



Department of the Performing Arts

K-12 Program Review

February 11, 2020

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Introduction

It is the goal of the Bridgewater-Raritan Office of Curriculum and Instruction to develop and implement a thorough, data-based process for analyzing curriculum, instruction, assessment, student performance, professional development, and resources in all curricular areas ensuring that professional practice is always current, relevant, and aligned to the most updated standards. Each curricular area will be reviewed on a, at most, five-year timeline. The results of each process will be presented publicly.

Acknowledgements

The following individuals were directly involved in gathering information/data and contributed to the completion of the Performing Arts Department's program review, which is presented in this document:

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Goals and Purpose

In this document, it is the goal of the Performing Arts Department to present the following:

- A description of the physical program
- Current course offerings including enrollment data
- A review of the curriculum, instruction, assessment, resources and professional development
- A review of supporting research
- Recommendations leading into the Curriculum Revision Process

Program Description (Current)

The Performing Arts Department in the Bridgewater-Raritan Regional School District is currently comprised of a curricular music education program that serves students in grades Pre-K through 12 and is supplemented by additional co-curricular programs and opportunities for students in grades 5-12. In addition to a breadth of co-curricular offerings in instrumental and choral music, the Performing Arts Supervisor also oversees the high school extracurricular Theatre Arts program.

The National Association for Music Education (NAfME) Opportunity to Learn Standards provide a research based, national framework to evaluate aspects of a music education program. Our current music program meets many of the requirements of the NAfME Opportunity to Learn Standards for a “Quality” program. All students in Bridgewater-Raritan receive regular music instruction from a certified music teacher from Kindergarten through eighth grade. Music instruction is provided in designated and well-equipped music classrooms, and the teacher to student ratio is generally comparable to districts that provide similarly high-quality music instruction in our area. Students in our instrumental program receive small group instruction in lesson groups based largely upon instrumentation and student needs, and all of our ensembles present a series of performances for families, peers, and the community. High school ensembles frequently present performances at premier venues through state festivals or invitational programs.

Students in our music program are consistently recognized for their individual efforts through the New Jersey Music Educators Association (NJMEA) honors ensemble circuit, with band, orchestra, and chorus students from our intermediate, middle, and high schools all earning seats within regional and state honor ensembles. Our district is regularly represented by Bridgewater-Raritan Regional High School students in All-National Honors Ensembles. While these achievements are a testament to the individual efforts and talents of our students, they would not be possible without the high quality instruction, mentorship, and support provided by our entire music faculty from our Primary schools to the High School.

In 2018 - 2019, the Bridgewater-Raritan Regional School District was recognized by the National Music Merchant (NAMM) Foundation as a “Best Community for Music Education” district, a national recognition of the exceptional quality of music instruction found within our schools, as well as a recognition and celebration of the overall community support for music in our schools across the district.

The existing Music program includes instruction in general music, instrumental music (band, orchestra), and choral music. General Music, Choral Music, and Instrumental Music curricula are aligned to the 2014 New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) for the Visual and Performing Arts. Details by level are as follows:

Primary (Grades Pre-K - 4)

Students in all seven primary schools receive 20 minutes once or twice per week of general music instruction in Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten. Beginning in first grade, students receive 40 minutes of general music instruction per week. Students attend general music as part of the Related Arts program, traveling to each building's designated music room with their homeroom for music instruction.

Students in Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten receive an average of 720 minutes of music instruction in the course of an entire year. Students in first through fourth grades receive an average of 1,450 minutes of general music instruction.

Grade	Average Yearly Instructional Minutes
Pre Kindergarten General Music	720 Minutes
Kindergarten General Music	720 Minutes
Grades 1 - 4 General Music	1,450 Minutes
Chorus (Grade 4)	400 (Additional) Minutes

Students attend music class on a fixed, five-day schedule, meaning that a homeroom will have music every Monday, Period 5, for example. A consequence of this schedule design is that some students receive less instructional time in music than their peers, depending on the day of the week their class is scheduled to go to music. A review of the 2019 - 2020 academic calendar reveals that classes that meet for General Music on Mondays have 175 minutes less scheduled instructional time than classes that meet on Thursdays. Additionally, an unanticipated school closure, such as a snow day, or planned activities such as assemblies and field trips, mean those students will not receive music instruction again for an entire week.

This table reflects the scheduled instructional time by day of the week based upon the 2019 - 2020 calendar. Note that these time estimates do not account for school closures due to inclement weather, or for missed class time due to field trips, assemblies, etc.

2019 - 2020 General Music Instructional Minutes (Grades 1 - 6) by Weekday

Weekday	Yearly Instructional Time (Minutes)
Monday	1330
Tuesday	1490
Wednesday	1465
Thursday	1505
Friday	1465

In fourth grade, students have the additional opportunity of participating in the first formal ensemble experience in our program - chorus. Grade 4 Chorus is limited to 400 minutes of instructional time throughout the year. The chorus schedule looks slightly different depending on the building, as these schedules are built in collaboration between the music teacher, building principal, and classroom teachers. When 4th grade students are participating in the chorus program, they typically receive 40 minutes of Chorus in addition to their 40 minutes of general music. All fourth grade students have the opportunity to perform in a concert for their peers as well as for their families, presented in the early Spring and held during the school day. Fourth grade chorus students are also invited to participate in the district choral festival held in March each year.

Intermediate (Grades 5 - 6)

All Intermediate students continue to take General Music, provided for 40 minutes once per week. At the Intermediate level, General Music is scheduled similarly to the Primary buildings, meaning students go to the General Music classroom for music instruction one day per week (on a fixed, five-day schedule). This yields similar amounts of instructional time in the year, and carries the same challenges as indicated above in the primary level discussion.

Beginning at the Intermediate level, students have the opportunity to participate in Band or Orchestra, as well as in Chorus. Students that elect to participate in Band or Orchestra receive instruction in small lesson groups one time per week, for 40 minutes, in a “pull-out” rotating

lesson program. Lesson groups are scheduled so that the class students are ‘pulled’ from classes each week, ensuring minimal impact on any one subject area due to lessons.

In addition to their small group lesson, Band and Orchestra students attend an ensemble rehearsal one day per week, held before school. Students who participate in Band and Orchestra at the intermediate level are required to have their own transportation to school for before-school rehearsals. Additionally, students who participate in Band and Orchestra are expected to rent an instrument, as well as purchase their own methods books and required supplies. The cost to the student/family to rent an instrument varies depending on the selected instrument and rental terms. In band, the average cost will range from \$30 to \$50 per month, in Orchestra, from \$35 to \$70. The methods books cost approximately \$7-\$10, and students are required to provide additional supplies that are dependent upon the selected instrument (*e.g.* cleaning supplies, additional reeds, shoulder rests).

Students who choose to participate in Chorus attend a chorus rehearsal during their regularly scheduled I/E period, one day per week for 40 minutes. Band, Orchestra, and Chorus are part of the regular instructional music program (and are not considered “extra or co-curricular”). All students who participate in Band, Orchestra, and/or Chorus at the Intermediate Level are formally registered in PowerSchool and receive regular grades as a result of multiple means of assessment.

Band, Orchestra, and Chorus students present two concerts per year, one in the Winter and one in the Spring. Concerts are presented during the school day to their peers and teachers, and in the evening for families and the community. Fifth and sixth grade choral students and sixth grade band and orchestra students are also invited to participate in the district Festival of the Arts held in March each year.

At the intermediate level, students have additional opportunities to extend their learning through chamber strings and advanced band groups, typically beginning at the 6th grade level. These groups include Lunch Club Choral Groups (Grades 5 & 6), Advanced Band, Chamber Strings, and additional audition or volunteer groups that vary by year depending upon student interest, instrumentation, and need. Students that participate in these additional co-curricular groups typically have additional performance opportunities throughout the year.

Middle School (Grades 7 - 8)

At the Middle School level, General Music instruction continues for all students in grades seven and eight. General Music is part of the Middle School cycle program. Students take music each year, receiving instruction every day for a period of seven weeks as part of the cycle offerings.

Middle School students receive approximately 1,400 minutes of general music instruction in the cycle class, which is comparable to the instructional time for general music in grades 1-6.

Middle School students who participate in Band and Orchestra attend a full ensemble rehearsal two times per week. The ensemble periods rotate throughout the weekly schedule, so that students do not miss the same period/class more than one time per month. Band and Orchestra students continue to receive small group instruction in weekly lessons. Lessons are scheduled during the students' Physical Education class, and are fixed so that students have their lesson on the same day, in the same period, every week. Chorus students attend rehearsal two times per week, on a rotating schedule. Again, these ensemble periods rotate throughout the weekly schedule.

In Middle School, a student who chooses to participate in either Band or Orchestra will be pulled from another class three times per week. Students who choose to participate in Band or Orchestra and chorus will be pulled from class 5 total times per week. Band, Orchestra, and Chorus are part of the regular instructional music program (and should not be considered "extra or co-curricular"). All students who participate in Band, Orchestra, and/or Chorus at the Middle School Level are formally registered in PowerSchool and receive regular grades as a result of multiple means of assessment.

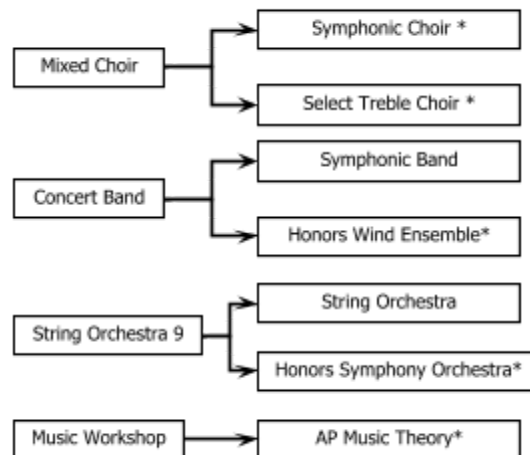
Band, Orchestra, and Chorus students present two evening concerts per year, one in the Winter and one in the Spring. Additional performances are presented during the school day to their peers and teachers and at the district Festival of the Arts concerts

At the middle school level, students have the opportunity to participate in additional performance ensembles outside of the regular grade level ensembles through our co-curricular programs. Students may audition to participate in Chamber Strings, Wind Ensemble, Jazz Ensemble, Sol (Cambiata Choir), and Dolce (Select Treble Choir). Each of these co-curricular ensembles are led by a highly qualified music faculty member and are directly aligned to the goals for student outcomes associated with the curricular ensembles.

High School (Grades 9 - 12)

In High School, students participate in the music program solely through choice/elective course options. Students can take Band, Orchestra, and Chorus as full year, five-day courses. Additional music electives in high school include Music Workshop and AP Music Theory.

High School Offerings as Outlined in the BRHS Program of Studies Handbook:



Band

The band program consists of three ensembles - Concert Band, Symphonic Band, and Wind Ensemble. Concert Band is comprised of all 9th grade students and is the first full ensemble experience when students have band every day. Symphonic Band is comprised of students in grades 10 - 12. Wind Ensemble is an auditioned group with fixed instrumentation for students in grades 10 - 12. Band periods are regularly scheduled electives offered as part of the BRHS Program of Studies. Concert Band and Symphonic Band are considered “academic” level, and Wind Ensemble is an honors level course. The high school band program is currently staffed to accommodate small group lesson instruction, which was formerly a part of the high school schedule. Current scheduling practice does not support providing students with access to small group instruction.

Orchestra

The orchestra program consists of three ensembles - Orchestra Ninth, String Orchestra, and Symphony Orchestra. Orchestra Ninth is comprised of all 9th grade students and is the first full ensemble experience when students have orchestra every day. String Orchestra is comprised of students in grades 10 - 12. Symphony Orchestra is an auditioned group for students in grades 10 - 12.

Wind Ensemble and Symphony Orchestra are intentionally scheduled to run during the same period (traditionally period 1), as select Wind Ensemble students (winds, brass, and percussion

students) play in the Symphony Orchestra to complete the full instrumentation, attending this rehearsal one day per week. Symphony Orchestra is an honors level course. Current scheduling practice at the high school does not support consistent student access to small group instruction.

Chorus

The choir program consists of three ensembles - Mixed Choir, Select Treble Ensemble, and Symphonic Choir. Mixed Choir is comprised of students in grades 9 - 12. Select Treble Ensemble is an auditioned group for treble singers in grades 10 - 12, and Symphonic Choir is an auditioned ensemble for mixed voices in grades 10 - 12. Symphonic Choir is an honors level course.

Performances

At the high school level, students enrolled in any of the band, orchestra, or choral ensembles will perform a minimum of three times, at the Winter and Spring concerts and at the district Festival of the Arts concerts. There are many additional performance opportunities throughout the year, both within the district and outside the district at music festivals, competitions, and/or community events.

Music Workshop

Music Workshop is a general music/overview course that includes music theory, music history, and composition. Music Workshop is offered as an elective to all students, with no prerequisite.

AP Music Theory

AP Music Theory follows a College Board approved syllabus to provide college-level instruction in music theory and prepare students for the AP Music Theory exam.

Co-Curricular Programs - Music

Students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of co-curricular ensembles and programs, that include auditioned jazz ensembles and choral ensembles. The largest opportunity for co-curricular music making at the high school is provided through the year long Marching Arts program. The Marching Arts program is a comprehensive instructional and performing program that includes Marching Band (Fall), Indoor Guard (Winter/Spring), and Indoor Percussion (Winter/Spring). Marching Band is a collaborative art form comprised of multiple artistic elements, including live music performance, sophisticated choreography, dance, and movement, integrated visual elements, and artistic intent/emotive concept.

Co-Curricular Programs - Theatre and Dance

Currently, the Performing Arts Supervisor oversees the operations of the high school theater arts program. This is a fully extracurricular program. Students perform one play and one musical per

year, and students involved in the Thespian Honor Society produce an additional play or musical each year.

After-school theatre programs are organized at both intermediate schools and at the middle school. These programs are not currently connected to the performing arts department. Similarly, some schools have extracurricular dance teams that are not connected to the performing arts department. The definitive difference found between an exclusively extra-curricular program, club, or activity and a curricular program lies in the delivery of sequential, standards-based instruction with appropriately aligned mechanisms for assessment and feedback, provided by a highly qualified and certified arts educator. There is inherent value in providing students with opportunities to explore arts forms through school-based activities and clubs; however, this does not satisfy state requirements, nor does it appropriately prepare students to meet state standards in arts areas in order to communicate proficiently within the competencies of creating, performing, connecting, and responding.

It is noted that the BRHS Program of Studies currently includes a Drama course, offered to students in grades 9-12 for 2.5 credits. This elective is offered through the English department, and the course curriculum is not aligned to the NJSL Standards for Theatre.

Performances (District Overview)

Student performances - be they school-day assemblies for peers and teachers, or evening performances for family and friends - are an important aspect of the learning process in the performing arts and connect directly to the NJSL & National Core Arts Standards. In the performing arts, students develop and refine skills and techniques for a performance, and ultimately realize creative ideas and convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. And, in addition to the important learning that takes place for the preparation and presentation of a performance, concerts are a wonderful and joyous opportunity to celebrate the efforts of students and staff and to allow music and the arts to uplift and inspire our own lives.

Generally, performances are held at the school for each school-based ensemble. At the elementary and intermediate levels, choral concerts and other student performances (grade level concerts, sing-a-longs, etc.) are typically held in the school gym or cafeteria. Set-up typically involves choral risers, which are shared across the district as needed, chairs and music stands, and a sound system to support the student performers. Elementary concerts and performances are held during the school day, and parents/guardians are typically invited to attend. Intermediate concerts are typically presented during the day for peers and teachers, and in the evening for families. There are often one or two rehearsals held before a concert, and building administration and other teaching staff - as well as the building custodial teams - work collaboratively to

support student performances.

At the middle and high school level, concerts are held in the evenings in the school auditoriums. The middle school music faculty prepares a winter and spring assembly program so students can perform for their classmates and teachers during the school day two times during the year. At the high school level, there are no performances held during the school day. In addition to formal concerts, teachers at all levels hold “Informances” (an informal performance) during the school day for families, or invitational rehearsals, where parents and guardians are invited to visit class and observe a rehearsal or music class.

All district concerts are presented free of charge to families and the general public, with few exceptions of events sponsored by high school parent organizations for specific fundraising purposes (e.g. Broadway Night). Concerts are publicized on the school website, social media, and through eBlasts. Concert attendance in grades four through eight is always quite high. Attendance at high school concerts varies depending on group size and other factors.

Festival of the Arts

The Festival of the Arts is a traditional celebration of district music and visual arts programs held each Spring. The Festival concert series is held in the high school gym in the evening, and is free of charge. District administration, as well as the district facilities and custodial team, provide a great deal of support for this event.

The Choral Festival Concert features chorus students from grades four through twelve. The combined Fourth Grade chorus typically consists of around 400 students from all seven primary schools. The combined Intermediate Chorus is typically around 500 fifth and sixth grade students from Eisenhower and Hillside. The Middle and High School choirs perform within their grade level/course ensembles. The concert closes with a choral piece performed by all musicians, grades four through twelve. The Band and Orchestra Festival Concerts feature grade level ensembles from each school from grades six through twelve. Each ensemble performs a selection from their concert repertoire. The Band and Orchestra concerts feature over 300 student musicians each evening.

The Festival of the Arts concerts are optional for students to participate in; however, participation is always strong and the concerts are highly attended by families and community members. These concerts are a remarkable tradition that have stood the test of time and change over the years in Bridgewater-Raritan. The Festival concerts are a highlight of the year, and demonstrate the breadth and quality of our performing ensembles and their dedicated teachers.

Instrumental Sampling Process

Each year, the instrumental music staff allocate time within their schedules to conduct the instrumental “Sampling” process to introduce the instrumental music program to all fourth grade students. Hillside band and orchestra teachers visit Hamilton, Adamsville, and Crim schools, and Eisenhower band and orchestra teachers visit John F. Kennedy, Van Holten, Milltown, and Bradley Gardens. In the 2018-2019 school year, the instrumental music team revised the sampling process with the goal of increased student excitement and enthusiasm for finding a good “match” with an instrument. Fourth graders now have the opportunity to briefly try to play every instrument in band and orchestra, with guidance from our experienced instrumental staff to help identify an instrument match that will help the student be successful in the instrumental program. Students are encouraged to find out which instrument will “choose” them by giving them a great sound when they attempt to play it. The instrumental team continues to collaborate and discuss the changes to the process, and is maintaining data on student selections and ultimate participation, retention, and success within our programs in order to determine whether the approach better supports the needs of our students. In order to make it possible for students to try every instrument, particularly in band where there are multiple instrument families, instrumental staff from the middle and high school participate in the sampling process. This allows us to successfully implement the revised sampling procedures and is also an added opportunity for teachers to work together across grade levels and buildings, leading to improvement and growth in our move towards establishing common language, processes, and goals for our students and programs.

Instructional Staff

The BRRSD Music Faculty is comprised of 29 full time educators. Our music faculty all hold a K-12 Music Certification; however, our district intentionally recruits, hires, and retains pedagogical specialists in each of our primary disciplines - general music, choral music, band, and orchestra. More than half of our music teachers hold graduate degrees, primarily in the field of music, and nearly all of our faculty are practicing musicians and performers. The qualifications of our teaching staff align with the NAFME Opportunity to Learn Standards for a “quality” program. Additionally, several metrics that the NAMM Foundation reviews as part of the application for a “Best Community in Music Education” award is the qualifications of the district staff - specifically whether teachers provide instruction in their field of specialization, hold masters degrees in music education or performance, and work outside the classroom as

professional musicians and clinicians. We are fortunate to attract and retain an exceptional team of experienced and accomplished music educators.

Primary

We currently have 7 full time teachers at the Pre K - 4 level. Each primary building has one music teacher that teaches all or most of the students in the building for both General Music and Chorus. Crim, Hamilton, and Milltown schools have one full time music teacher in the building. Bradley Gardens, John F. Kennedy, and Van Holten schools have a music teacher for 4 of 5 days, with each of the three teachers spending their fifth day at Adamsville. Adamsville has one full time teacher as well as three teachers that fill .2 of their assignment at Adamsville serving the Pre-K program.

Intermediate

The instrumental music program begins at the intermediate level, in Grade 5. Eisenhower and Hillside Intermediate Schools have orchestra and band programs, organized into grade level ensembles. In each school, four music educators are assigned to instrumental music - 2 orchestra, 2 band - in order to provide small group lessons and lead ensemble rehearsals and performances. Eisenhower has two full time general music/chorus teachers that provide general music instruction, while Hillside has one full time general music/chorus teacher and a shared-time teacher who also teaches general music at the Middle School. Eisenhower and Hillside have robust choral programs, with grade level choruses that often exceed 200 students per year. Each grade level chorus is directed by one of the general music/choral teachers.

Middle School

The middle school staff includes two full time orchestra teachers and two full time band teachers, continuing a model of instrumental music instruction that includes weekly small group lessons and grade level ensembles. One full time general music teacher provides instruction for the 8th grade music cycle. 7th grade music cycle classes are split between two teachers, with one teacher shared-time between the middle school and Hillside, and the second teacher also serving as the choral program director for the pull-out chorus program.

High School

There are four full time music educators currently staffed at the high school. Two teachers provide instruction for the band ensembles as well as Music Workshop, one teacher leads the choral program, and one teacher directs the orchestra program and teaches A.P. Music Theory.

Instructional Resources

Significant resources are designated towards the performing arts programs each year in the annual district budget. The following is a brief overview by level of financial and other resources allocated in support of the program.

Primary Budgetary Resources

At the primary level, budgeted resources for general music and chorus are handled at the building level. Each building budget includes a specific allocation for recorders and recorder method books (Be a Recorder Star, Macie Publishing), as this is a required resource for all third and fourth grade students based upon the existing general music curriculum. Outside of this allocation, resources at the primary level are not standard across the district.

Primary Technology

Each of the seven primary school general music classrooms are equipped with a SmartBoard to enhance instruction. Most classrooms have an adequate sound system that includes amplification for the teacher (a crucial resource that preserves the vocal health of the educator). Primary music teachers, overall, use their SmartBoards to project course materials and to use the interactive digital subscription to “Be a Recorder Star,” our district resource for teaching recorder in grades 3 and 4. Primary teachers rely on CD players and digital music files/YouTube for classroom use. At the primary level, in most buildings there are Chromebook carts available that General Music teachers could sign-out. Because teachers will see classes from each grade level throughout the week, a cart would need to be reserved for a week to be useful for one lesson for a grade level. For this and some other reasons referenced in the teacher survey, devices are not often accessible at the K-4 level.

5 - 12 Budgetary Resources

Budgeted resources for general music at the Intermediate and Middle School level are handled at the building level. Additionally, each building determines specific allocations to support the ensemble programs each year. These funds have traditionally been designated towards the purchase of sheet music/ensemble repertoire and towards yearly supplies (such as reeds, replacement parts, instrument cleaning supplies, shoulder rests, rock stops, etc.). Ordering and purchasing for these purposes is handled by the Performing Arts supervisor and administrative assistant.

5-12 Instrumental Repair Budget

An annual allocation for the repair of instruments is included in the district budget each year. According to the NAfME Opportunity to Learn Standards for a “quality” music program, the annual repair budget should be at least 5% of the overall district instrument inventory.

In addition to a repair budget, an annual allocation of at least 5% of the overall district instrument inventory should be budgeted for the replacement and addition of district owned instruments. This is required to support the growth of our programs, maintain and replace aging instruments in our existing inventory, and adapt to the changing needs of students based on instrumentation. Instrument inventories should be examined for balance and equity across schools and programs, to ensure that we are providing sufficient resources to support student need throughout the district.

5-12 Technology

Teachers at the intermediate level have received professional development as part of the STAR program and are supported by the district instructional technology specialist and supervisor in the exploration/implementation of new resources. An existing iMac lab at the Middle School supports the 8th grade music cycle curriculum and should be upgraded to support anticipated curriculum revisions and current practice in music technology. High school music teachers have occasional access to a chromebook cart that is shared among staff in the 100 building. The intermediate, middle, and high school music classrooms have varying levels of audio and amplification equipment. Nearly all music classrooms in grades 5- 12 have a projector, however some instrumental teaching spaces at the intermediate level do not.

Co and Extra-Curricular Program Budgets

Co-curricular music programs at the high school level are supported through annually allocated budgeted funds that the Performing Arts supervisor oversees. All three high school ensembles (Band, Orchestra, and Choir) are supported by parent organizations/associations that conduct additional fundraising and provide additional resources to support curricular and co-curricular program needs beyond the district budgeted funds. The high school theatre program is primarily funded through box office proceeds that are managed through the student activities fund. Co and extra-curricular programs are supported/staffed through the assignment of stipends as part of the BREA negotiated agreement. Currently, there are some inconsistencies within the co and extra-curricular stipend allocations for performing arts programs, as the stipends designated to support performing arts programs have not been revised to reflect program growth and changes over the course of recent years.

Facilities

Existing instructional facilities were examined against the National Association for Music Education Opportunity to Learn Standards. There are three areas of focus for the discussion of existing facilities as they relate to our current program: instructional space, performance venues, and storage.

Instructional Space

Instructional space throughout the district supports the music education program. In primary, intermediate, and middle school grade levels, students have access to a dedicated room for General Music, large enough to accommodate the largest group taught and to provide ample space for physical movement.

The ensemble programs are supported at the intermediate, middle, and high school levels by adequate instructional spaces and facilities. Hillside school faces significant challenges in managing the instrumental ensemble programs, as there is not a designated rehearsal room large enough to accommodate the ensembles. Additionally, the band program shares rehearsal space with a general music classroom, which creates added challenges of set-up, storage needs, wear and tear on instruments and equipment due to frequent movement, and other logistical concerns. At the middle school, the most pressing facility concern is the lack of climate/humidity control in the band and orchestra wing. There is no ventilation in the instructional spaces (lesson rooms or rehearsal room), and there is no air-conditioning. The lesson and rehearsal spaces can reach dramatically high temperatures and humidity levels, creating an environment that is not conducive to learning. Additionally, the drastic changes in temperature and humidity lead to significant levels of damage to our instruments - particularly woodwind and string instruments - that warp, break, or develop mold due to the classroom climate.

In order to meet the standards for a “Quality” program, our instructional spaces would have the following specifications:

- All spaces used for music would be acoustically isolated by an acoustical barrier or wall with a Sound Transmission Classification (STC) of 50 or more
- Appropriate lighting and ventilation: Lighting and ventilation systems do not exceed noise criterion levels of 30 for classrooms, rehearsal rooms, and practice rooms or studios.

Performance Venues

Generally speaking, our students present performances in spaces large enough to accommodate the performing group and invited audience, with adequate sound and lighting; however, concerts at the intermediate level are held in gyms, which do not have appropriate sound and lighting to support quality music performances.

To meet the expectations of a “Quality” program within the NAfME OTL Standards, students would have access, at least one time per year, to a “high quality performance venue to present accomplishments to the public.” A high quality performance venue meets the following criteria:

- Performance space (stage) is large enough to accommodate the largest performing group/ensemble

- Audience seating can accommodate “the entire student body” within a school, and/or the anticipated audience for evening/community performances
- Quality lighting and sound equipment
- Acoustical treatments to fully support musical performances

Finally, an evaluation of our current process for the scheduling and oversight of our performance venue at the high school (auditorium) revealed the following challenges and inconsistencies:

- **Scheduling:** Current procedures for scheduling the BRHS Theatre are complicated and often result in miscommunications and conflicts. A single point of oversight for the scheduling of the BRHS Auditorium - which is the district’s most frequently used performance/presentation venue - could help ensure the venue appropriately supports the instructional needs of students in curricular and co-curricular performing arts programs as well as meets the needs of the building, district, and community.
- **Oversight:** The auditorium is a unique facility with specific parameters for appropriate use. Without careful oversight, provided by personnel with an understanding of the facility and its operation, the district risks the security of expensive equipment. Proper maintenance of this space is crucial, particularly if and when additional investments are made to enhance the quality of this district performance venue.

Storage

Appropriate storage for instructional materials, equipment, and resources is a challenge across the district. This is of particular concert at the high school level, where the scope of programs, number of students involved, and amount of equipment/resources compound the issue. Existing classroom and storage space in the music areas of the 100 building on the high school campus are not sufficient to support the needs of the program. Specific concerns include:

- Lack of storage space for elements associated with the BRHS Auditorium and our performance ensembles and programs. There is no storage space in the theatre, and we house risers, sound shells, theatre sets/lumber, and sound and lighting equipment on a regular basis. During a production, there are additional needs for managing the production run (set pieces, props, costuming, additional rented equipment, etc.). The lack of storage results in unsafe conditions for learning and/or performance for our students and should be a priority concern. Additionally, the storage issues result in undue risk for district assets (wear and tear on equipment, potential for damage/breakage/theft of items that are not securely stored).
- Lack of storage space for equipment and materials to support co-curricular and extra-curricular programs (marching band, indoor percussion, winter guard, choral groups, theatre program).

Recommendations for improvements to our instructional and performance facilities will be offered through this program evaluation, along with specific suggestions to address the challenges identified above.

