

**ASTA with NSOA
Strings Advocacy Materials**

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Introduction

Advocacy remains an important issue for string educators. During uncertain economic times and changing educational trends, music is still viewed as extracurricular and, therefore, disposable. When the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* was adopted, music did become a part of the core curriculum, making it more difficult to try to cut. Instruction in the arts is an integral part of the curriculum as per the *No Child Left Behind Act*, as they are considered a core subject. Even with that distinction, some school systems are looking at reducing or cutting music programs to pay for remediation classes. Therefore, we need to constantly be aware of what is happening financially in our own school districts.

In addition to funding problems, some school administrators may be worrying about the fragmentation that pull-out programs cause at the elementary school level. Putting string programs before or after school is not an acceptable solution. Rather, teachers should work closely with classroom teachers to work out scheduling problems and find creative ways to schedule. It seems ironic that we are finally getting research results that show correlation between music study and academic learning, and now they can't find time to schedule it.

Finally, block scheduling can create havoc at the secondary school level. Being familiar with the strong rationale and growing body of research relating academic achievement to music may convince administrators to study thoroughly the ways that block scheduling impacts the arts. String orchestra directors should volunteer to be on committees studying block scheduling so they can keep track of what is happening and defend their own needs.

The following materials have been gathered and developed to help you if your school system is trying to eliminate a part or all of your program. They include strategies that have been used successfully, relevant articles, and other information that you may use in speeches to school boards or rationale statements. If you have additional materials to add that might be helpful, please send them to: ASTA with NSOA Advocacy, 4153 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax, VA 22030. You may also email them to asta@astaweb.com or fax to (703) 279-2114.

Best of luck to you in saving your program!

Tips for Addressing the School Board

1. BE PREPARED AT ALL TIMES

- **YOUR MESSAGE:** Music as defined in the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* is part of the **core curriculum**. Be firm on this point. Also remember—and stress—that the **students come first**. Convey the message that you are out to save the program for the students, not your job.
- **KNOW THE BUDGET:** If you cut a music class, those students will have to be placed elsewhere, so you really don't save any money.
- **USE ACCURATE INFORMATION:** Your school system's budget office can assist you with accurate information. This is crucial, as rumors tend to fly during times of crisis. Double check information that you see in the local papers for accuracy.

2. ACTIONS

- **ADVOCACY GROUP:** An advocacy group should be organized and ready for action. It can be helpful to name the group (e.g., "Arts Coalition for Education" or "ACE")
 - Monitor school board meetings year round, not only in times of crisis.
 - Get to know your school board and find out who your supporters are.
 - Invite school board members into your classrooms so they can see what you do. Have parents invite them to concerts—even pick them up and drive them to the concert, giving the parents a chance to talk about your program.
- **ONCE THE CRISIS HITS:**
 - Start a phone, fax, and letter writing campaign directly to the school board members. If you have the time, have assigned phone and fax days so the phone and fax lines remain busy the entire day.
 - Prepare speakers: Use parents, students, and community members with a vested interest in the arts.
 - **Parents**—speak to the importance of the program.
 - **Students**—speak on the benefits of the program, as well as personal experiences and hopes for the future (potential music education students make excellent speakers).
 - **Community members**—speak on what the music program has done for the community and the future work force. Examples of good speakers include business people, arts leaders (conductors of local performing groups), and university professors.
 - **Teachers**—speak only to give facts about the music department/program (number of students involved, SAT scores, etc.)
- Attend the school board budget hearings. Organize groups to attend so you completely fill the room.
- Make personal contact with school board members. Have a family visit so the school board member hears all the perspectives of the program.
- Use petitions. Collect signatures anywhere you can—symphony concerts, churches, in the local mall. Have a speaker present them at a budget hearing.
- Use the media. Notify local/regional media outlets (newspapers, radio and TV stations) of any of the activities you have planned.

