

Inspire and connect people for a lifetime through creating, performing and responding to music.

Music Department Program Review

Pine-Richland School District

May 2020

The information contained in this report is provided by the Pine-Richland Music Department for general purposes only. While this report serves as a strategic approach to curriculum planning, recommendations must be considered with respect to all programs provided by Pine-Richland School District.

Music Department Program Review

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Executive Summary

The mission of the Pine-Richland School District is to *Focus on Learning for Every Student Every Day*. Within the PRSD Strategic Plan, long-term and short-term goals outlined in the Teaching and Learning category form the foundation for continuous improvement. One of the short-term goals for 2016 - 2017 was to design and pilot an in-depth program review process for two of our departments (i.e., Science and Health & Physical Education). That initial work led to a final report for each department and set of recommendations for program improvement. The process itself has been refined and implemented each year and has now been used with a total of nine different departments and programs. **In-Depth Program Review is now a key strategy used to evaluate and improve our educational programs and services**. A full list of departments that completed this work include: Science (2017); Health & Physical Education (2017); Mathematics (2018); Business & Computer Science (2018); Social Studies (2019); Gifted and/or Highly Achieving Students (2019); English Language Arts (2020); Library Science (2020); and Music (2020).

This report outlines the process, findings, and recommendations from that work related to the K-12 Music Program. As an organization, it is understood that the pace of change may be dependent upon the impact of that change on other aspects of the educational program. The committee utilized the action-priority matrix to evaluate each recommendation and established an implementation timeline with associated cost estimates.

One element of the in-depth program review was the establishment of a departmental philosophy and vision (Figure 1). As a result, the vision is captured through the following image and words:



Figure 1

Inspire and connect people for a lifetime through creating, performing and responding to music.

Recommendation Overview

Recommendation #1: Philosophy and Vision

1. Adopt and widely communicate the Music Department philosophy and vision to internal and external stakeholders while ensuring a practical connection to program design and delivery.

Recommendation #2: Curriculum and Standards

1. Infuse the National Common Core Arts Standards and Pennsylvania Arts & Humanities Standards within the Music Department curriculum and ensure vertical alignment and progression according to the suggested competencies by sub-discipline (e.g. General Music, Composition/Theory, Music Technology, Guitar/Keyboarding/Harmonizing Instruments, & Ensemble) and through the four functions: (a) create, (b) respond, (c) perform, and (d) connect.

Recommendation #3: Technology Integration and other Resources

1. Implement technology applications as a means of diversifying music education offerings, which supports the validity of non-performing branches of music education to help meet a wide range of interests and developmental student needs (e.g. adapted courses for special education; music production for "creation" not performance - Garage Band).

Recommendation #4: Program Development and Structure (including staffing)

1. Identify and implement **systematic recruitment and retention strategies** for students within each of the performance music groups.

2. Promote music program through **advocacy**, digital footprint, performance and community connections (universities, business, cultural district in Pittsburgh).

3. Implementation of adaptive music classes as needed and where appropriate to better integrate modifications and accommodations for students with special needs / disabilities across all levels.

4. Develop and offer a summer performance program (elementary and middle) to maintain engagement and minimize regression with a **summer 2020 pilot**.

5. Reconfigure schedule and structures to allow for improvements to the music program and its delivery with the following considerations: (1) Kindergarten music; (2) Five day rotation; (3) Improved staffing/section balancing; (4) Managing conflict between middle school music and necessary interventions; and (5) Expand HS music electives to reach a larger portion of students at their level, interests, and needs (creating, performing, and responding to music outside of traditional ensembles).

Recommendation #5: Music Pedagogy (Instructional Approach & Professional Development)

1. Develop a blend of research-based pedagogical strategies for music education to enhance learning across multiple learning styles and modalities as is developmentally appropriate, with consideration of vertical alignment and skill progression.
2. Enhance and improve concert experiences for students, as both producers and consumers of music, through strategies such as etiquette; repertoire selection; resource database; etc.

Recommendation #6: Assessments

1. Create a systematic approach, leveraging technology where appropriate, to assess individuals and groups, including self-reflection.
2. Ensure feedback methods include both student achievement (points in time) and growth (between points).

In-Depth Program Review Process

The process for in-depth program review was developed in the 2016 - 2017 school year and has been refined annually. For 2019-2020, the departments in the study phase include English Language Arts, Library, and Music. To help ensure a clear understanding of the process elements, a process diagram was developed and reviewed on a regular basis. Major elements of this image are further described below:

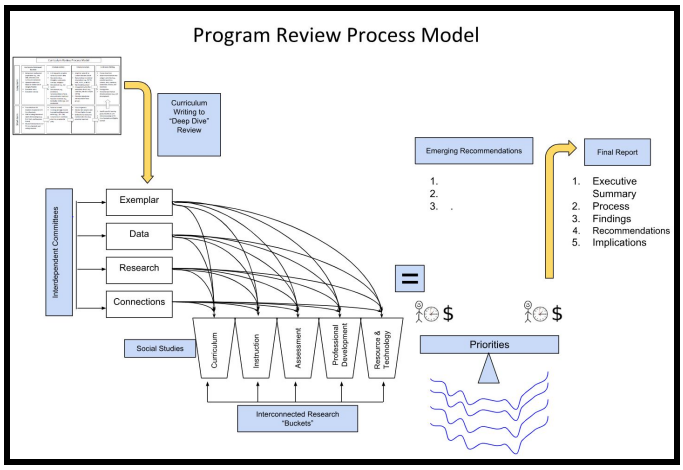

Figure 2

Curriculum Writing to "Deep Dive"

