

MUSIC

PRIMARY GOAL - To gain an appreciation and basic understanding of the various music forms as an opportunity for personal expression.

<u>Staff</u>	<u>Students</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Cost Per Student</u>
21.40	5,503	\$1,831,158	\$332

North Colonie's music program exposes elementary students to various styles of music, acquisition of knowledge about the elements of music, and the development of listening and performing skills. Students in upper elementary grades have the opportunity to participate in an instrumental program. Choral music begins in grade 5 and is offered as an elective in grades 7-12. A number of electives are available in grades 9-12.

Elementary

Elementary students are instructed in six conceptual areas of music: rhythm, tempo, melody, texture, timbre and form. Students develop a steady beat and its division in kindergarten, and build into more advanced rhythmic concepts as rests, meter signatures, sixteenth notes and syncopation by sixth grade. Tempo begins as fast and slow designations for the youngest students and delves into some of the Italian musical terms such as *Allegro*, *Andante* and *Lento* in the older grades.

Students sing a variety of melodies, from American folksongs to melodies from the traditions of many world cultures. They learn pitches through solfege symbols and hand signs, and identify major and minor tonalities.

Texture is explored through the use of Orff instruments. Students accompany their own performances and distinguish thin and thick textures. They learn to identify terms and concepts such bourdon, monophonic, homophonic, chord progressions and a cappella.

Students learn timbre through the use of different voices: whispering, speaking, singing, calling. Students learn about instrument families and to identify the instruments in a symphony orchestra. Fourth and sixth grade students create compositions using found sounds from their own environment.

The musical concept of form is used through each grade level, and students learn to identify some of the different forms a piece of music can have. They learn terms associated with following a page of music.

Elementary students explore these musical concepts through a wide variety of activities. Children sing, dance, speak, listen, play Orff instruments and recorder, write, compose, read, use technology and improvise regularly. Approximately 97% of the children are successful in learning the musical concepts.

MUSIC (cont.)

Singing is one of the focal points of the elementary general music curriculum. The quality of vocal music in the North Colonie elementary schools far exceeds the expectations of the New York State Standards, and is one of the reasons for the high quality of vocal performance at the junior high school and high school levels as well. Students begin a formalized choral experience in fourth grade, using one or two-part singing, following a conductor, vocalizing with proper technique, reading music notation in sheet music, and performing in a spring concert setting. They learn to work together to achieve a beautiful sound and musical expression.

Fifth and sixth grade students presented two evening concerts. The students met by grade level for 30 minutes once each week. Students sang in two parts and memorized all of their selections. They performed music from different cultures and in different languages. Some selections included student accompaniments on Orff instruments.

Instrumental program enrollments for 2005-06 were:

Grade	4	5	6	Total
Band	213	170	161	544
Orchestra	143	123	78	344
Total	356	293	239	888 (860 in 2004-05)

Junior High School

Junior high school students are given opportunities to experience music through their general music classes. They can also participate in the many performing groups offered at Shaker Junior High School.

Seventh grade general music is divided into units. In the Classical Music and the Music Technology and Careers units, students listen to and identify musical styles, and compose and perform original music. Students complete projects using technology equipment available in the classroom and computer labs. In the two instrument units, students learn skills to perform simple melodies and accompaniments on keyboards and acoustic guitars.

Eighth grade students develop an understanding and appreciation of the elements and various styles of music, with particular focus on Jazz and Rock-n-Roll. In these two units, the children study lessons in music history, identify styles and performers through listening exercises, and complete technology projects. The instrument units allow the

MUSIC (cont.)

students the opportunity to perform at a more advanced level, and are assessed through performing individually, in small groups, and as a class.

Ninety-nine percent of students are successful in achieving a passing grade in junior high school general music.

Instrumental and Choral Enrollments

Grade	7	8	Total
Band	118	55	173
Orchestra	50	48	98
Chorus	91	98	189
Total	259	201	460 (490 in 2004-05)

The retention rate in the junior high elective program is as follows:

Grade 8 to Grade 9-	2005-06	2004-05	2003-04	2002-03	2001-02
Band	75%	83%	85%	71%	77%
Orchestra	77%	91%	72%	95%	46%
Chorus	61%	51%	38%	66%	89%

Trends in retention remain as areas of close observation for the music department. This year's retention rates reflect normal fluctuations in range. The music staff continues to examine its practices surrounding recruitment into subsequent grades to determine methods in which we can positively affect retention.

The enrollment of students into the elementary orchestra program has risen and remained consistent in the past five years, from 280 students in 2001 to 344 students currently. This trend is projected to continue, and the recent addition of part-time staffing in the 2006-07 budget is expected to help ease some of the overcrowding that has been going on in lesson scheduling.

