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UNITED STATES EXPERIENCE WITH MUSIC IN THE ARTS CURRICULUM AND IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

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For many years, when music was integrated into the curriculum it was done by the primary classroom teacher weaving music throughout the school experiences of the children. With careful planning, social studies, spelling, maths, art, physical education, and other curricular components were enhanced by having music contribute to broader understanding of them, and by helping to make experiences within those curricular components more interesting. The children would have opportunities to sing songs of the countries being studied in social studies, to learn spelling words and number combinations through chants or songs, to develop works of art while listening to music, to develop physically while doing movement activities in time to music, and so on.

Gradually, music educators perceived that music was being used to enhance other subject areas, but little credence was being given to its contribution as a unique discipline with its own reasons for being included in the lives of the students. The profession began to stress music's contributions to human lives rather than speaking in terms of how it could serve other areas. Instead of trying to fit music, artificially, into all the "Seven Cardinal Principles of Education" (worthy use of leisure time, and development of citizenship through co-operative behavior seemed to be the most pertinent applications), works like Reimer's *A Philosophy of Music Education* (1970) challenged educators to look at the aesthetic value of music, to define the unique contributions to human life made possible only through the perception of sound organized in constituent and expressive elements combined, thus giving opportunities for participation in and appreciation of musical experiences.

Even as music began to shed some of its involvement in serving other curricular areas and began to be studied for its own value, a different type of perspective developed concerning its relationship to other arts. Rather than looking at music from the viewpoint of how it

could serve these allied arts, parallels were drawn showing how the arts shared, and could help each other demonstrate certain concepts while still retaining the special characteristics of their own disciplines. Rhythm could be demonstrated through music aurally, through art visually, through dance physically, through drama aurally, visually, and physically, but in different ways than as shown through music, art and dance. Formal structure could be shown through music, art, and movement with each of the senses helping the other to perceive more clearly the concepts being developed. Once the imaginations of arts educators were stirred, a multitude of possibilities suggested themselves, even reaching into the psychological realm with the development of such concepts as understanding feelings, the sociological area of interdependence, the physical principle of balance, the emotional appreciation of celebration, and so on.

The vocabulary that developed to describe the sharing taking place in the arts lacked precision. Wenner (1978) listed "allied arts," "related arts," "unified arts," "humanities," "comprehensive arts," "aesthetic education," and "arts in education" as some of the titles used to describe programs in which arts are used in a co-operative approach. He saw the first four (allied arts, related arts, unified arts, humanities) as generally being offered at the secondary level, involving team teaching and combining a variety of subject areas such as art, music, literature, dance, drama, film, industrial arts, and /or home economics. "Interdisciplinary studies," "co-operative programs," "arts in the total curriculum," "arts for every child" were cited by Smith (1978) signaling a broader interpretation than arts working only with arts, but encouraging the arts as part of general education. With this broader interpretation, humanities courses were sometimes organized around social studies or English themes in which the arts may or may not be included. A characteristic of some of these courses was that they were designed to help the students appreciate the arts, rather than participate in them.

Wenner saw the last three titles on his list (comprehensive arts, aesthetic education, arts in education) as including more than just secondary courses. These programs might include courses designed to be part of the curriculum at all levels, using community resources, with programs for special people including the handicapped, gifted and mature students. In addition to using a team teaching approach

with music and art specialists, gifted individual elementary teachers included the arts in their programs because of the potential for enabling students to better understand the concepts being developed by using multiple experiences.

Secondary and tertiary programs were often developed by compatible faculty members combining their expertise. Some of them were merely a series of lectures in which the individual lecturers took their turns to present material to the students. Others featured the presence of all the faculty members at each lecture, with contributions as they were deemed appropriate being made by the lecturers, sometimes in an organized fashion, sometimes spontaneously. Often, one faculty member would organize a course to combine the arts and draw upon guest lecturers and performers to illustrate the course content.

