
MUSIC TASK FORCE UPDATE

POLICY ISSUE/SITUATION:

A Music Task Force update will be provided by facilitators Robin Kobrowski, Jan Martin and Tom Colett.

BACKGROUND

At the August 26, 2013 meeting, the School Board charged the District with forming a Music Task Force to be made up of parent, teacher, community and administrator members. The Task Force has met 6 times since its formation in September, 2013.



Music Task Force Proposal to BSD Internal Budget Committee



Music Task Force Recommendation to BSD Internal Budget Committee

Background

The BSD Music Task Force (MTF) was formed in September 2013 at the request of our School Board. The MTF has been charged with studying current music programming, researching best practice models in music education, and presenting programming recommendations with an eye toward equity of curricular options for all BSD students, especially students of low socio-economic status and diverse backgrounds.

Our investigation of the BSD K-12 music program revealed that the program has eroded over the past twenty years through a series of substantial cuts. In the past two years, additional substantial cuts have brought the program to a crisis stage, significantly impacting the district's ability to provide a complete education for all students. Due to significant disparities in instructional time and/or course offerings that exist among BSD schools, many students do not have equitable access to the breadth or depth of music education accessible by students in other schools. Our projections (based on current enrollment and attrition rates) demonstrate that, without substantial action, the music program will continue to decline.

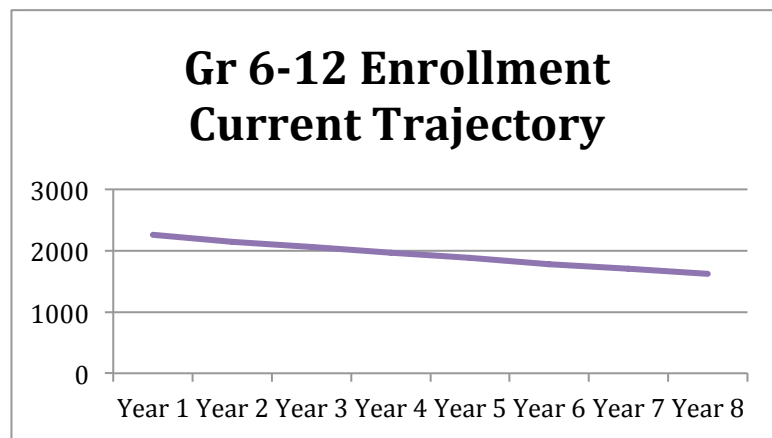


Figure 1: Current projected enrollment in instrumental music over an 8-year period:

Our review of best practice models in music education revealed that school districts with nationally recognized music programs have significantly higher participation and they have invested a significantly greater portion of funds in their program. The Music Task Force is sensitive to the fact there are many and varied needs within the Beaverton School District, and that the investment seen in nationally recognized districts may be beyond what is currently possible for the BSD. Therefore, the recommendations in this document have been strategically developed to generate improvements in the program (including increases to student enrollment) with the minimum expenditure possible. Below this threshold of investment, it is not likely that the current trend of decline will be reversed.

The recommendations outlined in this document are designed to fulfill the following objectives as steps toward providing a complete education for all Beaverton students:

- Provide for greater equity of access to quality music education.
- Reduce barriers to enrollment in elective music classes at the secondary level.
- Coordinate music programs to support the district's strategic plan, particularly Individual Student Growth and Equity in Student Outcomes.
- Reverse the downward trend in student participation and replace it with a growth trajectory.

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It should be noted that the bulk of the recommendations in this document are geared toward primary school music programs; this is intentional – the greatest impact over time will be made at the elementary level and bear fruit in the years to come as these students matriculate to secondary schools. Also, some research suggests that a “cognitive window” exists for music education much like for language acquisition wherein learning is likely to be more effective before students reach a certain age.

Supporting Individual Student Growth – The Benefits of Music Education

Many people are at least peripherally aware of “soft research” that indicates “music makes people smarter.” In recent years, however, there have been significant findings that show direct correlations between music education and several important measures of student growth. For instance:

- At-risk students in the lowest quartile of SES who engaged in arts of some kind experienced significantly better academic outcomes, higher career goals, and more civic engagement than those of their peers who did not engage in arts (Catterall 2012).
- Students of all SES levels consistently involved in orchestra or band during their middle and high school years performed better than their non-music-involved peers in math at grade 12. *The results were even more pronounced for students from low-income families.* Those who were involved in orchestra or band were more than twice as likely to perform at the highest levels in math as their peers who were not involved in music. Further, students who participated in music for at least three hours each week earned an average GPA of 3.17 vs. 2.97 for students who earned low or no arts credits, were 5 times more likely to graduate than their peers who earned low or no arts credits, and were 3 times more likely than students who lacked to earn a bachelor’s degree (Catterall 2002).
- Students at risk of not successfully completing their high school educations cite their participation in the arts as reasons for staying in school (Barry 2002)
- 50 percent of all low-SES adults with arts-rich backgrounds anticipated having a “professional” career such as law, medicine, or management by age 30. In contrast, only 21 percent of those lacking such backgrounds anticipated having professional careers (Catterall 2012).

