

CREATING SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY MUSIC SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS
TO REACH SOCIO-ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES: A CASE
STUDY OF THREE MODELS

by

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Abstract

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Creating Successful Community Music School Engagement Programs to Reach Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Communities: A Case Study of Three Models

Thesis directed by Dr. Alejandro Cremaschi

In the wake of reduced funding for music education in Title 1 public schools, it is essential that community music schools create outreach programs that are well-developed, well-researched, and successfully reach the socio-economically disadvantaged communities that they serve (McDaniel, 2011). Three community music schools studied across the United States each feature vastly different models of engagement programming in socio-economically disadvantaged communities. Through interviews with outreach staff and detailed analysis, the author studies which models and their characteristics are successful in order to discern how to best bring music to these communities in a meaningful way. Based on the interviews and analysis, the author identifies eight major needs that community music schools face when bringing music outreach to disadvantaged populations. These needs are analyzed via Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and are categorized by importance according to the hierarchy. Of the needs evaluated, the need to foster belongingness in students through the curriculum is shown to be an often-overlooked aspect when designing music outreach. In the same way, societal constructs and hegemony regarding the tradition of music education and the participation therein operates on a somewhat exclusive level that frequently does not consider the needs or desires of the population served. It is with this foundation that the author recommends future research in the form of a long-term, immersive study that includes a larger and more diverse group of participants.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Historical Context of the Study

Community music schools across the United States have existed as a bridge for music education outside of the public or private school environment by offering music lessons on various instruments or musical disciplines. The first community music school, The Hull-House Music School located in Chicago, IL, was established 1892 with a goal to make music lessons accessible to all people regardless of their background (Egan, 1989; Hamilton, 2012). The school particularly reached out to immigrants and those from low income families on a “pay what you can” basis. Robert Egan in his book, *Music and the Arts in the Community*, quotes Janet D. Schenck in his definition of community music schools.

A [community music school] aims to put the highest musical education within the reach of serious students whose circumstances do not allow them to pay professional rates. The student is taught by a thoroughly qualified teacher for a sum which does not force both parent and child to cheat the body to nourish the mind. (1989, p. 89)

Based on this sentiment, it is clear that the original intent of community music schools was to reach disadvantaged populations with music education.

In 1965, the Title 1 Elementary and Secondary Education Act was passed enabling the National Guild to receive funds for the founding of a community music school in a rural community (Egan, 1989). The resulting project was entitled, *Mobile Academy for Children of Rural South East Arkansas, Arts for All*. Music as well as other performing arts disciplines were offered. Egan notes that,

The major thrust of the project was, of course, to bring the arts to the people. It is obvious that children and adults who reside in rural communities do not have the opportunity to involve themselves in the arts, because great distances make it impossible to be at the spot where the musical or theatrical experiences might be. (1989, pp. 271-272)

While the idea was initially successful, the funding of the program was doomed from the start. It was thought that the community in South East Arkansas would be able to monetarily contribute to the program after the initial grant expired. However, the poverty of the community in SE Arkansas was not taken into consideration and could not bear the financial burden of a community music school. Thus, the initiative failed.

Research published in 1985 examines outreach in community music schools especially in regard to various groups including those with disabilities, those in detention centers, and those of various ethnic groups (Pflieger, 1985). In this study, 83% of the schools stated that they did not have ethnic outreach programs on any level. Of the schools that did offer ethnic outreach programs, 38% offered programs in African music, 38% offered programs in Latin American music, 25% offered programs in Hispanic music, and 25% offered programs in American jazz, blues, and folk music (Pflieger, 1985). The lack of variety of content to reach students of a variety of ethnic backgrounds is an issue that (existing well before the turn of the century) is still pervasive today in modern-day music outreach.

The Modern Community Music School

In our modern age, those who attend community music schools do so as an “after-school” activity for which they pay a semesterly fee. While some music schools cater to a specific age group (for example, K-12), many accept students of all ages and backgrounds. Private lessons on

a variety of instruments are offered by teachers who are employed and compensated by the school.

Community music schools often feature community engagement/outreach branches that play a large role in the operating activities. These programs vary, but at their core, they offer music education free of charge to disadvantaged populations. As this research will focus exclusively on these programs, it is essential to define the modern difference between “community engagement” and “outreach.” According to Emmanuel (2008), the characteristics of music outreach are vastly different from music engagement. Modern-day outreach often consists of a performance program given by the performers to an audience. The engagement with the audience is minimal – leaving little room for educational aspects to resonate with the listeners via discussion or hands-on learning. Community engagement, on the other hand, tailors its programs to the audience members, encourages participation, and sparks interest in the listeners.

“Community engagement” programs found in non-profit music schools nearly always entail teachers going into the community (or inviting the community in) and facilitating a music-based event that caters to a certain group of people (including school-aged children, adults with disabilities, underprivileged communities, and so forth). These programs consist of an “outreach” rather than an engagement model – which leads to the problem at hand.

Current Issues in Music Outreach

Research (Hedberg & Rabkin, 2011) has suggested that music programs for children (engagement and otherwise) fail to engage students below the middle-class category. Additional findings note that the same music programs are being largely directed towards students in the middle-class and above (Wright, 2010). Such programs largely promote a “dominant ideology” in regard to the acceptable canon from which music education can come (Mozart, Beethoven,

etc.). *Sociology and Music Education* by Ruth Wright states that (in reference to music education in schools),

The ways in which dominant social groups have succeeded in perpetuating the form of cultural capital considered most suited to their own interests may well, then, involve incorporation of congenial view of those professionally prominent and the cooperation of reproducers whose habitus has already been likewise formed. (2008, p. 47)

This concept of “high art” also fails to engage economically disadvantaged students who may struggle to see their own place in music. Children from minority groups and/or children from disadvantaged communities, do not have a say in how music is presented to them. Because of this shortfall, children from these backgrounds will likely not have a sustained involvement in the arts because they don’t see themselves represented in the performers, the pieces, or the history.

Survey of Student Demographic in the Cities Studied

Since this study examines community music schools in Denver, CO, Nashville, TN, and Boulder, CO, it is essential to present data relating to the student population in the public-school districts in these areas. The Denver Public School System services approximately 79,500 students. Over half of the total student population in Denver Public Schools is Hispanic (58%). 19.8% of the students are White, 14.6% are Black, and 3.3% are Asian. Of the total number of students, 72.5% qualify for a free or reduced lunch (U.S. Dept. of Education, n.d.). Nashville, TN boast a larger public-school population than Denver with 88,000 students. In Pre-K, the student demographic is 44% Black, 28% White, 23% Hispanic, and 4% Asian. Of the total

number of students in the Nashville public school system, around 75% are considered to be at an economic disadvantage (Wikipedia, 2019)¹.

The city of Boulder, CO and surrounding cities feature a public-school program that is vastly different from the major cities discussed above. As of fall 2018, the Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) had 30,880 total students enrolled. Of these total students, 68.2% were white, 19.1% were Hispanic, and 5.6% were Asian. Of the total number of students enrolled in BVSD, only 20% were enrolled in the free/reduced lunch program (Boulder Valley School District, 2018).

The Need for the Study

There are countless arguments to be made regarding how arts participation can enrich the lives of students beyond music. Studies have suggested again and again that music education also benefits other areas of students' learning such as math, science, etc. What these studies do not address, however, is the socio-economic status of the children. *Arts Education in America: What the Declines Mean for Arts Participation*, an article published by the National Endowment of the Arts, cites a study showing that low-income students are benefited by arts education even more than students from middle class to wealthy families. It notes that,

One study found that the effects of arts involvement on low-income youth, like the effects of early childhood education, are sustained well into adulthood. Youth who have substantial engagements with the arts are more likely to go to college, get good grades in college, register to vote, and hold a full-time job, and they are less likely to require public assistance or food stamps. (Hedberg & Rabkin, 2011, p. 21)

¹A scholarly source was not available.

In the same vein, extracurricular activities are even more important for children from low-income families. In many instances, their home life is less than ideal – thus making inclusive, loving, and productive after-school programs and environments essential. Even though children from low-income families benefit the most from arts education (whether it be in the form of after school events or a concert during school hours), they are also the least likely to participate. A dissertation by Alexandra Andreassen points out that,

The benefits of music programs rarely extended to one of society's most vulnerable groups: low income children. Even if students don't have to pay to receive music lessons, students who come from families with lower socioeconomic status (SES) are less likely to enroll in music activities than those from higher SES families. (2013, pp. 35-36)

The source continues on to cite a study showing that, “in-school or extracurricular programs offering deep arts involvement may help narrow the gap in achievement levels among youth of high vs. low SES” (Andreassen, 2013, p. 36). One other crucial point to make is that community music schools cannot rely on the school system to help bridge this gap. When the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) went into effect, underperforming and underfunded schools began focusing only on the subjects that were to be tested by the NCLB assessment exams. Thus, because arts programs were not tested, they were not given priority funding in school (Andreassen, 2013).

With these data, one concludes that engagement programs that are put on by community music schools now more critical than ever. Students in that area may not be obtaining arts education from anywhere else thus leaving a community music school with a one-shot chance at engaging a student. Consequently, the material used in a music engagement programs and how it is presented to a student is of paramount importance. If successful, these programs can serve not only to spark an interest in music, but also create an inclusive community. By promoting

participation and belongingness in young students, community music schools could have a hand in raising children who work against social issues such as gentrification, white privilege, and inequality. In an effort to provide a solution to the problem examined above, this research evaluates three different community music schools from the cities discussed and creates informal recommendations to ensure that community music schools are successfully reaching children of all ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds in their community engagement programs.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

This study uses qualitative analysis and a “case study” methodology. Data collection took place in two major stages. The first of these consisted of online data collection via the websites of the three community music schools to be studied. After this was complete, further data were gathered by contacting the participants and scheduling either a phone or in-person interview. Interviews were recorded via smartphone with the consent of the interviewees. Notes were taken via iPad during the interviews. After the interview was complete, the author re-listened to the recordings several weeks later while adding more details to the existing notes taken in the initial interview. Thus, each interview was heard twice by the author. Interviews were not transcribed since detailed notes were taken. Direct answers to the interview questions were included in the research as well as any other data seen by the author as relevant to the study.

