Choral Literacies and Skills

LEVEL-BASED DEVELOPMENTAL MARKERS

	VOCAL TECHNIQUE								MUSICIANSHIP			
	Tonal Technique				Breath Technique				Artistry		Music Reading	
LEVEL OF LITERACY	RESONANCE AND VOWELS	ENSEMBLE SOUND AND BALANCE	VOCAL FACILITY AND INDEPENDENCE Range, Agility, Clarity, Divisi	INTONATION	BREATH MANAGEMENT Effort, Airflow, Efficiency, Onset	DYNAMICS	DICTION	ARTICULATION	RHYTHM AND TEMPO Precision, Clarity, Expression	EXPRESSION AND ARTISTRY Style, Form, Expression	RHYTHM AND MUSICAL MARKINGS	MELODY, INTERVALS AND AUDIATION
Level 1 ENTRY-LEVEL SINGERS OF ALL AGES	 Shaping vowels with space, basic vowel uniformity is introduced. Resonance introduced as "tall" vowels, opening up inner resonating spaces. Body awareness of jaw, lips, tongue introduced and develops. Resonance is most easily developed with [i, u, o, a]. Light and heavy mechanism, or or "head" and "chest" resonance is introduced. Sings mostly in "head" voice, or light mechanism. Resonance often inconsistent due to vowel space, or heavy mechanism i.e., "chest" voice. 	 Ensemble sound develops through vowel uniformity and "matching vowel." Ensemble sound is most successful with [i, u, o, a]. Ensemble sound occurs most easily when all singers sing in light mechanism. Ensemble sound inconsistent due to heavy mechanism singing or difficult vowels [ε, æ, etc.] 	 Singing range determined by age, gender, vocal quality, and speaking voice, often a 6th to a 10th in all voice parts. Stepwise melodies and simple intervals sung clearly at a moderate tempo. More challenging passages can be coached. Unison, simple counterpoint introduced and develops clarity, e.g., partner songs or canons. Stepwise and pentatonic melodies sung with clarity at moderate tempi. Close parallel harmonies and minor dissonance can be inconsistent. 	 Clear intonation in unison singing develops. Listening skills develop through understanding how vowel uniformity affects pitch. Singers recognize being "in tune" with pentatonic and simple melodies. Common pitch issues due to inconsistent vowels, register, or scooping, can be coached. 	 Good posture with low, expanded muscles for breathing is introduced and develops. Breathing together and energizing the voice are introduced and develop. Expansive, low breath is reinforced, as clavicular breathing is common. Singers demonstrate consistent breath effort most often in short, loud passages. Breathing in appropriate places, such as ends of words, or with punctuation is introduced. 	 Singing with contrasting dynamics is introduced and develops. Forte and piano develops, contrasting dynamics between songs or between major sections within a song is introduced. Maintaining ensemble sound in contrasting dynamics is introduced. Inconsistencies in resonance often occur during changes of dynamic. Crescendo and decrescendo are introduced and demonstrated. 	 Pronouncing words together is introduced and develops. Vowel clarity reflects singers' body awareness of LEVEL 1 Resonance and Vowels. Consonant clarity varies by age, body awareness, or primary language. Enunciating consonants at onset and offset of phrases at louder dynamics develops. Internal consonants often lack clarity. 	 Contrasting articulation with text and effort is introduced and develops. Quick and sustained, light and heavy enunciation are introduced. Clarity of articulation varies as result of text and volume. 	 Singing rhythmically together is introduced and develops. Demonstrates physical sense of pulse when coached. Simple rhythms can be sung accurately, syncopation and simple multicultural rhythms can be taught by rote. Rhythmic inconsistencies common, precision is affected by age, body awareness, dynamics, diction, and articulation. Basic count singing is introduced. 	 Singing with energy, body involvement, and facial expression to convey mood introduced and develops. Expression varies by age, body awareness, energy, and confidence. Expressing the mood of a song with general changes of dynamic and articulation as determined by text is introduced and develops. Form is demonstrated by contrasting formal elements with dynamics and articulation, e.g., verses, refrains, and major sections. Body movements help singers connect physicality to the mood and sound desired. 	 Meter: 2/4, 3/4, 4/4. Note Values: Whole, half, quarter. Tempo: Andante – Moderato (72–120). Musical Markings: Adagio, Allegro, p, mp, mf, f. 	 Melodic Reading: Step-wise and pentatonic melodies, unison. Intervals: Whole step, minor 3rd, perfect 4th and 5th, major scale introduced. Key Signatures: None to two sharps or two flats. Chord Tones: Two-part "chords" built on pentatonic scale degrees.
