen in the future.

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

The beginning of the year warrants special consideration and preparation in any school. It is important to take time to establish classroom culture, create a safe and consistent space for students to feel welcome and encouraged to take risks, and establish clear musical expectations with short and long-term performance-based and social/emotional goals. Establishing clear expectations for transitions between classes and rehearsals, instrument care and maintenance, and musical expectations in your rehearsals will help to establish a safe and productive learning environment for students to grow, take risks, and succeed. The information in this section is the result of lived experiences at Conservatory Lab Charter School, assembled to give a practical, actionable backdrop to start your year well.

Teaching the Instruments: Protocols, Methods, and Strategies

At Conservatory Lab, a variety of pedagogical approaches and rehearsal strategies are synthesized to create a curriculum unique to the site. The specific pedagogies informing the practice of individual teaching artists matter less than the overall teaching community's primary design principles of flexibility and adaptation. Diverse pedagogical backgrounds are a strength for the program; teachers learn from a diverse set of best practices within the teaching community and students are offered a variety of teaching styles to find success within.



Mr. Barstow works with a new student to select an instrument at the beginning of the year.

We must reiterate a core design principle here: the Conservatory Lab Model should be characterized as kinetic, energetic, and adaptive. If at any point your instruction comes in conflict with these instructional techniques, such conflict should serve as a generative, productive means of growth and further instructional development.

Instrument assignment

Instrument assignment is based on a variety of factors at Conservatory Lab; while students have some level of choice, especially those who start at the school early on in their academic careers or move to the school with a strong background on an instrument, music instructors make final decisions by taking into consideration a child's size, emotional/cognitive needs, and interest. It is important to note that, since all students are required to participate, this process is extremely important in creating both a functional classroom and a student who wants to be part of the ensemble. This process is not a perfect science – it is guided by trial and error and hinges upon the resources and flexibility of your school and staff, along with cooperation and understanding from students and their families.

Once assigned an instrument, we highly encourage students to spend at least one if not two years on it before they consider switching. Within that amount of time, most students will have gotten over the hill from very beginner basics to being able to work on more detailed technical work, and teachers can recognize whether there is real desire to continue learning or if another type of instrument might be more functional for the student. In addition these skills are transferrable later if said student wants to change instruments because they will have built a framework of musical skills and knowledge to work from.

What follows is a general model for timing of instrument assignment:

Pre-Kindergarten: In pre-Kindergarten, students study musical concepts through singing and body or instrument percussion, and learn ensemble skills through group participation.

Kindergarten: The Kindergarten year is an expansion on the skills established in pre-K, with the added complexity of singing in two-part harmony, engaging in more lyrically complicated songs, and performing more frequently. Towards the end of the school year we engage student leaders from grade 1 to visit Kindergarten music classes and teach them about their particular string instrument. The first graders play for the Kindergarteners, and talk to them about what music classes look like and their unique qualities and functions in an orchestra.

Grade 1: After studying the makeup of a string orchestra and how the different string instruments sound and work together, students are assigned instruments based on the traditional structure and numbers (violin, viola, cello, bass) of a string orchestra, the student's size, dexterity, and affinity for a particular instrument, and the student's needs and choice (example: a child very much wants to play the bass, and teacher agrees, but parent cannot

accommodate the size of the instrument and argues against it vehemently). Students have the opportunity to list their top three choices, and we have almost always been able to give the students either their first or second choice of instrument.

Grades 1-3: Students continue playing string instruments they learned in first grade. Most often their original choices are lasting because experienced instructors can identify affinity for particular instruments and guide their students to learn technical aspects with joy. As a result students often enjoy their instruments because they love their teacher. In this way, if you have a strong teacher-student relationship the choice of instrument is generally easier, even if he/she doesn't get their first choice.

Students do not usually begin winds instruments before grade 4 because of the physical demand that these instruments require (ie, embouchure, breath control). In the past, we have started wind players as early as grade 3 with mixed results.

Grades 4-5: Woodwinds, brass, and percussion are added to the selection of instruments available. Students who have been in the program for some time and either demonstrate a keen interest in a new instrument or have obvious needs (either physical or mental/emotional) that are not met in their assigned sectionals are tested on new instruments and sometimes switch. In general, winds and percussion classes have been smaller, but a larger, independent winds ensemble is feasible.