Recommendations

Recommendation:	Action:	Approximate Cost:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitate the hiring of quality music teachers (in cooperation with other administrators) in order to provide students with a quality music education.• Provide models for the evaluation of current music teachers (in cooperation with other administrators) in order to further improve the quality of music education.• Provide for the professional development of our current teaching staff.• Work with district administration to maintain a district music budget in order to provide for more efficient use of funds.• Coordinate placement of itinerant music staff (in cooperation with other administrators).• Manage district inventory of musical instruments, sheet music, and other music equipment.	<p>Add 1.0 Music Administrator*</p> <p>Alternatively, add 1.0 Music TOSA (position must convert to Administrator in 1-4 years to ensure the retention, development, and evaluation of a highly qualified music teaching staff.)</p>	<p>\$150,000</p> <p>\$100,000</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Address equity of student contact time between elementary schools throughout the district.	Add 12 Elementary General Music FTE	\$1,200,000

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase student contact time to approach 90 minutes per week at the elementary level to meet minimum National Standards (NAFME, 1994) • Provide 5th grade band instruction. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide necessary instruction to the 5th grade band classes in cooperation with the General Music Teacher. • Allow for collaborative team-teaching on a rotating basis from the area Middle School Band Director or a part-time roving Band Director. This collaboration improves student learning and retention across grade levels, particularly where a change in school occurs. 	Add 2.5 Elementary Band FTE	\$250,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide instruments to students in beginning band who cannot obtain them through other means. This addresses the most significant equity issue with instrumental music and is necessary for fifth grade band. 	Instrument & equipment purchase for 5 th grade band	\$135,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring parity to elementary music classroom equipment to provide a consistent and equitable music education experience across the district. • Provide the means for authentic and meaningful music education experiences in every elementary music classroom throughout the district. 	Instrument & equipment purchase for elementary general music classrooms	\$250,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for the overdue replacement and repair of instruments at the secondary level. • Provide for student participation in educationally necessary co-curricular events. • Provide for the upkeep of district-owned music equipment, including choir robes, pianos, band instruments, etc. • Provides for acquisition of sheet music. 	Instrument/equipment repair & replacement	\$158,000 (\$10,000 per middle school band, \$12,000 per high school band, \$2,000 for choirs)
TOTAL:		\$2,143,000 (admin) \$2,093,000 (TOSA) Of this, \$385,000 is a <u>one-time</u> expense.

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Cost-Benefit Analysis

The recommendations outlined above will have a positive impact on enrollment in elective music classes at secondary schools. If, in future years, daily band and choir is implemented at the middle school level, even more positive impacts will be realized. As enrollment and class size of the secondary music classes grow, the average size of the non-music classes scheduled during the same period of the day will decrease. Figure 2 and 3 below demonstrate this concept in principle. The numbers are not derived from an actual BSD high school, but the effect of growing music class size could be applied to any school in the district.

CURRENT CLASS SIZE MODEL							
	BAND CLASS	CHOIR CLASS	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	OTHER CLASSES	# OF CLASSES	AVG CLASS SIZE (inc. music)	AVG CLASS SIZE (not inc. music)
P1	35	24	1500	1441	50	30	30.02
P2	14	40	1500	1446	50	30	30.13
P3	54	0	1500	1446	50	30	30.13
P4	0	55	1500	1445	50	30	30.10
P5	0	0	1500	1500	50	30	31.25
P6	55	0	1500	1445	50	30	30.10
P7	0	0	1500	1500	50	30	31.25
	158	119					

Figure 2: A sample school with enrollment similar to current BSD high schools

PROJECTED CLASS SIZE MODEL							
	BAND CLASS	CHOIR CLASS	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	OTHER CLASSES	# OF CLASSES	AVG CLASS SIZE (inc. music)	AVG CLASS SIZE (not inc. music)
P1	70	75	1500	1355	50	30	28.23
P2	80	70	1500	1350	50	30	28.13
P3	0	70	1500	1430	50	30	29.79
P4	80	0	1500	1420	50	30	29.58
P5	70	45	1500	1385	50	30	28.85
P6	80	0	1500	1420	50	30	29.58
P7	0	75	1500	1425	50	30	29.69
	380	335					

Figure 3: Class size projection based on nationally recognized programs of excellence.