Both inductive and deductive reasoning were used to analyze the total data gathered. Themes hypothesized by the author regarding under-funding in public school music programs, a lack of belongingness in amongst disadvantaged music students, systemic issues facing community music school outreach programs, and the need for guidance to create successful music engagement programs were explored and proven by the following research. Amongst the schools studied, the presence of such predetermined themes did emerge, but also deviated in certain areas depending on the curriculum goals and the student demographic being served by the school.

Participants

Three community music schools were studied as part of this research. The selection of these participants was based on the author's previous familiarity with the mission, programs, and the faculty of the school. Due to the author's immediate location in the Denver area, two of the schools studied were in that region.

The first of the participants was Swallow Hill Music School in Denver, CO. For this research, Tiffany Grady, Director of Outreach, was interviewed. The second school studied was W.O. Smith Music School located in Nashville, TN. A school previously familiar to the researcher, several aspects of this school were already known. Further research was conducted through an interview with the Music Education Director, Jordan Morrison.

The last school to be studied as part of this research was the Parlando School of Musical Arts in Boulder, CO, a school also previously familiar to the author. Two members of the administration team desired to provide information. Kristel Brown, Director of Specialized Programming, was interviewed in tandem with Travis LaBerge, Executive Director.

Interviews

For this research eight questions were used for both phone and in-person interviews. The questions are as follows:

1. What is your background/training in community engagement/outreach programming?
2. What do your programs entail?
 - a. What specific events are planned?
 - b. What occurs at said events?
3. Do the events take place off or on the school campus? If off campus, where?
4. What is your system of evaluation to determine the success of these outreach programs?

- a. What specific evaluation tools have been most helpful?
 - b. From whom are you receiving feedback?
5. After receiving feedback from the evaluation tools, what areas stood out as strengths and what areas could be improved?
6. What is your 3-5 year plan for the engagement/outreach program?
7. Have you seen children from the outreach program latch on to music long-term or short-term?
8. If a child does latch on to music, what does long-term commitment look like for them?

The first interview conducted was with Tiffany Grady of Swallow Hill Music School. The interview was conducted over the phone and lasted for approximately thirty minutes. Ms. Grady's background in outreach consisted of first working in an arts administration capacity and gradually moving into the area of community engagement.

The second interview was with Jordan Morrison of W.O. Smith Music School. The interview was conducted over the phone and lasted for approximately forty-five minutes. Mr. Morrison's formal background is in music education. He has served for several years in an administrative capacity at W.O. Smith and recently moved into the role of Education Director upon the retirement of the previous director, Lynn Adelman.

The final interview was conducted in-person at the Parlando School of Musical Arts. The author's initial aim was to meet with Director of Specialized Programming, Kristel Brown, but also met with the Executive Director, Travis LaBerge in tandem with Ms. Brown. The interview lasted approximately one hour. Ms. Brown's formal education is in voice and theater performance. She currently serves on the vocal faculty at the Parlando School of Musical Arts while also overseeing all engagement initiatives that are implemented by the school. Mr.

LaBerge created the Parlando School of Musical Arts in 2007. With a formal background in piano, he currently oversees all programming at the school.

Procedure

Initial research took place by exploring and gathering data from each of the websites of the three music schools to be studied. The data found provided a basis for the formulation of the interview questions. Before conducting the interviews, the author created a list of eight questions (see above) which specifically aimed to explore particular aspects of each school's outreach programs, the mission behind them, the response from the community, and the evaluative practices instituted by the school to measure the effectiveness of their engagement programs. With the exception of Parlando, each school sent the author the evaluation tools that they use – which consisted of surveys and curriculum evaluations.

In order to understand the context in which music engagement programs took place in the cities studied, data were also collected regarding the public-school system in each city. For each city, the student demographic data were collected via government-sponsored websites. The student demographics used for this research included racial breakdown as well as the percentage of students on the free/reduced lunch program. In addition to this information, data were also collected regarding the public-school music standards for the states of Colorado and Tennessee. Swallow Hill based the majority of their programs on the state's music education standards while W.O. Smith and Parlando did not.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Once preliminary data from the community music schools regarding current outreach programming and the population served by outreach were collected via internet search and interviews, the results proved to be extraordinarily varied. These variations revolved largely around the type of programs designated for engagement and the style of music introduced to the children. These variations, while unprecedented, were hardly unexpected. The term, “engagement” holds a very broad definition depending on the region being reached. Thus, it is not surprising that each school had devised an approach based on what they deemed successful. In addition to data collected from the community music schools, data were also gathered regarding the student demographic of the public-school system in each of the cities in which the community music schools were located. These data shed light on the needs of particular students being reached as well as the majority/minority groups and percentages. Thus, the forthcoming results are presented based on the region in which the school lies.

Denver, Colorado

The Denver Public School System services approximately 79,500 students. Of the total number of students, 72.5% qualify for a free or reduced lunch (U.S. Dept. of Education, n.d.).

The student demographic is as follows (retrieved October 2019):

	Hispanic	Caucasian	African American	Asian
Student Percentage	58%	19.8%	14.6%	3.3%

(U.S. Dept. of Ed. n.d.)

Swallow Hill Music School (Denver, CO): Program Overview

Swallow Hill Music School seeks to bring music into schools that specifically service low-income communities (Swallow Hill Outreach, 2019). It is a Tier II SCFD (Scientific and Cultural Facilities District) organization – meaning that it is required to undergo an annual vetting process in order to receive revenue from the tax district. The SCFD was founded in 1988 and collects a one cent tax on every ten dollars of retail sales. The revenue is then given to cultural organizations in the Denver/Boulder area (Understanding SCFD, 2019) Swallow Hill, a non-profit institution, has made it its mission to use music outreach/engagement programs to service schools in the Denver area – specifically schools who have a student population of 80% or higher that qualify for a free/reduced lunch, according to the author’s interview with Tiffany Grady, Director of Outreach. Such students come from families who are typically living on \$29,000 a year or less for a family of four. According to Ms. Grady, Swallow Hill boasts two major areas of engagement. These include their Little Swallow’s program – a class designed to introduce preschoolers to music, and the Music Assemblies Program – an interactive, performance-based series that seeks to introduce K-12 students to music and instruments of various genres. Swallow Hill also boasts a successful music therapy outreach program, but for the sake of this research, this program is not evaluated.

Swallow Hill: Little Swallows

The Little Swallows program takes place either at Swallow Hill Music School or in low-income public elementary schools across Denver including Adventure Elementary School and Global Primary Academy and is led by instructors from Swallow Hill. The preschools reached through the Little Swallows program typically do not have a pre-existing music class yet are desirous of one. According to Ms. Grady, Swallow Hill’s outreach administrators reach out to a

preschool's administration to first ascertain if there is a desire and a need for a weekly music class. If so, teachers from Swallow Hill are sent. General information for two schools mentioned above is as follows. The following data do not reflect the demographic of the students participating in Little Swallows, but only the demographic of the public schools themselves. Ms. Grady did state in her interview, however, that the majority of the students participating in Little Swallows are Hispanic.

Adventure Elementary (2016-2017 School Year)

- 73% eligible for free/reduced lunch
- 20-24% reading proficiency

	Hispanic	Caucasian	African American	Asian
Student Demographic	81%	15%	1%	n/a

(Public School Review: Adventure Elementary, 2019)

Global Primary Academy (2016-2017 School Year)

- 71% eligible for free/reduced lunch
- 11-19% reading proficiency

	Hispanic	Caucasian	African American	Asian
Student Demographic	92%	8%	n/a	n/a

(Public School Review: Global Primary Academy, 2019)

Designed for preschool-aged children, the Little Swallows class takes place during school hours during which attendance is not optional. Because the majority of schools reached do not have existing music programs, Little Swallows exists completely outside of any program already established by the school (if there is one). Ms. Grady noted that the curriculum is flexible

depending on the needs of the students, yet largely consists of movement-based activities to introduce the children to various songs, dance, rhythm, auditory recognition, and pitch matching. The instructor typically will play guitar or ukulele to accompany various children's songs while encouraging students to participate.

Swallow Hill, Little Swallows: Evaluation Tools

Although not a public institution, Swallow Hill uses the Colorado Music Standards when creating the Little Swallows program, according to Ms. Grady. Such music standards are comprised of four ideals that were established in 2009 and have been updated for 2020. However, since Swallow Hill has not yet fully finished updating their own evaluation tools to the 2020 standards, this research focuses on the standards from 2009. Colorado's four standards of music education are described by the Colorado Department of Education as follows:

Figure 1

Colorado Academic Standards Music

The Colorado Academic Standards in music are the topical organization of the concepts and skills all Colorado students should know and be able to do throughout their preschool through twelfth-grade experience.

1. Expression of Music

The expression of music is the demonstration of human thought and emotion through the medium of performance, which is a product of knowledge and skills gained in the study of music.

2. Creation of Music

The creation of music is the demonstration of learned skills in the composition, improvisation, and arranging of music. Creating music involves writing music, fashioning new music from an existing piece of music, or forming an entirely new piece of music.

