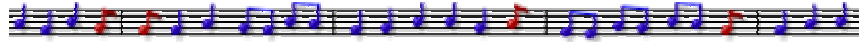


WHY MUSIC?



MUSIC IS A SCIENCE - Music is exact, specific, and it demands exact acoustics. A conductor's score is a chart, a graph that indicates frequencies, intensities, volume changes, melody and harmony all at once and with exact control of time. The laws of physics are involved with every tone that is performed.

MUSIC IS MATHEMATICAL - The organization of notes in music is rhythmically based on the division of time into differing fractions within a measure unit, which may vary in length from unit to unit. The mental gymnastics required to perform this must be done instantaneously, not worked out on paper, and with complete coordination of the fingers, lips and other appendages of the body needed to produce that note.

MUSIC IS FOREIGN LANGUAGE - Music is foreign in two ways: (1) it uses foreign terms and (2) it is totally new language built on symbols. The terms in music are French, Italian and German for the most part. However, it is not unusual to see terms in Russian, Hungarian, Norwegian, Japanese or Spanish. The semantics of music is the most complete and the most universal of all languages. Not only are you told what note to play and when, but also how fast, how loud, what kind of attack and how long. It will be played the same way in Japan, in the United States or in Europe.

MUSIC IS HISTORY - Music usually reflects the environment and times of its creation, often even the nationalistic or racial feeling of the country from which it comes. Music has been entwined with religion, royalty and the common man from every area of the earth.

MUSIC IS A SOCIAL STUDY - Participation in any ensemble, regardless of size, involves close relationships, both musical and non-musical, with others. A large performance organization is almost a microcosm of the adult world these students are about to enter. Both musical and non-musical responsibilities are assigned to each member with the success of the entire organization dependent upon each person meeting their responsibilities.

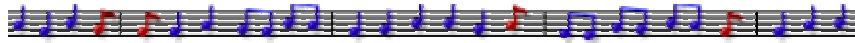
MUSIC IS PHYSICAL EDUCATION - Music requires fantastic coordination of fingers, hands, arms, lips, cheek and facial muscles, in addition to extraordinary control of the diaphragm, back stomach and chest muscles which respond instantly to the sound heard in the ears and interpreted in the mind.

MOST OF ALL, MUSIC IS ART - It allows a human being to take these individual techniques and use them to create emotion. This is the one quality that science CANNOT duplicate - humanism, feeling, emotion - that which happens to you when you become a part of music.

THIS IS WHY WE TEACH MUSIC - Not because you plan to major in music, not because you plan to sing or play all of your life, not so you can relax, or not so you will have fun (although you will find yourself relating to these fine purposes of music) - BUT - so you will be human, will recognize beauty, will be sensitive, will have something personal, will have more compassion, gentleness, love and understanding, and will create more that is good - in short, MORE LIFE!



THE EXTRA-MUSICAL ADVANTAGES OF A MUSICAL EDUCATION



READING, LANGUAGE, AND MUSIC PROGRAMS - All of the studies support the existence of a connection between music study and reading. In most of the studies the students were instructed specifically in the skill of reading music notation, this in turn seemingly caused an increase in language reading skills. This finding held true with students in the early stages of reading development as well as with junior high school students. A result of many years of music study appears to be increased reading ability among college age students. Further, it appears that the best gains are made when a music specialist provides the music instruction.

DOES MUSIC INSTRUCTION AID LANGUAGE SKILLS? - It appears from studies that there is a connection between the development of musical and language skills. Students who studied music were shown to have both better discrimination skills for perceiving language as well as better articulation skills for speaking language. It would seem, therefore, that music instruction could be used as a "pre-language" program or as a simultaneous language enhancement activity. In either case, it appears that regular music instruction in the early and middle grades may have a positive transfer effect to the development of language skills.

DOES MUSIC INSTRUCTION AID FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS? - It appears that a student's ability to discriminate different pitches has a positive effect of the learning of a foreign language. Further, a developed tonal memory, singing skills, and instrumental music instruction all appear to relate positively to a student's ability to succeed in learning a second language. The development of pitch discrimination, tonal memory, and singing skills are common objectives and outcomes of elementary general music instruction. It appears that these fundamental music skills, once developed, also transfer to the learning of a foreign language. It further appears that learning to play a musical instrument will also increase the probability of success in learning a second language.

DOES MUSIC INSTRUCTION AID MATHEMATICS SKILLS? - Studies provide convincing support for the assertion that musical skill and mathematical skills are closely related. It seems clear that students who do well in math also do well in music.

DOES MUSIC INSTRUCTION AID OVERALL ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT? - Studies show that there is in fact a connection between academics and music. Although it cannot be said that music instruction will definitely increase mathematical skills, or overall GPA, it certainly can be argued that music instruction is an important aspect of a well-rounded education.

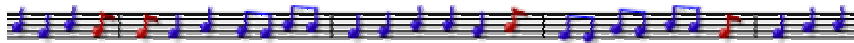
PSYCHOLOGICAL & PSYCHOSOCIAL EFFECTS OF MUSIC - There appears to be a relationship between creativity and music. Students who participate in music classes or pursue music as a profession may have higher creativity scores as a result of that experience. Therefore it could be concluded that music can enhance creativity.

EFFECTS OF MUSIC PARTICIPATION ON DROPOUT REDUCTION - Through music participation, at-risk students and students traditionally not considered to be at-risk tend to increase their self-awareness and develop pride and satisfaction in themselves and in their schools, classrooms, and teachers. Increased positive interactions with peers and adults, both in school settings and non-school settings and improved social adjustment skills have been reported due to music participation. Music teachers become role-models for students (Mr. Holland's Opus), music classrooms become settings in which individual creativity, trust, and interaction can be cultivated and grown, and music participation becomes the emotional outlet needed to reduce or prevent student drop-out.

SELF-ESTEEM/SELF-CONCEPT AND MUSIC PARTICIPATION - Whether the musical activity involved performance in an instrumental group or choir, whether students were singing or moving to music, whether the students were from high or low socioeconomic background, there appeared to be a very strong degree of association between participation in music programs and activities and increases in student self-esteem/self-image.

PSYCHOSOCIAL OUTCOMES AND MUSIC PARTICIPATION - Studies show that music and music programs and activities can provide for emotional and social outlets for many people as well as stimulate and promote trust and cooperativeness. The implication from these studies is that music can provide a variety of psychosocial benefits to many individuals.

FACT: High school students who participate in either music appreciation or music performance classes receive higher verbal and math SAT scores than the national average of students who take no music coursework. Students who participated in musical arts courses for four or more years in high school had verbal mean scores 32 to 35 points and math scores consistently 14 to 23 points higher than students who had not participated in any arts programs. The more years of music study the higher the gains.



*All information in this handout was quoted from:
"The Extra-Musical Advantages of a Musical Education"
by Dr. Robert Cutietta, Dr. Donald L. Hamann, and Dr. Linda Miller Walker
Published by United Musical Instruments U.S.A., Inc.
for the Future of Music Project*