When band and choir classes have increased to at or near capacity – which is likely to happen as BSD improves the K-12 articulation of the music curriculum and reduces barriers to enrollment – the average class size can potentially decrease by as many as 2 students per class. This effect is almost as significant as the class-size reduction realized by the 2013 Local Option Levy (Beaverton School District, 2013) and it is possible within 6 years of adopting our recommendations. Also, note that current class size averages outside of music are being driven up by the current low enrollment in music classes. This fact further supports the need for measures to decrease barriers to enrollment in the music program at all levels.

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If the above scenario were to be realized in our district, the total increase in FTE Value (a number derived from comparing the student load of any given teacher with the average student load) of secondary music teachers would represent a potential savings of nearly \$3 million annually (Music Task Force Staffing & Scheduling Report, page 21).

Additional Recommendations

In addition to the recommendations above, the Music Task Force recommends the following four actions that afford significant improvements to our overall program at minimal cost.

Recommendation:	Action:	Approximate Cost:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide unique opportunities in music education tailored to the needs of special education students who are not currently receiving music instruction.• Improve the quality of music education by providing music educators with specific training in special education.	Add .5 Certified Music Teacher with SPED background to work with SPED students district-wide (e.g. in ISC) Purchase instruments for SPED students	\$50,000 \$2000
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce barriers to enrollment, particularly for underserved students.• Support bussing for recruiting tour performances by older ensembles; provide substitute pay to enable middle school teachers to recruit; allow for sufficient time during the school day for <u>all</u> interested students to try out a variety of instruments; provide funds for printed materials.	District-supported, articulated recruiting for beginning band	\$25,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide access to music education to students Merlo Station where there currently is none.• Use a small ensemble model aimed at helping underserved/at-risk students.	Add .5 Music FTE to Merlo Station Purchase instruments for Merlo Station	\$50,000 \$3500
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide for K-12 community outreach, celebration and recruiting through large yearly performance	Reserve one evening in the gym at all 5 high schools for a joint K-12 concert by feeder area in December	\$0
TOTAL		\$130,500

Anticipated Future Needs

The Task Force also makes recommendations that BSD consider several actions for future years:

- Form an orchestra program beginning in 4th or 5th grade in a manner similar to the proposed 5th grade band program.
- Additional FTE will be eventually be necessary to support some of the larger student loads at the secondary level. This FTE would be determined during the staffing process in the spring and would be based on student enrollment.
- The district should resolve the inequity in course offerings that currently exists between schools in the district by ensuring that every comprehensive secondary school offers band *and* choir, and eventually orchestra.

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- The district should resolve the inequity in class time that currently exists between middle school music programs in the district by ensuring that ensemble music classes meet for an average of 225 minutes in a regular school week.

Creative Budget Solutions

The Music Task Force proposes the following ways to reduce the budgetary impact of our recommendations. These are just a few possibilities:

- We recommend the budget committee focus its allocation on staffing. With staffing in place, BSD will be more likely to win grants for material expenses.
- The purchase of instruments (both for 5th grade band and for the elementary music classrooms) can be funded in part by grants (e.g. BEF, Music for All, VH1 Save the Music, other private grants).
- The 2.5 FTE for 5th grade band, which will primarily be assigned to current middle school band teachers as a portion of their total FTE assignment, can be funded in part through Title II professional development funds.
- The estimated cost of instrument/equipment purchases is based on retail pricing. The actual cost will be lower once the order goes through a bid process.
- The Music Task Force members are ready and willing to help find funding sources for material needs. The district could recruit other volunteers to help as well.
- Instrument purchases can be made on a multi-year lease to mitigate the budget impact of any single year.
- A \$20,000 Grammy Foundation Grant may be applied for to support music education at Merlo Station while researching the effects of participation in music education on student graduation rate.

Conclusion

Based on the ever-growing body of research, it is evident that all BSD students will benefit enormously from a strengthened music program. Advocates for music education have been told for years that the music program is valued, but that there simply is no way to afford it. It is the hope of the Music Task Force that this document makes clear that the economic cost is not insurmountable and that the potential gains make it more than worthwhile.