Level 2 ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL EMERGING HIGH SCHOOL CHURCH / COMMUNITY NON-AUDITIONED COLLEGIATE	 Resonance develops by discovering inner resonating space, relaxed jaw & shaping mouth. Resonant space is introduced, e.g., tall, dome, or lofted, lifting soft palate, inner smile, etc. Vowel uniformity is consistent with [i, e, a, o, u] in middle register, expands with age and experience. Treble voices sing mostly in "head voice," or thin folds. Mixing into "chest voice," heavy mechanism, or thick folds, introduced. Voices in transition sing with a relaxed airflow, light effort, and emphasize "head voice" as low notes appear. Singers recognize breathy, pressed, and balanced tone production. Resonance affected by text, extremes of dynamic and range. 	 Ensemble sound develops through vowel uniformity and matching vowel shape. Ensemble sound demonstrated in slow passages, cadences, and with vowels [i, e, a, o, u]. Ensemble sound inconsistent in rhythmic or fast-moving sections due to text, register use, or individual singer's volume. Ensemble sound and balance affected by personnel, repertoire, register, and tessitura. Balance achieved by adjusting numbers of singers on each part or standing arrangements. 	 Singing range determined by age, gender, vocal quality, and speaking voice. Range often a 6th to a 12th, expands with age and experience. Stepwise melodies, slow to moderately fast tempi, and intervals of 3rds, 4ths, 5ths sung clearly. Unison, partner songs, and simple counterpoint sung with clarity. Part independence in passages with close parallel harmonies or minor dissonance develops. Some compositions in three or four parts possible, determined by personnel, range, or composition style. Singing in non-Western classical styles introduced. 	 Listening skills develop through listening to selves and others. Intonation consistent in middle voice with LEVEL 2 vowels. Inconsistencies occur with challenges of text, diphthongs, range, and dynamics. Unison, partner songs, simple counterpoint can be sung with clarity of pitch. Individual tuning issues due register use, volume, or scooping, can be coached. Tuning homophonic passages or close harmonies is inconsistent, can be coached. Singing in tune with piano or other instruments introduced and develops. 	 Good posture, and low, expansive breath develops and becomes consistent. Low, expansive breath without downward pressure at the beginning of a song, or a major section of a song develops. Low, expansive breath for individual phrases is introduced. Balanced tone, with light effort and relaxed movement of air is encouraged. Imbalanced tone may result in breathy p, pressed f, poor intonation, decreased legato, et al. Ability to sustain longer phrases, breathe in appropriate poetic places develops. "Stagger breathing" for sustained tones, fermata, is introduced. 	 Varied dynamics from song to song develop, p-f. Crescendo and decrescendo developed. Varied dynamics from phrase to phrase is introduced and develops. Dynamics mp-mf demonstrate LEVEL 2 Resonance and Vowels. Dynamic extremes may affect resonance and pitch, with piano breathy and forte pressed. 	 Clarity of enunciation, projection, and body awareness of articulators introduced and develops. Vowel clarity reflects LEVEL 2 Resonance and Vowels. Consonant clarity is developed, especially at onset and offset of phrases, at louder dynamics. Consonants before the beat and internal consonants introduced. Breath plan determined by text and poetry is introduced. Non-English language texts introduced. 	 Basic articulation develops, e.g., detached / legato, heavy / light, quick / sustained. Various types of accents introduced, e.g., staccato, marcato. Legato singing is introduced, often inconsistent as affected by text, dynamic, and developing LEVEL 2 Breath Management. Articulation affected by text and volume. 	 Rhythmic clarity develops through unified diction. Inner pulse introduced. Ritardando and Accelerando are introduced. Rhythms more complex than 8th note patterns can be coached. Ensemble sings together but rushing or dragging is common. Count singing at LEVEL 1 is possible. 	 Creating a unique style for each piece with dynamic, tempo, articulation, and text develops. Word stress / un-stress is introduced. General mood of poetry is understood, demonstrated by varied musical elements. Form demonstrated by contrasting musical elements, e.g., dynamics of verses or phrases, and finding a "climactic moment" in each piece is introduced. Most of the choir demonstrates facial expression and / or appropriate body movement, especially when coached. 	 Meter: 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, cut time (symbol and 2/2), 6/8. Note Values: Whole, half, quarter, eighth, simple dotted notes and syncopation. Tempo: Andante – Allegro (72–132) Musical Markings: Adagio, Andante, Moderato, Allegro, Rit(ardando), Accel(erando), pp–ff, Cresc(endo) and Decresc(endo), Accent mark >. 	 Melodic Reading: Step-wise and pentatonic melodies, introduction of 3rds, 4ths, and 5ths in melody, unison and two-part canon or simple counterpoint, dotted notes. Intervals: Whole step, half step, minor 3rd, major 3rd, perfect 4th, perfect 5th, major scale sung with Kodály hand signs. Key Signatures: None to three sharps or three flats, minor key introduced. Chord Tones: Two- to three-part chords, major and minor root position 6ths and 7ths introduced.
