

15th February 2013

Ms Kerryn Riseley, Executive Officer

Education and Training Committee

RE: Inquiry into the extent, benefits and potential of music education in Victorian schools

Dear Kerry,

I am a Classroom and Instrumental Music Teacher, who has taught in Government and Non-Government Schools for the last 20 years. I would like to quickly respond to just a few points. I am not an expert, by any means, but just passionate about music.

Evidence supporting music education in schools

1) *Benefits to society and to individual students wanting to pursue music as a career*

**There is no doubt that students can benefit so much from learning music at school. It creates confidence, self-esteem, improves physical skills, improves mathematical skills, music creates leadership qualities due to being in ensembles, a social outlet for some who need a way to express themselves.

2) *general benefits to students as a result of music education*

** Looking at myself who went to the local High School, I gained so many positive aspects in my life, due to learning music at school. It gave me so many other opportunities in life to experience, other social groups to participate in, travel, trips and excursions, meeting other children who have the love of music, experiencing being billeted by families in other towns, cities or countries via band tours, experiencing opportunities to perform in wonderful theatres and concert halls that Melbourne has, and performing with other famous musicians.

3) *Benefits to student academic performance as a result of music education*

** Whilst teaching in high schools in the Bendigo area for three years, I discovered, due to the way the classes were timetabled at one particular school, that by Year 10, the very bright maths students were put into an advanced maths class. As it turned out, 95% of that class were all in the Instrumental Music Program and played in the school concert band. I also now teach at a school that has an accelerated learning program. Over the past 6 years that I have worked there, the numbers of students who take up instruments are often more likely to be the students that are in the accelerated program and they thrive in music, while learning an instrument.

I hope that these few points are relevant.

Yours sincerely

Kate McAlister

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