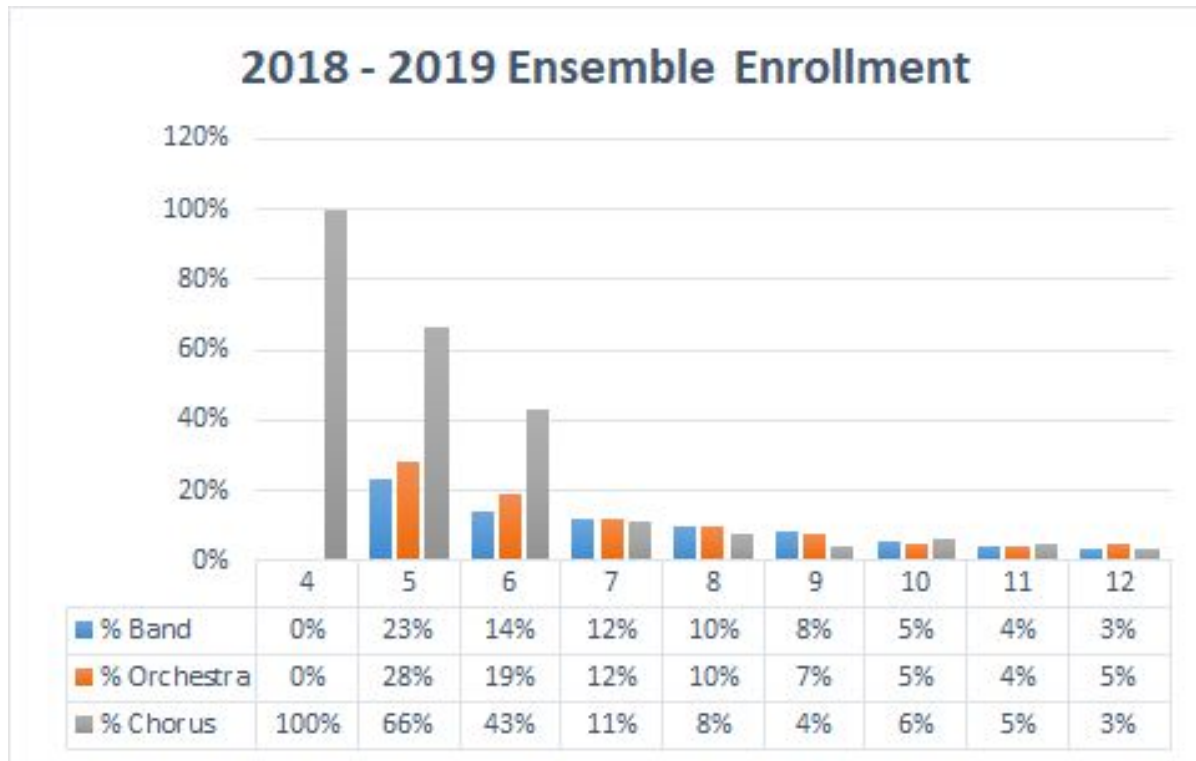
Enrollment Trends

In grades Pre-Kindergarten through eight, 100% of students receive music instruction in the form of General Music. Additionally, all fourth grade students across the district have the opportunity to participate in the choral ensemble experience.

Beginning in Grade 5, students have the choice to participate in traditional music ensembles (band, orchestra, and chorus). All students continue to receive music instruction through general music and the cycle music courses in Intermediate and Middle School. At the high school level, students have the choice to participate in the traditional music ensembles (band, orchestra, and chorus).

2018 - 2019 Ensemble Enrollment

Reviewing a snapshot of ensemble enrollment for the 2018-2019 academic year, the committee examined the decline of ensemble enrollment as students progress through each year in our district.



The initial look at the decline in ensemble enrollment is dramatic; however, it is important to note that a decline in ensemble enrollment as students advance in grade levels is not an unexpected or uncommon aspect of a performing arts program, and our district enrollment data is similar to that of other school districts within our district factor group (DFG) or across the state. Our committee did, however, highlight some findings from this data:

Chorus

Making music together in an ensemble is a critical component of an arts education and chorus provides a pathway for all students to experience ensemble music-making. In our district, every student participates in chorus in fourth grade and has the opportunity to grow as musicians, learners, and members of our community. This is a powerful aspect of our program and one that should be protected and, if possible, expanded upon. Fifth and sixth grade students have the greatest access to chorus once it becomes an elective program, as the Intermediate schedule allows students to participate in chorus without missing any other subject area or choosing between various elective offerings. In middle school, participation in chorus requires students to miss other classes two times per week, and this visual graph clearly demonstrates the profound impact this has on our students' ability or desire to participate in the program.

High School Enrollment

In the 2018 - 2019 year, 11 students (grades 9 - 12) that were not enrolled in an ensemble elected to take one of the additional music offerings (Music Workshop or AP Music Theory). In total, 433 students participated in at least one music class. This represents about 15% of the total high school population. According to the New Jersey Arts Education Annual Summary Report for 2019, the state average for participation in music classes at the high school level is 20%.

Five Year Ensemble Enrollment Trends

The committee examined enrollment data over a period of 6 years. All students from Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade receive general music instruction; therefore, the committee focused more closely on the elective/choice-based programs. Beginning in 5th grade, students are provided the opportunity to participate in chorus, band, and/or orchestra.

The following tables represent ensemble enrollment for our grade level instrumental ensembles (Band and Orchestra, grades 5 - 9) over five years. The percentage columns indicate what percent of the entire grade level was enrolled in each program.

Band

	15-16		16-17		17-18		18-19		19-20*	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Grade 5	145	23%	160	24%	135	20%	151	23%	178	26%
Grade 6	91	13%	100	16%	107	16%	98	14%	118	17%
Grade 7	65	9%	76	11%	76	11%	85	12%	72	10%
Grade 8	59	8%	59	8%	70	10%	67	10%	80	11%
Grade 9	48	7%	51	7%	49	7%	60	8%	56	8%

Orchestra

	15-16		16-17		17-18		18-19		19-20*	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%

Grade 5	155	24%	182	28%	176	26%	186	28%	226	33%
Grade 6	100	15%	123	19%	128	19%	132	19%	152	22%
Grade 7	73	10%	70	10%	69	10%	84	12%	106	15%
Grade 8	65	9%	49	7%	39	6%	41	6%	42	6%
Grade 9	N/A	N/A	49	7%	39	5%	41	6%	42	6%

Of Note:

In light of our program evaluation research, at the end of the 2018-2019 school year, the fifth grade orchestra teacher at Hillside reached out to families of students that dropped orchestra in the course of the year. At that time, 23 students had left the program. From this group, 34% left due to loss of interest, 40% left because either they or their parents did not want them to be pulled from other classes, 13% were unable to get a ride to morning rehearsals, and the remaining students moved out of district.

Chorus

The choral program enrollment over five years is shown below, for the grade level choruses in grades 5 - 8.

	15-16		16-17		17-18		18-19		19-20*	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Grade 5	311	49%	386	59%	398	57%	431	66%	420	62%
Grade 6	283	42%	302	47%	315	46%	307	44%	317	47%
Grade 7	38	5%	43	6%	38	6%	75	11%	69	10%
Grade 8	41	6%	34	5%	15	2%	50	7%	62	9%

High School Ensembles

The committee examined enrollment trends within our high school ensembles, focusing specifically on 2017-18 through 2019-20, as 2017 saw several high school staffing changes.

Band

	17-18	18-19	19-20
	Total	Total	Total
Concert Band (Gd 9)	49	60	56
Symphonic Band (Gds 10-12)	47	48	43
Wind Ensemble Hon. (Gds 10-12)	50	40	47
Total Program 9-12	146	148	146

Over three years, the average percentage of students in grades 9-12 enrolled in the band program was 5% of the total 9-12 population.

Orchestra

	17-18	18-19	19-20
	Total	Total	Total
Orchestra Ninth (Gd 9)	39	41	42
String Orchestra (Gds 10-12)	44	55	57
Symphony Orchestra Hon. (Gds 10-12)	63	56	48
Total Program 9-12	146	152	147

Over three years, the average percentage of students in grades 9-12 enrolled in the band program was 5% of the total 9-12 population.

Chorus

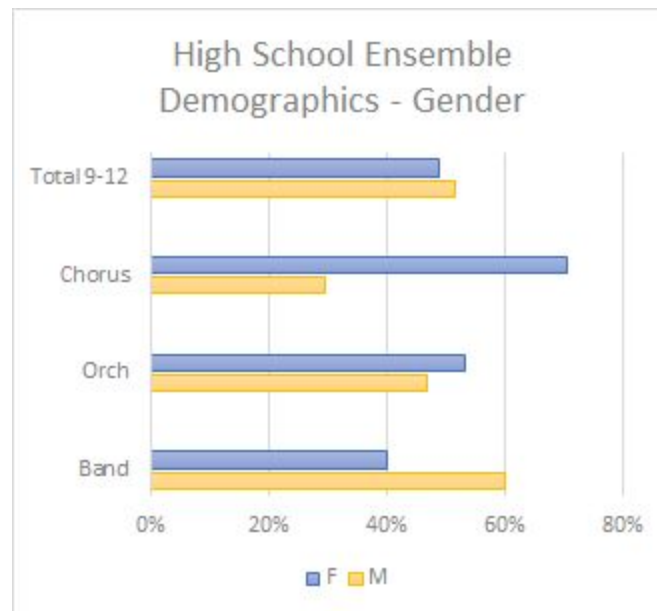
	17-18	18-19	19-20
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	Total	Total	Total
Mixed Choir (Gds 9-12)	71	52	73
Select Women's (Treble) Choir (Gds 10-12)	32	28	21
Symphonic Choir Hon. (Gds 10 - 12)	43	48	49
Total Program 9-12	146	128	143

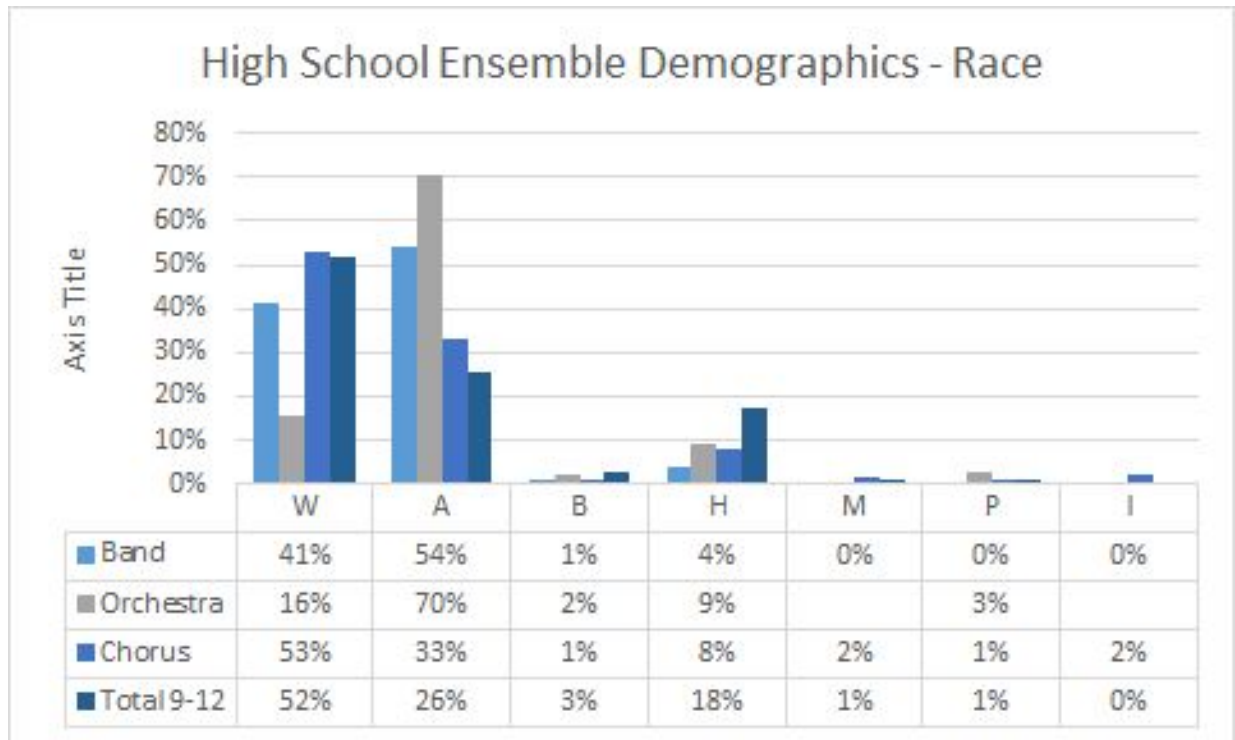
Over three years, the average percentage of students in grades 9-12 enrolled in the band program was 5% of the total 9-12 population.

Ensemble Demographics - High School

An analysis of the high school ensembles for the 2019 - 2020 academic year revealed the following demographic breakdown for representation of gender, by ensemble:



As well as the following breakdown of representation by race, by ensemble:



Class of 2020 Cohort

In an effort to move focus from the *all* to the *one*, the committee examined data for a cohort of students, tracking the class of 2020 over the course of eight years, beginning in grade 5 when students can elect to participate in band, orchestra, or chorus.

The primary motivation for reviewing this data was to better understand how students progress through our program, particularly through building and program-based transitions.

This table shows the number of students from the class of 2020 who were enrolled in band and orchestra at each grade level from 5 - 12.

	Band		Orchestra	
	# of students	% decrease	# of students	% decrease
Grade 5	125		166	
Grade 6*	72	42%	92	45%

Grade 7	68	5%	69	25%
Grade 8	62	9%	61	12%
Grade 9	50	19%	54	11%
Grade 10	41 (13 WE)	18%	35 (17 SO)	35%
Grade 11	30 (18 WE)	27%	31 (19 SO)	12%
Grade 12	26 (21 WE)	13%	MISSING DATA	

***Grade 6**

The most significant decrease in band and orchestra enrollment occurs during this cohort's 6th grade year. In September of 2013, 112 students were enrolled in 6th grade band. By October 15, that number had decreased to 85.

Band Grade 6

Date	Enrollment in PS
September 1, 2013	112
October 15, 2013	85
June 30, 2014	72

Similarly, in Orchestra, 152 students were enrolled for 6th grade band at the start of the 2013-2014 academic year, while by October 15th, the enrollment decreased by 50 students.

Orchestra Grade 6

Date	Enrollment in PS
September 1, 2013	152
October 15, 2013	102
June 30, 2014	92

The intermediate program includes several weeks of "intensive" lessons for beginning 5th grade players, which means that 6th grade students do not begin their regular lessons until late

September or early October. Because of this aspect of the program, we are assuming that the 27 students that dropped band and the 50 students that dropped Orchestra between September 1st and October 15th had either made the choice to leave the program in the summer and not yet communicated it to the school/instrumental staff, or elected to leave the program prior to the start of their regular lessons. This information is something that our instrumental staff should examine and discuss to determine whether systems for tracking students are appropriate and, more importantly, whether the program at the intermediate level can be improved to encourage greater retention between 5th and 6th grade.

Interestingly, it should be noted that despite the school and schedule transition that occurs between 6th and 7th grade, this class of 2020 band cohort did not see a significant decrease in enrollment moving to the middle school schedule. (Note that our overall 5 year enrollment trends are not consistent with this finding). In orchestra, however, we do see another significant decrease in enrollment as students transition from intermediate to middle school (25% decrease of total ensemble enrollment between 6th and 7th grade).

Examining Band at the High School Level

Fifty students were enrolled in band in their 9th grade year. About 50% (24 students) do not end up continuing in four full years of band. It appears that as students move up in grade levels, fewer band students remain in Symphonic Band than Wind Ensemble, despite the intended program design to lead towards a larger symphonic band and a small, instrumentation-based wind ensemble. According to the high school band staff, it is less likely for students to choose not to take band when they are in Symphonic Band than when they have been accepted into the honors level Wind Ensemble. By Grade 11, 20 students in the cohort have quit band, 18 have been accepted into Wind Ensemble, and only 12 remain in Symphonic Band. Moving into grade 12, three additional students gain acceptance into Wind Ensemble, while only 5 remain in Symphonic Band for their senior year. Conversations at the high school level and in the program evaluation committee meetings examining this data have raised the question of whether students are choosing not to continue with the band program if they are not accepted into the honors level ensemble (Wind Ensemble), since this ensemble carries honors weighting. In an exit survey conducted for all Concert and Symphonic Band students in June of 2019, 26% of band students indicated they were not returning to band for the 2019-2020 academic year because “I prefer to take another elective that has a higher GPA weight (Honors/AP)”.

Examining Orchestra at the High School Level

In orchestra, we see a pattern similar to band. In their 9th grade year, 54 students from this cohort were enrolled in orchestra. In 10th grade, 35 students continue with orchestra, half of those in String Orchestra and half in the auditioned Symphony Orchestra. By grade 11, 19 students are in Symphony Orchestra, and only 12 remain in String Orchestra.

Do Students Join Our Instrumental Program After 5th Grade?

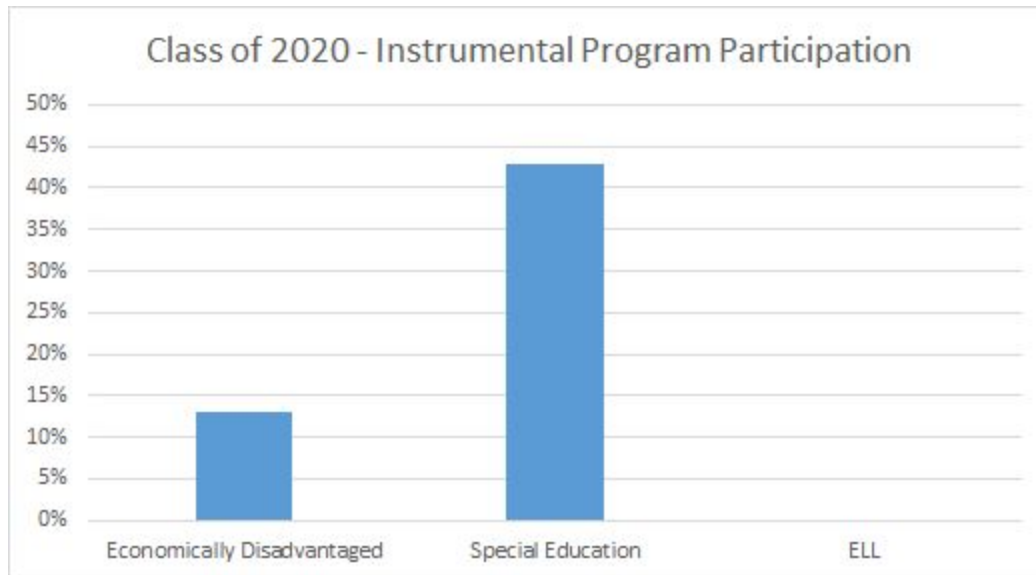
Throughout the program evaluation process, the committee has sought to examine student access to our programs, as well as barriers that may currently prevent students from participating in the music program. By examining the Class of 2020 Cohort, we discovered that, over the course of eight years, only eleven students joined our band program after the 2012-2013 beginning 5th grade year. With the exception of one single student who attempted to join band in high school (but only remained for one year), all of these students joined our program the year they moved into the district, so it is most likely that they were already studying an instrument in their former school district.

In Orchestra, eight students in the cohort joined Orchestra after grade 5. Five of these students joined the year they entered our district, while the remaining three had been in the district in grade 5 but enrolled in the orchestra program at a later point. Again, it is most likely that the five students that moved into the district were studying in their former district. Two of the three additional students began playing in 6th grade, and the third joined in 11th grade. It is possible that these students took private lessons outside of school, as it is not uncommon for students to study stringed instruments in private studios.

Who Are We Missing?

43% of the overall class of 2020 participated in the instrumental music program (band or orchestra) at some point during their school career. Due to differences in how choral enrollment was documented in our system in the years we tracked this cohort, the total number of overall choral enrollment is not available; however, we estimate approximately 47% based upon our five year enrollment data.

Representation of Economically Disadvantaged, Special Education, & ELL Student Subgroups
from the Class of 2020 in the Instrumental Music Program



Overall class participation in the instrumental music program was 43%

Economically Disadvantaged Students

In the Class of 2020, 75 students are identified in Power School as Economically Disadvantaged. Five participated in Band at some point in their school career, and five participated in Orchestra at some point in grades 5 through 12. In total, 13% of the economically disadvantaged population participated in our instrumental program (compared to 43% of the overall population).

Students with Special Learning Needs

There are 104 students in this cohort who have special education needs. Forty-four of these students (44% of the total special education subgroup) enrolled in band or orchestra in 5th grade. Twenty-two enrolled in band in 5th grade, and 22 enrolled in orchestra. Within the first year, however, 14 band students and 12 orchestra students dropped the program. Looking at 5th grade participation in band and orchestra overall, 78% of the students that enrolled in 5th grade successfully completed the year, however in comparison only 59% of students with special learning needs remained enrolled in the instrumental program in this beginning year.

English Language Learners

No ELL designated students in the class of 2020 participated in the instrumental music program.

Discussion

The high school instrumental staff and the program evaluation committee will engage in further exploration of these questions of recruitment, retention, and access for our ensemble programs. Several areas that should be pursued include:

- Initial recruitment/instrumental selection → if students select an instrument they like AND have potential to be successful playing, are they more likely to stay with the program? How is our new sampling practice impacting the initial recruitment & intermediate retention?
- Building & program schedules at Intermediate and Middle School Level → what is the impact of a pull out program on student participation and retention? What, if anything, can or should staff do in the beginning weeks of school to keep kids enrolled? How do we handle mid-year ‘drops’?
- How does the high school program encourage or discourage four-year participation in an ensemble? Does honors weighting for Wind Ensemble, Symphony Orchestra, and Symphonic Choir help support student participation? Does the lack of honors weighting for other ensembles after 9th grade discourage participation? What other factors contribute to attrition at the high school level?
- How can we improve our instruction and programs to better meet the needs of the students we are not currently serving? Specifically, how can we increase access and encourage participation for students that are economically disadvantaged, have special education learning needs, or have language learning needs?

Data Collection, Teacher Feedback, and Reviews

The Performing Arts Program Evaluation Committee prepared surveys to collect information from students, parents/guardians, and department staff. Responses to surveys included 26 teacher responses, 4,390 responses from students in grades 3 - 12, and 302 parent responses.

Survey questions covered the following categories/themes: attitudes towards the arts/role of the arts; curriculum, instruction, and assessment; choice and access; resources and instructional facilities; professional development; and perceived program strengths and areas for growth. Survey questions and responses for each target audience can be found in Appendices A-C.

Attitudes and Beliefs

Role of the Arts

All survey respondents were asked: *What is the most important purpose of a K-12 Performing Arts Program?* They were provided with three options to rank in order of importance from 1 - 3.

Teachers and parents agreed that the “most important” purpose of a K-12 performing arts program is: ***To provide all students in grades K-12 with the opportunity to engage in the learning, creation, and performance of art through sequential, curricular instruction in the performing arts content areas.***

Both teachers and parents ranked the subsequent purposes accordingly:

2: To provide students with arts learning opportunities that help support or enhance student performance or experiences in other content areas or in the development of 21st century skills such as innovation, communication, and leadership.

3: To provide students with the opportunity to perform in advanced and competitive ensembles or programs.

Students in Grades 3-12 ranked these statements as follows:

1: ***To provide students with arts learning opportunities that help support or enhance student performance or experiences in other content areas or in the development of 21st century skills such as innovation, communication, and leadership.***

2: To provide all students in grades K-12 with the opportunity to engage in the learning, creation, and performance of art through sequential, curricular instruction in the performing arts content areas.

3: To provide students with the opportunity to perform in advanced and competitive ensembles or programs.

The committee interpreted these results to indicate that our students believe performing arts programs will help prepare them for success in other content areas and the development of skills that will prepare them for 21st century college and career pathways. Additionally, while all groups ranked the importance of student opportunity to perform in “advanced and competitive ensembles or programs” as the least important of the three choices, the level of student response here indicated this was still an important consideration in their beliefs surrounding the role/purpose of the performing arts programs. The committee recognizes the importance of understanding the mindset of our students in order to examine student motivation to participate in performing arts programs.

Attitudes Towards the Performing Arts

Survey questions sought to understand the respondent's attitudes towards the Performing Arts at a broad level, as well as towards the Performing Arts Department in Bridgewater-Raritan.

Parent Attitudes

In an effort to ascertain the parent respondents personal connection to the performing arts, respondents were asked to share information on their arts educational backgrounds. 87% of respondents indicated they had a general music class at some point in their K-12 education, while 65% responded that they also participated in a performing ensemble (band, chorus, or orchestra) in school. 24% of survey respondents indicated that they continue to sing, play an instrument, or participate in music making in some way now. About half as many parent/guardians had classes in theatre or dance in their K-12 school experience, though 24% of parents participated in theater or dance in some way outside of school.

Nearly 90% of the parent/guardian respondents indicated that their personal experience participating in music or the performing arts during their K-12 education was either “highly positive and important” or was “positive.”

Student Excitement

Students in grades 3 and 4 were asked the question, “Are you excited to go to general music class every week?” and students in grades 5-12 were asked, “Are you excited by the music class offerings in your school?” Questions were worded differently to account for the program change in grade 5, when students begin to have some choice about the music classes they participate in. Responses show a dramatic shift in student excitement from the primary/intermediate grade levels to the middle/high school grade levels. The majority of students in grades K - 6 indicated excitement for music class (71% in grades 3 and 4, 64% in grades 5 and 6), while more middle and high school students expressed they were NOT excited by music class offerings (59% answered “no” in grades 7 and 8, 66% in grades 9-12).

Participation

Students in grades 5-12 that indicated they were not currently enrolled in band, orchestra, or chorus but had been previously were asked to report the grade level they chose to discontinue their participation. All three ensembles see a steady decline, which to a certain point is to be expected as students prioritize their choices in higher grade levels. Notable enrollment decreases occur between grades 5 and 6, after students have participated in the ensemble programs for one year, and again between grades 6 and 7. Another notable decrease occurs when students move from middle school to high school.

Students in grades 5 - 12 that indicated they did not participate in the elective music programs (band, orchestra, or chorus), were asked “what is keeping you from being involved?” The

majority of respondents (75%) said “no interest,” while additional significant reasons included problems fitting courses into their schedules (10%), being too busy with other interests or activities (6%), and concerns about the impact on other classes or academic areas (5%).

Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment

Use of Curriculum

The K-12 music curriculum is aligned to the 2014 NJSLs for the Visual and Performing Arts. Curriculum was reviewed and revised in some areas in the summer of 2017 as the documents were migrated to Rubicon Atlas, though all curriculum documents are in need of revision with the impending release of the new 2020 New Jersey Student Learning Standards for the Arts. When surveyed about how they access and use existing resources, only half of the teachers in the department indicated they consistently use or reference the existing curriculum documents in their unit or daily planning, yet 73% of teachers believe they and their colleagues have “a clear and common understanding of what needs to be taught by grade level/discipline,” and 68% of teachers believe the music curriculum is well sequenced vertically across grade levels. A teacher noted, “We need more time to work together to make sure that we all have the same understanding,” while another commented, “Rubicon is difficult to navigate and organized poorly for our curriculum. I am unsure of how easily accessible it is for newer teachers.”

Approximately 65% of teachers share that they are familiar with the NJSLs for the Performing Arts and are “comfortable referencing them in my planning and practice.” About half (54%) of teachers say they are familiar with the National Core Arts Standards, upon which the anticipated newly revised NJSLs for the Visual and Performing Arts are based. Both responses indicate a need for targeted professional development to ensure staff are prepared to engage with the newly revised standards and with the impact of the standards revision upon our existing curriculum.

Curricular Goals

As the 2020 NJSLs for the Arts are focused on the four artistic processes - Creating, Performing, Responding, and Connecting, teachers were asked to share how much emphasis they give to goals and learning outcomes specific to each of the four artistic processes.

Areas with the greatest emphasis are aligned to the Performing artistic process, defined by the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS) as “realizing artistic ideas and work through interpretation and presentation.” The majority of teachers indicated they give “major” emphasis to: singing/playing on instruments (80%), performing varied repertoire (70%), and reading and notating music (60%).

Over 70% of teachers say they give “major” emphasis on “learning about the expressive possibilities of music (i.e. conveying feelings, ideas, meaning), which align with the artistic process of Responding, which is “understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning” (NCCAS, 2014, p. 12).

Additionally, the majority of teachers give either “moderate” or “major” emphasis to listening, analyzing, and describing music, evaluating music and musical performances, making connections among music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts, and understanding music in relation to history and cultures. These goals align with the artistic process of Connecting, defined as “relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context” (NCCAS, 2014, p. 12).

The artistic process Creating refers to “conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work” (NCCAS, 2014, p. 11). Currently, more than half of music teachers indicate they give either no emphasis or minor emphasis to “improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments,” as well as “composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.”

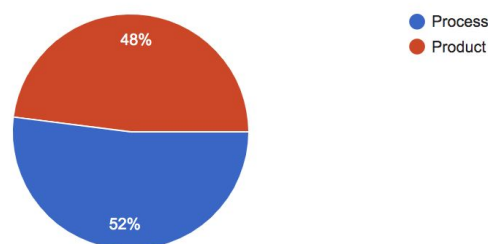
Instructional Goals

51% of students in grades 3-4 indicated they feel “challenged” by their current music course. 67% of students in grades 5-12 indicated they feel challenged currently, or felt challenged in the most recent music class they were enrolled in. 79% of parents/guardians believe their child/ren to be adequately challenged by the current program.

