

I write to you as a parent of students who were able to access music education at school. We live in a small isolated rural area and for my children to be able to make use of this program was invaluable. There would have been no other way for my children to have had music tuition as we are 130 km from Wodonga - a major centre where music tuition is easily accessible. They have gone on to use that knowledge in their adult life and it has been invaluable both for them and those around them.

Richard Gill director of Victorian Opera has on numerous occasions championed the idea of music for children from the beginning of their schooling life and what a difference it makes to their academic ability. Are you suggesting he doesn't know what he is talking about?

For this small community the school band participates in many events including:

The school play, Anzac day march, Carols in the park, The nursing home, playing at the 3 local primary schools, the preschool, the Man from Snowy river festival and numerous events that centre around the school.

The students are happy to give up their own time in order to participate and see that their contribution is important to the well being of many.

I ask that you reconsider removing this funding and even increasing it so the program is available to more students. For the sake of the future of our country and its inhabitants I believe it is important.

Helen Malitz