

# WHY MUSIC?

## The Many Benefits of a Musical Education

With school funding shortages leading to cuts across the board, music education programs may fall by the wayside. However, because music learning yields so many benefits to students, these programs are far too valuable to lose.

### Benefits to the Brain and General Learning Skills



Music learning involves active engagement and discipline, resulting in far-reaching benefits to the brain that may include:

- Improved reading skills
- A better vocabulary
- Stronger neural activation in native language

90% of preschool children studied showed increased verbal intelligence after just 20 days of musical training<sup>1</sup>

#### Other verbal benefits observed:<sup>2</sup>

Increased ability to incorporate the sound patterns of a new language into words – especially helpful for students for whom English is a second language

Better and more focused listening skills, including the ability to pick out the most important auditory signals

Better auditory memory and attention

#### ENHANCED FINE MOTOR SKILLS

Musical training develops the part of the brain associated with sensory and motor function

May enable students to better write, use a computer, and interact with their learning environment<sup>3</sup>

Superior working and long-term memory.<sup>5</sup>

*Better preparation for learning math and abstract thinking skills.*

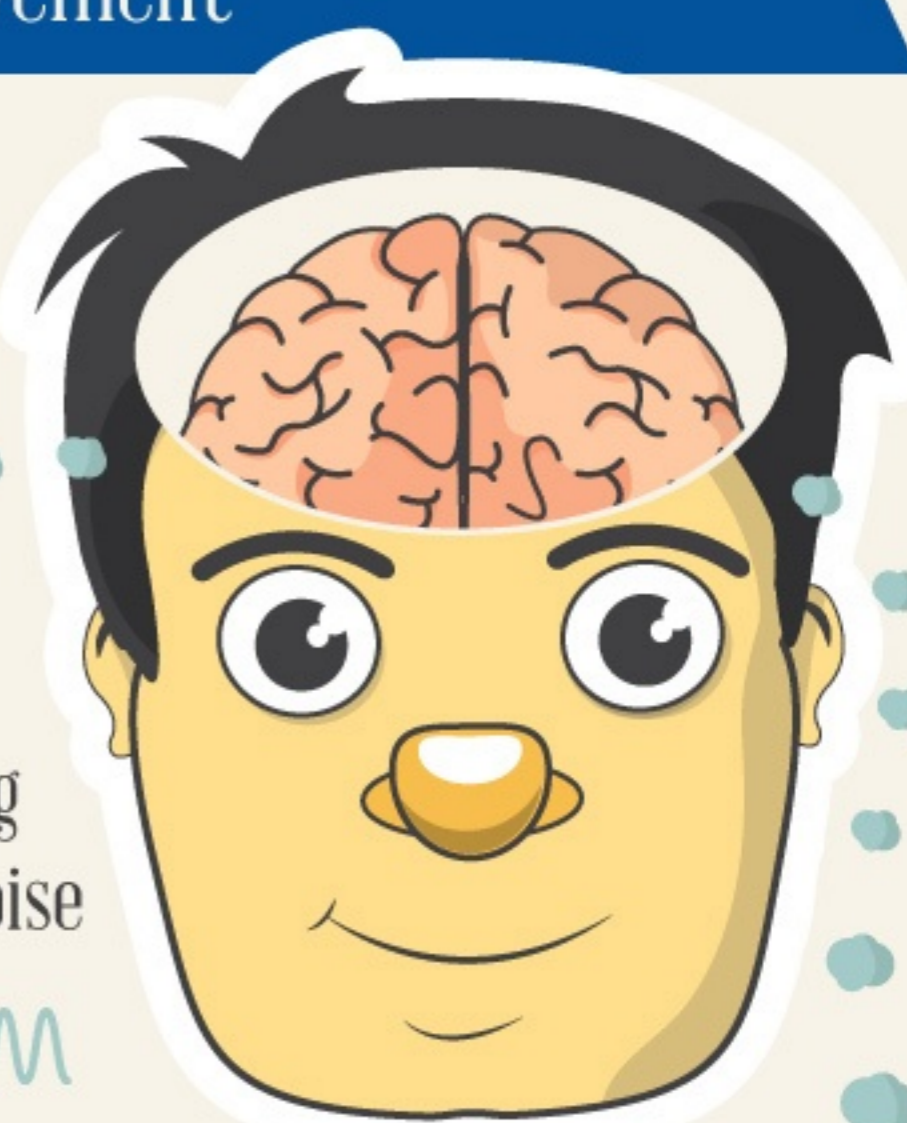
Music strengthens the same part of the brain used for complex math skills

One study found that students who had received formal musical instruction greatly outperformed their peers in basic algebra

### Benefits to Academic Achievement

All the benefits of the neural workout and discipline from musical training may translate into real, positive results in schoolwork.