74% of teachers believe teaching of music in our district is skills based, while 26% say it is more content based. Interestingly, the department is split on whether our program “as a whole” is more focused on process or on product:

From what I see, our music program as a whole is more focused on:

25 responses



Discussion

In light of teacher feedback in these areas, an anticipated mindset shift will be needed to support a move towards music and performing arts instruction that ensures all artistic processes are addressed within the written and taught curriculum. This will require an increase in focus on the Creating process to meet the expectations of the standards as well as apply best practice in providing students with opportunities to develop creativity and critical thinking skills through exploration, improvisation, and creation (composition). These needs will be weighed against expectations (both perceived and actual) relating to public performances and the level of preparation geared specifically towards the polish of a final ‘product’ for public performance. Additionally, teacher comments indicate that the constraint of time contributes to their ability to place process over product, particularly in an ensemble setting. One teacher remarked, “our district wants to keep the high caliber of performance, but is not providing enough rehearsal time for teachers to see this as a sustainable achievement, while teaching our curriculum.” Another comment read, “our district seems to put a higher expectation on the performance than on the music academics. This has to do with schedules that do not provide sufficient time to reinforce the theoretical and/or historical significance of a work they are performing,” while another teacher noted, “the lack of rehearsal time contributes to my feeling on this. I would like to have the ability to focus more on the process, if we had more time for rehearsal.” This sentiment is echoed in survey responses to questions about instructional time, as noted in the next section.

As a department, we will need to move towards primarily process-based instruction (rather than product-based), as well as an instructional design that focuses more on skill development through a variety of appropriate contextual resources rather than on specific content knowledge. This may raise questions about how ensemble repertoire is programmed. For example, is repertoire selected based upon the end product/result, or is it selected based upon the unique and changing needs of students/groups of students each year? Professional development time will be necessary to work on establishing a common understanding as well as common expectations and goals for our instructional model.

Instructional Time

Students indicate they are largely satisfied with the amount of instructional time they receive (or have received) in music courses (61% in grades 3-4, 70% in grades 5-12). 26% of students in grades 3 and 4 said they wished they had more music class time every week, and 13% of students in grades 5-12 said the same.

Parents were satisfied, overall, with the amount of instructional time their children receive during the school day (78%).

Teachers feel strongly that 20 minutes per week of general music instruction at the Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten level is not adequate to achieve our instructional and curricular goals (nearly 80% of staff), while just over 50% of teachers feel similarly that 40 minutes per week in grades 1-6 is not adequate. The majority of teachers believe the general music instructional time at the middle school (cycle program) is adequate.

More than half of ensemble teachers (band, orchestra, chorus) believe that their ensemble students do NOT have adequate rehearsal/class time to achieve our instructional and curricular goals, and this sentiment is expressed in open ended comment sections throughout the survey. Generally speaking, high school teachers appear to be satisfied with the amount of instructional time as well as frequency (40 minutes, daily), while teachers at other levels indicate they do not have sufficient time with their students and ensembles. Of surveyed staff, there is strong agreement (88%) that the current 4th grade chorus program does NOT allow adequate time to achieve the curricular and instructional goals for chorus.

Teachers are split in their opinions on whether school schedules support quality programs at all levels, though nearly all teachers (88%) are satisfied with the existing high school schedule. Teacher responses to open-ended questions in this survey reflected a variety of perspectives behind these responses.

At the primary level, teachers express concerns about the inconsistency in time and instruction depending on the day of the week that students have class (for example, Monday classes have less music class time throughout the year). At the intermediate and middle school levels, comments reflect concerns over scheduling challenges and inconsistencies at various buildings, the pressure on students to make up missed work due to the ‘pull out’ programs, and a desire for more contact time with students.

Assessment

Just over 50% of staff agree that they and their colleagues have “clear and common expectations for how students are assessed.” Over 80% of teachers say they have “a clear understanding of how we measure student growth as a department, and how we use this information to inform instruction.”

Teachers report assessing students through observation, in performance tasks and projects, and through the use of rubrics. Some teachers employ written response assessments or selected-responses assessments. 80% of teachers report that their students are “always fully aware of the criteria on which they are assessed,” and nearly 90% of teachers indicate that their students engage in self assessment.

Nearly 80% of staff believe that “implementing some common assessments across grade levels/disciplines would help me and my colleagues review, track, and discuss student performance and growth.”

Small Group Lessons

Over 90% of staff believe that small group lessons “are an essential part of a strong instrumental music program,” and the same percentage of teachers believe that small group lessons should continue at the high school level for band, orchestra, and chorus.

A focus on the continuation and even expansion of the small group lesson program aligns with the curricular need to find time in already limited instructional models for students to engage in the type of exploration, improvisation, composition, and student-led-music making opportunities that should be a focus in the ensemble instructional program. Additionally, teachers note that additional staff at the high school would allow for greater flexibility and more opportunities for students to have small group instruction.

Access, Choice, Representation

Choice

Students indicated a desire for increased choice in the curricular performing arts department offerings, with specific requests for the following areas: Guitar (32%), Piano/Keyboarding (17%), Dance (10%), Theatre (5%), Music Technology (4%), Jazz/Rock Band (3%), and Music Composition (2%).

Over 80% of the exciting music faculty believes it is important that we explore ways to offer curricular dance to our students, and about the same amount of staff would like to explore ways to offer curricular theatre to students. Nearly all respondents (24 of 26) either strongly agree or agree that we explore ways to offer expanded opportunities in music as well, beyond the traditional ensemble programs, with 22 teachers indicating they agree these expanded opportunities would also meet the needs of current music students that intend to study music in college. Teacher open-ended comment responses indicate a desire for professional development as well as alignment in the department goal and mission to ensure that increasing opportunities and providing additional disciplines/content areas does not negatively impact existing programs.

Representation

Students in grades 3 and 4 were asked if the music they learn about or perform in general music class includes music that represents their culture or is performed in the language their family

speaks at home. 63% of students answered “no.” Staff were split 50/50 in response to the question, “our current program, curriculum, and offerings reflect the diversity of our students and community.”

Student Need

Over half (58%) of teachers believe our current program does not adequately address the needs of all students, yet 80% of teachers say they and their colleagues have “clear and common expectations for the ways in which we ensure the needs of all students are met within the music department.” Teacher comments indicate a need for department discussion and professional development to address how our program meets the needs of all students.

A teacher wrote:

I believe our teachers need more support with accommodating the mainstreaming of students into classrooms and advocating in a way that ensures that these students are in the most beneficial environment possible. I also believe our area should be included more in the creation and implementation of IEPs (and easier access to IEPs) when it comes to our class, especially if students are going to be mainstreamed. Often, special needs students are placed into our classes without our knowledge or input.

Access

Parents and students were asked what barriers existed that prevented them from being involved in the performing arts programs. As noted previously, the majority of students that are not involved say it is due to a lack of interest. Additional significant reasons, as reported by both students and parents, include problems fitting courses into schedules, concerns about the impact on other classes or academics, concerns about the impact on overall grade point average, too busy with other interests/activities, or too busy with homework/obligations for other classes.

An analysis of the open ended responses connected to this question in the parent survey revealed a prevailing concern around the ‘pull out’ nature of the program/missed class time, for example:

My daughter very much enjoys band, but unfortunately she is quitting because she gets very stressed about having to miss class to take her lesson. Missing some E classes puts her behind and she is afraid to miss those classes.

My children are nervous about keeping up with academics in the middle school and how the pull out program will impact that. Being in an instrumental ensemble and chorus is nearly impossible for a student hoping to succeed.

The process the middle school employs actively encourages students not to participate...

kids should not be missing classes for choir. Choir should be a separate class like in intermediate school and high school. The arts are just as important, if not more so, than academics.

Another focus as we look at accessibility is on whether our programs are inherently inaccessible to some students. 6% of parents indicated that the financial cost of participating in the program is a barrier to their child's participation. A review of enrollment data as well as our examination of the Class of 2020 cohort indicates that participation of economically disadvantaged students is lower in our programs than compared to the overall student participation rates. This also appears to be the case for students with Special Education needs and students with Limited English Proficiency.

In an open-ended comment, one teacher noted, "our department needs clear and consistent guidance on how to assist underprivileged students. Also, the district needs to find a process for providing these students with instruments."

Resources and Instructional Facilities

Technology

Approximately 50% of teachers indicated that they "frequently" use technology in the music classroom. Less than 40% of teachers say they have access to the same resources and technology as their colleagues in other content areas, and about 40% of teachers report having access to technology that fully supports their instruction. Teachers that have smartboards (K-4 level, primarily) appreciate and use the resource. Teachers that do not have smartboards or projectors find their instruction is limited by this lack of resources. Most teachers indicate they use Google Classroom and Google Apps for Education in their instruction. Teacher open-ended survey responses reveal some frustration with the inconsistency of resources (for example, music software or equipment that exists in one school/classroom and not in another), as well as with an overall sense of lacking access to technology resources. One teacher wrote, "I do not currently have the resources to implement basic technology in my classroom, though I am more than comfortable doing so."

Instructional Facilities and Resources

When asked what factors impact the quality of our program, parent/guardian respondents indicated the quality of or improvement to our performing arts facilities was an important factor towards the overall quality of our program. Additionally, parents/guardians believe that hiring and retaining credentialed/specialized arts educators is one of the most important factors in our success, along with overall district administrative support of our programs.

Staff surveys reveal the majority of teachers (nearly 70%) are not satisfied with the overall maintenance and upkeep of rehearsal and performance spaces and equipment. Specific resources identified as in need of replacement or investment include: music stands, student chairs (music chairs specifically designed to support appropriate posture and playing), and risers. Additionally, nearly 70% of teachers indicate that rehearsal and storage spaces are not adequately climate-controlled in order to protect valuable instruments and equipment. Over 65% of teachers do not believe their building is equipped with the appropriate resources to support high quality performances, such as appropriate lighting, sound, and stage equipment.

Professional Development

Almost 70% of teachers feel the district provides opportunities for “relevant and meaningful” professional development during district in-service days, however 75% of staff do not feel that, overall, the district provides adequate time to support their professional development needs. Less than half of teachers are satisfied with the amount of time they have to meet and work with level-alike colleagues, while only 27% of teachers are satisfied with the amount of time to meet and work with discipline specific colleagues across all grade levels (*e.g.* band grades 5-12). Two-thirds of teachers indicate they would like more time to meet and work together as an entire department. In the open-ended responses, staff indicate a desire for increased, regular time for meetings with their department colleagues, both horizontally (within building/grade levels) and vertically across multiple levels.

Additionally, nearly two thirds of teachers do not feel they have access to professional development that can help them better support students with special learning needs, language learning needs, or behavioral needs.

Teachers list the following types of professional development as valuable to them: workshops/guest clinicians, guest conductors/artist residencies, observing colleagues, attending conferences/workshops.

Perceived Program Strengths/Areas for Growth

Parent/Guardian respondents were asked to “rate” the music and performing arts education program in our district as either Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor. 92.6% of respondents gave a rating of either Good (33%) or Excellent (59.6%). Student respondents were asked the same question. 67% of student respondents from grades 3-12 gave the program either Good (41%) or Excellent (26%).

Parent/Guardians rated the following areas as “Most Important” in their impact on the quality of our program: support from district administration and having credentialed performing arts specialists. Rated as “Important” were the following: support from families/the community, training for classroom teachers in how to use the arts.. (finish), opportunities for students to share/perform their work, access to professional musicians/artists (finish), appropriate facility/space (finish), improvements to facility/space, increased opportunities, dance, theatre (finish these categories).

Parent/Guardian respondents shared comments about what they value about our existing program. Several themes emerged.

<p>Students Value: Performance opportunities Their music teachers Active music making experiences (e.g, playing recorder, ukulele, Orff instruments, chorus)</p>
<p>Parents/Guardians Value: Concerts and performances District and administrative support The Festival of the Arts Teacher credentials, quality, commitment Existing “high standards” for students and programs Opportunity for students to participate in both Chorus and the Instrumental Program</p>
<p>Staff Value: Qualifications/specializations/experience of their colleagues/fellow music educators Administrative support (building, district) Performances Support from the community for music/the arts Maintaining instructional time Small group lessons (Grades 5-8)</p>

When asked what aspects of our program they would like to see changed or improved, respondents shared comments that included the following themes:

<p>Students Would Like: Increased options/choice (<i>e.g.</i> guitar, dance, theatre)</p>
<p>Parents/Guardians Would Like: Increased options/diversity of choice - such as dance, theatre, additional music (<i>e.g.</i> guitar) Greater access for all students Less pull-outs/not missing other classes, and more support from teachers & administration for students that choose to participate in the program Facility improvements (HS) Repertoire selection (more relevance/more enjoyable) Improved access for kids to start music after intermediate (instrumental) Greater focus on composition/improvisation/creativity in curriculum and course offerings Increased funding to support curricular & co-curricular programs</p>
<p>Staff Would Like: Improved facilities & resources Small group lessons at High School Time for department work/vertical articulation Increased opportunities for students Increased instructional time</p>

A consistent theme overall among students, parents, and teachers, is that they value and are proud of the existing music program and hope to maintain what we have, build upon it, and continue to expand and offer more to students.

Comparison Districts and Site Visits

The Performing Arts Supervisor and members of the program evaluation committee visited the following school districts as part of the evaluation process: West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District, Hopewell Valley Regional School District, Franklin Township Regional School District, and Paramus Public Schools. The Performing Arts Supervisor also met with supervisors from the Montgomery Township School District and the Watchung-Hills Regional High School District.

While the focus was slightly different for each school and district visited (for example, Franklin Township was visited specifically to view their K-12 curricular dance program), the overall areas

of focus for our visits were: program offerings/alignment to state requirements, student access and opportunity, scheduling practices (specifically for instrumental pull-out programs), and facilities and resources that support high quality performing arts programs.

Site Visit Descriptions/Learnings

West Windsor - Plainsboro

WW-P offers a music program that bears similarities to the traditional music program offered at BRRSD. WW-P recently completed a program evaluation and will be implementing music technology, theatre, and dance, pending a renovation/addition of dance spaces through a district referendum. On our visit, we had the opportunity to observe classes and speak with music teachers at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. In addition to observing existing programs and instruction, we had the opportunity to learn about the changes and improvements planned through the completed program evaluation process.

Strengths

Curriculum

- Integration between music teachers across the general music and band curriculum. (*e.g.*, an elementary band teacher incorporates songs from the general music class into the repertoire for students, and uses solfege in band instruction).
- Orff instrument used through Middle School general music program → continued focus on playing, creating, improvising, making music rather than shifting to a more theoretical approach in upper grade levels.
- Existing schedules seemed to support the needs of the program. Potential changes at the MS level will take the needs of the music program into careful consideration.
- Lessons (pull-out program through grade 8) are fully supported by district administration. The Superintendent issues specific guidance that lessons are a curricular component of the instrumental program and that students cannot be held from lessons for other class purposes (even tests, etc.). HS students receive lessons as part of the rotating drop block schedule (staffing allows for this).
- Elementary chorus is held two times per week.
- “Opt In” honors option for high school ensembles after grade 9.
- Successful high school music technology course.
- ALL students in grades 3-5 are required to take a music ensemble (chorus, band, or orchestra). The biggest downside we noted is that currently the program does not support students who wish to participate in an instrumental ensemble and in chorus.

Professional Development

- Elementary staff certified in Kodaly and/or Orff - certifications & continuing education/professional development is financially supported by the district.
- Common planning time (and shared planning spaces/offices) to support collaboration among staff.
- Opportunities for teachers to observe their colleagues.

Facilities and Resources

- Existing facilities and instructional spaces are well equipped for the current program and for projected growth, and deficiencies will be addressed through upcoming renovations and additions included in a recent district referendum.
- Established annual budget for instrument replacement/inventory growth
- Department-based budgeting used to ensure equity/balance of resources across schools.
- Financial support for individual teacher professional development needs.

Paramus Public School District

The Paramus Public School District was recently recognized by the New Jersey Governor for the quality and breadth of its arts programs. Paramus High School received a designation as a New Jersey Model School in the Arts in 2013. The district music program shares many similarities to our program in BRRSD; however, a key difference is the increase of program offerings at the high school level. We spent the day of our visit at Paramus High School to explore these program elements.

Strengths

Curriculum

- General Music curriculum is taught with consistency across schools/teachers. Specific areas of focus by grade level (e.g. World Music, Musical Theatre and Opera, Jazz, Modern). Guitar is incorporated into 7th and 8th grade general music.
- Middle School also offers electives in dance and theatre.
- Instrumental program includes pull out, rotating lessons.
- High school program includes dance, theatre, piano, guitar, music technology - in addition to traditional ensembles. *No noticeable negative impact on existing programs as new programs were added.*
- Music Technology lab & course was very impressive. Students were engaged in the creative process (composition, arranging, remixing) using technology as the tool.

Facilities and Resources

- Music Technology Lab is an exceptional facility. It is not a large space but it is well equipped to meet the needs of a 21st century music program.
- Dance Studio - again, not a large space - but appropriate for the needs of the program. Has locker/changing space and nearby bathrooms.
- Recently updated HS Theatre.
- System in place to support students in financial need with instrument rental. The district provides instruments to students that are on free & reduced lunch. Families “rent” from the district at no cost. TRI-M Honor Society fundraises to support this program (most school instruments are refurbished donated/used instruments).

Hopewell Valley Regional School District

We visited the Middle and High School in Hopewell Valley to observe music classes as well as curricular theatre (middle and high school) and dance (high school). HVRSD has beautiful, modern performing arts facilities (PAC, new Black Box Theatre, dance studio) to support their students and programs.

Strengths

Curriculum

- High School is on a rotating drop block schedule, students have lessons as part of their ensembles at the high school level. The Middle School schedule is changing next year to a similar model. Generally, the HS teachers like the schedule.
- High School offers curricular dance and theatre programs, including technical theatre courses taught in the PAC. HS music program includes piano.
- Middle School offers curricular theater in addition to music courses. Team teaching between theatre and choir teacher adds to the integration of art disciplines.
- Honors level ensembles at the high school.
- Common planning time provided for teachers.
- Dynamic teachers in dance and theatre demonstrate the importance of hiring the ‘right’ teacher to build and sustain elective programs.

Facility and Resources

- Well designed and resourced Performing Arts Center (PAC) on the high school campus. This facility is used to host all district performances, is a source of income for the district

(rented to outside groups), and serves as an instructional space to support the high school theatre program, including curricular courses in technical theatre.

- The PAC is managed collaboratively by the Performing Arts Supervisor and a staff member who teaches technical theatre part time and manages the facility (booking, scheduling, maintenance, etc.).
- Students are involved in running the technical elements for the PAC, in addition to professional staff.
- Recently constructed Black Box Theatre at the high school to provide an additional performing and creative space for performing arts students. In addition to serving as a performing space, this facility is an instructional resource to support technical theatre students.

Franklin Township School District

Franklin Township Schools have been recognized as Model Schools in the Arts by the Department of Education and ArtsEdNJ. The Franklin Township School District offers curricular instruction in all four arts disciplines, including a K-12 curricular dance program. The dance program was the focus of our visit to this district, where we had the opportunity to observe dance classes at the elementary, middle, and high school level.

Strengths

Curriculum

- The K-12 Dance Curriculum is aligned to the NJSLs for Dance and the state model curriculum for dance/National Core Arts Standards for Dance.
- ALL students in grades K-6 take dance as part of their regular related arts experience (in addition to music and art).
- Emphasis on creation, improvisation, expression, collaboration, and communication - while developing physical skill and technique.
- Dynamic male dance educator at Franklin Middle School. Middle school dance is an elective and the culture in this district encourages and supports ALL students to participate in dance. A male dance ensemble is a highlighted performing group in the district.
- High School dance program includes a CTE Track for students interested in pursuing dance after high school in college/career. Audition based. High school dance is also offered as an elective (at progressive levels) to all students.

Facility

- Large and aesthetically pleasing Performing Arts Center located at Franklin High School.
- PAC is well situated around dance and performing arts classrooms to support all programs.
- Dance studios at every school in the district. The new studio at Claremont Elementary School is stunning.

Watchung Hills Regional High School

The Performing Arts Supervisor visited Watchung Hills Regional High School to meet with the arts supervisor and tour the facilities during the summer, while classes were not in session. A primary focus of this visit was instructional facilities and resources.

Strengths

Curriculum and Programs

- WHRHS offers music, dance, and theatre as curricular courses and electives. Music electives include guitar and music technology.

Facility and Resources

- The Music Technology lab is well equipped to support the curriculum.
- The Watchung Hills PAC is a large and aesthetically pleasing facility that supports all district performances and is frequently rented for community use.
- The PAC is managed by an experienced theatre technician.
- The PAC has an adjacent scenic shop/workshop, storage for construction and set items, and is situated near dance classrooms and other music rooms.
- The PAC provides instructional space for theater and technical theatre courses. Students are involved in running the technical elements for the PAC, in addition to professional staff.

Montgomery Township School District

A full site visit was not conducted in Montgomery, however a meeting between the department supervisors allowed us to collect the following information.

Strengths

Curriculum and Programs

- Montgomery offers curricular theatre at the middle and high school levels.

- The high school ensembles maintain a similar structure as BRHS, with three curricular bands, three curricular choirs, and two curricular orchestras. All high school ensemble programs have a co-teaching model (at BRHS this model exists only in band).
- Lower and Upper middle schools have grade level ensembles with designated lead teachers, similar to our intermediate & middle school structures.
- The Montgomery High School music program has a philosophy of non-competitive performance.

Key Takeaways from Site Visits

Student Choice & Access

All of the visited offered more electives in music at the high school and/or middle school level than we currently offer. All of the programs either currently offer curricular dance and theatre or are moving towards including these disciplines in the program.

Franklin Township and Paramus are strong examples of how a curricular dance program offered through the public school provides access to *all* of the students that live and attend school within a community. While many students in Franklin Township may have the means or access to take dance outside of school (in a private studio), there are students and families that may not have this option available to them. Since Dance is recognized as a core arts content area, it should be accessible to all students, not only to students that have the means to pursue the study outside of school. Particularly in Franklin, the level of community support and student interest in the program is a testament to the impact a K-12 curricular dance program can have on students and a school community.

Importance of the Teacher & of Teacher Support

In elective programs, it is evident that the teacher is the most essential element in determining the success and quality of a course or program. The districts we visited have experienced and qualified teachers providing instruction in their areas of expertise, and the result is that students are cognitively engaged and enjoy learning in the arts.

Teacher feedback from the site visits included attention to collaborative time for teachers to work and plan together. In districts where this appeared to be better supported, we observed integration across different music classes and programs as well as a supportive learning environment in which different arts programs work in harmony with one another, with little to no sense of competition for students, time, or resources. Additionally, teachers were impressed with districts like West Windsor-Plainsboro, where teacher professional development is encouraged and supported financially.

Facilities and Resources

Great instruction can happen nearly anywhere. The teachers in BRRSD recognize this and value the facilities and resources we currently have. However, well planned and maintained facilities can better support students and staff in meeting high expectations for learning in the arts. In most cases, our facilities support the size and instructional needs of our program. Some areas that are not fully supported, and were observed across other districts, included:

- Dance studio space to support a curricular dance program
- Adequate storage space to appropriately store our district resources in a safe and efficient manner that can preserve and protect our investments without a negative impact to instructional space and/or student safety
- Adequately climate-controlled classroom and rehearsal spaces for instrumental music programs to preserve and protect valuable instruments
- One primary performance space (such as a PAC) that serves as a performance venue for all or most district level performances, is well equipped with resources and technology to support existing and new programs, and provides opportunity for instruction in technical theatre to support 21st century college and career opportunities for students

In touring these facilities, a clear sense of community support and love for performing arts programs was prevalent as the performing spaces were aesthetically pleasing, large enough to serve the community, and reflected the high quality student performances held within the space.

Comparative District Analysis

Using data collected in the ArtsEdNJ 2017 Arts Census Project, the following is a presentation of offerings and enrollment across 14 comparable school districts to the Bridgewater-Raritan Regional School District peer group.

Arts Enrollment by Discipline - Peer Districts
(Data sourced from ArtsEdNJ 2017 Arts Census Project)

District	Dance	Music	Theatre	Visual Art	Total Arts
Bridgewater-Raritan Regional		6,052		6,821	7,349
Bernards Township	66	3,615	89	4,262	3,540
Hopewell Valley Regional	33	2,243	239	2,299	3,027
Livingston		4,039	84	4,463	3,578
Millburn Township	245	3,220		4,056	4,405

Montclair	1,294	4,212	800	4,357	4,343
Montgomery Township		2,901	91	3,074	3,805
Princeton	44	2,226	592	1,883	2,774
Randolph Township	98	2,959	12	3,362	3,848
Ridgewood	76	4,167	16	4,379	4,941
Scotch Plains-Fanwood		5,129	9	4,892	5,073
South Brunswick		4,347	28	6,786	5,868
Summit		2,968	387	3,477	3,570
Tenafly		2,654	100	2,663	2,977
West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional		7,499	35	6,514	7,589

Seven of the districts in this group offer curricular dance. Bridgewater-Raritan and Millburn are the only districts that do not offer theatre through the arts department. At the time this data was collected, West Windsor-Plainsboro did not offer theatre through the arts department, however theatre was recently added at the high school level. Additionally, West Windsor-Plainsboro plans offer dance in the near future as part of the recent program evaluation process.

Review of Assessments

Multiple means of assessment are used as a way to measure student progress against our curricular content goals. In grades K - 6 there are currently no common assessments in music. In grades 7 - 12, nearly all music courses are taught by a single teacher as electives or ensembles. Within each course, teachers use various types of assessment, including midterm and final exams at the high school level, to measure student progress. The use of rubrics to evaluate student performance is common practice at all levels, however there is not an established, common process for collecting data on student performance.

One teacher describes the daily assessment process for an ensemble rehearsal as follows:

Students play selected portions of repertoire in each rehearsal. With each repetition students are made aware of what to listen for and seek improvement towards. Criteria will vary but can include intonation, tempo, rhythmic and harmonic accuracy, dynamic attention, interpretative gestures and markings, to name a few. I, as the instructor, will monitor the success of each repetition and will often times allow for students to identify the success for themselves. I hope to allow for more student contributions towards this process, but that is the vast majority of the assessment experience in band class.

In teacher survey responses, nearly 80% of staff believe that “implementing some common assessments across grade levels/disciplines would help me and my colleagues review, track, and discuss student performance and growth.” Additionally, teachers have expressed a desire to establish common benchmarks within our ensemble curriculum to improve the vertical articulation of our curricular goals as students progress through each grade and building level of the instrumental and choral programs. Moving forward, assessments will include a balance of skills and content, and common assessments will be developed and implemented, allowing our faculty to collect and analyze student performance data over time in order to ensure student progress in the performing arts.

The National Core Arts Standards include ‘cornerstone’ assessments designed to focus classroom and district-level assessment around rich performance tasks that require students to demonstrate understanding and transfer of knowledge and skills. The assessments can be used to provide the basis for collecting benchmark student work that illustrates the nature and quality of student achievement. In describing assessment in the arts, the National Core Arts Standards Conceptual Framework argues, “this paradigm shift in measuring student learning in the arts will offer relevant and reliable evidence of what students truly understand and know how to do, for it is only when students are able to apply their learning thoughtfully and flexibly to a new situation that true understanding of the content is demonstrated (p. 16).

Comparative Data Analysis - AP Music Theory

In the Advanced Placement Music Theory course offered at the high school, Bridgewater-Raritan consistently outperforms the average scores reported for New Jersey. The complete results for the Music Theory Advanced Placement assessment can be found in Appendix D.

Supporting Research

“Anyone who has ever seen a student become excited, energized, and confident through artistic exploration has seen first-hand how arts education engages children and contributes to their overall development. The arts [...] are recognized as ‘core academic subjects’ in Federal law, as well as in state statutes and core educational documents. While each of the arts disciplines has its own unique set of knowledge, skills, and processes, the arts share common characteristics that make arts education powerful preparation for college, career, and a fulfilling life.”

Partnership for 21st Century Skills, Arts Education Map

Arts Education in New Jersey

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) replaced the idea of “core academic subjects,” as previously identified under No Child Left Behind, with the broadly defined term “well-rounded education.” ESSA’s definition of a well-rounded education specifically names art and music among subject areas that contribute to a well-rounded education, and adds that this definition extends to include “any other subject, as determined by the State [...] with the purpose of providing all students access to an enriched curriculum and educational experience” (Tuttle, 2020, p. 7).

Through the 2014 New Jersey Student Learning Standards, the state of New Jersey recognizes the Fine and Performing Arts, which include music, art, theatre, and dance, as required subject areas for all students to achieve the holistic demands of a *well-rounded* education. The standards explicitly state that districts are expected to provide opportunities for learning in each of the four arts content areas through regular, sequential instruction taught by highly qualified teachers. Arts programs are considered a “core” subject, according to New Jersey Administrative Code, and have maintained this status since 1997. Arts programs in New Jersey are expected to have the same level of academic rigor and educational validity as any other core subject such as language arts literacy or math (Morrison, 2019).

The standards for the visual and performing arts are organized into three grade-band clusters, through which the Department of Education has defined specific expectations for student outcomes.

In grades K-5, students are given broad-based exposure and opportunities to participate in each of the four arts disciplines, with the expectation that students can communicate at a basic level in each of the four arts disciplines by the end of fifth grade, using the vocabularies, materials, tools, techniques, and intellectual methods of each arts discipline in a developmentally appropriate manner.

In grades 6-8, students should gain greater depth of understanding in at least one of the arts disciplines. Students must continue to have opportunities to create and perform, as determined by student choice, with the expectation that they achieve competency in their chosen discipline. All four arts disciplines must be made available to middle-level students.

In grades 9-12, all students are expected to communicate at a basic level in the arts and demonstrate proficiency in at least one arts discipline. This specialization allows for student choice which means that all four arts disciplines must be made available to students. All high school students must successfully complete five credits in at least one visual and performing arts course in order to receive a state-endorsed diploma.

