



## Early and Middle Childhood

## MUSIC

### Assessment at a Glance

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*National Board Certification  
Promotes Better Teaching,  
Better Learning, Better Schools*

## Choosing the Right Certificate

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The National Board Certification® process offers experienced teachers the professional development opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and practices against high and rigorous standards. Candidates pursue certification by completing two major assessment components: a portfolio of classroom teaching practice and an assessment of content knowledge administered at a computer-based testing center.

The Early and Middle Childhood/Music certificate is appropriate for teachers who teach music to students ages 3–12, who know the full range of the school music curriculum, and who have highly specialized knowledge in choral, instrumental, or general music. Read this document to learn the content and pedagogical knowledge you will be required to demonstrate for this certificate area and to measure your readiness to pursue National Board Certification.

Candidates applying for certification in the Early and Middle Childhood/Music certificate area must select a performance perspective when applying. Two of the assessment center exercises (Exercises 1 and 3) require responses from a music performance perspective. In order to provide all teachers with a more tailored range of possibilities to meet their individual needs, and for the purposes of these two exercises only, teachers will select their desired performance perspective prior to attending the assessment center: band, vocal, or orchestra.

Below is a set of questions to ask yourself about your teaching practice. If you answer “yes” to these questions, you are ready to apply. For eligibility requirements and application instructions, read the *Guide to National Board Certification* on the NBPTS Web site ([www.nbpts.org](http://www.nbpts.org)).

If you answer “no” to one or more of these questions, you may need to discuss your teaching situation with professional colleagues, your school faculty, a National Board Certified Teacher®, your faculty support group, or a local-level administrator who is directing a National Board program.

### **For the portfolio, will you be able to:**

- demonstrate that your teaching practice meets the Music Standards?
- have access to a class of at least 6 students, in which 51% of the students are ages 3–12 during the period 12 months prior to the submission of your portfolio entries?
- submit video recordings in English and/or Spanish showing samples of students at work and your interactions with them?
- demonstrate how you implement a multi-lesson unit from your program of music instruction, within which you identify and implement instructional strategies and activities designed to meet selected students' needs in performance, participation, or skills?
- demonstrate how you deliver instruction while motivating students, and promoting and nurturing their achievement?
- show how you use your musicianship within the teaching and learning environment, how you develop musicianship in your students, and how you use assessment as a means for informing future teaching?
- present evidence of how you impact student learning through your work with students' families and community and through your development as a learner and as a leader/collaborator?

**For the assessment center, will you be able to demonstrate content knowledge in:**

- diagnostic skills?
- historical repertoire?
- applied theory/composition?
- instructional strategies
- music from a world sample?
- curricular applications?

## Reviewing the Standards

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The requirements for National Board Certification in the field of Early and Middle Childhood/Music (EMC/Music) are organized into the following Standards. The ordering of the Standards is designed to facilitate understanding, not to assign priorities.

### **I. Knowledge of Students**

Accomplished music teachers understand the cognitive, physical, and social development of students and know their musical background; they use this knowledge to foster productive relationships with students and to provide music instruction that meets their needs.

### **II. Knowledge of and Skills in Music**

Accomplished music teachers consistently demonstrate outstanding performance and musicianship skills; comprehensive knowledge of music theory and history; and highly specialized knowledge in general, choral, or instrumental music as they provide students with high-quality, sequential instruction in music.

### **III. Planning and Implementing Assessment**

Accomplished music teachers plan and implement assessments, use assessment data in planning subsequent instruction, and employ a variety of methods to evaluate and report student progress.

### **IV. Facilitating Music Learning**

Accomplished music teachers employ materials, methods, and strategies that engage students' interest and facilitate music learning. They have highly specialized knowledge in choral, instrumental, or general music as they provide students with high-quality, sequential instruction in music.

### **V. Learning Environments**

Accomplished music teachers create and foster dynamic learning environments that are characterized by trust, risk taking, independence, collaboration, and high expectations for all students.

### **VI. Valuing Diversity**

Accomplished music teachers value the diverse backgrounds, abilities, and perspectives of their students and provide a music curriculum that is inclusive of all students and rich in musical diversity.

### **VII. Collaboration**

Accomplished music teachers understand and value the distinctive role of families, colleagues, the community, and others in the music education process and continually seek opportunities to build partnerships with them.

