

## **Elementary Honors Ensembles featured CREC Performers at Connecticut Music Educators Association Conference Festival**

(Hartford, Conn.) CREC students from the International Magnet School (IMS), in South Windsor, Montessori Magnet School (MMS) in Hartford, and Reggio Magnet School of the Arts in Avon took part in the Connecticut Music Educators Association (CMEA) Conference festival at Hartford's Connecticut Convention Center in April. They were especially chosen for the Elementary Honors Ensembles that feature high-achieving young vocalists and musicians from across the state.

This year's Elementary Honors Chorus was comprised of 230 choral students in grades four through six. CREC vocalists included Gabriella Eckert, IMS, grade 5, Enfield; Saoirse Noyes, MMS, grade 5, Berlin; Chaina Mersan, MMS, grade 5, Hartford; Shanira Lugo, MMS, grade 4, Hartford; Phoebe Candy, MMS, grade 4, Hartford; Jelitza Santiago, Reggio, grade 5, Hartford; and Mekena Pisani, Reggio, grade 4, Simsbury. The conductor was Craig Knapp, a clinician and choral conductor who makes frequent appearances in New York, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut.

The Elementary Honors Band featured student musicians in grades four to six. CREC's band members were Collin Howe, IMS, grade 5, Enfield; Davian Santana, IMS, grade 5, East Hartford; and Casio Robinson, Reggio, grade 5, New Hartford. Their conductor was Rob Grice, one of the preeminent composers of young band music. The band premiered his original piece that CMEA commissioned. Grice's "The Steel Mill" is about the first steel mill in the U.S, which was located in Simsbury in the 1700s.

Performing at the festival was a great experience for the students. "There were a lot of kids there. I've never sung in a group that size before," said vocalist Gabriella Eckert. "I was nervous, but you should never be afraid to do something that you like."

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*The Capitol Region Education Council was established in 1966. Working with and for its member districts, CREC has developed a wide array of cost-effective and high-quality programs and services to meet the educational needs of children and adults in the region. CREC brings nearly five decades of experience in education, regional collaboration, and operations to provide innovative strategies and products that address the changing needs of school districts and their students, corporations, non-profits, and individual professions. CREC regularly serves 36 towns in Greater Hartford, offering more than 120 programs to more than 150,000 students annually. CREC manages more than 35 facilities throughout the area, including 16 interdistrict magnet schools. More information about CREC and CREC's award-winning schools is available at [www.crec.org](http://www.crec.org).*

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