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The Universal Language of Music: Why Music is Important in Education

Carron Prudhon

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Abstract

This capstone project focused on the need for increasing music opportunities in schools and the ways in which it increases literacy, particularly in an English Language Learners (ELL) classroom, where increasing English literacy is so vital. After interviewing a district music director, a high school English language development director, and a high school ELL teacher, three action options emerged as ways to provide more music in high school ELL classrooms. Based on the findings, an action was undertaken to help secondary teachers incorporate more music into their daily curriculum.

The Universal Language of Music: Why Music is Important in Education

I have been singing for as long as I can remember. Music has always had a big influence on my life. It has gotten me through heartbreaks, relationship problems, fights with my parents, loneliness, and celebrations. It can pump you up before the big game, make you dance the night away, or console you in isolation. My childhood would have been a totally different experience without music. I loved the singing programs in school, learning to play the guitar in 4th grade and the flute in 6th grade. Choir became my peace in high school. Music was the only thing I was ever good at. I tried to play sports, but I really was not very good at them, and realized in high school, that I was contributing more to the team by not playing, then by playing. When asked what my talents are, singing is the only thing I name.

Later on in life, my passions became singing and children. I loved having children, helping them learn, assisting them in finding their passions and encouraging them to be the best humans they can be. I continued to sing in choirs and surround myself with musician friends and live music. I also decided that I wanted to be a teacher and spread my love of children and music to make a difference in this world.

After completing two years of schooling, I found out that I had thyroid cancer. My thyroid would need to be removed. The doctor explained that the vocal nerves are wrapped very close to the thyroid and when removing the thyroid there is risk of vocal damage or even losing your voice altogether, being left with only the ability to whisper. This possibility was devastating to me. Would I still be the same person if I no longer had a voice? I decided to not let this hold me back from the things that I wanted to do. I had the surgery over winter break, and was back in

school when the next semester started, and waited for summer break to do my radiation treatment. Luckily, although it did have some effect on my voice, I can still talk and sing.

In continuing my education, I have focused a lot of study on the correlation between music and learning. The more I learned about the benefits of music and how it has connections to cognitive and language development, the more I was convinced that I was meant to be a teacher and use music to reach my students and enhance their learning. Music is more than a passion. It has helped me deal with many emotions in life. It can also help children deal with their emotions and outlook on life. On top of that, it has many proven benefits that can aid children's learning and development of language and literacy. Music is a universal language that connects people. I am convinced that teachers should integrate music into their classrooms and that the children will all benefit from it.

Literature Review

Literacy can be defined as the ability to read and write proficiently. Literacy is the core to learning. Without the ability to read and write, learning will be difficult for all other subjects as well. Schools should use methods with proven benefits to improve literacy. When the University of London rolled out the Literacy through Music program (Bloom, 2012), there was unequivocal improvement in the literacy of the children that participated. In contrast, there was no notable improvement in the control group that did not participate in the Literacy through Music program (Bloom, 2012). Music increases literacy. In schools with high numbers of English Language Learners (ELL), English literacy is especially low. English Language Learners are those students who are learning the English Language in addition to his or her native language. According to an article in *The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*, only 4% of eighth grade ELLs and 20% of

students classified as “formerly ELL” scored at the proficient or advanced levels for reading on the 2005 National Assessment (Anonymous, 2007). Schools need to increase the opportunity for music education and incorporate it into the literacy curriculum. The problem is that in a school system that is constantly under pressure with budget cuts, music is often one of the first programs cut.

Why is it an opportunity?

Historically, music in education dates back to 1717 when the first singing school was introduced. In 1837, the first public school was established in Boston, then called “common school”. That same year, Mason, with three of his assistants approached the Boston school board and offered free singing classes in public schools. In 1838, music was declared a regular subject and Mason and his assistants were hired as teachers (K12 Academics, 2017).

At the Yale Symposium in 1963, music professionals and education professionals gathered due to concerns about the music teaching in education. Educators were criticized for the lack of education that children were receiving that did not prepare them to expand their music education in college. The final report gave recommendations in many areas that included: Musicality development, music as literature, performing abilities, and teacher training. This sparked the beginning of many programs. As a response to that symposium, there was another gathering, the Tanglewood Symposium in 1967. This resulted in the “Tanglewood Declaration” that called for music to be included in education curriculum, and listed eight agreed upon standards (Boston University, 2007). Some examples of these standards are: 1) Music serves best when its integrity as an art is maintained, 2) Music of all periods, styles, forms, and cultures belong in the curriculum, 3) schools should provide adequate time for music in programs ranging from

preschool through continuing education, and the last example is standard 7) The music education profession must contribute its skills, proficiencies and insights toward assisting in the solution of urgent social problems as in the “inner city” or other areas with culturally deprived individuals.

