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## **Don't stop the music : the mission to keep music education in public schools**

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**Don't Stop the Music: The Mission to Keep Music Education in Public Schools**

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CSUMB

### **Abstract**

California's ongoing budget crisis has hit public education hard. Schools all across the state and locally in Monterey have had to decide how and where to use their money given to them by the state and federal governments. Unfortunately, music programs have become the first on the chopping block, which is depriving future generations from developing to their fullest potential. Through interviews and observations at Bay View Academy, it was learned that music education at this unique school is a vital part of education and is one such program that will never be cut. Although the music program at Bay View is up and going, fine tuning and the implementation of effective lesson plans were needed to better use the limited resources and enhance the students' learning experiences.

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My public school education included far more than math, English, history, or science lessons. Beginning in the fifth grade, I became part of the schools' choir program and became actively engaged in learning music and performing in front of my peers and community members. During this time, music was not a required aspect of my education, but rather something I signed up for to do before the school day started. Music quickly became something I enjoyed and an aspect of my entire public education experience, that I continued into my high school years. It was not until middle school that choir was an elective and counted for an actual grade. Even though it still was not required, I was blessed with an extensive choir program and the opportunity to expand my knowledge in joining the schools' extracurricular show choir. During my middle school years I also took advantage of the opportunity to perform in the annual school play, in which I auditioned and received the lead part in the sixth grade.

Music was a way for me, during my education, to be creative and learn on a more personal level with my peers. I remember in my early years of being in choir how songs reinforced things that we were learning in the regular classroom. For example, in fifth grade choir we learned an extremely catchy song about the fifty states. Still to this day I can recite the entire song and many times through my education used the song to name off all fifty states, in alphabetical order. Not only were we learning music, but we were learning lifelong lessons about the culture we are all involved in.

Looking back on my public education experience, I quite possibly would not have turned out the way I have without my experiences in the school music programs. Being involved in something like this that worked outside of the norm, I learned to work with others, created

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friendships that will last a lifetime, and was also able to find abilities within myself that I may not have been able to find had music not been a part of my education. Being so, I find it very disheartening that in today's public schools, because of budget cuts, schools have had to decide whether or not music programs are a vital part of public education. My past experience in school are nothing without music, and I feel it is of great importance for school administrators and board members to realize just how much education in fact does go on within a schools' music program.

### **What is the Problem and Why is it an Issue?**

Music was a basic core subject of education way back at the beginning of public education. Consider, Patricia Campbell and Carol Scott- Kassner (1995) who write, "Music is one of life's essential ingredients for children, it is often the substance of their playful exploration of and experimentation in the world around them" (p.2). School administrators and school board need to work together to make sure that this vital outlet remains available for future generations. There are many benefits of music that these decision makers tend to miss when they are contemplating eliminating music programs. In his online blog, a concerned parent wrote about his feeling concerning why educational professionals do not feel the need to keep music in schools. He writes, "The arts engage children in ways that are hard to measure and that makes it difficult to argue for their inclusion in a fully funded budget" (Rob Southworth, 2009). This parent recognized that fighting for music programs is hard because the education received is not easily seen, but as he later expresses this education is still very vital.

One of the things music education does for students is it allows them to open up about their emotions, while learning more about their culture and the history of his or her ancestors (Learningmatters.tv). Miller and Coen (1994) write, "A student's education is impaired if it does not also touch the soul, and music can be the key" (p.461). Because of the benefits that music holds for our children, we as future educators and community members need to work with the money that is allotted to schools and find out feasible ways to keep music and art part of the everyday curriculum. Without music we are only depriving our children from reaching their full potential. Music not only provides educational experiences, but it also provides an outlet for self-confidence that can further extend into other aspects of the child's education. For example, if a student can read music notes, then reading of words should not be that bad (learningmatters.tv).

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Music also works to develop the “whole child”, as Julie Desbordes, a professional musician and teacher, states in the video *Does Music Education Matter*,

“We use music as a tool to teach them how to listen to each other. They have a sense that they belong to something... makes you feel good to go through life feeling like you belong to something” (Learningmatters.tv).

Even with all the evidence of what music education can do for the students' there are two problems that emerge when we look into music education in public schools today. Those problems stem from both a federal and state level, leaving the school district to make the final decision.