### **VIII. Reflection, Professional Growth, and Professional Contribution**

Accomplished music teachers reflect on their teaching, students' performances, and developments in their field to extend their knowledge steadily, improve their teaching, and refine their philosophy of music education; they contribute to the growth of their colleagues, their schools, and their field.

Read the Standards on the NBPTS Web site to ensure that you will be able to demonstrate your accomplishments and confidently satisfy the defined expectations for National Board Certification.

# Demonstrating Your Teaching Practice and Content Knowledge

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This section describes the portfolio entries and assessment center exercises for the EMC/Music certificate area.

## Portfolio Entries

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You will be required to submit four portfolio entries. One entry is based on student work samples, and two entries feature video recordings of student–teacher interactions in the classroom. The fourth entry relates to your accomplishments outside of the classroom—with families, the community, or colleagues—and how they impact student learning.

Following is a description of each portfolio entry.

**Entry 1:  
Planning**

In this entry, you provide a 6-minute video recording of student work to demonstrate your ability to implement an interrelated sequence of lessons or rehearsals (a unit) from your program of music instruction. Within the context of this sequence, you identify and implement instructional strategies and activities designed to meet selected students' needs in performance, participation, or skills. The students you select will be featured in two brief video segments that you submit with this entry. You submit a 1-page Unit Overview that represents the scope and sequence of your unit. You also submit a Written Commentary describing, analyzing, and evaluating how you promote and nurture student achievement within the context of your interrelated sequence of lessons or rehearsals.

**Entry 2:  
Delivering  
Instruction**

In this entry, you provide evidence of your ability to sequence and deliver instruction, inspire and encourage students, and provide them with information regarding what they are expected to know and be able to do. You analyze, evaluate, and reflect on your teaching practice. You provide a 15-minute video recording of a segment of an instructional sequence that provides specific evidence of your ability to deliver instruction. You also provide a Written Commentary describing, analyzing, and evaluating how you promote and nurture student achievement through the delivery of your instruction.

**Entry 3:  
Demonstrating  
and Developing  
Musicianship**

In this entry, you demonstrate how you use your musicianship within the teaching and learning environment while developing musicianship in your students. You show your ability to use assessment as a means for informing your future teaching. You provide a 15-minute video recording that provides evidence of your ability to use your musicianship to demonstrate and develop a specific music concept and skill. You also provide a Written Commentary analyzing your video-recorded instruction and reflecting on the lesson. **Entry 3 is the preselected *Take One!* portfolio entry.**

**Entry 4:  
Documented  
Accomplishments:  
Contributions to  
Student Learning**

In this entry, you illustrate your partnerships with students' families and community, and your development as a learner and collaborator with other professionals by submitting descriptions and documentation of your activities and accomplishments in those areas. Your description must make the connection between each accomplishment and its impact on student learning.

Read the *Portfolio Instructions* on the NBPTS Web site to learn more about the requirements for preparing, developing, and submitting the portfolio component of your assessment.

## Assessment Center Exercises

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This assessment is composed of six exercises that examine content knowledge specified in the NBPTS Standards. You are given up to 30 minutes to respond to each exercise.

Following is a description of each assessment center exercise.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Exercise 1:<br/>Diagnostic Skills</b>              | In this exercise, you demonstrate your ability to hear, analyze, and anticipate performance problems in student performances. Given a recorded student performance, you identify performance problems and cite potential causes and solutions for each. Given a second musical score, you anticipate and explain performance challenges for a given group of students.            |
| <b>Exercise 2:<br/>Historical Repertoire</b>          | In this exercise, you demonstrate knowledge of music history. Given three identified musical excerpts, you discuss the compositions from a formal perspective, and discuss how each is representative of its style or genre and its historical or cultural context.   |
| <b>Exercise 3:<br/>Applied<br/>Theory/Composition</b> | In this exercise, you demonstrate knowledge of music theory and composition. Given a school function that calls for music, as well as specified compositional parameters, you compose a brief composition intended for student performance.   |
| <b>Exercise 4:<br/>Instructional<br/>Strategies</b>   | In this exercise, you demonstrate your depth of knowledge of instructional strategies designed to support student learning of a given music concept. Given a musical concept, you identify and explain six ways of teaching the concept.  |
| <b>Exercise 5:<br/>Music from a World<br/>Sample</b>  | In this exercise, you demonstrate knowledge of music from diverse cultures. Given four recorded samples of music chosen from a world sample, you identify the styles or genres of the samples, and explain these styles or genres through a discussion of the relevant instrumentation, vocal styles, theoretical system, uses of music within the culture, or elements of music. |
| <b>Exercise 6:<br/>Curricular<br/>Applications</b>    | In this exercise, you demonstrate knowledge of curriculum. Given the score of a well-known song, you identify and describe the uses of the song as an instructional resource to address four given student content standards.   |