MUSIC (cont.)

Senior High

Shaker High School students are given both traditional and performance-based assessments. They perform in class as a group and in small sections, and perform individually most often in their small group lessons. Students attend weekly lessons that serve to strengthen technical skills and improve upon their understanding and performance of the music. They complete written work on musical terms and concepts.

Mid-term exams in each ensemble are performance based. Students are assessed based on criteria used by the New York State School Music Association in its solo evaluations, including tone, technique, rhythm, intonation, articulation and expression. Students prepare the piece in advance and perform individually.

Students take the Music Competency test to assess their knowledge of musical terms and rhythmic notation in various simple meters. The passing score for this exam is an 85, and any student who passes is exempt from the exam in subsequent years. Typically, chorus students score lower because they may be learning their music aurally rather than interpreting terms. Also, the Wind Ensemble has a higher ratio of students who take private lessons and have more performance experience. The exam will be reexamined over the 2006-07 school year for potential revisions in format and administration.

Final Exam Scores for SHS Music Performance Groups

Course	Scored 85% or Above	Scored 65% or Above	Scored Below 65%
Chorus	88%	97%	3%
Orchestra	99%	--	1%
Symphonic Band	82%	97%	3%
Wind Ensemble	95%	100%	--

Music Competency Scores for SHS Music Performance Groups

Course	Scored 85% or Above	Scored 65% or Above	Scored Below 65%
Chorus	77%	87%	13%
Orchestra	89%	91%	9%
Symphonic Band	80%	93%	7%
Wind Ensemble	100%	--	--

MUSIC (cont.)

Students taking Music Theory I studied elements of music: duration, pitch, timbre and intensity. Music Theory II continued a more advanced study of music, including an introduction to four-part writing and harmonic analysis. The majority of students were successful in these courses. Music Theory III and IV were again offered at Shaker High School, and included an in-depth study of music at a level of many college courses, including modulation, transposition, secondary dominant chords, figured bass and aural training. One hundred percent of students were successful in these two courses. One student took the Advanced Placement test in Music Theory and received a five.

Music in Our Lives explored topics such as Rhythm and Percussion, Notation, the life of Mozart and Popular music through the late 20th century. Historical Perspectives of Music was not offered this year because of low enrollment, however the available staffing was used to cover an additional section of Music Theory I.

The World Percussion class participated in a November field trip to see the Masters of Caribbean Music concert at the Egg in Albany. The class studied music from African, South American and Caribbean cultures.

Enrollments for the past five years have been as follows:

Course	2005-06	2004-05	2003-04	2002-03	2001-02
Orchestra	88	99	80	75	64
Concert Band	174	186	176	171	194
Mixed Chorus	156	168	136	162	161
Music Theory 1-4	96	74	63	63	60
*Applied Music	41	27	19	14	19
Music In our Lives 1	24	30	27	25	32
Music in our Lives 2	21	27	24	24	32
World Percussion	12	5	9	9	13
Historic Perspectives of Music	0	21	22	17	15
Total	571	610	537	560	590
FTE	486	519	457	476	488
FTE % Total SHS Enrollment	24%	26%	23%	24%	25%

*Applied Music is not counted in the total.

Music Theory III and IV were offered again this school year. An additional section of Music Theory I was offered in place of Historical Perspectives of Music, which was not held this year due to low enrollment. World Percussion returned to typical enrollment numbers.

Applied Music saw a large increase to forty-one students, more than any year on record, indicative of a wider interest and value placed on private music instruction.

MUSIC (cont.)

The consistent enrollments in the high school performing groups, combined with interest in the music “knowledge” courses (Theory, Music in Our Lives) have led to a reduction in the available periods for instrumental lessons. This has in turn led to large lesson group sizes: nine in an average group for orchestra and seventeen in one of the large string groups; seven in an average group for band and thirteen in one of the large groups, much higher than the district average of four to five students per lesson group.

The music enrollment at Shaker High School was 571 (28%). The full-time Equivalent enrollment at the high school was 486 (24%).

Non-Credit Bearing Groups

The non-credit bearing performing groups continue to enrich the music education of North Colonie students. Students are chosen either by audition or a selection process and reach a high level of achievement with their groups.

Grade level plays were well attended and highly successful. The sixth grade productions were especially well done, and showcased not only the students’ musical and performance skills, but also the dedication, hard work and cooperation that were a large part of the learning experience.

The Forts Ferry Singers, along with the Forts Ferry band and orchestra students, performed at the Colonie Center Mall in December, as did the Southgate Select Chorus.

