





Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

Interlude

Music Makes Us Dashboard Report





## Interlude Dashboard Report

Update on the Implementation and Impact of Music Makes Us® in Metro Nashville Public Schools

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foreword

It takes more than a village to develop and sustain quality music education in an urban public school setting. In the case of Nashville, it takes a very large, complex, ever-evolving village with interwoven layers of systems, sectors, and support.

In an earlier 2013 study, *Prelude: Music Makes Us Baseline Research Report*, we learned that music education is a worthy investment for our students, contributing to their cognitive, social, and emotional growth right here in our own schools.

Here in our most recent program study, we asked researcher Dr. Dana Powell Russell to help us look more deeply at what we are doing well, examine the barriers to progress and recommend avenues for growth. As we chart the future growth and direction for Music Makes Us, we want to understand what the data are telling us within the context of the very human endeavor that drives the work.

Music Makes Us®, a public/private initiative jointly held by Metro Nashville Public Schools, the mayor's office, and music and arts business and community leaders, is beginning its fourth year of operations. With the goal of providing quality music education for all students in Metro Schools, the initiative has made significant advances in access, participation, and quality. Band has been restored at all 33 middle schools. Ten new middle school choral programs have been developed. Over 45 new classes in mariachi, world percussion, rock band, and country/bluegrass reach middle and high school students in 18 schools. The business of music is taking root in a world-class recording studio and student-run record label. A new teacher evaluation growth model has been implemented, examining and promoting teacher effectiveness through a portfolio of student work.

The initiative is also becoming a model for effective public/private partnerships. Former Mayor Karl Dean, the CMA Foundation Board, industry partners Nancy Shapiro at The Recording Academy and John Esposito at Warner Music, Jennifer Cole at Metro Nashville Arts Commission, Mary Luehrsen at the NAMM Foundation, and many more higher education and community leaders are standing shoulder to shoulder with Metro Schools in this work.

We are grateful to the NAMM Foundation and CMA Foundation for their support of this study. We look forward to sharing our findings with the field and hope it will serve to advance the work of others who are charting a similar path.

Laurie T. Schell
Director, Music Makes Us
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools



#### **About Music Makes Us**

A joint effort of Metro Nashville Public Schools, the mayor's office and music industry and community leaders, the Music Makes Us initiative aspires to be a national model for high quality music education. With a focus on music literacy and student participation, Music Makes Us is strengthening traditional school music while adding a contemporary curriculum that embraces new technologies and reflects our diverse student population.<sup>1</sup>

#### 2012-2013 Baseline Study

In its launch year, 2012-2013, Music Makes Us commissioned a baseline study<sup>2</sup> about the impact of music participation. The study found significant correlational benefits for MNPS students, with benefits increasing as music participation increased.

The baseline study established that the benefits of music education were already evident in MNPS schools, and that the keys to maximizing those benefits would be to *expand* the reach of the music program by engaging more students, and to *extend* music participation in grades 5 through 12 by engaging more students beyond the 1-year threshold.

The table below illustrates the differences found among students with no music, up to 1 year of music, and more than one year of music. Extended music participation was associated with higher attendance, GPA, graduation rates, and ACT scores in both English and Math, as well as lower incidence of discipline reports.

#### Overview of Key Indicators for Students by Music Participation Level

	No Music	≤ 1 Year	> 1 Year
MNPS 2012 Seniors (# of students)	3,897	1,169	940
Students in Each Level of Participation (rounded)	65%	20%	16%
Attendance Rate (4-year average)	87%	91%	93%
Discipline Reports (4-year average/year)	4.34	3.75	3.23
Senior Grade Point Average (4 point scale)	2.51	2.61	2.89
Graduation Rate (%)	60%	81%	91%
ACT-English Score (average, 36 point scale)	16.95	17.64	19.58
ACT-Math Score (average, 36 point scale)	17.20	17.62	18.67

p < .05

<sup>1</sup> Source: http://musicmakesus.org

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Prelude: Music Makes Us Baseline Research Report (MNPS, 2013).