Read *Assessment Center Policy and Guidelines* on the NBPTS Web site for more information about the assessment center component of the certification process. To locate an assessment center, visit the NBPTS computer-based testing Web site ([www.pearsonvue.com/nbpts/](http://www.pearsonvue.com/nbpts/)).

### Selected Assessment Center Exercises

The following sections contain selected exercises administered in a previous assessment cycle. These exercises present information that candidates saw on screen at the assessment center and include instructions for using the computer, stimulus materials (if applicable), and prompts requiring responses. These exercises have been included to help you become familiar with the structure of assessment center exercises and to help you understand the scoring rubrics. The exercise prompts in this section **do not** represent actual prompts candidates will see at assessment centers in the future.

Please note that assessment center exercises cover the **entire** age range of the certificate. Be aware that you are expected to demonstrate knowledge of developmentally appropriate content across the full range of your certificate.

### Sample Exercise 3: Applied Theory/Composition (Band)

Exercise 3: Applied Theory/Composition (Band) -  
Candidate Name

🕒 Time Remaining 29:31

#### Introduction

For this exercise, you will use your knowledge of music theory to create an 8-measure composition in accordance with a given set of specifications.

#### Criteria for Scoring

To satisfy the highest level of the scoring rubric, your responses must provide clear, consistent, and convincing evidence of the ability to:

- create theoretically accurate musical compositions; and
- compose music in response to curricular demands or performance situations that is at an appropriate level of difficulty for an intended ensemble.

#### Directions

There is one prompt in this exercise. Compose your response as directed in the Assessment Center Response Booklet on the staff paper provided.

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#### Retired Prompt 1

Create an 8-measure composition according to the specifications listed below. Include in your response the full range of musically appropriate signs and symbols, including tempo and dynamic markings.

#### Specifications

**Purpose:** A fanfare

**Characteristic:** Must include syncopation

**Instrumentation:** Brass quartet: 2 trumpets, 1 French horn, 1 trombone

**Performers:** 10-year-old students

**Key/Meter:** E-flat major (in transposed score) / 3/4

### Sample Exercise 3: Applied Theory/Composition (Orchestra)

**Exercise 3: Applied Theory/Composition (Orchestra) -**  
Candidate Name

 Time Remaining 29:31

#### Introduction

For this exercise, you will use your knowledge of music theory to create an 8-measure composition in accordance with a given set of specifications.

#### Criteria for Scoring

To satisfy the highest level of the scoring rubric, your responses must provide clear, consistent, and convincing evidence of the ability to:

- create theoretically accurate musical compositions; and
- compose music in response to curricular demands or performance situations that is at an appropriate level of difficulty for an intended ensemble.

#### Directions

There is one prompt in this exercise. Compose your response as directed in the Assessment Center Response Booklet on the staff paper provided.

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#### Retired Prompt 1

*Create an 8-measure composition according to the specifications listed below. Include in your response the full range of musically appropriate signs and symbols, including tempo and dynamic markings.*

#### Specifications

- Purpose:** A fanfare  
**Characteristic:** Must include syncopation  
**Instrumentation:** String quartet: 2 violins, 1 viola, 1 cello  
**Performers:** 10-year-old students  
**Key/Meter:** G major / 3/4

### Sample Exercise 3: Applied Theory/Composition (Vocal)

**Exercise 3: Applied Theory/Composition (Vocal) -**  
Candidate Name

 **Time Remaining 29:31**

#### Introduction

For this exercise, you will use your knowledge of music theory to create an 8-measure composition in accordance with a given set of specifications.

