

## Fine Arts

“Music education not only sparks creativity and grows social skills, it also greatly enhances students’ understanding and achievement in non-musical subjects,” stated Patty Taylor, arts consultant for the California State Department of Education. Music enhances one’s life in so many positive ways, children should be exposed to it every day in school. Unfortunately, many schools are dropping music from its curriculum. The reality is that most students don’t have a chance to learn music outside of school, and when schools don’t offer music classes, students lose that opportunity. There are a plethora of benefits for students when they learn music. Therefore, the arts, especially music, should be part of every school’s curriculum at every grade level because music makes improves student achievement, gives children something positive to do, and builds self-confidence

Music is important because it develops stronger students. Students exposed to music improve their classroom skills, like paying attention, following directions, and participating without interrupting. Since music stimulates spatial intelligence and creative thinking musicians do well in math and English earning high S.A.T. scores. For instance, a study by the College Entrance Examination Board reported, “Students with 20 units of arts and music scored 128 points higher on the S.A.T. verbal and 118 points higher in math than students who did not take music.” A Rockefeller Foundation study states that music majors have the highest rate of admittance to medical school. Making music also lets children use their imaginations, unlike playing with video games or watching TV. “It provides students a chance to try out their own ideas,” claims the *California Educator*. Music helps develop successful, well-rounded students.

Music not only makes children better students but also gives them something creative, social, and positive to do both now and in the future. In a music program, children can

be part of a band or choir instead of joining a gang. In band, orchestra, or choir, students get to have the important experience of being part of a team. They can interact with old friends and make new friends through music. Students can also develop leadership skills through different music organizations and clubs. Through fine arts, children can begin to appreciate the music they hear and learn to create music as well. While learning and making music, children can also be exploring a potential career. Many famous musicians like Shakira, Usher, Alicia Keys, and Snoop Dog all credit music classes in school as the foundation of their careers. Music may not only impact children's present but also their futures in a positive way.

Music builds self-confidence. It gives children a sense of accomplishment and success. Learning a new piece of music can be a challenging but achievable goal, and when mastered students feel successful and accomplished. Making music is something for them to be proud of, and it lets kids practice performing in front of an audience. As reported in the *California Educator*, "It gives [students] self-confidence and a feeling of importance to have a skill someone appreciates. They are also learning how to accomplish something from beginning to end and actually come out with a product that they can be proud of." Music gives children an outlet for self-expression, and that helps develop their self-confidence.

Despite the many benefits of fine arts that are available to point out, there are still those who are against it. The biggest argument typically discusses how shrinking budgets for schools often lead to a choice between fine arts or core classes such as math. If parents or teachers need to decide between keeping art or math, most people would probably pick math claiming that students may not have tapped into their creative side, but at least they can add. These observations can be proven wrong on two levels. First, enormous amounts of research have found that fine arts actually contribute to growth and success in core classes. For some students, by working both sides of the brain, they have excelled in math or sciences. Second, the

federal government has implemented many fundraising programs to keep fine arts programs, and schools can actually receive money in forms of grants or scholarships for their music programs. Faulty thinking like these assumptions should be more clearly discussed, so individuals can understand that these potential barriers are not really barriers at all.

Without a doubt, music education is extremely important because it can make children better students, give them something positive to do, and build their character. Unfortunately, the children who need music the most usually don't have access to it outside of school. For these reasons, and many more, music should be offered in every single grade in every school.