### **California's Budget**

Public education, in recent years, has been the topic of much conversation on the political agenda. The budget and the recession have made it so that public education has had to make critical decisions involving the use of the money it receives from both the State and the Federal governments. Schools have had to fire teachers, cut programs, and at the worst close their doors because the money they received was not sufficient for the things their schools were providing. Focusing on the allotted school budget, I am most concerned about schools cutting programs from either the everyday or extracurricular curriculum. Music programs, unfortunately, have become the topic at hand when cuts are put on the schools planning agenda. This is a problem because, as mentioned before, music is a source of education that reaches far beyond the classroom doors. Miller and Coen (1994) write, “Through music, students learn the rich and wordless dimensions of their own cultural heritage” (p.460). Without music, children lack the ability to connect with their community and themselves in ways that “core” subjects are unable

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to do. Additionally, it has been stated that, “Art addresses us in the fullness of our being- simultaneously speaking to our intellect, emotions, intuition, imagination, memory and physical senses. There are some truths about life that can be expressed only as stories or songs” (McConnell 2007).

The main reason behind these programs being cut is because the state is stuck in a deep recession. In 2010-2011 the state deficit was an astounding amount of \$19.9 billion (O’Connell, 2010). The California proposition, Prop 98, that guarantees that a set percentage of the overall state budget be dedicated and allotted to the Department of Education has been tested and affected by the recent and ongoing recession. In the 2010-2011 budget plans, Proposition 98 would be providing 2.2 billion dollars lower than in years prior. Because of this, schools have had to decide what to do with the minimal amount of money they are given.

### **Standardized Testing**

Public education is the key to creating the leaders of tomorrow. These leaders need to be well rounded, know of important historic events, calculate basic math problems, and be able to be an amateur scientist. The “core” subjects that are mainly focused on in the curriculum of public education classrooms today are math and reading, with little focus on history, science, and the arts. Cydney Spohn (2008) writes, “...arts teachers and nonarts teachers believe instructional time and classroom practices have been altered in the district to accommodate NCLB requirements, resulting in a loss of both access to and learning in the arts” (p.5). Because of the implementation of No Child Left Behind policy, and the high emphasis on standardized testing and the scores students receive on these tests, even more importance has been on making sure students receive as much education on the topics they will be tested on. Because of this school administrators felt the need to cut programs such as music and art to make up for other parts of

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the school which may need the extra money. Although research shows that music education is vital to the education experience (Abril & Gault, 2008), we are seeing the exact opposite inside public schools with the emphasis on language and math. This is the problem I hope to solve within this Capstone project. Educators of all types need to realize the importance of music to the education of children and work on making sure students of all ages receive this form of education to truly make them well rounded without just focusing on the basics. Unfortunately, No Child Left Behind has made it to where teachers are teaching to the test, the test in which does not assess topics of music or art.

## **Literature Review**

### **What has been done both in schools and outside of schools to protect music education programs?**

In researching the topic of budget cuts and music programs, there was a lot to read on the topic of what is being done to keep such a vital program in our public schools. A lot of action has been taken in the past ten years both inside and outside of schools, as this problem has become a larger issue with the recent budget crisis throughout the nation. Being that the recession shows no sign of improvement, advocates for a well rounded curriculum have made their voices heard in government and various communities to ensure that future generations receive proper music education. Schools themselves have also found solutions to the problem on an individual case basis. Found in the research on solutions, was both what schools can do, as well as what the nation as a whole can come together to do to keep the programs running. For example, in New York City, the Harmony Project which is an organization that provides after school music education to underprivileged youth has been working to be able to provide music education despite the issue of money ([learningmatters.tv](http://learningmatters.tv)). Research also shows that it is important for music educators to be “vigilant as local school officials and examine their budgets. We must also continue to educate administrators about the value of strong music programs and the need for their support” (Geer, 2009, p.8). This then brings the responsibility to the administrators to fight what they feel needs to happen.

### **Schools' use of resources**

Being that the budget has become less and less every year, the responsibility of schools decision on how to use the money has become harder and harder. Schools all over the United States have had to “cope” with the money given and have had to devise ways to use resources wisely. Schools also have the power to make cuts to other portions of their budget without

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worrying about cutting the programs they provide. Gunthrie (2011) refers to this idea as “Fine Tuning.” Gunthrie stresses the importance of schools looking at the little things and making small adjustments that can save large amounts of money. One example given that has worked for other schools is centralizing school employees’ health insurance at a state level which can result in a decrease in per employee cost (Gunthrie 2011). Gunthrie(2011) reports, “... the only way of coping with slowing revenue growth will be reconfiguring how people are paid and augmenting labor with technology” (p.1).

