

Michael Conan-Davies


27 January 2013

Dear Members of the Parliamentary Committee,

RE: Submission to the Inquiry into the Extent, Benefits and Potential of Music Education in Victorian Schools

I am greatly concerned about the potential of loss of financial support from the Victorian Government for music education.

Education in the arts is extremely important in today's economic environment. To remain competitive we need young people who are imaginative, resourceful, and confident and risk taking. An education rich in music, drama and the arts develops these skills.

The strong music / drama curriculum bestowed on my 3 daughters at Canterbury Girls Secondary College has been instrumental in developing the confident, imaginative and resourceful young women they are today. I am convinced that the emphasis on music in our daughter's curriculum resulted in their academic out-performance as measured by their VCE scores. A US study by Johnson & Memmott (2006)¹ which examined the relationship between music education and standardised test results corroborates my own personal experience by clearly showing that students achieve higher academic results. There are many other studies which corroborate this study and readily searchable on the web.

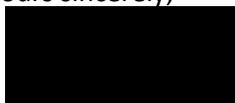
The benefits of music and drama go beyond academic results. The impact on social and personal development is also significant. As members of various ensembles, orchestras, choirs and the like, my daughters learned valuable life skills in collaboration, commitment and a general appreciation of what it takes to put on a show.

Music and the arts in general trains young minds to solve problems creatively and innovate in ways which the more academic subjects like maths and science cannot. School musicals, concerts and exhibitions are testament to this where amazing feats of creativity are on display.

Music education also provides alternative avenues to engage children who are otherwise not interested in mainstream subjects at school or sports.

I thank the committee for taking my submission and look forward to a positive hearing more about their deliberations which on the weight of evidence available in the public domain can only lead to one conclusion – retain funding for school music programs because the benefits far outweigh the costs.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Conan-Davies

Parent of 3 girls

Canterbury Girls Secondary College

¹ Johnson, C.M. & Memmott, J.E. (2006), "Examination of relationships between participation at school music programs of differing quality and standardised test results". *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 54 (4), 293