ADVANCED MIDDLE SCHOOL MANY HIGH SCHOOL, CHURCH / COMMUNITY ENTRY-LEVEL COLLEGIATE	 Resonating spaces such as tall, dome, lofted, lifting soft palate, et al, develop. As inner resonating spaces develop, jaw becomes relaxed and neutral in mid-voice. Opening of resonating spaces in extended ranges through vowel modification, relaxed and flexible jaw, introduced and develop. Consistent vowel uniformity, space, and color with basic vowels [i, e, ε, a, o, u]. Resonance consistent throughout middle voice, extended ranges varied due to age and experience, SA voices A3 to G5, TB voices G2–G4. SA develop 'mix.' TB develop floating upper voice and focused lower voice. Resonance affected by extended dynamics and register, text challenges such as diphthongs, and foreign languages. 	 Ensemble sound develops through uniform application of LEVEL 3 Resonance and Vowels. Ensemble sound develops consistency throughout middle voice, regardless of musical demands. Individuals may be heard as ranges expand or voices develop. Balance affected by personnel, repertoire, extended dynamics, and register. Balance achieved by adjusting numbers of singers on each part or standing arrangements. Stylistic and repertoire-based balance variation is sometimes desired and introduced. 	 Singers work to extend range and address age-related vocal changes. Singers demonstrate greater range and agility during vocalise than in sustained tessituras. Melodies containing intervals of 3rds, 4ths, and 5ths sung clearly at most tempi. Most intervals can be sung clearly at a moderate tempo with coaching. Compositions in two to four parts common, greater divisi possible, determined by personnel. Singing with close harmony and dissonance develops. Singing in non-Western classical styles develops. 	 Listening skills emphasize listening to selves, others, and internal audiation. Tuning demonstrated in all ranges with coaching. Inconsistencies occur with challenges of text, diphthongs, tessitura and dynamics. Tuning within sections is consistent, sections work to tune with others, most often at cadences. Tuning in homophonic sonorities, dissonances, basic modulations, fast moving passages, and counterpoint develops. Choir tunes well with the piano. A cappella singing develops. 	 Buoyant, expansive breath posture, maintained from inhalation through phrase, is introduced. Low, expansive breath at beginning of songs, and at onset of individual phrases develops. Efficiency of breath effort, i.e., wide, buoyant intercostal engagement, efficient abdominal effort without downward pressure, efficient air flow, is introduced. Balanced breath effort consistent mp-mf, while piano, forte develops. Onsets to initiate phrase and crescendo may require "extra" breath effort and air flow. Low, expansive breaths during quick, or "catch breaths," introduced. Shaping the vocal tract during breath, such as "breathing in the vowel," is introduced. 	 Musicality through dynamic shaping develops. Dynamics from mp-mf consistent with LEVEL 3 Breath Management and Resonance. Crescendo and decrescendo within each phrase, "rise and fall," develops. Balanced tone in extended dynamics, or dynamic changes, develops. Breathy piano and pressed forte replaced as balanced breath effort develops. Dynamics affected by tessitura, i.e., higher passages may be sung louder, lower tones softer, individuals may be heard. 	 Expressive and clear enunciation develops. Initial onset, and final offset consonants consistently clear. Vowel clarity reflects LEVEL 3 Vowels, diphthongs and new languages can be coached. Clarity of diction in extended ranges and dynamics develops. Consonants before the beat and internal consonants develop. Poetic and agogic accent, i.e., word and syllabic stress / un-stress, introduced and develops. Latin and at least one other language introduced. 	 Greater range of articulations, e.g., crescendo on dotted or tied notes, fp, sfz, fermata, and clarity of faster-moving passages, develops. Articulation reflecting LEVEL 3 Breath Management is introduced and develops. Legato develops. Forward motion and sustained energy during legato most successful at louder dynamics and when efficient breath effort occurs. 	 