In terms of music programs, art educators have had to become creative in how they create and implement their programs. Balsley (2011) writes, “With budget cuts and hard times for schools becoming the norm, art educators must also become creative when it comes to finding money in their budget” (p. 1). Balsley provides information for art and music educators’ five things they can do to work with their budget effectively in times when money may be short. These five things are: 1. Ask other teachers for left over supplies. 2. Create an art/ music room wish list in a place where parents can see. 3. Hold a fundraiser. 4. Ask your PTA for additional funds. 5. Make smaller art/ music projects (Balsley 2011). Balsley’s suggestions allow for programs to stay afloat while budgeting within the limits they are given from the school district.

### **Support from the Community**

One of the biggest solutions, besides schools using their money more wisely, is the support and voice of the communities around schools that are faced with budget cuts. Research shows that even outside of the classroom, community members and large organizations are coming together to fight for the common cause of keeping music in public education. Having these voices become part of the cause is vital to preserving music education. Parents have come

together to form private foundations that organizes campaigns to fight for the programs on the chopping block (Archer 1996). Along with parent involvement is the importance of teacher collaboration. Organizations like NAFME, National Association for Music Education and VH1's Save the Music programs have worked with schools and teachers all over the world to ensure that music reaches all of the children of our future generations. VH1's Save the Music program is working one district at a time to help to provide the money needed to provide music programs. In one account of the program, music and dance supervisor Jim Holcomb states, "With the funding emphasis going to math, science, language arts, and reading this organization provides a wonderful opportunity to give instrumental music to a larger set of students than we would be able to with district funds alone"(Darling, 2009, p.18). The Save the Music Foundation purchases \$30,000 worth of musical instruments for each grant recipient (Darling 2009).

The NAFME organization also provides for such opportunity to all schools. The mission of NAFME is to encourage the study and making of music by all, and in doing so they bring awareness to the importance of music education. Some of the ways this organization brings awareness to music education is hosting music in our schools month where schools all over the country can work with their daily routine to include music in a formal or informal way. This organization works to help music education advocates be able to voice their place on the budget issue to different audiences and provides a guideline on what community members, teachers, and parents should do if their local district is faced with such a decision. NAFME provides ideas for teachers to include music in their everyday curriculum even if resources are not available to have an actual music lesson. Simple changes such as playing music as part of the morning routine are little ways in keeping music in schools (nafme.org).

## **Method**

Music programs, as mentioned, are an important aspect of learning in the classroom setting because it allows for students to explore their creativity and learn outside the everyday rigor of normal academic coursework. For this Capstone Project, I investigated how the local Monterey school, Bay View Academy, has been able to work towards including music into every classroom which is the exact opposite of the actions we have seen in other public schools. Bay View Academy currently has an active music program in place that was only made possible because of the parents' proposal for the program. In doing so, the school was able to receive a \$10,000 grant which allowed them to create the program, buy equipment, and hire an on staff music director. In obtaining more information about the program I observed a first, fourth, and fifth grade music lesson. I also interviewed the kindergarten teacher, first grade teacher, and the music director of the program. Through this I learned how these stakeholders view music education and how they feel they are able to incorporate music into the standard curriculum. Based on an analysis of the data and the relevant research literature, I used what I learned to further work with Bay View Academy in keeping their music program going in a way that inspires and informs both the general school population and the surrounding Monterey community.

## **Context**

I did my research at Bay View Academy located in Monterey California. This school is a public charter school that strives to bring education to life through the use of music and art programs along with the standard public education curriculum. The school provides classrooms from Kindergarten to fifth grade and has recently been able to implement a music program for all grades. The importance to music education to the school as a whole is stated in their mission

statement. It reads, "To provide a stimulating, student-centered educational experience for local children to produce creative, critical thinkers through study of the arts, music, languages and hands on projects..." Each grade level is required to have one forty minute session of music and art a week, which is taught by an on staff music teacher. Bay View uses an instructional model that emphasizes academic rigor and a theme-based, integrated curriculum approach aligned with state standards and core curriculum frameworks. The demographics of the school are 40% white students, with the remaining 60% ranging from Mexican, Chinese, and various other backgrounds, which make for a diverse classroom setting in each of the grades.