3. Theory of Music

The theory of music is the understanding of the distinctive language, conventions, mechanics, and structure of organized sound. Investigation of music theory allows for a more complete understanding of all aspects of the musical process, including musical performance and composition.

4. Aesthetic Valuation of Music

The value of music focuses on the knowledge needed to make an informed evaluation and to provide a well-thought-out critique about a musical piece. It also addresses the beauty, heart, and soul: the aesthetics of music. Valuing music will permit individuals to distinguish between a scholarly and an individual judgment of music.

(Colorado Academic Standards, 2019)

The standards are written to coincide with developmental stages of learning depending on the grade of the students. Benchmark goals are included in each grade of the standards to measure the students' success. For the purposes of this research, only the preschool grade (for Little Swallows) was examined. The following goals represent the ideals on which Swallow Hill bases their Little Swallows curriculum

Figure 2

Music	
Grade Level Expectations at a Glance	
Standard	Grade Level Expectation
Kindergarten	
1. Expression of Music	1. Perform independently 2. Respond to music with movement
2. Creation of Music	1. Create music through a variety of experiences 2. Identify simple musical patterns
3. Theory of Music	1. Comprehension of musical opposites 2. Comprehension of basic elements of musical form 3. Identify different vocal and instrumental tone colors 4. Identify simple rhythmic patterns
4. Aesthetic Valuation of Music	1. Demonstrate respect for the contribution of others in a musical setting 2. Respond to musical performance at a basic level 3. Identify and discuss music and celebrations in daily life
Preschool	
1. Expression of Music	1. Perform expressively 2. Respond to rhythmic patterns and elements of music using expressive movement
2. Creation of Music	1. Improvise movement and sound responses to music
3. Theory of Music	1. Describe and respond to musical elements 2. Recognition of a wide variety of sounds and sound sources
4. Aesthetic Valuation of Music	1. Demonstrate respect for music contributions 2. Express feeling responses to music 3. Recognition of music in daily life

(U.S. Department of Education, 2019)

Swallow Hill defines the success of the Little Swallows program based on how well it represents the aforementioned criteria. The students in the programs and their participation are

informally evaluated each semester through a detailed document that is completed by each of the teachers sent to the schools. This evaluation document is located in Appendix A. For students in early childhood education in the state of Colorado, only informal assessment can be done as well as assessments via the GOLD® Teaching Strategies – a model of observation-based assessment that utilizes 38 research-based objectives for development and learning (Teaching Strategies: GOLD®, 2019). In addition to the evaluation document, Swallow Hill also solicits verbal feedback from the public-school teachers and students which has been overwhelmingly positive. Such evaluation, however, does not exist in a documented form.

Swallow Hill: Music Assemblies

The K-12 program outreach program created by Swallow Hill is comprised primarily of single performances and instrument workshops/residencies in the Denver public schools, according to Ms. Grady. The single performances are typically themed events revolving around a single idea. Such themes have included musical styles (jazz, bluegrass, rock and roll, and folk), seasons (Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall), cultural rhythm (featuring 20 different percussion instruments), and an exploration of the history of Colorado through local songs including hits by John Denver. While such performances are typically one-time events, students are encouraged to interact with the performers through a slide show, critical questions, and trying out the instruments used.

Ms. Grady added that workshops in these schools function on a slightly different level. These events aim to give students a basic understanding of an instrument (usually ukulele). Teachers will introduce strumming patterns and basic chords, so that the students can play along to their favorite songs they hear on the radio. Songs covered in these workshops are chosen by

the students. A recently popular song choice in such classes has been the *Old Town Road Remix* by Lil Nas X and Billy Ray Cyrus.

Swallow Hill, Music Assemblies: Evaluation

Unlike the Little Swallows program, the Music Assemblies events are not based around the state standards. According to Ms. Grady, evaluation takes the form of verbal feedback from the public-school teachers and students themselves – meaning that feedback is solicited through informal conversations with both parties. In addition to the verbal feedback from the attendees and their teachers, data regarding the numbers of students and their demographic is also collected by event administrators but was unavailable to the author for this study.

Swallow Hill – Major Needs/Issues

Sustainability/Demand

Swallow Hill's outreach initiative is quite new. Ms. Grady noted that recent growth in their program could make it difficult to sustain administratively. Thus, the school's largest need is to ascertain how to continue operating a program that likely will continue to grow. As seen in the overview of Denver's public school system, the need for outreach is very great, yet Swallow Hill's teacher and time resources are still limited.

Bilingual Teachers

While the informal community feedback solicited from parents for the Little Swallows outreach programs has also been mostly positive, Ms. Grady stated that most common negative critique is that of the unilingual nature of the events as 70-75% of the students present in these low-income schools speak English as a second language. Only certain teachers at Swallow Hill

are able to conduct the classes in Spanish and English, thus the need for bilingual classes in the public schools cannot be fully met.

Swallow Hill: Long Term Vision and Goals

Swallow Hill has grown its engagement program nearly four-fold in recent years due to the vision of a recently hired CEO, new outreach management, and the award of a large grant from SCFD, according to Ms. Grady. The school went from doing outreach in 1 school in 2017 to 26 schools in 2019. Thus, future goals for the organization consist largely of ensuring that the growth is sustainable. Swallow Hill also offers private lessons at their own institution to children from low-income families as well as reduced ticket prices to some events. However, they hope to make those programs even more monetarily accessible in the future. Teachers of these private lessons already have established studios at Swallow Hill and are hired based on their education and previous teaching experience.

When Ms. Grady was queried regarding Swallow Hill's mission for the outreach initiatives, she noted that simply making music accessible to low-income children plays a large part in their programming. The school also seeks to spread and communicate the joy of music to each child by sharing music with them in an engaging way that is interactive and enjoyable.

Boulder, Colorado

The city of Boulder, CO and surrounding cities feature a public-school program that is vastly different from Denver, CO. Of the total number of students enrolled in the Boulder Valley School District, only 20.11% were enrolled in the free/reduced lunch program (Boulder Valley School District, 2018). The student demographic for 2018 is broken down below:

	Caucasian	Hispanic	Asian	African American
Student Percentage	68.2%	19.1%	5.6%	1.0%

(Boulder Valley School District, 2018)

Parlando School of Musical Arts (Boulder, CO) – Program Overview

Parlando School of Musical Arts in Boulder is a non-profit community music school that functions much like a for-profit institution. Student tuition fees cover the overhead operating costs while monetary gifts and grants fund the outreach initiatives. Currently, over 500 students come to Parlando weekly for music lessons. Parlando's outreach initiatives take place in two major areas. The first is "Julie's Program" – a series of events designed to reach adults living with disabilities. However, for the sake of continuity of the research, this program is not evaluated in this study.

The second initiative, and the focus of this research, is Parlando's outreach into public schools in the Boulder area - which exists in two parts. The first of these is titled "Music and Art," a 6 to 8-week summer-camp event. In this program students are taught and encouraged to create their own music pieces in a morning session. For an afternoon session, students are transported via bus to an art studio owned by local artist, Will Day, where they are taught and encouraged to create art pieces that reflect the pieces they are writing. According to the author's interview with Executive Director, Travis LaBerge and Outreach Director, Kristel Brown, the main thrust of Parlando's school outreach, however, is to provide music teachers (who are already employed as private teachers by Parlando) to assist in teaching the already existing curriculum/repertoire being taught in band, choir, and orchestra classes by the music teachers in Title 1 schools (information on the nature of this repertoire and whether or not it reflected the

Colorado Content Standards was not available to the author). Such a model could be perhaps be better termed as “enrichment” rather than “outreach,” but according to the outreach terminology used by Parlando’s executive director, Mr. LaBerge, it will be known as “outreach” for the sake of the study. Title 1 schools in Colorado are defined as institutions where most families live at or below the poverty line which is \$33,383/year for a family of four (Federal Poverty Line, 2018). Elementary, middle, and high schools are equally divided amongst the outreach. An outreach teacher’s duties depend on their area of expertise. For example, Parlando’s brass teachers are sent to assist the public school’s music program in the form of holding sectional rehearsals for specific instruments.

The largest needs in each school are currently trumpet and cello coaching/sectionals. Depending on the need of the school, Parlando will send its own teachers to lead sectionals for struggling students, thus enabling the existing teachers to focus on the rest of the students in smaller groups. In recent years, Parlando has shifted from servicing a broad range of schools to specifically Title 1 institutions including Columbine Elementary, Woodier Elementary, Arvada K-8, and Arvada High School. Student information and demographics of each school are as follows:

Columbine Elementary School (2016-2017 School Year)

- 58% of students eligible for reduced/free lunch
- 32% reading proficiency

	Hispanic	Caucasian	Asian	African American
Student Demographic	57%	37%	2%	1%

(Public School Review: Columbine Elementary School, 2019)

Whittier Elementary School (2016-2017 School Year)

- 39% of students eligible for reduced/free lunch
- 50-54% reading proficiency

	Caucasian	Hispanic	Asian	African American
Student Demographic	60%	23%	11%	1%

(Public School Review: Whittier Elementary School, 2019)

Boulder Preparatory Elementary School (2016-2017 School Year)

- Alternative School
 - Students may be affected by poor grades, behavioral issues, truancy tendencies, court dates, probation obligations, foster care, etc.
- 24% of students eligible for a reduced/free lunch

	Caucasian	Hispanic	Asian
Student Demographic	72%	19%	1%

(Public School Review: Boulder Preparatory Elementary School, 2019)

Arvada K-8 School - Jefferson County (2016-2017 School Year)