#### 2014-2015 Program Evaluation

The purpose of the 2014-2015 Music Makes Us research and program evaluation project was two-fold: 1) to build on the baseline 2013 study, specifically to learn more about how to augment participation in music by eliminating possible barriers, and 2) to assess the efficacy of the current program design in its ability to achieve long-term goals of equity, quality, and access.

#### **Research Questions**

The study was framed by five overarching questions:

- To what extent does the K-12 music program reach as many students as possible, and offer interested students a pathway through beginning, intermediate, and advanced music learning?
- 2. To what extent do the elementary and middle school music programs prepare students to succeed in music at the high school level?
- 3. What is the relationship between music teacher effectiveness and student outcomes in music?
- 4. To what extent do our program theory, design, and implementation support our intended impact?
- 5. What indicators should MNPS use to measure and improve program impact over the long term?

#### Methods

The methods included quantitative and qualitative analysis of existing program documents and districtwide data, as well as original interviews, focus groups, and surveys with a range of stakeholders including 10 program funders, partners, and advisors; 4 district administrators, 20 counselors, 11 school administrators, and all 200 music teachers; and 228 students in grades 5 and 9 through 12. In all, nearly 500 individuals contributed to the knowledge base in this year's study, providing rich context for the districtwide program data.

Program stakeholders also engaged in a logic modeling process to articulate the relationship between the program theory, its practical implementation, and the desired impact on students. Further, a dashboard of valid, meaningful indicators was developed and vetted in collaboration with the MNPS Research, Evaluation, and Assessment team, in order to gauge annual progress of the program toward its goals moving forward. The logic model and dashboard results are presented in the following sections.

#### **Logic Model**

The following is a streamlined version of the working program logic model, depicting the key inputs, activities, outcomes, and impact intended by the Music Makes Us initiative.<sup>3</sup> The model weaves together goals related to the partnership and the program, with a vision of change that extends beyond participating students to the district, the Nashville community, and nationwide.

Cross-sector leadership, advocacy, and resources

Broad-based community awareness and support

Community partnerships, inkind donations, and industry expertise

District commitment, infrastructure, staffing, and resources Cultivate
advocates,
partners, and
funders

Improve music infrastructure, policies and procedures

> Recruit, develop, and retain high quality teachers

Differentiate and improve standards-based, technology-enhanced music instruction

Expand and improve facilities, instructional materials, and instruments

Sustainable, high quality music program

More musicstudents at all tiers

More middle school students in music through 8th grade

More high school students in music beyond 1 year

Improved music engagement, learning, and achievement

Expanded socialemotional learning

Growth mindset the norm among music students MNPS students possess knoweldge, skills, and mindset to excel within and beyond music

Vibrant MNPS music culture attracts families, partners, and resources

Nashville stands out as an engaged community of lifelong music learners, creators, and supporters

Music Makes Us serves as a national model for public, urban K-12 music education

 $<sup>^3</sup>$  A more detailed version of the program logic model can be downloaded at http://musicmakesus.org/resources/research.

#### **Dashboard**

The dashboard is intended to gauge the progress of Music Makes Us toward its goals, and reflects a shift away from prior tracking of general student achievement data, focusing more on program-specific outcomes. This report presents the concise dashboard with key insights for each indicator. This summary report presents the concise dashboard with key insights for each indicator. Additional context and data behind the dashboard can be found in a suite of research briefs written during the course of the study, available at http://musicmakesus.org/resources/research.

#### **Partnership Indicators**

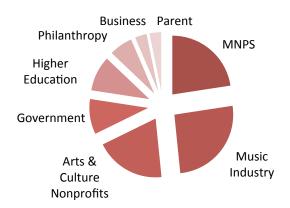
Music Makes Us is underpinned by an expanding cross-sector, public-private partnership. The following dashboard indicators provide insight into the nature and health of this partnership.