Given the time and effort invested into curriculum writing at Pine-Richland from 2014 - 2016, it is important to understand the relationship of that work to the in-depth program review process. The two-year curriculum writing process was designed to capture the current content in a consistent format through vertical teams (e.g., units, big ideas, and learning goals). That process allowed the department to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement. Most of the attention was directed internally at a review of our district's current structure and practices.

The **in-depth program review process has a broader focus** on all elements of the department. Importantly, the process was designed to emphasize a balance of internal needs and a review of best practices from external sources. It asks questions, such as, "Are we doing the right things?" or "Do we need to consider more significant changes in program design?" In the image above, the curriculum writing process is like a "springboard" to "dive" more deeply into the content area. The personnel, structure, and work were organized into four major sub-committees.

Committee Composition and Structure

We strongly believe that meaningful and lasting change requires engagement of all key stakeholders. Since the in-depth process was being developed and implemented at the same time, the initial structure was the use of a core team and an expanded team. The core team included several district office administrators, building principals/assistant principals based on vertical team assignment, and a small group of academic leadership council members (i.e., department chairs) and teachers. The core team conducted the planning and thinking necessary to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the expanded team. The expanded team included all core team members and additional teachers to ensure representation by all buildings, levels, and courses. As we moved throughout the years of in-depth program review study phases, the decision was made to leverage the equivalent of the expanded team at each meeting, since the agendas and pathway for the process are more clearly defined and have been refined. As a result, a cross-section of the entire department, across buildings, grade spans, and areas of competency was established and leveraged. This group does not include all members of the Music

Department; however, they have been updated throughout the process through the inclusion of summary notes from each session, inviting their feedback and voice to the process through their representatives.

Within the in-depth program review team, members were then organized by **four main subcommittees**: (1) Research; (2) Exemplar K-12 Schools; (3) Connections to Universities, Businesses, and the Community; and (4) Data and Information. While each subcommittee was responsible for specific tasks, two overarching elements were critical. First, the arrows on the left side of the subcommittees indicate that the groups must collaborate and exchange information (i.e., no silos). Second, the arrows on the right side of the subcommittees demonstrate that key findings/learnings were captured and organized by major research buckets.

It is important to note that the study team also used a systematic approach to listen to students and parents. Student focus groups were organized at the high school, middle school, Eden Hall, and the primary buildings. These groups were representative of the student body and a wide range of academic rigor. In addition, parent and community input was gathered during both day and evening town hall sessions. Parents who were unable to attend those face-to-face meetings were able to submit comments electronically.

Research "Buckets"

Within each discipline, five key areas of investigation were identified to guide the work of the subcommittees. **As Music information was gathered by subcommittees, it was organized into five key "buckets": (1) Program Development; (2) Measuring Skills & Knowledge; (3) Structure (Time, Schedule, etc); (4) Music Pedagogy; and (5) Technology/Resources.** In the early months of the process, the "buckets" were dynamic, meaning that some initial concepts were removed or combined with other key themes. As the expanded team continued to learn, those titles were then finalized. Importantly, the arrows on the bottom of the buckets also demonstrate the relationship between areas (i.e., no silos). The subcommittees' learning and identification of information for the buckets were interconnected, as information from one area informed others. Based upon the information gathered through the bucket findings, a set of emerging recommendations was developed.

Emerging Recommendations

A systems thinking approach was critical to the in-depth program review process. The transition from "findings" to "emerging recommendations" required skills of synthesis, critical thinking, healthy debate, and communication. The entire expanded team used one set of lenses to review the list of internal strengths and weaknesses. The lenses refer to the four subcommittees. Some emerging recommendations were designed to improve current gaps and weaknesses. Other emerging recommendations were identified in the analysis of exemplary programs, universities, businesses, or in the research literature. The team brainstormed recommendations by identifying recurring themes, ideas, and opportunities for growth. The team then discussed, modified, and edited the recommendations. Emerging recommendations were consolidated into a draft. The expanded team worked with the draft to link the emerging recommendations to data provided by the subcommittees.

Balancing Priorities and Resources

As a system, the "ripple effect" of recommendations was built into the process model. The team then put the emerging recommendations into the action-priority matrix. The action-priority matrix evaluates the impact versus the effort of the emerging recommendations. Examining the use of people, time, and money allows for the identification of which recommendations were quick fixes, major projects, fill-ins, and hard slogs. For example, a hard slog was used to categorize those recommendations that would require much effort but have little impact on student learning. The team then identified the final emerging recommendations.

