



## **Grading in the Performing Arts**

### **Middle and High School grading practices as they relate to performances outside the school day**

Please consider the following which comes directly from the NC Standard Course of Study in Music but can be easily translated to all performing arts:

*Presentation of work is a natural progression in the study of music. A high-quality performance is only one of many valid outcomes of music education. Students will have opportunities to demonstrate their work in many venues at the high school level. Performances are a culmination of the process of studying and/or creating music. Performances should not determine the curriculum; but, excellent, high-quality performances are typical at the high school level. Informances, demonstrating the process that students use to arrive at a performance as a result of instruction, are also appropriate at this level. Performing is a learning experience that helps students to define the roles of performers and audience members, teaches students to respond to and critique music appropriately, and helps students to build confidence and pride in their work. Performances also help foster an appreciation of music as an art form and as a form of communication.*

Based on this information, it is the recommendation of Arts Education that each teacher be clear with their expectations (e.g. as a member of the performing ensemble - we need your commitment and participation...) which is consistent with the Course Description Guide's reference to "participation in after-school rehearsals and performances is expected." We do not recommend using grades as a threat or punitive measure. Assessment occurs daily in your classroom and therefore, you are well aware of a student's grasp of the material - even their ability to meet competencies 1 & 2 (which includes showing respect for the performing efforts of others).

Realistically, grading a student's performance at an event outside the school day likely reflects only their participation (i.e. showing up) which is not a primary instructional objective. As a conductor/director/choreographer - your energy at performance time should be focused on facilitating a positive experience for your performers and your audience - not on assessment.

There are numerous reasons (illness, work, transportation, family obligations ...) that may prevent a student from meeting all their obligations. Arts Education suggests that, in a positive atmosphere, most students will enthusiastically participate and take advantage of the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in and out of class.