

*QUESTION #1: With so much to teach children in a relatively short day, it is difficult to make time for all children to have music class. Why not just offer music classes for those children who show an interest?*

To only offer music classes to those students who show interest allows students who show musical achievement a chance to nurture their abilities and grow as musicians. However, all children have an innate musical ability and deserve a right to a music education. All students deserve to have a solid music education and arts curriculum along side the other core subjects. All children are born with an aptitude for musical learning and depending on their home life and what musical experiences they receive outside and inside of school their aptitude will decrease or increase until they reach the ages of 9. In order to nurture our students' musical learning it is imperative that all students participate in a music classroom at some point in their school career to ensure positive musical development. All children are exposed to a plethora of music and most children are exposed to music through the music industry of today. By continuing to allow all students to participate in the music classroom we are allowing all people the access to music and nurturing their musical development.

Music has been found in every single country that has been studied and since the dawn of time people have been using music in order to chart genealogy, tell stories, find the meaning of life, and for performance practices. Not only have these cultures been using music, but also they have performed music in order to express themselves to each other. Music making is part of the human experience, as seen through various cultures, and should be a part of each students' experiences as part of their core curriculum. These cultures have all placed an importance on music in their society and so should we, by ensuring each child has a thoughtful and balanced music education.

When enrolled in a music class or any art class students are given the chance to express

their feelings and explore their own individual creativity. Music, along with the other arts and humanities, allows each person to freely express themselves and promote ambiguous behavior. These skills can be taken into other occupations. Music education, whether through ensemble performance or general music, provides children the experience to grow within themselves as people and become leaders of their society. The expression of music helps foster the amount of creativity needed to cross over into other realms of learning.

With every student having the chance to be enrolled in a music class we are ensuring that every student is given the opportunity to experience an excellent music education. This experience will nurture their young musical minds and ensure a higher musical aptitude. Each student's musical aptitude promotes a musical life post graduation from public school. Participating and understanding music outside of the classroom is the ultimate goal and will be obtained for each student if they are all given the opportunity to participate in a music class.

*QUESTION #2: If I observed one of your elementary general music classes, what would I see going on? Why?*

When observing my general music classroom the three following musical components will be present: singing, movement and performing on instruments. These three basic components are based on the National Standards for Music Education. These standards are not mandatory, but are simply recommendations for teachers at a National level to follow. There are also specific state standards that teachers should follow as well. Children should always be singing in music class, especially at a young age. It is important that students sing songs in various tonalities and meters and are given the tools to sing in-tune with a light singing voice. All students should be able to sing in tune and within the correct register after leaving elementary

school in order to make more musical achievement as each student moves on through their schooling.

Several movement activities to songs that are sung as well as recordings would be included in every one of my classes. Once again these recordings and songs are in various tonalities, meters, form and are from various cultures. Music is an aural, oral, and a kinesthetic activity, therefore students not only need to perform music, but they need to feel music by participating in movement. Movement, whether it is a simple pat and sway or a choreographed routine, allows students to have musical context before they even begin analyzing or performing music. It is important to have music from various cultures because this gives students the chance to absorb various sonic elements that they are not used to and are outside of their already formed musical experiences.

Students should also have access to perform on a variety of instruments, such as Orff instruments, world drums, guitars, keyboard instruments, and even other various percussion and stringed instruments. Performing on instruments not only provides musical context and in some cases cultural context, but allows students to have another chance to be assessed. Performing on instruments can contribute to the assessment of musical concepts such as meter, tonality, form, dynamics, etc. Also when students are performing on musical instruments they are working on fine motor and problem solving skills. These activities provide opportunities for them to reinforce skills that are found in other subjects, but exercising these skills in a new way.

Within a general music class all of the above are contained in about eight activities per class. The class is constantly paced in such a way that students spend just enough time on each musical concept to fully grasp the content, but keep moving forward to vary the lesson and to include all aspects of music. Like music itself, a music class is constantly in motion and an

exciting place to be because it is unclear what will happen at any given moment. This spontaneous quality makes music class unique when compared with other subjects and allows students to expect the unexpected and welcome change.