

Pinellas County Schools Key Learnings for Middle School Orchestra

The Next Generation Sunshine State Standards guide the curriculum for all courses offered in our public schools. While these provide a clear picture of what students should learn conceptually from a course, translating them into actual classroom practice can be a challenging task. The Pinellas County Schools Key Learnings are designed to assist teachers by distilling the most critical elements of the standards into a considerably more user-friendly format.

The state course descriptions divide Middle School Orchestra into three distinct levels, M/J Orchestra 1 – 3. The state course description is included on the first page of each level in this document, but the general design is:

- M/J Orchestra 1: A beginning level class for students with no prior experience
- M/J Orchestra 2: An intermediate level class for students who have previous orchestra experience and are ready for a more challenging level of work.
- M/J Orchestra 3: A more advanced level class for students who are ready for challenging literature and comprehensive study in music.

In order to study orchestra literature effectively as well as master ensemble performance skills, students must study the course curriculum in the context of a performing orchestra. As a practical matter, this means that students at various levels of proficiency may be studying different levels of the curriculum while in the same orchestra class.

In a very small program, all levels may have to be included in one class period; this is not ideal by any means, but enrollment may make it unavoidable, especially with newer programs. Slightly larger programs will have a lower level and an upper level class, which is much more workable; the largest programs will have multiple classes more aligned to the state courses, but will still have some mixing of levels.

The Pinellas County Schools Key Learnings for Middle School Orchestra break the standards down into ten key areas. Thorough, in-depth study for mastery of these ten specific areas should make up the majority of conceptual instruction. Links to each of the state benchmarks are provided in alignment to these ten areas. A variety of assessment forms and teaching resources are provided. The resource links are part of a living document and will be enhanced and expanded continually. All Pinellas County orchestra directors are encouraged to submit resource items throughout the year.

Pinellas County Schools Key Learnings

Middle School M/J Orchestra 2

State Course Description: Students who have at least one year of orchestral experience study, rehearse, and perform high-quality orchestra literature. Rehearsals focus on the development of critical listening skills, basic string techniques, music literacy, ensemble skills, and aesthetic awareness in the context of relevant history and cultures. Public performances may serve as a culmination of specific instructional goals. Students may be required to attend and/or participate in rehearsals and performances outside the school day to support, extend, and assess learning in the classroom. Students in this class may need to obtain (e.g., borrow, rent, purchase) an instrument from an outside source.

Upon successful completion of this course, the student may truthfully say:

1. I can demonstrate mastery of F, C, G, D, and A major scales and arpeggios.
2. I can demonstrate characteristic tone quality over an extended range of my instrument.
3. I can identify in-tune and out-of-tune pitches.
4. I can accurately perform additional rhythmic patterns including sixteenth and dotted eighth notes and rests in simple meters including cut time.
5. I can define, describe, and perform basic dynamic, tempo, articulation, and expression markings commonly found in music of FOA grade E.
6. I can perform music in the keys of F, C, G, and D major.
7. I can sight read music of FOA grade E to the level that the fundamental musical intent is understood by the listener.
8. I can compose or improvise a four measure phrase in a given key.
9. I can evaluate and analyze a variety of musical examples using appropriate musical terminology.
10. I can accurately demonstrate basic ensemble skills (balance, blend, precision) while performing a variety of genres and styles with my orchestra in public setting on a consistent basis.

Next Generation Sunshine State Standards Big Ideas:

- C – Critical Thinking and Reflection
- S – Skills, Techniques, and Processes
- O – Organizational Structure
- H – Historical and Global Connections
- I – Innovations, Technology, and the Future