Budget Hearing Timeline

1. Know your school board **BEFORE** the budget is presented.

- Send them a recording of an elementary, a middle school, and a high school performing group.
- Invite school board members to performances and have a parent drive them to the concert.
- Invite a school board member to observe one of your classes.
- Set up a meeting with an influential parent and his/her child to spell to the school board the importance of string education.

2. Find out when the presentation of the budget will be, and attend it yourself or send your booster organization president.

- If you aren't affected, go over and do the steps listed under item number 1.
- If you aren't affected, write the school board letting them know how much you appreciate their continued support.
- If you ARE affected, go on to item number 3.

3. If your program has been targeted for possible cuts:

- Get speakers prepared to give speeches at the budget hearings. Have students give testimony about your program.
- Have students perform during the hearings.
- Fill up the room during the hearings with your supporters.
- Start a phone campaign to school board members.
- Have a fax day—pick a date and send the school board as many faxes as possible.
- Initiate a letter writing campaign.

Be careful how you organize these strategies. Some school systems may penalize teachers for organizing things like this. Let your booster organization do the work here.

Sample Memo to Community Concerning Possible Cuts

ACE ♪

Arts Coalition for Education

We need your help NOW!

All supporters of the arts need to speak before the Board of Supervisors, write letters, make phone calls, and send faxes in support of educational funding for our schools.

In order to present a unified voice, please use the following points when addressing the Board of Supervisors:

Because,

- Next year, our county school enrollment will be increased by 3,500 students. Funding from the Board of Supervisors has not kept pace with our increasing enrollments.
- "Per pupil" costs for ANYTOWN School District students are among the lowest in the region. Teacher salaries are not competitive with surrounding jurisdictions.
- The school system has experienced a decrease in total funding, which includes supplies, equipment, and classroom ratios. There is nothing left to cut that does not directly affect our children's education.

Therefore,

- We support full funding of the School Board's budget as submitted to the Board of Supervisors.
- If necessary, we support a tax increase rather than cuts to the proposed school budget.

After making these points, please include personal stories reflecting your child's educational experience. Speak directly to your supervisor. Call him/her by name.

Speaker Days: April 8, 9, 10
Phone Day: April 13
FAX Day: April 20

Speakers Docket Phone: (123) 456-7890
Call your supervisor.
Fax your supervisor.

ACE ♪

FAX

Arts Coalition for Education

DATE: _____

TO: _____

FROM: _____

SUBJECT: _____

Number of Pages, Including Cover: _____

The Arts Coalition for Education (ACE) strongly urges the ANYTOWN County Board of Supervisors to fully fund the School Board's budget request for fiscal year 2007. If you believe that our children are our future, you will support increased funding for our schools.

We would like you to know how important the ANYTOWN County educational programs are to our child's education. Every child in ANYTOWN County Public Schools should continue to receive a comprehensive, sequential, and high quality education.

Help us to maintain the high standards of excellence in education currently found in ANYTOWN County Public Schools. Our county's educational system creates a climate that draws businesses and home owners to the county, and we want that climate to be preserved.

Thank you for your continued support.

ACE ♪

FAX

Arts Coalition for Education

DATE: _____

TO: _____

FROM: _____

SCHOOL BOARD DISTRICT: _____

Number of Pages, Including Cover: _____

We would like you to know how important the ANYTOWN County educational program is to our child's education. Every Child in the ANYTOWN County Public Schools should continue to receive a comprehensive, sequential, and high quality education.

The arts are a basic ingredient in a well-rounded education. Please vote to fully fund Superintendent NAME's 2006 proposed budget.

- 1. We support increasing the level of elementary art instruction per the school board resolution.**
- 2. We support maintaining countywide instructional field trips that include symphony concerts and art gallery exhibits.**
- 3. We support maintaining a comprehensive elementary strings program that starts in the fourth grade.**

HELP US TO MAINTAIN THE HIGH STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION CURRENTLY FOUND IN THE ANYTOWN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Thank you for your continued support.

