

## Specific Considerations for Teachers of Music

### About this Resource

Danielson’s 2013 *Framework for Teaching (FfT)* provides teachers and school leaders with a common language to describe and discuss effective teaching in order to achieve continuous growth in teacher practice and student learning. The *FfT* was created as an overarching framework that describes the commonalities in every classroom—those aspects of teaching that are common across grades, disciplines, and students’ backgrounds. Thus, the *FfT* is appropriate for use with and by teachers of the arts. For the 2014-15 school year, teachers are evaluated on only eight components in the Danielson 2013 *Framework for Teaching*. The remaining components (those shaded in the following pages) of the Danielson 2013 *Framework for Teaching* may be used for non-evaluative (i.e., developmental) purposes only.

Many school leaders and teachers have requested additional support in using the *FfT* in classrooms in which student characteristics, subject content, or program models may differ significantly from other courses or subjects. In response, this document offers specific considerations<sup>1</sup> for school leaders and teachers through component-aligned questions. These questions may be discussed when providing feedback, engaging in pre- and post-observations, and planning next steps; they are not to be used for evaluating teacher practice. In addition, these questions can be used by teachers voluntarily as a resource to guide their thinking as they plan and reflect on their instructional practice in how they are meeting the needs of their students. While these questions may be useful for informing teachers’ usual planning, preparation, and professional learning processes, teachers may not be required to provide written answers to these questions as an additional professional assignment.

This document is not a separate rubric for teachers of the Arts, nor is it to be used as a checklist in classroom observations. Each *FfT* component’s “Rationale,” “Performance Levels,” “Critical Attributes,” and many of the “Possible Examples” are relevant to teachers of the arts and should be used by school leaders when considering evidence of each component. This document only seeks to present additional context to consider, keeping in mind that not every question will be applicable depending upon the students’ need and context. Those components for which it was agreed

*“The Specific Considerations...is an excellent tool for all to use to enhance growth and development in conjunction with the Danielson 2013 Framework for Teaching... It serves as a guide for planning best practices and a template for reflection on instructional practice.”*

*—NYC Music Teacher*

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<sup>1</sup> New York State’s Education Law 3012-c requires that lead evaluators have appropriate guidance regarding specific considerations in evaluating teachers of English Language Learners and students with disabilities. While not required for teachers of the arts, this document was inspired by the Specific Considerations of Teachers of English Language Learners and the Specific Considerations of Students with Disabilities and follows a similar design.

that there were no significant special considerations for music teachers (4a: Reflecting on Teaching and 4f: Showing Professionalism) are not included in this document.

Embedded in the questions are good instructional practices for students; this document is not an exhaustive guide of those good instructional practices.

The Office of Arts and Special Projects contributed significantly to the creation of this document, and these questions align to the *Benchmarks for Arts Learning* as described in *The Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts: Dance, Music, Theater, and Visual Arts*. These specific considerations align with the work of the Office of Arts and Special Projects to support students by helping to create rigorous learning environments that focus on academic and artistic achievement.

*“The Specific Considerations illuminate the alignment of our Music Blueprint for the Arts and Common Core Standards. It will be an invaluable resource for planning and self-assessment.”*

*–NYC Music Teacher*

## Domain 1: Planning & Preparation

### 1a: Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy

- How do you align lessons with the appropriate learning standards in the NYC *Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Music, PreK-12*?

### 1b: Demonstrating Knowledge of Students

- How do you use assessments and surveys to determine:
  - students' musical genre interests (e.g., hip hop, salsa, and rock)?
  - the degree of students' engagement in musical traditions specific to their cultures?
  - students' access to musical opportunities and resources (e.g., whether students own or have access to instruments and/or lessons outside of school)?

### 1c: Setting Instructional Outcomes

- Over the course of the year, how do you ensure learning outcomes include objectives that address the Five Strands of Learning in Music, as laid out in the NYC *Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Music, PreK-12*?
- How are musical performances included in the learning outcomes?

### 1d: Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources

- How does your planning of learning opportunities take advantage of available resources (e.g., free concerts, student "rush" tickets, open rehearsals, free music software, and music websites)?

### 1e: Designing Coherent Instruction

- How do you ensure that *Blueprint*-based lessons are designed for sequential instruction in music performance, development of skills and concepts, and music compositions and related discussions?
- How do you plan opportunities for your student to document their emerging taste as music consumers and performers (e.g., annotated listening logs, oral reports, class discussion, and performance)?

### 1f: Designing Student Assessments

- How do you plan assessments to include opportunities for students to actively participate in ongoing self- and peer assessment of music presentations and performances in classroom, rehearsal, and concert settings?

## Domain 2: The Classroom Environment

### 2a: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport

- How do you establish a safe environment in which students take risks learning and performing unfamiliar music?
- How do you ensure that students feel comfortable sharing original musical compositions and performances with their peers?
- In what ways do you encourage a deep exploration of music that represents students' cultures?
- What do you do to ensure that students respectfully observe peer musical performances?

