

Ms Vivienne Tate



SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Teachers

I am a practising musician and instrumental music teacher. I've played for many years in music theatre orchestras and currently play in a band. I wish to address the term of reference regarding Parent Contributions. No 6

In theory the cost of state education should be set as low as possible to allow fair education for all. Despite this, there are many parents who find that they cannot pay the fees required by schools as the fees are rising faster than their incomes. Schools are under great pressure to stretch budgets as far as possible. This results in schools making decisions to cut back many extras, often reducing the quality and range of what they can offer as a result. Where possible, they are increasing fees to make up the difference.

In the state secondary schools in which I teach, students are charged fees that are increasing every year. The lack of adequate funding for staff is resulting in schools charging tuition fees for instrumental music lessons and the use of instructor school support staff officers instead of qualified teacher staff. The cost to many parents to pay for tuition and hiring of instruments is already making it difficult for many students to continue beyond one or two years. For many others the expense is simply too great to even commence lessons.

I was educated in the state system and I was able to participate in a thriving music program at McKinnon High School. I received regular lessons on flute, played in a range of ensembles both within my school and inter school events, such as workshops and regional music camps connecting and playing with students from many other schools. This has given me the career I have today, both as a teacher and performer. It has continued to give me a creative outlet and a way of instantly connecting with others.

Had I been at school today, given my families financial situation, there is no way I would have received any musical tuition. My family simply would not be able to afford it. In other words, I wouldn't have been able to study music at all.

Parents are asked to contribute to many things in schools such as activities, equipment, consumables for such classes as art, technology, food technology etc.

To pay for teachers is what you do in a private school, not a state school. Yet many parents

are asked to do exactly that when it comes to instrumental music tuition in state schools. A subject that should be available to all becomes exclusive and elitist.

The other terms of reference I wish to address here is relates to a combination of terms 2 and 3.

Instrumental music is unique in all subjects that can be offered in schools. Playing a musical instrument is the only subject that can unite students from all year levels on a regular basis such as participation in ensemble playing. Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligence is often quoted in the study of teaching practice. Gardner theorised that intelligence can be divided into different types. In their teaching practice, teachers are encouraged to allow for all types of intelligence as defined by Gardner. Though he theorised that musical intelligence is intelligence of itself, the actual playing of a musical instrument, in particular playing with others, I believe engages all of Gardner's theorised types of intelligence.

They are included as, and reflected in the playing of music as follows

Logical - Musical structures generate their own logical constructions, both rhythmically and tonally

Spacial - Placement of different instrumental parts in relation to each other in performance

Linguistic - Music has its own written language and playing language form

Kinesthetic - The physical movement of the body is required by the operation of playing an instrument.

Interapersonsal - The individuals internalised response to the performance of music.

Interpersonal - The sharing of other of musical performance.

Naturalistic - The sounds and rhythms found in music can be found within the natural world around us.

Existential - Musical expression accommodates an outlet of spiritual expression.

The only other subject that comes close to this breath of engagement of intelligence is dance. Participation in instrumental music, no matter to which level of achievement that a student strives to obtain, offers development of all aspects of intelligence that flows on to all other aspects of students study.

The benefits of instrumental music are of such great significance, that any potential funding reduction would be highly detrimental. Increased funding is what is required to allow as many students as possible to participate.