



# MUSIC IS KEY

## IN LEARNING AND IN LIFE

*"MUSIC BRINGS OUT THE LIFE IN ME."*

Ingrid T., Grade 4 student, Vancouver, B.C.

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music education  
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## Why learn music in school? BECAUSE MUSIC ...

- develops skills needed by the 21st century workforce: critical and analytical thinking, creative problem solving, effective communication, team work and more;
- keeps students engaged in school and less likely to drop out;
- improves the atmosphere for learning;
- helps students achieve in other academic subjects like math, science and reading;
- helps communities share ideas and values among cultures and generations;
- is a disciplined human endeavour with intrinsic value to society;
- provides students with the opportunity to:
  - i) express themselves in verbal and non-verbal ways;
  - ii) appreciate diverse perspectives, openness and flexibility in thinking;
  - iii) develop a high level of self-awareness and self-confidence;
  - iv) take risks and solve problems creatively;
  - v) embrace a variety of unique ways to gain insights about cultural and historical issues;
  - vi) develop a rich and healthy sense of beauty and imagination.

*Italic points reprinted from the York Region District School Board Arts Education Policy 2001*

**"ONE OF MY CHOIR STUDENTS TOLD ME THAT WHEN SHE MOVED TO CANADA, SHE WASN'T NERVOUS. SHE EXPLAINED THAT ALTHOUGH SHE DID NOT SPEAK ENGLISH AT THE TIME, SHE SPOKE MUSIC, AND SHE KNEW THAT IT WAS A LANGUAGE EVERYONE UNDERSTOOD."**

**MUSIC EDUCATOR, OTTAWA, ONTARIO**

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## There are strong correlations between quality music education in school and academic achievement

*"Music enhances the process of learning. The systems they nourish, which include our integrated sensory, attention, cognitive, emotional and motor capacities, are shown to be the driving forces behind all other learning."*

**Konrad, R.R., *Empathy, Arts and Social Studies*, 2000**

*"Music involves perception, memory, emotion, motor control, all the learning aspects. It brings together a lot of different functions in a very coherent way,"*

**Robert Zatorre, *McGill University, Montreal, QC* 2002**

*"Students who were exposed to music-based lessons scored a full 100% higher on fractions tests than those who learned in the conventional manner."*

**Neurological Research, *March 15, 1999***

*"A study by Dr. Glenn Schellenberg of the University of Toronto examined the influence of music education on non-musical abilities, the effects of music lessons on academic performance and the development of information-processing and cognitive abilities. In what can be considered breakthrough research, the study has revealed that students who participated in music lessons showed statistically higher IQs (intelligence quotas)."*

**International Foundation for Music Research, *June 2004***



## ... healthy social development

*"Music can be a powerful vehicle for positively influencing and benefiting at-risk, alienated and marginalized children and youth. Music can be used both within and outside the formal education system and environment as a means towards building safer and more nurturing communities... Music (can be used) as a tool to "speak" to kids as well as a way for kids to "speak" to us!"*

**Gary Crawford, Trustee and Vice Chair, Toronto District School Board**

*"With music in schools, students connect to each other better—greater camaraderie, fewer fights, less racism and reduced use of hurtful sarcasm."*

**Eric Jensen, Arts with the Brain in Mind, 2001**

*"For some children music class is one time during the week when they are confident they will shine through. The music program is also a vital part in creating community and fostering cooperation."*

**Music educator, from the Coalition for Music Education in Canada, Music Education "State of the Nation" Benchmark Study, May 2005**

*"We have an extremely successful band program at our school which adds consistently to the positive atmosphere in our building as well as the positive self image of our students. For us, music is every bit as important as any academic subject. It is a life long gift."*

**School administrator, from the Coalition for Music Education in Canada, Music Education "State of the Nation" Benchmark Study, May 2005**

**"MUSIC HELPS ME LEARN BETTER BECAUSE IT SETS OFF A MOOD THAT ALLOWS ME TO RELAX. MUSIC INSPIRES ME AND LETS MY IMAGINATION FLOW AND LETS ME THINK CLEARLY."**

