

Philosophy of Music Education
Joseph Schlicht
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

March 28, 2007

I always loved music; whoso has skill in this art is of good temperament, fitted for all things. We must teach music in schools; a schoolmaster ought to have skill in music, or I would not regard him.

Martin Luther (1483-1546)

The colors of life can be summarized by tones that we hear and see. Music is a magical emotion that conjures the inner most content, sadness, joyfulness, and the list goes on. Music education is whole heartedly an active part of curricular wholesomeness. Music education creates a gateway into a realm of all subjects, an intersection where a student can learn English and a foreign language, or make a matrix chart to compose a piece of music. As music becomes such a large role in society, it is also important for students in the world of academia to understand or at least learn what are seen as music standards. Students are entitled to a well rounded education and that includes music.

Music education offers a rare experience that most activities can not offer. It is a team sport that includes everyone all of the time, no matter the strength or weakness that a person may have. Music education can be called a constant, a feeling of inclusion, belonging without being rejected. The acceptance of all is something that as an educator we should know and be familiar with. The actions that we give as a result of being well rounded, educated, caring intellectual life-long learners proves that our classroom(s) are bias free and a welcome safe haven to those that need it and want to be a part of it. As a music educator it is our duty to provide that comfort while making great efforts to teach an enriching, informative, creative, fun, student informed curriculum.

Based on the state and national standards it is important to incorporate activities that students will gain valuable knowledge from. The relation of historical and contemporary topics of music history, theory, listening, and composition into a system that is congruent with the styles of John Dewey. While doing this, the homeostasis of a democratic classroom will live up to the modern liberal ideologies that we as educators should teach. While maintaining a curriculum that will be congruent with all types of students, a modified curriculum can be made to help with circumstances that will help the

student(s) meet goals that are set by you and the student. It is according to National law and standard that the Inclusion Act P.L 94-142 allows children with specific learning disabilities or disorders in one or more of the psychological processes be included in normal education courses. This would be an exception which would allow for a modified curriculum based on the IEP that is set up.

Having curriculum that is student based will allow for a multicultural blend in the classroom. Multiculturalism can be seen as multiple cultures meeting at one point to become one; the acceptance, promotion, and understanding of all cultures. It is the responsibility of the teacher to promote a wholeness and understanding to their students about the harshness and realities that accompany this subject. What better subject to promote multicultural excellence than music. Incorporating dance, singing styles, composition techniques, instruments, styles, and sounds will induce interest and importance into all cultures while still being sensitive. This gives students the opportunity to read, hear, and see how other cultures have contributed to music education and music. Music is a worldly possession and should be shared and enjoyed by all.

Meaningful assessment of student progress is an important task that requires time and effort that is sometimes limited because of the time restraints that occur in a weekly class schedule. Music assessment can be made possible by formal and informal tasks. There are also other assessments that can be used. The formal assessment would be a written examination where the student show's what he/she has comprehended for the unit, lesson, or cumulative course of studies. Using informal assessment is very important because of the restraint of time. Class time can be used for learning new music and other music topics. Although in a general music education course it would be important to have quizzes to assure them they are to be learning and not just reading and listening.

Music education is beauty, artistic, intellectual, and intertwines many subjects into a colorful display. As a music educator we are advocates for our field, a soldier that stands for the generations of beautiful works that fill our society and world with sound. A well-rounded education includes music. "Music expresses that which cannot be said and on which it is impossible to be silent." *Victor Hugo (1802-1885)*. Music is very important in student's education. It is inclusive, multicultural, and most importantly a subject that

everyone can be proud to be a part of. It evokes mental discipline and opens the gates to a world of possibility and color.