By the time the Rockefeller Panel released its report, *Coming To Our Senses* (1977), support had developed throughout the United States for arts programs by such agencies as: The American Council for the Arts in Education, The National Endowment for the Arts, The Arts and Humanities Division of the Office of Education, The John D. Rockefeller 3rd Fund, CEMREL, Inc., the education units of the Kennedy and Lincoln Centers, The Alliance for Arts Education. Arts Alliances, either by that or similar names, were formed in all fifty states. Many local and regional groups were formed in addition to these state and federal organizations.

Money became available to support arts programs. Federally-funded projects began to serve as models for programs throughout the country. IMPACT (Interdisciplinary Model Programs in the Arts for Children and Teachers, 1970-72) established art-centered programs in selected elementary schools and one middle school. IMPACT was sponsored by The Music Educators National Conference, The National Art Education Association, The American Theater Association, and the Dance Division of the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation. Each of the schools explored arts in the curriculum in ways appropriate for their specific situations. One of these, the Magnet Arts School in Eugene, Oregon, was centered on the co-operative effort of all teachers planning the program. The curriculum was based on broad concepts, rather than subject areas. The teachers chose concepts on which the entire school would concentrate for a specified period of time. Pengelly (1978), the music teacher at Magnet Arts, listed some of the concepts

chosen by the staff; "texture, shape, color, pattern, space, time, change, interdependence, motion, opposition, balance, silence, growth, and celebration" through daily classes in maths, art, reading, drama, social studies, music, science and dance. She further described the complex schedules balancing "the needs for space, time and comfort of the child and the adult." (p.49) Other federal and state grants made Artists in the Schools programs possible. Some of these resident artists encouraged scheduling that differed from the block, limited time normally allotted to the arts. Many of them operated on different timetables than the school schedules previously had, working with students and teachers (either primary or secondary) on projects, rather than in time slots. They brought their own creative ideas to bear on possible mind expanding activities for the students. These programs resulted in: junkyard symphonies in which the students built their sound producing equipment from unusual materials, approached their use from an artistic view in arranging them visually and playing them musically, and, in the performance, included dance to enhance the body's artistic presentation; development of musical dramas including a variety of arts; involvement of the school in indigenous forms of the arts; exposure of the children and staff to new or unique forms and expression; and many more.

New materials were developed to assist in the arts programs. Many of them were created by teachers meeting the immediate needs of the situation. Some found their way into publication. A series of textbooks written to include a variety of arts deserves special mention: *Self-Expression and Conduct, the Humanities* (1974-1979) was published by Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich. It includes teacher's and student's books for years one through six, PLAS (boxes of independent instruction), kits containing materials for music, art, dance and drama, and filmstrips. Wold and Cykler's *An Introduction to Music and Art in the Western World* (1980) through its many editions provides an excellent resource for the teacher or a text for advanced secondary or tertiary students.

By the end of the seventies, writers interested in arts education had begun to make a case for having music be part of the arts program and for the arts to be part of general education. Invariably, music was cited as being unique in its approach to the sensory experience. Eisner (1981) described the arts as cognitive activities that make unique forms of meaning possible. He said that no concepts can be

formed without sensory information, that the kind of concept and the subtlety required for its understanding is dependent on the differentiation of the senses involved, that words are meaningless without imagery necessary to form the concept. Eisner's sensory information is dependent upon forms of representation that must be chosen carefully (consciously or subconsciously) to best illuminate whatever is necessary in the development of the concept by the individual (1982, Chapter 3). He was disturbed that education without equality in arts discriminates against students who excel in those areas, especially when trying to enroll in tertiary education. This inequity may drive capable students to seek education outside of the school, or do without it if opportunities and finances are not available. Finally, he viewed that the arts are essential resources in helping students perceive qualitative nuances, conceptualize patterns, write in a compelling, imaginative, convincing form with sensitivity, insight and well-crafted form.

Sudano and Sharpham (1981) justified arts in general education because of four major contributions that cannot be made by any other academic disciplines:

- 1 aesthetic knowing, "transformation abilities that inform sights and sounds and movements with meaning." (p.49)
- 2 aesthetic response, made possible through "codification, categorization, organization and arrangement of aesthetic experiences so that they can be replicated, evaluated and placed in the perspective and context of life." (p.49-50)
- 3 aesthetic creation and recreation through participation in arts activities.
- 4 aesthetic evaluation, in which historical art objects are viewed concerning their value as "expressions of the artistic mind" (p.50) and, through performance and/or perception, are re-created in the present to be placed within the framework of human experience.

