

## Philosophy of Music Education

Our world thrives on communication. Without it, we would have no way of expressing emotions, experiences, and needs, and would not be able to learn and grow. We have the ability to choose our primary vehicle for communication in our lives. Though spoken language is seen to many as the “best” way to communicate, music is able to communicate emotions in a way that is simply indescribable. Music reaches into your soul and brings a joy and satisfaction that no other way of communication can express.

Sometimes music can function as many different forms of communication, verbal and nonverbal. Because music is so flexible in how it can reach others makes it universal. It has the ability to cross cultures, language barriers, and social boundaries. Simply put, this is why music is so important in the world today. Music defines us as human beings. Our complex understanding of music and the depth of how it affects us makes us unique from other species. By participating in musical activities, we not only learn musical concepts, but life skills: such as teamwork, attentiveness, critical listening, and leadership skills. Without these abilities, many students would fail at simple tasks that are asked of them in the future. These skills can be taught in other classes besides music, but because music has the ability to teach students these skills indirectly brings it a new sense of worth.

Music is important in every school curriculum to teach these critical skills and to bring a well balanced education to students. Music is often seen as an extracurricular activity instead of a core academic subject. On the surface, learning music will produce musicians and help people reach their full musical potential. Music teaches the mechanics of memorization, critical thinking and listening, and performance techniques to produce a competent musician. Below the surface, music gives students the

non-musical benefits of teamwork and leadership along with a positive creative outlet for their emotions and self expression. In turn, this will allow students to better communicate their ideas to others and help to become a successful, healthy citizen in their community.

Varying styles of music bring out an array of emotions and cultural beliefs and ideas. This is why having a well-rounded and balanced music education is vital. Students need all different types of genres, languages, and moods in order to understand how music is used as a means of communication. To deprive them of any style of music would be to stunt their creative process and understanding. They should be introduced to a wide range of difficulty within the pieces to challenge them as musicians and help them learn to work together for a common purpose. Besides the varying selections presented, students should also be offered an assortment of music courses to compliment their study and encourage them to grow in their musicianship. All students should be given the opportunity to take a music theory course that includes ear training and piano. These skills are crucial when continuing music education. Since high schools strive to prepare students for college, there is no reason music students should be left behind to struggle in their college music courses. It is our duty as teachers to prepare those interested in music for life beyond high school. All aspects of music should be included in a well balanced school curriculum.

No child should be without music in their well balanced curriculum. Therefore, all students should be required to take music until the foundations are taught and fully comprehended. Young children (grades Pre-Kindergarten through Fourth) especially would benefit from music education because it would give them an alternative way of learning. Sometimes, small children and English as a Second Language students learn best through music and movement, and they should be given this opportunity in order to reach their full potential. Middle school students should have music as a core academic that teaches the foundations of music. At this time, they should be offered the opportunity to

become part of large and small ensembles to introduce them to the mechanics of performing and working as a group. At the high school level, students should be refining the foundational skills they had been taught, polishing performing skills, and learning how to be a creator and an interpreter of the music for themselves. This comprehensive plan would ensure that when students continued their music education beyond high school, they would be fully prepared and ready for success at the next level.

Because music is such an important part of being human and expressing emotions, it is also important who is teaching students these skills. Those who educate should be extremely dedicated, compassionate, and musically competent. The teacher should be there because they *want* to be, and for no other reason. Educators should want to help students grow, achieve, and thrive in all aspects of life. They should want to make a difference in those they come in contact with and to help them express themselves in a positive way. These educators should be artists as well as teachers who are practicing their craft regularly and constantly learning more about the art of communicating through music. Those who are up to this mighty challenge should become the teachers, and should go into the profession selflessly. Their ultimate reward should be the students' joy in the creation of music, giving the educator complete satisfaction in a job well done.

Music is extremely personal, and it should be used to connect people of all walks of life. Too many young adults go through school feeling lost and alone, turning to negative outlets to express their inward anguish. This tragic scenario could be prevented if those students were to feel welcome and at home at school. All students should feel as though their class is a community of learners, with themselves being a prominent part of it. With the love and support of a nurturing learning environment, students would be able to find comfort from their worries in the classroom. Especially in a musical learning environment, every student should feel important and wanted. This is by far the most important element to a classroom.

Music will promote learning, positive actions, problem solving, and it will increase self-confidence in kids. The surroundings will promote multiculturalism, new experiences, and expressing emotions in a positive way. Only music can cross barriers to connect to all types of learners through the most diverse and comprehensive way of communication.