Signed: _____

Sample Support Letter from High-Profile Member of String/Arts Community

The following statement was written in 1992 by Mstislav Rostropovich, music director of the NSO at the time, in support of a Northern Virginia school district's music program.

National Symphony Orchestra
John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
Washington, D.C. 20566-0002

January 28, 1992

To: _____ County School Board

Statement from: Mstislav Rostropovich, Music Director, National Symphony Orchestra

Madam Chairman, Members of the School Board, Good Evening.

As music director of the National Symphony Orchestra, I fully support the continuation of the public schools' music program. Any cutbacks in the wonderful program you already have in _____ County would have disastrous results to the musical education of our youth. This would also result in a very significant cultural setback for _____ County and the entire metropolitan area. As a music pedagogue, I assure you that children need to be trained and/or exposed to music and arts programs as early in life as possible in order to achieve the necessary standards needed in our artistic endeavors. It is my fervent hope that you find the ways by which the music programs can be continued.

Respectfully,

Mstislav Rostropovich

Sample Letter to School Board

Your Name
Address
City, State ZIP

Date

School Board Member's Name
Address
City, State ZIP

Dear School Board Member:

I would like you to know how important the school arts program is to my child.

Music and art are vital to every child's education for their inherent aesthetic, historical, and cultural value. Music and art education are also important because they aid in creative, intellectual, and emotional development.

(Insert personal experiences from your children.)

Children are being cheated when they don't receive an education in music and other arts. Art and music are basic ingredients in a well-rounded education. We call on all those who care about education to destroy the myth that instruction in the arts is "curricular icing." You are responsible for the well-rounded education of our children and insist that you make education in the arts a basic part of the curriculum for all children.

Sincerely,

(your signature)

Your Name

Sample Letter to Local and State Legislators

Dear County Supervisor:

I am very interested in the ANYTOWN County Public School Budget and **do not want to see any cuts** to programs that directly affect my child's education.

A comprehensive music education program is essential to any child's education and should include instruction in orchestral music as well as band and choral music. Music in the ANYTOWN County Public Schools should be maintained as part of the instructional program at its current level. These programs should not be sacrificed as a short- or long-term solution during difficult financial times.

Please do what is necessary to ensure the continuing success of our sequential music education program.

Dear Senator:

Our children are our nation's most precious commodity, yet YOUR STATE ranks XXth in the amount of state funding it allocates to public education. YOUR STATE needs to find more money to fund education **before** programs that directly affect our children are cut. Education of YOUR STATE's children should not be sacrificed as a short- or long-term solution during difficult financial times.

A comprehensive music education program is important to any child's education, and students in YOUR STATE should not be denied access to musical programs due to budget constraints. Please review carefully Governor NAME's budget and do whatever is necessary to improve funding to education in YOUR STATE.

Sample Petition

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, DO NOT WANT TO SEE THE PROPOSED CUTS TO THE ORCHESTRA PROGRAM CARRIED OUT. WE ARE IN FAVOR OF A SEQUENTIAL STRING EDUCATION BEGINNING IN THE FOURTH GRADE AND CONTINUING ON THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL.

Name

Address

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Arts Coalition for Education

Information Sheet

Name _____ **Home Phone** _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **ZIP** _____ **Email** _____

School _____

What would you be willing to do to help? Check items below.

- Make telephone calls**
- Distribute information to your school community**
- Write letters**
- Contact the media**
- Send information via fax**
- Contact school board**
- Contact board of supervisors**
- Speak at school board public hearings**
- Speak at board of supervisors public hearings**
- Donate services (printing, postage, other _____)**

Are you acquainted with anyone who could influence school board members or the board of supervisors? Would you be willing to contact this person(s)?