#### **Music Industry Arts & Culture Nonprofits Partners Contributors Business** Higher Sector **Education Major Contributors** Founding Donors **Advisory** Council Government Philanthropy Nashville Metro Nashville **Families Public Schools**

#### **Circles of Engagement**

- Music Makes Us succeeds in involving a broad cross section of stakeholders in various aspects of the initiative, from the Advisory Council, to financial and in-kind contributions, to program implementation partners.
- While the cross-sector breadth is in place, the depth of engagement for each sector varies. This variation depends to some extent on the nature of their involvement (e.g., donors v. partners) and—perhaps most importantly—on the individuals involved having a clear understanding and commitment to their role in the progress of the initiative.

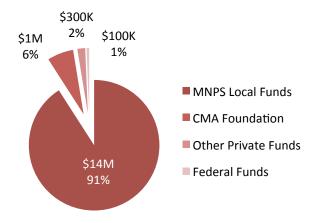
#### **Current Advisory Council Sectors**



#### **Key Insights**

- The advisory council includes a range of sectors, with most advisors representing the music industry, nonprofits, and MNPS.
- The one non-music business advisor is from the finance sector.
   Government participation is at the city level, although past federal experience is represented.

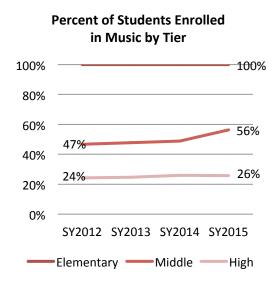
### 2014–2015 Music Makes Us Funding Sources

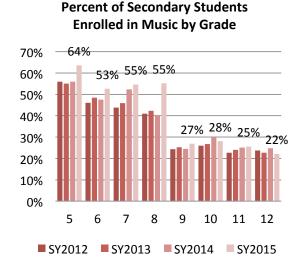


- Nearly all of the current annual funding for Music Makes Us comes from local district funds, augmented by a very significant grant from the CMA Foundation.
- Additional private and government grants are necessary to ensure that program reach keeps pace with both district growth and program expansion.

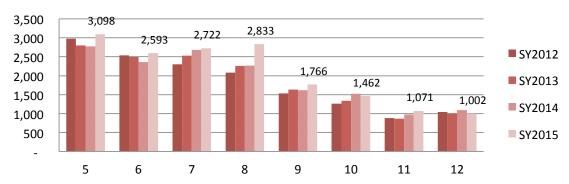
#### **Participation Indicators**

The following dashboard charts explore changes in student participation in K-12 music over the first 3 years of Music Makes Us. The year 2012 is included for comparison as the pre-program baseline year.



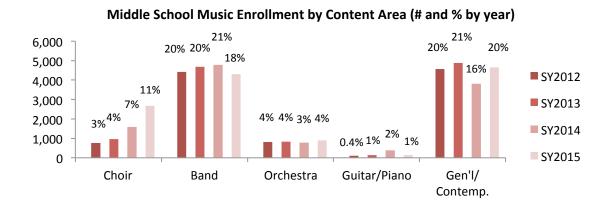


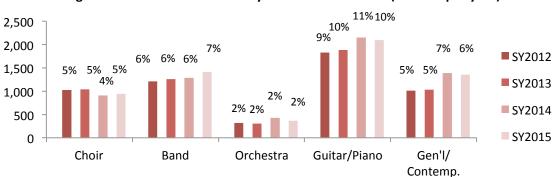
#### Number of Secondary Students Enrolled in Music by Grade



- Music Makes Us is succeeding in sustaining music education for 100% of elementary school students, is now exceeding its goal of reaching 50% of middle school students, and is 9 percentage points below its goal of 35% high school enrollment in music. Elementary and high school music is typically provided in year-long courses. It was not possible to determine what proportion of middle school students were enrolled in year-long versus semester versus 9-week courses.
- In the past 3 years, K-12 district enrollment has grown by 1,500 students (not including charter schools), and music enrollment has grown by 3,600 students during the same period. All elementary school students continue to receive music instruction as part of the standard curriculum. Middle school music participation has increased 9% in 3 years, and high school music participation has grown 2%, outpacing district growth at both tiers.