#### Criteria for Scoring

To satisfy the highest level of the scoring rubric, your responses must provide clear, consistent, and convincing evidence of the ability to:

- create theoretically accurate musical compositions; and
- compose music in response to curricular demands or performance situations that is at an appropriate level of difficulty for an intended ensemble.

#### Directions

There is one prompt in this exercise. Compose your response as directed in the Assessment Center Response Booklet on the staff paper provided.

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#### Retired Prompt 1

Create an 8-measure composition according to the specifications listed below. Include in your response the full range of musically appropriate signs and symbols, including tempo and dynamic markings.

#### Specifications

**Purpose:** A fanfare

**Characteristic:** Must include syncopation

**Instrumentation:** 2-part vocal score with 4-part classroom instrumental accompaniment, including 2 different pitched and 2 different unpitched instruments

**Performers:** 10-year-old students

**Key/Meter:** F major / 3/4

**Text:** You may choose to use the following text. You may vary the text as necessary for your setting, or you may create your own.

Welcome to our school;  
Welcome to our school;  
You must come again;  
Stay and be our friend;  
Welcome to our school.

## Sample Exercise 4: Instructional Strategies

Exercise 4: Instructional Strategies - Candidate Name

🕒 Time Remaining 29:31

### Introduction

In this exercise, you will use your knowledge of instructional strategies to identify and describe six learning activities designed to support student learning of a given music concept.

### Criteria for Scoring

To satisfy the highest level of the scoring rubric, your responses must provide clear, consistent, and convincing evidence of:

- a broad knowledge of auditory, visual, and kinesthetic instructional strategies, and
- the ability to select instructional strategies that support student learning and are appropriate to the content being taught.

### Directions

There is one prompt in this exercise. Compose your response as directed in the Assessment Center Response Booklet.

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### Stimulus

For the purpose of this exercise, you must select **one** of the following two concepts to address:

- intonation (or pitch matching)
- dotted rhythms

### Retired Prompt 1

*Identify the grade level(s) and type of music class or ensemble for which you will design this instruction. All parts of your response must refer to the same class or ensemble. Then select and identify one concept from the list presented above, and describe 6 distinct learning activities for teaching this concept. Include in your response activities that address the following types of learning:*

- *auditory*
- *kinesthetic*
- *visual*

*For each activity, include a description of what the students will be doing and a discussion of how the activity will support the learning of the concept.*

## Understanding the National Board Scoring Process

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All portfolio entries and assessment center exercises are scored by teachers practicing in the same content area as the assessment they are scoring. The National Board's carefully trained assessors use scoring rubrics to evaluate candidate responses. The rubrics clearly articulate the criteria that are to be applied in the evaluation of your responses. These criteria reflect the Standards that the entry is designed to measure.

Assessors use a four-level rubric to score each candidate's response as shown below.

Rubric Level	Score Range	Quality of Evidence
Level 4	3.75–4.25	Clear, consistent, and convincing
Level 3	2.75–3.74	Clear
Level 2	1.75–2.74	Limited
Level 1	0.75–1.74	Little or no

The Level 4 and Level 3 score ranges represent accomplished teaching practice. You do not have to receive Level 4 or Level 3 scores for every entry and exercise. A high score on one may compensate for a lower score elsewhere. Read the *Scoring Guide for Candidates* on the NBPTS Web site for your assessment.

### Your Total Weighted Scaled Score

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When your portfolio entries and assessment center exercises are completed and scored, your Total Weighted Scaled Score is computed. This is done by applying a set of weights to each of your entry and exercise scores.

For the EMC/Music certificate, these are the weights:

- 16% for each of the three classroom-based portfolio entries
- 12% for the Documented Accomplishments portfolio entry
- 6.67% for each of the six assessment center exercises

Your weighted scaled score for each entry or exercise is calculated by multiplying the raw score by the appropriate weight, shown above. Your Total Weighted Scaled Score is the sum of the weighted scaled scores for all entries and exercises plus a 12-point uniform constant. For example, if your weighted scaled score is 263, you would receive a 12-point uniform constant score, and your Total Weighted Scaled Score would be 275. This number is then compared to 275, the performance standard established by the NBPTS Board of Directors.