- 83% of students eligible for a reduced/free lunch
- 16% reading proficiency

	Hispanic	Caucasian	Asian	African American
Student Demographic	53%	37%	5%	1%

(Public School Review: Arvada K-8 School, 2019)

Arvada High School - Jefferson County (2016-2017 School Year)

- 65% of students eligible for a reduced/free lunch
- 6-9% reading proficiency

	Hispanic	Caucasian	Asian	African American
Student Demographic	57%	37%	2%	1%

(Public School Review: Arvada High School, 2019)

Parlando: Major Needs/Issues

Through the author's interview with Mr. LaBerge and Ms. Brown, several major needs/issues of such schools were identified as elements requiring attention in the outreach program. While these needs may be considered fundamental, Mr. LaBerge and Ms. Brown noted that they play a large role in the success of musical engagement and must be considered. The major needs/issues are as follows:

Transportation

Holding outreach in the public schools themselves is essential to Parlando's engagement success. Children and parents from these schools typically do not have the time or resources to attend a program at a secondary location. Additionally, giving music lessons in the public schools themselves is not successful as students cannot be expected to take time out of their school day to attend a private music lesson. Thus, sectionals and group coaching have proved to be the most successful

An exception to the secondary location rule is the Music and Art event held at Parlando itself. For this event, busloads of children from Boulder Preparatory Charter School are taken to Parlando for 6 to 8-weeks during the summer. Boulder Prep typically maintains a 50%

attendance rate during the school year, however, attendance at this summer event is well over 50%.

Lack of Representation

According to the data above, the majority of schools serviced by Parlando have very high populations of Hispanic students. Mr. LaBerge noted that although this is the case, this percentage is not reflected in the number of students involved in the school music programs. An example that was brought up by Ms. Brown was the student demographic of the choirs at a large high school in Boulder of which she was a coach in previous years. Anonymity of the school has been preserved as much of the information below is not first-hand account from the school itself. Although not a Title 1 institution, this school's choirs are comprised primarily of Caucasian students with only one or two Hispanic vocalists (the co-ed choir is comprised of approximately 50 students). This ratio does not reflect the student demographic of the school which is 90% Caucasian and 7% Hispanic (meaning that there is roughly 1 Hispanic student to every 15 Caucasian students) (Public School Review, 2019).

A similar issue pervades the band program at this same high school. Mr. LaBerge noted that students at this school can only be in the jazz band if they are also enrolled in concert band and marching band (due to the need for bodies on the field, according to Mr. LaBerge). This, however, limits student involved in the jazz band to students who do not have family or job obligations and can commit to ensemble practice at least 5 nights out of the week.

External Factors

Mr. LaBerge and Ms. Brown also noted that there are multiple external factors that can prevent the success of Parlando engagement initiatives in Title 1 institutions. These relate largely to the children's home life which is likely unstable. Some children come from families in which a single parent works to support the family. Such children likely have responsibilities to care for

their siblings and/or jobs to help provide for the family. Other children (such as those attending Boulder Prep) may have court dates, probation obligations, therapy appointments, and other factors that coincide with their education. Many children at Boulder Preparatory School also live in foster homes in which the trauma of being separated from parents and/or siblings can affect their success of their education.

To remedy this situation as best they can, Parlando seeks to send teachers with previous DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity) training into these schools. Employers often pay for DEI training and certification and require their employees to participate, according to Ms. Brown. Such teachers are aware of the economic/privilege gap and are able to be mindful of how they interact with the students. DEI training also prepares the teachers to deal with unexpected situations that may arise in the classroom (ex. A student acting out, struggling to learn/participate, or struggling mentally/emotionally during classes). Currently, Parlando does not offer the option of DEI training for their employees. Thus, a teacher wanting to participate in outreach must obtain the training on their own, or (as is more often the case) have received it from another organization where they are employed

Quality Instruction

The underfunding of arts programs is standard among public schools in the Boulder area, according to Mr. LaBerge and Ms. Brown. However, schools such as Boulder High School and Fairview High School are able to subsidize their arts programs through fundraising events hosted by parents of students. While this is a viable solution for these schools, Title 1 schools do not have such a luxury. Many of the parents in schools such as Arvada K-9 or Arvada High School do not have the time, money, or resources to organize fundraisers for the arts programs. Thus, the students continue to be educated by under-resourced programs. Mr. LaBerge noted in his interview that the music coordinator at Arvada High School requested Parlando's help due to the

fact that the high school's trumpet players were consistently playing at a 6th grade level. However, Mr. LaBerge noted that even with Parlando's help, the solution was provided too late. Since the students had, for so many years, been educated in a under-resourced program, their peers in other schools were already leagues ahead of their level – so much so that obtaining the standard level was impossible before the students graduated from Arvada High School. Thus, Parlando has focused their efforts largely in the K-8 school. With an earlier start, Parlando hopes that they will be able to help the students maintain a level of playing that competes with their peers in nearby communities,

Parlando: Evaluation Tools

The evaluation tool used by Parlando to measure the success of their musical engagement has evolved from previous years to their current system. Mr. LaBerge noted that in previous years, Parlando sought feedback from both teachers and students in the form of a survey. However, this was not entirely helpful as many of the young children surveyed were not able to provide relevant feedback that helped with Parlando's programming (simply due to their age). Despite this, the feedback collected from the public-school teachers regarding what was successful and what was not proved to be extraordinarily helpful. Currently, the rapport that Parlando has built with the public-school teachers has proved to be the single most successful avenue of evaluation. Mr. LaBerge solicits feedback every semester from teachers through either an email or phone call. Questions posed to the teachers consist of:

- Which Parlando teachers have led the most successful coachings/sectionals?
- Which Parlando teachers would you like to see returning for future outreach?

Which teachers would you like not to return?

- What teaching techniques have been successful in engaging the children and furthering their musical education. What techniques have not been successful?

Mr. LaBerge believes that by building a relationship with the teachers, Parlando will have a first-hand account of the success of their outreach from the individuals who are the most in-tune with the levels and mindsets of their students. By giving the teacher the choice of whom and what they want brought into their school, Mr. LaBerge seeks to foster the relationship building process with the teacher.

Long Term Mission and Goals

When asked about the 3 to 5-year plan for Parlando's outreach initiatives, Mr. LaBerge explained that Parlando hopes to eventually reach more schools with more days in each school. To accomplish this, Parlando hopes to provide DEI training (a preferred prerequisite for outreach) for all the faculty employed at their school, thus enabling more faculty members to be involved in the outreach program. Because several of the schools reached by Parlando are quite far removed from Parlando's main campus in Boulder, Mr. LaBerge hopes to one day hire teachers that are local to the areas being targeted for outreach, so that the teachers at the main campus are not obligated to commute extreme distances. An added benefit of hiring local teachers is that their likely familiarity with the area and the community which the school serves creates a greater chance of success for the outreach program in that particular school.

Parlando's mission for their outreach initiatives varies depending on the ages of the students. However, the overall mission is simple. The needs listed above contribute to a larger problem: accessibility. Through their music outreach, Parlando hopes to level the playing field for students who are growing up in predisposed, disadvantaged environments. For younger students, Parlando seeks to emphasize the fun, enjoyability of music in a way that inspires these

children to be life-long music-makers. For older children (particularly those in high school choirs), Ms. Brown spoke about the opportunity that music provides by giving them a voice to build agency for themselves through the expression of song. In outreach to older children, Parlando encourages participants to express their creativity and their unique voices (as exemplified in the Music and Art event series) in the hopes that they will one day be able to serve as positive advocates for their community by creating visibility regarding the systemic issues they overcame to obtain quality music education.

Mr. LaBerge described running a music outreach program in Boulder as, “grinding against reality.” Ms. Brown noted that the more the issue of music education in Title 1 schools is explored, the more evidence of a larger systemic problem is realized. She compared such research to “peeling an onion,” in which more and more layers of problems are discovered. Despite the systemic issues of poverty, underfunding and racial inequality, Parlando has pledged to continue its work against the grain by giving voices to the voiceless and marginalized communities.

Nashville, TN

Nashville, TN (or “Music City”) certainly does not suffer from a shortage of music engagement. Similar to Denver, however, the majority of the student demographic is at an economic disadvantage and cannot afford music lessons. Nashville, TN boast a larger public-school population than Denver with 88,000 students – 75% of which qualify for reduced/free lunch. The overall student demographic is listed below:

	African American	Caucasian	Hispanic	Asian
Student Demographic	44%	28%	23%	4%

(Wikipedia, 2019)

The state of Tennessee also has four standards by which public schools abide. Since the community music school studied in this area is a privately funded, non-profit institution, it is not required to abide by these standards, but for the sake of continuity in the research, they are important to note. Tennessee's standards reflect the National Standard of Music Education (NAfME) and consist of four primary categories with further details available in Appendix B:

1. Perform
2. Create
3. Respond
4. Connect

(TN Dept. of Education, n.d.)

While a bit broader than the specific Colorado standards, these also provide a framework by which one can evaluate music programs in Tennessee, including W.O. Smith Music School.

W. O. Smith Music School: Overview

Founded in 1984 by William Oscar Smith, this community music school seeks to transform lives through music by making quality music lessons affordable and available to children from low income families (W.O. Smith, 2019). Mr. Smith expressed the mission succinctly when he stated that,

It's not necessary to be on a music career track to benefit from focused practice sessions, setting and achieving goals, or presenting a personal achievement to the public. We believe that the self-discipline involved in the process can help any developing person, whether or not he or she goes on to pursue a career in music. Music was my ticket out of

the ghetto, and my hope is that music can help the youngsters we touch to realize their own ambitions. (W.O. Smith, 2019)

Since 1984, the school has grown to serve approximately 500 music students every year.