- Music Makes Us has focused resources at the middle school level in order to reduce the music participation "cliff" between 4th and 5th grade. In 2013, the dropoff was 44%, and that has now been reduced to 36%. The most dramatic gain in music participation is found among 8th graders, with a 14% increase in music participation over the past 3 years.
- While the elementary-middle cliff is improving, the middle-high cliff has grown from 16% to 28%, despite modest participation gains at the high school level. The only grade level at which music participation has declined over time is 12th grade, due primarily to challenges with course master schedules and limitations on arts electives in the graduation requirements.



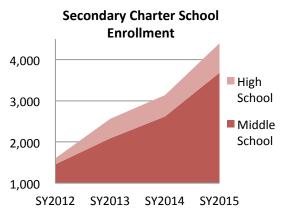


High School Music Enrollment by Music Content Area (# and % per year)

#### **Key Insights**

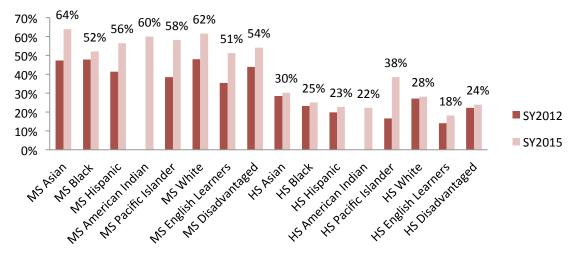
• The bar charts above show the number and percentage of the total MNPS student population enrolled in those content areas over time. Because all 4 years are included, it is possible to see the fluctuations in participation from year to year. At the middle school level, the jump in choir participation is seen here as 8% growth, or 1,911 more choir students over 3 years. The content areas with the greatest reach in middle school continue to be band and general/contemporary offerings.

• It is important to note that MNPS has expanded its charter school population at the middle school level by 3,685 students during these first 3 years of Music Makes Us (see chart at right). The program does not currently serve charter schools, and music offerings by the charters are limited. Although noncharter middle school enrollment has declined in recent years, Music Makes Us is reaching more and more students.



 At the high school level, the program has kept pace with district growth over 3 years, sustaining engagement with 200 more students in band; 50 more in orchestra; over 250 more in individual instrument courses such as guitar and piano; and, most significantly, nearly 350 new students in general/contemporary music courses.

#### % of Secondary Students Enrolled in Music by Subgroup & Tier



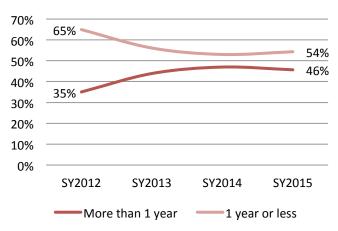
- The chart above provides insight into how equitably Music Makes Us is reaching its diverse student population. As a reference point, the largest ethnic groups in MNPS are, in order of prevalence (2014): 44% Black, 31% White, 19% Hispanic.
- As depicted in the first half of the bar chart, the 2012 middle school music program did not reach the majority of students in any demographic or learning subgroup. Now in 2015, the program is reaching a majority of students in every subgroup across the board. The most significant increases in participation are found among Hispanic students (up 15%), English Learners (up 16%), and economically disadvantaged students (up 10%), based on their proportions in the overall student population. It is worth noting that, despite a small gain, Music Makes Us has been least successful in attracting Black students to the music program.

In high schools, shown in the second half of the chart, Music Makes Us has also increased participation in every demographic and learning subgroup, although at a more modest pace. Again, the biggest gains are seen with students in the Hispanic (3%) and English Learner (4%) subgroups. The outliers are the American Indian and Pacific Islander groups, which appear to show great gains simply because their proportions are extremely small in the student population.