In December of 2019, The New Jersey Department of Education initiated the adoption process for the revised New Jersey Student Learning Standards for the Arts, with an anticipated adoption of June, 2020. The standards are closely aligned to the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS, 2014), and recognize *five* arts disciplines: art, music, theatre, dance, and media arts. The 2020 NJSLS for the Arts presents a framework for arts instruction that is defined by the four artistic processes of creating, performing/presenting/producing, responding, and connecting. The adoption of the new standards will be complemented by the release of a companion matrix that aligns the NJSLS for the Arts with Social Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies to assist arts educators and administrators with intentional integration of SEL practices within the arts content areas (ArtsEdNJ, 2019).

Dance and Theatre in Schools

According to New Jersey Administrative Code, school districts are required to provide regular, sequential instruction in the four arts disciplines included in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for the Visual and Performing Arts - Dance, Music, Theatre, and the Visual Arts. In order to fulfill NJ Administrative Code and ensure every child has equitable access to learning in, through, and about dance, co-curricular or extra-curricular activity in dance (such as dance teams or clubs) may not be used to fulfill the NJSLS, Code, or arts graduation requirements (NDEO, 2006; NJAEP, 2012).

Dance and Theatre are essential art forms, and the K-12 New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Dance and Theatre encompass a comprehensive set of learning expectations in which students create, perform, respond, and connect with and through each art form. BRRSD students should have the opportunity to engage fully in the performing arts disciplines through these standards and an accompanying curriculum aligned to the 2020 NJSLS for the Arts.

Staffing Requirements

Teachers of Dance should be certified in Dance Education in order to provide high quality dance instruction that aligns to the NJSLS for Dance to all students. The New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Dance are specific, require a high level of dance execution, and are not easily aligned with the physical education standards. Teachers with certification in Physical Education cannot teach Dance for arts credit in grades 6-12.

Teachers of Theatre should be certified in Theatre Education in order to provide high quality theatre instruction that aligns to the NJSLS for Theatre for all students. Existing drama courses at BRHS should be transitioned out of the English department and into the Performing Arts Department, with a certified Theatre Instructor, in order to meet state requirements.

Facility Requirements

A dance studio space is necessary to support safe, high quality dance instruction. A specialized dance floor (padded or unpadded marly surface) is required to reduce the chance of impact and/or torsion injuries or falls due to slippery surfaces. Dance floors should be properly maintained and periodically treated with disinfectants to prevent infections. In all cases, safety is the predominant concern. Additional requirements for dance include floor to ceiling mirrors along at least one wall in the studio, ballet bars (mounted or moveable), and proximity to an appropriate space for students to change into their dance class attire (locker room, changing room) (NDEO, 2006).

Theatre can be taught in a regular classroom and/or in a theatre or auditorium. The high school auditorium should not be the only available instructional space for theatre classes, as this facility is frequently used during the day for other purposes and this would interrupt instruction. Technical theatre courses can be primarily taught in the theatre so students have access to equipment and resources. Classroom space should be available if the class is displaced due to other school needs, and these interruptions should be kept to as much of a minimum as possible.

Artistic Literacy and Creative Practices

A high quality arts education provides experiences for students to do more than learn *about* music, dance, theatre, visual art, and media - but to become artistically literate in arts disciplines. The National Coalition for the Core Arts Standards (NCCAS) offers the following definition for artistic literacy:

Artistic literacy is the knowledge and understanding required to participate authentically in the arts. Fluency in the language(s) of the arts is the ability to create, perform/produce/present, respond, and connect through symbolic and metaphoric forms

that are unique to the arts. It is embodied in specific philosophical foundations and lifelong goals that enable an artistically literate person to transfer arts knowledge, skills, and capacities to other subjects, settings, and contexts. (NCCAS Conceptual Framework, 2014, p. 17)

Authentic arts practice occurs when students participate fully in the creative process. Through the ages, the arts have provided an essential means for people to express their ideas, feelings, and beliefs and to generate experiences that explore and expand knowledge and understanding (The College Board, Child Development and Arts Education, 2012). Research on the arts education consistently finds that artistically literate students develop and learn to access tools in order to interpret the world around them and make connections between themselves and others. The benefits of becoming artistically literate extend to social, emotional, and cognitive development for all students. Arts participation is linked to student achievement, cognitive development, and creative thinking skills (Jacobs, 2019; Morrison, 2019). Increasingly, arts participation is linked to positive social outcomes for students, including overall engagement in school, graduation rates, and increased community engagement (Morrison, 2019; NCCAS, 2014).

Creative Practices Across Content Areas

Creative practices - imagination, investigation, construction, and reflection - are essential in the arts as well as critical practices in the sciences (NCCAS, 2014, p. 19). These cognitive processes are fundamental to the artistic process of Creating as found in the National Core Arts Standards, and contribute to the other artistic processes across all five arts disciplines. In 2012, The College Board conducted a study of the alignment between the creative practices and the Common Core standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. The study found that investigation and reflection are connected to all ten anchor standards for Reading, and all four skills - imagination, investigation, construction, and reflection - are strongly represented in the anchor standards for Writing. Additionally, all four creative practices were found to be in alignment with each of the Standards for Mathematical Practice (The College Board, The Arts and the Common Core, 2012).

21st Century Skills and the Arts

Arts Education is long recognized for providing children with opportunities to learn and develop a range of skills beyond those specific to the arts disciplines. Many of the skills now recognized as required for success in our 21st Century global economy are integral to the artistic processes of creating, performing, responding, and connecting (NCAS, 2014).

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) Arts Skills Map (2010) presents some of the many ways our students acquire 21st Century skills through study of the arts, and illustrate how the arts

“promote work habits that cultivate curiosity, imagination, creativity, and evaluation skills” (Dean, Ebert, McGreevy-Nichols, et al., 2010, p. 2). The primary skills identified in the Arts Skills Map include critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, innovation, information literacy, media literacy, information, communication, and technology literacy, flexibility and adaptation, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, leadership and responsibility, and the interdisciplinary themes of global awareness, financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy, civic literacy, and health literacy (Dean et al., 2010).

The World Economic Forum reported the top ten skills needed for success in the 21st Century workplace by the year 2020, with critical thinking and creativity falling in second and third place (Beckford, 2018). In 2015, creativity was identified as number ten on the list of the top ten skills in the workplace. In a period of five years, the landscape of our global economy has changed and creativity has become significantly more critical for success than ever before - which means that our students will need greater opportunities to hone this skill through their educational experiences.

The Arts and the Bridgewater-Raritan School District Strategic Plan

The purpose of the Performing Arts Program Evaluation process is to ensure all aspects of our program are “current, relevant, and aligned to the most updated standards.” In order to present recommendations that align with the mission and vision of the Bridgewater-Raritan Regional School District, the program evaluation committee used our district strategic plan as a lens to focus the collection, discussion, and analysis of program data and information, as well as a guide for the presentation of program recommendations. A consistent theme throughout the course of the data collection and research process was the connection of our goals for arts education with the value statement, ***“we value creative thinkers who curiously ask questions, judiciously take risks, and relentlessly tackle challenges.”*** Research, best practice in arts education, and the anticipated 2020 NJSLs for the Arts highlight the critical role that arts education plays in the development of creativity and critical thinking for all learners. It is the firm belief of the Performing Arts Program Evaluation Committee that the arts competencies and skills that students develop through a sequential arts education will better prepare Bridgewater-Raritan students for success in school, college, careers, and throughout their lives, and that we have a responsibility to ensure all students benefit from the opportunity to engage fully in the arts through our district wide curriculum and programs.

The National Core Arts Standards and anticipated 2020 NJSLs for the Arts are built upon the philosophical foundations and lifelong goals that support arts education for all, recognizing the following overarching common values of the arts: the arts as communication, the arts as creative

personal realization, the arts as culture, history, and connectors, the arts as a means to well-being, and the arts as community engagement. Our committee recognizes the powerful role arts education can play in contributing to the overall health and wellness of our students. A philosophical underpinning of the National Core Arts Standards is that “participation in the arts as creators, performers/presenters/producers, and audience members (responders) enhances mental, physical, and emotional well-being” (NCAS, 2014). Artistically literate citizens can access tools and experiences that provide joy, inspiration, meaning, and other life-enhancing qualities through participation in the arts. As we work together in Bridgewater-Raritan to *focus always on what is best for students*, the performing arts are an integral aspect of our district mission and strategic plan.

Recommendations

It is the goal of the Performing Arts Department Program Evaluation Committee to:

Ensure equitable access for ONE and ALL to a quality, sequential arts education that is grounded in the four artistic processes (Creating, Performing, Responding, and Connecting) and that leads to the artistic literacy and fluency in all three performing arts disciplines (Music, Theatre, and Dance).

Program Recommendations are:

1. Maintain and strengthen existing high quality programs
2. Increase opportunity for all students through program expansion in music and in additional required arts disciplines
3. Ensure access and equity for all students through scheduling practices & program structures
4. Appropriately support program needs and growth through facilities, resources, and professional development

Recommendations are presented with greater detail in the following section, including a breakdown of each sub-recommendation within the overarching goal, rationale, a proposed plan for implementation, and a discussion of related costs and professional development.

RECOMMENDATION 1

<p><i>Maintain and strengthen existing high quality music programs</i></p>

Rationale

As demonstrated by student achievement, recognition of our programs and students at local, state, and national levels, and positive feedback from students and families, the existing music program in the Bridgewater-Raritan Regional School District represents a standard of excellence and a source of pride for our district and community. Our committee recommends that this standard be maintained and strengthened as we develop new curriculum that aligns to the 2020 New Jersey Student Learning Standards for the Arts, look to increase opportunities for more students to engage in active music-making throughout the K-12 program, and examine assessment practices to better monitor student learning and inform instruction. The revision of all p-12 music curricula to align to the 2020 NJSLs for the Arts will prompt a shift towards music and performing arts instruction that ensures all four artistic processes are addressed within the written and taught curriculum. The review and teacher input on our existing program indicates a need to increase our focus on the Creating process to meet the expectations of the standards as well as apply best practice in providing students with opportunities to develop creativity and critical thinking skills through exploration, improvisation, and creation/composition.

Implementation

Our first recommendation will be implemented through three primary objectives:

1.1 - Write PreK - 12 music course curricula that aligns with the 2020 New Jersey Student Learning Standards for the Arts.

- Ensure a balanced approach to the four artistic competences (creating, performing, responding, connecting).
- Ensure consistency in both written and taught curriculum across schools through the use of common language and instructional best practice.
- Incorporate connections and competencies to meet NJQSAC requirements, including the integration of SEL competencies with arts standards.
- Ensure/increase representation of all students and of our community through a thorough examination of all curricular resources with a focus on representation based upon race, culture/heritage, religious background, gender, and sexual orientation.

1.2 - Explore changes in course curriculum that provide more opportunities for students to participate in active music-making and encourage higher levels of participation in existing music programs.

- Create pathways (through both curriculum and program structures) to support students entering the instrumental music program after 5th grade.
- Include opportunities for music-making on instruments at all grade levels in the general music curriculum and increase consistency across schools (*e.g.* curricular units on ukulele, guitar, orff ensembles, digital/music technology tools).
- Strengthen curricular connections across the choral program (grades 4 through 12) to better prepare all students to successfully continue to sing (*e.g.* ensure consistent approach to vocal pedagogy, sight-singing, ensemble singing).

- Strengthen curricular connections across the instrumental program (grades 5 through 12) to ensure all students are prepared to successfully continue in the instrumental music program and to incorporate more opportunities for learning in the artistic processes of creating, responding, and connecting (e.g. improvisation, composition, reflection, analysis).
- Engage more students through intentional selection of repertoire and resources that appeal to student interest and backgrounds.
- Examine high school ensemble honors weighting/designations and explore options to increase student opportunity and access to honors level courses.

1.3 - Examine assessment practices across all grade levels and disciplines and create and implement common benchmark assessments.

- Ensure alignment of assessments to the NJSL bands (e.g. Grade 2, Grade 5, Grade 8).
- Increase the vertical articulation of curriculum goals and inform student-centered teaching practices based upon assessment data.
- Develop teacher capacity to monitor student progress against state standards and our curriculum content goals, while building consistent instructional practices and benchmarks across schools and grade levels.

Associated Costs

1. Curriculum Writing Work - \$29,700 (estimate for pK - 12 Music) - Rec 1.1
2. Common Assessment Development - \$10,800 (estimate) - Rec 1.3

Curriculum Writing Estimate Breakdown:

Grades/Content	# of Teachers	# of Days	Cost @ \$300/teacher/day
pK - 4 General Music and Chorus	3	8	\$7,200
5 - 6 General Music and Chorus	3	6	\$5,400
7 - 8 General Music	3	3	\$2,700
7 - 8 Chorus	2	3	\$1,800
5 - 6 Orchestra	2	3	\$1,800
5 - 6 Band	2	3	\$1,800
7 - 8 Orchestra	2	3	\$1,800
7 - 8 Band	2	3	\$1,800

9 - 12 Band	2	3	\$1,800
9 - 12 Orchestra	2	3	\$1,800
9 - 12 Chorus	2	3	\$1,800

Total: \$29,700

Common Assessment Estimate Breakdown:

Grades/Content	# of Teachers	# of Days	Cost @ \$300/teacher/day
K-8 General	3	3	\$2,700
5 - 12 Band	3	3	\$2,700
5 - 12 Orchestra	3	3	\$2,700
5 - 12 Chorus	3	3	\$2,700

Total: \$10,800

3. Additional costs associated with resources and professional development as needed to support changes to curriculum.

Professional Development

Professional development will be provided through district PD days, Monday Meeting time, and through additional pull-out professional development as needed to support changes to curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Increase opportunity for all students through program expansion in music and in additional required arts disciplines

Rationale

A review of survey and program enrollment data indicates students desire additional, varied opportunities in addition to our existing music courses and programs. The 2020 NJSLS for the

Arts include strands that specifically support course offerings in harmonizing instruments (such as ukulele and guitar) and in music technology, among other non-traditional ensembles and course offerings. Additionally, our understanding of student enthusiasm and engagement in the music program indicates students are excited by the opportunities to participate in active music-making at all grade levels. The music cycle and music elective programs at the middle and high school levels allow room for growth within our music course offerings.

As required by the State Department of Education and NJSLS for the Arts, students should receive sequential, curricular instruction in dance and theatre in grades K-12, and this instruction should be delivered by certified dance education and theatre education professionals. Student, parent, and staff survey responses demonstrate an interest in curricular offerings in dance and theatre.

Implementation

Recommendation 2 will be implemented through the following strategies:

2.1 - Expand course offerings in music to include Guitar and Music Technology electives at the high school level and increase student opportunities for new music experiences in the 5-8 general music program.

- Offer high school electives in Guitar and Music Technology as part of the BRHS Program of Studies that will be open to all students.
- Implement introductory Guitar program in 7th Grade General Music (cycle).
- Build connections between existing music technology units in 8th Grade General Music to high school elective options.
- Explore and pilot new technology/digital resources to enhance music instruction across all disciplines and grade levels.

2.2 - Implement curricular Dance and Theatre programs.

- Write a sequential, K-12 curriculum for dance that is aligned to NJSLS for Dance in order to meet state requirements to offer K-12 dance.
- Write a sequential, K-12 curriculum for theatre that is aligned to NJSLS for Dance in order to meet state requirements to offer K-12 theatre.
- Implement curricular dance and theatre programs.
- Implement high school level electives in dance (intro/beginner, novice, advanced levels).
- Implement high school level electives in theatre performance and technical theatre.

Associated Costs

1. Curriculum writing work - \$1,800 (estimate for HS Guitar, Music Technology) - Rec 2.1
2. Curriculum writing work - \$5,400 (estimate for K-12 Dance, K-2 Theatre) - Rec 2.2

3. Staffing needs (2-3 FTE for Fall 2021, future potential staffing requirements)
4. Facility requirements (see attached facility list, Appendix F)
5. Equipment/Resources
 - 60 Guitars (Classroom sets for MS & HS) - approx. \$10,000 (one time purchase, some recurring/consumable supplies)
 - Music Technology Lab - approx. \$80,000 (cost dependent upon facility, existing equipment/technology, and class size/number of workstations).
6. Additional costs associated with resources and professional development as needed to support changes to curriculum.

Professional Development

Professional development provided as needed to support new and existing staff.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Ensure access and equity for all students through scheduling practices & program structures

Rationale

Our current programs meet the needs of many students in the BRRSD school community; however, there are some students that may not be well served by existing performing arts programs. A review of program data, as well as survey responses from students, parents, and staff, indicate a need to examine a variety of practices that may allow us to increase equity and access for ALL students.

Implementation

Recommendation 3 will be implemented through the following:

3.1 - Maximize instructional time and student access through schedules at all levels (pK - 12).

- Maintain or increase current instructional time at all levels.
- Explore scheduling practices that reduce the inequity in instructional time found at the pK-6 level in general music (e.g. six day cycle vs weekday schedule).
- Maintain small group instruction based on instrumental to all instrumental students in grades 5-8 as per best practice.
- Increase student access to small group/sectional instruction grades 9-12.
- Explore scheduling practices that can reduce pressure on students to choose between participation in arts programs and other academic pursuits.
- Explore whether a change in scheduling practices can reduce barriers to student

participation (e.g. ensembles that rehearse outside of the school day and therefore require students to have transportation).

3.2 - Increase opportunities for all students to participate in instrumental music programs by relieving financial barriers.

- Review existing process/procedure for identifying students and families in financial need and supporting student participation in the instrumental music program. Establish common practices at all schools and grade levels to support families with access to quality instruments (subsidized rentals, provision of school instruments) and instructional materials (methods books, supplies). Effectively communicate with all students and families to ensure aid is accessible.

3.3 - Evaluate program structure and curriculum to find ways of providing quality music and performing arts experiences for students with unique learning needs.

- Meet with supervisors and staff within the special services, intervention services, and ELL departments to examine current practices for providing quality music/performing arts experiences for students with unique learning needs and explore strategies to increase access and student participation.

Associated Costs

Dependent on what is implemented - potentially new coursework (curriculum writing) and/or staffing implications. Costs associated with increasing district instrument inventory/supporting instrumental students with financial need.

Professional Development

Provide appropriate professional development to support teachers that have limited experience or require additional support in designing instruction to meet the needs of all students.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Appropriately support program needs and growth through resources, facilities, and professional development of staff

Rationale

Performing arts programs have specific facilities and resource needs to support student learning in the arts. While great instruction can happen nearly anywhere, facilities have an impact on the

quality of instructional programs and the student experience. In order to grow our programs to provide greater opportunity and access to all students in the arts, existing facilities should be examined and options explored to improve and add upon our instructional spaces and performance venues. Surveys of staff, students, and parents, as well as visits to peer districts and consultation against the National Association for Music Education Opportunity to Learn standards indicate a need to ensure our district facilities reflect the quality of our programs and community pride and support for the performing arts.

Additionally, a review of the existing program and allocation of resources, as well as feedback from teachers, indicates a need to examine whether current building-based budgetary procedures result in the most efficient use of district funds and ensure equity across schools and programs. Additionally, the district instrument inventory is aging and requires a long-range plan for annual upkeep and replacement. This recommendation also includes reviewing allocations, staffing, and support for co-curricular programs as these are directly tied to the curricular performing arts program.

Finally, the majority of teachers in the performing arts department do not have opportunities for regular common planning time with their colleagues. The existing “Monday Meeting” schedule and varying school hours do not allow for p-12 department collaboration to ensure the vertical articulation of curriculum. Existing district professional development days are either focused on other topics or formatted in ways that do not support full department time. The regular addition of quarterly half-day department meeting/PD time would help achieve these goals.

Implementation

Implementation of Recommendation 4 will be achieved through the following:

4.1 - Update and expand facilities to support student learning in the arts.

- Ensure district performance venues reflect the quality of our programs and the community pride and support for performing arts students.
- Increase instructional facilities/space to support program growth.
- Improve existing instructional and storage facilities to support high-quality instruction, preserve and protect district resources, and ensure student safety.

Specific areas of need include:

- District Performance Venues (*e.g.* BRHS Auditorium, BRMS Auditorium)
- Instructional facilities to support program recommendations for new content areas (*e.g.* Dance Studio, Theatre classroom, Music Technology Lab).
- Improvements to existing facilities to preserve/protect resources and ensure student/staff safety (*e.g.* HVAC in instrumental music areas).
- Increased storage capacity to preserve/protect resources and ensure student/staff safety (*e.g.* BRHS 100 Building Storage Needs).
- Additional instructional space to support program size/instructional need (*e.g.* Band

Room at Hillside).

A more detailed breakdown of facility recommendations can be found in Appendix E.

4.2 - Review budgeting and allocation of resources for PreK - 12 Performing Arts and consider changes to ensure efficient use of funds and equity across schools and programs.

- Ensure appropriate budgetary planning and allocations to support the long-term needs of the program, as well as the long-term maintenance and replacement of resources and equipment.
- Explore whether the district performing arts budget would be better managed at a department level than at a building - by - building level.
- Examine allocations for co-curricular programs and staffing to ensure appropriate alignment with the curricular goals of the p-12 department.

4.3 - Support the professional growth of performing arts staff.

- Increase opportunities for performing arts staff to engage in meaningful and collaborative professional development to support the vertical articulation of curricular goals, analyze student performance data to inform instruction, and promote the continued professional growth of our educators.
- Provide appropriate professional development time and resources to support changes to curriculum and programs following program evaluation process.
- Support bi-annual or quarterly (two - four times per year) half-day pull out professional development time for the p-12 department staff.
- Continue to support (through provision of subs as needed) the revised Sampling process that allows for collaboration among 5-12 instrumental staff as well as additional new or changing initiatives that result from the program evaluation process and curriculum revisions.

Associated Costs

1. Facility costs depend upon specific facility projects addressed and resources purchased. Some cost estimates provided within [Appendix E](#).
2. Proposed increase to district instrument inventory (can either be applied in one large lease-to-buy purchase or across multiple years through a standing instrument inventory replace/addition account line).
3. Professional Development costs to include:
 - a. Outside consultants/presenters/workshops (approx \$4,000 per year)
 - b. Provision of substitutes to cover pull-out professional development time (sub coverage for 17 staff members, 2-4 times per year).

Professional Development

Professional development will be provided through district PD days, Monday Meeting time, and through additional pull-out professional development as needed to support changes to

curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Additional Professional Development/training should be provided for staff members that use district performance facilities and/or equipment on a regular basis (e.g. sound and lighting equipment in the MS & HS theatres).

Implementation Timeline

	<u>2019 - 2020</u>	<u>2020 - 2021</u>	<u>2021 - 2022</u>	<u>2022 - 2023</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>
1.1, 1.2	Write pK - 12 curriculum for Music aligned to 2020 NJSLs	Support implementation of new curriculum & standards through resources & professional development	Support implementation of new curriculum & standards through resources & professional development	Support implementation of new curriculum & standards through resources & professional development	Support implementation of new curriculum & standards through resources & professional development
1.2	Design pilot for Small Group Lessons at High School Level for 2020-2021. Design pilot for honors "opt-in" for three BRHS ensembles for 2020-2021 school year.	Implement small group lesson pilots at BRHS. Implement honors "opt-in" pilot at BRHS.	Revise/support small group lessons at high school level. Revise/monitor honors "opt-in".		
1.3		Develop common assessments for General, Instrumental, & Choral music at benchmark points (2, 5, 8)	Pilot new assessments	Monitor and provide support/ professional development as needed	Monitor and provide support/ professional development as needed
2.1	Write curriculum for new elective courses at BRHS	Prepare new elective courses for board approval & adoption into the BRHS Program of Studies	Implement new elective courses at high school level	Monitor and provide support/ professional development as needed	Monitor and provide support/ professional development as needed
2.2	Write K-12 curriculum for Dance and Theatre	Prepare for implementation of dance and theatre (staffing, facility)	Implement curricular dance and theatre programs	Monitor and provide support/ professional development as needed, evaluate for potential program growth	Monitor and provide support/ professional development as needed, evaluate for potential program growth
3.1, 3.2, 3.3		Pilot/implement recommendations	Monitor and provide support/	Monitor and provide support/	Monitor and provide support/

			professional development as needed	professional development as needed	professional development as needed
4.1	Evaluate facility needs	Facility work as determined	Facility work as determined	Facility work as determined	Facility work as determined
4.2	Evaluate budget & resources	Implement changes as determined	Monitor and provide support/ professional development as needed	Monitor and provide support/ professional development as needed	Monitor and provide support/ professional development as needed
4.3		Implement recommendations	Monitor/revise PD approach as needed	Monitor/revise PD approach as needed	Monitor/revise PD approach as needed

Conclusion

The Performing Arts Program Evaluation Committee hopes this report and recommendations will help establish a future for the Performing Arts in the Bridgewater-Raritan Regional School District that ensures:

- Continued growth of the existing quality music programs our community proudly supports.
- Increased access, equity, & opportunity for One and All.
- Maintained focus on what is best for our students through providing a holistic & well-rounded education that supports artistic, academic, and personal development through arts education.

The arts, it has been said, cannot change the world, but they may change human beings who might change the world.

Maxine Greene
Philosopher, Activist, Teacher

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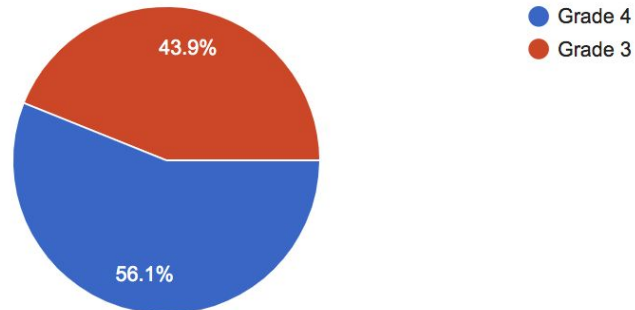
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APPENDIX A - STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

Survey for Students Grades 3 - 4

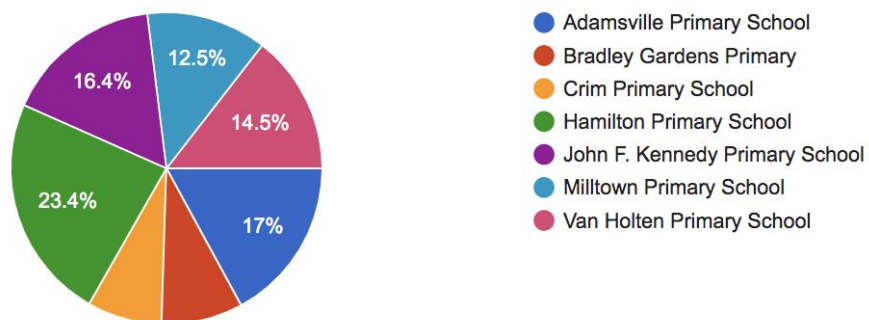
Please select your current grade level.

1,088 responses



Please select the school you currently attend.

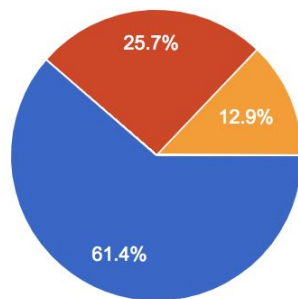
1,086 responses



Program Options

How do you feel about the amount of time you have for music class each week in school?

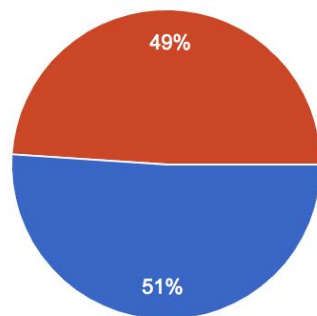
1,085 responses



- I am happy with the amount of time we have for music class every week.
- I wish we had MORE music class time every week.
- I wish we had less music class time every week.

Do you feel challenged by the current music courses at your school?

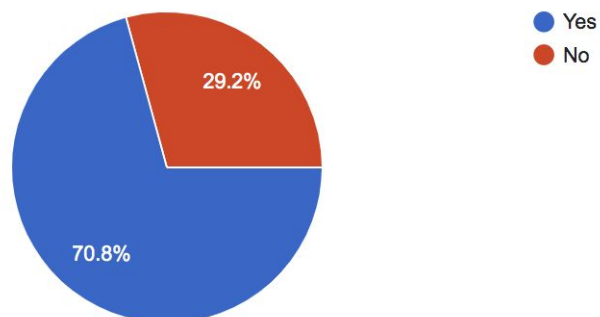
1,062 responses



- Yes, I am challenged
- No, I would like to be more challenged

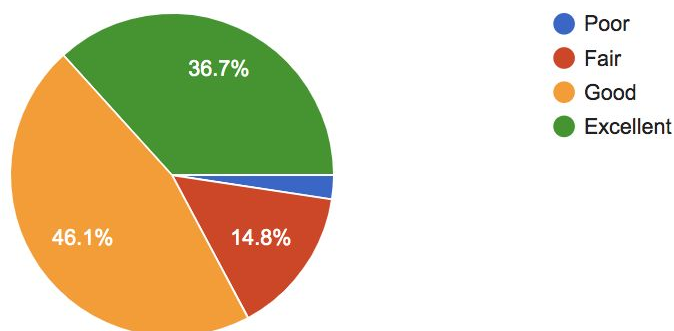
Are you excited to go to general music class every week?

1,074 responses



How would you rate your school music program?