Students come to W.O. Smith's campus after school to participate in a variety of music programs – some even spending 4 to 5 days a week at the institution's after-school programs. Unlike the previous schools, the entire aim of W.O. Smith's programming is outreach. The school's operating revenue solely comes from donations/gifts from the city of Nashville which enables W.O. Smith to offer lessons at a reduced price (50 cents a lesson) or free of charge depending on the student's financial situation. Jordan Morrison, the school's Educator Director who was interviewed for this research, emphasized that offering reduced price/free private lessons is the institution's, "bread and butter." Before students qualify for private lessons, however, they must go through an introductory, basic musicianship course. This class is designed to introduce musical concepts such as note reading, basic rhythm, and basic musical notation. Once students pass this class, they are assigned to lessons with a volunteer teacher. Teachers at W.O. Smith are musicians coming from various walks of life – many of them being music students at the local universities. They are required to complete a short application and interview process in order to volunteer at the school. Student placement is subject solely to a teacher's availability. Mr. Morrison shared that once students are established in private music lessons, they are free to join any ensembles or classes they wish. Examples of offered ensembles/classes are:

- Jazz band
- Rock band
- R&B Band
- Lab Band (blues)
- String Orchestra
- Community Orchestra
- Choir (one for older and one for younger students)
- Audio Engineering Class
- Visual Production Class

- DJ Class
- Composition Class
- Advanced Music Theory Class
(college level theory)

During the summer, three camps are offered. The first of these is the Residency Camp. This camp is the only event that takes place off the W.O. Smith campus. During this week-long event, children participate in one of three music tracks (last year, tracks in 60s, 70s, and blues music were offered) as well as mass choir rehearsals and team building events. For students interested in rock and roll, the school offers Camp Backbeat – a week-long experience that takes place on the W.O. Smith campus. Younger children are invited to participate in the W.O. Smith Day Camp which includes exploring topics in basic musicianship through activities/games, choir rehearsals, and a field trip.

Long-term student involvement in music occurs regularly at W.O. Smith. In 2018, of the 19 high school seniors who graduated from the program, 4 went on to attend college as music education majors (2), a vocal performance major, and a musical theater major.

W.O. Smith – Major Needs/Issues

Student Enrollment vs. Quality Education

In his interview, Mr. Morrison stressed the importance that W.O. Smith places on tailoring their programs to the needs and desires of the students. With the building size that W.O. Smith currently has, only 500 children can be successfully reached each year. Expansion is difficult due to the real-estate boom in nearby downtown Nashville which has driven property prices outside of the school's budget. Due to this limitation, W.O. Smith has focused on programming a more thorough musical education for their student body rather than seeking to

increase their numbers above 500. However, this means that the school has a sizable waiting list for students seeking to be enrolled.

Transportation

Because the school has its own campus to which students must come for lessons, W.O. Smith has had to be mindful about how students are transported to their facility. For children unable to be driven by parents or relatives, W.O. Smith offers a bus to ferry children to and from their lessons. Since many children enrolled are also siblings, W.O. Smith works with the parents to schedule all lessons at the same time, thus minimizing trips taken to the school. The location of the school has also been strategic. Within walking distance to W.O. Smith is “project” housing which is available to economically disadvantaged families and Rose Park Middle School. Also located close to W.O. Smith is the Nashville Symphony’s Schermerhorn Symphony Center. According to Mr. Morrison, though many children are involved in classical music at W.O. Smith, they are not able to attend symphony concerts (even those that are free) simply because their parents cannot afford to pay for parking downtown (which typically ranges from \$5 to \$20 per event).

Community Partnerships

With the presence of many nearby recording studios, schools of music (Vanderbilt University and Belmont University), and those working in the music business industry, W.O. Smith is well-regarded and well-funded by the community. Nashville’s popular radio station, Lightning 100, recently hosted an event in which all proceeds were generously given to the school. However, when queried on W.O. Smith’s partnerships with major classical music institutions, Mr. Morrison expressed mild frustration. The Nashville Symphony generously gives the school a block of 200 tickets every year to attend *The Nutcracker Ballet* but does not pursue

any further partnerships. This could be due to the fact that the symphony has their own outreach program (the Accelerando Program) by which they seek to educate young children of diverse ethnicities to be future symphony musicians.

Food

While slightly surprising, this need has manifested itself several times during the author's research into W.O. Smith's program. When the author was employed by W.O. Smith, she had the opportunity to work on staff for the Day Camp summer event. During this event, the author assisted with food distribution (lunch and an afternoon snack) for the camp participants. It was crucial that students were served lunch and a snack daily as food was limited at home. Proof of this was seen in the fact that parents would wait to pick up their kids until they were served a snack mid-afternoon as the camp ended for the day.

Mr. Morrison also brought up this point by sharing that he has received feedback from parents asking why the school does not feed children as part of their after-school programming. While feeding hungry kids is not their job, Mr. Morrison noted, it is an issue that has to be considered when dealing with economically disadvantaged populations.

W.O. Smith: Evaluation Tools

In order to ensure the success of their music education, Mr. Morrison noted that there is, "a paper trail that follows every student." Every single student is required to undergo an informal performance evaluation at the end of every semester. Students play for a panel of adjudicators who provide constructive feedback. If a student consistently performs at a sub-standard level and shows no desire to learn, their spot in the school is given to a child on the waiting list. This

system also works to keep teachers accountable as they too are evaluated through the performances of their students.

In addition to this practice W.O. Smith has recently instituted a parent survey in English and Spanish that solicits feedback from the community. As of last year, only 30 families participated in the survey (about 80 students due to sibling enrollment), but the school hopes to grow this initiative in the future. The survey is located in Appendix C.

W.O. Smith: Long Term Mission and Goals

The mission of W.O. Smith has remained the same since 1984 and will not be changing at any point in the near future. However, the organization does have plans to expand their facility in coming years to facilitate larger enrollment. A strategic planning meeting with board members in November 2019 will start the planning process. With the slowing of the real-estate boom in Nashville, the school hopes to secure a contractor to assist in the expansion of their current space, according to Mr. Morrison. Because of the expansion, W.O. Smith will be looking to hire additional staff members and volunteers in the near future to sustain their growing program.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

The initial objective of this study was to explore how community music school outreach can best cater to a wide range of children from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. However, based on the results of the study, it has become apparent that the greater need is to examine how music engagement can better serve the needs of low-income populations (the majority of the people whom they serve). Between the three schools studied, three models for outreach were uncovered based largely on the populations served by the community music schools and the mission and vision of the organizations stated above. For the purposes of the discussion, these are listed and discussed below.

1. In-School Music Classes/Event Outreach (Swallow Hill)
2. In-School Teacher Assistance Outreach (Parlando)
3. Community-Based Outreach (W.O. Smith).

In addition to these models, eight major needs were uncovered that should be addressed by community music school outreach:

- Transportation
- Quality Instruction
- Lack of Representation
- Food
- Recognition of External Factors
- Bilingual Teachers (where applicable)

Lastly, in an effort to better understand the broad societal context in which these community music schools exist, Marxist theories of hegemony and Pierre Bourdieu's practice theory will be discussed in relation to the systemic societal issues facing community music school outreach.

Discussion of Models

Model 1: In-School Music Classes/Event Outreach Model (Swallow Hill)

The strengths and weaknesses of this model give insight into what largely seems to be a very new outreach program trying to find its footing. Amongst the three music schools, this model is perhaps the most relevant example for community music schools seeking to create or grow their outreach programs.

Strengths

As seen in the needs presented above, Swallow Hill bypasses the need for transportation by going into the schools to provide music events. Teachers sent to the schools have already been screened as they are already employed at Swallow Hill as private teachers. In this same vein, such teachers are encouraged (but not required) to incorporate Spanish into some of their classes – thus reaching students who may be learning English as a second language. Additionally, by designing the Little Swallows program around the Colorado State Standards, the school is setting a foundation for themselves around which they can model to their programs.

In regard to the evaluation tools used by the school, the detailed form filled out by the teachers (Appendix A) is certainly extraordinarily helpful in pinpointing the success of the students in the class and how well the class is aligned to the state standards. Such forms are filled out every semester in order to provide current evaluation of how and what the children are learning. Evaluation also consists of personal feedback (via email and in-person conversations) from the public school's teachers – which (according to Ms. Grady) has been overwhelmingly positive.

Weaknesses

While such a program may at first seem solid, there are several issues to be examined. Firstly, is the issue of the lack of bilingual teachers in the Swallow Hill program. Ms. Grady noted that this shortcoming is their largest negative critique coming from the feedback of the public-school teachers themselves and is something they aim to address in the future.

The second and perhaps largest weakness is the lack of well-rounded evaluation of the success of the programs. Since Little Swallows falls into the category of early childhood education, however, only informal assessments can be used, and student growth cannot be tracked. While the evaluation tool listed in Appendix A does an excellent job of evaluating how well Little Swallows adhere to the state standards, it does not measure other important areas of evaluation such as parent feedback and long-term music involvement of the children (if a child participates in Little Swallows, are they more likely to participate in music later on in life?). The current evaluation tool is somewhat effective as the music teachers are more likely to be acquainted with the children firsthand from simply leading classes, yet the limitation to this is that the information gathered by the teacher may be lacking in completion due to their unawareness of the child's home life (something that could be provided by soliciting feedback from parents/guardians).