In the case of new students they are introduced to a variety of instruments when they arrive, then placed into an ensemble with other students of their level, either a new ensemble or with younger students. Peer mentoring is encouraged at Conservatory Lab Charter School: we have found this useful in helping new students catch up to their grade-level peers. This system also helps the more advanced students learn how to mentor.

Grades 6-8: Students in the program at this grade level for more than 2 years have most likely either settled on an instrument assignment or require reassignment due to either having a physical or psychological need that would be fulfilled in a different ensemble or switching because of explicit desire to try something new or related but different (for example, switching from trumpet to French horn). New students entering in these grades are assigned instruments after a brief tryout process and then put into an ensemble of students at their similar level. More advanced students often act as peer mentors to instruct new students.

Strings Overview: pre-K and Kindergarten, grades 1-3, grades 4-5, and Middle School

Pre-K and Kindergarten: pre-K and Kindergarten serve as our students' introduction to our musical learning community. Instructors seek to instill an enduring love of music in these young students that can be sustained throughout their time at Conservatory Lab Charter School. Students cultivate the ability to keep pulse, match pitch, and work together in a large group, as most learning is through singing and movement. Kindergarten students learn about the orchestra and its instruments to prepare them for orchestra in grade 1. By the end of the year, students are familiar with the setup of the orchestra and rehearsal practices. They start their grade 1 year by constructing and using papier-mâché instruments in order to learn how to care for and handle them. Throughout this process, students also learn positioning and basic rehearsal procedures by learning specific songs and motions that allow for these gross motor skills to develop while not risking harming real instruments in the process. Although we have relied on the Paper Orchestra process to help transition our kids from a general music curriculum to an orchestra rehearsal curriculum, we understand that this may not be feasible for every program to replicate. Conservatory Lab has its own Paper Orchestra curriculum that is available on request.

Grades 1-3: focus on building fundamental instrumental technique and the development of familiarity with rehearsal routines. In the beginning, a student's technical foundation is built through a combination of learning by ear, spatial orientation on the fingerboard, and through patterns and rote repetition. Grade 1 pieces are frequently written in a hybrid musical script of letters and rhythms. As their music literacy and note reading fluency grows over time, students transition to reading written music. Students are encouraged to write in note names and/or fingerings on their music until they feel comfortable without them.

Grades 4-5: continue to further develop instrumental technique and music literacy. The technical focus begins to drift away from pure rote repetition of tetrachords to a larger variety of scales, scale variations, and technical exercises. Concert repertoire will define the majority of skills necessary to be mastered as the year progresses. As students' technical proficiency grows, more class time can be spent on ensemble skills and artistic/musical concepts.

In **Grades 6–8**, students begin to focus more on ensemble and artistic competencies while continuing to develop instrumental technique. By middle school, a combination of new students added to the school and differentiated rates of learning will require a beginner level ensemble. Advanced students will help to teach beginner students in private lessons called “peer mentoring.” Repertoire continues to define the skills necessary to be developed for students in all ensembles and sectionals.

Woodwinds, Brass, and Percussion Overview

In grades 4 and 5, we invite students to either remain on their string instrument or consider switching to a wind or brass instrument. The process for placing students on specific wind, brass, or percussion instruments is guided by those specific Resident Artists specializing in the instruments. For current grade 4 and 5 students, our staff will recommend students to switch from their string instruments to wind, brass, or percussion for a number of reasons: they express a desire to switch from their string instrument, they’re struggling on their current instrument, or they demonstrate social/emotional/physical challenges on their current instrument. During the first two weeks of assignment, Resident Artists monitor each student’s progress and makes recommendations to switch students to another wind instrument if the student is having a great deal of trouble producing a clear tone or physically managing the instrument.

Instruments are assigned by taking into account the student’s interest, initial ability on a particular instrument, available instruments, and balance of ensemble and grade level (i.e., 3 flutes from grade 4, 4 trumpets from grade 5). We even consider character traits that a student demonstrates during the instrument trial period.

In addition to joining full orchestra rehearsals, Wind and percussion students rehearse in their own ensembles. Wind ensembles have beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels often performing inside the school as well as out in the community. Percussion allows students to participate in beginner, intermediate, and advanced ensemble music, as well as drum line, a fairly new addition to the Conservatory Lab program.



Band practice.

