



10 February 2013

Mr David Southwick MP  
Education and Training Committee  
Parliament of Victoria

Dear Mr Southwick,

Re: Inquiry into the extent, benefit and potential of music education in Victorian schools

Thank you for your letter of 27 November 2012 to Professor Annette Gough regarding the Inquiry into the extent, benefits and potential of music education in Victorian schools.

The School of Education at RMIT University welcomes the inquiry and trusts it will elicit information which will consolidate and improve the place of music in schools in Victoria. The inquiry has the potential to provide a model for other investigations across Australia.

We find it commendable that the Victorian Parliament has asked the Education and Training Committee to consider the extent, benefits and potential of music education in Victorian schools. The direct focus on Victorian schools is completely understandable and justified.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority would have extensive data on the extent and quality of music education in Victorian schools and be able to provide recommendations on the optimum funding and governance arrangements for music education in Victorian schools. We welcome the opportunity to have this information tabled in the Inquiry and be open to discussion and scrutiny. This data would provide a foundation for any amount of deliberation, comment and recommendations.

On the direction for the Committee to investigate the benefits of music education to student and the broader society in schools we direct your researchers to the vast Australian and international literature in this field. These extensive reviews of the research literature have been embraced by advocacy and education authorities to support and enhance the place not only of music education, but an education in the arts, and in the other areas of the school curriculum.

Specifically in response to the Education and Training Committee's request to provide information on:

1. Pre-service training for specialist music teachers

The School of Education does not offer training for specialist music teachers.

2. Pre-service teacher training for generalist primary teachers

The main focus of activity in the School of Education is teacher education for generalist primary teachers. Within the Bachelor of Education music is offered as part of the course in Performing Arts. This course (12 credit points, 30 hours) is predominantly offered in music. At the Brunswick campus it is exclusively a music education course. In addition to this time in music, the students have a similar time in visual art. As they progress through the degree program they have opportunities to work in the field of music in integrated arts units and independent projects.

3. Professional development for teachers

While the School conducts a range of activities and partnerships, particularly in the northern region of Melbourne, we do not offer any in music.

4. Any research your university has conducted into the benefits of music education for students

In the School of Education considerable research in music education has been undertaken by academics and higher degree research students. This research has focussed on policy, curriculum and content development. There has not been any work conducted to date in the School into the benefits of music education for students.

5. Any school music education programs that your university is involved in

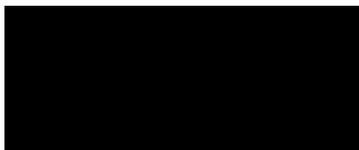
The School and University are not directly involved in any school music education programs.

As music is one area of study within the broad field of Education we trust this will be the start of inquiries into other subject/discipline areas across schooling in Victoria. We look forward to the recommendation from the Education and Training Committee that the terms of the music inquiry be broadened to encompass all school education.

We look forward to working with the Victorian Parliament's Education and Training Committee to implement the finding and recommendations of the Inquiry. The Inquiry has the potential to elicit a great amount of materials which could form the basis of extended research studies which will live well beyond the scope and intent of the Inquiry. We welcome the opportunity to access the materials once the Inquiry is concluded.

I am happy to appear before the Inquiry on behalf of the School of Education if further clarification or comment is required.

Yours sincerely,



**David Forrest PhD**  
**Professor of Music Education**