Currently, the National Standards for Music Education include three artistic processes: creating, performing and responding. Within these three processes are 11 common anchors. These anchors give students the opportunity to imagine, plan and make, present, evaluate and refine, and interpret music (NAfME, 2018). Figure 1 shows the current National Core Art Standards.

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS

Dance, Media Arts, Music, Theatre And Visual Arts

Creating

Performing/ Presenting/ Producing

Responding

A process that guides educators in providing a unified quality arts education for students in Pre-K through high school.

Anchor Standard #1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard #2. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard #3. Refine and complete artistic work.

Anchor Standard #4. Select, analyze and interpret artistic work for presentation.

Anchor Standard #5. Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.

Anchor Standard #6. Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

Anchor Standard #7. Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Anchor Standard #8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

Anchor Standard #9. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

Anchor Standard #10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

Anchor Standard #11. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

Figure 1. National Core Art Standards. State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education (SEADAE). (2014). Retrieved from <https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/>

Unfortunately, due to budget cuts determined by each state, music education is disappearing at a rapid rate. Niles(2013), author and documentarian, states that according to the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) music education funding is down about 20 percent since 2001. Public schools are no longer able to afford all of the elements of a liberal education, so they are abandoning arts, starting with music. Music is seen as expensive, non-essential and is not on “the test” that is being taught to. This trend undervalues the benefits of music, and leaves poor students, and emotionally disturbed students without access to the value of music on development as well as vital life skills (Niles, 2013). Figure 2 shows the decline for arts education, including music, for minorities between 1982 and 2008.

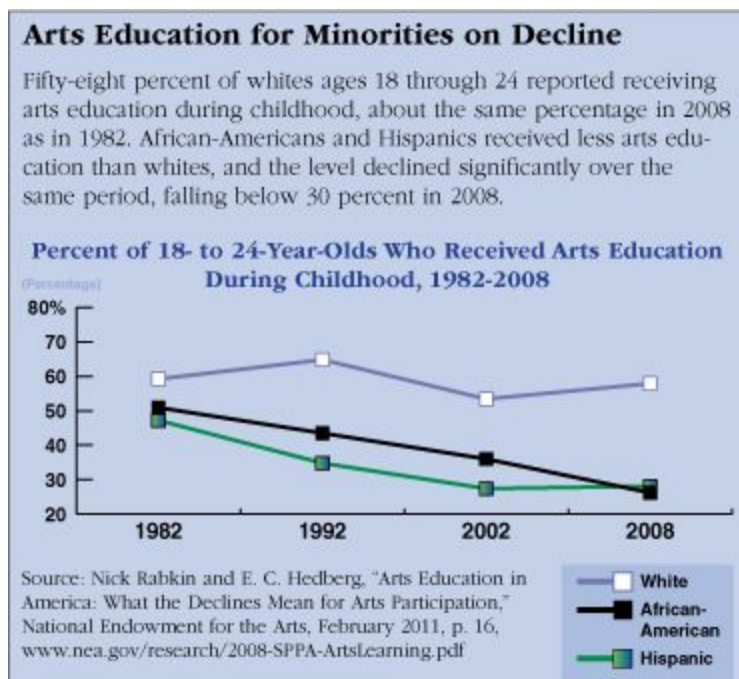


Figure 2. Trend of Declining Music Education for Minorities. Reprinted from *Arts education in America: What the declines mean for arts participation*, by Rabkin, N., & Helberg, E.C., 2011, February 4, retrieved from <https://www.arts.gov>.

U.S. Department of Education Secretary, Arne Duncan (2010) said this:

In America, we do not reserve arts education for privileged students or the elite.

Children from disadvantaged backgrounds, students who are English language learners, and students with disabilities often do not get the enrichment experiences of affluent students anywhere except at school. President Obama recalls that when he was a child ‘you always had an art teacher and a music teacher. Even in the poorest school districts everyone had access to music and other arts.’

Today, sadly, that is no longer the case. (n.p.)

This quote shows that music education used to be for every student, but has become only available to privileged students. This only widens the achievement gap and gives underprivileged children even more of a disadvantage.

Studies of Effects of Music

There have been numerous studies done on the positive effects of learning music. One such study (Munsey, 2006) concluded that music education was a significant predictor of higher IQ in early adulthood. Shellenberg (as cited in Munsey, 2006) conducted this study after analyzing a study that was done involving one year of music training with six-year-olds. That study showed that the children with music training had significantly higher IQ’s than those who did not have music lessons. Shellenberg (as cited in Munsey, 2006) hypothesized that more years of music study could compound this affect. The evidence clearly identified that playing music predicted a significantly higher IQ in adulthood (Munsey, 2006).A similar study was conducted in Germany with 1st graders (Rautenberg, 2013). After 8 months of music training, the results show substantial increases in word reading accuracy as compared to no music training.