#### **Key Insights**

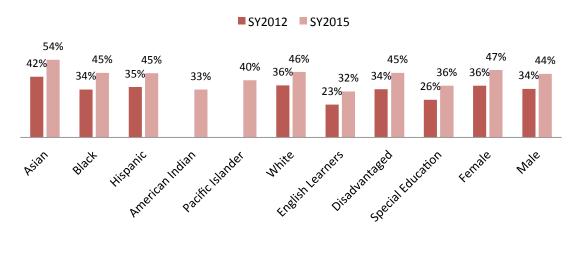
- The 2013 baseline study found that music participation beyond 1 year was associated with the highest levels of engagement and achievement in school. Since Music Makes Us launched in Fall 2012, the percentage of graduating seniors who took more than 1 year of high school music has increased by 11%.
- These increases are significant because students are only required to take 1 year in any arts discipline in order to

#### **High School Music Participation Among Graduating Seniors**



- graduate. Therefore, these results indicate that more students are opting to continue beyond that minimum requirement in music.
- It is interesting to note that these results appear to plateau in SY2015, which could be due to significant challenges with scheduling and competing graduation requirements reported by students, teachers, and counselors.

#### **Graduating Seniors with More than 1 Year of High School Music**

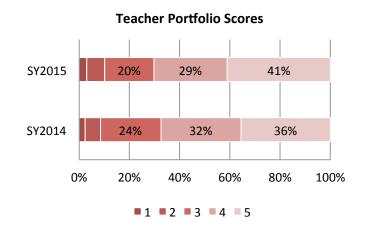


#### **Key Insights**

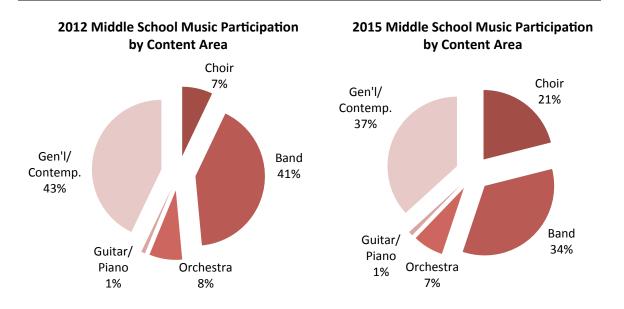
- Over the first 3 years of Music Makes Us, all subgroups have seen gains in the percent of graduating seniors taking more than 1 year of high school music. In fact, the growth in this area appears very evenly distributed, with each subgroup gaining between 9% and 12%.
- It is interesting to note that while there has been relatively limited growth in music participation among Black students in secondary school (p. 11), the growth in Black students taking more than 1 year of music in high school is on pace with other subgroups.

#### **Instruction Indicators**

High quality music instruction is critical to student learning, and a breadth of course offerings is a key strategy for inspiring and engaging all kinds of students in long-term music participation. The following indicators shed light on the current status of music instruction.

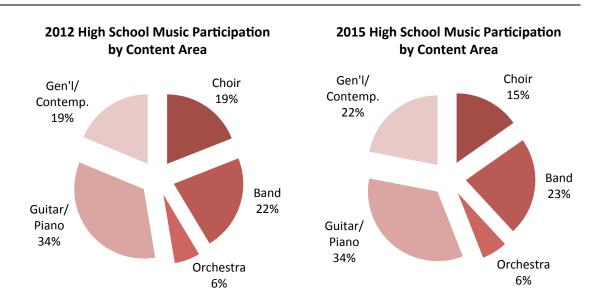


- The new Tennessee Fine Arts Student Growth Measures System is a key state indicator of teacher quality.
- In 2015, 41% of MNPS music teachers earned the highest possible score, up 5% from 2014, the first year the system was implemented.



#### Key Insights

- Another instruction indicator is the range of content areas in which music is being offered.
   Over the past 3 years, a significant investment in expanding choir in middle schools has tripled the percent of music students taking choir in that tier.
- Overall, more middle school students are participating in music across all content areas, and participation is gradually growing more evenly distributed among choir, band, and general/contemporary content.



- The breakdown of music by content area has not shifted as much at the high school level. Choir has dipped 4%, while general/contemporary courses have drawn 3% more students.
- The expansion of contemporary music offerings—such as Hip Hop, World Percussion,
   Mariachi, and Rock Band—is a key strategy for attracting and sustaining music participation
   among high school students.

#### Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on extensive quantitative and qualitative analysis, and collaborative interpretation of the full set of data gathered from the hundreds of stakeholders who participated in the study. The recommendations are clustered into the key layers of the initiative: partnership, infrastructure, instruction, and participation. Additional recommendations are offered regarding data tracking.

#### **Partnership**

- Continue to strengthen and unify messaging about Music Makes Us. Advisors and district leaders agree that awareness of the initiative is increasing, although most say that awareness is still somewhat limited to the stakeholders immediately involved and their constituents. This opportunity is beginning to be addressed through general ad campaigns. Several interviewees noted the opportunity to increase visibility for Music Makes Us by making it a systemic part of school communication with families, such as announcements at schoolwide events. It was also suggested that public awareness could be improved by increasing the frequency of student performances at community events outside of school, such as in partnership with the Nashville Convention and Visitors Corporation events department.
- Cultivate consistent, deep engagement and long-term commitment among stakeholders. The initiative found itself potentially vulnerable amid simultaneous leadership transitions within both the City Government and MNPS; however, the crosssector Advisory Group is steadfast in its long-term commitment to the initiative and is seen as a positive force to act as a bridge during the transition. There is an opportunity to identify and implement strategies to move key stakeholders in all sectors from awareness to deeper engagement. At the same time, it is critical for the initiative to establish long-term commitments with organizational anchors, such as the Mayor's Office and the School Board, so that leadership transitions do not adversely affect the advocacy and resources for K-12 music education.
- Create more directive roles for key advisors and partners. Members of the Advisory Council perceive that they have multiple roles. About half of the advisors feel that their role is clearly to raise awareness and to advocate for the initiative in the community, one-third noted their role is to connect Music Makes Us with potential financial resources, and another third see their role as connecting the initiative specifically with the music industry. A common theme among the advisors was the desire and need for a more specific "call to action" or "marching orders"—specific requests and tasks to carry out that support the goals and objectives of Music Makes Us. The current meetings are perceived as informational in nature, and there is a desire for the meetings to be more action oriented. There appears to be untapped potential for staff to make direct asks for financial support from some of the corporate entities around the table.
- Establish a formal fund development plan. Music Makes Us has successfully secured substantial funds from individuals, foundations, corporations, and government programs to supplement MNPS's core investment in music education. Now that the initiative has completed its initial 3-year phase, it is recommended that Music Makes Us establish a formal multi-year fund development plan in parallel with the strategic plan, in order to secure the future of K-12 music in MNPS. The process would include steps

such as taking stock of the initiative's strengths and assets, identifying key funding stakeholders and prospects, setting realistic fundraising goals with each funding sector, designing the campaign, and implementing the campaign with the involvement of the Advisory Council and other partners.

#### Infrastructure

- Formally adopt music as a district turnaround strategy. National and local research has established that music participation has benefits for students both within and beyond the music room. An internal advocacy campaign is needed to engage and develop a music-minded district network horizontally across departments and vertically through administrative levels. Continued vocal support and visibility provided by the Mayor's Office and the Director of Schools are critical; however, formal policy action by the School Board that is championed, in turn, by district and school administrators will be key.
- Align policies and practices to support music education as a districtwide priority. If the
  motivation of the City of Nashville and MNPS is, as stated, to establish a world-class
  music education program, it will be important to identify, articulate, adopt, and align
  policies and procedures in departments beyond music that enable music to reach its full
  potential. Master scheduling, staffing, budgeting at both the district and school levels
  need to reflect the priority placed on music education, in order to establish its shared
  status among other top strategies of the district.
- Minimize and/or eliminate practices that limit music participation. Particularly at the elementary school level, students who need additional support in subjects such as language arts and math typically receive remediation during music or other subjects that are deemed less important by school administrators. Because emphasis on high-stakes testing is so pervasive, pulling students out of music for remediation in other subjects is an example of a common practice that could be eliminated as part of a systemic districtwide effort to elevate music education as a school turnaround strategy. Similarly, music teachers reported that they are required to attend professional development that is unrelated to their specialization, and to remediate students in subjects other than music. As noted in the next section on Instruction, it is critical that music teachers have ample opportunities for music-specific training, that their instructional time be devoted to their expertise, and that their students not be pulled from music class for remediation in other subjects (i.e., Response to Instruction and Intervention).
- Engage school counselors in identifying and implementing solutions to participation barriers. School counselors are on the front lines of student and family decision-making when it comes to music enrollment. Their role as informants and advisors regarding student music options at each school and tier level makes counselors important allies in ensuring that the music pathway is both clear and accessible to students who wish to pursue it. Counselors can help to develop and deliver consistent information about the K-12 music program at critical transitions to 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades, and at stages where electives become more limited in 7<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades.

