UMEA BELIEVES THAT MUSIC CAN AND SHOULD STILL BE A PART OF EACH STUDENTS’ EDUCATION.

There are many valid concerns regarding the safety of students and teachers and the viability of music in the immediate future due to the spread of COVID-19. However, it is 100% possible to maintain school music programs, particularly instrumental and choral music ensembles, while adhering to necessary restrictions. It is imperative to note that even though virtual music education looks different from in-person music instruction, it is vital to maintain music programs during this pandemic.

MAJOR CONSIDERATIONS

- Music educators teach students music through the “vehicles” of Band, Choir, Orchestra etc.
- Music Education offers many opportunities in which individual students are given more personalized learning experiences. This is achievable in online and face-to-face instruction.
- With flexibility and support, instrumental/choral music education can continue in a 100% online context or hybrid context.
- Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is a construct intended to provide students with the skills to confront challenges by being self-aware, socially-aware, and make responsible decisions. Effective SEL is embedded in the curriculum. Music teachers do this in a very authentic way. Music is social. Music is emotional. Whether in large group, small group, or in individual work - the life lessons of music learning are critical in today’s environment.
- Music Education can have a large impact on keeping students engaged in school.
- Graduation rates are strongly tied to the involvement of students in elective courses.
- Large group music performances, like other large group gatherings, could be possible in the 2020-21 school year. Creativity and adaptation will be important as schools navigate the unique needs of its student population in partnership with local Health Departments and Governing Bodies.
- Virtual ensembles, while a great showcase for students and their abilities, are not a representation of the achievement of core standards in a given course and may not be equitable and viable for all programs.

THE FOLLOWING IS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW INSTRUCTION MIGHT LOOK FOR STUDENTS IN UTAH.

Virtual Instruction

Students will be able to progress in their music education with meaningful instruction, which could include:
- Being taught music core curriculum through online platforms such as Google, Canvas, Zoom, Teams, SmartMusic etc.
- Using their instruments/voice at home to practice and develop individual music skills.
- Using the observational and written skills ofural/visual, compare/contrast, and the evaluation of musical performances.
- Describing and writing about music.
- Interacting individually or collectively using video conferencing apps to share musical ideas, thoughts, practices, feelings, etc.
- Creating their own music.
- Collaborating with other students through the use of video and audio recordings.

Hybrid Instruction

A combination of in-person and virtual instruction with additional modifications that could include:
- The creation of smaller ensembles within larger existing ensembles to create social distancing.
- Ex. Rotation of face to face instruction and creative use of facilities in combination with online components.
- Teaching fundamentals as outlined by the Utah State Core Curriculum in the socially distant classroom. The actual playing of instruments and singing can be accommodated with the recommendation from local Health Departments.
- Reinforce fundamentals at home with instrument practice/singing with remote learning guidelines and structures.