### **Participants and Participant Selection**

The participants in my study involved the music teacher at Bay View Academy, my master teacher with whom I was already observing her first grade classroom for my service learning, and the kindergarten teacher. The school administrators that I interviewed were all females.

**Krisi Abraham:** Miss Abraham is a 25 year old, first year first grade teacher who happens to be an alumni of CSUMB. Kristi's classroom incorporates traditional and non-traditional teaching styles. Incorporated into Kristi's curriculum is the school mandated music program that allows for a 40 minute lesson of music be given to her students once a week, during which time she is able to prepare for the later lessons of the day. In observing Kristi's class I also learned that she herself incorporates music into daily lessons outside of the mandated forty minutes. For example on one Friday Kristi incorporated a catchy math song to teach subtraction to her eager students.

**Ms. Choy:** Ms. Choy is the kindergarten teacher who is friends with my Miss Abraham and was present during the interview and allowed for me to write down some of her ideas

towards the music program as she sees it being implemented in her own classroom. She and Miss Abraham both held similar views towards the music program at Bay View Academy, so I felt that her voice only furthered my information on the program.

**Elizabeth Miranda:** Mrs. Miranda is the on staff music teacher who plays the “traveling musician” from class to class to teach the basics of music. Mrs. Miranda is a seasoned music teacher and was thoroughly excited to get back into the teaching scene after being absent for some time. In teaching the basics of music to the students of Bay View Academy she allows for the children to experience with their vocal capabilities along with the instruments that the school provides. Elizabeth, from the moment Bay View Academy asked her to be their on-staff music director, has worked hard on obtaining the materials needed and providing meaningful lesson plans to the students from kindergarten to fifth grade. Elizabeth runs a one man show and holds the sole responsibility to keeping the music program at Bay View Academy up and running, as well as assessing the students’ abilities in music performance and comprehension.

## **Researcher**

This project is personal to me because I grew up with music being involved in my early education and I feel it is very important in keeping this art form inside the classroom to further enhance student’s learning environment. It recently has really frustrated me that because of the budget issue, schools feel teaching music is not as important as teaching math or English and they are ultimately cutting a vital program, and I feel that there has to be a way that we can make it so music programs are able to stay in our public schools, much like how Bay View has done. I am a product of music programs and I can use my knowledge of music to further help those at Bay View who are still working on creating a valuable program. I can use my past

experiences of choir and plays to help bounce off ideas with the administrators at Bay View. I can also help alongside the music director in working with the student's in making music and possibly sing along with them.

### **Semi-Structured Interview**

My initial experience at Bay View Academy took place in the form of observation of the weekly music lesson. As part of the curriculum, the students received a 40-minute music lesson conducted by Mrs. Miranda. Through my observation I got to see how both my master teacher and the music teacher work together to allow for a smooth flowing lesson plan. After observing the first grade music lesson plan, I created some semi-structured questions to ask those involved in both the creation and the implementation of the music program. Following are a list of the questions I used to ask Mrs. Miranda about her feelings towards both the music program at Bay View Academy, as well as the importance of having music programs all throughout the public school setting.

1. What do you see as the problem with budget cuts resulting in music programs being cut?  
How has Bay View worked with the money they receive to implement a working program?
2. What is currently being done at Bay View to improve the music program and keep it as a vital part of the educational experience? - by whom – What is in place to have the music program excel as the students go up in grade level?
3. How was the music program obtained in the first place? What was needed in order to get such a program started in this new school? Who was involved in creating the program?

4. What do you think should be done in other schools about music programs who may or may not have the freedom to request such grants that would be needed to keep such a program?
5. What is the goal at Bay View in having a working music program?
6. Is there anything else that you would like to say about the importance in music programs and/or the improvement or preservation of music programs?

After conducting the interview with the music director, I found that asking these questions of my other stakeholders would only make the answers redundant. Therefore, I created a separate set of questions to ask of the teachers in order to get a better understanding of their perception of the program that is taking place inside the doors of Bay View Academy. The questions were as follows:

1. What are your general feelings towards the music program at Bay View? Or having music in schools period
2. Do you feel Bay View is using their resources appropriately?
3. Do you feel the music program has an influence on the students that would normally not occur inside the regular classroom?
4. Are there any suggestions that you have for the music program as a whole?

