

## Philosophy of Music Education

It is my sincere belief that all children should have meaningful access to a sequentially based music education. A well-educated student is educated musically. Music is basic to our culture and must be a vital part of every school's curriculum. Regardless of socio-economic status, physical or intellectual ability all children should be offered the opportunity to discover and explore their innate potential as musicians and to increase these natural capacities through formal music instruction. The arts and especially music is crucial to the development of well-rounded individuals. Music is a subject that is a synthesis of all other academic subjects and engages us in a logical, kinesthetic and linguistic manner. Music is a unique way of knowing.

Learning occurs through a variety of modes, but it is my belief that valuable learning takes place when students can experience music for themselves. A hands-on performance-based experience allows students to achieve understanding and insight about music, about the world around them and about themselves. I share David Elliott's belief that music making should be at the center of the music curriculum. (*Music Matters*, Elliott 1995) Elliott stresses the personal music experience through participation should also include the "what" "when" "where" and "why" for a greater understanding of the music we study.

The mission of a music teacher is to assist students in discovering music. When music is taught in an artistic and comprehensive manner it becomes an essential component in a student's growth and development. It is the goal of the music educator to prepare students to become independent musicians and lifelong participants and advocates of music.

With the ongoing innovations and advancements in technology and the global market our world has become a much smaller place. Therefore, it is imperative that we become more aware and sensitive to cultural differences. Music enhances this awareness of others and helps to break down socio-economic borders. The very nature of music making requires collaboration and cooperation as opposed to competition. Music is a place for everyone and through ongoing exposure and participation we become mindful individuals who freely dismiss prejudices and actively support the freedom of differences. In short, music helps us become more human.

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