Music training may improve listening ability, and allow children to more effectively filter out noise in a loud classroom<sup>6</sup>



This becomes especially helpful for students with learning disorders, who may be more distracted by background noise

In 2007, elementary school students in top-quality music programs scored 22% higher in English & 20% higher in math than students in deficient music programs<sup>7</sup>

In 2010, students who took 4 years of arts and music

classes in high school scored 102 points higher on their SATs<sup>8</sup>

#### MUSIC AND ARTS EDUCATION CAN BE ESPECIALLY BENEFICIAL TO LOW-INCOME STUDENTS.<sup>8</sup>

The NEA found that compared to those with low arts education, low-income students with high amounts of arts education:

- Scored higher in writing and science
- Were more likely to participate in extracurricular activities
- Were more likely to enroll in a moderately or highly selective 4-year college
- Had a higher GPA
- Were 5X less likely to drop out of high school
- Were 3X more likely to earn a bachelor's degree

This points to arts and music education as a way to help close the achievement gap

### Benefits to Life Skills and Personal Enrichment

Arts-engaged low-income students were more likely than those without arts engagement to have:<sup>11</sup>

- Attended and done well in college
- Obtained employment with future growth
- Participated in the political process by voting
- Volunteered in their communities

Aside from the scholastic benefits, musical training can benefit children in other important ways, such as:<sup>10</sup>

- Increased self-esteem
- Better attentiveness and perseverance
- More enjoyment and creativity
- Better study habits

#### AND OF COURSE, MUSIC EDUCATION IS BENEFICIAL IN ITS OWN RIGHT! MUSIC:

- Can be a lifelong passion, leading to on-going personal enrichment and satisfaction<sup>15</sup>
- Is a unique form of cultural and personal expression, existing in every world culture<sup>12</sup>
- Provides an outlet for creative thinking and expression<sup>14</sup>
- Sensitizes students to the aesthetic beauty of the world<sup>13</sup>
- Is a unique form of intelligence, creating the capacity to think in musical terms, hear and recognize patterns, and perhaps manipulate them<sup>16</sup>

Music is a way that students can experience (as cellist and conductor Pablo Casals said) the "incredible marvel" of being a human!<sup>17</sup>

### And it is Possible!

Although arts programming is often on the chopping block due to budget restrictions, it doesn't have to be – many organizations are calling for increased arts integration in schools.

- Music doesn't have to break the bank – NAMM found that the annual cost for comprehensive K-12 music education is only \$187 per student<sup>18</sup>
- In 2010, the U.S. Conference of Mayors (representing over 1,200 cities nationwide) urged school districts to commit to arts education<sup>19</sup>
- In 2011, The President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities released Reinvesting in Arts Education, calling for the creation of "arts-rich" schools<sup>19</sup>

### Music Makes a Difference in Students' Lives

#### WHY MUSIC?

Because students deserve the advantages, creativity, and engagement that music brings, and it can help shape lives for the better.



PROFESSIONAL MUSIC EDUCATORS ARE CRUCIAL TO THE MUSICAL OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS

The University of Florida's online Master of Music Education degree program provides active music teachers advanced opportunities for creative and professional development.

SOURCES: 1 - http://www.psmag.com/education/music-training-enhances-childrens-verbal-intelligence-36701/ 2 - http://www.soc.northwestern.edu/brainvolts/documents/KrausChandrasekaran\_NRN10.pdf 3 - http://www.aep-arts.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Music-Matters-Final.pdf 4 - http://www.psmag.com/news/middle-school-music-lessons-enhance-algebra-skills-17009/ 5 - http://www.aep-arts.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Music-Matters-Final.pdf 6 - http://www.soc.northwestern.edu/brainvolts/documents/KrausChandrasekaran\_NRN10.pdf 7 - http://music.ed.nyu.edu/files/2012/04/benefits\_of\_music.pdf 8 - http://www.americanartsforthearts.org/pdf/get\_involved/advocacy/research/2011/sat\_arts11.pdf 9 - http://www.nea.gov/research/arts-at-risk-youth.pdf 10 - http://www.aep-arts.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Music-Matters-Final.pdf 11 - http://www.nea.gov/research/arts-at-risk-youth.pdf 12 - http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200008/music-the-mind 13 - http://www.questia.com/library/music-and-performing-arts/music-music-aesthetics 14 - http://www.gutenberg.org/files/17111/17111-h/17111-h.htm 15 - http://www.dialecticmusicteaching.com/articles/directors/18-benefits-of-playing-an-unusual-instrument/ 16 - http://www.pbs.org/wnet/gpe1/education/ed\_mi\_overview.html 17 - http://music.ed.nyu.edu/files/2012/04/benefits\_of\_music.pdf 18 - http://www.takepart.com/article/2012/08/30/music-education-why-does-not-have-expensive-why-should-stay-schools 19 - http://www.pcah.gov/sites/default/files/PCAH\_Reinvesting\_4web\_0.pdf