Other studies performed in the past 10 years have shown additional positive benefits for music education. For example, A study published in the *International Journal Of Alzheimer's Disease* showed that those who played a musical instrument into adulthood were 36% less likely to develop dementia (Balbag, Pedersen & Gatz, 2014). Another study conducted by the National Institutes of Mental Health concluded that the more a child is trained on a specific instrument, the better detail oriented the child, in addition to the child having a better emotional outlook and anxiety control (Giedd, Raznahan, Alexander-Bloch, Schmitt, Gogtay, & Rapoport, 2015). A meta-analysis of 30 different studies revealed that music education elevates reading ability by considerable amounts in children (Standley, 2008). Some other studies worth mentioning confirm that music has positive effects on cognitive development (Blasi & Foley, 2007), music has positive effects on intellectual, social, and personal development (Hallam, 2010), music increases verbal memory performance (Rickard, Vasquez, Murphy, Gill, & Toukhsati, 2010), and music enhances neural processing of sound and confer benefits for language skills (Tierney, Krizman, & Kraus, 2015). Finally, a last example is a survey released by Harris Interactive that found that high schools with a music program have a 90%+ graduation rate. Schools without a music program had a rate of less than 73% (NAfME, 2007).

These studies are only a sample of the many studies that have been conducted. The research on the effects of music on the brain and if music should be included in education is substantial. In an article in *The Atlantic*, it states “What they are finding, according to Dr. Nina Kraus, a professor and neuroscientist at Northwestern and lead researcher of the study, is that music instruction not only improves children communication skills, attention, and memory, but that it may even close the academic gap between rich and poor students” (Kase, 2013, p. 2). Music has

a long history in the education of children, and the studies done should be taken into consideration when asking if music should or should not be taken out of schools.

How Music Promotes Literacy

According to Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development, there are zones of proximal development (ZPD) for children's learning. These ZPD are what the child can do, or has knowledge of, independently, and what they can do with support (Vygotsky, 1978 as cited in Salmon, 2009). A teacher uses scaffolding to bridge the child's current knowledge, with a new concept, with teacher support, until the student is independent with the skill taught. According to Vygotsky, language and thought cannot be treated in isolation (Vygotsky, 1978 as cited in Salmon, 2009). A natural connection remains between thinking, music and language. We can only understand how children develop language by relating thought and language. Music stimulates curiosity and promotes thinking. Music training helps children to read and write, and has the potential to activate mental imagery. Music is a natural way to tap into children's prior knowledge. Music is a universal language that associates moods, feelings and memories. Salmon states, "When children are exposed to music and its connections with language and literacy early in life, teachers can identify or create ZPD and scaffold their listening, oral and written language" (2009, p. 7). In summary, music is part of being human and has connects to social and cognitive development. Music is inherent in people's memories, and has the potential to activate children's prior knowledge. Music is a natural tool that assists teachers in identifies children's ZPD. Music produces imagery, which is important for language development and comprehension. Music is a meta-cognitive tool that scaffolds children's language and literacy development. It also connect to culture and establishes home and school connections. Music

nurtures students' imaginations and should be integrated into the classroom environment to enhance student learning (Salmon, 2009).

Method

For this Capstone Project the researcher investigated how teachers and administrators viewed music as a way to improve literacy and what they thought could be done to incorporate music into the English language learners curriculum. Based on an analysis of the data and the relevant research literature, the researcher used what she had learned to formulate an action that responded to the focus issue in a way that inspired, informed, and involved a particular audience.

Context

The site location I worked in is Wilson High School¹. Wilson is located in Santa Carla County, with a population of 51,199. The economy centers around the farming industry. Wilson High School has an enrollment of 1,925 students. 98% of the students are minorities and 81% are economically disadvantaged. Over 33% are English Language Learners (Public School Review, 2018). The school is located in a mainly residential area, only a few blocks from downtown. The school is well maintained.

Participants and Participant Selection

The stakeholders who participated in this study included one English as a second language teacher, one English Language Development Director, and one District Music Director. Of the three participants, two are female and one is male. All three of the participants have many years of experience in education.

¹ Pseudonyms have been used for the names of people, places and organizations.

Randall Rogers. A white male English Language Development Teacher at Wilson High School. He has been teaching at Wilson for the past 20 years, and prior to teaching at Wilson, he taught English Language in Tokyo, Japan.

Katherine Swanson. A white female Director of the English Language Learners Department at Wilson High School. Katherine has taught and been a part of the administration in Santa Carla County education for about 20 years. She has also taught Child Development courses at a local community college for the past 16+ years.

Barbara Hastings. A white female Music Director in Santa Carla County. Barbara has been teaching music education for the past 25+ years.

