

Music 386
Philosophy of Music Education
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My Philosophy of Music Education

One essential goal each music educator should bestow is to create a classroom where every student has the opportunity to learn. With the individual knowledge, skills and dispositions of each student in mind, educators need to create a comfortable environment for every student. When creating an environment that accommodates each individual student educators need to first obtain the goal of demonstrating the act of an intentional educator. Demonstrating this role is important by keeping relevant goals and classroom structure in mind. It is also important that the educator knows each individual student and can make accommodations for all. Additionally, it is vitally important that the intentional teacher strives to accomplish the goals set for each student.

In a secondary education setting it is a time when students are growing and changing rapidly, while they are developing their own identity. During this time, music education can become quite beneficial for many students and aid in the development of their individual identity and role in society. When performing in an ensemble, choral, general, or instrumental, an important goal for students is to develop significant teamwork. If they can develop this characteristic in the classroom they will use it as a life long asset to their future careers and within the social economy. In addition to teamwork, students have the opportunity to develop confidence within performance and gain positive encouragement which will drive the students to become lifelong learners and continue to develop their knowledge in every content area.

Within the classroom, the task of assessment is a necessity. Assessment is a broad procedure of education that can be demonstrated in a variety of ways. However, assessment in music education can be slightly more difficult compared to other subject areas. It is difficult because a key component of music education is musicianship and performance. Assessing a student's musicianship or performance cannot be done by written assessments, for example, true false or multiple choice exams. As stated by Burbidge (1998), written assessments do not develop and demonstrate musicianship within music education. In order to assess a student's musicianship there needs to be some level of performance. It is important for the students to understand the significance of creating music, aside from circling the correct answer after memorizing the definition of musical terms. A common solution to assessing a student's performance is to use a rubric.

Rubric assessments open up a wide-angle lens to focus on the whole student and give the teacher a clear, bright assessment of that student's abilities (Burbidge, 1998, p.7). Using a rubric allows the students to understand the important aspects of their performance and musicianship and gives them a personal check list of performance characteristics to prepare. Additionally, a rubric avoids the possibility of a teacher's bias opinion. The criteria within a rubric are equally important. Not only should the assessment define the standards of music education but it should also consider the judgments of the educator. Assessment is developed by product, performance, and progress (May, 1997, p.35). The product stage includes performance, projects, etc., performance includes efforts, participation, etc., and progress includes how far the learner has come. With that said, the student can not be failed, rather they can pass or not.

Another important aspect within music education is to develop a curriculum that entails multiculturalism. Multiculturalism encompasses a wide range of varying ideologies and aspects of diversity. Regardless of what one individual belief is to the next it is important to remember that we are all members of a culture and there is no one specific way that things should be done. Additionally, everyone is equal and holds values and beliefs centered within their culture. This is easily done by allowing students to see what role music has in different cultures and how music is composed, performed, and what the meanings of certain genres of music are. Ultimately, this will create an appreciation for multiculturalism in music education. Additionally, it is important to develop repertoire with a wide range of cultural diversity. It is necessary for students to learn the aspects of the music and understand where the music is coming from in order to perform the piece correctly.

Before developing a curriculum and a class centered on multiculturalism, it is important to understand that each student will follow different cultural beliefs. These differences may affect the learning styles that students are accustomed to, their gender role in a society, or diverse methods of communication. In today's educational society we are faced with a wide range of diversity. It is important to give each student the opportunity to share their cultural ideologies, which will create a level of respect among the students. When sharing their cultural norms the students will develop an appreciation for the differences among others, not only will the level of respect increase among students but also among opinions of culture.

It is the teacher's role to take the first step to develop an idea of each individual student's culture. Communicating with the student and guardians of the student will

allow the educator to gain background information on their culture. Many students desire to learn about their own heritage in order to maintain a sense of their own unique cultural identity. In order for the student's to express their own heritage educators could develop a part of the curriculum devoted to the personal cultural differences in the classroom and allow the students to present their personal beliefs, which can lead students to value cultural pluralism (Rauscher, 1998, p.112).

In addition to developing a better understanding of each student, it is the educator's responsibility to gain knowledge of each student's knowledge, skills, and dispositions. With these aspects in mind it is necessary that the classroom allows each student to feel comfortable and is a least restrictive environment. The students should establish an understanding that all are welcome in our classroom no matter what diversity is upheld. The inclusion of exceptional learners in the classroom may be a difficult task to master, but the effects on students with exceptionalities and without both significantly benefit. For students with exceptionalities it allows them to feel a sense of community within the classroom and to grow and learn with their peers. This will ultimately improve their self esteem, while building friendships, and enforcing a sense of belonging. As stated in Hittie & Peterson (2003), students with disabilities gain increased time in instruction, targeted functional activities, incidental learning, and future social advantages. Future social advantages are highly beneficial for any student. Developing a sense of community and working with others is a task every individual has to obtain to survive in today's society. Additionally, students without disabilities highly benefit from inclusion. The students without disabilities are given a responsibility to help the students

with disabilities. When experiencing this sense of diversity it allows the students without disabilities many future benefits and assists in helping the teacher as well.

When inclusion is demonstrated in a classroom, technology may serve a vital role. Through the use of audio and visual aids, sign language etc. inclusion in a classroom is much more successful. Aside from the benefits technology in the classroom offers for students with exceptionalities, it is beneficial for the classroom as a whole. Technology offers a unique method of how we teach and what we teach. For example in some schools if there are not enough resources for each student, notation or keyboard software for computers may be much more accessible for students. What is important to remember is that good technology is also likely to change frequently which changes standards and the quality of compatibility. Overall, technology in the classroom is an essential accommodation for many students but it is important to remember that good technology may not replace good teaching.

Overall, music educators play a critical role in education. The physical, emotional and intellectual development that comes from music education is unlike any other form of education. In order for students to understand how music affects our lives, they need to experience the effects of music for themselves, and music education allows that. Through the varying types of activities, performances, technology, and lessons students may be exposed to a broad range of musical experiences, which may benefit them individually or as a society.

References

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