Action Priority Matrix

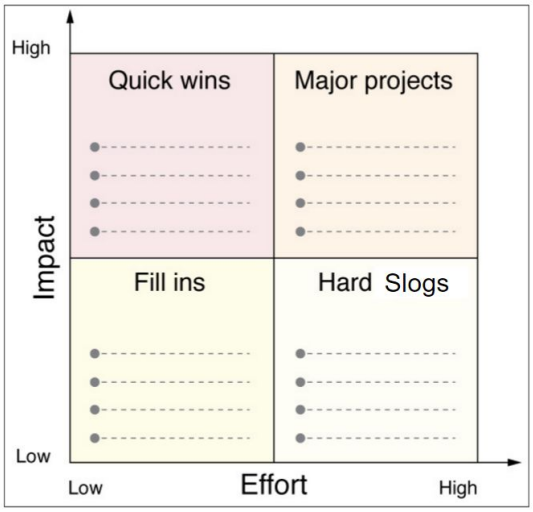

Figure 3: Elmansy, Rafiq. "Time Management Tips for Designers: The Action Priority Matrix."*Designorate*, 14 June 2016, www.designorate.com/time-management-the-action-priority-matrix/. Accessed 14 Mar. 2017.

Continuum of Improvement

Throughout the in-depth program review process, it was important to maintain perspective on the nature of program improvements. Especially when considering effective elements of exemplary schools or programs, the desire to move from the current program ("Point A") to an ideal future ("Point Z") is natural. However, it is more realistic to recognize that meaningful program improvement within an organizational system will often result from a series of smaller steps ("Points B, C, D, etc."). Although depicted as a straight line in the image below (figure 4), the in-depth program review committee recognizes that continuous improvement is not always a linear process.



Figure 4

Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Philosophy and Vision

1. Adopt and widely communicate the Music Department philosophy and vision to internal and external stakeholders while ensuring a practical connection to program design and delivery.

FINDINGS:

Internal Analysis

- There was not a formal, articulated, and shared philosophy or vision statement for the Music Department (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Clearly communicate the definition of music literacy (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Promote music as a subject that impacts every person every day with the concept of music for life for all (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Music helps students calm down, and also helps pump them up for sporting events (Student Voice - Grade 3, 2020)
- The study of music affects the brain thought process in different ways than other courses (Student Voice - High School, 2020).

External Analysis

- Music should be an integral part of the child's overall education (Carnegie Mellon University, 2019).
- "[E]very student in the nation should have an education in the arts. This means that all PreK-12 students must have a comprehensive, balanced, sequential, in-school program of instruction in the arts, taught by qualified teachers, designed to provide students of all ages with skills and knowledge in the arts in accordance with high national, state, and local standards" (NAfME, 1999).
- Fostering creativity is an important part of creating a complete music program (West Virginia University, 2019).
- Music is a part of everyone's life and school music programs provide the vehicle for reaching students (Penn State University, 2019).
- "The study of music includes the study of the people, places, and cultures involved in its creation and performance. As our country becomes increasingly diverse, it is important for students in every school setting to study a wide variety of musical styles, cultures, and genres" (NAfME, 2017).
- Let music be an active part of your life as you get older (Ohio University, 2019).
- Music study helps develop social skills (Volkwein, 2019).
- Music serves a purpose beyond engaging students in classroom lessons. The field provides for active, learning opportunities, as well as programs and events beyond the traditional school years, creating opportunities for life (Ernst, 2019).
- Students should participate actively in music to allow them to "experience the real-life role of musicians" rather than simply becoming "passive consumers of music". (Menard, 2013)
- Music education is for all students and a wide variety of offerings, covering multiple modalities should be provided to ensure relevant, active music learning. (Reichl, 2019; NAfME, 2014; Gerrity, 2009; Clauhs, 2019; Reimer, 2003).
- Students need to be exposed to a variety of different musical sources frequently because people tend to like what they are more familiar with (Guy, Madison, and Schioelde Gunilla, 2017).
- "The innate musicality in all children must be developed to the fullest extent possible" (Bowyer, 2015).

- "In general, the impact of music study on overall student development is very positive: both immediate and long-term gains have been found in students' auditory, perceptual, and aesthetic senses, as well as in their work ethic" (NAfME, 2007).
- "The arts have a unique ability to communicate the ideas and emotions of the human spirit. Connecting us to our history, our traditions, and our heritage, the arts have a beauty and power unique in our culture. At the same time, a growing body of research indicates that education in the arts provides significant cognitive benefits and bolsters academic achievement, beginning at an early age and continuing through school" (NAfME, 1999).
- Performance benchmarks are written by the music department and are updated every year with community input as a central point in curriculum development (Spring Grove SD, 2019).
- A major goal of the music department is to "adhere to other curricular areas and do things globally" (North Allegheny SD, 2019).
- Music curriculum is reviewed and updated every four to six years (State College SD 2019; Quaker Valley SD, 2019).
- As a district and community, we embrace K - 12 music education with a comprehensive and spiraling curriculum (Williamsport Area SD, 2019; Fox Chapel Area SD, 2019).
- The learning process is the focus and is more important than the final product (Quaker Valley SD, 2019).

