Strengthening Performing Arts Programs in the District of Columbia Public Schools

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Frank W. Ballou Senior High School
Rationale

• Strong performing arts programs should be a vital part of public school curriculum
• positive changes in the school environment and improved student performance
• the arts are vital to a well-rounded education
• priorities are being shifted and budget cuts are being made
• opportunities for students to participate in high-quality arts instruction and activities are diminishing
Students in DCPS schools are exposed to arts courses throughout their K-12 education.

Students graduate with a minimum of a half credit in music and 3.5 credits of electives.

Expansion efforts include: DCPS Music Festival, Turnaround Arts, Digital Media Arts, Partnerships, and the Fillmore Arts Center.

Music teacher professional development working groups.

Many schools throughout the district that are suffering from both quantity and quality of performing arts programs.
Literature Review

• Children from low-income families are less likely to be consistently involved in arts
• Improved standardized test scores (including verbal & math SAT scores)
• Encourages socialization, diversity, and teamwork
• Vocal music improves the voice in speaking & reading
• Promotes health: exercising the lungs and improving the heart
• six major types of benefits associated with study of the arts and student achievement are:
  ➢ Reading & Language Skills, (2) Mathematics Skills, (3) Thinking Skills, (4) Social Skills, (5) Motivation to Learn, & (6) Positive School Environment
Plan of Action

• Band & chorus directors were surveyed in Florida, South Carolina, & the District of Columbia
• Students that selected the course
• Students that were forced to take the course
Data Analysis

• Florida – 100% of students selected band
• South Carolina – 90% of students selected choir
• District of Columbia – 25% of students selected band
• District of Columbia – 8% of students selected choir
Results

Florida Band

South Carolina Choir
Results

DC Concert Choir

DC Band
Implications

• In summary, it is vital that DCPS works to improve the quality of performing arts programs. The DCMEA (District of Columbia Music Educators Association) can work collaboratively with DCPS to provide a variety of positive and productive experiences for music educators and students.

• Increased support from administrators & the community

• Positive school environment
Implications (cont.)

• Student course selection
• Grants & fundraisers
• Performance opportunities
• Active DCMEA (District of Columbia Music Educators Association)
• DCMEA sponsored Professional Development Conference
• Directors meetings during Professional Development
• Solo & Ensemble