Thirdly, is the weakness regarding Swallow Hill's Music Assemblies program. Firstly, these events are one-time performances that happen infrequently. While these performances are largely interactive, they mostly serve as entertainment for their audiences. Secondly, events such as a drumming ensemble, a rock music concert, a folk music concert, or even an instrument petting zoo that likely goes along with each of these can certainly serve to introduce children to various musical styles and genres, but they most certainly do not accomplish the objective of

“engagement.” The definitions provided at the beginning of this research would characterize such events as, “outreach,” Such events 1) do not build lasting relationships with children, 2) do not arguably meet any sort of their needs except for perhaps the need to be entertained, and 3) do not seek to address the needs of the children before engaging in music education.

Model 2: In-School Teacher Assistance Outreach Model (Parlando)

This model does not seek to create its own outreach program, but rather aims to assist teachers in Title 1 institutions in their already existing rehearsal schedule and curriculum by sending assistance in the form of additional teachers. Such a model also seems to be quite new and somewhat underdeveloped simply due to its short-term existence as a program offered by Parlando.

Strengths

This structure of outreach/engagement certainly does not require a large amount of programming. For an organization seeking start on outreach/engagement program, this model could be a reasonable place to start. Title 1 schools are typically underfunded and understaffed in music classes (according to Mr. LaBerge’s interview), but with the help of teachers from a private institution, quality music education could become more accessible to low-income communities. The teachers sent to do outreach into these communities are already vetted by being employed at Parlando as private teachers (much like Swallow Hill). These teachers typically have a background in special education and/or have received Diversity, Equality, and Inclusivity (DEI) training.

Evaluation tools used by this program/model are largely based on personal relationships with the public-school teachers and communication with them via phone or email. While a bit unconventional, this system of evaluation builds upon mutual respect between both parties. This

evaluation works under the assumption that the public-school teachers know what is best for the children they teach, what their backgrounds/family life are, and how they learn best.

Weaknesses

Such a model as used by Parlando is underdeveloped in that it relies heavily on already existing teachers and programs. While certainly well-intentioned, this model can actually create more work for the public-school teachers as opposed to relieving them of their already heavy workload. Parlando teachers sent to the schools must first be introduced to the repertoire, class structure, school layout, and specific student needs before their assistance can be beneficial to the existing teacher.

The evaluation tool used by Parlando, while certainly very personal, is too informal in order to ensure the success of the outreach initiative. While relationship building with teachers is surely important, a lack of documentation of feedback can have negative effects. Informal emails or phone conversations do not provide long-term documentation of success or failure. In a similar way, long-term involvement of students in music as a result of Parlando's outreach is not evaluated in this system of feedback since long term documentation is non-existent. The current feedback system is only successful for informal, short-term evaluation. Also lacking in the evaluation process is a system for obtaining feedback from the parents regarding their views on the success of the program. Such data would enable the teachers at both the public schools and Parlando to understand what the home environment for each child is like (and what the external factors/issues might be in their musical development) and if the music is being practiced at home.

Model 3: Community-Based Outreach (W.O. Smith)

While certainly arguable that all of the outreach programs discussed above are, “community-based,” this term refers to W.O. Smith’s reach into the community that is broader than the school-level outreach of the previous two models. By far the oldest and most developed of the models, W.O. Smith’s program is largely well-rounded in terms of class/lesson structure and evaluation practices.

Strengths

The wide variety of programs offered by W.O. Smith appeals to a very wide range of ages, interests, and abilities while the other models listed are either limited in the instruments offered or the age for which the programs are offered. Teachers of various specialties are obtained from the community, thus contributing to this wide range. Additionally, evaluation practices used in this model by W.O. Smith was best summarized by Mr. Morrison as the, “paper trail that follows every student.” This detailed system of performance evaluation ensures that students and teachers are held accountable to certain standards and that they are encouraged to operate to the best of their ability. As well as this paper trail, surveys are sent to the parents via email each year (See Appendix C). Both positive and negative aspects are documented to be used in future programming. Because the organization is not limited to certain schools, their program has a much farther reach into the community than previously discussed models.

Weaknesses

While weaknesses in this already strong program are few and far between, there are certainly several that do not exist in the previous models. The first weakness is the lack of teacher vetting that goes into becoming a volunteer for W.O. Smith. Unlike the previous models which use teachers already teaching privately at their schools, the teacher pool at W.O. Smith is

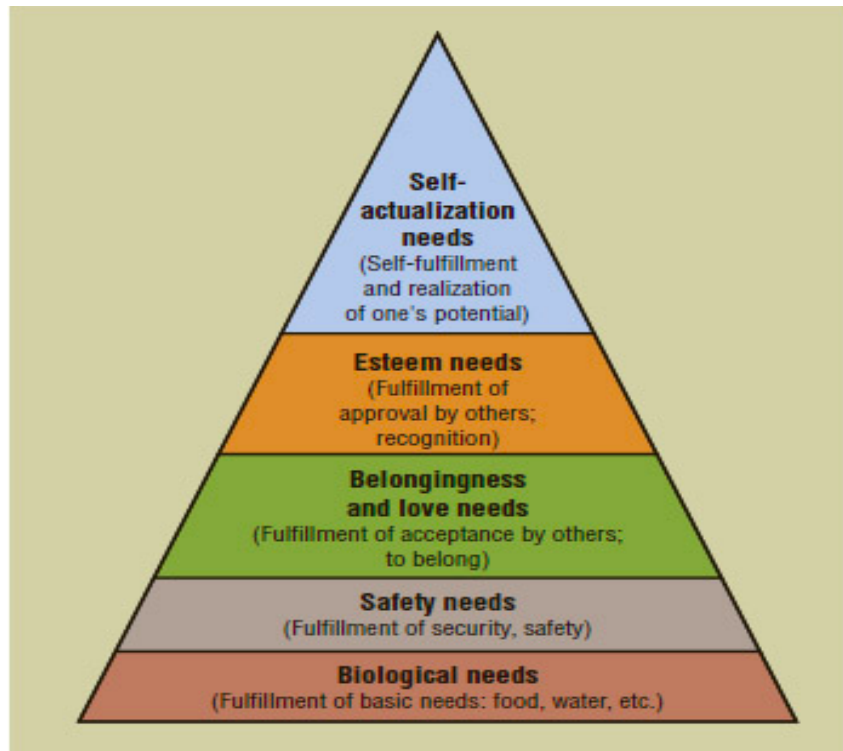
solely volunteer based and drawn from the community. Thus, the risk of having underqualified teachers giving lessons is quite high. In order to volunteer at W.O. Smith, potential teachers fill out a short questionnaire and go through a very informal interview process regarding their musical abilities/training. Teacher turnover is quite frequent since the instruction is volunteer based, according to Mr. Morrison. This means that the number of students able to take lessons on a certain instrument varies greatly from year to year and is limited to teacher availability.

In regard to evaluation practices, W.O. Smith's model is surely the strongest of the three (with the exception of their teacher vetting process). However, while the concept of performance evaluations for each student is an excellent practice, it also has its own limitations. A child's performance may be affected by external factors that are out of their control. In this case, schools would do well to be aware of and consider the factors that may be working against the success of the child's musical development.

Discussion of Needs

In an attempt to categorize the six needs presented above, perhaps the most logical place to start is by examining how they fit in the schema of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Created by Henry Maslow (1908-1970) in 1943, this pyramid scheme seeks to itemize the basic needs of the human race.

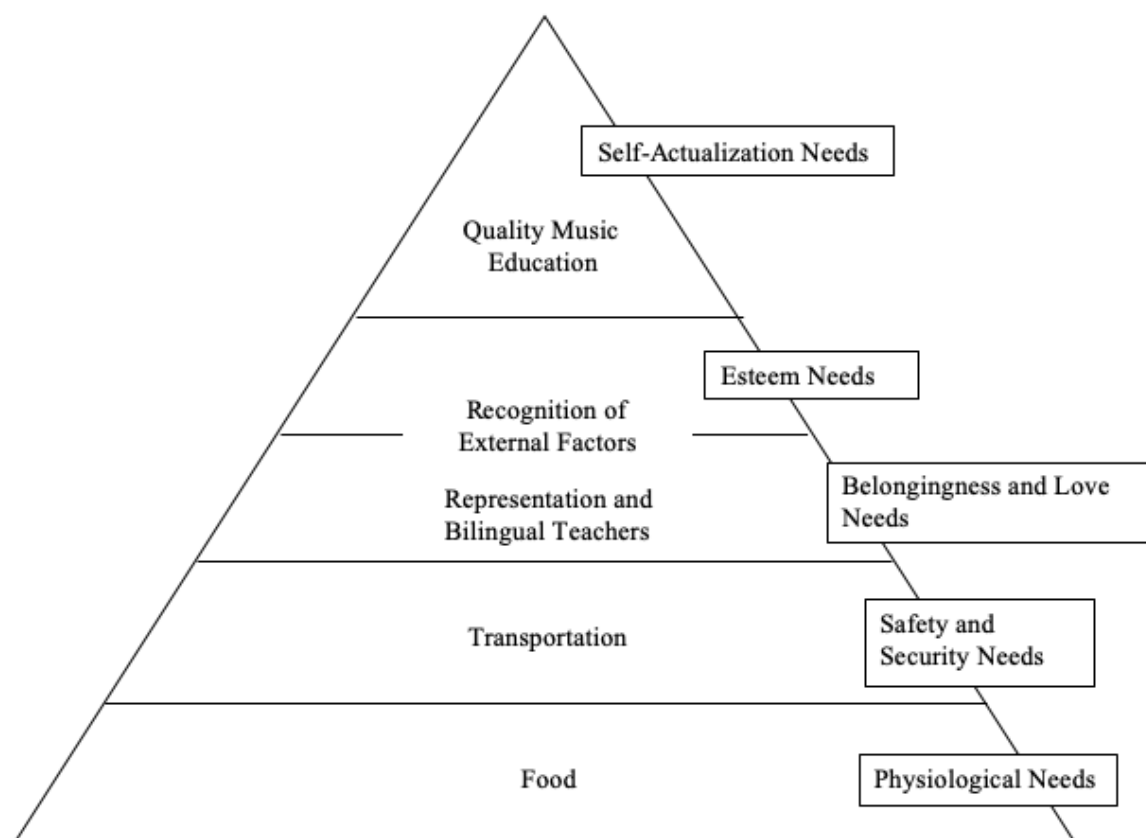
Figure 3



(Atkins & Harmon, 2016)

With this foundation, the needs of the populations served by the three community music schools can be broken down as follows:

Figure 4



According to Maslow, the needs at the top of the pyramid cannot be successfully met until the needs at the bottom of the pyramid are fulfilled (Atkins & Harmon, 2016). This is the first crucial step to understanding how to create a meaningful music engagement programs. W.O. Smith has experienced this problem in that the parents often ask why the school does not feed their child as part of the program. While this is certainly not the school's job, it does prompt the question: should hungry kids be given music lessons before food? In the summer camp programs, W.O. Smith does tackle this question by making sure everyone is properly nourished before partaking in musical activities.