Additional Resources

1. Check with your local/state MEA advocacy contact person for information applicable to your state.
2. Check your local/state Arts Alliance—many exist at both local and state levels. They may be able to help provide speakers for school board hearings.
3. Ask your local symphony orchestra conductor for a quote on the importance of string programs in the schools. Use the quote in letters, faxes, newspaper articles, etc.
4. Work with your local music dealers. They have a financial interest at stake but may be willing to aid your cause without crying out about losing business.
5. [Order your free copies of ASTA's *Why Strings?* advocacy brochure by clicking here.](#) Whether you're looking to start a string program in your schools or are fighting to keep what you have, this advocacy brochure will help you in your campaign. ASTA members may order up to 300 copies at no charge.
6. Visit the following websites for more resources:

[Americans for the Arts: Quick Facts and Figures about the Benefits of Arts Education](#)

[MENC's "Information, Please!"](#)

This site contains a comprehensive list of resources covering a wide variety of music education topics of interest to teachers, parents, students, researchers, music industry professionals, and others.

[VH1 Save the Music Foundation](#)

The VH1 Save the Music Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of education in America's public schools by restoring music programs in cities across the country, and raising public awareness about the importance of music participation for our nation's youth. VH1 Save the Music purchases new musical instruments to restore music education programs that have been cut due to budget reductions in the past or to save programs at risk of elimination due to lack of instruments. The Foundation also conducts awareness campaigns, musical instrument drives and fundraising events.

Securing Our String Programs **By Sheila Kendall**

Large and successful school string programs are not impervious to district budget cuts. What can be done on the local level to prevent or to deal with cutbacks in string teaching staff and programs? The following recommendations have been used successfully and may prove to be a starting point.

COMMUNITY INTERACTION

Interaction between the school string program and the community is critical. Visibility within the community will help validate the program to all and increase a positive voter block. Don't forget, the news media appreciates knowing when something special is coming up.

Check with your local and state politicians. Ask them to speak at a performance, perhaps opening the program. Because this is a community event, it gives politicians an opportunity to address their constituencies. Having the politician there can potentially increase the audience. The school administration may also take note and attend the program.

Hosting an exchange program with a school outside the district can become a community event when well advertised. Administrators often enjoy the opportunity to host such an event and take pride in their performing group.

How about participating in a parade? It's not as outrageous as it sounds. Try clustering the students on a float facing outward. Play some simple material from memory and amplifying if appropriate. The students will enjoy the experience, and their participation is unique.

Small to large groups might even play the national anthem at sports events. Imagine the exposure from opening a professional basketball or baseball game!

Above all, don't forget to play at community centers, retirement centers, and care facilities for retirees. Or perhaps invite a group from a specific retirement area to attend your concert and dedicate the performance to them. Be sure to use some music they can relate to in particular. You will be establishing a friendship with those folks and an opportunity for warm interaction for the students. Some of the strongest supporters of string programs in times of trouble can be retirees.

DEVELOP A SPECIALTY

Administrators love to showcase a specialty group. Simple songs and simple movements can have high audience impact.

Fiddling is one option, cellos and all, elementary through high school. In some cases traditional tunes can be arranged easily into melody and simple harmony. Arizona's 1996 Grand Champion Fiddler Peter Rolland (yes, Paul Rolland's son) publishes fiddling material for all four instruments. These groups can generate a great deal of publicity and are highly portable. Teachers might accompany the students on guitar or piano.

Another option is establishing a mariachi. Mama Bowling of Mesa, Arizona, has put together a how-to manual and literature for the elementary level. Her material doesn't necessarily need winds, but using a guitar or piano will be necessary. Once again, all string students participate. Some publications for standard mariachi instrumentation are available from RBC, although string arrangements for middle school and high school are non-existent. As the popularity of mariachi increases, this basically aural tradition will become more and more available in print.