Adler (1982), writing for the Paideia Group (a blue-ribbon panel interested in the improvement of education in the United States) is intent on revolutionizing education. He demands equal education for all through primary and secondary school with concentration on acquisition of organized knowledge, development of intellectual skills and enlarged understanding of ideas and values. He includes, as a matter of course, works of art and involvement in artistic

activities. Not only are the arts to be discussed, but also exercises are to be included in performance and composition as the most direct manner of developing appreciation.

In light of the quality of these, and other perceptive perspectives on arts programs, what then is happening in arts education throughout the United States today?

1 **Educational policy and responsibility.** Because primary and secondary schools are funded and governed by local Boards of Education with no explicit central control by state or federal government, it is not possible to present an accurate unified picture. The following comments reflect what seems to be happening generally:

- a. Although the federal government is not supposed to control education, various policy decisions and recent legislation with accompanying funds have enabled it to influence local practices to a far greater extent than in previous years. Federal intervention concerning integration, education for the handicapped, and talented/gifted programs have sometimes included opportunities for inclusion of the arts. For example, if arts educators submitted a project that included special provisions for the handicapped, the program could qualify for funding, and so on. If schools did not co-operate with federal laws, such as anti-discrimination, funds could be withheld.

The National Endowment for the Arts had a variety of project possibilities through which arts programs could be supported. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare was divided during the Carter administration so a separate Department of Education could be formed. Arts projects were often sponsored by these departments.

- b. States act in an advisory capacity to local school districts, often having supervisors or coordinators to assist the districts in various subject areas. The Departments of Education in many states are responsible for accreditation of schools and selection of textbooks. (This responsibility varies widely. Some states do nothing with textbook selection; some publish a list from which schools may choose their texts; some select one text in each subject that schools are expected to use.) Although the state agencies are not supposed to make local

policy, because they give some funds to the districts and can withhold them if the schools do not measure up to accreditation standards, there is an influence on policy.

Advocates for the Arts and Alliance for the Arts programs often work closely with the State Departments of Education.

- c. Local School Boards are intended to develop policy reflecting the specific needs of the communities they serve. Curriculum programs are supposed to be developed by these districts.

2 Politics and finances.

- a. Budget cuts implemented by the Reagan administration have significantly diminished funds available to the National Endowment for the Arts; a 27% cut is projected during 1983. (Weeks, 1982) It is a matter of public record that President Reagan intends to eliminate the new Department of Education. His plan is to take the federal government out of education.

Many Artists in Residence have either sought other employment or gone back to college to become accredited teachers.

- b. With heavy unemployment through many parts of the United States, state funds have generally diminished causing state contributions to local school districts to shrink. This attrition, coupled with the federal government plan to give more responsibility to the states with no additional funding opportunities, has precipitated an unpredictable future for state educational involvement.

Diminishing state funds have resulted in drastic curtailment of funds available for state-funded tertiary institutions. This diminution further lessens the tertiary funds already decreased through smaller enrollments as the number of available students becomes smaller because of the falling United States birthrate.

Seizing every opportunity possible to economize, the states are cutting and combining supervisory positions. Although the arts programs are in favor of co-operative use of personnel, cutting arts positions so the former music state supervisor is now in charge of art and music, significantly lessens the available resources.

- c. Many of the problems facing federal and state educational divisions influence the local school boards. In most of the states, votes are taken concerning school board practices at least once a year, frequently more often. The school budget is voted on. Board members are elected. Referendums are held concerning buildings, and at the present time, budgets are designed so voters can determine curriculum: If the A budget passes, but the B budget doesn't, that can mean the items designated in the B budget will be eliminated. The arts programs often are in the B budget. The budgets are sometimes prioritized so that the B budget cannot pass unless the A budget passes, but the A budget can pass without the B budget. For at least the last ten years music and art programs have been eliminated with increasing frequency from elementary schools. Some school systems have also lost parts of their secondary music and art programs.