Researcher

Music has always been important to me. Music is creative, and helps people deal with all kinds of emotions, as well as being a “universal language”. All cultures have music, so it is something that brings people together and unites the world. Music also has benefits to learning, such as cognitive development, helps with memory and linguistic skills. Literacy is the backbone of communication and learning. Being able to read and write is mandatory for learning all other subjects. Because music can help with literacy, bringing music and literacy together makes perfect sense.

I have been singing since I was a small child. I sang in choirs and groups, as well as solo performances. Music has always been a way for me to express myself. In college, I have taken Music Theory, Music for Children and and Music History, as well as Jazz appreciation and Solo Voice. I feel that I have some musical knowledge to share. I have also done extensive research on the benefits of music in education. With the research I have done, specifically on music and

literacy for English Language Learners, I feel that I am qualified to carry out this project.

What makes me different to work on this concern is my passion for music and my knowledge on how music can benefit children. I have worked in Wilson, so I have an idea about the area and the children that I will be working with. My only concern with this project is that I am not bilingual. I have a desire to learn Spanish and plan on learning it after I complete my current program. I have a desire to connect with these children through music and help them the best I can to improve their literacy in a fun and thoughtful way.

Semi-Structured Interview and Survey Questions

1. What do you see as the problem with including music to increase literacy?; or What are you concerned about when it comes to incorporating music with your reading and writing curriculum?
2. What is currently being done to improve literacy - by whom - and do you think this is good, bad, or indifferent? Why?
3. What do you think should be done about increasing opportunities to include music in literacy learning?
4. What do you think are the obstacles/drawbacks/disadvantages to incorporating music into the literacy program?
5. Is there anything else that you would like to say about music and literacy and/or using music to improve literacy?

Procedure

The participants that were initially contacted, were Katherine Swanson and Barbara Hastings. I contacted them by email and asked if they would be willing to participate. Katherine Hastings

then gave me the contact information for Randall Rogers, who was interested in having me work in his classroom. I initially interviewed all three participants by email. I then conducted observations in Randall Rogers English Language Development classroom at Wilson High School.

Data Analysis

Transcribed interviews were coded and analyzed for emergent themes.

Results

For this Capstone Project, a district Music Director, an English Language Development Director, and a high school English as a second language teacher, were interviewed to see what they think could be done to improve the opportunity to increase music in the classroom to increase literacy. This is important because literacy is the foundation for all learning, and numerous studies show the benefits that music education has on learning and literacy. Based on an analysis of the data and the relevant research literature three themes emerged (see Table 1). Evidence-based decision making required evaluating each potential Action Option by the following criteria: cost; time; and effectiveness. The cost will reflect the overall estimated cost that would be required to implement the action options. The time will reflect the amount of time it will take to implement each action option. Finally, the effectiveness will reflect how effective the options are at reaching every student, and maximizing the benefits of music in literacy curriculum. Based on the evaluation of each Action Option an action will be recommended and justified.

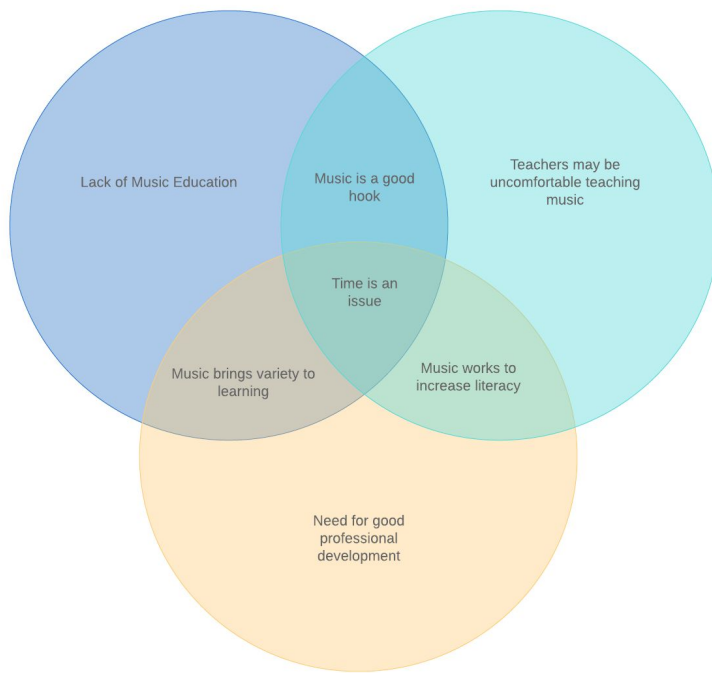


Image 1. Emerging Themes from Analysis of Data

Table 1.