## **Procedure**

The procedures I used for the data-collection for my research was to first observe the music classroom to get a feel for how the program worked at this school. I then interviewed those who were involved in the music program to better understand their feelings towards both music programs in general and the music program at Bay View. I choose to interview my master teacher because she is able to see the direct affects the music program has on her students. I also

then interviewed Mrs. Miranda to get her view as well, to bounce off ideas from the two different teachers. The interviews with the administrators was done on a one on one level as well just so that I could get the ideas of the individual without the influence of everyone else's opinion.

### **Data Analysis**

The data was then transcribed and analyzed for emergent themes.



## **Results**

The administrators at Bay View Academy expressed some interesting views on the current music program that is being implemented throughout the grades. Bay View is an interesting case because it is such a new, up, and coming school, which also makes it easier to propose a data driven action to help improve the education being provided. The music teacher, Elizabeth Miranda, first grade teacher Kristi Abraham, and kindergarten teacher Ms. Choy, expressed their wants, likes, and concerns revolving around the music taught to the children each week. Some themes emerged from the analysis of the data.

### **Value of Music Education**

The first theme that emerged from analysis of the three interviews was the fact that each of the teachers respected the value of music education. Kristi Abraham said, "Music is great! I try to include it in other aspects of my classroom, but it is always nice to have someone who knows what they are doing" (Personal Communication). Elizabeth Miranda put this into her own words saying, "Music develops the child as a whole and helps to further develop both the left and right brain." To me the fact that the teachers are showing such interest in this one subject shows me that districts may not be looking into faculty views on the budget and the implications of the possible deletion of music programs. All of the stakeholders also made it apparent that early education and continuation of music education is very much needed throughout the child's lifetime. Research supports this idea in that it shows that, "If music programs are discontinued, students will be deprived of kinesthetic, aural, oral, visual, and emotional experiences that can ultimately bring written texts to life" (Hansen & Bernstorff, 2002, p.17). Mrs. Miranda said, "Starting singing early will only help the children later on be able to play instruments and be able to participate in music extracurricular activities." In discussing the budget cuts with the teachers,

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Mrs. Miranda had some very powerful words involving how she felt about districts cutting the programs, "These children are not rats. Messing with the education is not even an option." All three of the teachers expressed the importance of parental involvement in keeping music programs going. Mrs. Miranda said, "We would not have this program if it weren't for a loving parent who recognized the importance of music in his children lives." Having parental involvement will only expand the realization of the value that music education holds.

### **Curriculum Allows for Limited Time**

The second theme I discovered was the need for more time. Everything Mrs. Miranda stated either spoke about the importance of the program for the children, and her desire for more time. Each class is only allotted 40 minutes a week which she described as, "...not enough." Furthermore, Ms. Abraham noted that, "I realize she [Mrs. Miranda] does not have a lot of time with the students and I think that is what makes teaching to the younger students that much harder." In observing the music lesson of the fourth and fifth graders on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012 I saw how little time is given to music instruction. Mrs. Miranda had 40 minutes which included 10 minutes of warm up and clean up. Ultimately she only has 30 minutes of instruction which is rather difficult with 20 students. One thing I did observe that was helpful to Mrs. Miranda was, the fact that she was not given all of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders, but rather the classes were split in half. Half of the class went to PE the other half to music. Unfortunately, time is not something that can really be worked with. In the research I conducted in the literature review, the concern was not having money to focus on music, so in Bay View's case having 40 minutes a week is good progress.

### **The Need for more Direction**

The final theme emerged from the first grade and kindergarten teachers' interviews. They both indicated the need for more direction and set daily objectives for both the students and the teachers to understand. Mrs. Abraham said "I know Mrs. Miranda has a lot on her plate, but I feel that the education to each student would benefit much from the implementation of objective and learning assessments." Mrs. Abraham and Ms. Choy voiced that the younger children need to learn more concepts and terminology involving music, rather than just having music time being a "crazy" classroom setting. In observing the first grade music lesson, I recognized this crazy classroom setting and saw that the children were not really learning any material, but were rather performing with instruments with little terminology given to remember or learn. Before I even interviewed the teachers I recognized this as a problem because I saw that the students received little to no direction on what was going to occur in that days' music lesson and barely even understood what they learned once the lesson was over. I felt that that needed to be address in one way or another. Both teachers felt that if more cohesive lesson plans were to be implemented that the students learn how to act accordingly and would be better controlled both behaviorally and academically.