Counting together and inner pulse develops. Accelerando and ritardando performed with accuracy, tempo changes can affect balance of tone or breath effort. More challenging rhythms such as dotted notes, triplets, meter signatures, multicultural rhythms are introduced, can be coached. Rhythmic inconsistencies occur, affected by dynamics, tempo, or imbalanced breath effort. Breathing rhythmically for precise onsets introduced. Count singing at LEVEL 2 is possible. 	 Expression and style results from specific attention to composer's markings. Poetic and agogic accent introduced, i.e., word and syllabic stress / un-stress to creating poetic meaning. General meaning of poetry is understood, communicated through dynamic and poetic shape. Form explored, formal elements lead to a "climactic point" in each piece. Extra-musical means of expression, e.g., movement, facial engagement, "choralography," standing arrangements, narration, developed. 	 Meter: 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, cut time (symbol and 2/2), 6/8, 5/4, 6/4, simple changing meters. Note Values: Whole, half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth, dotted notes, syncopation, eighth note triplets. Tempo: Largo – Allegro (56–144). Musical Markings: Adagio, Andante, Moderato, Allegro, Presto, Rit(ardando), Accel(erando), pp-ff, Cresc(endo) and Decresc(endo), sfz, fp, fermata, subito, Accent >, marcato and staccato. Non-Traditional Notation: Introduced in jazz or multicultural repertoire. 	 Melodic Reading: Step-wise and pentatonic melodies, 4ths, and 5ths, introduction of 6ths in melody, uniso to four-part reading depending on difficulty, dotted notes, syncopation, and triplets. Intervals: Major and minor scale sun with Kodály hand signs. Non-diatonic intervals with Kodály syllables and hand signs introduced. Key Signatures: None to four sharps or four flats, both major and minor. Chord Tones: Three- to four-part chords, major and minor root positio 7th chords, 9ths and inversions introduced.
Level 4 ADVANCED HIGH SCHOOL EXCELLENT CHURCH / COMMUNITY MANY COLLEGIATE	 Resonance develops through shaping and tuning inner resonating spaces, healthy alignment, body awareness of pharyngeal resonance, resonant vowels, head / chest mix. Vibrant, overtone rich, balanced-tone, reflecting LEVEL 4 Breath Management develops. Resonance consistent in all vowels, including diphthongs and many non-English vowels. Resonance consistency develops and extends throughout vocal ranges. Modification of vocal tract in extended registers is introduced and develops, e.g., specific resonant vowels, tall or lofted, primal sounds, with relaxed and flexible jaw. SA develop functional mix of "head" and "chest" voice. TB develop a vibrant, expansive mid to lower tones and a lyric, clear upper voice. 	 Ensemble sound results from consistent resonance, precise rhythm, and dynamic shape. Ensemble sound results from a unified vocal approach, encourages individual development. Methods to create ensemble sound adjusted as voices develop, e.g., voice matching, standing arrangements. Unified ensemble develops across varied vocal styles, e.g., vibrato or non, world music. Balance addressed by varied standing arrangements, flexible personnel use, dynamic adjustment. Stylistic and repertoire-based balance variations develop. 	 Ease of extended range and increased agility develops. Singers demonstrate ease of tessitura in upper voice: SA voices C5 – F5, TB C4 – F4 16th note passages clearly sung at moderately fast tempo, chromatic intervals when coached. Divisi within each section is possible. Complexity of divisi determined by personnel. Vocalization of non-Western classical styles developed. 	 Listening skills and tuning individually, within sections, between sections, is consistent. Intonation consistent throughout vocal ranges, at faster tempi, more challenging intervals, or text. Singers able to make adjustments to fix poor intonation. Melodic tuning develops in addition to harmonic tuning. Complex chords often tune accurately. Inconsistencies occur due to individual development of LEVEL 4 technique, can be coached. Singers adjust intonation when singing with piano vs. a cappella. When singing a cappella, choir tunes well, even if overall pitch may flat or sharp. 	 