

The Flexible Ensemble Learning Experience

Project #1

Consortium Leader and Co-Founder
Mr. Cooper Haywood

Composer and Co-Founder
Mr. Kevin Poelking

Overview and Goals

The Flexible Ensemble Learning Experience (FELE) is a collaboration between composer and music educators to offer our students important learning opportunities during the COVID-19 Pandemic and beyond. This important project was designed by the co-founders with the intention of accomplishing the following:

- **Address uncertainties caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic**

This piece will be written with the current state of our world in mind. The music will be easily transferable from in-person instruction to online, and a hybrid of the two.

Regular cadential points and consistent phrases will allow for a flexible ending and the ability to use small sections of the music for pedagogical reasons. The teacher and students can elect to play only a portion of the piece in performance if the instructional environment necessitates the need for this adjustment.

- **Invest in the teacher as a creative professional**

The music educator is rarely limited by their creativity, but can often be limited by their repertoire and pedagogical tools. The intent of this piece of music is to invest in the creative teacher by offering as many flexible learning opportunities as possible within a single work.

- **Address the needs of our beginner band musicians**

This piece will be written, first and foremost, with the beginner band musician in mind. Input from music educators around the country will be considered to attempt to create a pedagogically relevant piece of music that will engage students and help them grow as musicians.

The following two pages (pp. 2-3) of this document outline some of the above goals in the context of the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards. These are included to:

1. Offer assistance and ideas in lesson planning
2. Offer further information on the intentions of this project
3. Serve as an official document that can be shared with administrators, parents, etc.

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Objectives and Standards

Note: All of the standards listed below are from the 2014 National Coalition for Core Arts Standards. These can be viewed online at the following link:

<https://nafme.org/my-classroom/standards/core-music-standards/>

I. *Creating (Composition)*

The composition aspect of this work (which can be easily omitted by the teacher if they so choose) allows students to create their own signature within this piece. They will have a specific phrase in the work with parameters to compose their own music in regards to the piece. The composer, Kevin Poelking, will post a video explanation of this section. He will introduce students to the idea of composition and provide them with a starting point. Once the students have composed their phrase, they can submit to their respective teachers for evaluation. As teachers, we can share several examples within our classes and even introduce students to music notation software i.e. Finale, Sibelius & Noteflight.*

- A. MU:Cr1.1.E.5a Compose and **improvise** melodic and rhythmic ideas or **motives** that reflect characteristic(s) of music or text(s) studied in rehearsal.
- B. MU:Cr2.1.E.5a Select and develop draft melodic and rhythmic ideas or **motives** that demonstrate understanding of characteristic(s) of music or text(s) studied in rehearsal.
- C. MU:Cr2.1.E.5b Preserve draft **compositions** and **improvisations** through **standard notation** and audio recording.
- D. MU:Cr3.1.E.5a Evaluate and **refine** draft **compositions** and **improvisations** based on knowledge, skill, and **teacher- provided criteria**.
- E. MU:Cr3.2.E.5a **Share** personally- developed melodic and rhythmic ideas or **motives** – individually or as an **ensemble** – that demonstrate understanding of characteristics of music or texts studied in rehearsal.

*Music Technology Standards:

- A. MU:Cr1.1.T.Ia Generate melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas for **compositions** or **improvisations** using **digital tools**.
- B. MU:Cr2.1.T.Ia Select melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas to develop into a larger work using **digital tools** and **resources**.
- C. MU:Cr3.1.T.Ia Drawing on feedback from teachers and peers, develop and implement strategies to improve and **refine** the **technical** and **expressive aspects** of draft **compositions** and **improvisations**.
- D. MU:Cr3.2.T.Ia **Share compositions** or **improvisations** that demonstrate a proficient level of musical and technological **craftsmanship** as well as the use of **digital tools** and **resources** in developing and organizing **musical ideas**.