• Implement workplace policies and practices that encourage the recruitment, retention, and success of high quality music teachers. The study found that teachers working at different tier levels have different needs in the work environment. At the elementary level, the principal's support is key to music teacher longevity and success, while middle school and high school music teachers agreed that a music-friendly master schedule is the most critical factor. Teachers at all levels need additional instructional planning time during the regular school day, and report that having music as a high-visibility part of school culture contributes to their job satisfaction. The school board, district administrators, and school administrators all have roles to play in ensuring that music teachers have strong support; sufficient staffing, salary, and benefits; ample instructional materials, and instruments; and guaranteed site-level discretionary funds for individual program needs, independent of booster clubs and parent fundraising.

#### Instruction

- Establish professional development system to support both districtwide goals and individual teacher needs. As noted earlier, district professional development days have not provided for music-specific networking and training. Teachers are eager for an instructional support and training system that takes into consideration individual experience level, school tier, content area, portfolio evaluation score, needs, and interests. Such a system will help teachers assess their training needs, offer content-specific training, and provide mentors and grants to support individual professional growth.
- Scale up the individualized instructional practices found in exemplar schools. Some schools in MNPS manage to provide students with master classes, sectionals, private lessons, and peer tutors as part of regular music instruction. MNPS should work toward a districtwide staffing structure that enables a network of intensive instructional support for students, such as extra support for beginning and struggling students and instrument specialists to teach advanced techniques. Addressing this issue will involve funding and personnel for master classes, sectionals, and private lessons during the regular school day, and a consistent protocol for peer tutors within school music programs.
- Review and update K-12 music facility plans. In 2012, MNPS commissioned a
  comprehensive music program facilities audit for middle and high schools, and some
  facilities improvements are underway as a result. The National Association for Music
  Education recently released facility guidelines, and it would be beneficial for a working
  group to review these guidelines vis-à-vis the prior audit, adjust the current building
  specification guidelines for performing arts in MNPS, and make recommendations
  regarding the adequacy and consistency of classroom, rehearsal, and performance
  spaces, as well as technology and safety.
- Provide consistent, adequate instructional materials and scale up the use of successful
  instructional technologies. As Music Makes Us unfolds districtwide, both needs and
  success stories are emerging across school clusters. MNPS has the opportunity to
  stabilize the program base through fundamental support for day-to-day needs such as
  sheet music, while simultaneously raising program caliber across the board by scaling up

- effective technologies such as the Selmer Music Guidance Survey, Quaver, and SmartMusic. Because Music Makes Us varies with the academic format of each school, site-level discretionary music funds are needed to allow teachers to integrate materials and technologies to meet their unique program needs.
- Grow new instrument inventory and repair program to keep pace with district and program growth. Though significant district and private investments have been made, ongoing funding for high quality instruments and instrument repair will always be a core need of Music Makes Us. As Nashville attracts more and more families, MNPS enrollment is growing steadily, and Music Makes Us reaches out to a higher percentage of students each year. In order to achieve its music participation goals and maximize the benefits for students, it is critical to continually augment the district's instrument inventory and improve the efficiency of instrument repair/replacement. Teachers recommend the creation of instrument lending libraries both on-site during the school year and off-site during the summer (e.g., via libraries or community centers).