In the majority of United States schools, the arts are most often represented by music programs. Art is next in order of popularity. Drama and dance generally appear only if they are included as part of the English or physical education departments. If arts programs are developed, they generally are an outgrowth of co-operation by these departments or joint endeavor by primary teachers, often with the help or leadership of the music and/or art teachers. Other arts courses, such as film making, computers in music, synthesizers and composition, home economics, industrial arts, sculpture and so on, may be offered at the secondary level depending on the resources and philosophy of the communities.

Arts programs, even such established ones as Eugene's Magnet Arts School, are struggling for survival. Next year, due to diminishing enrollment and financial problems, the school building shared by Magnet Arts and Conden (a more conventional school) will close. The Conden students will be distributed among other nearby schools. Magnet Arts will probably share a building with a newly-formed middle school. The wooden floors that were right for dancing, the auditorium that lent itself beautifully to music and drama productions will no longer be available. The idea of grouping grades K-5 (Magnet Arts) with middle school children (6-8)

is being challenged by parents and educators. Already some of the Magent Arts teachers have been reassigned to conventional schools.

- 3 **Curriculum.** A back-to-basics movement has swept through the United States as financial resources have dwindled. Sometimes the basics are defined narrowly as the three R's: reading writing and 'rithmetic. Some educators quickly say there are four R's: reading, writing, 'rithmetic and art. Some of the best articulation of artistic value and reasons for including the arts in the curriculum have been forced as reaction to this concentration on the basics. The back-to-basics movement has grown because of hard times. In affluent times, the arts have less trouble being maintained as part of the curriculum than they do in times of financial stress. Music programs throughout the country have been curtailed or eliminated as a result of current financial problems. Since music has been more firmly established than many of the arts programs, the demise of the latter, especially if they have been started only recently, is predictable. Music specialists who may have had time to act as arts consultants are more likely now to be placed on more than one school or reduced to a part-time employee.
- 4 **Teacher education.** There are very few tertiary institutions in the United States in which teachers can participate in a formal program of integrated arts teacher education. The teachers and principals who start these programs in schools are generally those people who have developed interest and expertise in these related fields on their own. Some universities offer workshops in integrated arts to help develop a vision of what can be, or to get a program started. Teachers in established arts programs are generous in sharing ideas, materials and practical suggestions with beginners.
- 5 **Administrators.** Very often administrators will allow integrated arts programs to develop on a small scale if teachers insure that all other curricular components are firmly in place. Administrators who become enthusiastic about an arts program may be faced with re-education of a substantial part of the faculty members who do not feel competent in working with the arts, especially music.

- 6 **Teacher attitudes.** Specialization is so strongly entrenched, particularly at the secondary and tertiary levels that the integrated arts program may loom as a threat to the teachers who have the potential to be involved. Furthermore, specialists at every level are fearful that if all teachers can teach these programs, the need for specialists, such as the music teacher, may be over. This controversial point is strongly contested by arts advocates who do not see an integrated arts program negating the need for strength in each of the arts involved. Unless the children are taught fundamentals in the arts, unless they practice doing each of the arts, the integrated program may become only a spectator sport.
- 7 **The role of society.** This is a difficult time to start any kind of arts program. School systems that have eliminated music programs often cannot marshal resources or philosophical incentive to restore it, let alone begin or maintain integrated arts programs. School systems that have managed to retain their music and art programs have such a tenuous hold on the programs that they do not attempt to enlarge upon the arts component. If arts specialists retain their commitment to an integrated approach, they can hope to succeed only with the education of society as to the advantages of this approach. Writing about successful programs helps, but the ultimate infusion of these arts programs is dependent upon the success of pilot projects that can demonstrate to society the advantages of allied arts approaches beyond those already established by more conventional school offerings. Support for them does not seem to be growing, nor are they part of the majority of United States school curriculums. Music teachers who are dedicated to integrated arts, and can include this approach in their music programs may be the best hope for the growth of integrated arts in the United States schools at the present time.

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