Evaluation of Action Options

	Cost	Time	Effectiveness
Adding music training to Teacher Credentialing requirements	Moderate	High	Low
Incorporate music training in ongoing Teacher Development	Low	High	Moderate
Curriculum Support	Moderate	Low	High

As noted in Table 1, three action options emerged after interviewing three educators regarding how to improve the opportunity for music education to increase literacy. These options are:

1. Adding music training to Teacher Credentialing requirements
2. Incorporate music training in ongoing teacher development
3. Provide teachers with curriculum support

All three options will be evaluated based on cost, time to implement, and effectiveness. Cost is important to consider, as schools have a limited budget, and securing extra funding may prove to be difficult. The time it takes to implement the action option is essential because time is already tight for teachers, and the longer it takes to implement an option, the longer the effectiveness of that option is deferred. Lastly, and most importantly, how effective the option is will show how far the option reaches all children, and how much the children will benefit from the action options.

Adding Music Training to Teacher Credentialing Requirements

While conducting the interviews with three educators, a recurring theme arose around the lack of music training for teachers. Rogers (R. Rogers, personal communication, October 23, 2018) commented that a problem to incorporating music in literacy curriculum is the teachers “who are too uncomfortable singing” would be reluctant to teach music. Hastings (B. Hastings, personal communication, October 23, 2018) also concluded that “non-music teachers lack of musical education” is a drawback to really be able to teach the subject. Because many people didn’t grow up with music, they are unprepared to teach it. This creates a cycle for the next generation of

kids, as they don't learn music when their teachers can't teach it. In response to these issues, the action option of adding music training to teacher credentialing requirements arose.

The cost for this option is dependent on the University fees and how many additional classes the music training would add. I listed this option as moderate because college classes can be quite costly, and it will be a burden on the student, not on the school district. The cost will also depend on if the credential program is adding music training in addition to the requirements already set by the University, or if it can be incorporated into other classes or be instead of certain requirements.

The time it would take to implement this option is high. The state requirements for teacher credentialing would need to change, which could take years, and then it could add more time for future teachers to complete their credential.

The effectiveness is rated as low. Although this option has great potential to be very effective for future teachers, it does not provide the training necessary for current teachers and therefore would not have a very wide reach to all students. If we mandated all current teachers to take the additional classes, this would add additional costs for the school districts, and additional time to implement, but it could increase the effectiveness of the option.

Incorporate Music Training in Ongoing Teacher Development

According to an article in Hechinger Report (2015), an average of \$18,000 a year per teacher is currently being spent on teacher development (Mader, 2015). If music education could be included in the current teacher development budget, it would add minimal cost to the current budget.

The time it would take to implement music training for teachers depends on the level of training that would be required. It would take at least a year to get all current teachers additional training. According to Hastings (B. Hastings, personal communication, October 23, 2018), “good professional development...would be important and would definitely give them a baseline”. The amount of time for a teacher to feel confident teaching music, and learning how to incorporate music into their lesson plans and curriculum could be substantial.

Requiring music education for all teachers through teacher development could be relatively effective as long as the teachers are willing to fully integrate what they have learned into their everyday curriculum. As previously discussed, music helps memory, reading and decoding skills, and could be incorporated into all subjects. Just listening to music has some benefit, but learning to read music, understand rhythm, and performing it make the greatest impact. The question would then remain if a couple of hours of training would give teachers adequate knowledge and experience to teach music education sufficiently to reach the optimal benefits.

Curriculum Support

The cost of curriculum support would depend on how the school district decided to implement it. According to Stauffer (2016), the average cost to purchase a curriculum runs between \$10,000 to \$30,000 per year, if the school districts decided to purchase a curriculum package. The other option is to have a curriculum designed specifically according to the schools' needs. This option costs between \$32,039 to \$86,871 (Lewis, 2018). This option is much higher, but would be geared for the specific elements that would benefit the students the most.

The time it would take to implement this option also depends on if the district buys an already made curriculum, or has one designed. To buy a curriculum that is already created would have a low time commitment, and could be implemented as soon as it is purchased. Some teacher training may be necessary before getting started. If a curriculum is designed, it takes approximately 12-18 months to design (Lewis, 2018). All three of the educators interviewed noted time as a real issue for teachers. The less time the teachers need to take creating curriculum, and participating in additional teacher training, the better for the teachers, and the more likely they are to get on board. Swanson (K. Swanson, personal communication, October 24, 2018) mentioned that a possible problem for teachers would be “adding some planning time to make it meaningful”, and that “a concern would be making sure that there’s enough time for the rest of the core curriculum--which is a common complaint for teachers”. Rogers (R. Rogers, personal communication, October 23, 2018) agrees and stated that “I have used music in the past successfully, but these lessons take a lot of time to put together and I just haven’t had time to do it in the last few years”. Providing the teachers with the curriculum and lesson plans would help in increasing the opportunity for more music education.

