

-1 **Philosophy of Teaching** **Corrie Box**

“Education is what survives when what has been learned has been forgotten.” [B. F. Skinner](#)

The purpose of a music teacher is to provide a foundation for holistic growth of future musicians, citizens and individuals. A teacher can have an extraordinary effect on the long-term attitude of a child towards all things related to life and music. In *The Selected Writings of Zoltan Kodaly (1974, p.124)*, the words of Kodaly reflect the contemporary weight of responsibility on the teacher for both the present and the future of the next generation:

“It is much more important who the singing master at Kisvarda (small village) is than who the director of the Opera House is, because a poor director will fail. (Often even a good one.) But a bad teacher may kill of the love of music for thirty years from thirty classes of pupils.” (1929)

As a teacher of future musicians of all potential levels and giftedness it is vital to keep the end goal of the instillation of joy in music making. It is also important to give students a broad view of the genres, styles and characteristics of music of excellence. Past achievements of musical expressions must be presented in a way that proves itself relative to a contemporary high quality of life.

The social benefits of classroom music are enormous. The collective nature of singing and games provide an atmosphere to develop critical social skills. Sometimes, students who struggle socially or academically gain confidence from success in the music classroom. The activities teach students to be good citizens as they must work together as part of a team to accomplish goals and objectives for each class. Also, through the use of the sight before sound approach of music literacy, the student music develop higher order thinking skills. The use of critical analysis and deduction will serve the student well when the skill is applied to other subjects such as math and science.

Finally, music develops students as people. Even though there is a strong cooperative element, in the music classroom there is also room for individual expression. There is room for creative thought. There is room to imagine outside the box. This is accomplished through the use of improvisation, eurhythmics, individual interpretation of various sights and symbols. Incorporating other areas of the fine arts can provide a rich avenue for unique creations. This can also give the student an outlet for healthy emotional expression which is an essential component for long term success.

Music is a gift. It is a gift for the mind. It is a gift for the soul. It is a gift for the heart. Music is a gift that will continually give back to students as long as they live. It gives the earth meaning and helps us touch the skies. What more could we ask or want?