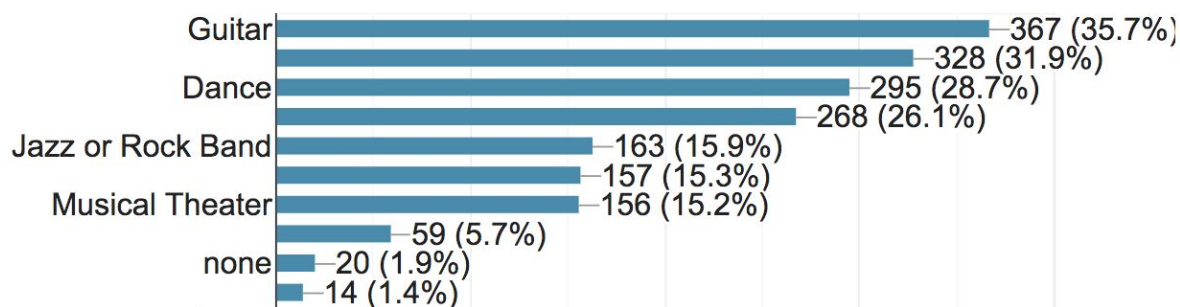
1,081 responses



What additional performing arts courses would you be interested in taking now or in the future?

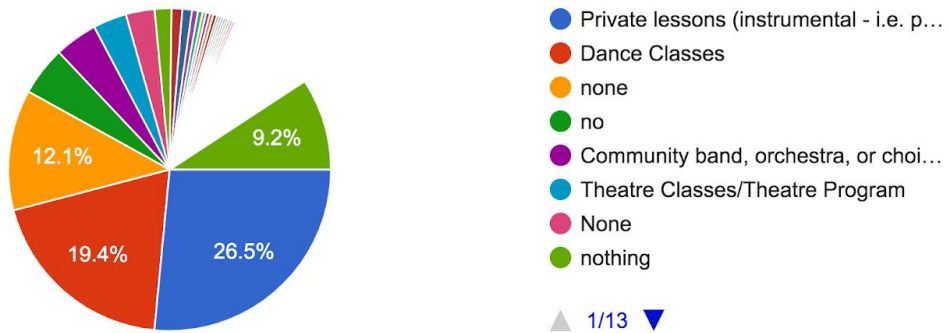


1,028 responses



Are you involved in any of the following music/performing arts activities OUTSIDE of school programs?

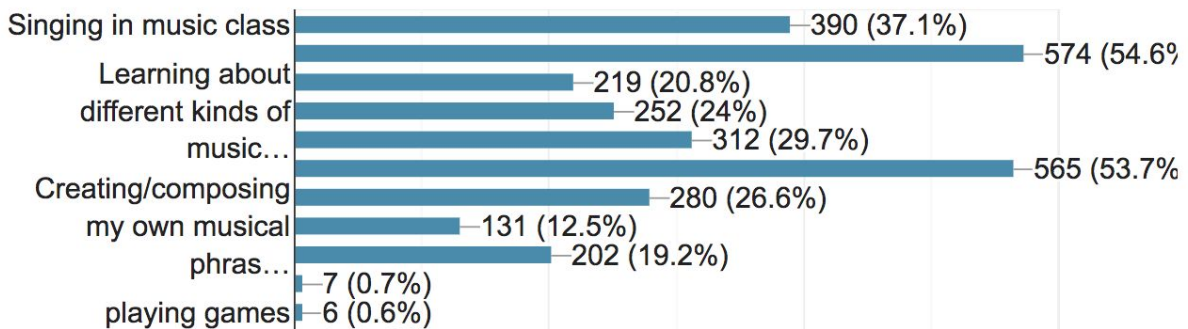
834 responses



What types of things do you enjoy about your current music class?

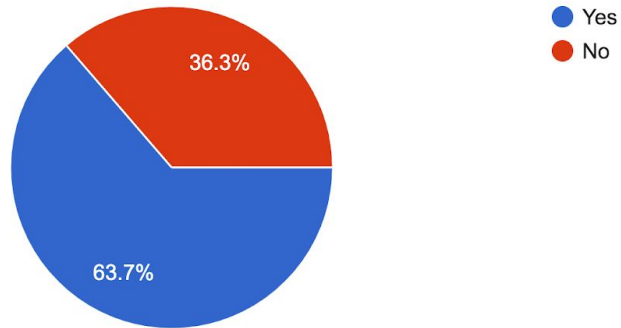


1,052 responses



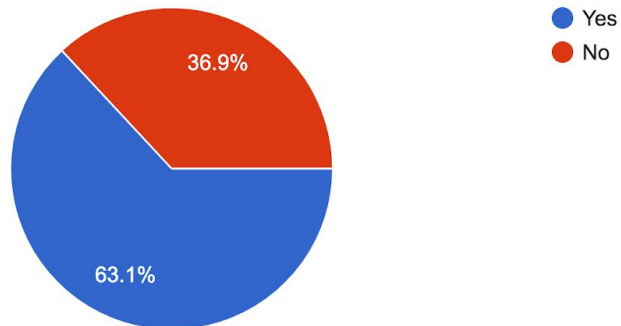
Do you practice the recorder at home?

1,065 responses



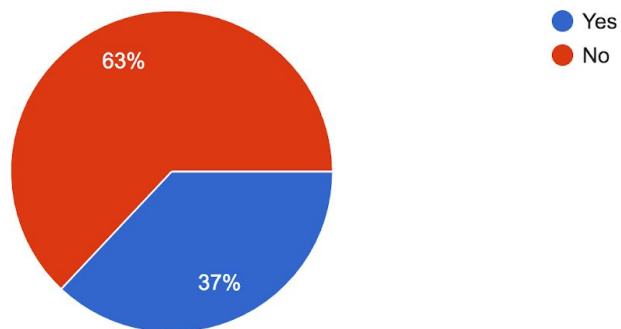
Do you sing or play music at home for fun with members of your family or with friends?

1,067 responses



The music we learn about or perform in music class includes music from my culture or in the language my family speaks at home.

1,046 responses



Which of the following classes do you think we should add/offer in our Performing Arts department?

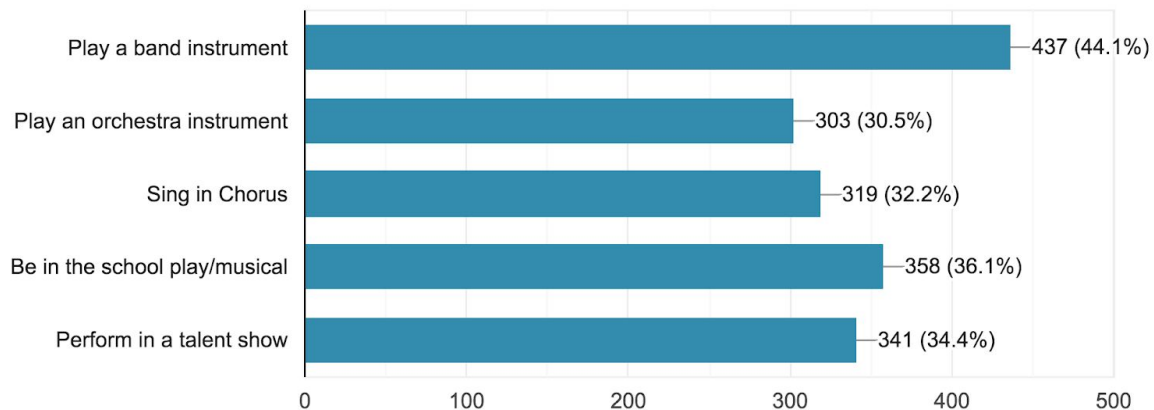


1,034 responses

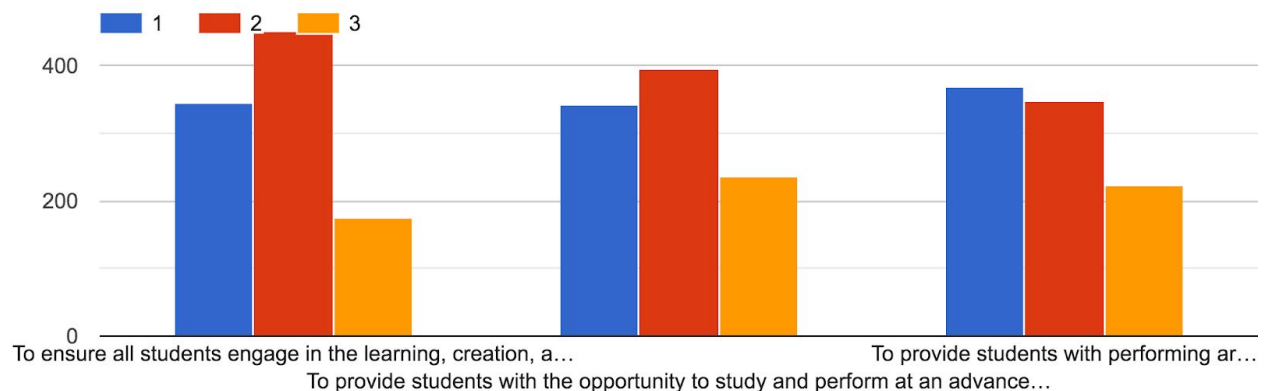


Which of the following do you want to do in future grades/schools?

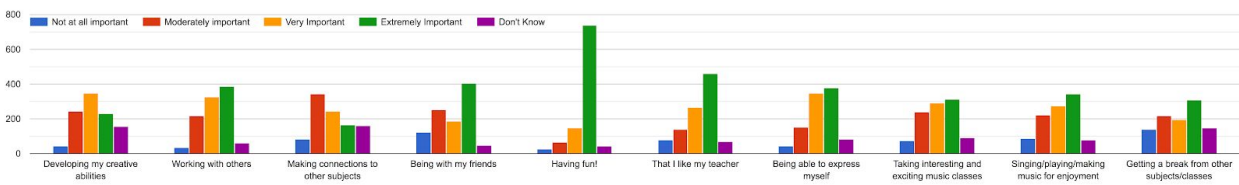
992 responses



Considering the purpose of a K-12 Performing Arts Program, rank each statement from least to most important - with 1 being the MOST important.



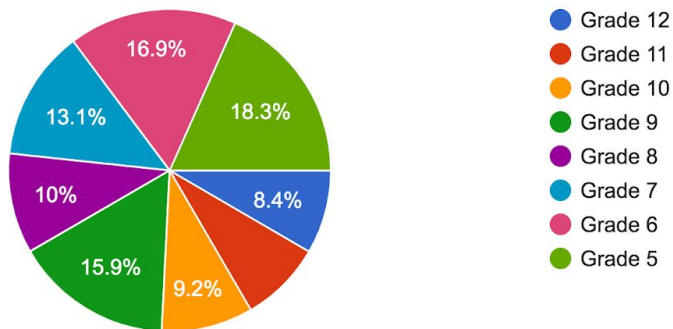
Rate the importance of each of the following regarding your own involvement in music/the performing arts in your school



Survey for Students Grades 5 - 12

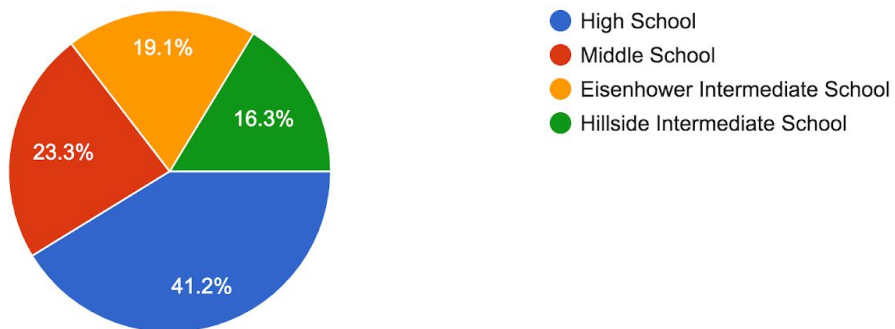
Please select your current grade level.

3,266 responses



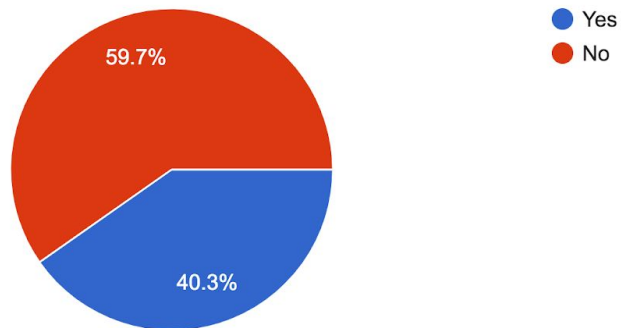
Please select the school you currently attend.

3,244 responses



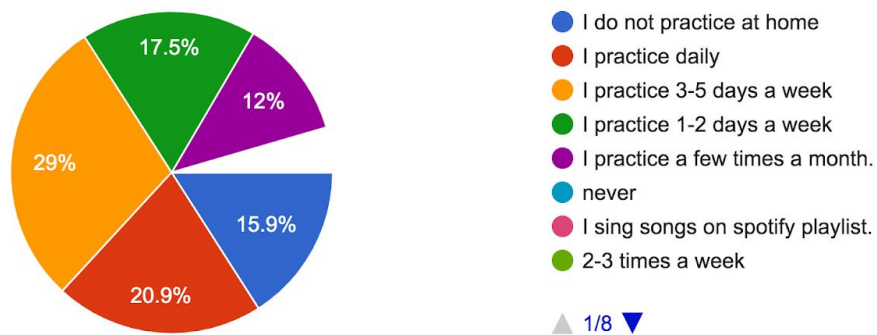
For the current school year, have you participated in either BAND, ORCHESTRA, or CHORUS at your school?

3,276 responses



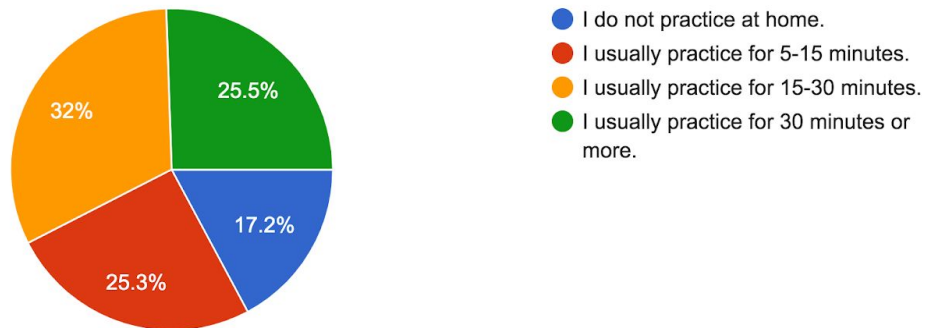
How often do you practice music at home?

1,305 responses



When you practice at home, for how long do you typically practice in one session?

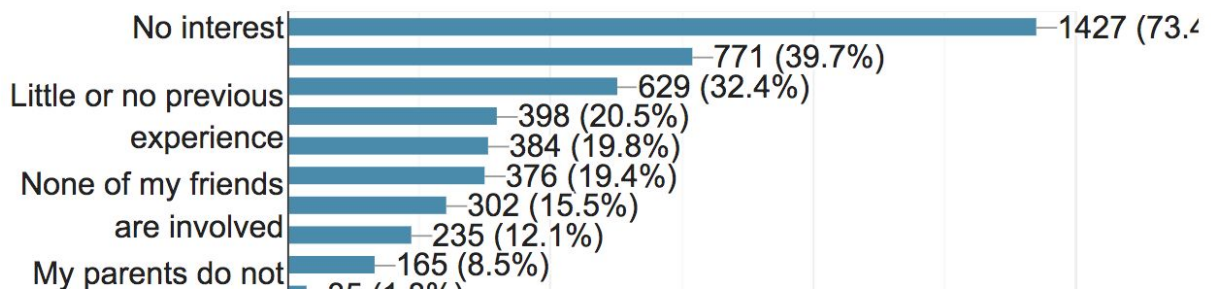
1,316 responses



What is keeping you from being involved in the music/performing arts program at the school (check all that apply).

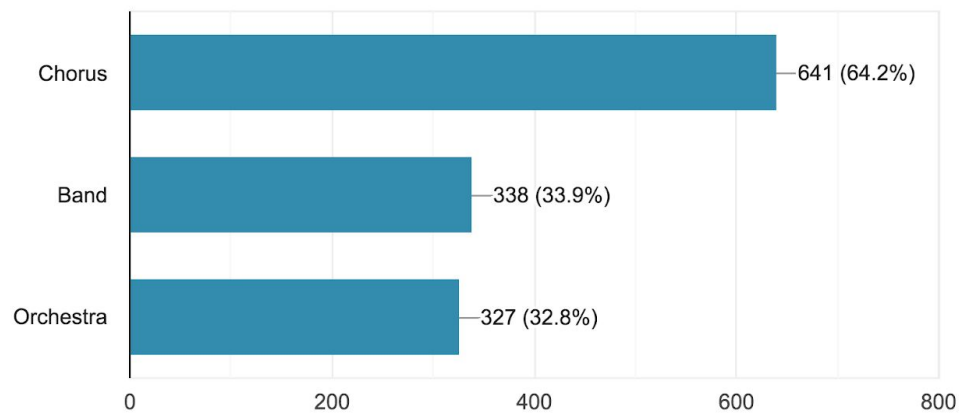


1,943 responses



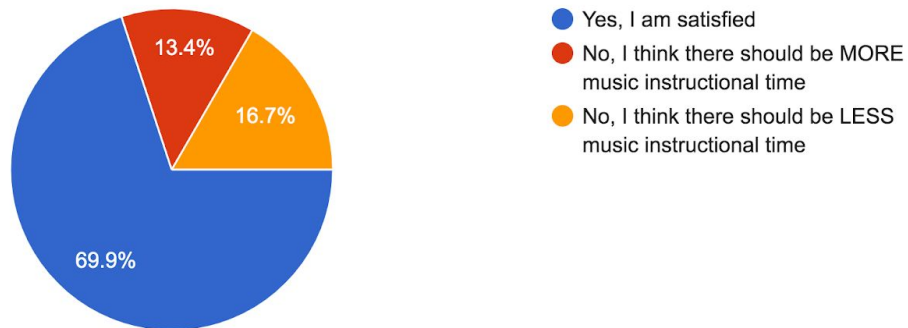
Which program(s) did you participate in in the past (select all that apply)

998 responses

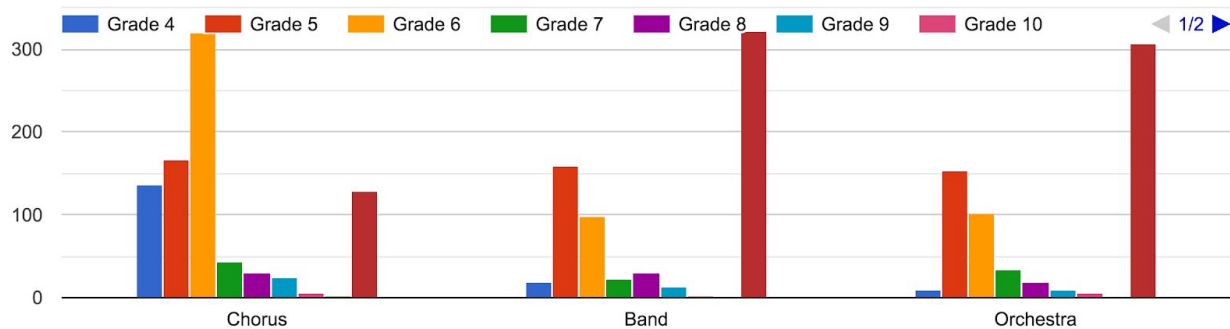


Are you satisfied with the amount of music instruction time you receive/have received in school, either... and/or in Band, Orchestra, or Chorus?

3,181 responses

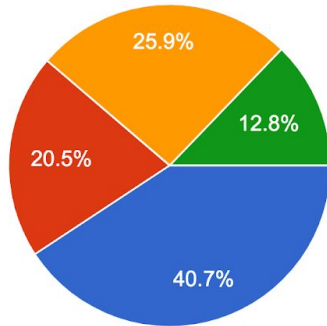


What was the LAST grade level you participated in each ensemble?



Do you feel challenged by the current music courses at your school?

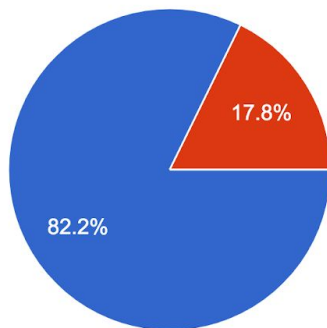
3,162 responses



- Yes, I am adequately challenged
- No, I would like more challenging content
- I am not in a music class this year, but I felt adequately challenged by music class in the past.
- I am not in a music class this year, but I would have liked more challenging content in music class in the past.

Do you feel you have enough program choices to participate in music and/or the performing arts at this school?

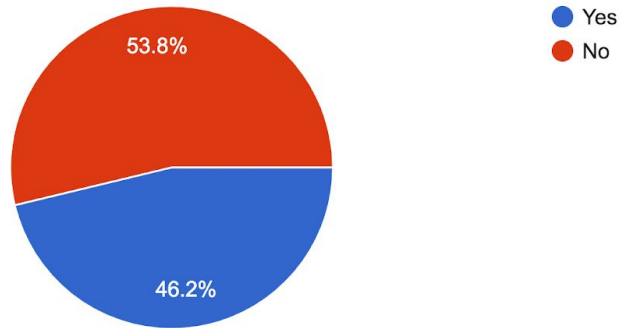
3,198 responses



- Yes
- No

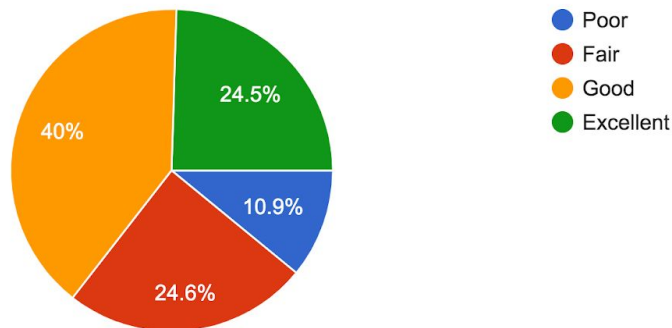
Are you excited by the music class offerings in your school?

3,190 responses



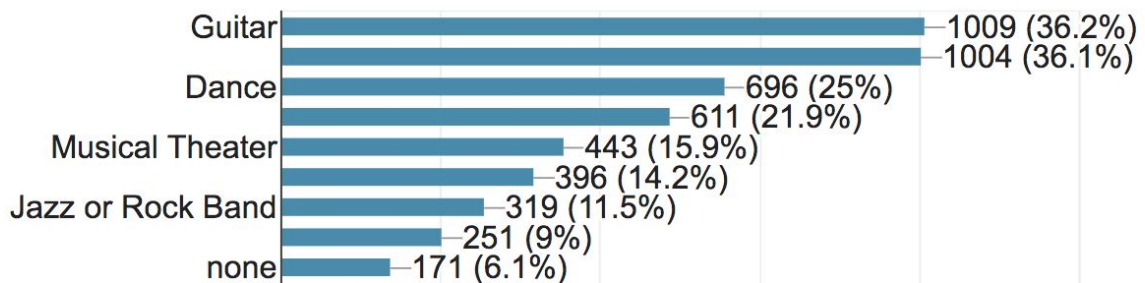
Please rate your experience with the music program at your school

3,156 responses



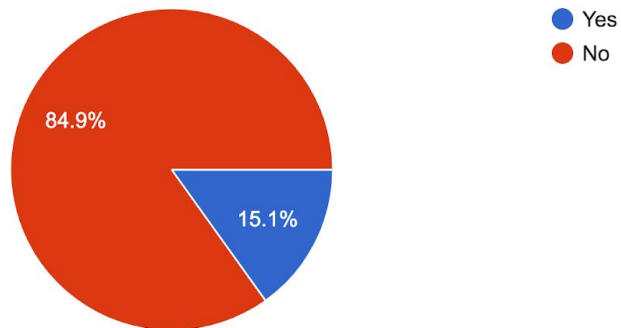
What additional performing arts courses would you be interested in taking now or in the future?

2,784 responses



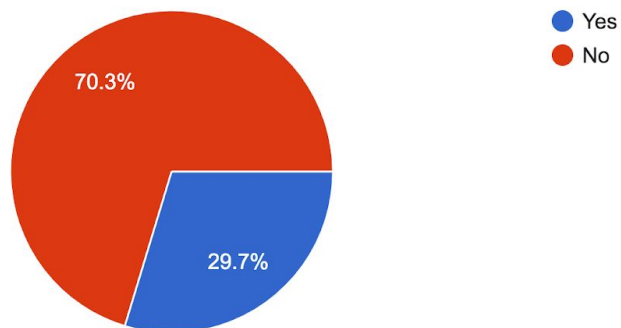
Are you involved in any co-curricular music or performing arts programs at school? (Jazz Band, Chamber Group, Marching Band, the school Musical/Play, etc.)

3,178 responses



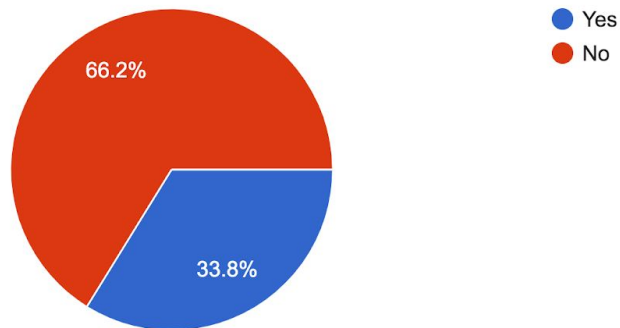
Are you involved in music/performing arts activities OUTSIDE of school programs (community ensembles, private classes, community theatre, etc.)

3,167 responses

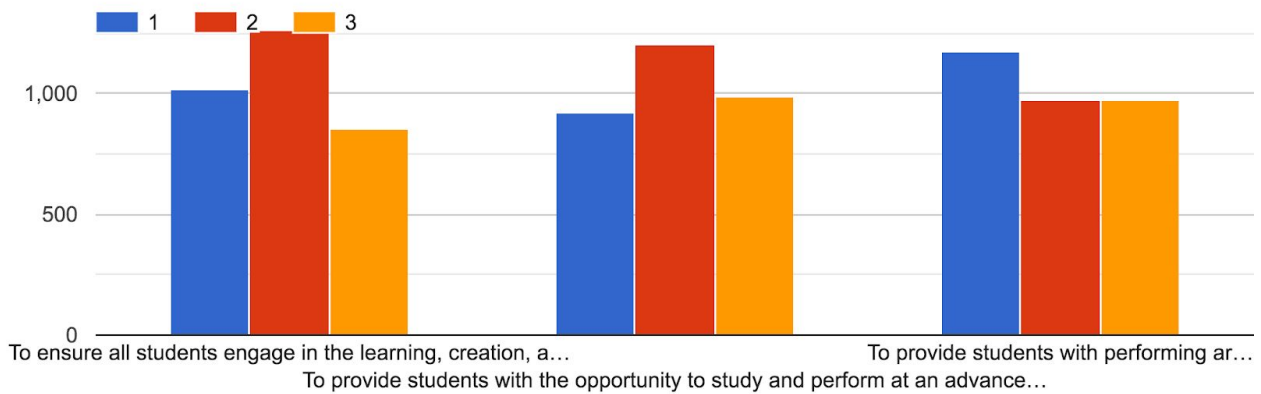


Would you like to have more co-curricular music/performing arts activities or clubs offered at your school?

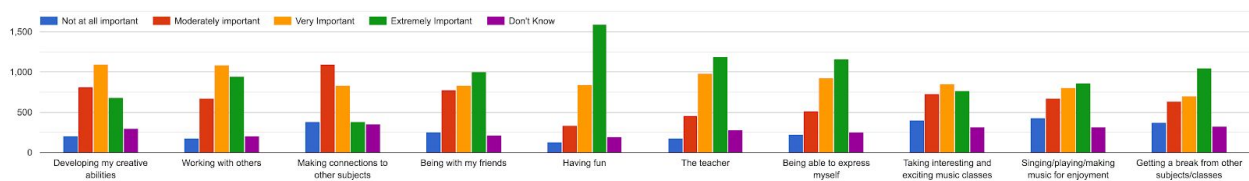
3,150 responses



What is the most important purpose of a K-12 Performing Arts Program? Rank each statement from least to most important - with 1 being the MOST important.



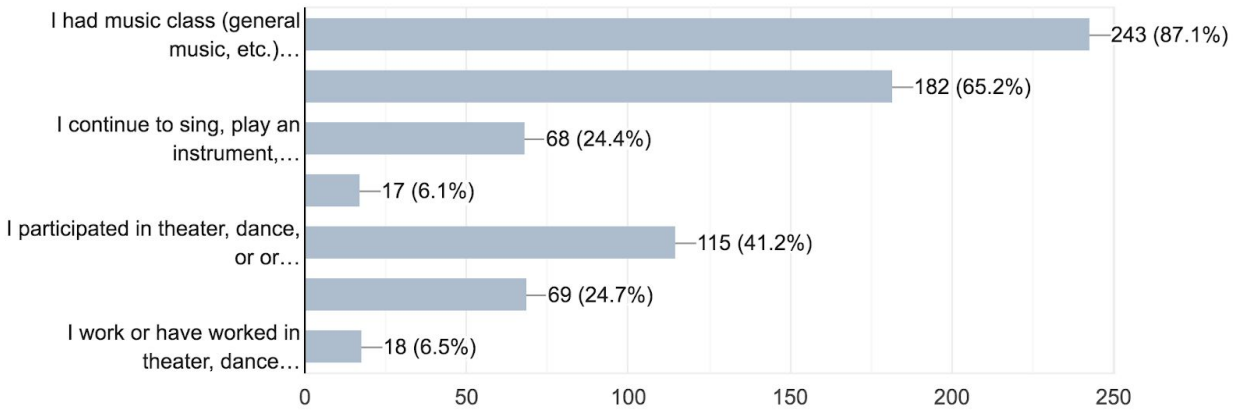
Rate the importance of each of the following regarding your own involvement in music/the performing arts in your school



APPENDIX B - PARENT/GUARDIAN SURVEY RESULTS

Which statement(s), if any, describes YOUR participation/involvement in music or the performing arts? Please check any/all that apply.