A third option is a strolling strings group. Once again, simple music and simple movements are really all you need. Administrators and the public at large are always thrilled to add such a touch of class to their events. Materials for starting such a group are available from Music Educators National Conference and the National Strolling Strings Association.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

String teachers have to go the extra mile to convince school administrators that the string program is valuable and that string teachers are producers. What are some strategies? Play before Board of Education meetings. Entertain as Board members are walking in; after the last number say a few quick words about the students' latest activities and successes. Add a word of praise and pride.

A tour of the Education Center is also a good idea, especially during the holidays. The staff will enjoy hearing the students, and they will become familiar with the program. Yearly visits can become enormously popular.

Closer to home, it's critical for the school office to hear the string group. Just before a concert, or when a group has a really great tune ready to go, take the students down to serenade the office. It doesn't matter how many people the group is playing for; it's the contact that's important, even at the high school level. Don't pre-notify the office—just suddenly appear. Hopefully, the doors will open wide and the office staff (principals included) will pour out. In a situation where such a trip just isn't possible, call the office on the intercom and ask if the string group can serenade them. This isn't for school-wide consumption, just the office. After the initial surprise on the first request, the reception will quite likely be very positive.

Try requesting a visit from the principal. Enthusiasm is contagious. If the string teacher is excited about the group, the principal is likely to visit. When the principal arrives, be sure he or she knows that the students find playing for him or her an honor.

Be sure that awards and honors are well advertised around the school, but use terms such as "the school has won again" or "our kids." This helps develop the feeling that "we're all a team" and that the group provides great publicity for the school. All of this helps foster administrative pride.

HIGH VISIBILITY

If string teachers don't promote themselves, they will find they have nothing left to promote. A monthly or bi-monthly newsletter is highly recommended. This letter could feature awards, honors, a concert schedule, past events, statistics or program growth, free community concerts available, newsworthy items on students and faculty (people need to know!) and perhaps a teaching tip aimed at just the students. This newsletter can be given to the students and taken home to parents.

Also send copies to all administrative and Board members. Be sure to include enrollment numbers where possible. Remember those numbers represent not only students but their parents—a supportive voting block. That fact is not lost on your administrative readers. Producing such a newsletter takes time. But the effort will eventually pay off in enormous dividends.

String teachers should get in the habit of sending the news media articles and information of interest. Why not send them a copy of the newsletter?

Don't forget to include all events and awards on the school's morning announcements or in school newsletters. Also supply videos of the group to go out over in-house TV and make them available for the PTA. See if the local cable company will accept that video for use on your local public access channel.

Another high visibility strategy is to create a community performance event. How about a potluck dinner-concert, a multi-school concert, or an honors concert? Anything that is special and has the potential to draw a big audience works well.

But most of all, be verbal, be proud. Don't be shy about telling the world how special these string students are. It bears repeating: If string teachers don't promote themselves, they will find they have nothing left to promote.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Even a loose-knit group of parents can reap enormous benefits. They want what is best for their children. They have a personal and financial commitment to the program. They are the string teacher's ultimate movers and shakers. Provide parents with a list of ways they could assist and ask them to sign up for what they could help with. Make them feel involved and part of a team. Be sure to keep them informed about what is going on with the program. Keep those schedule and event memos rolling.

String groups are like sports teams, and parents can be just as enthused about them. At the end of the year, don't forget to send special written thank-you notes. They go a long way toward maintaining warm relations.

COMPILE STATISTICS

Numbers talk louder than impassioned speeches. Know and publish year to year enrollment figures. Know who has won honors (including a black belt in karate!), scholarships and competitions. Publish that information.

KNOW HOW THE PROGRAM BENEFITS THE STUDENTS

Don't be afraid to publicize the benefits of string study. Some examples would be:

- the development of higher-level thinking skills

- the development of team skills
- the development of goal-setting skills
- the development of study skills
- increased self-worth in accomplishment
- the development of self-discipline
- increased understanding of people and cultures
- increased self-reliance ability to present oneself in public
- motivation for staying in school and passing courses
- improved chances for earning college scholarships
- increased college admission opportunities.