Providing curriculum support for teachers could be highly effective. If the teachers embrace the opportunity they are given and implement the lesson plans, it would have an opportunity to reach all students. After the expense of purchasing the curriculum, the schools would need to require that teachers implement it. It could prove difficult to enforce this requirement, and to get all of the teachers buy in.

Conclusion

In this section I will provide my recommendation of which action option should be implemented. I will also discuss the concessions, limitations, and potential negative outcomes of my recommendation, as well as justify why I recommend it.

Recommendation. Of the three potential action options that resulted from the interviews, I recommend that option 3, providing teachers with curriculum support be implemented. I feel that this option is the most attainable with regards to cost, time, and effectiveness.

Concessions. The options that were not recommended are still positive options. Option 1, adding required music training to teacher credentialing requirements would be a good option because it would reach all new teachers in the credential program. This option has the potential to stop the cycle of teachers not being comfortable teaching music, because they were not taught music in school. Option 2, incorporating music training into ongoing teacher development is also a good choice, because it has the ability to reach all current teachers, and it would be incorporated into the teacher development that they are already doing. This option would also be the most cost effective, as the teacher development budget is already set.

Limitations. The recommended option of providing teachers with curriculum support does have some limitations. First, the cost is moderate, and the funding may be difficult to obtain. Lastly, how to enforce implementation of the new curriculum by teachers could prove challenging as well.

Potential negative outcomes. The only potential negative outcome that I could see with providing teachers with curriculum support, would be if the teachers don't embrace the curriculum and don't implement it. This would not give the children the value of music that they deserve, and it would be a waste of district money.

Conclusion. Even though supplying teachers with curriculum support has some limitations, I feel it is still the best recommendation. Based on the criteria of time, once the curriculum was purchased, it should be able to be implemented right away. The other options would take much more time. This option also has the greatest potential for being effective, or reaching the most children. Because all teachers would have the curriculum incorporating music into their lesson plans, all children would benefit from it.

Action Documentation and Critical Reflection

My project began with researching the benefits of music in education. After reading an article in *The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education* (Anonymous, 2007), I found out that only 4% of eighth grade English Language Learners (ELL) and 20% of students classified as “formerly ELL” scored at the proficient or advanced levels for reading. Because literacy is the core to learning, and music has many benefits for literacy learning, I decided to focus my project on how music can be incorporated into literacy curriculum, specifically for ELLs. I started by interviewing a District Music Director, A English Language Development Director, and an English as a second language high school teacher. While conducting the interviews, recurring themes emerged that resulted in three potential action options. These were: 1) Adding music training to teacher credentialing requirements, 2) Incorporating music training in ongoing teacher development, and 3) Providing teachers with curriculum support. I chose to recommend option 3, providing teachers with curriculum support because it would take the least amount of time to implement, and would have the potential to reach the most children. My project made a step toward this recommendation.

Action Research Project Documentation and Reflection

My community partner was Wilson High School. For my project, I worked with Randall Rogers, an English as a second language high school teacher. He allowed me to first, come and observe his classroom. I was impressed by the respectfulness of his class, and through my observation, got a basic sense of the level of English that this class knew, and how well they would be engaged with the lessons I was creating. Next, I created a curriculum of three lesson plans to implement in the classroom (Appendix). The first lesson taught, I titled Music and Lyrics. I made a google slide presentation with clips of popular, and appropriate, music. I then made worksheets for the students that had the lyrics but some words were left blank. When I taught the lesson in the class, they listened to the clip of the song, which was 1 minute in length, while trying to follow along with the words on the worksheet. Next we listened to the song line by line and let the students try to fill in the missing words. This did three things for their literacy: First, they read along with the words being sung. Second, they had to listen closely to the articulation of the words to figure out what words belonged in the blanks on the worksheet. Third, they had to read the sentence they created when filling in the word to see if the sentence made sense. The students were actively listening, and engaged in the activity.