279 responses



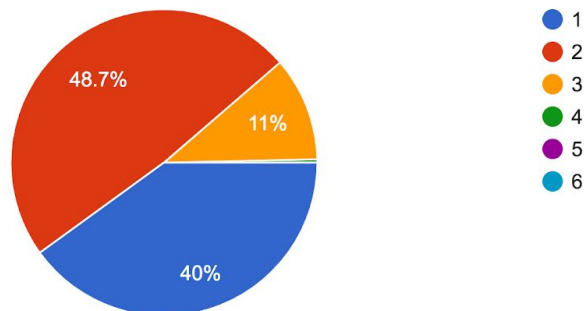
If you participated in music or the performing arts in some way in your K-12 education, how would you describe the importance of that experience?

269 responses

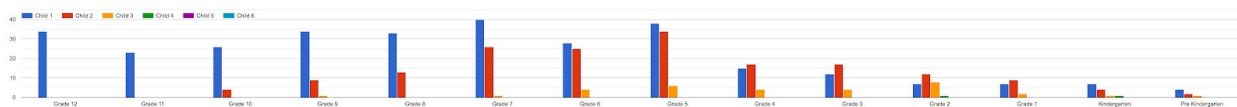


How many students, for which you are a parent or guardian, do you have currently attending Bridgewater-Raritan Regional Schools?

300 responses



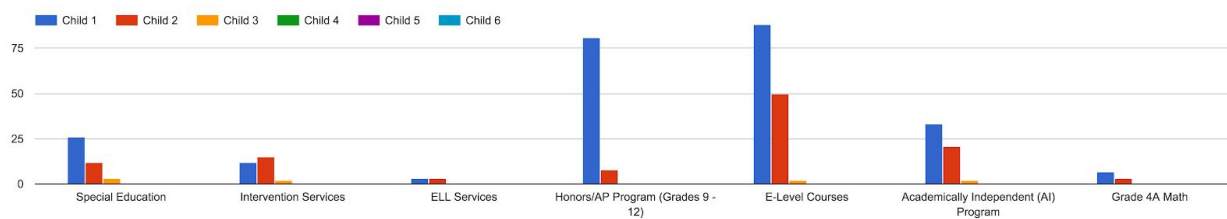
Please indicate the current grade level of each child attending BRPSD.



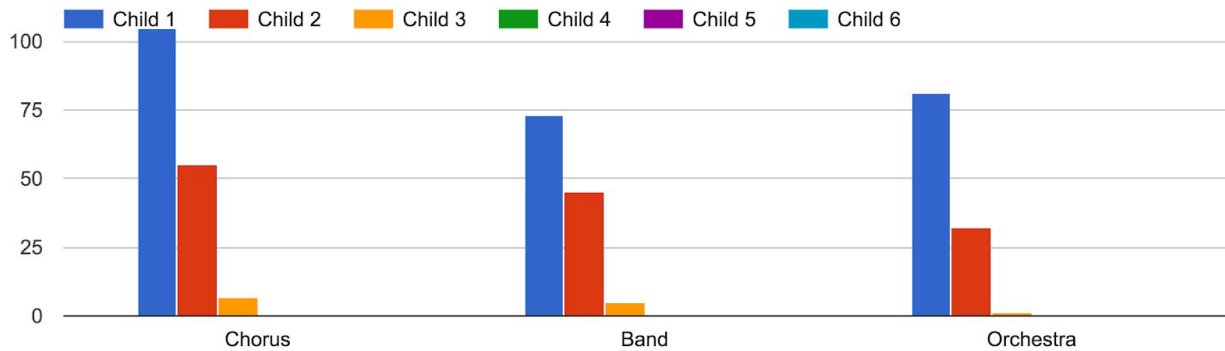
Please indicate the school that each child attends.



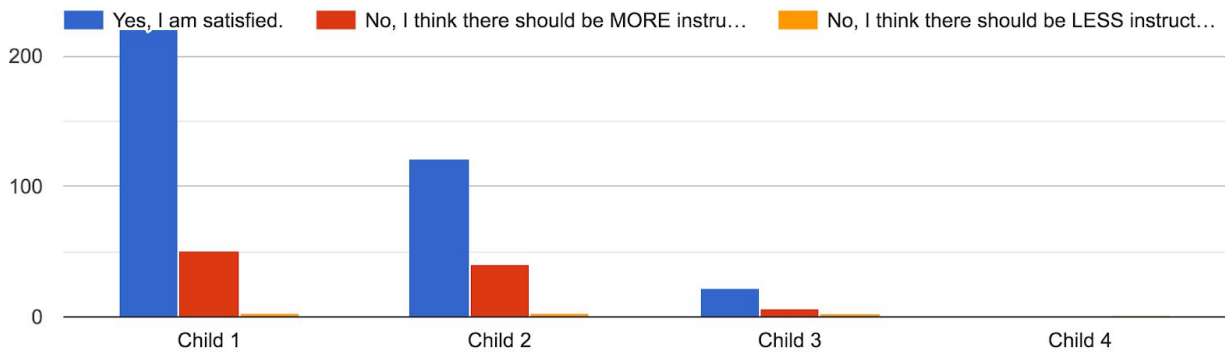
Please indicate all special programs and services received by each child.



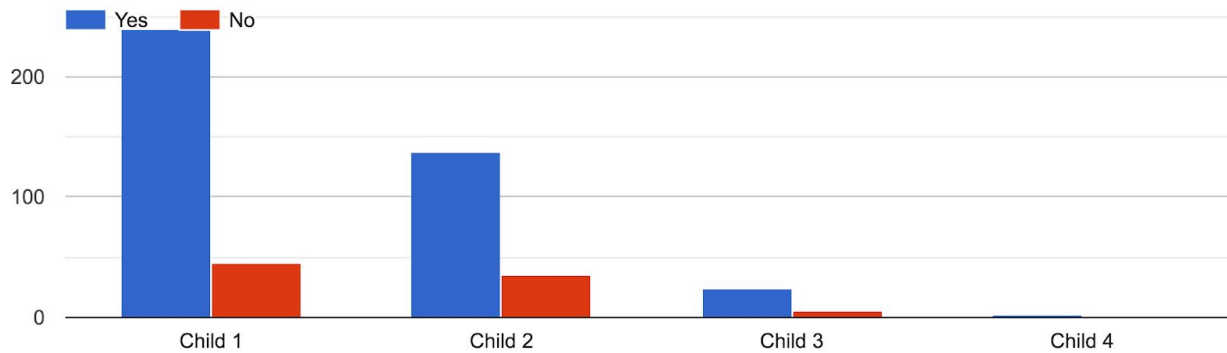
Please indicate which, if any, ELECTIVE music classes/programs each child participates in (in addition to general music offered to all students in grades K-8).



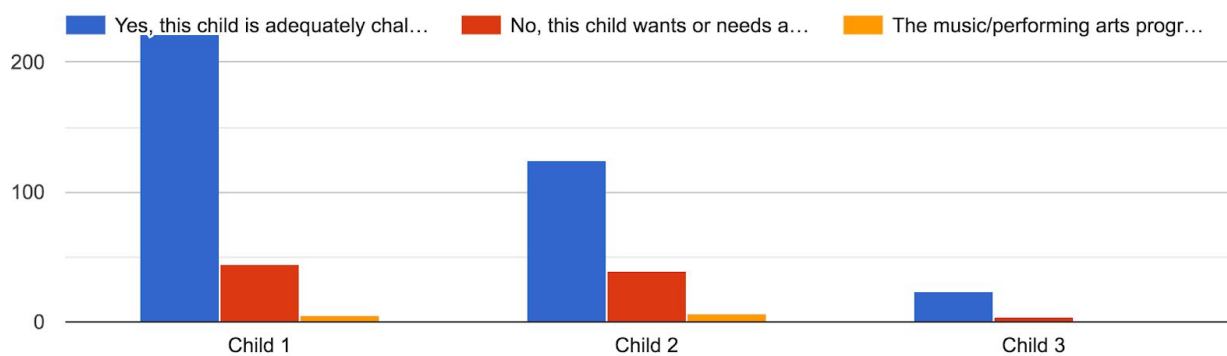
I am satisfied with the frequency of music/performing arts instruction this child receives during the school day.



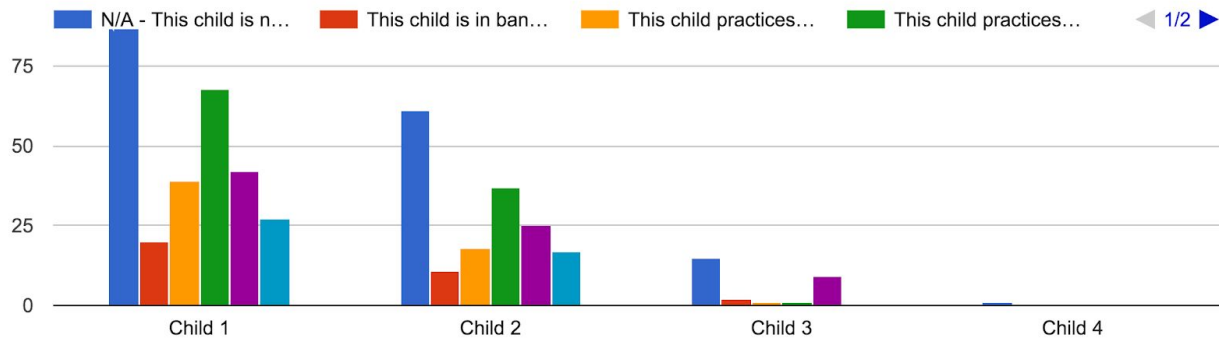
I feel this child has enough choices/options in music and performing arts classes in their school.



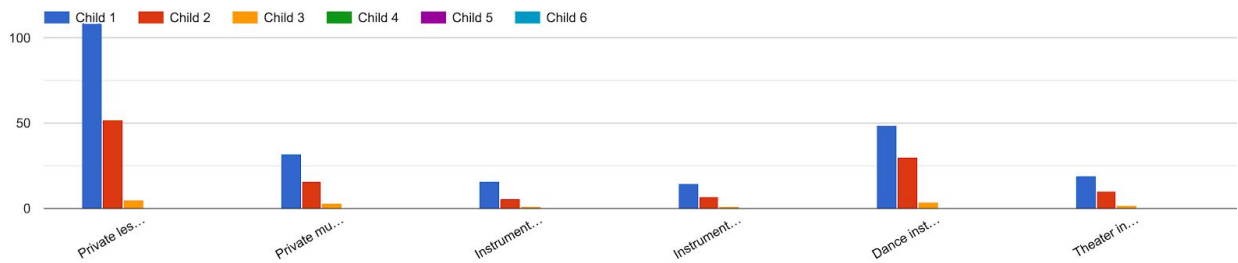
This child is adequately challenged by the current music/performing arts program at their current school.



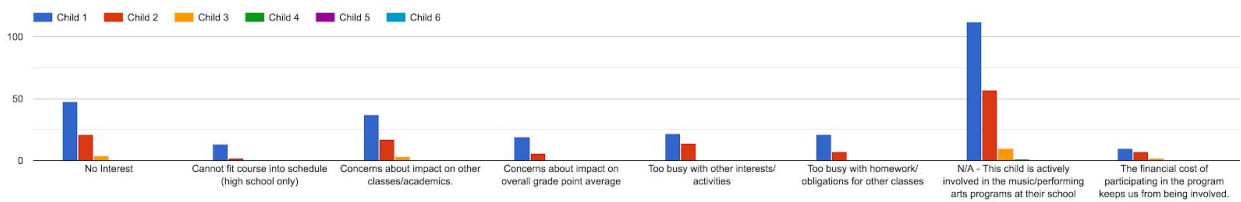
How often does your child practice music for a school music class at home?



My child is involved in the following music or performing arts experiences OUTSIDE of school/school activities (select any/all that apply).

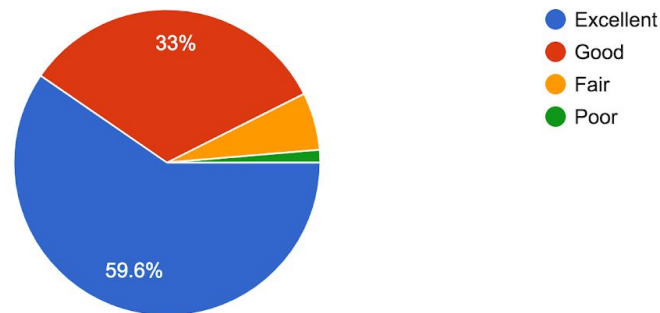


What, if anything, is keeping your student from being involved in the arts program at this school? (Check any/all that apply).



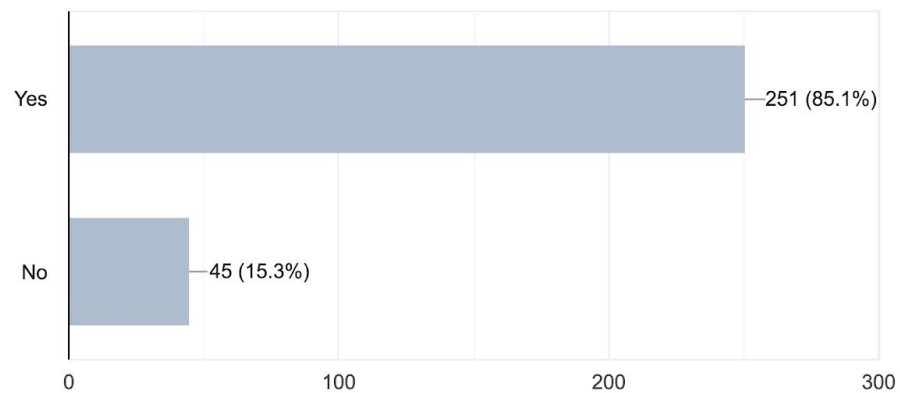
Please rate the music and performing arts education program in Bridgewater-Raritan Regional School District based on your own knowledge or experience.

297 responses

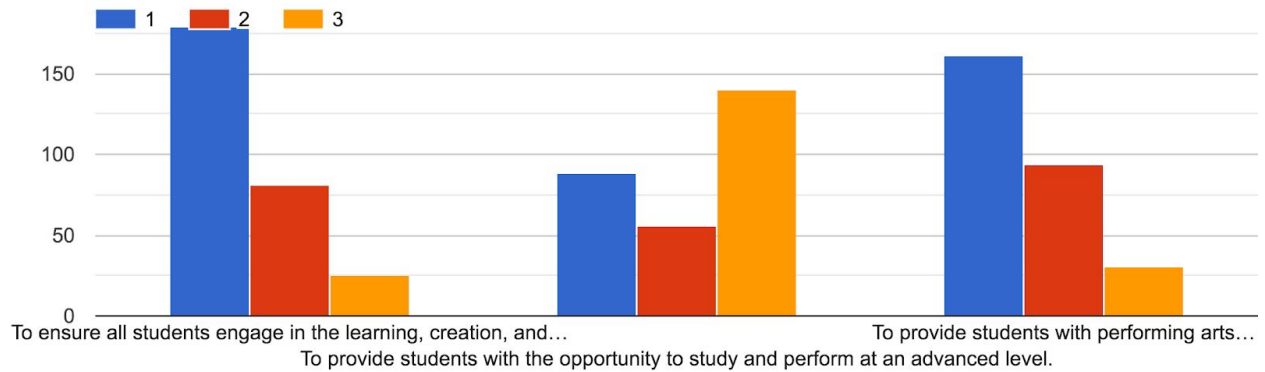


I feel adequately informed about district wide performing arts events and opportunities that my child or family can participate in and/or attend (such as School Musical, district concerts, special events).

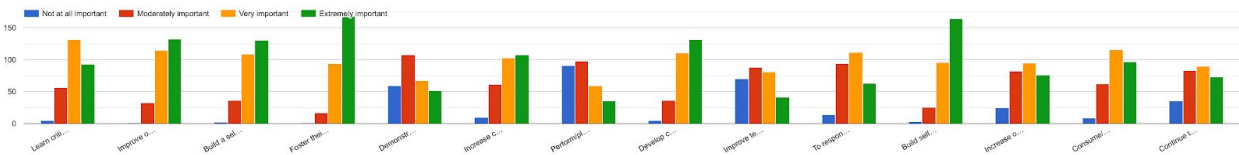
295 responses



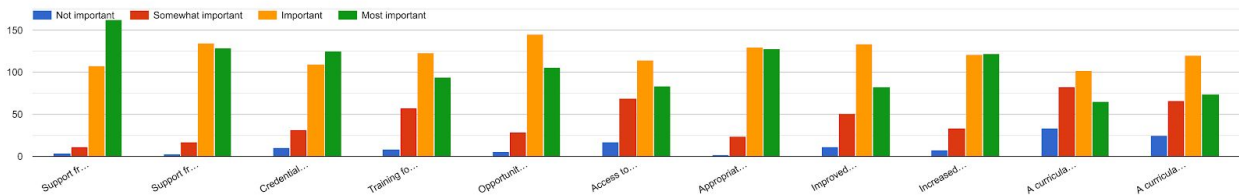
Considering the purpose of a K-12 Performing Arts program, rank each statement from least to most important - with 1 being the MOST important.



Rate how important arts education is for students to



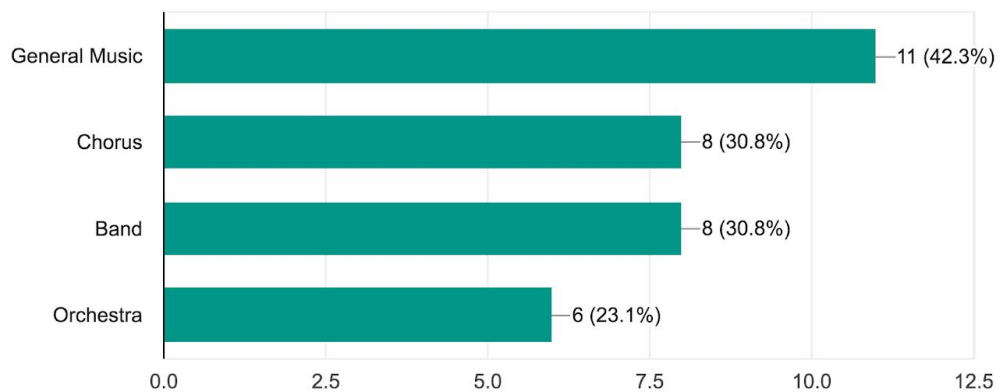
Please consider the following things that impact the quality of our district music and performing arts program and rank from least important to most important.



APPENDIX C - STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

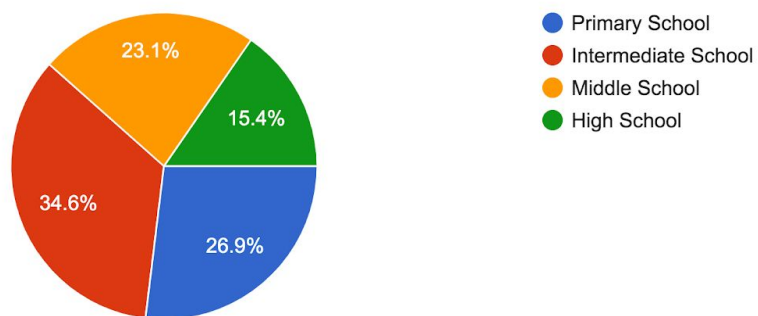
I currently teach (select all that apply)

26 responses



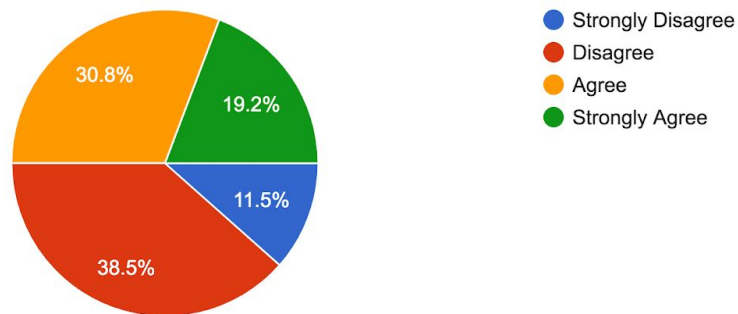
My students are in

26 responses



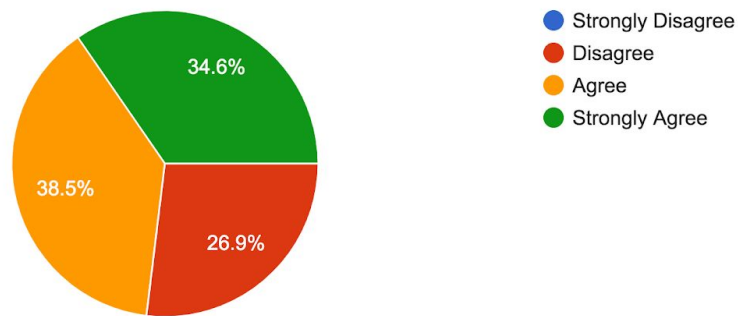
I consistently use/reference the existing curriculum in my unit/daily planning.

26 responses



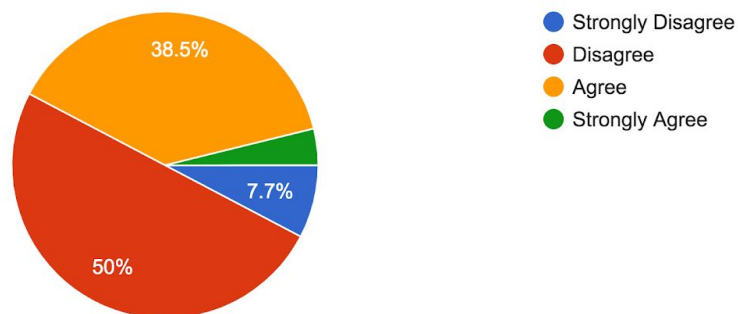
My colleagues and I have a clear and common understanding of what needs to be taught by grade level/discipline.

26 responses



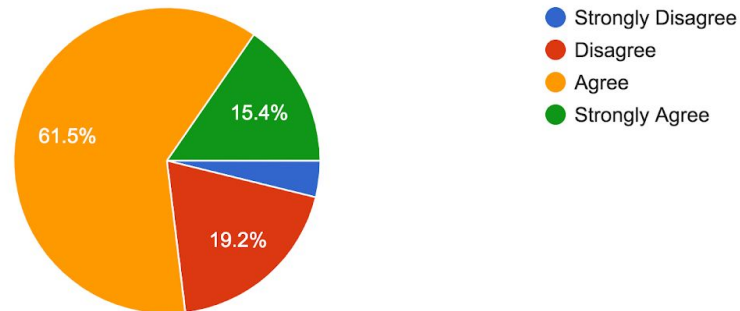
Our current program adequately addresses the needs of all students.

26 responses



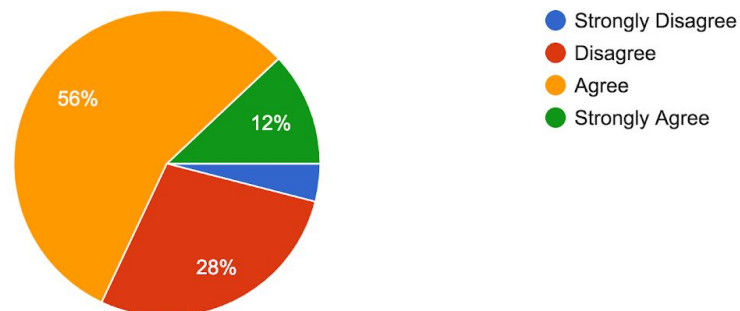
My colleagues and I have a clear and common expectation for the ways in which we ensure the needs of all students are met within the music department.

26 responses



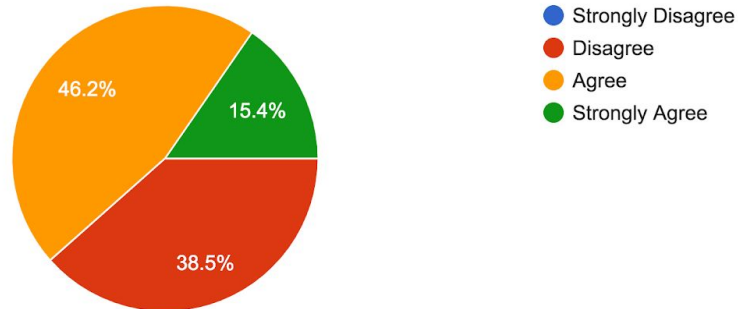
From what I have experienced with regard to student's prior knowledge and skill acquisition, the music curriculum appears to be well sequenced (vertically).

25 responses



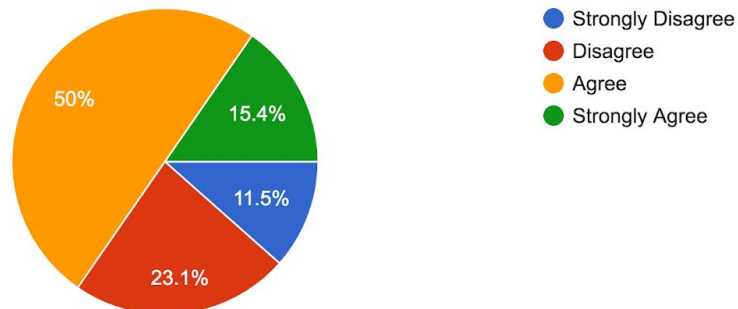
From what I have experienced at my grade level, the curriculum is being implemented consistently across grade level/schools.

26 responses



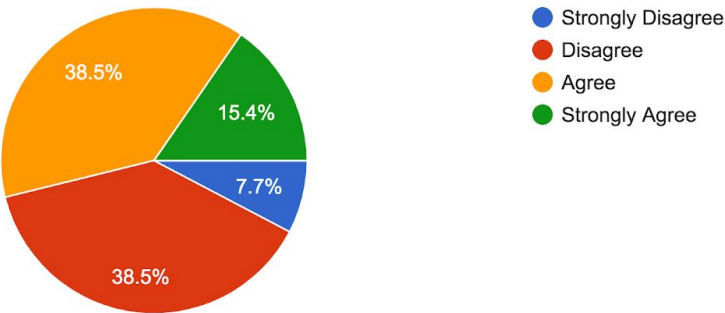
I am familiar with the 2014 New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Performing Arts and am comfortable referencing them in my planning and practice.

26 responses

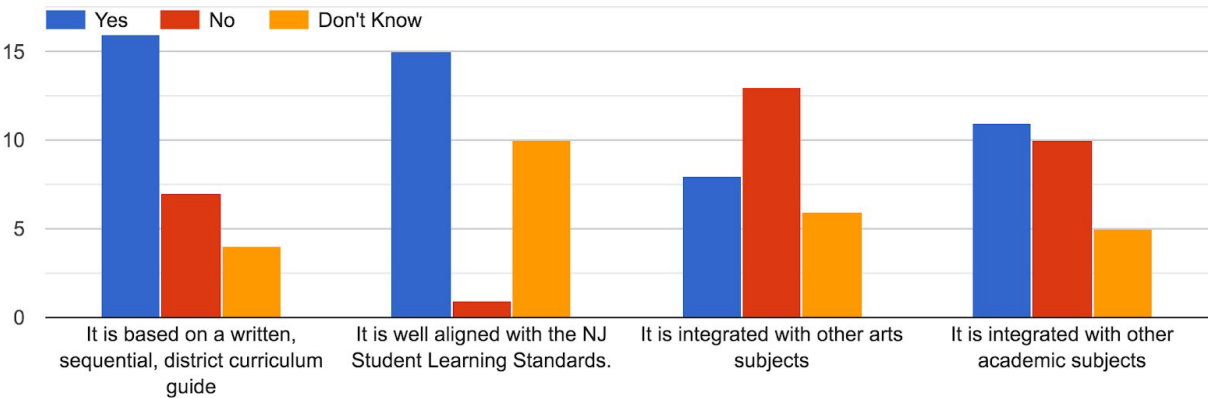


I am familiar with the new National Arts Standards/anticipated implementation of new NJSL Standards for Visual & Performing Arts.

26 responses

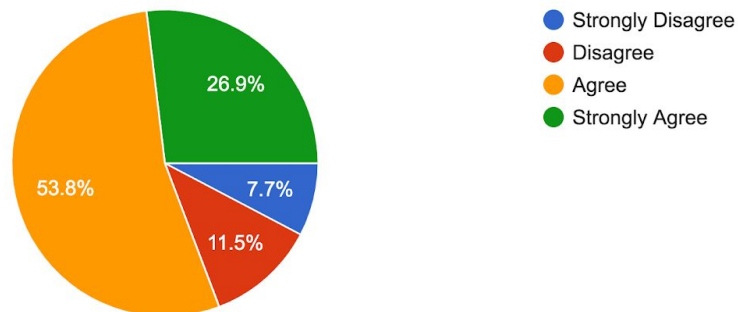


How well do the statements below describe your curriculum/instructional program at your school?



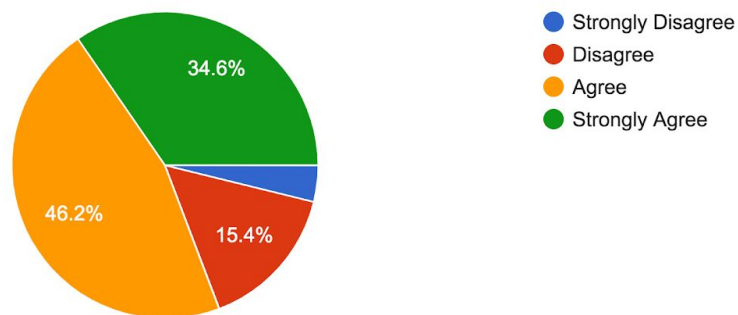
It is important to me that we explore ways to offer curricular dance to our students.