Southgate’s Select Chorus performed for the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) Major Organization Festival and was awarded a Gold medal for their outstanding performance. The group also traveled to a local nursing home during the winter, along with Southgate band students, to perform for the residents and give small gifts.

Shaker Junior High School students had many additional performance opportunities. Multiple groups performed at the Teresian House, and the Select Chorus performed at Our Lady of Hope.

The Wild Winds group at Shaker Junior High School was reconfigured under a new teacher and became a Select Band. The group performed well at both the December and May concerts at the junior high.

The Shaker Junior High School Jazz Ensemble performed at the opening reception of the District Art Show at the Latham Circle Mall, as a kick-off to Music and Art for Youth month. The group also performed with the high school Jazz Ensemble and Jazz Band at this year’s Jazzaret.

MUSIC (cont.)

The Shaker Junior High School groups traveled to the Great East Music Festival again this year to perform for experienced adjudicators. Syncopella and Select Chorus were honored with a Platinum rating, the Jazz Ensemble and Scherzo! received a Gold rating, and the new Select Band was awarded a Silver rating. Shaker High School's Wind Ensemble also participated in the Great East Music Festival and was awarded a Gold rating for their performance.

The Shaker High School Jazz Ensemble performed at the Italian-American Community Center for the Colonie Senior Citizens' December luncheon, at Safe Inc. of Schenectady's Project Safe dinner and at various programs within the school and community.

Shaker Select continues to perform widely in the community and school. The group sang at the Veterans Day celebration, the Rose Parks/Coretta Scott King Commemorative Event, the Staff Recognition Tea and many other events.

Shaker High School's Chamber Strings performed at the Veterans Day celebration, the NYSUT Building Rededication ceremony, the Regional Food Bank Open House and played holiday carols in the halls in December.

The "Principal's Own" Shaker High School Marching Band performed in three parades this year. The group is preparing to submit another tape for consideration to perform with Magic Music Days in Walt Disney World in Florida in the spring of 2007.

Additional Information

The community demonstrated support for the music program through their attendance at concerts. The audience filled the auditorium at concerts. It was standing room only at most of the junior high school concerts. School musicals sold out at all six elementary schools and at the junior high school, and the new production of "Once on This Island" was popular at Shaker High School. Community members attended the District Recital and the Faculty Recital. Jazzaret filled the seats of LaFollette Dining Hall at Shaker High School in January.

The Elementary All-District Concert continued to be very well attended. Tickets were distributed to the families of participants to manage the crowd, and all 750 seats of the high school auditorium were filled, with many unfulfilled requests for additional tickets.

Fifth grade students participated for the third year in the Saratoga Performing Arts Center's Class Action program. They watched a demonstration by two ballet dancers at Shaker High School, learned about the art form in their music classes and were offered

MUSIC (cont.)

free tickets to a performance of the New York City Ballet at SPAC. The program was based on a bit of Americana, and included *Western Symphony*, *N.Y. Opus: Export Jazz*, and *Fearful Symmetries*. The students clearly enjoyed the program a great deal.

Sixth grade students participated for the second year in the orchestra part of the Class Action program. A string bassist from the Philadelphia Orchestra came to Shaker High School and presented a highly interactive program about the orchestra, her instrument and the program the students would hear in August. Sarah Chang, a former child prodigy on the violin, performed the Bruch *Violin Concerto*, and the entire group of students was on the edge of their seats during her performance. Twenty students were the recipients of free lawn passes until their high school graduation, for participating in both fifth and sixth grades.

Twenty-eight North Colonie students participated in the Empire State Youth Orchestra organizations. Past and present teachers joined the students' families in attendance at their concerts, at venues such as the Troy Music Hall, Proctors Theatre and Ozawa Hall at the Tanglewood Music Center in Lenox, Massachusetts.

Four students will be attending colleges to major in music. They will be pursuing majors in music education, music performance and music therapy. The colleges they have chosen to attend are: State University of New York at Fredonia and Schenectady County Community College. Another former Shaker High School student graduated from Interlochen Fine Arts Academy, where she chose to spend her senior year. She will be pursuing a degree in music at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester.

Students who are Shaker graduates frequently visit their alma mater. They ask to formally observe music classes and speak highly of their training for college music programs. A 2006 graduate tested out of his introductory Music Theory class at Fredonia because of his education in the theory classes at Shaker High School.

Parents demonstrate their support for the North Colonie music program in their attendance at the many concerts and musicals held throughout the year. Some parents continue to attend the concerts even after their children have left the grade level or graduated from the high school. Parents frequently compliment the District Music Supervisor on the high quality of performances in the concerts and on the dedication of the music teachers.