Implementation Timeline (Anticipated Start/Finish): May 2020 - September 2020

Key Personnel: K-12 Music Teachers, District Administrators

Major Action Steps: (1) Finalize image; (2) Communicate to all members of the Music Department; (3) Publish on district website; (4) Communicate with parents and students at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year via syllabus and open house/curriculum nights; (5) Incorporate into published music curriculum documents; and (6) Incorporate into Program of Studies.

Estimated Budget/Resources: Minimum costs to produce posters. There are no other anticipated costs.

Potential Implications (Short-Term and Long-Term): The development**,** understanding, and communication of a clearly articulated music department vision/philosophy should strengthen program delivery for all stakeholders (i.e., staff, students, and parents). It provides a perspective that can be reinforced and considered when making future program decisions.

Recommendation #2: Curriculum and Standards

1. Infuse the National Common Core Arts Standards and Pennsylvania Arts & Humanities Standards within the Music Department curriculum and ensure vertical alignment and progression according to the suggested competencies by sub-discipline (e.g. General Music, Composition/Theory, Music Technology, Guitar/Keyboarding/Harmonizing Instruments, & Ensemble) and through the four functions: (a) create, (b) perform, (c) respond, and (d) connect.

FINDINGS:

Internal Analysis

- Students in the EHUE Music program develop critical thinking skills and a life-long appreciation of music through classroom instruction and performance opportunities (Student Voice - Grade 6, 2020).
- Music ensemble participation develops skills used throughout other courses and life (Student Voice - High School, 2020).

External Analysis

- The National Common Core Arts Standards are organized by 4 anchors: (a) creating, (b) performing/presenting/producing, (c) responding, and (d) connecting in accordance with the processes utilized by musicians for generations (National Association for Music Education & the National Common Core Arts Standards, 2014).
- "The new standards provide teachers with frameworks that closely match the unique goals of their specialized classes. The standards are presented in a grade-by-grade sequence from pre-K through grade 8, and discrete strands address common high-school music classes, such as Ensembles and Music Composition/Theory. The standards are provided in "strands" that represent the principal ways music instruction is delivered in the United States" (NAfME, 2014).
- Pennsylvania currently holds its own set of Arts & Humanities Standards which serve as the baseline for our curriculum; infusing the National Common Core Standards into the PRSD music curriculum would help us to more fully develop our already robust programming in line with best practices and current research by NAfME (NAfME, 2014; Pennsylvania Arts & Humanities Standards, 2002).
- Performance benchmarks are written by the music department and are updated every year (Spring Grove SD, 2019).
- Community input is a central point in curriculum development (Spring Grove SD, 2019).
- A major goal of the music department is to "adhere to other curricular areas and do things globally" (North Allegheny SD, 2019).
- Music curriculum is reviewed and updated every four to six years (State College SD, 2019; Quaker Valley SD, 2019).
- As a district and community, the Williamsport Area School District embraces K - 12 music education with a comprehensive and spiraling curriculum (Williamsport Area SD, 2019).
- The learning process is the focus and is more important than the final product (Quaker Valley SD, 2019).
- "Spiraling Curriculum" builds a good base for continuity when moving between buildings (Fox Chapel Area SD, 2019).
- Curriculum is written and updated every seven years with a plan to implement something new each year (North Hills SD, 2019).
- Integration of theater elements such as acting, lighting, choreography can enhance the music experience (Wexford Acting Studio, 2019).
- A variety of program offerings above the National Standards should be achieved (Jeter's Theatre, 2019).
- Students should understand music at a deeper level (tonality, how is it supposed to sound, nuance) (West

Virginia University, 2019).

- Music curriculum should be crafted and delivered considering factors such as brain development, culture and broad range of student interests and strengths, thus allowing for an optimal and holistic music experience (NAfME, 2009; Strong, 2019; Norton, 1979; Feierabend, 1995; Gonyou-Brown, 2019; Reimer, 2003).

Implementation Timeline (Anticipated Start/Finish): August 2020 - ongoing

Key Personnel: K-12 Music Teachers, District Administrators

Major Action Steps: (1) P.R. Music Department faculty will align current curriculum units with National Common Core Arts Standards anchors, updating curriculum as needed. (2) Establish student awareness and familiarity K-12 with terms relating to standards and learning anchor. (3) Develop curriculum for any new course offerings intended for implementation.

Estimated Budget/Resources: Cost associated with these recommendations include: professional development for staff; resources to support the new and updated curriculum; professional development time requiring substitute or after-hour costs for staff to work on curriculum.

Potential Implications (Short-Term and Long-Term): (1) General Music Curriculum may need to be revised if new course offerings are instituted.

Recommendation #3: Technology Integration and other Resources

1. Implement technology applications as a means of diversifying music education offerings, which supports the validity of non-performing branches of music education to help meet a wide range of interests and developmental student needs (e.g. adapted courses for special education; music production for "creation" not performance - Garage Band).

FINDINGS:

Internal Analysis

- Evaluate technology resources that can enhance the general music program to support all learners including those students with more intensive learning needs (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Evaluate resources to engage the non-traditional music students (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Third grade students love recorder, xylophone, bass bar, slide whistle, drums, hand drums (Student Voice - Grade 3, 2020).
- Incorporating technology practices, such as iPads, to expose students to music technology resources may be helpful (Student Voice-Grade 6).