### **Importance of Donations**

Because of her direct connection to the writing of the grant and the money aspect of the music program, Mrs. Miranda was able to educate me on what it takes for Bay View Academy to have a music program in the first place. The other two stakeholders are not very much present on this aspect of the program, so their knowledge on the subject is very limited. In talking about the program, Mrs. Miranda told me that in order for Bay View Academy to have the program they need to raise \$30,000 dollars a year in donations alone to maintain the music and art programs.

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Bay View Academy, at the time of the interview, had raised a little over \$23,000 dollars, but as Mrs. Miranda stated, “That I close but we are still in need for more donations.”

Overall the teachers of Bay View provided further proof of the importance of music education in the public school setting. As stated in research literature, music needs to be treated as a core subject and not be set aside because of matters of money. Observing Bay View also produced the strong feelings towards how grateful teachers are for the program, but the fact that they do recognize the need for improvement to make music instruction more effective.

Figure 1 refers to the common themes that were found through my interviews. The need for education, donations, motivations and the overall involvement of parents all contribute to not only the success of music programs in general, but have made the music program at Bay

View into what it has become today.



Figure 1: Emerging Themes

## **Justification of Action**

The situation at Bay View Academy made implementing my action quite easy. More specifically, because Bay View Academy is a brand new school, they are open to new ideas and volunteers who can come in and provide help in creating the school. Based on the interviews I conducted and the research that I came across involving music programs in public schools, my action is very justified. Deciding on what path to take for my action, however, was difficult because of the varying views that emerged regarding the situation. Had I gone with the information I received during the teacher interviews, my action would have involved creating lessons plans that were more cohesive and beneficial for the students. Although this would have been a great path for my capstone, I felt having a well supported program and the necessary resources was of greater importance for the program. For example, through my observations I saw that resources were very limited when it came to providing music books for the children. Having the right number of books would make Mrs. Miranda's job a lot easier and would not cause as much of a problem as sharing books does for the older grades. One of the major contributors, which I found through my research of the literature, to the success and protection of music in public schools is the support of the community and the involvement and motivation of the parents. Being the case, I decided to make parents and the community my target audience in terms of inspiring, informing, and getting them involved because ultimately at the end of the day it is the support of these individuals that will keep music programs alive, not only at Bay View Academy but hopefully other public schools as well.

The action that I implemented at Bay View Academy was the creation of a brochure that highlights the program that is now in place at the school. This brochure can be used for both

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current students and hopefully students applying to attend this school and can inform the general public of the goals and expectations both the school and the music director have for the music education program. Within the brochure, I provided an envelope that invites the individual looking at the brochure to donate money to the music program if they feel so inclined. Bay View Academy has figured out that in order to keep extracurricular programs like music and art; they need to raise a total of \$30,000 on their own, which is all fueled by donations. This brochure will be used to show the great work that is being done at this small school, and get parents and community members alike to realize and understand the impact that music education has on the future of their children and to promote the want to donate to this school in need. Not only will this brochure be given to parents, but there will hopefully be a link on the school's website for those who are researching schools and want to see what it is that the school provides. There should never be a time where Bay View Academy administrators feel the need to discuss whether or not to keep the music program and through informing the community and receiving donations, hopefully this will never be the case.

## Critical Reflection

### Action Taken

Overall, I feel like my action was a good one for the time that Bay View Academy is at in becoming a well known, prestigious, charter school. I feel like my action will allow incoming parents to further understand the one of many benefits that comes along with enrolling their child at such a wonderful school. The strength I feel like my action has is that it is something that can be used year after year to highlight the music education program that is provided. Also, donations are something that Bay View Academy are going to need no matter what school year so the inclusion of a donation envelope will hopefully help them reach the \$30,000 mark easily each year. Given that we were only given one semester to implement an action, definitely if given more time I would have focused more on the actual workings and logistics of the music program. As I mentioned in my interviews with the teachers of Bay View, structure and objectives were very much needed in the teaching of the actual music. If given more time, I would have worked more one on one with Mrs. Miranda in creating and implementing lesson plans that would further be more effective for the students' educational advancement. Former CSUMB student, Jenny Kovitch, wrote the same sentiments as I in her Capstone project titled "Incorporating Music Into Language Arts Curriculum". She wrote, "If I were to change the project in the future, I would continue to implement music into the curriculum, but focus more on vocabulary, which in turn would help for every subject whether it is language arts, math, science, etc" (Kovitch, 2011, p. 16). Her goal, as I feel is a very important goal for music education, is to have music become a part of everyday education that teaches both music concepts while connecting it to lessons for other curriculum material. Within the time constraint I had this semester for this project, I feel that the creation and implementation of the pamphlet

was the most effective use of my time and very beneficial to the information that I received through both the observations and the interviews at Bay View Academy.