**GRADE 3 STUDENT, MARKHAM, ONTARIO**

## ... preparation for the 21st century workplace

*"Creative and cultural development is a basic function of education, not a separate subject. They are completely compatible with high standards of literacy and they are equally, not less, important."*

**Sir Ken Robinson**

**World renowned expert on innovation and creativity**

*"Participating in the arts helps people develop their creativity. Creativity involves imagination and the ability to visualize. 'Seeing' situations as they might be in the future is a valuable tool for solving problems and changing situations."*

**Voluntary Arts Network, 2005**

*"There is a growing body of research that suggests that when arts are developed and included as part of the core curricula, students have more and better chances of achieving their greatest potential"*

**Dr. Len Henriksson**

**University of British Columbia Faculty of Commerce and Business Administration, 1998**

*"The nation's top business executives agree that arts education programs can help repair weaknesses in American education and better prepare workers for the 21st Century."*

**The Changing Workplace is Changing Our View of Education, BusinessWeek, October 1996**

## ... quality of a young person's life

*"Music education demonstrably improves academic achievement, behaviour and attitude. Through music, kids learn how to have constructive relationships with other people, how focus counts, how application produces results, how to dream and most of all, how to feel true joy."*

**Bob Ezrin, legendary producer  
2004 Canadian Music Hall of Fame inductee**

*"Through music, children tap into their natural creativity, express themselves in ways that were otherwise impossible, and find tremendous satisfaction in doing so."*

**Pinchas Zukerman, Music Director,  
National Arts Centre Orchestra**

*"With music, I feel complete. It reminds me that humans possess genius and can use it to create beauty. Music classes in our schools can unlock the doors to creativity and self expression for Canada's young people and help them expand their horizons."*

**Dr. Marc Garneau, former head of the Canadian Space Agency and the first Canadian astronaut in space, 2006**

## What Can You Do to Ensure That All Students in Your School Receive a Quality Music Education Program?

- Make music a priority. Anything is possible if it is deemed important.
- Ask your music teacher for suggestions. Good music teachers know what constitutes a good timetable or will consult with colleagues to find out.
- Ask other administrators for suggestions. Why reinvent the wheel when the school down the road has already met the challenge?
- Provide all music classes with certified music specialists. Recruit and hire competent teachers, asking current music teachers for assistance in the hiring process.
- Coordinate class schedules to minimize conflict of music classes with other courses.
- Provide a music program budget that includes funding for staffing, instruments, maintenance and repair, purchase of music, current technology and a teaching environment that is equipped with the furniture and teaching supports to enable the teacher to effectively do his or her job.
- Ensure that the music program is part of the entire school year. A good program creates a community within the entire school population and reaches into the local community.
- Show your support by attending concerts. Drop by classrooms/rehearsals the next day to talk with the students. This is where the learning is celebrated.
- Encourage music teachers to network with other music teachers. Often they are the lone music teacher in the school.
- Encourage and support music teachers to attend quality professional development opportunities (e.g. provincial music education association conference, Orff association conference).
- Provide new/inexperienced music teachers mentoring opportunities with an experienced music teacher within the school and/or in other schools to help build the program and create teacher confidence and expertise.
- Connect your music teacher with the Coalition for Music Education website ([www.weallneedmusic.ca](http://www.weallneedmusic.ca)) and your provincial music education organization. These organizations provide an abundance of networking and professional development opportunities as well as resources.



The mission of the Coalition for Music Education in Canada is to raise awareness and understanding of the role that music plays in Canadian culture and to advocate for the contribution that music education makes in the lives of all Canadians. Our goal is to see that all children have a quality program in music through their schools. If school is the foundation for everything that we want our future to be, then our schools must include music as a tool for engagement, harmony, creativity and achievement.

The Coalition is here to support you. For more information, materials and resources, please visit our website at:

[www.weallneedmusic.ca](http://www.weallneedmusic.ca)

or contact us at:

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We are pleased to acknowledge the assistance and support of



as well as the Music Achievement Council, in the preparation of these materials.