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**Personal Philosophy of Education**  
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Music education is valuable because it can reach students with many levels of ability and different areas of interest. All who participate in music will be benefited.

When students leave my class I want them to have the skills to do whatever they want in music: become a professional musician, amateur musician, or a music supporter. To be a professional and amateur musician, people need the knowledge of reading music and the technical abilities to play their instrument well enough that they do not need assistance with these aspects; they can solve problems on their own when they encounter them. To be a professional, amateur or a supporter, people need to know how to listen critically in order to appreciate what is happening in the music. This appreciation leads to a love of music that I hope they will all possess. I also want my students to realize that the arts are what give man our humanity and are, therefore, vital to our society.

Music is more than the notes on the page and playing an instrument. I believe in learning about music comprehensively. There is theory of composition, history, cultural traditions, art, science and many other topics that relate to music. If students learn about how music is connected to so many aspects of life, they will have a better appreciation for it, will listen to it with a more critical ear and create connections between themselves, society, and music. The connection students create with music will help them to appreciate music. Comprehensive musicianship is a key factor in creating lifelong music lovers. Comprehensive musicianship is an idea shared by educators across the country and the ideas are part of the National Standards. A few of the National Standards are: “understanding music in relation to history and culture,” “understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts,” and “listening to, analyzing and describing music” (Education World, Inc.).

When assessing students' knowledge on a Comprehensive Musicianship unit, teachers use a variety of methods for assessment. Often a portfolio is used which allows students to express their knowledge in a way that is best for them. This helps create a democratic classroom because students have a say in how they will express themselves. Portfolios also incorporate Howard Gardner's theory of eight intelligences because a student can express their knowledge in the area where they are strongest. Typically schools are based on what Howard Gardner calls "linguistic" and "logical/mathematical" skills. If a student's strength is not in one of these areas they can find school difficult, but can excel in learning that is "bodily/kinesthetic", "spatial" or any of the other intelligences (Slavin 123-124).

Music is important because it helps to define a culture and is what makes us human. All cultures have music for special events and entertainment. It carries on traditions and customs which help to define who we are and where we came from. Music makes us human because of the emotions and feelings that are felt when listening to or playing music.

My role as a teacher is very large. I need to teach students to play their instruments and read music well enough to continue on in music in their future, they also need comprehensive musicianship for any path in music, and they need to have an emotional connection to music to love it for life. Having democracy involved in assignments helps students to have more interest in the assignment and allows them to tailor it to best show their capabilities and strengths. Music education can reach students at many levels and areas of interest and will benefit all who participate.

*"Teaching music is not my main purpose. I want to make good citizens. If children hear fine music from the day of their birth and learn to play it, they develop sensitivity, discipline and endurance. They get a beautiful heart."*

*Shinichi Suzuki*

Education World, Inc. *National Standards for Arts Education*. 2007. 23 April 2007

<<http://www.education-world.com/standards/national/arts/index.shtml#music>>.

Slavin, Robert E. *Educational Psychology, Theory and Practice*. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Pearson, 2006.