External Analysis

- Technology enhances and extends the music experience beyond performance-based offerings. Technology in the music curriculum allows for additional exploration of creativity and serves as a media tool and resource to enhance traditional music instruction (The Royal Conservatory - Demski, et al, 2019; Reimer, 2003).
- "A well-rounded and comprehensive music education program, as envisioned in the 2014 National Music Standards, should exist in every American school; should be built on a curricular framework that promotes awareness of, respect for, and responsiveness to the variety and diversity of cultures; and should be delivered by teachers whose culturally responsive pedagogy enable them to successfully design and implement such an inclusive curricular framework" (NAfME, 2017).
- Music teachers "face unique challenges as they seek to expand their assessment work. For one, music teachers are often responsible for teaching and assessing large numbers of students, such as in ensemble classes or across a weeklong schedule of elementary general music students. Another challenge is that most important accessible work in music classes consists of multimedia products, such as performances and improvisations, which must be recorded and scored individually and in real time. For the sake not only of assessment but also instructional quality, schools should balance large ensemble rehearsals with small group lessons and provide recording devices and other technology to facilitate the collection, management, and scoring of students' music work" (NAfME, 2009).
- "For the sake not only of assessment but also instructional quality, schools should balance large ensemble rehearsals with small group lessons and provide recording and other technology to facilitate the collection, management and scoring of students' music work" (NAfME, 2009).
- "Students need to have experience in creating, to be successful musicians and to be successful 21st Century citizens" (NAfME, 2014).
- Students are one-to-one with iPads allowing for wide-use of technology resources throughout the music department and district (North Allegheny SD, 2019).
- Adaptive music classes are offered at select schools and levels (North Allegheny SD, 2019; Fox Chapel Area SD, 2019).
- Chromebooks and Google Classroom are utilized for student practice recordings (State College SD, 2019; North Hills SD, 2019).
- A classroom 'set' of iPads are utilized in the general music classes (Quaker Valley SD, 2019).

- Elementary general music classes utilize technology to enrich the program (Fox Chapel Area SD, 2019).
- Technology: It is important to keep up to date with technology in the music classroom, especially with composition (Carnegie Mellon University - Raponi, 2019).
- Embrace technology. Students are creating music on their devices, e.g. laptops, phones, tablets, etc. (Ohio University - Talbert & Hayes, 2019).
- Use of current technology is helpful for student growth (Wexford Acting Studio - Sarah McGraw, 2019).
- Students with more specialized needs will not "all experience music the same way". Some will have greater challenges and will need greater levels of support or differentiation (Reichl, 2019).
- "Technology allows us the opportunity to teach students with very little musical background by having them create music and compose music...It allows us to take them through the process of understanding music and what goes into creating music--things that students would typically learn in a performance class--like harmony, melody, and rhythm. It's applied learning. They apply themselves to the practice by actually composing" (Demski, 2019).
- Higher levels of student engagement occur when digital technologies are employed in the learning process (Pecanac, Rajko, et al., 2019).
- It's important to consider how one might go about modifying or adjusting content and instruments that are used in Music classes in order to provide for a level of "independence" within the classroom (Gonyou-Brown, 2019).
- Technology should be used to enhance and extend the music experience beyond performance-based offerings. Technology in the music curriculum allows for additional exploration of creativity and serves as a media tool and resource to enhance traditional music instruction (The Royal Conservatory - Demski, et al., 2019; Reimer, 2003).

Implementation Timeline (Anticipated Start/Finish): August 2020 - June 2021

Key Personnel: K-12 Music Teachers, Special Education and Gifted Education Teachers, Building Level Technology Coaches, Instructional Technology Staff, Building and District Administrators

Major Action Steps: (1) Identify learning goals and big ideas for current courses and new courses. Consider all ranges of learners (Life Skills, Autistic Support, Non-traditional music students); (2) Evaluate resources to support those learning goals; and (3) Develop new courses or refine current courses to integrate these learning activities and resources into the curriculum.

Estimated Budget/Resources: Costs for substitutes during school-day work sessions, hardware and software costs, professional development

Potential Implications (Short-Term and Long-Term): (1) Staffing changes to support adapted learning experiences and new course development; (2) Hardware and software needs as well as professional development for using the new technology; (3) Modifications to existing courses or no longer offering a current course based on new course options.

Recommendation #4: Program Development and Structure (including staffing)

1. Identify and implement **systematic recruitment and retention strategies** for students within each of the performance music groups.

2. Promote music program through **advocacy**, digital footprint, performance and community connections (universities, business, cultural district in Pittsburgh).

3. Implementation of adaptive music classes as needed and where appropriate to better integrate modifications and accommodations for students with special needs / disabilities across all levels.

4. Develop and offer a summer performance program (elementary and middle) to maintain engagement and minimize regression with a **summer 2020 pilot**.

5. Reconfigure schedule and structures to allow for improvements to the music program and its delivery with the following considerations: (1) Kindergarten music; (2) Five day rotation; (3) Improved staffing/section balancing; (4) Managing conflict between middle school music and necessary interventions; and (5) Expand HS music electives to reach a larger portion of students at their level, interests, and needs (creating, performing, and responding to music outside of traditional ensembles).