A candidate whose Total Weighted Scaled Score is 275 or greater is recognized as an accomplished teacher and is awarded National Board Certification. A candidate whose Total Weighted Scaled Score does not meet 275 is not yet certified and for the following two years has the opportunity to retake certain portfolio entries or assessment center exercises in order to meet the performance standard of 275.

## Things to Keep in Mind

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The National Board Standards for the EMC/Music certificate area are addressed within the portfolio and assessment center process. Therefore, you should keep the following in mind:

- Although the portfolio entries address many of the Standards, they may not address all of them. Standards the portfolio does not address may be included in the assessment center portion of the certification process.
- Each entry is scored independently of the others. When an entry asks for background or contextual information, be complete, since an assessor for one entry will not see your other entries.
- At each of the four levels of the scoring rubric, the same Standards-related criteria are applied. However, each level of the scoring rubric represents a difference in the quality of evidence demonstrated by the entry or exercise. For example, if “Knowledge of Students” is a Standard measured by an entry, the Level 4 rubric will refer to “clear, consistent, and convincing” evidence of that Standard while the Level 2 rubric will refer to “limited” evidence of the same Standard.
- One of the fundamental principles underlying the evaluation is that responses are scored only on what candidates are specifically asked to do. For example, if the directions specifically ask you to demonstrate how to use assessment in the featured instructional sequence, evidence supporting your use of assessment will be evaluated based on the scoring rubric. Conversely, if an entry does not require you to demonstrate how to use assessment, it will not be evaluated.

# Beginning Your Journey toward National Board Certification

The first step on this journey is to make a commitment, but what does this commitment involve? First-time candidates apply and complete their assessments in an initial candidacy period as shown in the timeline below. For candidates who are not successful in their first try, there is a 24-month window, following the receipt of scores, in which to retake assessments and/or resubmit portfolio entries in order to achieve certification.

You may wish to start with the *Take One!* program that requires submission of a single portfolio entry for scoring. The preselected portfolio entry required for *Take One!* is identified as part of the portfolio entry descriptions on page 4. You can choose to transfer your *Take One!* score to National Board Certification within three years of completing the *Take One!* process. Read *Becoming a Take One! Participant* on the NBPTS Web site to learn more about the requirements.

If you choose to pursue National Board Certification, there is also a financial commitment for which support is available. Visit the NBPTS Web site to learn about federal, state, and/or local funds available to support National Board Certification and *Take One!* fees. Be sure to check with your local, district, or state educational officials for incentives (such as salary increases and bonuses) that may be offered for achieving National Board Certification.

The following timeline provides a snapshot of your schedule of commitments. Read the *Guide to National Board Certification* on the NBPTS Web site for complete information.

## Certification Planner

Step	To Do	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
1	<b>Send forms and fees to NBPTS:</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>application</li> <li>nonrefundable initial fee (\$500)</li> <li>all eligibility forms</li> <li>balance of full fee (totaling \$2,500)</li> </ul>	Jan. 1 — Dec. 31			
2	<b>Develop portfolio entries and submit them to NBPTS:</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receive portfolio box <b>after</b> submitting initial fees.</li> <li>Submit all four portfolio entries at once <b>after</b> submitting all fees and eligibility forms.</li> </ul>	Jan. 1 — Mar. 31			
3	<b>Schedule your assessment center exercises:</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>after</b> submitting all fees and eligibility forms</li> <li>at least 30 days <b>before</b> the test date</li> </ul>		Jan. 1 — Jun. 15		
4	<b>Obtain your scores online:</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access <i>My Profile</i> to learn about your scores and certification status.</li> </ul>		Dec. 31	Dec. 31	Dec. 31
5	<b>Continue the journey:</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you did not achieve certification, decide whether to retake assessment center exercises and/or portfolio entries.</li> <li>Submit retake application and fees.</li> </ul>			Jan. 31	Jan. 31
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retake selected assessment center exercises.</li> <li>Submit selected portfolio entries.</li> </ul>			Jan. 1 — Jun. 15	Jan. 1 — Jun. 15
				Jan. 1 — Apr. 15	Jan. 1 — Apr. 15

Having made the commitment, many teachers who pursue National Board Certification become role models and leaders in their schools and districts, earning a greater voice in what happens and having a very positive effect on their students' experiences. On your journey, you will benefit directly from your candidacy, taking part in what many have described as the best professional development experience of their lives.

Produced for the



by

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