	Pinellas County Schools Middle School M/J Orchestra 2 Key Learnings Teacher Planning Tool	NGSSS Code
1	I can demonstrate mastery of F, C, G, D, and A major scales and arpeggios.	MU.68.S.2.1 MU.68.S.3.1 MU.68.S.3.2
2	I can demonstrate characteristic tone quality over an extended range of my instrument.	MU.68.S.2.1 MU.68.S.2.2 MU.68.S.3.1 MU.68.S.3.2
3	I can identify in-tune and out-of-tune pitches.	MU.68.C.2.1 MU.68.C.2.2 MU.68.S.2.2 MU.68.S.3.1 MU.68.S.3.2
4	I can accurately perform additional rhythmic patterns including sixteenth and dotted eighth notes and rests in simple meters including cut time.	MU.68.S.2.1 MU.68.S.2.2 MU.68.S.3.1
5	I can define, describe, and perform basic dynamic, tempo, articulation, and expression markings commonly found in music of FOA grade E.	MU.68.C.1.2 MU.68.C.2.1 MU.68.C.2.2 MU.68.S.2.2 MU.68.S.3.1 MU.68.O.3.2 LACC.68.RST.2.4 DA.68.S.2.1 MU.68.S.3.2 MU.68.S.3.6
6	I can perform music in the keys of F, C, G, and D major.	MU.68.S.1.4 MU.68.S.3.1 MU.68.O.3.2 MU.68.S.3.2 MU.68.S.3.6
7	I can sight read music of FOA grade E to the level that the fundamental musical intent is understood by the listener.	MU.68.C.1.1 MU.68.S.2.2 MU.68.S.3.1 MU.68.S.3.2 MU.68.O.3.2 MU.68.S.3.3

8	I can compose or improvise a four measure phrase in a given key.	MU.68.C.2.3 MU.68.S.1.1 MU.68.S.1.3 MU.68.S.2.1 MU.68.S.3.5
9	I can evaluate and analyze a variety of musical examples using appropriate musical terminology.	MU.68.C.1.3 MU.68.C.2.2 MU.68.S.3.4 MU.68.O.1.1 MU.68.O.3.1 MU.68.H.1.1 MU.68.H.1.2 MU.68.H.1.3 MU.912.H.2.3 MU.68.H.3.1 MU.68.F.2.1 MU.68.F.3.2 LACC.68.RST.2.4 LACC.68.WHST.3.9
10	I can accurately demonstrate basic ensemble skills (balance, blend, precision) while performing a variety of genres and styles with my orchestra in public setting on a consistent basis.	MU.68.S.3.1 LACC.6.SL.1.1

Assessment Tool for Key Learnings
M/J Orchestra 2

Name: _____

K.L. 2.1	4	3	2	1
Scales	The student performed all pitches/notes accurately.	The student performed most pitches/notes accurately.	The student performed numerous inaccurate pitches/notes.	The student performed inaccurate pitches/notes consistently throughout the music.

K.L. 2.10 Ensemble Skills Checklist

Demonstrates appropriate balance within an ensemble.

Demonstrates proper blend within an ensemble.

Demonstrates accurate precision within an ensemble.

K.L. 2.4	4	3	2	1
Rhythmic Accuracy	The student performance of rhythms is accurate and indicated tempos are consistently maintained.	The student performance of rhythms is generally accurate, but there are some errors. The tempo is performed as marked with only minor un-indicated changes in tempo.	The student performance of rhythms contains a number of critical errors. Tempo is not as indicated at a number of points.	The student performance of rhythms contains many critical errors. Sections of the piece cannot be performed.

K.L. 2.7	4	3	2	1
Note Accuracy	The student performed all pitches/notes accurately.	The student performed most pitches/notes accurately.	The student performed numerous inaccurate pitches/notes.	The student performed inaccurate pitches/notes consistently throughout the music.
Rhythmic Accuracy	The student performed accurate rhythms throughout.	The student performed nearly accurate but lacked precise interpretation of some rhythm patterns.	The student performed numerous rhythm patterns accurately.	The student performed most rhythm patterns incorrectly.
Tone	The student's tone is full and rich, characteristic of the tone quality of the instrument in all ranges and registers.	The student's tone is a characteristic tone quality in most ranges, but distorts in occasional passages (i.e. loud or soft, high or low tessitura, etc.)	The student's tone has some flaws in basic tone production (i.e. thin sound, unfocused tone, forced tone, etc.)	The student's tone has several major flaws in basic tone production (i.e. consistently thin and unfocused)

K.L. 2.7 Checklist:

The student observed dynamic markings

The student performed tempo changes

The student performed phrases with tension and release

The student performed articulations in correspondence with written notation

K.L. 2.8	4	3	2	1
Tonality	The student performs All melodic patterns in proper context of all harmonic changes as well as an awareness of chord tones verses passing tones and they were performed accurately.	The student performs most melodic patterns in proper context of harmonic changes and were performed with few if any inaccuracies.	The student performs some melodic patterns in proper context of harmonic changes, mainly with relation to the tonic and performed with many inaccuracies.	The student performs most melodic patterns are outside of the context of chord changes.
Rhythm	The student performs Advanced rhythmic patterns (i.e. pickups, syncopation etc.) which are creative and appropriate to the style and setting of the accompaniment and were performed accurately.	The student performs contrasting rhythmic patterns, which include divisions and/or subdivisions of large beats and show competence in rhythmic creativity and were performed with few if any inaccuracies.	The student performs few or no interesting patterns with little or no contrast and performed with many inaccuracies.	The student's response did not display an understanding of rhythm or meter.
Variation and Embellishment	The student performs variations and embellishments are performed with ease in both rhythm and melody and show creativity appropriate to the style and setting of the piece.	The student performs Variations and/or embellishments, both rhythmically and melodically which are appropriate to the style of the piece.	The student performs variations and/or embellishments, that are primarily rhythmic or melodic.	The student performs few if any variations or embellishments of any type.

K.L. 2.8 Checklist:

- Well conceived solo structure having a beginning, middle and end.
- Motivic development rather than a reliance on unrelated melodic licks
- Appropriate melodic and harmonic resolutions
- A chosen mood appropriate to the musical setting
- Original solo, melodic and rhythmic ideas offered in a personal style

Key Learnings Assessment

Orch 2

Name: _____

Skill 2.1	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	GRADE	DESCRIPTION
Scales and arpeggios:			4	Consistently performs all pitches, rhythms and notes accurately
			3	Performs most pitches, rhythms and note accurately
			2	Making progress, many inaccuracies
			1	Progress in this area is not evident
Skill 2.2	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	GRADE	DESCRIPTION
Tone Quality			4	Consistently produces correct tone (i.e. posture, articulation)
			3	Meets standards; rarely needs correction
			2	Tone is inconsistent
			1	Progress in this area is not evident
Skill 2.3	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	GRADE	DESCRIPTION
Tuning basics			4	Consistently identifies in-tune and out-of-tune pitches
			3	Meets standards; can identify pitch most of the time
			2	Making progress; intonation is inconsistent
			1	Progress in this area is not evident
Skill 2.4	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	GRADE	DESCRIPTION
Rhythmic accuracy			4	Consistently performs basic rhythm values accurately
			3	Meets standards with some minor errors
			2	Performance is inconsistent, frequent errors
			1	Progress in this area is not evident
Skill 2.6	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	GRADE	DESCRIPTION
Performs in selected keys: F, C, G, D			4	Consistently performs music in these keys accurately
			3	Performs music in these keys with some errors
			2	Making progress performance is inconsistent on some elements
			1	Progress in this area is not evident
Skill 2.7	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	GRADE	DESCRIPTION
Sight-Reading			4	Consistently exceeds in areas of performance with no errors
			3	Meets standards with some minor errors
			2	Performance is Inconsistent, frequent errors
			1	Progress in this area is not evident
Skill 2.8	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	GRADE	DESCRIPTION
Composition/Improvisation			4	Consistently exceeds requirements and guidelines given
			3	Meets standards and expectations
			2	Inconsistent or lacking on some elements
			1	Progress in this area is not evident
Skill 2.10	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	GRADE	DESCRIPTION
Ensemble skills			4	Consistently demonstrates ensemble skills (balance, blend, precision)
			3	Meets standards few inaccuracies
			2	Inconsistent on some elements
			1	Progress in this area is not evident
Skill 2.10	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST	GRADE	DESCRIPTION
Performances			Yes or No	Performs with ensemble in concerts
Written	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST		DESCRIPTION
2.4, 2.5, 2.9				Record your scores from the pre and post test

