



ONTARIO MUSIC
EDUCATORS'
ASSOCIATION



The Way Forward

For Music Education In Ontario Schools

www.omea.on.ca

Spring 2022

The Way Forward for Music Education in Ontario Schools

The OMEA COVID-19 Response Committee team was formed in May 2020, to address the impact of COVID-19 on school music programs in Ontario. Since that time, the committee has published two documents (A Framework For The Return to Music Classes 2020-21 and Return To Playing And Singing, April 2021) to help gather and share the most current research with regard to the Covid-19 virus and music-making, and to offer support resources to music educators to assist in delivering the most robust music curriculum possible.

In the following document, the Ontario Music Educators' Association continues to work within its mandates to advocate for culturally responsive and relevant music education for all learners in Ontario; to provide a vehicle for communication between our professional organizations, the government and our members; and to provide professional support to our members in a variety of ways. It is time to move forward and to find ways for comprehensive music education to flourish in Ontario schools once again.

It has always been widely acknowledged that music is a key component in wellness and social-emotional learning. Music is also a key part in cultural understanding and driving empathetic decision-making among people. Over the past 2 years, during the pandemic, it has become increasingly evident that music is essential. The music educators in Ontario are excited to return to providing robust, essential learning for students using all the facets of the curriculum, including wind instrument playing and singing. The way forward is bright.



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Living with Covid-19

As vaccines become available to all ages and pandemic restrictions wane, our collective resilience and fortitude will allow us to approach the world of music education and its role in our lives with new vision and new strategies. Together we will come back stronger. Enabling students to perform with their voices and wind instruments plays an important part in learning and needs to make a full return to Ontario classrooms. Now is the time when students need music and good music instruction more than ever.

Common Standards

The standard safety mitigations that are utilized in music classrooms and in extracurricular music activities must be consistent and equitable with all other subject areas and activities taking place within the school setting. It is critical that music students and those involved in extracurricular ensembles receive the same access to opportunities as their peers in other subject areas, clubs or teams.

Music and Social Emotional Learning

As music educators, we know that participation (playing/singing) in music develops the life skills essential for maximizing one's potential and ultimately assists in garnering the tools needed to achieve one's personal/professional goals. Through musical experiences we learn: creativity, confidence, cooperation, communication, acceptance, civility, appreciation and so much more.

- Positive Motivation & Perseverance
- Healthy Relationship Skills
- Self Awareness & Sense of Identity
- Stress Management & Coping
- Identification and Management of Emotions
- Critical and Creative Thinking

In music, students often experience friendships, develop a passion for their learning, rely on a network of support, learn to control their impulses, learn to cope with adversity, persevere, and problem solve through challenges. Music can help us see the value in progress, without the expectation of perfection. The OMEA looks towards the future of music education, and to deepening our collective understanding of the social and emotional learning that happens in our classrooms.



The Way Forward For

Music Education

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Recognizing that music is a direct reflection of culture, music education in Ontario must continually interrogate and dismantle oppressive systems, and replace them with culturally responsive learning spaces that champion music education for all.

Qualified Music Teachers

Music instruction must be delivered by educators with a deep and authentic knowledge of the music they are teaching, and of best-practices in its pedagogy, while ensuring that support and meaningful professional development in music instruction is available for all educators.

Funding

Funding must be provided to support equitable access to the resources required to support school music programs that reflect students' communities and their varied backgrounds, in all regions in Ontario. Further, the Government must ensure that teachers of music are receiving support to develop professionally as music educators.

Equitable Access



The government must, through curriculum policy and funding, assure equitable, barrier free access to a music education that includes performance, creation, and analysis.

Pre-Service Programs



Faculties of Education must be required to provide teacher candidates graduates with a minimum of 18 hours (primary/junior) and 36 hours (junior/intermediate) of explicit training in music pedagogy that includes creating, presenting / performing, reflecting, responding, and analyzing, all in a variety of cultural contexts.

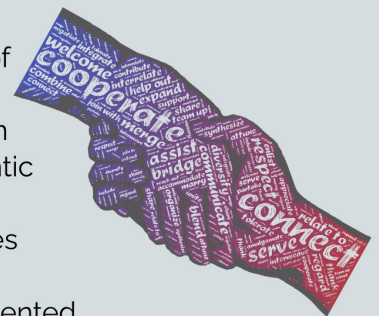
Adequate Time Allotment



Students in all Ontario school boards should receive a minimum of 100 minutes of focused music instruction per week in elementary schools. A minimum of 1 compulsory credit in music should be required for an OSSD.

Collaboration

Music both supports the development of collaboration, and is best delivered in a collaborative environment. Collaboration must consider student voice, the authentic musical experience of the various communities in the classroom, influences from a variety of Arts disciplines, and thoughtful consideration of underrepresented voices, including indigenous perspectives.



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