

Music in the Primary School

Exposure and specialist instruction in music at the primary school level are vital to the ongoing development of a child's music education. Learning an instrument can take years to master and exposure to the basic elements of music such as rhythm, notation reading and singing will contribute greatly to the understanding, appreciation and success of future learning. Providing a private company to come in and teach instruments to students will never replace a quality classroom program, catering to all students and not just the well-to-do or gifted.

Ideas proposed:

- Singing must be encouraged in all generalist classroom programs
- Introduction of a State wide or National singing program such as reintroducing the ABC songbooks with supporting CD accompaniments.
- Specialist music instruction provided by trained music teachers who teach rhythm, notation reading and more specific vocal or instrumental techniques

Music in the Secondary College

Ideas proposed:

- More autonomy in the structure of subjects, with enough classroom time given to the Performing Arts subjects, be given to schools
- At year 7 and 8, the minimum of 6 months of classroom music program
- At years 9 and 10 the minimum of an elective classroom music program
- Music offered at VCE level
- Instrumental Music Programs, with specific and specialist instruction in learning a musical instrument, offered as an elective program from year 7 - 12. This needs to be incorporated into the schools timetable.

Funding for the Instrumental Music Program

Funding for an instrumental music program must come from a variety of sources. Most schools, which run a successful program, cannot rely on the employment of DEET teachers alone and must employ a variety of instrumental teachers separately. While this already does happen, to rely solely on the employment of these private teachers will not create a successful program. It is the ongoing status and security of the DEET teachers who help administrate and contribute largely to the success of the instrumental music program in schools.

Ideas proposed:

- DEET - current number of teachers and placements maintained or increased, hence funding increased to cover increased costs of wages and expenses, (at the minimum, the current level of funding must be maintained)
- Schools - must meet a specified criteria in order to maintain or increase instrumental staffing levels
- Schools - provide additional funding for the Instrumental Music program
- Parents - pay a subject levy and music tuition levy, the amount that is appropriate for the socio economic area of the school
- Public/Private partnership - between schools and the music industry

Music in the Primary School

additional points:-

- 1) The concept of the "shared music specialist" was developed in the Western Region in the 1980s and recommended as a state wide model in the "Ray Report" into music education in 1987-88. In the model a Specialist taught teachers appropriate skills for specific year levels and also demonstrated the effectiveness of these skills in the classroom. This was done in a cluster of generally 3 to 5 neighbouring schools facilitating access to more teachers undertaking the P.D. activities than would be possible in one school.
- 2) The Cluster concept has also proved very effective in the delivery of Instrumental Music Programs, where schools share Instrumental specialists

and run joint ensemble rehearsals, chairs, camps and concerts. This gives students the experience of music in a much broader way. This model for example has been running very successfully in the Moonee Ponds and Ascot Vale Cluster for many years.

3) Music in the "Special School" setting should not be overlooked, for students of any age.

Music in the Secondary College.

- i) Whenever Instrumental Music Programs are mentioned this also includes vocal tuition by trained vocal teachers — this is currently the fastest growth area in many schools
- ii) Schools should develop a unified Class and Instrumental Program with common goals.

Instrumental Music Program.

- i) The D.E.E.T. Funding has not been increased in overall numbers employed for many years and the specific allocations are still in place based on good Regional criteria that may not match the current reality, because they were done years ago, and School needs have changed.
- ii) Regional Music Committees involving Principal, Class Music, Instrumental Music and Parent organisation representatives should be re-constituted to review the current needs of Schools.
- iii) The V.I.T. is a very poor registration body compared to the old Teacher Registration Board, which was much more

able to cope consistently with people less than fully qualified but excellent practitioners and teachers. People used to correlate these I.M.Ts with Trade Teachers in Technical Schools. There is currently a lot of inconsistency in the renewal of registration and some wonderful ~~Instrumental~~ Music Teachers are being defined as Support Staff and paid less than their colleagues. The "Teach Australia" program may provide a model in overcoming some of these problems and providing specially designed teacher training of short duration to people already in the system.