Brass at Conservatory Lab

The beginner brass class consists of B-flat trumpets, trombones, and euphoniums. We tend to search for strong low brass students first. Due to the large size of the trombone, many students favor the smaller trumpet. However, the euphonium provides a low brass alternative that many students enjoy.

As trumpet players move into their second and third year, we offer the option of moving to French horn whenever possible. While the French horn and trumpet embouchures are slightly different, beginner horn players with a well-developed embouchure have demonstrated far greater confidence and more consistent note-accuracy right from the start.

With regard to euphonium players, we treat them as B-flat musicians, teaching them to read B-flat transposed parts. When incorporating them into the full orchestra in their second and third year, we have found that playing the bass clarinet part in most arrangements for grades 2-4 works well and allows for opportunities to play alongside a student bass clarinet player. Encouraging peer mentorship and challenging advanced players, we have found success in allowing the advanced B-flat trumpet players to play alongside the beginner euphonium players during rehearsals, to help build confidence in their euphonium and bass clarinet players who are often playing more exposed parts in the music.

Woodwinds at Conservatory Lab

At Conservatory Lab, we have been fortunate and successful with placing beginner woodwinds on student-model flutes and clarinets as early as grade 4.

As flute players move into their second and third year, we offer the option of moving to oboe whenever possible. While the embouchures are different, we tend to have the oboe players double the flute parts to help build confidence and note-accuracy from the start.

As clarinet players move into their second and third year, we offer the option of moving to bass clarinet whenever possible. When incorporating them into the full orchestra in their second and third year, we have found that doubling their part with our B-flat euphonium players helps to build confidence on their parts, which often stand out more in compositions.

Percussion at Conservatory Lab

Percussion actually starts in pre-Kindergarten. Students learn beginner ensemble skills, some of the most fundamental and necessary for their future studies, in their first year with small hand percussion instruments and rhythm games.

Percussion students begin as a percussion ensemble separate from beginner woodwinds and brass in grades 4 and 5. They work on stick technique on drum pads and Orff instruments. Percussion students primarily work in independent percussion ensemble music, which includes the use of traditional orchestral percussion equipment, Latin percussion, and a full-size marching drum line, including bass drums, snare, and marching quints. During the year, various students in the percussion ensemble will prepare music to play with wind and string ensembles as needed.

In particular, percussion has a unique designation within the musical sections as, very often, a child who struggles with fine motor skills issues, behavioral issues, or other learning impediments, is placed in percussion.

There are several reasons for this placement: the size of the group is generally smaller, which allows for a smaller teacher-to-student ratio; the fine motor dexterity is less of a factor than it is on other fingered instruments, like violin or clarinet; and the playing of a percussion instrument is often more physically demanding, which often helps students with ADHD or similar behavioral issues to focus.

Development and learning in music (and indeed in all disciplines) is the result of inter-domain growth. A student's competency is a function of complex relationships between many skills from several related paths.



Percussion students perform at Spring Fling.

ASSESSMENTS

Over the years, at Conservatory Lab Charter School, we have employed a few different measures and formats of ensuring success in the musical education of our students. Presently, we have settled on a grading scale and set of standards that were vetted and written by our music staff. This tool currently best captures the learning we expect from our students.

Conservatory Lab students are selected into the school by lottery, not by audition, and they may or may not have any prior musical knowledge, experience, or inclination whatsoever. In addition, they may come to our school as early as Kindergarten or as late as grade 8. As a result, our teachers do not use competitions or juries to assess our students' development. Instead, we deeply value growth over proficiency as our means of gauging students' understanding of the material.

Our grading scale intentionally mirrors how students are assessed and graded in their academic subjects. For example, the standards are always phrased in an "I can" statement. This practice is consistent with how EL (Expeditionary Learning) phrases their learning targets and goals. Each standard, in all subjects, is graded on a 1-4 scale: 1 is below standard, 2 needs improvement, 3 meets the standard, and 4 exceeds the standard.

Music grades are written by the sectional teachers of each student. The sectional teacher's responsibility is to teach the students all of the required technique and repertoire for the year, which makes them the ideal candidate to fill out these grades, rather than having the large ensemble teachers assess the students on these standards.

These standards were chosen by the music staff in order to reflect the priorities of our El Sistema-inspired program. They are separated into three major categories: Habits of Musicianship, Technique, and Literacy.

