Some Study Guidelines for the “Music That Matters” program

*The artists describe the program as follows:*

Common Chords shows how European and African instruments and styles fused to make

American music; audiences will learn that the evolution of American music is a journey of tolerance and acceptance. The program begins with early spirituals set in the 1840s and progresses through the songs of the Underground Railroad, the Industrial Revolution, early Blues and its offshoots, Country, Jazz, Bluegrass, Gospel and R&B, and continues into Rap and Hip-Hop. It is the history of music and the music of history—with an emphasis on the power and celebration of cultural diversity.

*This is a high-level overview of some of the concepts which will be discussed during the Common Chords with songs that may be used to illustrate those concepts.*

**How does folk and roots music differ from other types of music?**

We’ll discuss how roots music is all forms of American popular music have in common.

(There is an explanation of) the “American Music Tree” metaphor. (American music is like a tree with tangled roots and many and varied branches.)

• “Mind Your Own Business”—Hank Williams

• “12 Bar Blues”--Generic

• “Johnny B. Goode”—Chuck Berry

**The Folk Process**

Folk songs are often not down, and they (often) change to reflect current cultural situations as they are passed from generation to generation. Folk songs are also often changed because they can serve purposes that go beyond entertainment. For example, folk music was historically used as work songs, for dances, to convey information along the Underground Railroad, to rally and encourage social movements and for protest.

Potential examples:

• “I’m On My Way”

• “Wade In The Water”

• “Follow The Drinking Gourd”

• “John Brown’s Body”/”Battle Hymn of the Republic”

• “Hard Times Come Again No More”

• “Take This Hammer”

• “Peg and Awl”

• “1913 Massacre”

• “Union Maid”

• “Christmas In the Trenches”

• “Keep Your Eyes On The Prize”

• “Touch A Name On The Wall”

• “Change Is Gonna Come”

• “We Shall Overcome”

**Some of the Key Historical Periods that changed American music\***

**• 1619-1864** The existence of legal enslavement in the United States

• **1861-1865** The Civil War

• **1861-1877** Reconstruction

• **1870-1914** Second Industrial Revolution

• **1914-1918** World War I

• **1929-1941** The Great Depression

• **1931-1935** The Great Dust Bowl Migration

• **1941-1945** World War II

• **1955-1968** American Civil Rights Movement

• **1955-1975** Vietnam War

\*A typical assembly program doesn’t necessarily cover all of these periods, but any of them can be addressed musically, thus allowing for a customized presentation.

**The instruments, styles and structures of folk and roots music**

Guitar, fiddle and banjo are three of most important roots music instruments. The banjo has African origins, while the fiddle is from Europe. The guitar is originally European but American guitar styles combine African and European elements to produce American music.

This music is simple in structure, often based on three chords (I, IV and V) and five notes, combining the major and minor pentatonic scale. Changes in melody and tempo contribute to differences between various music styles, but also reveal their commonalities.

Potential examples:

• ”Skip To My Lou”

• “Oh, Susanna”

• “Old Joe Clark”

• “This Little Light Of Mine”

• “Going Down The Road, Feeling Bad”

• “Tell Me What I Say”

• “Blue Suede Shoes”

• “My Girl”

• “Death Letter Blues”

Educational Benchmarks for Common Chords

**Common Chords—Telling America’s story through music and cultural expression**

Sponsored by the Ford Motor Company Fund

Here is a list of some potential connections between the concepts presented in Common Chords program and Michigan’s Grade Level Standards. We hope you find them helpful!

**Content expectations- Arts**

Fourth grade

(VPAA: C3, P3, R1, R2 R3, R4)

Attending program

ART.M.IV. 4.1 Describe distinguishing instrumentation of music genres and styles from various cultures.

ART. M. IV, 4.3 Demonstrate audience appropriate behavior for the contest and style of music presented and performed.

ART. M.V.4.2 Observe and identify cross-curricular connections within the 4th grade curriculum.

ART. M.V 4.3 Describe the music performed and presented in 4th grade by moving, drawing or through other appropriate responses.

Fifth grade

(VPAA: C3, P3, R1, R2, R3, R4)

Attending program

ART.M.III.5.3 Understand and respect that there are different responses to art works in a global community.

ART.M.IV.5.2 Demonstrate audience appropriate behavior for the context and style of music performed.

ART.M.V.5.3 Discuss the various rationales for using music in daily experiences.

In response document

ART.M.III.5.4 Use music vocabulary to analyze, describe and evaluate music.

ART.M.III.5.7 Explain, using music vocabulary, personal aesthetic response to music.

ART.M.IV.5.1 Describe distinguishing characteristics of representative music genres and styles from various historic periods and cultures.

ART.M.IV.5.2 Describe how elements of music are used in examples from world cultures.

Sixth grade

(VPAA: C3, P3, R1, R2, R3, R4)

ART.M.III.6.1 Identify and describe specific musical elements and events in a given aural example, using appropriate terminology.

ART.M.III.6.2 Identify elements of music used in music of diverse genres and styles.

ART.M.III.6.3 Demonstrate knowledge of the basic principles of rhythm, simple meter (2/4, ¾, 4/4), and intervals of a major scale.

ART.M.V.6.1 Identify characteristic materials of each art form.

ART.M.V.6.2 List musical elements and find a connection to at least one other discipline.

**Content expectations-Social Studies**

Fourth grade

4 - H3.0.4 Draw upon stories, photos, artifacts, and other primary sources to compare the life of people in towns and cities in Michigan and in the Great Lakes region during a variety of time periods from 1837 to the present (e.g. 1837-1900, 1900-1950, 1950-2000). (G)

4 – H3.0.5 Use visual date and informational text or primary accounts to compare a major Michigan economic activity today with that same or a related activity in the past. (E)

4 – H3.0.7 Use case studies or stories to describe the ideas and actions of individuals involved in the Underground Railroad in Michigan and in the Great Lakes region. (See 8-U4.2.2; 8-U4.3.2;8-U5.1.5; USHG 7.2.4) (G,C,E)

4 – G4.0.1 4-G4.0.2 Use case study or story about migration within or to the United States to identify push and pull factors (why they left, why they came) that influenced the migration. (H) Describe the impact of immigration to the United States on the cultural development of different places or regions of the United States (e.g., forms of shelter, language, food). (H)

4 – C2.0.2 Identify situations in which specific rights guaranteed by the Constitution and Bill of Rights are involved (e.g., freedom of religion, freedom of expression, freedom of press).

Fifth grade

5 – U1.4 Describe the environmental, political, and cultural consequences of the interactions among European, African and American Indian peoples in the late 15th through the 17th century.

5 – U2.2.3 Describe how Africans living in North America drew upon their African past and adapted elements of new cultures to develop a distinct African-American culture.

5 – U2.3.3 Describe colonial life in America from the perspective of at least three different groups of people.

5 – P4.2.2 Act constructively to further the public good. Participate in projects to help or inform others.

Sixth grade

6 – H1.2.3 Identify the point of view (perspective of the author) and context with reading and discussing primary and secondary sources.

6 – H1.2.4 Compare and evaluate competing historical perspectives about the past based on proof.

6 – H1.2.5 Identify that role of the individual in history and significance of one person’s ideas.

6 – H1.4.1 Describe and use cultural institutions to study and era and a region.

6 – G2.2.2 Explain that communities are affected positively or negatively by changes in technology.

6 – G2.2.3 Analyze how culture and experience influence people’s perception of places and regions.

6 – G4.1.1 Identify and explain examples of cultural diffusion with the Americas (e.g., baseball, soccer, music, architecture, television, languages, health care, internet, consumer brands, currency, restaurants, international migration).