26 responses



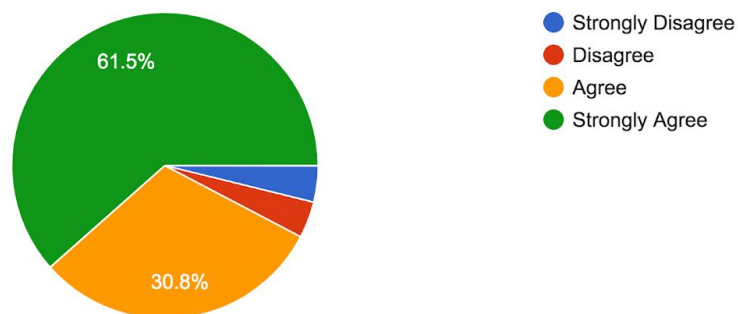
It is important to me that we explore ways to offer curricular theatre to our students.

26 responses



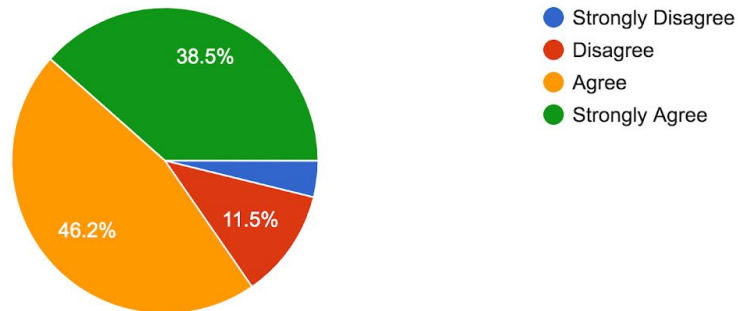
It is important to me that we explore ways to offer expanded opportunities in music to B-R middle and/or high school students NOT currently involved i...i.e. music technology, guitar, keyboarding, etc.).

26 responses



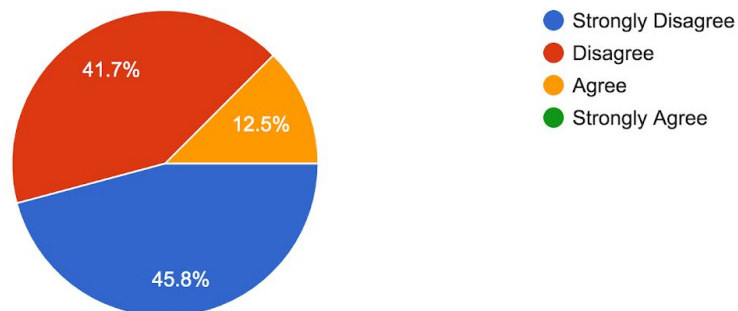
I believe offering expanded opportunities in music to B-R middle and/or high school students (i.e. music technology, guitar, keyboarding, etc.) will help our students that intend to study music in college.

26 responses



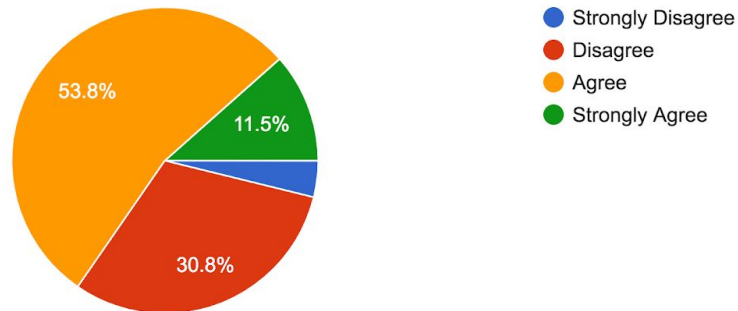
I believe the current 4th grade Chorus program allows adequate time to achieve the curricular and instructional goals for chorus.

24 responses



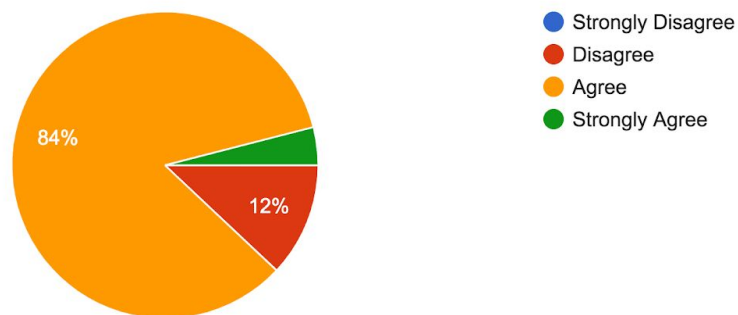
I am well aware/informed of what is happening in our department throughout other buildings/grade levels in the district.

26 responses



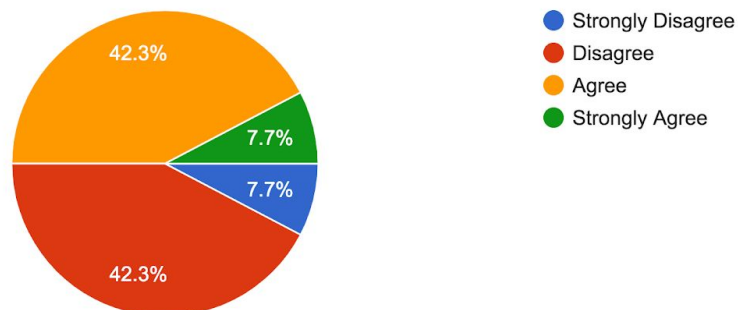
Our current program, curriculum, and offerings align with the values of our community.

25 responses

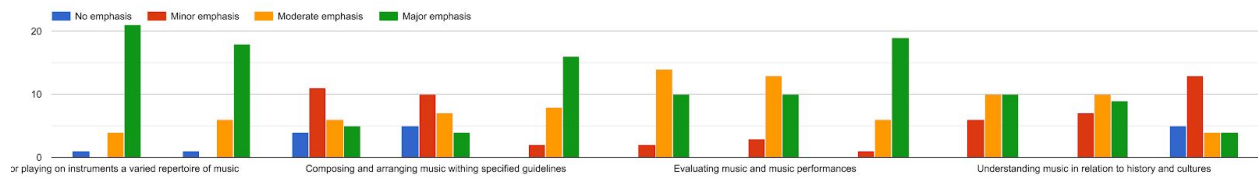


Our current program, curriculum, and offerings reflect the diversity of our students and community.

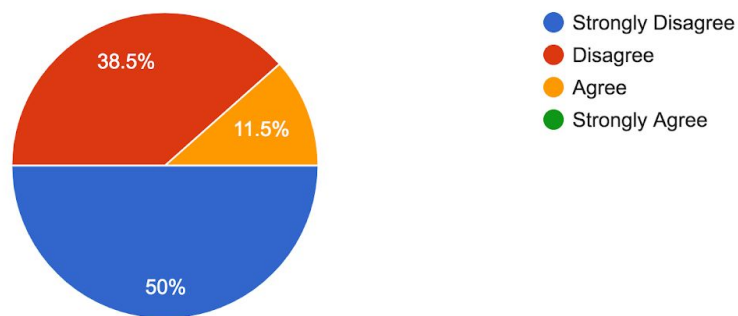
26 responses



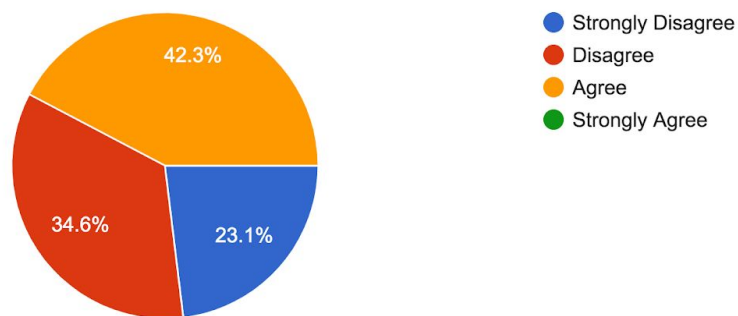
In general, how much emphasis do YOU give to the following goals or objectives of student learning?



Students in grades PRE K and KINDERGARTEN receive 20 minutes of general music a week. I believe this is adequate general music class time to achieve our instructional and curricular goals.
26 responses

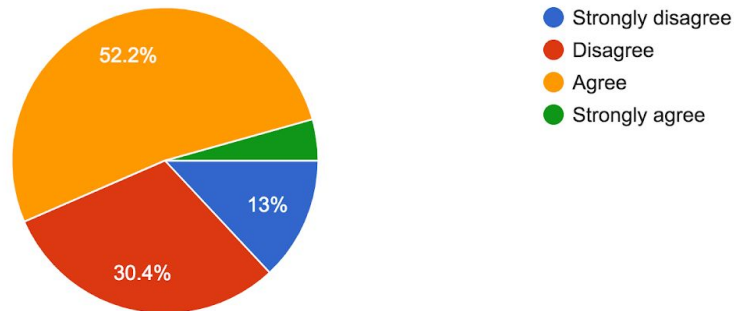


Students in grades 1 - 6 receive 40 minutes of general music a week. I believe this is adequate general music class time to achieve our instructional and curricular goals.
26 responses



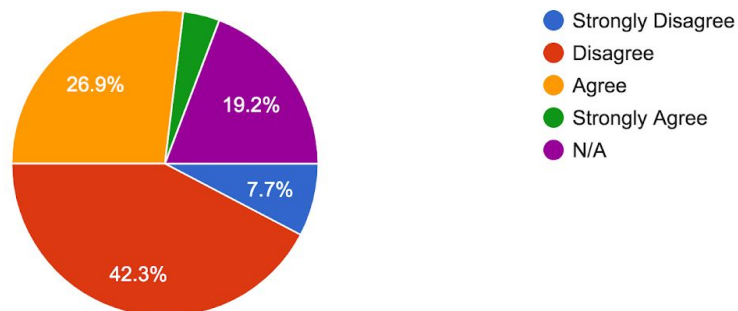
The Middle School cycle program allows for adequate general music instructional time for students in grades 7 & 8.

23 responses



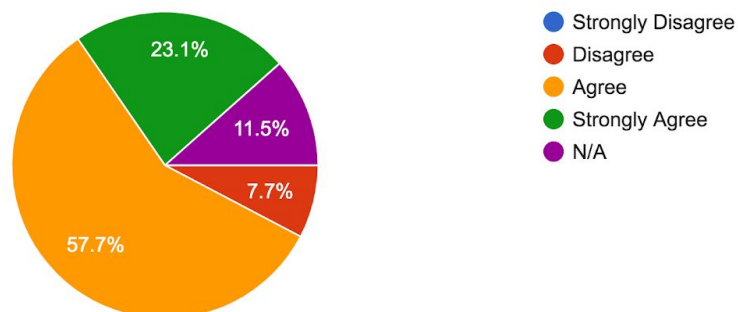
My ensemble students have adequate rehearsal/class time to achieve our instructional and curricular goals.

26 responses



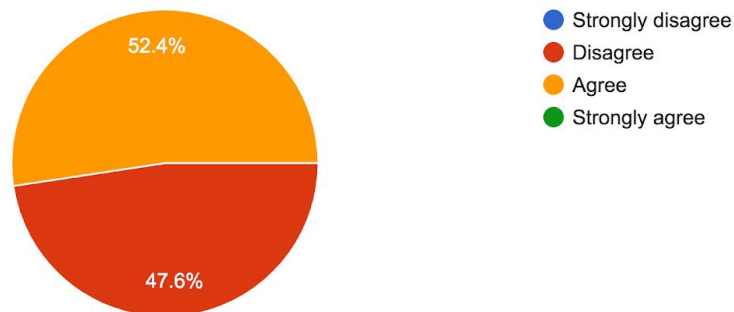
My ensemble students have adequate performance opportunities.

26 responses



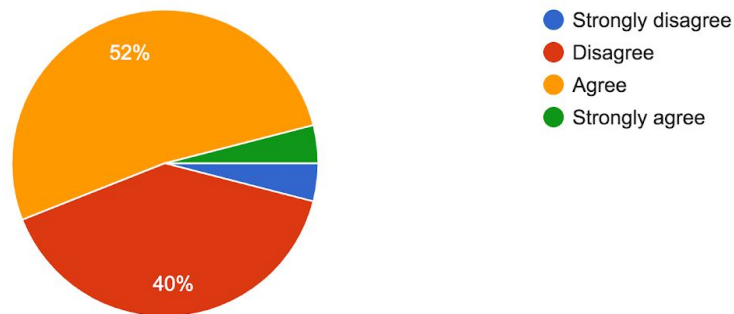
Our current Primary School schedule supports high quality music programs and offerings.

21 responses



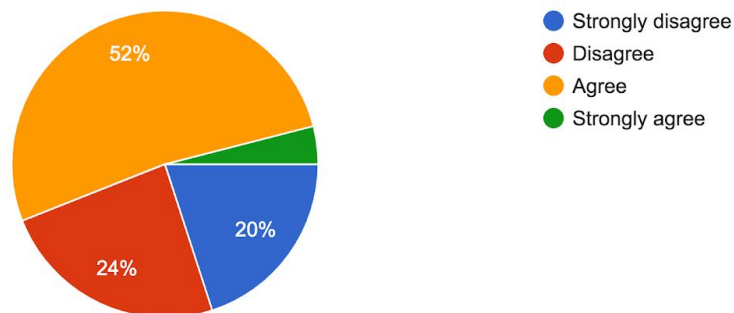
Our current Intermediate School schedule supports high quality music programs and offerings.

25 responses

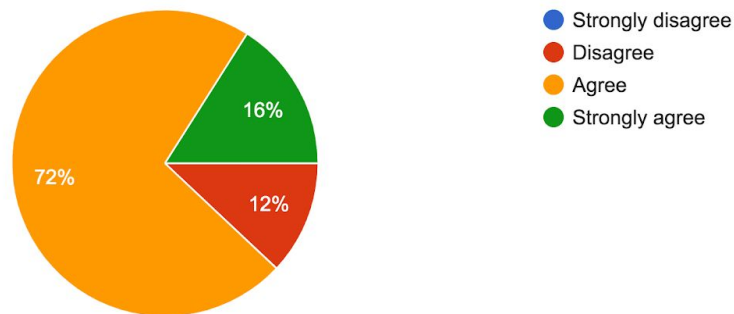


Our current Middle School School schedule supports high quality music programs and offerings.

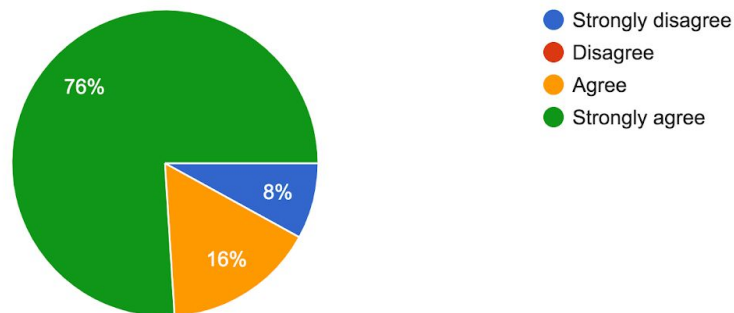
25 responses



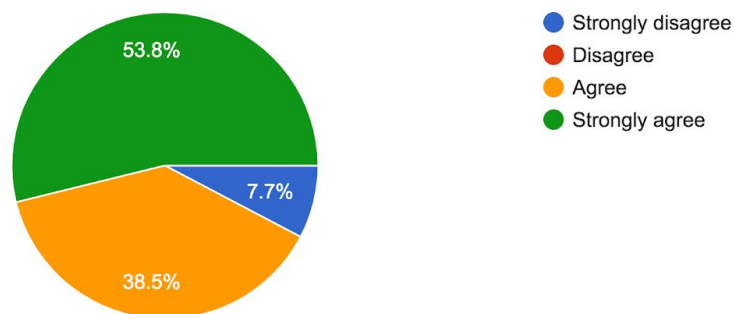
Our current High School School schedule supports high quality music programs and offerings.
25 responses



Small group lessons are an essential part of a strong instrumental music program.
25 responses

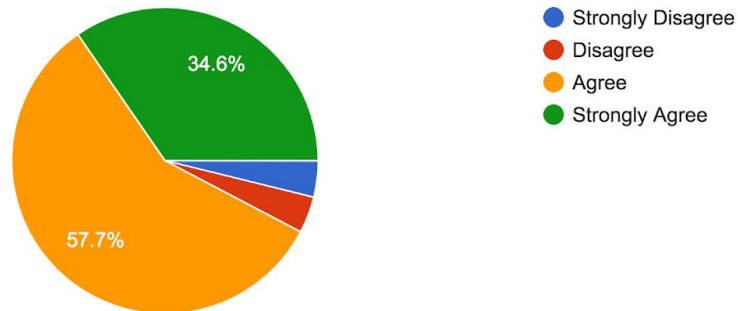


High School students in band, orchestra, and choir should receive weekly small group instruction in addition to their ensemble.
26 responses



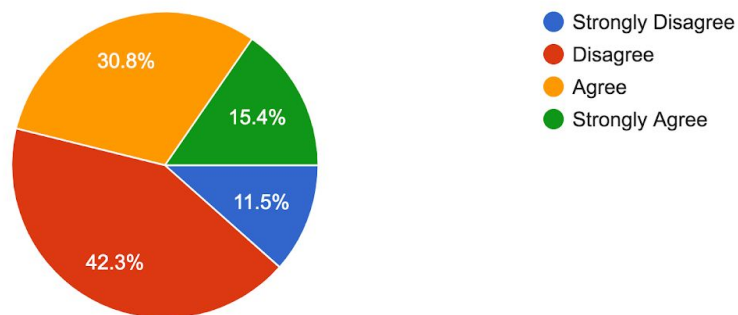
I see value in incorporating opportunities for integrating with other subject areas (both by incorporating other content areas into the music cl... arts content into other subject area classrooms).

26 responses



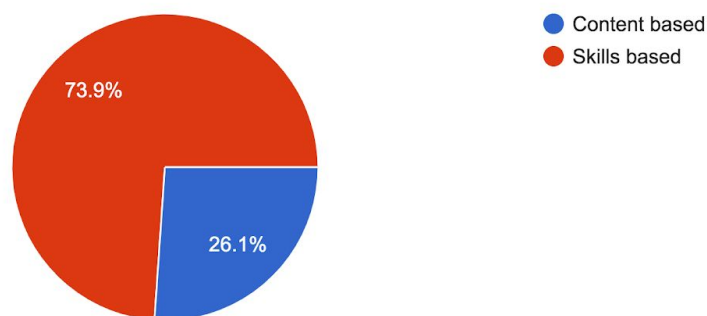
I frequently infuse technology into the music classroom.

26 responses

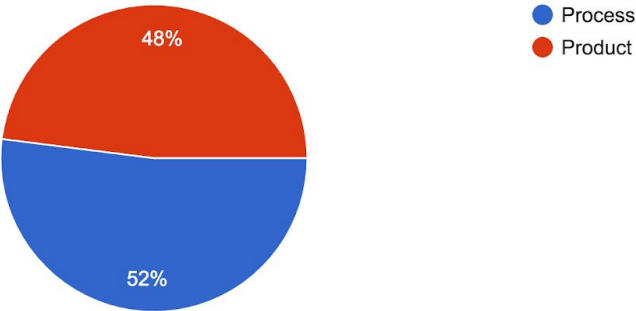


From what I see, the teaching of music in our district is more:

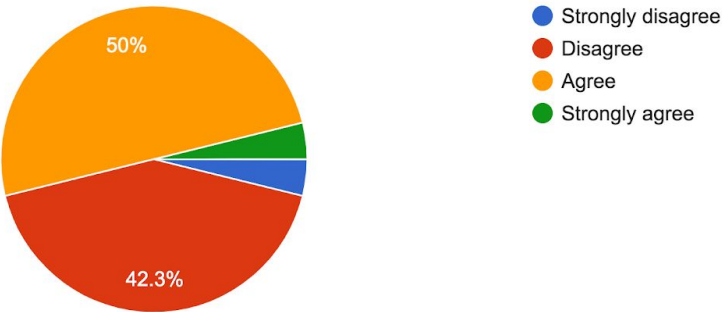
23 responses



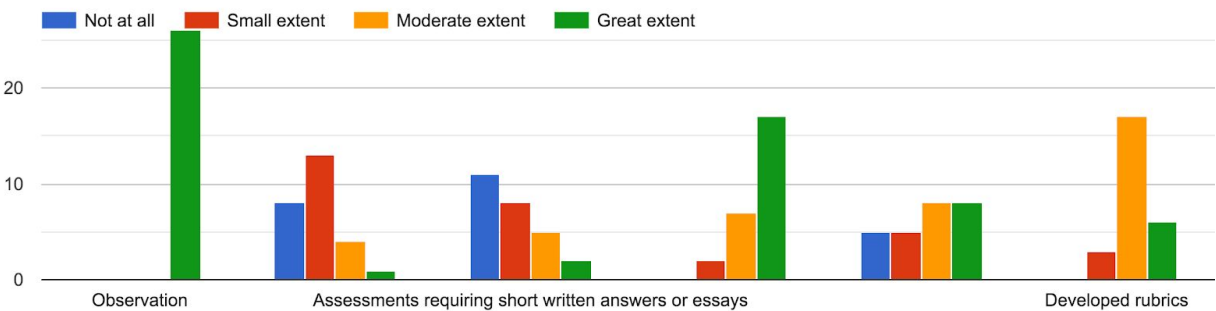
From what I see, our music program as a whole is more focused on:
25 responses



My colleagues and I have a clear and common expectation for how students are assessed.
26 responses

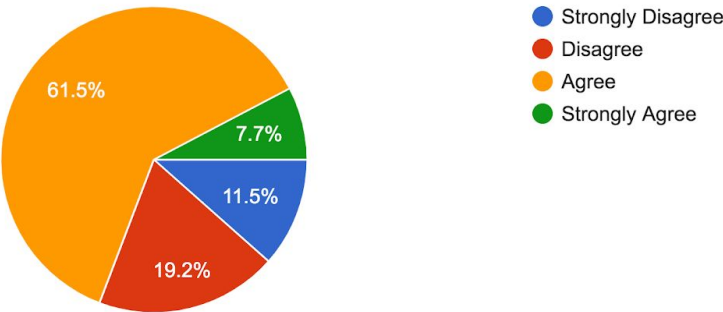


To what extent, if any, do you use the following types of assessment to determine student progress and achievement in your discipline at this school.



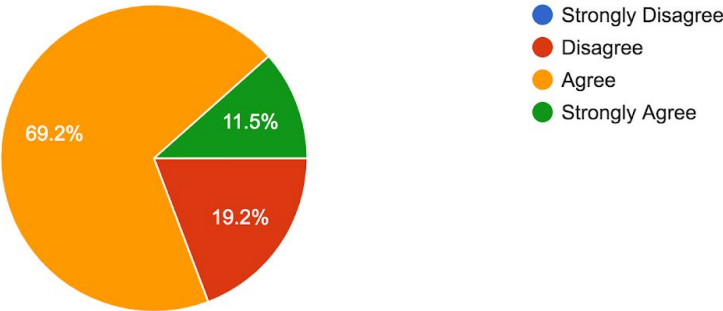
I have a clear understanding of how we measure student growth as a department, and how we use this information to inform instruction.

26 responses



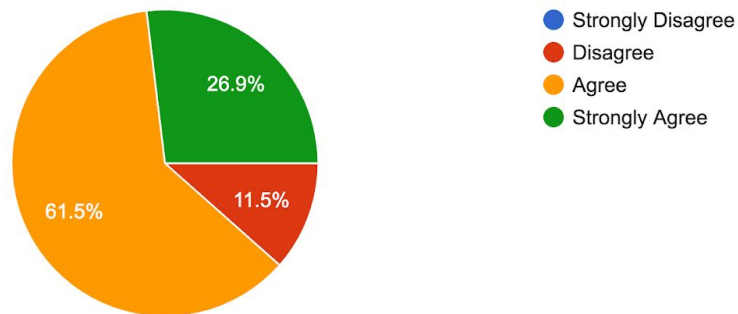
My students are always fully aware of the criteria on which they are assessed.

26 responses



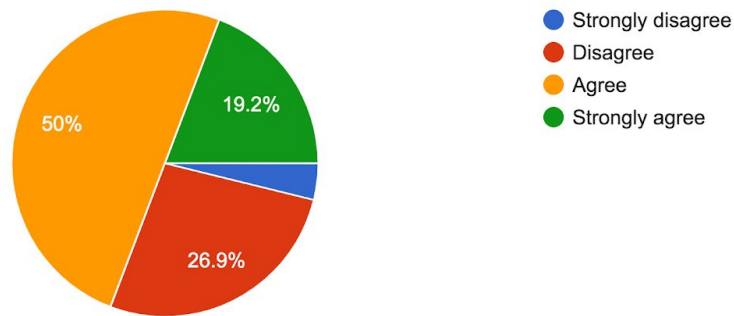
My students frequently engage in self assessment and use this to inform their growth.

26 responses



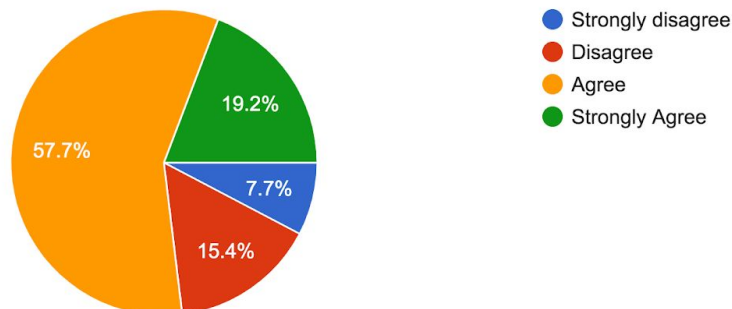
I have opportunities to review and discuss student performance with my colleagues.

26 responses

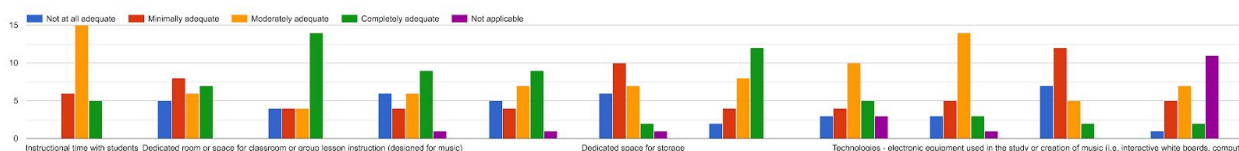


Implementing some common assessments across grade levels/disciplines would help me and my colleagues review, track, and discuss student performance and growth.

26 responses

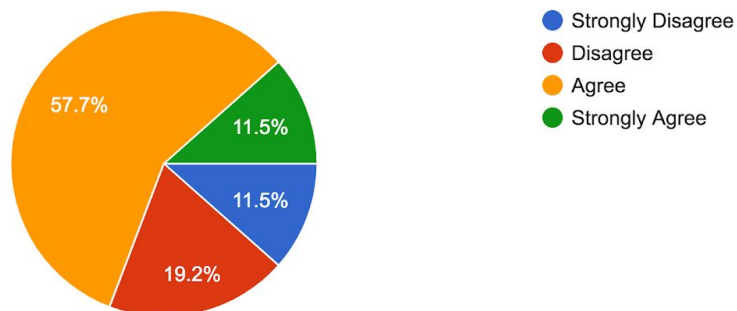


How adequate is the support for teaching music at YOUR school in each of the following areas? If the question is not applicable to your school or class select 'not applicable'.



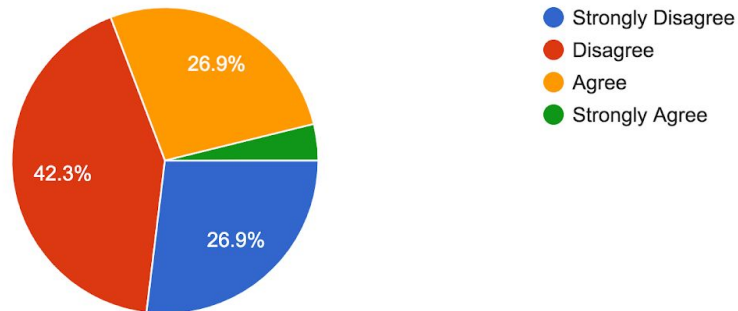
Our district provides adequate resources to support students of different socio-economic backgrounds.

26 responses



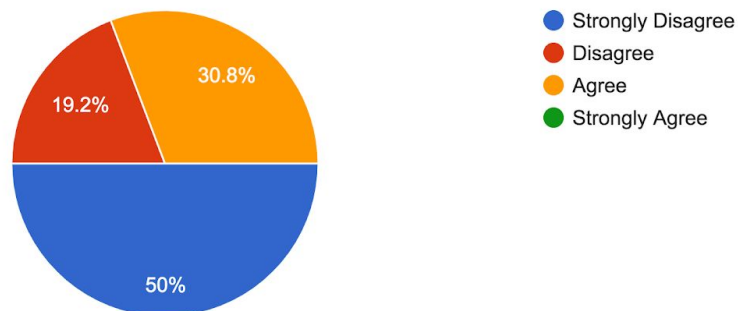
Our district supports the proper care and maintenance of our rehearsal spaces, performance spaces, classrooms, and resources/equipment.