CLOSE TIES WITH COLLEAGUES

Close ties with colleagues are imperative city-wide, district-wide, or state-wide. String teachers must be a support system for one another. A territorial attitude benefits no one and only serves to isolate people and programs. On the local level, monthly meetings are highly recommended to keep communication open and information flowing. Have an agenda and leave time for a roundtable of problem solving. It doesn't take an administrator to have such meetings, just teachers who care. Consider having these meetings at a local restaurant. This allows people to have coffee or a bite to eat and gives the whole meeting a warmer, more communicative atmosphere.

NEVER BECOME COMPLACENT

No matter how secure the program appears to be, string teachers cannot afford to become complacent. Figure that the axe is always ready to fall and the only way to forestall that ax is to take all the steps recommended in this article. String teachers have a responsibility to ensure that that same opportunities available to them are available to their students and those students yet to come.

Sheila Kendall is lead teacher for strings in the Scottsdale School District in Arizona. She is the past president of the Arizona ASTA Chapter, has served as the chair of the Music Education Coalition for Arizona, and was a member of ASTA's School Task Force from 1994 to 1996. She has tested all of the suggestions in this article within her own community and continues to search for creative ways to advocate the importance of school string programs.

**Why Are the Arts Important?
By Dee Dickinson
New Horizons for Learning**

1. They are languages that all people speak—that cut across racial, cultural, social, educational, and economic barriers and enhance cultural appreciation and awareness.
2. They are symbol systems as important as letters and numbers.
3. They integrate mind, body, and spirit.
4. They provide opportunities for self-expression, bringing the inner world into the outer world of concrete reality.
5. They offer the avenue to “flow states” and peak experiences.
6. They create a seamless connection between motivation, instruction, assessment, and practical application—leading to “deep understanding.”
7. They make it possible to experience processes from beginning to end.
8. They develop both independence and collaboration.
9. They provide immediate feedback and opportunities for reflection.
10. They make it possible to use personal strengths in meaningful ways and to bridge into understanding sometimes difficult abstractions through these strengths.
11. They merge the learning of process and content.
12. They improve academic achievement—enhancing test scores, attitudes, social skills, critical and creative thinking.
13. They exercise and develop higher order thinking skills, including analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and “problem-finding.”
14. They are essential components of any alternative assessment program.
15. They provide the means for every student to learn.

The question was asked, *Why should music be a part of basic education?*

Here are some of the reasons:

1. "A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform," by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, recommends that high schools provide vigorous programs in the fine and performing arts.
2. The College Board Report "Academic Preparation for College" includes the arts as one of the six basics to be included in the school curriculum.
3. John Goodlad, author of "A Place Called School" views the arts as one of the "five givers" of human knowledge, along with mathematics and science, literature and language, society and social studies, and vocations.
4. Ernest Boyer's "High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America," lists the arts as second curriculum priority, after language, in the proposed core of common learning. This proposed core includes nine subject areas. He goes on to say that music is ranked first among subjects most liked by students and receives high rankings in the areas of importance and difficulty.
5. Howard Gardner's "Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences" states that there are seven forms of intelligence: linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily kinesthetic, interpersonal and intrapersonal. None of these ought to have priority over others.

We must present and repeatedly reinforce why music is basic and share with the students and parents what our goals are.

Why music in education? Some of the reasons are:

1. Music contributes to the school and community environment (quality of life).
2. Music helps prepare students for a career and is an avocation.
3. Music makes the day more alive and interesting, which in turn leads to more learning.
4. Music combines behaviors to promote a higher order of thinking skills.
5. Music provides a way to image and create, contribute to self-expression and creativity.
6. Music enriches life; it is a way to understand our cultural heritage as well as other past and present cultures.
7. Performing, consuming, and composing are satisfying and rewarding activities.
8. Music contributes to sensitivity (see Gloria Kiester's article "Teaching Music for 'Feelingful' Intelligence").
9. Music education provides for perceptual — motor development.
10. It encourages team work and cohesiveness.
11. It fosters creativity and individuality.
12. Music education adds to self-worth of participants.
13. Music education fosters discipline and commitment.
14. Music is a major source of joy and achievement.
15. Music provides unique and distinct modes of learning (see article by Howard Gardner).
16. Music is a therapeutic outlet for human beings.
17. It is a predictor of life's success (see article by National Association of Secondary School Principals).
18. It develops intelligence in other areas (see articles by Wendell Harrison, Howard Gardner, Malcolm Browne and Tom Cohen).
19. To provide success for some students who have difficulty with other aspects of the school curriculum.
20. To help the student realize that not every aspect is quantifiable and that it is important to cope with the subjective.
21. The music program is very cost-effective (see Save Your Music Program, by John L. Benham).

What parent or child *wouldn't* want the benefits of music education?

Philosophical Principles of String Music Education

Philosophical Principles

String music education is an important and justifiable academic enterprise within a comprehensive school curriculum.

A. String/orchestra performance classes can offer students unique and profound educational opportunities because of the aesthetic, skill, cognitive, and social learning experiences that they combine.

1. Aesthetic: Music, as art, has tremendous intrinsic and expressive values. Guiding students to recognize these values through performance should be a fundamental principle of a comprehensive curriculum.
 - a.) Recent research has provided evidence that aesthetic perception, apart from cognitive perception, is a separate hemispheric function of the brain.
 - b.) Music education (especially performance classes) is one of the few, if not the only, subject matter in school curricula that attempts to teach aesthetic, non-language perception.
 - c.) A comprehensive attitude toward curriculum requires serious attention to this fundamental area of learning.
 - d.) String/orchestra education is particularly suited to support this rationale because of (1) its especially close ties with the traditions of artistic musical literature, (2) its great flexibility to move among style and genre, and (3) its relative freedom from extra-musical requirements.
 - e.) As in any discipline, an appropriate level of understanding needs to be reached for music to have a lasting value and affect on student lives. Therefore, music's organized study within an academic environment (e.g., a school) is an important means to achieve this level of understanding.

2. Skill: String playing is an extremely complex physical activity. The study of string instruments provides students with unique motor, coordination, dexterous, and sequential development skills. Furthermore, these physical activities are applied for expressive purposes. Also, these physical activities are readily adaptable to other areas, particularly on a small muscular level, rarely cultivated in other areas of the school curriculum.

3. Cognitive: String/orchestra playing requires simultaneous recognition and understanding of a multitude of stimuli: language and non-language, tactile, visual, and aural. The student employs both inductive and deductive reasoning in assimilating these stimuli. Furthermore, he must instantaneously translate the stimuli into specific and complex motor skills. The process has an expressive aesthetic outcome to its direction and purpose, unique among academic disciplines. It might be diagrammed:

Cognitive Understanding → Motor Skills → Expression = Artistry

4. Social:
 - a.) String/orchestra, as in other music performance groups, provides students with an enterprise resulting from the combined, guided effort and cooperation among its members toward an expressive goal. Unique to orchestra is the medium through which this process takes place and the musical heritage and artistic instrumental tradition that is represented.
 - b.) Music performance training can be an important vehicle for reducing social disparity by providing a common cultural base simultaneously with cognitive, skill, and aesthetic learning.
 - c.) Students gain socially by sharing a specific long-term learning process. They are in the same orchestra class for several years, thereby building friendships and a commonality of purpose that can last a lifetime.

B. A school string/orchestra program provides a cultural influence to the community. When well taught, students will bring their enthusiasm home to share with parents. Attendance at concerts and mutual concern among parents for their students' continuing achievement provide means for an increasing cultural awareness.

C. Some parents prefer their children to study strings. A string/orchestra curriculum meets the needs of these students when they would not normally be involved in the school music program.