Both Parlando and W.O. Smith cited transportation as a major need that affects their outreach. Both schools work to circumnavigate this by either going into the schools themselves (Parlando) or providing a bus service (W.O. Smith). If a school is so quick to remedy a basic need such as transportation, it must also consider remedying the even more basic need of sustenance for the students served.

Once the basic needs have been addressed by a school, the psychological and self-fulfilling needs can be met. While some may disagree with the placement of quality musical education at the very top of the pyramid, when compared with the other needs of the population served, there is no other logical placement. In an esoteric sense, one could think of quality music education as a basic need – citing that quality music education instills characteristics that set up a student for success later in life, but due to the extreme poverty in the communities being served, this view is neither productive nor realistic. In Figure 4, one could think of the esteem and belongingness as a single unit. The needs listed in the sections contribute to each other (i.e. establishing a sense of belonging/acceptance can contribute to higher self-esteem). It is also helpful to think of these two factors as a means to an end: quality music education. If students see themselves in music (representation/bilingual teachers) and are shown an openness to working with their external factors, they are more likely to be successful recipients of an outreach program.

Discussion of Outreach Offerings to Foster Belongingness

The importance of the content offered in the three models discussed above is also shown in the need for belongingness and self-esteem in Maslow's Hierarchy. As seen in the data explored in the results section, many of the disadvantaged communities served by community

music school outreach consist of under-represented minority populations. Creating a sense of musical belonging for these communities consists of more than just providing bilingual teachers where needed, but rather must involve the content of the outreach itself. Such content must consist of a diverse range of musical activities that speak directly to the community being reached. To accomplish this, the assumption that community music schools already know what the community needs/desires are (based on preconceived notions or worse, stereotypes) must be done away with. Instead, schools seeking to design a meaningful outreach programs should first survey the community being targeted to ascertain their musical needs and desires.

Model 1 of outreach (see above) is perhaps a well-intentioned, but unsuccessful example of attention to the needs of the community. While Swallow Hill certainly has a diverse range of musical offerings (folk concerts, percussion concerts, ukulele workshops, etc.) in their Music Assemblies program, they do not have any data based on the desires/needs of the community. Additionally, since the Music Assemblies are either one-time or short-term events, students only have a limited time to connect with music that may speak to them - after which, the opportunity is removed. To remedy this situation, Model 1's Music Assemblies outreach could aim to become more long-term and interactive. Once the community's desires and needs have been ascertained, this could look like holding year or semester-long classes in ukulele, folk songs, or percussion (or other instruments/classes based on the community survey) with a plan for long-term continuation if the students so desire.

Model 2's method of outreach renders it practically impossible to provide diverse programming as it relies on the already existing teacher and repertoire for the outreach. Because music programs at Title 1 schools are already underfunded, the existing offerings at the school are likely not varied - consisting only of a bare bones structure. There are several remedies to this

situation would be to course correct to an entirely different model of outreach (Model 3), or to perhaps design an entirely new model of outreach by surveying students regarding what they want out of the music program and working with teachers to provide a music curriculum that goes beyond traditional orchestra and band repertoire. Options for students could include composition classes, jazz band (for more advanced students), or percussion ensemble.

W.O. Smith's model of outreach (Model 3) is certainly the closest to optimal outreach offerings. As Mr. Morrison stated in his interview, classes are not offered unless there is a demand in the community for them. The inclusivity of their programming includes courses outside of the traditional gamut as exemplified in their R&B ensemble, jazz band, and DJ class. As seen in the demand for these courses, such music connects with the children served more than perhaps string orchestra or choir. With such a mindset, W.O. Smith is ensuring that all students feel a sense of self-esteem and belongingness not just through how the music is presented to them, but also in the type/genre of the music itself.

In order to create such diverse/inclusive programming, community music schools must be willing to think outside the box regarding standard music education. This means working against the societal construct of "high art" and who participates in the creation and performance therein, as discussed in the introduction to this study. In the current societal model, socially disadvantaged children are systematically shut out not only from classical music ("high art"), but also quality music education as well as it is simply accessible to them in a way that is neither attainable nor meaningful. Such a situation contributes to the striking lack of diversity in music education in the cities of Denver, Boulder, and Nashville. Community music schools, once understanding the system and needs of the children they serve, can work to reverse this unfortunate circumstance by providing outreach based not on what they think the community

needs, but instead on the needs identified through the solicited feedback of the community members themselves.

Discussion of Music and Societal Constructs

Based on the results of the research, it has become increasingly apparent that community music schools must seek to challenge the status quo in how they provide meaningful musical engagement to disadvantaged populations. In this case, the status quo consists of three fundamental points based on the “needs” section discussed above:

1. Insufficient funding for public school arts programs
2. Predetermined conceptions of what music “outreach” should look like
3. Systemic lack of musical opportunities for economically disadvantaged populations.

Karl Marx (1818-1883), philosopher and writer of the 19th century, contributed largely to the concept of capitalism and its relation to socio-economic class (Manuel, 2019). While much Marxist writing/theories must be approached with caution, theories on the subject of hegemony in capitalistic societies can be helpful in understanding and challenging the status quo of community music school outreach. Marxist theory centers around the concept of a societal “bourgeois” majority that guides the commonly accepted social principles (also known as “hegemony”). According to Peter Manuel,

Hegemonic ideologies, rather than being explicit and overt, are typically taken for granted and are most powerful when they are effectively invisible...bourgeois ideology also serves to obscure class consciousness and systems of domination, reinforcing exploitation and often inculcating a false consciousness in which people think, act, and vote in ways that are often contradictory to what would otherwise be their enlightened self-interest. (2019, p. 59)

Issue no. 1 presented above can be explained by this concept. Title 1 public school funding for arts programs is deficient because other school subjects (STEM, for example) are deemed by those in authority as more important. It is important to note, however, that this issue of arts funding is based on a very limited sample of the schools examined in this study. The above conjecture is based only on a small pool of Title 1 institutions in the Denver/Boulder area. Issue no. 2 can be explained by the hegemonic ideal that music (classical, specifically) is considered in Western culture to be “high art” which must be consumed in a certain way (symphony concerts, professional recordings, etc.). Traditional music education (regardless of genre) in Western society must be taught a certain way (private lessons, participation in orchestra/ensembles, and sizable amounts of time devoted to practicing). In turn, these criteria create Issue no. 3 by limiting music’s accessibility to only a certain group of people able to meet the acceptable criteria for music education – usually consisting of those who are not economically disadvantaged. Economically disadvantaged students participating in the outreach models discussed above do not have the resources to purchase/rent an instrument, attend concerts, take private lessons. Thus, without meaningful community music school outreach, their successful exposure to music and its creation is minimal at best.

Of additional relevance to this research is the concept of “Practice Theory.” Developed by Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002), Practice theory explores the concept of actions and values perpetrated by society. Manual notes that,

Central concerns of practice theory include the relationship between structure and agency, the ways in which situated social conduct is both shaped by and constitutive of

macros-level social orders, the roll of culture in patterns of domination and exploitation, and the nature of embodiment. (2019, p. 54)

Bourdieu refers to the above-mentioned social conduct as, “habitus.” Habitus not only refers to the actions of a community, but also their preferences. Ruth Wright notes that,

Cultural habits and preferences became badges of memberships to a particular class, allowing social divisions to be reproduced. Bourdieu demonstrates this by showing that practices such as museum and concert attendance...varied throughout the population according to social class. (2010, p. 43)

This research reflects the above theories by showing how the structure of society removes musical agency from disadvantaged populations. This is exemplified in the interview with Mr. LaBerge of Parlando regarding the amount of time commitment needed (for rehearsals and performances) to be a part of the jazz band program at the anonymous high school in Boulder. The same pattern is seen in the lack of arts funding at schools such as Arvada High School as parents do not have the resources (time and/or money) to make up the arts deficit via fundraising initiatives. These societal constructs in turn influence the musical habitus of low-income populations by severely limiting their musical engagement not only from a societal perspective but by creating an idea that musical engagement is not “for them.” Thus, it is vital that community music schools are aware of these constructs as they program their outreach and interact with the community. Only with this perspective can a community music school successfully create music engagement that emphasizes a sense of belongingness and inclusion.