26 responses



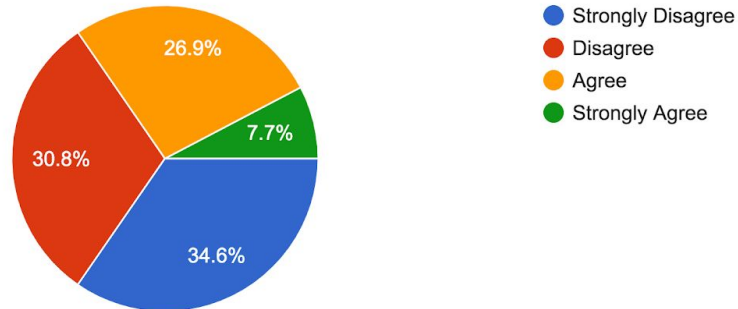
My rehearsal spaces and storage spaces are adequately climate-controlled in order to protect our valuable instruments and equipment.

26 responses



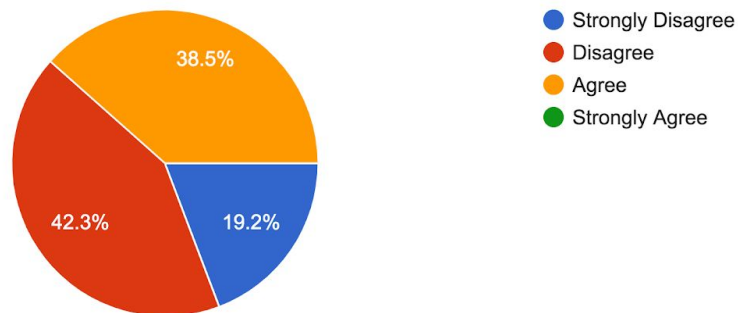
My building is equipped with the appropriate resources to support high quality performances (i.e. sound equipment, lighting equipment, risers).

26 responses



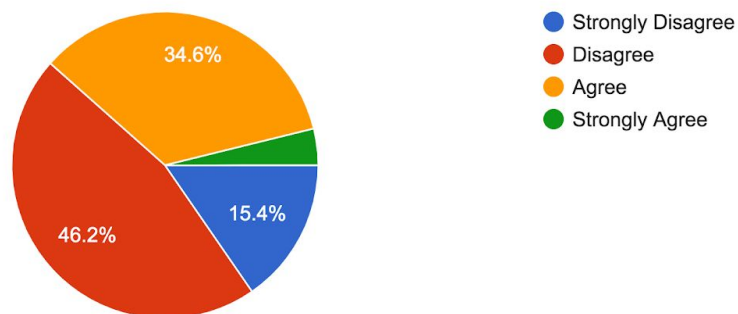
I have access to the same resources and technology as my colleagues in other content areas.

26 responses



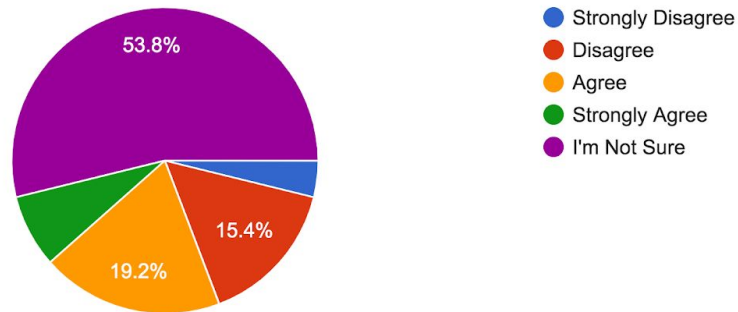
I have access to technology that fully supports my instruction.

26 responses



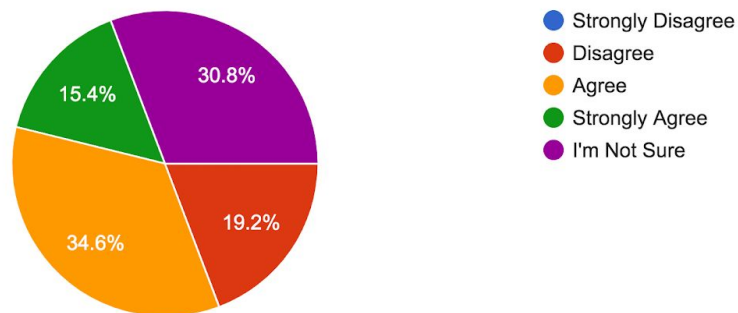
Our co-curricular programs at the Middle & High School are appropriately supported by the district.

26 responses



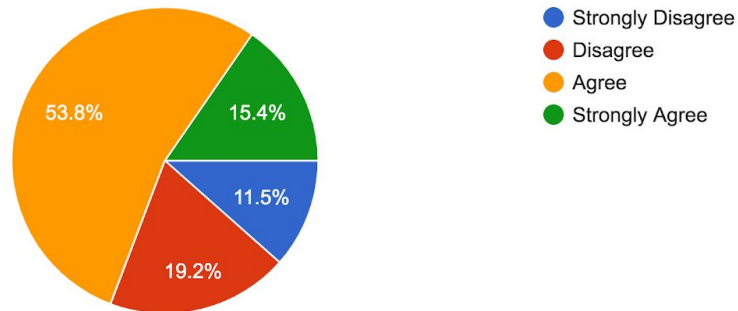
We provide sufficient co-curricular opportunities for students to extend their learning in the performing arts.

26 responses



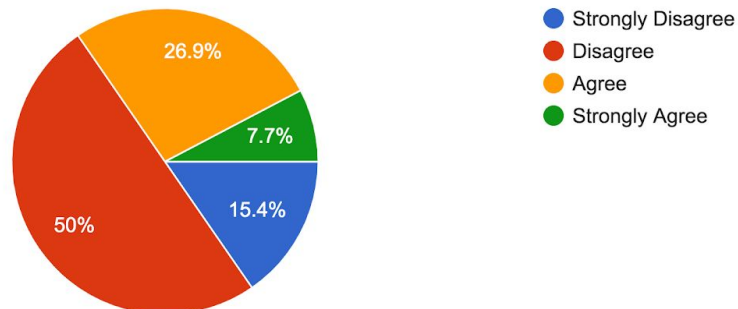
The district/my department provides opportunities for relevant and meaningful professional development during district in-service days.

26 responses



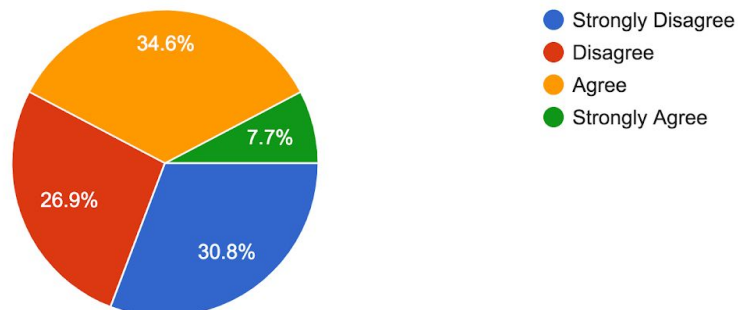
I believe the district provides adequate time to support the professional development needs of me and my colleagues.

26 responses



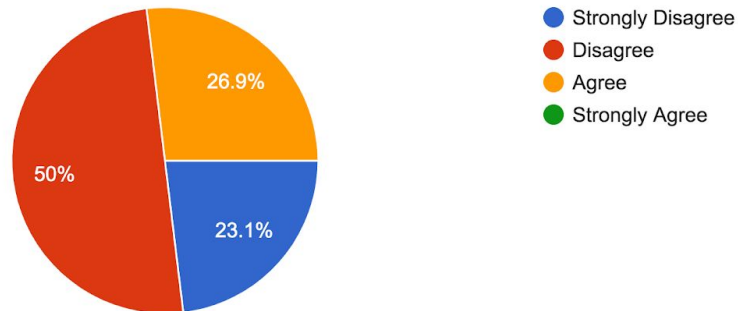
I am satisfied with the amount of time I have to meet/work with my level-alike colleagues.

26 responses



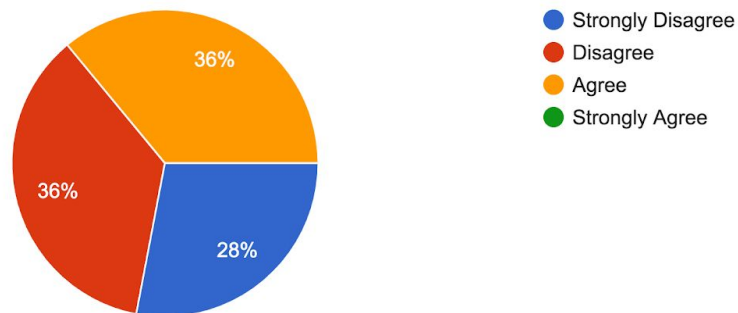
I am satisfied with the amount of time I have to meet/work with my discipline specific colleagues across all grade levels.

26 responses



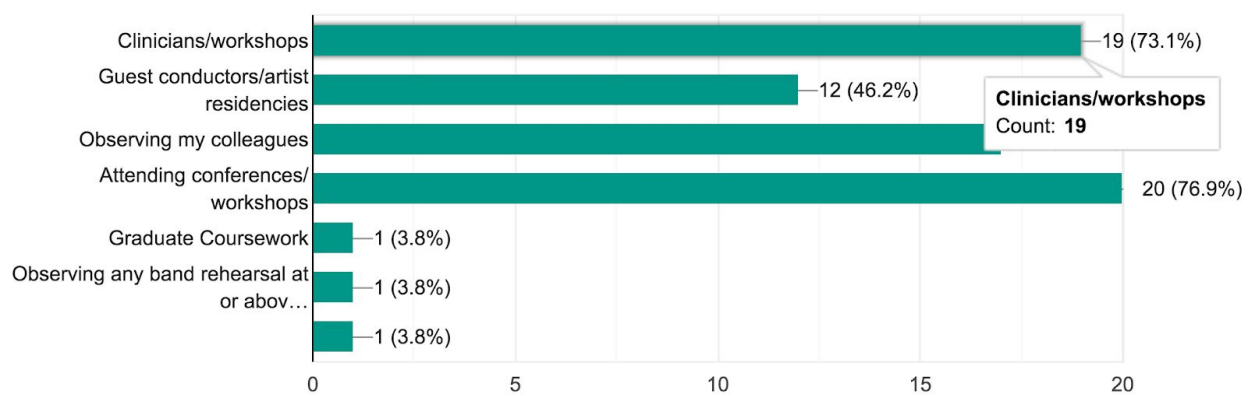
I am satisfied with the amount of time we have to meet or work together as an entire department.

25 responses



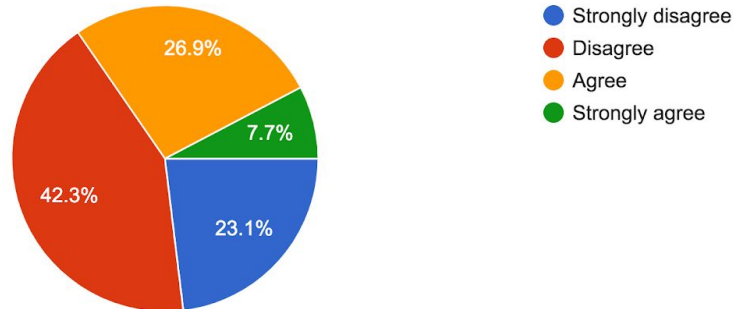
The most valuable PD to me is/would be:

26 responses

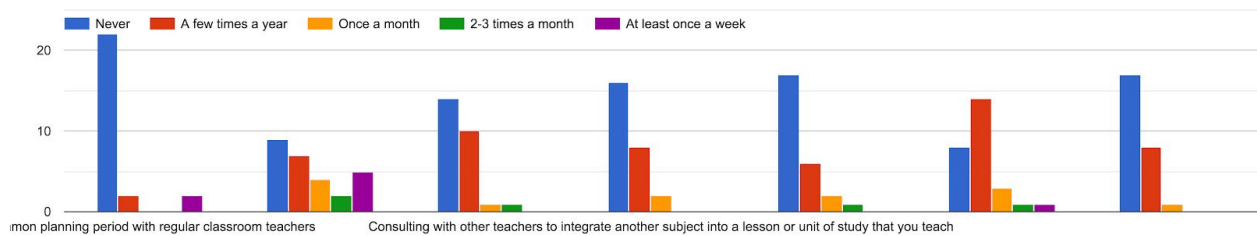


I have access to PD that can help me better support/teach students with special learning needs, language learning needs, or behavioral needs.

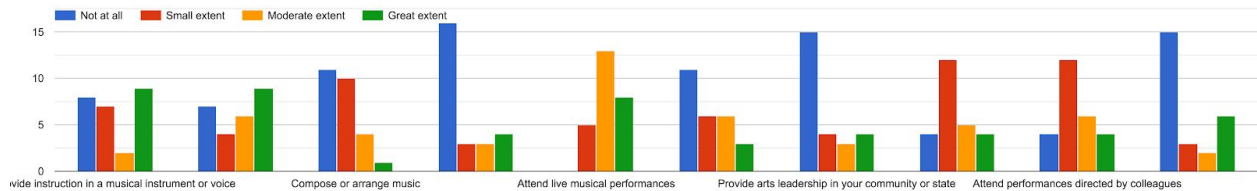
26 responses



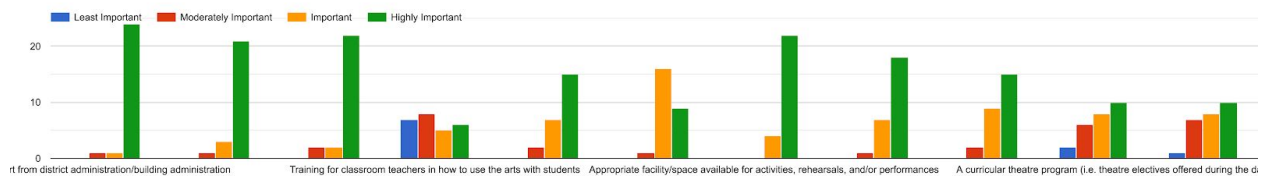
In the last 12 months, how frequently have you participated in the following activities related to your teaching?



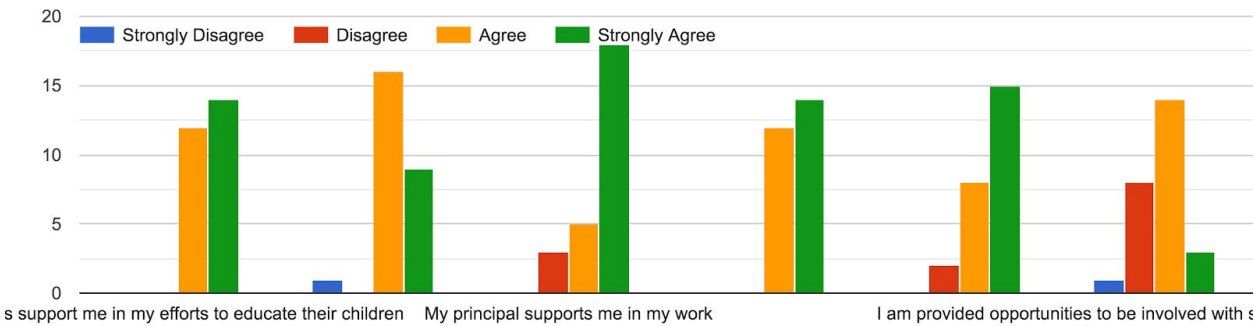
Outside of your school duties, to what extent, if any, do you participate in each of the following activities related to music at this time?



Please consider the following things that impact the quality of our district music and performing arts program and rank from least important to most important.



Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about arts instruction at your school?



APPENDIX D - AP Music Theory Exam Results

AP Music Theory - 5 Year Scores

2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P
14	93%	15	53%	1	100%	11	91%	6	83%

T: Number of students that sat for exam

P: Percentage of students that passed (scored a 3 or higher)

Instructional Planning Report - 2019

Data Updated: October 15, 2019
Report Run: January 29, 2020

Bridgewater-Raritan Regional High School (310753)

Music Theory

Section 1

Form 1 - A commonly administered version of the exam given on the regularly scheduled testing date.

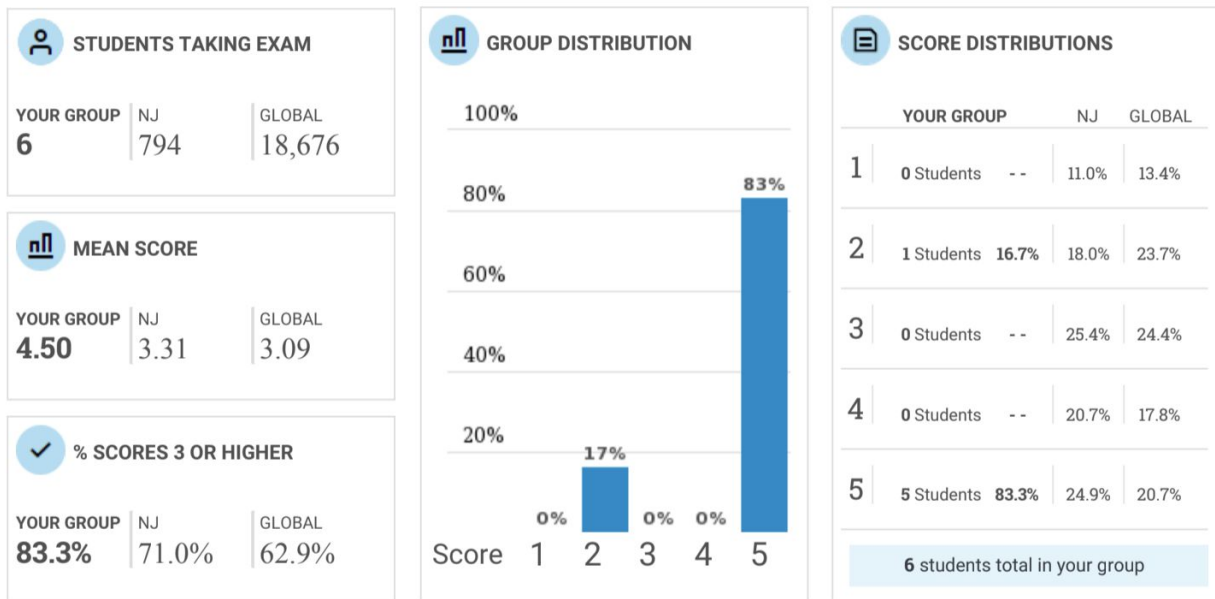
Filters Applied:

Teacher: No Selections

Attended / Instructed: All Students

Score: No Selections

Grade: No Selections



Instructional Planning Report - 2018

Data Updated: August 31, 2018
Report Run: January 30, 2020

Bridgewater-Raritan Regional High School (310753)

Music Theory

Section 1

Form 1 - The most commonly administered version of the exam.

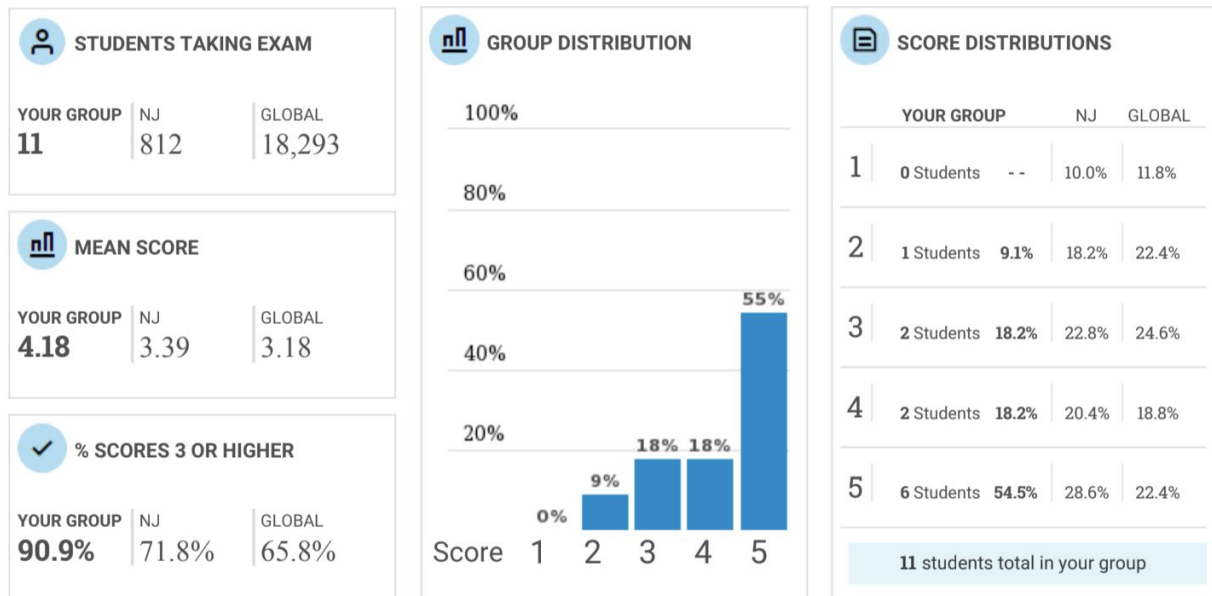
Filters Applied:

Teacher: No Selections

Attended / Instructed: All Students

Score: No Selections

Grade: No Selections



Instructional Planning Report - 2017

Data Updated: December 08, 2017
Report Run: January 30, 2020

Bridgewater-Raritan Regional High School (310753)

Music Theory

Section 9

Form 1 - The most commonly administered version of the exam.

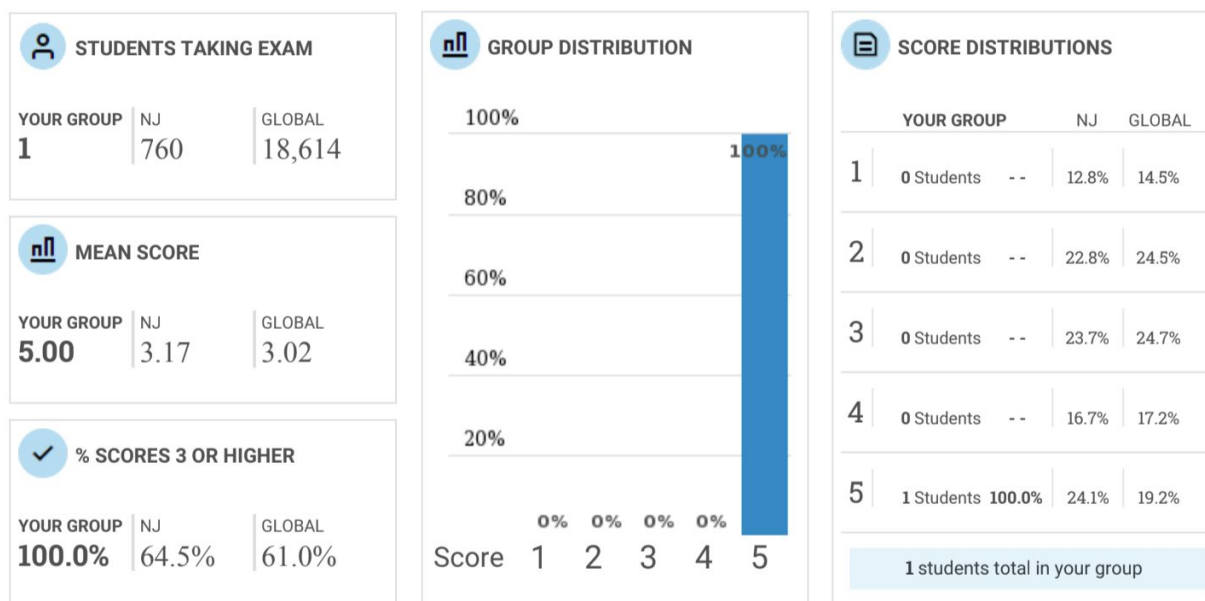
Filters Applied:

Teacher: No Selections

Attended / Instructed: All Students

Score: No Selections

Grade: No Selections



Instructional Planning Report - 2016

Data Updated: August 10, 2016
Report Run: January 30, 2020

Bridgewater-Raritan Regional High School (310753)

Music Theory

Section 1

Form 1 - The most commonly administered version of the exam.

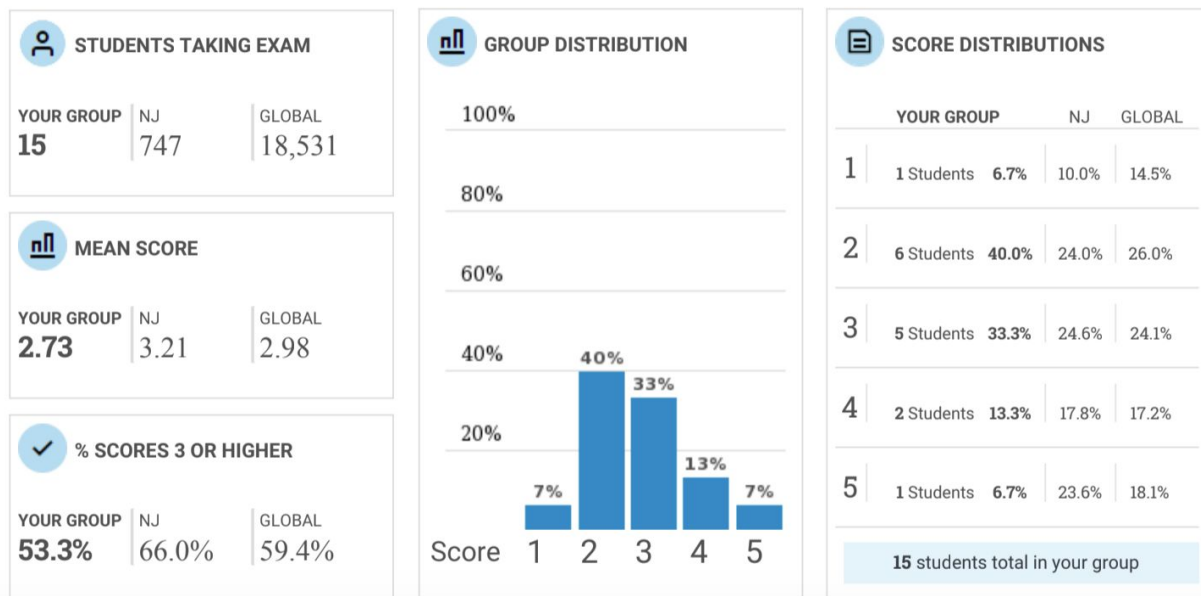
Filters Applied:

Teacher: No Selections

Attended / Instructed: All Students

Score: No Selections

Grade: No Selections



Instructional Planning Report - 2015

Data Updated: August 22, 2015
Report Run: January 30, 2020

Bridgewater-Raritan Regional High School (310753)

Music Theory

Section 1, Section 9

Form 1 - The most commonly administered version of the exam.

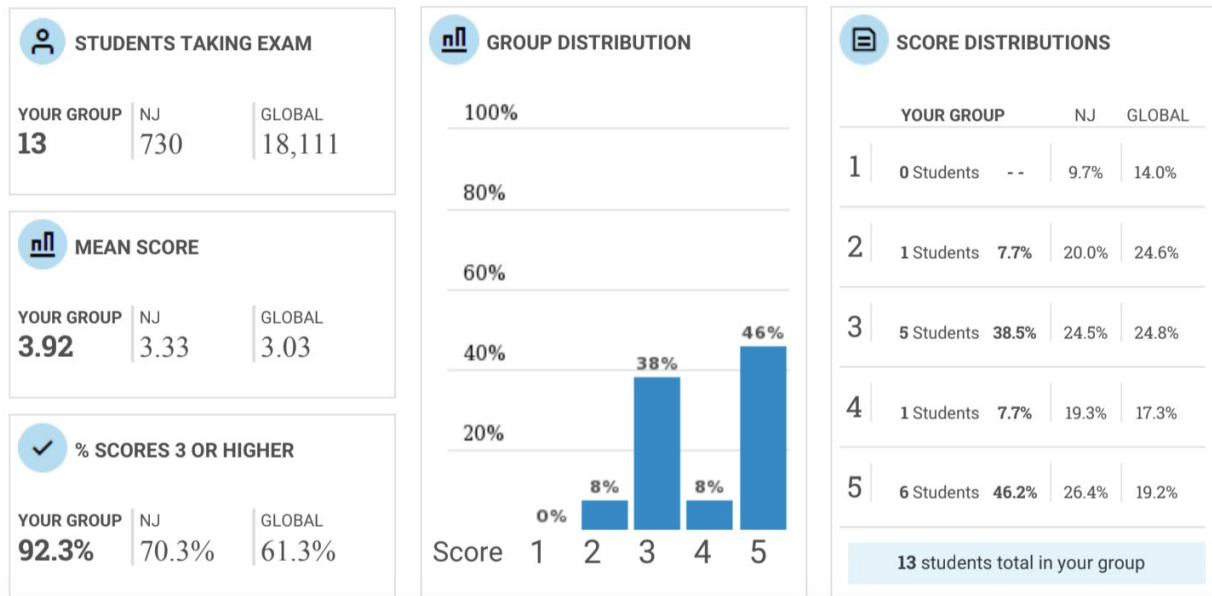
Filters Applied:

Teacher: No Selections

Attended / Instructed: All Students

Score: No Selections

Grade: No Selections



APPENDIX E - Facility Recommendations

View a breakdown of facility recommendations [here](#).

APPENDIX F - Associated Costs, Resources & Equipment

View a breakdown of associated costs, equipment, and resources [here](#).