#### **Participation**

- Continue to improve overall K-12 program continuity. The program has succeeded in boosting middle school music participation to the point where 55% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders were enrolled in music in SY2015. While the "elementary-middle cliff" is improving, the "middle-high cliff" has jumped from 16% to 28%, despite modest program growth at the high school level. Music Makes Us will need to devote additional resources at the high school level in order to ensure that the benefits of middle school music engagement can extend through 12<sup>th</sup> grade for students who seek it.
- Extend the choir pipeline at the high school end. Middle school choir has been a
  priority and a success story for Music Makes Us. As choir participation has tripled at the
  middle school level and declined 4% at the high school level, it will be important for
  Music Makes Us to ensure that high school choir programs can sustain the coming influx
  of experienced choir students as they matriculate up to high school.
- Strengthen music participation growth among Black students. Music Makes Us has succeeded in expanding music participation with all demographic and learning subgroups, most notably Hispanic students, English Learners, and disadvantaged students. The gains are stronger in middle school than in high school, and the program has been *least* successful in engaging Black students in music courses. Because Black students are the largest ethnic subgroup in the district, it may be harder to move the needle in terms of percentage on this indicator, but it is important for MNPS to explore other specific issues that could be inhibiting participation (e.g., the appeal or accessibility of the current course offerings).
- Focus on strategies that address top barriers to student participation. Teachers reported that the top five barriers to student participation in music are: master schedule conflicts, parental support, transportation, access to instruments, and challenges with practicing. These same core challenges were reported independently by students. The current scheduling system, course articulation, and variations in offerings among schools make it particularly challenging for students to return to music in later grades if they decide to skip a semester or year, or if they move to a new school. This is a particularly important issue for MNPS, given that roughly one-third of students move

into, out of, or across town in any given year. Both music and non-music students at all grade levels noted their decision to stick with music was most influenced by family members or friends, with high school music students citing the encouragement of their music teacher being just as influential as that of family and friends.

#### **Data Tracking**

- Improve tracking of student participation in Midstate music competitions. The program staff expressed interest in tracking students' participation and results in Midstate music competitions as a measure of music program outcomes. The existing tracking system counts students multiple times, so it is not yet possible to track student participation in terms of the percentage of music students taking part in these competitions.
- Refine tracking of middle school music participation. Middle school participation numbers have made strong gains, resulting in the K-5 music experience being extended to K-8 for a majority of students. It was not possible to analyze the percentage of students enrolled in the three types of courses offered: year long, semester, and 9-week rotations. Understanding the duration of middle school course participation could provide valuable insights for administrators regarding whether certain types of courses are associated with extended music participation over students' K-12 experience.
- Track contemporary music course enrollment separately from general music course enrollment. In an effort to boost secondary school music participation, Music Makes Us has expanded contemporary course offerings such as world percussion, mariachi, hip hop, and rock band. Unfortunately, the current course tracking system for the district groups these new courses with more general music courses such as music appreciation, history, and theory. In order to more accurately gauge the impact of the contemporary offerings on music participation, the district will need to create a new data tracking category specifically for contemporary courses.

#### Conclusion

During its first 3 years, the Music Makes Us initiative has focused on creating a K-12 music program with a strong foundation of access, equity, and quality. The program has made significant progress overall in engaging more students in K-12 music, improving the quality of the program and instruction, and paving the music education pathway through 8<sup>th</sup> grade for the majority of MNPS students.

In its next phase, it will be important for Music Makes Us to expand its efforts beyond access and equity, to include engagement and continuity, particularly at the high school level. Engagement in the sense that more students, particularly African American students, need to feel that the music program is for them, and continuity in laying out the stepping stones that extend the music pathway through high school for more students.

This continuity can only be achieved through cross-departmental district commitment, leadership, and advocacy that generates broader buy-in, collaboration, and policies to ensure that music education is a high priority. With a solid cross-sector network and cross-department infrastructure, Music Makes Us can advance toward its intended broad-reaching impact for students, the district, the Nashville community, and beyond.

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