FINDINGS:

Internal Analysis

- Retention data indicates that percent decrease from grade 4 enrollment to grade 12 enrollment is approximately 70% in band, orchestra, and chorus (Retention DATA: Click Here, 2019)
- Improve breadth and depth of department website (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- Learning about other cultures through music is important. Also, playing music that is directly associated with real life experiences (movies, popular music) has an impact on student learning (Student Voice - Grade 8, 2020).

External Analysis

- "In-school arts programs are designed to reach and teach all students, not merely the interested, the talented, or those with a particular socioeconomic background" (NAfME, 1999).
- Decrease student-to-teacher ratio in order to improve quality of instruction as well as expand course offerings (North Allegheny SD, 2019; State College SD, 2019; Williamsport SD, 2019; Quaker Valley SD, 2019; Fox Chapel Area SD, 2019; North Hills SD, 2019; Bethel Park SD, 2019).
- Strengthen relationships and community engagement with both community members and outside performing groups (Bethel Park SD, North Hills SD, State College SD, Spring Grove SD, 2019).
- Add an adaptive general music class K-6 (Williamsport SD, 2019; Quaker Valley SD, 2019; Fox Chapel Area SD, 2019; Bethel Park SD, 2019).
- Summer music program offerings could boost engagement and retention in the instrumental music programs from 4-5th & 5-6th (North Allegheny SD, 2019).
- Add Kindergarten music to leverage the prime developmental acquisition period (Schwartz & Reichl, 2019; NaFME Early Childhood Position Statement, 2018; Yu, Pao-Ta, et al, 2010; Curtis & Fallin, 2014; Strong, 2019; Norton, 1979).
- "As the National Association for Music Education, we believe all young children have the capacities for music learning. Thus, each has the right to a musical childhood that includes play-based, developmentally appropriate musical engagement that is responsive to gender, ability, and culture, and provided, guided, or

supplemented by a professional early childhood music educator" (NAfME, 2018).

- "Aural music learning begins for a typically-developing fetus at approximately 5 months gestation. From before birth throughout early childhood (i.e., through 8 years old), all children are primed for diverse forms of music engagement and music learning" (NAfME, 2018).
- "By offering intentionally responsive, play-based, developmentally appropriate music engagement opportunities, adults honor young children's agency for music making. Such opportunities must be integral in education settings serving young children, including homes, home-based or center-based care and intervention programs, preschools, pre-kindergartens, and elementary schools" (NAfME, 2018).
- "Young children should enjoy consistent and abundant opportunities for music engagement with adults and other children who seek to develop diverse forms of music expression, which include singing, rhythmically chanting, moving, creating, improvising, making and manipulating a variety of sounds and materials, and talking about their music interests, preferences, and ideas with others" (NAfME, 2018).
- "[E]very student in the nation should have an education in the arts. This means that all PreK-12 students must have a comprehensive, balanced, sequential, in-school program of instruction in the arts, taught by qualified teachers, designed to provide students of all ages with skills and knowledge in the arts in accordance with high national, state, and local standards" (NAfME, 1999).
- Create a 5-day rotation cycle at K-3 level to decrease the inequity among music class sections due to the calendar structure currently in place (PRSD Vertical Team, 2020).
- To ensure the same courses aren't missed repeatedly due to scheduling small group lessons, "it may be necessary to rotate the lesson program so that students miss minimal numbers of class sessions in any one subject" (NAfME, 2007).
- Optimize and balance staffing levels across and between grade spans to allow for balanced sections and offering of programming. Specifically study how staff can be used to create more flexibility at the high school (offer music periods 1-11) (PRSD IDPR Team, 2020):
    - Evaluate how staff is being used across grades 4-8 to determine if additional flexibility exists to provide more elective or course offerings at the high school during period 1, 2, and 3.
    - Place teachers in their musical strength to improve overall instruction.
    - Expand current exposure for future professional openings and tailor interview process to highlight candidate musical and pedagogical strengths.
- Address the conflict between Academic Support and music classes at Pine-Richland Middle School (PRSD IDPR Team, 2020).
- Expand non-performance offerings and electives for high school students (North Allegheny SD, 2019; Spring Grove SD, 2019; State College SD, 2019; Williamsport SD, 2019; Bethel Park SD, 2019):
    - Create tiered ability based ensemble offerings for high school orchestra (North Allegheny SD, 2019; State College SD, 2019).
    - It is important to offer alternative electives such as music technology/composition, AP music theory, and popular music ensembles (North Allegheny SD, 2019; Spring Grove SD, 2019; State College SD, 2019; Bethel Park SD, 2019).
    - "The integration of music technology offerings into traditional school music programs may also help initiate more student-centered, relevant, and engaging learning experiences in school music contexts" (Clauhs, 2019).
- Connect to excellent resources around Pittsburgh (Duquesne University, 2019).
- Music should begin as early as possible. Early childhood should be learning through musical play: singing, moving, responding to music and exploring through music. Devoting a lot of time to this early in the game. Steady beat and match beat are established at a very young age (West Virginia University, 2019).

