

Mr David Southwick, MP
Committee Chair
Education and Training Committee

11 February 2013

Dear Mr Southwick,

I recently read that the Education Department is holding a Parliamentary Inquiry into the provision of music education in Victorian Schools; and furthermore, that the Department is considering potential cuts to the funding of music education.

As a former student from Blackburn High School, I am deeply dismayed at such news. Over the years Blackburn High School has developed a reputation of being 'the best of the best' in high school music education in Victoria. The reasons for this are because of the high calibre of our teachers, the quality of our facilities and programs, and most importantly because of the funding we receive that enables us to do so. Without this funding not only the students, but the entire school and the broader community in which we are a part of suffers a great loss.

Our school currently runs many different ensembles and orchestras to cater for students of all musical abilities and instruments. While it obviously does not sound like much, I can tell you from experience that having the opportunity to be part of a group and play music is a wonderful thing. Students from different year levels or classes who may never have spoken to each other in the schoolyard are brought together by their passion for music. Sometimes we find that the students whose name we never quite knew (or the person who doesn't talk and always sits in the corner) turns out to be the star of the show when it comes to performance time or competitions. Without music, these students may never have found their stage to shine and these friendships may never have had the chance to blossom.

I am sure you agree that you cannot put a price on the future of our society. In the same way, it is also true that you cannot put a price on the value of education to the students of Victoria. These students are the seedlings of our future. Whilst nobody can guarantee the future, what can be done is to provide the best possible environment in which to grow; and this includes access to a quality music education for *all* students.

Yours Sincerely,

Lingyun Li