D. An orchestra can represent in a public way a school's and district's academic orientation. In the same sense that a marching band reflects a school's spirit and pride, an orchestra reflects an academic climate. This attitude is an important one to be demonstrated publicly by a school and is often overlooked. Obviously, a classroom course cannot demonstrate this in a public, entertaining way. An orchestra can fulfill this function efficiently and effectively. Even an article announcing an orchestra concert in the local press expresses this sense to people, though they may not actually attend the concert.

James Plondke
Valdosta State University

How Arts Education Prepares Students for the Job Market

Dear School Decision Maker: Will your students be prepared for the job market of their future?

Did you know that arts education (art, dance, drama, music) will make your students better prepared and more competitive for the job market?

Consider these comments by some of our nation's largest employers:

WILLARD C. BUTCHER, Chairman of the Board, The Chase Manhattan Corp.

"I firmly believe that there is place for the arts—music, dance, drawing, painting, writing—in the school curriculum.

In the elementary grades, the arts are a valuable component in broadening a child's mind and talents. In secondary school, the arts provide a sense of history, connecting the past to the present. When a student reaches college, a liberal arts education teaches not just clear but creative, innovative thinking.

That's the kind of individual I'm interested in recruiting for Chase: one who can think conceptually, write well, and—perhaps most importantly—bring a creative outlook to the conference room table.

Beyond that, however, an appreciation of music and the arts can provide countless hours of enjoyment for a full and rewarding life."

WILLIAM E. LAMOTHE, Chairman of the Board/CEO, The Kellogg Co.

"I believe that a liberal arts education prepares young people for adult life far better than a more narrowly focused education. The perspectives on music, art, history, languages, and the other disciplines help adults understand more about life, get more enjoyment out of life, and contribute more to their families, churches, and communities. An education enriched with participation in lively arts encourages students to reach for the best within themselves. The self-esteem they develop from this experience builds the confidence to reach for the best in our society.

Business also benefits from education in the arts. Successful companies in our emerging global economy need more than technicians. They require men and women who thrive in an environment of multiple cultures and who understand the variety of needs among both employees and customers. Appreciation of music and related arts bridges the gaps among societies and offers young people valuable lessons in cooperation and sensitivity to others.

One of the most wasteful decisions any school could make would be to discard arts education as a "frill." The investment in a fine arts curriculum is repaid many times over by the quality of life it fosters in the community and by the growth it encourages in our most valuable asset: our children."

DAVID T. KEARNS, Chairman and CEO, Xerox Corp.

"Why arts in education? Why education at all? The purpose of education is not simply to inform but to enrich and enlighten, to provide insights into life as it has been led, and as it may be led. No element of the curriculum is better suited to that task than arts education. Whether we think about music, the performing arts, the plastic arts, whether we think about appreciation or performance, the arts take us beyond pragmatic concerns of the moment and give us a glimpse of human possibility.

Ars longa, vita brevis: art is long, life is short. This timeless quote—attributed to Hippocrates, used by Chaucer, Browning, and Longfellow—reminds us of the true importance of art and the reason for arts education. Art alone endures; it is the highest form of human expression; and it is accessible to everyone. Even though most of us cannot perform as Beethoven, Leonardo, Sophocles, or Picasso did, we can appreciate and participate in their accomplishments.

There is, of course, a practical reason for arts education—indeed, for liberal education: as I said in *Winning the Brain Race*, a book I co-authored with Denis P. Doyle, 'a liberal education not only imparts the great lessons of history, citizenship, and science, it teaches people to think, to solve problems, to take risks . . . to think independently, to step back from problems and the crowd, to be an entrepreneur and innovator. The virtues of a liberal education are the virtues of free enterprise in general and the high-tech, knowledge-based society in particular—flexibility, adaptability, inventiveness, even playfulness."

For more information, contact the [California Alliance for Arts Education](#), 495 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena CA 91101.