Key Learnings Overview, Middle School M/J Orchestra 1 - 3

KL#	M/J Orchestra 1	M/J Orchestra 2	M/J Orchestra 3
1. Instrument Fundamentals	I can demonstrate proper assembly, care, and maintenance of my instrument.	I can demonstrate mastery of the F, C, G, D, and A major scales and arpeggios.	I can demonstrate mastery of B-flat, F, C, G, D, and A major scales and arpeggios and the chromatic scale with the appropriate chromatic fingerings over the commonly applied range of my instrument.
2. Tone	I can demonstrate proper tone production on my instrument using correct posture, bowings, hand position, articulation, and releases.	I can demonstrate characteristic tone quality over an extended range on my instrument.	I can demonstrate characteristic tone quality throughout the common applied range of my instrument.
3. Pitch	I can identify, match, and perform musical pitches both aurally and in the clef generally used for my instrument.	I can identify in-tune and out-of-tune pitches.	I can demonstrate proper tuning techniques on my instrument.
4. Rhythm	I can accurately identify and perform basic written rhythm values including whole, half, quarter, eighth, dotted half, and dotted quarter notes and rests in simple meters.	I can accurately perform additional rhythmic patterns including sixteenth and dotted eighth notes and rests in simple meters including cut time.	I can accurately perform additional rhythmic values including quarter and eighth note triplets in both simple and compound meters.
5. Performance Fundamentals	I can demonstrate proper rehearsal and concert etiquette and understand the importance of rehearsal and concert attendance.	I can define, describe, and perform basic dynamic, tempo, articulation, and expression markings commonly found in music of FOA grade E.	I can define, describe, and perform dynamic, tempo, articulation, and expressive markings commonly found in music of FOA grade D.
6. Evaluation	I can demonstrate control of rhythmic pulse by myself and within an ensemble.	I can perform music in the keys of F, C, G, and D major.	I can perform and notate music in the keys of B-flat, F, C, G, D, and A major.
7. Sightreading	I can accurately sight-read short examples of music for my instrument in simple meters in the keys of concert G and D major.	I can sight read music of FOA grade E to the level that the fundamental musical intent is understood by the listener.	I can sight read music of FOA grade E with minimal or no technical errors.
8. Creation	I can improvise short musical phrases in the keys of concert G and D major.	I can compose or improvise a four measure phrase in a given key.	I can create and accurately notate a short musical composition when given specific guidelines
9. Connections	I can identify and classify a variety of musical elements using appropriate terminology.	I can evaluate and analyze a variety of musical examples using appropriate musical terminology.	I can explain and describe the cultural and historical background and compositional style for one or more compositions that I have performed.
10. Additional Skills	I can demonstrate fundamental notation skills, accurately and neatly drawing clefs, notes, rests, time signatures, and key signatures.	I can accurately demonstrate basic ensemble skills (balance, blend, precision) while performing a variety of genres and styles with my band in a public setting on a consistent basis.	I can discuss the quality and effectiveness of a musical performance using appropriate musical concepts and terminology.

Pinellas County School Key Learnings Assessment for Middle School Orchestra

A - Complete Mastery with no errors
 B - Mastery with only minor or inconsequential errors
 In Progress - Not Mastered, but learning evident

Student: _____

M/J Orchestra 1	A	B	In progress
1. Assembly, Care, Maintenance			
2. Tone Production			
3. Pitch – Identify, Match, Perform			
4. Rhythm Values			
5. Etiquette and Attendance			
6. Rhythmic Pulse Control			
7. Sight Reading			
8. Improvisation			
9. Music Terminology			
10. Notation Skills			
M/J Orchestra 2			
1. Scales – F, C, G, D, A			
2. Tone Quality			
3. In tune/Out of Tune			
4. Rhythm Patterns			
5. Expressive Markings – Grade E			
6. Perform in F, C, G, D			
7. Sight Reading			
8. Composition/Improvisation			
9. Vocabulary			
10. Ensemble Performance			
M/J Orchestra 3			
1. Scales & Arpeggios – Bb through A			
2. Tone Quality – Extended Range			
3. Tuning			
4. Rhythmic Accuracy			
5. Expressive Markings – Grade D			
6. Perform in Bb, F, C, G, D, A			
7. Sight Reading			
8. Composition and Notation			
9. Cultural and Historical Connections			
10. Aesthetic and Critical Analysis			