II. *Performing*

With the future uncertain, this work will help provide aid if/when schools are forced to close for a period of time. Below are several objectives and standards this composition will work to achieve:

- Instrument ranges will be achievable for the beginner band student but will offer appropriate challenges.
- This composition will feature 3 ability tracks (advanced, intermediate, and novice, divided by part) for the students. Students can work at their own pace with each track, offering a new challenge for the students ready to move forward.
- Students will be able to practice with a rehearsal track when practicing at home and in the event of intermittent school closings.
- Percussion students will be able to work with several “non-traditional” instruments and utilize different sound productions. They will still be asked to use correct playing technique.
 - A. MU:Pr4.2.E.5a Demonstrate, using music reading skills where appropriate, how knowledge of formal aspects in **musical works** inform prepared or improvised **performances**.
 - B. MU:Pr4.3.E.5a Identify **expressive qualities** in a varied **repertoire** of music that can be demonstrated through prepared and improvised **performances**.
 - C. MU:Pr6.1.E.5a Demonstrate attention to **technical accuracy** and **expressive qualities** in prepared and improvised **performances** of a varied **repertoire** of music.
 - D. MU:Pr6.1.E.5b Demonstrate an awareness of the **context** of the music through prepared and improvised **performances**.

Materials Included in the Project

- **PDF Music in 3 Parts**

This piece will be written with “flexible instrumentation.” Every instrument from the standard concert band will receive Parts I, II, and III. The parts will be written with increasing complexity with Part III being the least challenging. All three parts will be appropriate for the beginning musician and will offer multiple teaching opportunities.

These three parts will allow students to play in heterogenous and/or homogenous instrument ensembles. The music will be appropriate for solos, duos, trios, chamber groups, and full ensembles.

In addition to mallet parts, percussionists will also receive non-pitched percussion parts. These will be playable on basic concert percussion instruments, but will also offer the students the opportunity to come up with creative instruments of their own design using materials within their home.

Parts will be delivered to the purchaser in PDF format at the email provided in their order information. The PDF will be marked at the bottom of each page with the purchaser’s information (teacher and/or school). PDFs will allow teachers to share music digitally with their students or print off unlimited copies for their students.

Note: PDFs provided may only be used by the purchaser/ school. Sharing your copy with other schools/institutions/ individuals is NOT permitted.

- **PDF Document with a list of the Consortium Members**

A PDF outlining the goals and importance of this project will be included with the names of all of the teachers and schools who were a part of this project. This can be used however the teacher so chooses (professional portfolios, sharing with parents and admin, etc.)

- **“Play-along” Recordings**

A computer-generated play-along track will be provided. This accompaniment will be provided at multiple tempi in order to facilitate proper practice habits with students learning from both near and far.

- **Shareable Link to an Instructional Video from the Composer**

Within the work, there will be a section (easily adjusted, or even omittable by the teacher) where students will be able to compose their own music. Composer Kevin Poelking will be creating a short video available online as a possible tool for teaching the beginner musician the basics of creating their own music.

Timeline for the Flexible Ensemble Learning Experience

This timeline was designed by the consortium leader and composer to ensure members receive their materials before the school year begins. If you are in need of materials earlier than listed below, please get in touch with us through the “Contact/ Questions” section of our page or email the composer at kpoelking@gmail.com. If possible, all materials will be delivered earlier than the dates listed below.

July 10 - August 7

Consortium Open

The consortium is open to anyone interested.

July 31, 11:59PM EST

Deadline to submit ideas for the piece

This project is unique in that it is designed in the spirit of collaboration! Use the Google Form Link on the website to offer suggestions or ideas that may be helpful to our students. While we will not be able to use all of the suggestions, all of them will be read, and we may be able to incorporate them into future projects!

August 7, 11:59PM EST

Consortium Closes, Fees due

All online payments, checks, or invoices must be paid in full by this time to have your name included on the list of consortium members. There are no refunds after this deadline.

August 10 - August 14

Materials Delivered via Email

Consortium list, recordings, and parts will be marked and delivered to consortium members via email. The composer video will also be filmed during this period and subsequently sent to members no later than Friday, August 21 by 5:00PM EST. If possible, all materials will be delivered earlier than the dates listed above.

Payment Agreement:

Payment (online, in-person, via invoice, by check, etc.) to be involved in the consortium assumes that you have read and understand this document. It also binds the purchaser to an agreement that the PDFs/ music parts provided may only be used by the purchaser/ school. Sharing copies outside of the purchasing institution is NOT permitted. If you have an issue with your delivered materials, please get in touch with us so we can help you and your students to the best of our abilities.