Habits of Musicianship

This category encompasses habits that our students exhibit in terms of how to be in a rehearsal room and abide by ensemble rehearsal procedures. These include participating in the ensemble, persevering during challenging situations, following silent conductor signals, collaborating with others, and matching the sound and movements of their peers.

Technique

This category includes basic standards of technical proficiency and execution, from holding the instrument to tone production. These include: playing in tune, playing with a steady pulse, playing with a quality tone, using appropriate technique (embouchure, hands, fingers, arms, etc.), and general posture.

Literacy

In this category, we assess a student's knowledge of written notation in regards to their understanding of and relationship to their instrument. These categories include: identifying and playing correct pitches and rhythms in a musical piece and identifying, playing, and expressing correct musical notation.

Conservatory Lab acknowledges that this current grading/assessment system is not finalized and needs constant revision and reframing. Our goal is to eventually be able to align applicable state and national standards to our set of values and combine them with standards that our faculty deem necessary. Examples of future standards we wish to incorporate include teaching other students, oral presentations of concert/musical material, and self-reflection.

FINAL WORDS

This guide codifies the tools that we have found useful in building our own professional learning community, but you should consider these tools a point of departure, not a definitive list. The Conservatory Lab Model is a model that is constantly changing. We are always adapting and reacting to external factors, and this will inevitably be the same for anyone attempting to integrate aspects of this model. Even if your school perfectly executes our model as described, the output created by your administration, teachers, and students will be a different result – and this fact should be embraced and celebrated. This is a model that can work well and look completely different for any school or organization.

Above all else, our faculty's adaptability, flexibility, and pragmatism have allowed the school to survive numerous difficult times over the years, and these should be the primary characteristics of any staff hoping to successfully enact these practices. As a conservatory, teaching artists should always hold their students to the highest level of musicianship possible. As a laboratory school, all staff should never stop experimenting to find solutions.

The guiding questions we presented at the beginning of this document have helped bring us this far in our development as a school. We continue to grapple and struggle through truly finding the right answers that fit our circumstances (school model, staffing, budget, demographics location etc.) and through these struggles we have come to find new guiding questions that will take our program through the next steps of its evolution:

- How culturally relevant is the content we are teaching our students?
- Why shouldn't we branch out to other-non classical instruments and genres?
- What is the role of singing in our older grades? Could it be its own major?
- What is the role of formalized composition in our program?
- What are concrete examples of using music to improve social outcomes?
- How do we accurately assess musical progress?
- How will we attract and recruit trained and experienced musician-educators to engage in this type of work?

We aspire to continue reflecting and learning from the information above and expect to add more lessons learned and best practices to this document as we continue to find the most effective ways to execute our school's mission and the vision of our El Sistema-inspired music program.

ENDNOTES

¹ Conservatory Lab is currently participating in three separate studies conducted at New England Conservatory, Boston College, and WolfBrown.

² Greeno, 1998, Rogoff, 1994, Lave, 1991, Wenger, 2010

³ metacognition, noun - awareness or analysis of one's own learning or thinking processes. Merriam Webster Dictionary online, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/metacognition>

⁴ <http://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/>

⁵ <https://www.johnsonstring.com/>



K2 music class.