Buoyant, expansive breath posture, maintained from inhalation through phrase, develops. Efficiency of breath effort, i.e., buoyant intercostal engagement, efficient abdominal effort and air flow, balanced and smooth onsets, develops in all ranges and dynamics. Offset breaths and "catch breaths" re-establish efficient and balanced effort. Intentional breaths develop, e.g., rhythmic breaths, shaping the vocal tract, other musical elements. Breath and effort technique for non-Western classical styles introduced. 	 Dynamics from p-f consistent with LEVEL 4 Breath Management and Resonance. Dynamics varied within phrases, phrases contrast to build an overall structure. Balanced tone and breath effort in extreme dynamic ranges develops as LEVEL 4 Breath Management and resonance is learned. Accuracy of dynamics in extremes of range and tessitura develops. Subtle or quick shaping of dynamics to reflect text, rhythmic patterns, and style develops. 	 Diction develops as poetic declamation, in addition to pronunciation and enunciation. Modification of diction creates consistent enunciation in range and dynamic extremes. Consonants before the beat and internal consonants are consistent and help create a sense of forward motion and <i>legato</i>. Poetic and <i>agogic</i> accent consistently applied, i.e., word, syllabic, and phrase stress / unstress. Expressive treatment of text, e.g., duration or placement of consonants and color of vowels for style, dialect, develops. A more difficult language to Englishspeaking singers may be introduced, e.g., French, Russian, or less familiar world languages. 	 Artistic use of articulations develops. Articulations that are varied and reflect LEVEL 4 Breath Management, develop. Legato is consistent, diction creates a sense of forward motion, energy, and momentum. Extreme articulation demands can affect resonance and pitch. Balanced breath effort develops. Varied weights of repeated articulations, or articulation resulting from artistic poetic declamation and agogic accent introduced. Ornaments, non-Western classical styles, and other subtle expressions develop. 	 Precision and accuracy through subdivision is introduced and develops. Rhythmic energy is present in all styles and dynamics. Accelerando and Ritardando performed with balanced tone and breath effort, develops. Rhythm as an expressive element, e.g, rubato, tempo changes, and fermata, with artistic purpose, introduced and develops. Rhythmic weight, style, or "feel," e.g., jazz, multicultural styles, develops in addition to metric precision. Rhythmic breathing resulting in precise and artistic onsets develops. Count singing at LEVEL 3 is possible. 	 Musical decisions based both on the composer's markings as well as personal expression develops. Historical and contemporary style and performance practices introduced. Specific meaning of the text is understood, and communicated by poetic declamation of text, LEVEL 4 Dynamic, Diction, and Articulation, resulting in artistically shaped singing. Form demonstrated by intentional shaping of structural elements, LEVEL 4 Rhythm elements, and musical details. Extra-musical means of expression, e.g., programming, movement, staging, develop. 	 Meter: 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, cut time (symbol and 2/2), 6/8, 5/4, 6/4, 3/8, 5/8, 7/8, 9/8, 12/8 and changing meters. Note Values: Whole, half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth, dotted notes, syncopation, eighth and quarter note triplets. Tempo: Largo – Presto (56–168). Musical Markings: Adagio, Andante, Moderato, Allegro, Presto, Rit(ardando), Accel(erando), ppp-fff, Cresc(endo) and Decresc(endo), sfz, fp, fermata, subito, piu, meno, Accent >, plus marcato, staccato, tenuto. Non-Traditional Notation: Developed with opportunities to sing jazz, aleatoric, multicultural, or early music. 	 Melodic Reading: Melodies with all diatonic intervals, major and minor, unison to four-part reading depending on difficulty, dotted notes syncopation, triplets, compound met basic meter changes. Intervals: All intervals, major scale and minor sung with Kodály hand sig Non-diatonic intervals, e.g., tritone, major 7th, minor 9th, with Kodály syllables and hand signs practiced. Key Signatures: None to five sharps or five flats, both major and minor. Chord Tones: Three- to eight-part chords, major and minor root positio 7th chords and inversions, altered chord tones introduced.