Image 2. Wilson High School

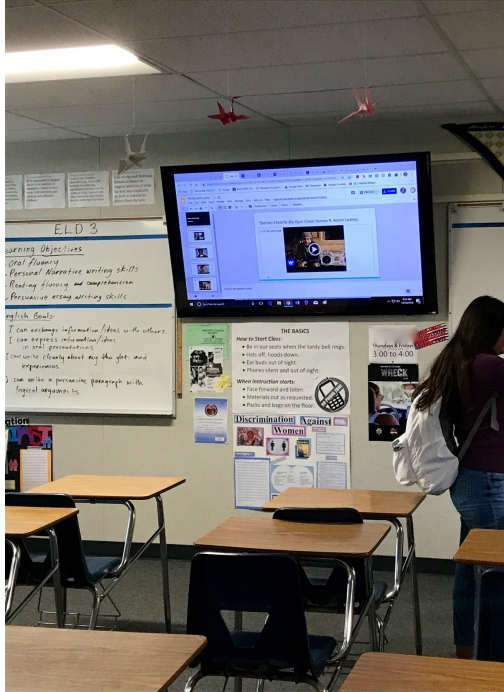


Image 3. Photo of classroom with Google Slide presentation

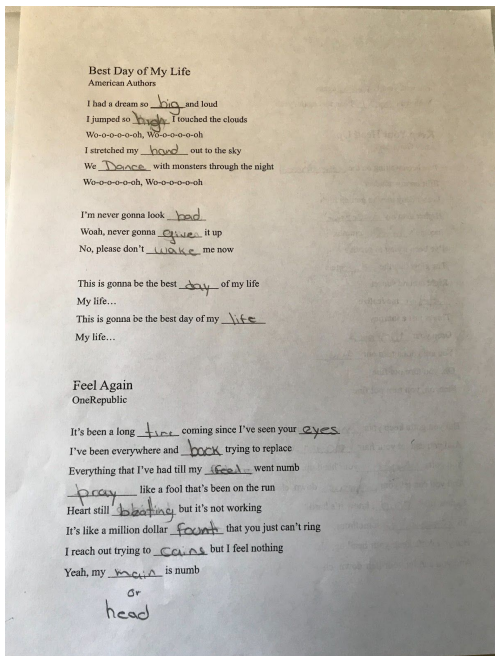


Image 4. Example of student worksheet

After teaching the lessons in the classroom, I handed out an anonymous survey to the students, to gauge how they felt about the lessons. The survey consisted of four questions: 1) Did you enjoy the music lessons? 2) Do you feel that music would benefit your learning? 3) Were the lessons challenging? 4) Would you like to see more music in this classroom? The results were very positive, and showed that music made a positive impact on these students.

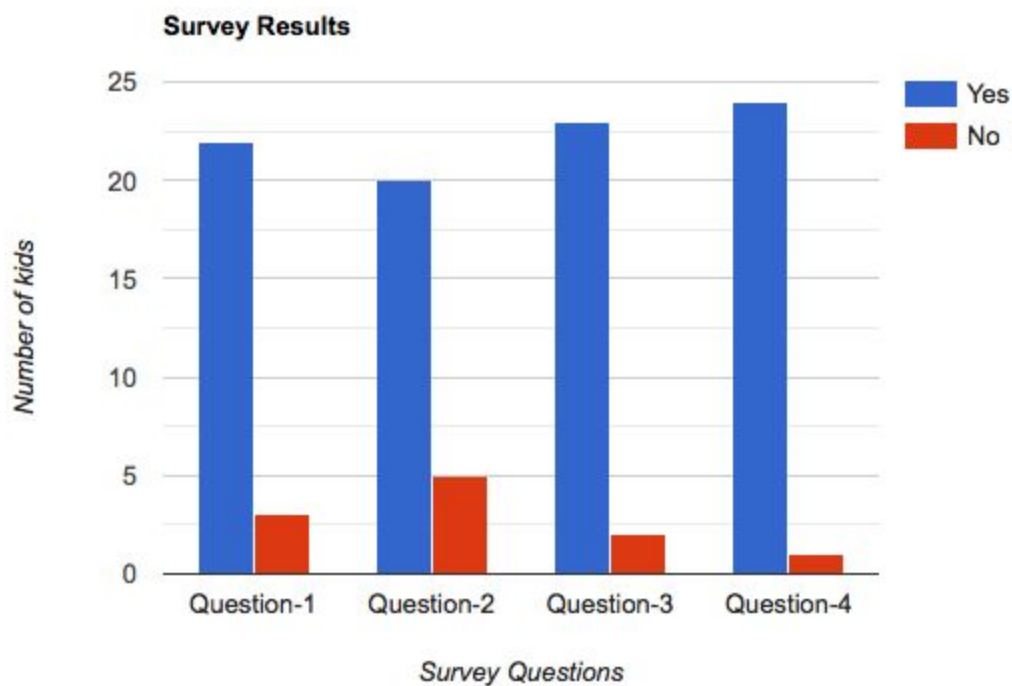


Figure 3. Results of anonymous student surveys.

When I decided to work in a high school, I was a little apprehensive, as I had previously worked with elementary aged students. I was surprised to realize how enthusiastic these kids were. They participated well, and really wanted to learn. I enjoyed the experience so much more than I anticipated. The biggest thing that I wish I knew, is Spanish. The teacher was very accommodating and supportive with me and assisted me whenever I needed it, but I definitely

have a desire to learn Spanish to benefit me in my future as an educator. Overall, I would have wanted more time, to make a greater impact with this project. I feel that the classroom I worked in was impacted, but it would have been great to get more than one classroom involved. For next steps, I will join The Support Music Coalition, so I will be kept up to date on what is happening with music education and continue to support the arts and empower the school I work in to do the same. I was pleased to know that Mr. Rogers plans to continue using my lessons and has been inspired to implement more music into his own literacy lessons.

