

Rock Ridge Music Program Framework – Administrative Summary

Executive Summary

The Rock Ridge Music Task Force convened to evaluate the current state of the K–12 Music Program using a structured scoring framework across nine domains. Each domain includes four performance levels, Exploring (1), Emerging (2), Proficient (3), and Extending (4), representing developmental stages from foundational to exemplary practice. This scoring mechanism allowed the team to assess the program both individually by domain and holistically as a department.

After reviewing instructional time, staffing models, curriculum consistency, student achievement data, scheduling practices, and departmental culture, the task force assigned evidence-based ratings for each domain using input from all three buildings. The resulting scores identify significant disparities in access, instructional consistency, staffing capacity, and long-term program sustainability.

Holistic Program Observations

Across all domains, several consistent patterns emerged:

1. Instructional Inequity Across Buildings

Different elementary schedules and uneven access to general music result in unequal student experiences and impact long-term readiness for secondary ensembles.

2. Structural Scheduling Barriers

Travel time between buildings, Every-Other-Day scheduling at the junior high level, and conflicts with Academy pathways reduce both instructional quality and teacher effectiveness.

3. Insufficient Staffing to Meet Program Demands

Current staffing levels do not support equitable lessons, consistent curriculum delivery, or the administrative tasks required to maintain a comprehensive K–12 program.

4. High Community Support

Parents, boosters, and local arts advocates provide strong, growing support—indicating a clear community value for the arts and fertile ground for future partnerships.

5. Strong Potential, Constrained by Capacity

The department demonstrates pockets of excellence despite operational limitations. With adequate staffing and structural support, Rock Ridge could build a model, equitable music program aligned with state and national best practices.

Domain Review

Access & Participation

Current Status: Score 1

- Inequitable access to classroom music across buildings.
- Inconsistent elementary instructional minutes.

Target State:

- Consistent K–12 access across all schools.
- Multiple, equitable entry points (Orchestra, Chamber, Men's/Women's Choir starting in Jr High).
- Strong retention supported by early, reliable access.
 - These programs only succeed if the younger programs have strong opportunity beginning in 5th grade for orchestra, and 6th for all other modalities.

Curriculum & Instruction

Current Status: Score 2

- Curriculum exists but is inconsistently delivered due to unequal staff/student contact time and seasonal course alignments.

Target State:

- Fully standards-aligned curriculum.
 - Developed by the teaching staff, and reviewed with the Boards input.
- Balanced, diverse repertoire.
 - Difficulty of music grows over time to allow for engagement
- Guaranteed and consistent instructional time across buildings.

Staffing & Professional Learning

Current Status: Score 2

- Insufficient staffing to support lessons and ensembles.
 - Insufficient scheduling to allow for Jr High Ensemble and program development

- Travel reduces contractually required prep time.
- Limited professional development access.

Target State:

- Adequate staffing to provide lessons 6–12.
- District-supported, aligned professional development opportunity and collaborative planning.
- Capacity to manage administrative tasks (inventory, concerts, logistics).

Resources & Facilities

Current Status: Score 2

- Instrument inventory needs updating; inconsistent access to stable spaces.

Target State:

- Regular funding for maintenance/replacement.
- Stable classroom assignments in buildings
- Appropriate rehearsal/performance spaces and technology.

Community Culture

Current Status: Score 3

- Strong booster and parent involvement.

Target State:

- Expanded partnerships and increased public performances.
- Sufficient staff capacity for community engagement.

Department Culture

Current Status: Score 2.5

- Positive relationships but limited collaboration due to scheduling and workload.

Target State:

- Appropriate Prep / Professional Development time.
- Unified department identity.
- High student enthusiasm and multiple music pathways.

Student Achievement

Current Status: Score 1.5

- Inconsistent lesson schedules limit literacy and skill development.

Target State:

- Consistent lesson provision.
- Strong literacy, fundamentals, and musicianship.
- Students achieving honors and scholarship opportunities.

Participation & Retention**Current Status: Score 2**

- Participation varies across buildings.
- Every other Day scheduling and limited lesson time reduce retention.

Target State:

- Lessons offered consistently for all ensembles.
- Stable or increasing participation across transitions.
- Balanced ensemble sizes with strong demand.
- Early entry points for all levels of music, with no before/after school requirement.

Performance Quality**Current Status: Score 2.5**

- Adequate performance level but inconsistent rehearsal time impacts readiness.

Target State:

- Superior ratings at contests.
- State-level performance invitations.
- Strong representation in All-State ensembles.

Post-Secondary Readiness**Current Status: Score 2**

- Some students pursue post-secondary music opportunities.

Target State:

- Increased scholarship participation and alumni engagement in music.

Key Takeaway

The Music Task Force's evaluation shows that Rock Ridge has a dedicated staff, strong community support, and high student interest. However, current barriers in staffing, scheduling, and equitable access prevent the program from reaching sustainability or meeting best-practice standards. Addressing these foundational gaps—especially through targeted staffing increases—will directly improve student achievement, retention, and access, and position the district for long-term success.

Next Steps & Recommendations

Based on the domain evaluation and the holistic findings of the Music Program Framework, the Music Task Force recommends the following next steps to ensure the program moves toward equitable access, sustainability, and alignment with best practices:

1. Immediate Action (2025–26 School Year) **Partially Met**

A. Stabilize Elementary Specialist Scheduling

- Align general music access across buildings (consistent minutes and rotation frequency).
- Ensure all K–5 students receive equitable instructional opportunities regardless of school placement.
- Hire .5 FTE to alleviate parity concerns at the elementary level

2. Near-Term Action Spring 2026

A. Review and Correct Scheduling Barriers

- Assess the impact of Every-Other-Day (EOD) scheduling at the junior high level.
- Evaluate feasibility of restoring daily ensemble instruction.
- Review Academy model conflicts that prevent students from enrolling in music electives.

B. Conduct a Staffing Needs Forecast

- Determine staffing levels required to restore foundational entry points (Grades 5 and 6) and long-term offerings (Men's/Women's Choir, additional electives).
- Revisit alignment with the originally proposed FTE Model

C. Audit Resources & Facility Stability

- Review instrument inventory needs and create a rotating replacement plan.
- Stabilize classroom assignments to reduce instructional disruption.

3. Long-Term Action (2026–27 Strategic Planning)

A. Rebuild K–12 Vertical Alignment

- Ensure consistent curriculum across fall/spring rotation and buildings.
- Align curricular maps, repertoire policies, assessment benchmarks, and lesson systems.

B. Expand Community Partnerships & Visibility

- Leverage the newly formed Rock Ridge Arts Association.
- Increase community performances and partnerships to strengthen pipeline and advocacy.

C. Multi-Year Music Program Goals

- Restore high school Men’s and Women’s Choir.
- Increase participation and retention through consistent access to lessons in ensemble programs as appropriate.
- Track progress using annual scoring on the same framework to measure growth.

4. Ongoing Monitoring & Collaboration

- **Quarterly check-ins** between administration and the Music Task Force to monitor progress.
- Use the Framework scoring annually to show growth and identify emerging gaps.
- Pair staffing and scheduling changes with student participation and achievement data to evaluate impact.

Summary Recommendation

The Music Task Force strongly recommends the district pursue a phased, structured improvement plan beginning with the addition of .5 FTE, alignment of elementary access, and correction of key scheduling barriers. These steps will stabilize the program, support student achievement, and lay the foundation for restoring a fully aligned, equitable, and sustainable K–12 music program.