### 2b: Establishing a Culture for Learning

- In what ways do you support students in using positive and constructive feedback protocols when responding to musical works?
- How do you ensure that students display concentration, focus, and discipline when mastering new musical techniques?
- How do you support students in demonstrating persistence in developing skills and understanding related to musical expression and their emerging musical identities?
- In what ways do you fairly and democratically make solo and small ensemble performance opportunities available?
- How do you ensure that criteria for performance opportunities are clear, consistent, and made known to all students?

### 2c: Managing Classroom Procedures

- What are some ways in which you establish music class routines to maximize instructional time?
- How do you support students in demonstrating independence in carrying out music class procedures (e.g., taking assigned seats, retrieving instruments and scores, distributing equipment and materials, and beginning instrumental and vocal warm-ups)?

### 2d: Managing Student Behavior

- How do you assign leadership roles to students (e.g., student conductor, ensemble section leaders and core music group leaders)?

### 2e: Organizing Physical Space

- In what ways do you display and update students' work and music-related creations on a regular basis?
- How do you ensure that students support and contribute to the upkeep of their environment to advance learning (e.g., orderly retrieval and storage of musical instruments and a respect for materials, supplies, and equipment)?

## Domain 3: Instruction

### 3a: Communicating with Students

- How is the purpose of the task and its relation to the larger learning goals communicated to the students?
- In what ways do you model correct *embouchure* (mouth position), tone, and posture?
- How are desired performance techniques and mechanisms communicated to vocal and instrumental students?
- In what ways do you use analogies from core subjects and the performing and fine arts to help students understand musical historical periods?

### 3b: Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques

- In what ways are students provided opportunities to offer verbal and musical responses? For example:
  - Students demonstrate transference; they are able to read and perform a new piece of music on sight.
  - Students use music terminology when discussing a new set of music (e.g., *forte* and *sotto voce*).
- What are some ways in which you ask questions of high cognitive challenge to deepen students' understanding of music and how it relates to other disciplines? For example, you might ask:
  - "How are the elements of music used to depict a specific culture, musical genre, or style?"
  - "Does music have meaning? Justify your response with textual evidence from the musical work or supporting research."

### 3c: Engaging Students in Learning

- How do you support students in participating actively in the rehearsal process in ways such as:
  - focusing upon music while playing or singing?
  - keeping time while singing or playing an instrument?
  - responding physically to the rhythm or pulse while playing or singing?
  - practicing repetitions without interruption?
- How do you ensure that students demonstrate appropriate musical responses to verbal and non-verbal conductor's cues, such as stop-starting (i.e., cut-offs), dynamic control (i.e., loud, soft, and all variations of these levels), and sensitivity (e.g., lightly or march-like)?

### 3d: Using Assessment in Instruction

- In what ways do you listen to, observe, and model a range of musical strategies in response to students' varying mastery of skills and content?
- How do you ensure that students observe each other's rehearsals and compositions and engage in positive and constructive peer critique using music terminology?
- How do you facilitate students' interpretation of the notation, symbols, and musical terms of a selected piece?
- What are some ways in which you administer, analyze, and give feedback on pre- and post-performance and written assessments?
- In what ways are students given an opportunity to teach a musical piece, skill, or concept to peers?

### 3e: Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness

- In what ways do you encourage students' input in rehearsal and core music settings?
- Based on performance, how do you ensure that students are given opportunities to assume leadership in sectionals, ensembles, and small group settings?

## Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities

### 4b: Maintaining Accurate Records

- What strategies do you use to maintain accurate records of the students' progress in music skill building?

### 4c: Communicating with Families

- How do you ensure that notices and permission slips are sent home with students in a timely fashion for music class events, upcoming performances, and field trips?
- What are some examples of times when you invite parents and community members who are musicians to contribute to classroom and school-wide music events, where possible and appropriate?
- In what ways do you help families become aware of opportunities to enjoy musical performances at NYC's major cultural centers with their children?
- How do you identify and facilitate opportunities for student performances and presentations within the school and neighboring community?

### 4d: Participating in the Professional Community

- What are some ways in which you collaborate with other music educators and teachers of other curriculum areas to enhance student success in and through music?
- In what ways do you support, organize, or conduct instrumental and vocal ensembles to perform at school-wide presentations?
- How do you co-direct school musical theater and drama productions?
- In what ways do you support having solo and ensemble student performances included at community and sports events?

### 4e: Growing and Developing Professionally

- What are some ways in which you participate in ongoing school-based and off-site professional development opportunities during the school day?
- What do you do to enhance your professional practice? For example:
  - attending regular music-related professional development provided by the NYCDOE and at school
  - participating in events and training provided by professional music organizations and/or music education organizations
  - attending professional concerts and performances
  - participating as a member of a band or orchestra
- How do you continue to develop your musical skills?