- Knowing students miss certain days of the week more than others during the school year, the standard "Monday - Friday" schedule should be adjusted, in favor of a schedule that rotates for specialized courses. Every three or more days should be considered so that students are not missing the same class throughout the year (Canady, Robert Lynn., and Michael D. Rettig, 2008).
- Specialized music instruction is proven to be beneficial to students' academic, social and emotional development. Therefore, a secure and functional schedule should be in place to ensure students fully experience the benefits of music instruction (NAfME, 2009).
- "Specialized music instruction (sometimes called pullout programs) usually refers to elective classes that take selected students, but not all students, out of the self-contained classroom to participate in group practices or individual lessons. This is a common practice in many elementary, middle, and high schools across the country and is not limited to regularly scheduled music classes such as band, choir, and orchestra. This position paper uses the term "specialized music instruction" rather than "pullout," a word that can perpetuate the bias against comprehensive schooling" (NAfME, 2007).
- Provide a wide variety of ways in which students can actively participate in music so as to engage as many students as possible, including additional alternatives to traditional performance ensembles (Reimer, 2003).
- Non performance-based courses should be offered in middle school and high school as well as performance-based offerings (Gerrity, 2009).

Implementation Timeline (Anticipated Start/Finish): May 2020 - June 2022

Key Personnel: K-12 Music Teachers, Special Education Department, Instructional Technology Staff, Building Level Technology Coaches, Building and District Administrators

Major Action Steps: (1) Develop a unified system to recruit and retain students in the music program; (2) Optimize resources (staffing, technology, etc.) to create new learning opportunities reflecting student needs and interests. Curriculum will need to be developed to support the adaptive music class; (3) Create connections between the Pine-Richland Music Department and the community; (4) Identify structure and staff and communicate summer performance program; (5) Develop curriculum to integrate music education beginning in kindergarten; and (6) Identify course and scheduling options for the secondary program to address academic support and high school elective options.

Estimated Budget/Resources: Costs associated with this recommendation include: ancillary pay for summer instruction, instructional resource costs for new classes, honorarium for guest clinicians, substitutes for in-school work sessions.

Potential Implications (Short-Term and Long-Term): (1) Curriculum revisions/updates and structure/time needed based on new course offerings and kindergarten integration; (2) Shifting of professional staff assignments to maximize expertise; (3) Summer resources needed to support the program (facilities, staff, instruments/resources, etc.); (4) Modifications/reduction of existing courses based on new course recommendations; and (5) professional development opportunities provided to staff to best support adaptive music courses for students with special needs.

Recommendation #5: Music Pedagogy (Instructional Approach & Professional Development)

1. Develop a blend of research-based pedagogical strategies for music education to enhance learning across multiple learning styles and modalities as is developmentally appropriate, with consideration of vertical alignment and skill progression.
2. Enhance and improve concert experiences for students, as both producers and consumers of music, through strategies such as etiquette; repertoire selection; resource database; etc.

FINDINGS:

Internal Analysis

- Instructional strategies:
    - Ensure constant alignment with instructional strategies, implementing proper emphasis on active music making and other learning activities (PRSD Vertical Team, 2019).
    - Utilize Feierabend lesson breakdown (not necessarily his program or materials) as a means of unifying General Music instructional approach vertically (see pie chart of Doing/Literacy/About) (PRSD Vertical Team, 2019).
- Solidify an effective and uniform way to teach audience etiquette and understanding of a variety of performance environments (PRSD Vertical Team, 2019).
- Develop a living, searchable, collaborative, district-wide database document of resources and instructional examples (song titles, recordings, sheet music links, videos etc.) (PRSD Vertical Team, 2019).
- Students benefit from being in front of an audience. Music inspires creativity and helps with other content areas (Town Hall, 2020).

External Analysis

- Instructional strategies:
    - Provide ongoing professional development in these strategies and other current best practices (North Allegheny SD, 2019; Williamsport Area SD, 2019; Spring Grove SD, 2019).
    - Utilize in-service time as a music department to share best practices, instructional strategies, and assessment methods (North Allegheny SD, 2019; Williamsport Area SD, 2019; Spring Grove SD, 2019).
    - Utilize in-service time to observe music teachers outside of the Pine-Richland School District (North Allegheny SD, 2019).
    - Develop a system to support professional development conferences and workshops outside of the district (Spring Grove SD, 2019).
    - "In-service music teachers must (a) be reflective and critically observe their own teaching practice, (b) have opportunities to observe other teachers teaching, (c) participate in workshops designed to develop an understanding of learning theory and its application to music instruction, and (d) engage in action research, systematically examining the effectiveness of instructional approaches in their own classroom (Duling, 1992).
    - Consider what students are listening to and how their music fits into the program. (Oberlin, 2019).