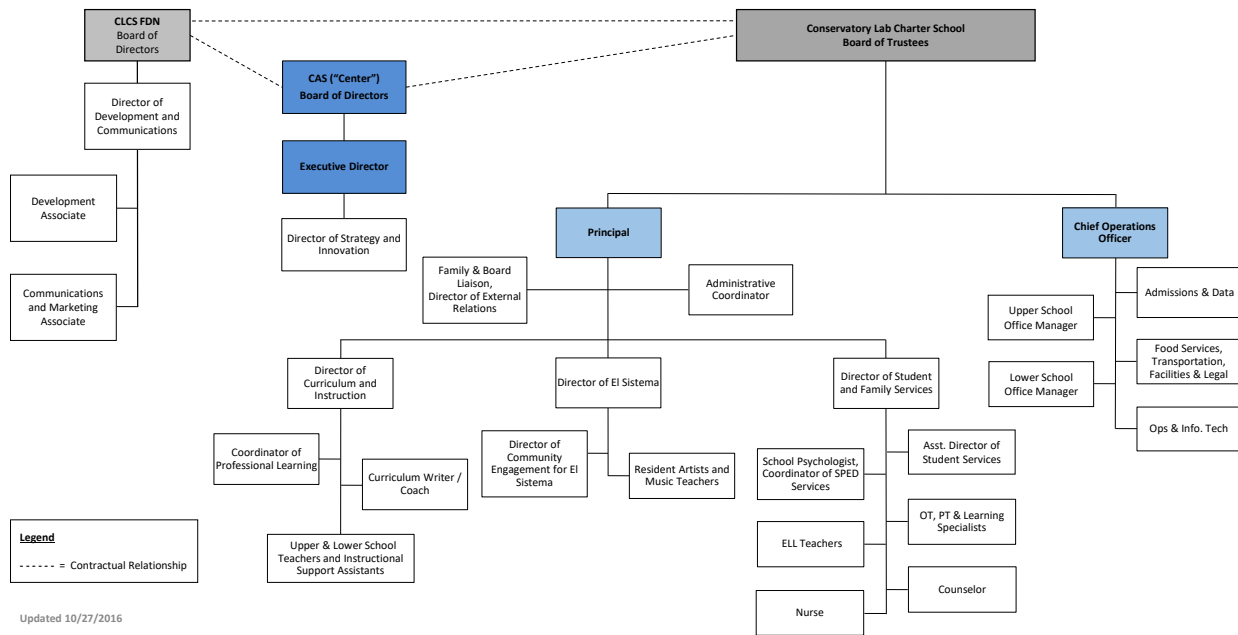
APPENDIX

Online resources

www.conservatorylab.org

www.youtube.com/conservatorylabcs

2016-17 Administration Organizational Chart



Instructional aid examples

First year student learning targets

| Strand | Content (What) | Processes (How) |
|--|--|--|
| Instrumental technique | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can play my open string warmup • I can play all my open string tetrachords • I can play all my open string arpeggios • I can play in a round | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily rote repetition of the open strings, tetrachords, and arpeggios with regular assessment |
| Music Literacy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aural: I can identify major vs minor by ear • Written: I can write in my notes on a new piece of music • Conceptual: I know and understand the terms: Dynamics, Piano, Mezzo piano, Mezzo forte, Forte, Crescendo, Decrescendo, Accent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juxtaposition of major and minor songs i.e. Hot Cross Buns and Cold Cross Buns • Essential elements, worksheets, and regular sight reading • Regular definition and repetition of terms in rehearsal |
| Socio-emotional skills (Ensemble Skills) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-4 overall rating on the ensemble skills scale | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity with the ensemble skills curriculum/continuum |
| Meta cognitive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am aware of when I play something correct and when I make a mistake | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking students to self evaluate their own performance |

Beginner/First Year Strings Student Repertoire Curriculum

| Repertoire | Time | Skill | Rationale |
|--------------------|-----------|---|--|
| DAD Song | Weeks 1-2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can identify my strings I can produce a sound on my instrument by plucking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of steady pulse Foundational pizzicato technique |
| Open Strings | Week 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can build my bow hold I can produce a sound on my instrument with my bow | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rote sequence designed to practice bow hand, bow arm, and develop sound production |
| String Crossings | Week 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can change from one string to another | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rote sequence designed to practice transitioning from string to string. Slurs are added with Mahler unit |
| Major Scale (D, G) | Weeks 3-4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can combine two major tetrachords to build a major scale | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scales are a fundamental element of musical practice Aural imprinting |
| Hot Cross Buns | Week 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can play a song that uses my left and right hand at the same time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of 1st position technique |
| Cold Cross Buns | Week 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can play a minor version of a song I already know | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops aural awareness of the difference between major and minor in a song structure Sets up the same learning process to take place with Frere Jacques/ Mahler |

| Repertoire | Time | Skill | Rationale |
|------------------------------|----------------|--|--|
| Frere Jacques | Weeks 7-8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can memorize a 1st position melody with 4 different sections I can perform a round | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of aural skills and memory/retention. |
| Minor Scale (D, G) | Weeks 9-10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can combine the minor tetrachord with the phrygian tetrachord to build a natural minor scale | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continues process of learning new scales Deepening of understanding between major and minor |
| Mahler, 1 mvmt., 3 melody | Weeks 11-14 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can perform a piece that full orchestras play | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st major piece that has a large scale orchestral equivalent Continues to develop major/minor distinction |

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All photos in this document were taken by Catherine Martin and are the property of Conservatory Lab Charter School.



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