

ASTA Content Area Standards

ASTA Content Standards taken from "ASTA String Curriculum: Standards, Goals, and Learning Sequences for Essential Skills and Knowledge in K–12 String Programs," available for sale at alfred.com/asta.



1A. Body Format

Students establish a lengthened and balanced posture; support instrument without tension, demonstrate ease of motion; format is adjusted for physiological changes due to growth; control of weight distribution, unilateral movement, bilateral movement, in sitting and standing position.

1B. Left Hand Skills & Knowledge

Students perform with correct address and angle of left arm–wrist–hand–finger to instrument, that is balanced and free of tension; independence of fingers; ease of motion and control of finger weight; produces characteristic tone, with vibrato (as appropriate); shows understanding and ability to apply fingerings, finger patterns, shifting, extensions.

1C. Right Hand Skills & Knowledge

Students perform with fluent bowing motion, control of variables (weight, angle, speed, and placement), in a variety of bowing techniques and articulations, with characteristic tone.

2A. Aural Skills & Ear Training

Students demonstrate the following abilities: matching and manipulating pitch, playing with a sense of tonality, tonal–melodic and tonal–harmonic function (horizontal and vertical relationships/functions of tonality), ear-to-hand skills, aural and kinesthetic awareness of pitch accuracy and intonation, including and related to improvisation.

2B. Rhythmic Skills

Students perform simple and complex rhythmic patterns/functions, with steady pulse/beat, correct sense of meter, metric organization and phrasing, in a variety of meters.

2C. Creative Musicianship

Students demonstrate creative musicianship skills at all stages of development, including the ability to improvise variations of rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic patterns, within the traditions and standards of a variety of genres and practices; arrange and compose melodies and harmonies according to specific criteria and guidelines.

2D. Music Literacy

Students demonstrate sequential music literacy {decoding and comprehension), defined as association of sound to symbol, in a given musical context, which includes: predictive components, knowledge of symbols and notation related to pitch, rhythm, dynamics, tonality, clef, articulation, etc.), based on the principle that sound comes before sight.

2E. Ensemble Skills

Students perform in an ensemble, demonstrating sensitivity and the ability to adjust and maintain a uniform sense of rhythm, tempo, articulation, tone, blend, balance, and dynamics; understand conducting gestures, follow conductor and section leader, and are able to synchronize bowings.

3A. Expressive Elements

Students employ expressive elements of music to communicate abstract thoughts, ideas, and meaning; to share the depth of the human experience; and for self-expression and understanding.

3B. Historical & Cultural Elements

Students perform music from a wide range of genres in a culturally authentic manner, reflecting the diverse nature of people, groups, and cultures found across the world and in the U.S.; performances demonstrate an understanding of historical and cultural contexts, and reflect stylistic traditions and practice.

3C. Evaluation of Music & Musical Performance

Students evaluate and analyze music for executive skill, musicianship, and artistic considerations; evaluate and analyze the musical performances of themselves and others based on established criteria.