Level 5 HIGH-LEVEL COLLEGIATE, CHURCH / COMMUNITY MANY SEMI-PROFESSIONAL	 Vibrant, overtone-rich, balanced tone develops, reflects LEVEL 5 Breath Management, and is consistent in all registers and voice parts, regardless of dynamics, style, or language. Resonance develops through a naturally and artistically shaped text, resulting in a flexible tonal approach. Resonance can be inconsistent in the most demanding of passages or languages, can be coached. SA lower register is a functional mix of "head" and "chest" voice; upper voice balanced, agile, vibrant. TB consistently vibrant and expansive in mid to lower voice; upper register is clear, forward. 	 Ensemble sound results from vibrant, overtone-rich, and balanced tone, is consistent in all vowels, registers, as well as unified musical elements. Ensemble sound occurs while individuals maintain a relaxed and healthy sound, regardless of style, language, or type of resonance desired. Balance is determined by musical and stylistic demands of repertoire, created through various methods, e.g., varied standing arrangements, moving singers from part to part, adjustments of resonance, vowel and dynamic. 	 Singers maintain balanced tone and effort in sustained tessitura in all registers. Chromatic intervals and passages, complex rhythms, dissonant intervals and harmonies sung clearly, inconsistencies of resonance and clarity occur, can be coached. Any divisi possible as determined by personnel. Singers demonstrate flexible tonal approach in non-Western and historic styles. 	 Intonation accurate in all registers. Intonation accurate in all styles and tempi. Complex harmonies of varied styles tune easily. Singing in varied temperaments and non-Western tuning can be coached. Inconsistencies occur due to developing technique, breath management and vibrato, solutions can be coached. Singers maintain correct pitch center in a cappella singing in addition to melodic, harmonic tuning. 	 Efficiency of breath effort, i.e., buoyant intercostal engagement, efficient abdominal effort and air flow, balanced onsets, develops consistency in all ranges and dynamics. Use of appoggio develops, e.g., messa di voce, ease of extended registers. Intentional breaths develop, e.g., prepare onsets for vowel, pitch, register, articulation, and rhythmic shape. "Catch breaths" that are intentional, artistically and rhythmically placed, develop. Non-Western classical breathing styles can be coached. 	 Balanced breath effort creates a natural rise and fall of dynamics in all registers. Dynamics vary within phrases, phrases contrast to build an overall form to each piece. Subtle or quick shaping of dynamics to reflect text, rhythmic patterns, and style is consistently demonstrated. Technically demanding dynamics are introduced and develop, e.g., sotto voce, mesa di voce, fp, sfz. Dynamic distortions of vocal quality, vowel, vibrato, can be coached. Dynamic markings are treated as guides through which an artistically shaped musical line is sung, as opposed to absolutes. 	 Enunciates text clearly in a variety of languages, including more challenging languages, with appropriate dialect determined by language, region, or history. Intentional tonal difference resulting from dialect may be desired and coached. Modification of consonants and enunciation for musical reasons develops, e.g., rubato, delaying onset, legato, tessitura, balance with instruments. 	 Articulation reflects LEVEL 5 Breath Management, develops artistic subtlety. Articulation determined by language and style develops. Balanced tone and effort consistent through long articulated passages, extremes of articulation, dynamics, and tessitura. Composer's articulation markings interpreted as a reflection of an artistically sung text and musical line, rather than absolutes. 	 Inner pulse consistent. Knowledge of subdivision is demonstrated by precise rhythm in all styles. Balanced tone and effort maintained throughout tempo variations and challenging rhythms. Rhythm as an expressive element is consistent, e.g., rubato, varied weight, momentum, and "feel", in addition to precision. Precision develops, and reflects LEVEL 5 Breath Management, in all rhythms and styles. Count singing at LEVEL 4 is possible. 	 Mature artistry develops, with consistently shaped phrases, poetic declamation, rhythmic artistry, and informed reading of composer's indications. Historical, contemporary, or world-music style and performance practice informs artistic elements, e.g., LEVEL 5 Diction, Vowels and Resonance, Articulation, et al. Specific meaning of the text is communicated and conveyed through musical elements. Form results from musical elements and composer's markings creating an artistic and structural whole. Extra-musical expression, e.g., programming, movement, and staging, is thoughtful and creative. 	 