Discussion of Limitations and Recommendations for Further Study

Limitations

The limitations of the study exist in three different areas. Firstly, as seen in the study, the needs of the population reached differs slightly based on location. Some communities may have issues relating to transportation and food while others may have external factors relating to legal matters (as exemplified in Boulder Preparatory School). Other differences in the communities consist of ethnic backgrounds (Swallow Hill outreach has high populations of Hispanic students while W.O. Smith has high populations of African American students). Consequently, there is no universal solution to provide for “best practices” in community music school outreach. There are, however, certain guidelines that have been discussed above that, when followed, can be beneficial in planning meaningful programming.

Secondly, the data pool in this study was very limited and was based on the author’s personal experience with the community music schools discussed. Future study should expand on the data to include a larger range of institutions served through outreach to provide a more diverse research sample.

Lastly, due to the time constraints of this research, no families or children were interviewed. Thus, firsthand accounts from participants were not collected. Further research would seek to not only interview teachers and administrative staff but would also seek to gather data directly from the participants and their families regarding program feedback and family background.

Model Summary and Recommendations for Engagement/Outreach Program Evaluation

The community outreach model used by W.O. Smith is surely the strongest and most well-developed of the three discussed as seen in the long-term success of the initiative (aside

from the question of the teacher vetting process). Although, community music schools desiring to create an outreach program would certainly not be able to offer something similar on such a large scale. They would, however, do well to copy certain models of operating such as diverse offerings in private lessons and ensembles courses, detailed program and student evaluation, and (most importantly) attention to the basic needs and external factors of economically disadvantaged students.

Amongst the three schools, the most common form of evaluation comes in the form of surveys sent teachers and parents. However, survey questions such as, “what are the positive/negative aspects about our program?” (see Appendix C) are sometimes too open ended to gather any specific data. An improved version of this survey would perhaps be to hold a parent/teacher conference either as part of the school’s pre-existing parent-teacher association meeting, or (in W.O. Smith’s case) their own facility. Such one-on-one meetings could serve to provide a more personal connection to the families and their specific needs from the music outreach program.

Conclusion

While this case-based investigation with limited sample does not show a universal solution for solving of systemic issues facing community music schools and the effectiveness of their outreach, it certainly serves as a jumping off point for further research. For full effectiveness, the researcher should immerse themselves in a singular outreach program to gage its long-term effects in a low-income community. Such a project would have a nearly ethnographic approach as it would require long-term study and research. Further research could explore the relevancy not only to community music schools, but also to orchestral outreach

programs. Due to the performative nature of the orchestra culture, many orchestral outreach programs include a “one and done” concert model (more outreach related than engagement).

It is with this perspective that the author hopes the above research will serve to provide the foundation for a rubric of successful outreach programs in community music schools and beyond. The underfunding of public education has driven low-income schools to rely heavily on privatized intuitions for music education as seen in this research. Thus, it is vital that community music schools ready themselves to assist in a way that truly reaches students by being attentive to the needs and desires of the community they serve. If successful, future generations of under-represented communities could be given agency, advocacy, visibility, and opportunities through music – all of which they are equally deserving.

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Appendix A

Little Swallows Outreach Assessment Guidelines

Little Swallows Outreach teachers will summatively assess their class using the following guidelines twice per school year: once in the winter (December) and again in the spring (May). The assessments are aligned with the newly revised 2020 Colorado State Standards and are designed to get progressively more challenging or scaffold on previously taught material from the winter semester to the spring semester. Teachers are to use the following rubric to determine individual student success with each standard; however, the assessment results will be recorded as class ratios (i.e. 11/17 students performing at or above standard, a Level 3 or 4 in the rubric below). The assessment is to be given on the standard and skills associated with that standard using various methods. The purpose of the assessment is not to determine student performance on a specific song or piece of music. It is given that students will have various amounts of interaction with music prior to beginning this program. Therefore, in informal diagnostic assessments used for planning purposes, class ratios will start with a number greater than zero.

Student Assessment Rubric

4	Student is demonstrating mastery of the standard and can apply knowledge and connect to other standards.
3	Student is consistently demonstrating the standard.
2	Student is approaching the standard or is inconsistently demonstrating the standard.
1	Student is not demonstrating the standard.

Little Swallows in Schools Assessment Tool

Teacher:

School:

Class Length:

Class Age:

Total Number of Students:

Semester and Year:

Teacher Observations and Notes:

Expression of Music

- a. Perform expressively.
- b. Respond to rhythmic patterns and elements of music using expressive movement.
- c. Apply teacher feedback to demonstrate appropriate processes when singing, playing, and moving.

Winter Assessment – Students using voice, instruments, or move expressively to music.

Spring Assessment – Student using voice, instruments, movement, or a combination to expressively communicate ideas and emotions.

	ACTIVITY	DATE	SCORE
Winter Assessment			
Spring Assessment			

Creation of Music

- a. Improvise movement and sound responses to music.

Winter Assessment – Students improvise movement responses to music.

Spring Assessment – Students improvise sound responses to music.

	ACTIVITY	DATE	SCORE
Winter Assessment			
Spring Assessment			

Theory of Music

- Describe and respond to musical elements.
- Recognize a wide variety of sounds and sound sources.

Winter Assessment – Students describe or respond to musical elements such as rhythm, pitch, dynamics, or form.

Spring Assessment – Students describe or demonstrate a variety of vocal and instrumental sounds.

	ACTIVITY	DATE	SCORE
Winter Assessment			
Spring Assessment			

Aesthetic Valuation of Music

- Show musical preference for style or song.
- Recognize music in daily life.

Winter Assessment – Students move, sing, or describe feeling responses or preferences to a variety of music.

Spring Assessment – Students listen and respond to a variety of music.

	ACTIVITY	DATE	SCORE
Winter Assessment			
Spring Assessment			

Appendix B



Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions Tennessee Music Standards 2018

Domain	Foundation	Artistic Process	Enduring Understandings	Essential Questions
Perform	1. Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for performance.	<i>Select</i>	Performers' interest in and knowledge of musical works, understanding of their own technical skill, and the context for a performance influence the selection of repertoire.	How do performers select repertoire?
		<i>Analyze</i>	Analyzing creators' context and how they manipulate elements of music provides insight into their intent and informs performance.	How does understanding the structure and context of musical works inform performance?
		<i>Interpret</i>	Performers make interpretive decisions based on their understanding of context and expressive intent.	How do performers interpret musical works?
	2. Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for performance.	<i>Rehearse, Evaluate and Refine</i>	To express their musical ideas, musicians analyze, evaluate, and refine their performance over time through openness to new ideas, persistence, and the application of appropriate criteria.	How do musicians improve the quality of their performance?
	3. Convey and express meaning through the performance of artistic work.	<i>Present</i>	Musicians judge performance based on criteria that vary across time, place, and cultures. The context and how a work is presented influence audience response.	When is a performance judged ready to present?
				How do context and the manner in which musical work is presented influence audience response?

Domain	Foundation	Artistic Process	Enduring Understandings	Essential Questions
Create	4. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.	<i>Imagine</i>	The creative ideas, concepts, and feelings that influence musicians' work emerge from a variety of sources.	How do musicians generate creative ideas?
	5. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.	<i>Plan and Make</i>	Musicians' creative choices are influenced by their expertise, context, and expressive intent.	How do musicians make creative decisions?
	6. Refine and complete artistic work.	<i>Evaluate and Refine</i>	Musicians evaluate, and refine their work through openness to new ideas, persistence, and the application of appropriate criteria.	How do musicians improve the quality of their creative work?
		<i>Present</i>	Musicians' presentation of creative work is the culmination of a process of creation and communication.	When is creative work ready to share?
Respond	7. Perceive and analyze artistic work.	<i>Select</i>	Individuals' selection of musical works is influenced by their interests, experiences, understandings, and purposes.	How do individuals choose music to experience?
		<i>Analyze</i>	Response to music is informed by analyzing context (social, cultural, and historical) and how creators and performers manipulate the elements of music.	How do individuals choose music to experience?

Domain	Foundation	Artistic Process	Enduring Understandings	Essential Questions
	8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.	<i>Interpret</i>	Through their use of elements and structures of music, creators and performers provide clues to their expressive intent.	How do we discern the musical creators' and performers' expressive intent?
	9. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.	<i>Evaluate</i>	The personal evaluation of musical work(s) and performance(s) is informed by analysis, interpretation, and established criteria.	How do we judge the quality of musical work(s) and performance(s)?
Connect	10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to artistic endeavors.	<i>Connecting</i>	Musicians connect their personal interests, experiences, ideas, and knowledge to creating, performing, and responding.	How do musicians make meaningful connections to creating, performing, and responding?
	11. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical contexts.	<i>Connecting</i>	Understanding connections to varied contexts and daily life enhances musicians' creating, performing, and responding.	How do the other arts, other disciplines, contexts, and daily life inform creating, performing, and responding to music?

Appendix C

Parent Survey

Please help us to get better at what we do by giving us your honest feedback. This can be anonymous if you wish. Thank you!

Name/Nombre (Optional)

What do you like most about W. O. Smith? ¿Qué es lo que más le gusta de W.O. Smith?

Is your child being well served by W. O. Smith? If no, please explain why. ¿Servimos bien su(s) hijo(s) aquí? Si no, por favor explica.

What would make things better? ¿Qué lo mejoraría?

What are we not musically providing for your child that you would like to see added? ¿Hay un programa musical que nos quiere añadir?

Additional Notes (Feel free to include any info you would like us to know that wasn't asked above.) Apuntes adicionales (Aquí puede incluir información no preguntada arriba.)

SUBMIT