Critical Reflection

Through this project I learned that English Language Learners are eager to learn. I learned that bringing your passions into the classroom brings benefits to your students. I learned that music keeps kids engaged in the activity and keeps them actively listening to the lessons. Music is beneficial for all students, but it also has the potential to positively impact students' literacy skills and can help close the achievement gap for low income and minority students. Lastly, I learned that adding music to curriculum in small ways can still make a big difference.

Synthesis and Integration

The Liberal Studies program at CSUMB has influenced my professional development in many ways. First, I have learned as a student to think, write, and speak critically, and understand my responsibilities as a California public educator. This relates to MLO 1: Developing Educator. I have learned innovative approaches to teaching, as well as how to teach to students with many different ways of learning. I have also learned about comparative education, and creating cultures of thinking. Next, I have acquired extensive knowledge about diversity and multiculturalism. Through classes such as Immigrants and Equity, Multicultural Literature, and

Teaching for Social Change, diversity has been a large part of my education here. I appreciate the knowledge I have learned and the tools that I can take with me into my classroom to have an inclusive and equitable classroom. This relates to MLO 2: Diversity and Multicultural Scholar. Next, through projects, presentations and group collaborations, technology has been used effectively in my education. MLO 3: Innovative Technology Practitioner, was an integral part of my education. Lastly, MLO 4: Social Justice Collaborator was ingrained throughout my schooling. I have grown so much in this area. I have learned that equal and equitable are not the same thing. I have learned about different cultures and many different learning needs. I have learned that social justice is individual and each one of us have an obligation to stand up to injustices and make the world a better place, especially in our classrooms.

To be the educator that I want to be, I will continue to look for ways that I can improve myself. I want to become bilingual and learn Spanish, which is so prevalent in our area. I want to continue to encourage all students to reach their highest potentials with respect, caring, and compassion. I want all children to feel their worth, no matter what background or circumstances they come from. I also want to continue to respect and embrace multiple cultures, races, languages and learning styles. Lastly, I want to remember everything I was taught at CSUMB. The things I have learned about myself, about teaching, and about learning are invaluable.

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Appendix
Using Music in Literacy Curriculum

Lesson Plan: Music and Lyrics

LESSON TOPIC:	English Literacy
AIM:	Using music to increase literacy
OBJECTIVES:	Students will be able to: Follow along with written lyrics while listening to music Listen closely and identify missing words on worksheet Make sure the sentence they completed makes sense
MAIN ACTIVITY:	Hand out worksheets to students Listen to 1 minute music clips while following along with the written lyrics Try to identify missing words on worksheet write in the missing words Make sure the words the students choose make sense for the sentence
CLOSING:	Have students share with others around them to see how if others got different answers
ASSESSMENT:	Walk around the room to see how many words they are identifying correctly. Have students turn in worksheets
MATERIALS:	Google slide prepared with music clips (Computer to play it on screen) Worksheets created pencil

Lesson Plan: Vowel Sounds While Singing

LESSON TOPIC:	English Literacy
AIM:	Using music to increase literacy
OBJECTIVES:	Students will be able to: Use music to listen and learn to correctly articulate vowel sounds Read the lyrics of the song
MAIN ACTIVITY:	Hand out lyrics to the song: "You Are My Sunshine" Have students repeat the song line by line Repeat any lines that are difficult Have students sing whole song through
CLOSING:	Congratulate them on a job well done!
ASSESSMENT:	Walk around the room and listen to the articulation of the vowel sounds as the students are singing
MATERIALS:	Printed lyrics to "You Are My Sunshine"

Lesson Plan: Using the subjunctive “If” in song lyrics

LESSON TOPIC:	English Literacy
AIM:	Using music to increase literacy
OBJECTIVES:	Students will be able to: Define and understand what a subjunctive verb tense is Write an original song or poem
MAIN ACTIVITY:	Hand out lyrics to the song: “If I Were A Boy” by Beyonce Listen to the song Introduce the subjunctive “If” and how it is not based on facts, but is hypothetical, doubtful, or conditional Ask what they think this mood implies in English Have the students come up with their own “If I were...” scenarios Assign students to write their own lyrics (or a poem) using “If I were...”
CLOSING:	Explain the assignment and the due date
ASSESSMENT:	Assess their song lyrics/poems to ensure understanding of “If” in English
MATERIALS:	Printed lyrics of “If I were a Boy” by Beyonce Have song available to listen to Paper Pencil