Parents demonstrate support by enrolling their children in private lessons and outside musical camps and advanced study programs, such as the Music Studio, the Crane Youth Music program, the New York State Summer School for the Arts and jazz programs at SUNY Purchase. Support of private study is evidenced in the large increase in Applied Music credit at the high school. Parents invest in quality instruments for their older children.

MUSIC (cont.)

The North Colonie Friends of Music receives the support of many parents and other individuals in the school community. They began a tremendous campaign to fundraise for two Steinway grand pianos for Shaker High School and Shaker Junior High School. As of the beginning of September 2006, they had raised \$24,000 for the pianos and were making plans to bring in the 5 Browns to perform a benefit concert at Shaker High School in December. The Friends of Music organized Jazzaret, paid registration fees for Suburban Council, Area All-State, half of the cost of All-State and provided receptions for the Faculty Recital, the Elementary All-District Concert and the Tri-M Induction ceremony. The Friends of Music has been working diligently to maintain the excellent support they have always offered to the North Colonie Music Department.

Parent support was also evidence through many hours of help with grade level plays, musicals and field trips. Parents offered their time and expertise to build sets, design costumes, supervise trips and backstage and move equipment on jazz ensemble and marching band trips. Many parents volunteered time to assist with the NYSSMA Solo Festival at Shaker Junior High School in June.

Music and Art for Youth month was introduced by a proclamation by the Board of Education at its April meeting. The Southgate Elementary School Select Chorus performed at the meeting and Board members received an invitation to the District Art Exhibit and the many concerts being held that spring. M.A.Y. was featured in an article in the *Colonie Spotlight* newspaper. The art show featured a performance by the Shaker Junior High School Jazz Ensemble, and the many concerts made the community aware of the music accomplishments of North Colonie students.

The March workshop day gave teachers the opportunity to explore areas in the larger community that would enrich their teaching. North Colonie music teachers visited the following locations: the College of St. Rose, Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake School District, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's EMAC Department and Theatre, Cohoes Music Hall, The Guitar Center, Albany VanCurler Music, the National Museum of Dance, Francis Morris' String Repair Shop, John Keal Music Company and the Blue Sky Recording Studio. The day was enriching, enjoyable and extremely rewarding for all of the music teachers.

The elementary general music curriculum has successfully integrated the "Share the Music" series. The elementary music staff is planning to submit a proposal for curriculum work to be done over the summer of 2007.

The junior high school general music program can now be modified to reflect two separate units on guitar and keyboard, with the introduction of equipment purchased in the 2006-07 budget. The junior high music staff is planning to submit a proposal for curriculum work to be done over the summer of 2007.

MUSIC (cont.)

A curriculum draft was completed for the high school Music Theory III and IV classes. The Music Theory I final was revised, as were revisions of the Music Theory III and IV finals. An assessment of any necessary revisions of the Music Theory III and IV curriculum will be done over the 2006-07 school year.

One of the great strengths of the North Colonie music program is an excellent, dedicated staff. Music teachers work diligently at each level to give the students the best musical education possible. They build strong collegial relationships with each other and offer professional assistance as often as possible. Teachers share ideas about curriculum and supplies, perform for each other's productions and attend each other's performances regularly.

North Colonie students demonstrated significant achievement in music on an individual level as well as in their performances in groups. Five hundred and eight students attended the NYSSMA Solo and Ensemble Festival at Shaker High School in June. An impressive 98% of these students received the highest ratings of Outstanding and Excellent for levels one through four music, and A's for levels five and six. Also impressive was the dedication of the students to the music programs, as evidenced by the large number of students working at the NYSMA Solo Festival.

The Southgate Elementary School Select Chorus attended the NYSSMA Major Organization Festival in the spring, and was honored with a Gold medal for their outstanding performance. The Shaker Junior High School 8th Grade Chorus was chosen by audition to perform on WMHT's "Music for the Holidays", broadcast locally on television and radio.

The curriculum is a strength of the program. It effectively meets the four New York State Standards for the Arts and the nine National Standards for the Arts, as recommended by the MENC: The National Association for Music Education. Teachers frequently communicate about the curriculum and match the many components of it to the district specialties at each level and type of class.

Student participation remains strong in the performing groups that are both curricular and extra-curricular. Teachers offer many opportunities for students to perform within and outside of the school community. The music supervisor receives frequent requests for North Colonie music groups to perform at special events. Overall 2,097 students participated in performing groups in grades 4-12: 50% of grades 4-12 enrollment.

The support of the Board of Education, administration, community and parents is another important strength and helps to foster an atmosphere of excellence for the entire music program.