Meter: Any can be coached. Note Values: Any. Tempo: Any can be coached. Musical Markings: All common markings, descriptive phrases, e.g., con bocca chiusa, can be coached and understood easily. Traditional Notation: Developing with opportunities to sing modern styles. 	 Melodic Reading: Melodies utilizing all intervals, all keys and modes, unison to eight-part reading depending on difficulty, challenging syncopation, triplets, compound me challenging meter changes. Intervals: All intervals, major scale a minor sung with Kodály hand signs. Non-diatonic intervals with Kodály syllables and hand signs developed through application to chromatic repertoire. Key Signatures: Any key major or min Chord Tones: All positions and inversions of chords; rootless chords and "stacked" chords; six-part and more chord tones.
Level 6 TOP PROFESSIONAL & SEMI-PROFESSIONAL RARE COLLEGIATE	 Singers produce a vibrant, overtone-rich, balanced sound, consistent in all registers and all voice parts, regardless of language, dynamics or tessitura. Approach to tone is varied and stylistically informed, remaining consistent with healthy vocal technique regardless of vocal demands. 	 Ensemble sound results from a uniform approach to resonance, diction, and artistic elements, regardless of tone desired. Balance handled through varied standing arrangements, flexible handling of personnel, e.g., moving of voices from section to section, adjustment of numbers of singers. Balance is determined by performance practice, musical and stylistic demands of repertoire. 	 Resonance is clear and consistent in all singers, regardless of dynamic, range or tessitura. Complex rhythms and harmonies can be sung with absolute clarity of resonance and pitch. Any divisi is possible. Singers demonstrate technique to create any non-Western classical sound with healthy vocalism when coached. 	 Intonation is flawless. Accurate within dissonant passages or works, as well as dissonant accompaniment. Singers adjust fluently to varied temperaments as needed for historical purposes or instrumental demands. Singing non-Western styles and with non-Western instruments, microtones or non-Western tuning can be coached. 	 Balanced breath effort creates an efficient and intentional energy and flow throughout all registers and dynamics. Variations of air flow and effort allow singers to create an array of sounds, while remaining vocally healthy. Intentional breaths for onsets and "catch breaths" are an important expressive component in a musically sung phrase. Non-Western classical use of breath and body easily coached. 	 The entire range of dynamics is sung with consistent LEVEL 6 Resonance, Intonation and efficient breath effort. Dynamics are the result of a natural mix of composer's markings, an artistically sung musical line within the musical texture, informed by stylistic or historical performance practice. 	 Vowels vary in color and resonance as determined by language, dialect, and stylistic approach, yet maintain uniformity throughout the choir. All languages have a consistent and dialectic approach, appropriate for musical style. Subtleties of enunciation, as well as unusual linguistic demands can easily be coached. 	 Articulation is uniform throughout, consistently a function of LEVEL 6 Breath Management. Articulation is determined by style and poetic declamation, and varied with regards to needs for balance, dynamic, tessitura, vocal considerations. 	 Inner pulse and subdivision in all singers leads to a vibrant and unified rhythmic approach. Rhythms, sung with intention, are a foundation of all other musical elements. Rhythm or "feel," is precise, accurate, and informed by style and performance practice. 	 Superb individual artistry mixes with other artists across the ensemble, to create a powerful, expressive performance. Historically-informed performance practice, deep awareness of style and culture combines with insightful artistry to create meaningful performances. Text is sung in a poetic and meaningful way, and is expressed with insightful attention to musical detail. Formal and musical elements combine to create a structural, dramatic, and / or personal artistic statement. Choir utilizes creative means to effectively communicate with audience. 	All elements mastered.	All elements mastered.