    - Project-based learning can be utilized effectively in the music classroom (Tobias, 2015).
- Continuous and relevant professional development is an effective and necessary component to maintaining high quality methods and instruction (Short-term: workshops/courses - Long-term: ongoing scholarly awareness of best practices, self-reflection and peer observation (Bowles & Duling, 1992)

Implementation Timeline (Anticipated Start/Finish): August 2020 - June 2021

Key Personnel: K-12 Music Teachers, Building Level Technology Coaches, Building and District Administrators

Major Action Steps: (1) Develop a professional development timeline for blending research-based instructional strategies into K-12 music courses; (2) Develop a system for in-district and out-of-district peer observations and reflections; (3) Work with music staff, administrators, local partners, parents, and students to improve concert experiences.

Estimated Budget/Resources: Cost associated with these recommendations include fees and/or tuition associated with courses and/or training; substitute costs for coverage during peer observations; travel costs if professional development sessions are outside of Pine-Richland; resource needs to support research-based instructional strategy recommendations

Potential Implications (Short-Term and Long-Term): (1) Professional development for all K-12 staff to learn a variety of research-based instructional strategies; (2) K-12 curriculum modifications may be necessary based on recommendations; (3) Potential modification to concert resources, structure, design, and delivery.

Recommendation #6: Assessments

1. Create a systematic approach, leveraging technology where appropriate, to assess individuals and groups, including self-reflection.
2. Ensure feedback methods include both student achievement (points in time) and growth (between points).

FINDINGS:

Internal Analysis

- Build a stronger knowledge of the hardware and software that will enhance and expand music instruction (e.g., Google classroom, IWB, music department iPads, YouTube, Smart Music extending learning outside of the classroom) (PRSD Vertical Team, 2019).
- Develop and integrate common assessments and rubrics (available to parents and students for self-assessment) (PRSD Vertical Team, 2019).
- It is important for older students to do peer observation / evaluation and to take ownership over their assessments (Town Hall, 2020).

External Analysis

- Design professional development opportunities for teachers within the music department regarding the use of technology for both instruction and assessment (e.g. create, perform, connect, and respond) (North Allegheny SD, 2019; Williamsport Area SD, 2019; Spring Grove SD, 2019).
- Other assessment options include: listening reflections, concert reflections, recordings, use of rubrics (Oberlin, 2019).
- Setting appropriate benchmarks is essential when assessing student achievement (Penn State University, 2019).
- Self-assessment and learning how to self-assess is key when working in ensemble settings (Wexford Acting Studio, 2019).
- Rubrics developed with student and teacher input can be more meaningful and engaging (Waters, 2017).
- Music teachers should establish common assessments while taking into consideration a variety of data sources such as group size, self-assessments, and using technological tools. Students also benefit from self and peer evaluation methods (NafMe 2009).
- Musical instruction books now have downloadable technology that can be used to aid assessment (Christine Gallagher, Volkwein's Music, 2020).
- Formative, Diagnostic and Progressive assessments should be utilized (Carnegie Mellon University, 2019).
- "Music program assessment should include a variety of sources of data, at least some of which should be derived from common assessments to permit consistent evaluation of program progress and quality across schools and even districts" (NAfME, 2009).
- "While the forms and content of music assessment may appropriately vary, some form of regular assessment of music programs should be adopted. The assessment should measure student learning across a range of standards representative of quality, balanced music curriculum, including not only responding to music but also creating and performing music. This assessment should serve the goal of educational accountability by providing data that can be included in the school- or district-level "report card" disseminated to the public as required by law" (NAfME, 2009).

- "Given the importance of assessment in public education, music educators have an interest in supporting approaches to assessment that are **standards-based, practical, and serve to help school music programs provide the best possible experiences to all students**. This interest can best be achieved through collaboration among music educators, and with other colleagues in their school, district and state, including higher education. The states that are most experienced in the development of assessment in music education have found that assessment will be most successful when the music education community works together to develop a "culture of assessment" within the system. This culture must include a willingness to embed regular assessment of students and programs within the curriculum and to embrace the public reporting of the outcomes of this assessment. Effective assessment systems provide teachers with information that enables them to provide better instruction to students *and* to give parents, administrators, and other decision-makers information they can use to evaluate the sufficiency of resources allotted to music education" (NAfME, 2009).
- "For the sake not only of assessment but also instructional quality, schools should balance large ensemble rehearsals with small group lessons and provide recording and other technology to facilitate the collection, management and scoring of students' music work" (NAfME, 2009).

Implementation Timeline (Anticipated Start/Finish): August 2020 - June 2021

Key Personnel: K-12 Music Teachers, Special Education and Gifted Education Teachers, Building Level Technology Coaches, Building and District Administrators, Local Partners

Major Action Steps: (1) Provide all staff with the necessary training and resources on research-based programs that will provide them with a variety of options for assessing all learners; (2) Develop rubrics to aid in assessment; (3) Refine common assessments; (4) Provide access to technology for assessment and feedback; (5) Develop goal setting skills with students to conduct self-reflections and assessments.

Estimated Budget/Resources: Costs could include assessment resources, online learning platforms, substitute costs for professional development, and curriculum revisions.

Potential Implications (Short-Term and Long-Term): (1) The use of technology for assessments must be easily accessible and user friendly for all staff and students; (2) Challenges exist in balancing the time needed for assessment, feedback, and instruction; (3) Student achievement and growth measures can be used to provide students and parents with specific feedback over the course of a school year.

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