

GRADES 6-8 MUSIC

In grades 6-8, students are given the opportunity to take Music as an elective, as part of St Michael School's Enrichment Program. Music Enrichment classes usually meet five times per semester to learn about musical subjects that go beyond the normal Elementary School Music curricula.

Areas of discussion include, but are not limited to:

- Folk Dancing – Students learn the steps to a folk dance, and perform it as a class. Students also learn about the musical elements and ethnic origins of the song to which the dance is performed. Elements of courtesy and respect are emphasized as students learn to dance in group ensemble.
- Classical Music Appreciation – Students listen to and discuss various pieces of classical music. They learn about musical periods (Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Modern) and are exposed to music from a variety of these periods and national origins. For “program music” students learn the story behind the program, such as in a ballet or suite. Students also learn something about each of the composers.
- Elements of Rhythm – Students are taught more advanced elements of rhythm in music, including note and rest value (whole note, half note, quarter note, eighth note, etc.), time signatures, beats and measures, etc. The elements of rhythm are illustrated with examples of drum patterns and piano accompaniments, as well as with examples from various songs and pieces of music.
- Music Theory – Students are introduced to musical concepts such as intervals, scales, keys, and chords. Exercises are provided to help students see the practical application of these concepts, and to see how the various elements relate to one another.
- Discussion and Analysis of Song Lyrics – Students listen to one or more songs, especially chosen by the teacher to illustrate how song lyrics can be seen as a type of literature. Students discuss the meaning of the lyrics, and are asked to back up their assertions with examples from within the lyrics. Students are shown how the songwriter can use many of the same elements of literature used by poets and writers (metaphor, simile, consonance, alliteration, onomatopoeia, etc.)
- Singing – Each semester, one Music Enrichment class is usually devoted to singing.

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