### **Lessons Learned**

Some lessons that I learned from this project about myself is that I am able to make my stance known and am able to introduce my ideas and opinions to third parties. One thing I found that I need to work on though is the initiation of getting in touch with the people I need to be in contact with. Throughout the beginning of this project it was hard for me to get up the gumption to actually call and make appointments with the stakeholders I needed to be in contact with. I feel most of this is a result of my communication skills and the anxiety that comes along with communicating with people I do not know.

The lessons I learned in terms of working towards change is that any and every action takes a lot of time to take place and implement. At the beginning of the semester I knew that creating an action for change was going to take time, but never thought it would take as much time and thought as it did for this project. Working towards change, also, is easier when more than one person is working towards the same common goal. I found it very easy to work with Mrs. Miranda because she as well understood the importance of music education for all children. She, as well, felt the same about maintaining and keeping a well rounded program that will be fully beneficial for all students.

Ultimately one of the biggest lessons I learned was the difficulties that come along with teaching and learning. Although Bay View Academy does have an in place music program, forty minutes a week for Mrs. Miranda to teach up to thirty students is some rather difficult shoes to fill. Teaching requires many outside hours to prepare and set up for the day, especially within the

music class. Being that Mrs. Miranda travels from class room to classroom also makes her job more difficult in that she has to be mobile at all times without having a teaching space all to herself.

### **Synthesis and Integration**

Overall the Liberal Studies department has helped shaped my education in many ways. The requirements for the program in both transferring into the program and working as an undergraduate at CSUMB has thoroughly helped me attain a broad based knowledge of subject matter. I took everything from physical anthropology to Ancient History which I feel all helped in me being better prepared to teach a variety of subjects when I am finally placed within my own classroom setting. These courses also provided an outlet of life-long learning, especially in the classes that promoted and revolved around multiculturalism and community. One thing that I did gain through the Liberal Studies department here at CSUMB that I did not have when I arrived was the ability to have ethical reflection on various situations in my life mostly involving different cultures and families. Having this as part of my knowledge base will be very important later on in my career in that I will use these skills to treat each and every situation with respect and consideration for the thoughts and ideals that come along with whomever I may be dealing with.

The service learning aspect of both CSUMB and the Liberal Studies department as well better prepared me for my future. At first I was not so happy about the fact that I would have to do hours outside of my classes, work , and my social life in order to pass my classes. But as each semester went by and each experience within an actual classroom setting, I learned to value and cherish service learning. Without service learning I do not think I would have really learned what

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it takes to be a teacher nor understand all of the logistics of what takes place in running an effective classroom. Each and every one of my hours spent at my various service learning sites provided me with a lesson that I will use for the rest of my life.

MLO's here at CSUMB also helped in informing my project at Bay View Academy. My emphasis being human development has allowed for me to use the concepts and theories I have learned in my various classes, to further analyze and fight for the inclusion of music education in public schools. Music education is all about developing the student as a whole, which has been the focus of the classes I have taken to fulfill my emphasis requirements. MLO 11, Ethical Reflection and Social Responsibility, allowed for me to understand the social foundations of schools as an institution. Walking into my project knowing how school's work as an institution helped me understand how my implementation of an action would eventually work out. Knowing the history and background of the funding for schools like Bay View, allowed for me to create my action around the need for more funding. MLO 3, Cross- Cultural Competence, allowed for me to better understand different cultures and the histories that these different cultures bring along with them. Bay View Academy, and other schools' in the Monterey area, contain a diverse population of students so having this background knowledge really helps in making the learning environment as effective as it can be.

Overall, the Liberal Studies department and the requirements that came along with being involved in that major have influenced my education in a way that will continue throughout my life. Using the knowledge I gained through my two years here at CSUMB, allowed for my capstone project and action to be as effective as it can be given the time allowed in this semester.

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