

Talking Points

In order to grab your audience's attention, you need to have a strong set of talking points, or fascinating facts, that will educate and resonate. The following are ASTA approved talking points regarding *No Child Left Behind* and music education.

Even though *No Child Left Behind* lists Arts Education as a core academic subject, only 18% of US schools offer strings programs. It is in the face of budget cuts that schools are resorting to cutting after school programs, art classes, and even music classes. No music program is complete without strings instruction. It is impossible to maintain a well-rounded curriculum without proper funding.^{1, 3, 4}

The serious study of music has been demonstrated to complement other areas of academic study. In 2005 test-taking College-Bound Seniors, those with an average of 2 years of study in arts and music had significantly higher GPAs in each subject than those students who did not.^{1, 5}

Music education programs enrich the whole student and are a critical component to a well-rounded academic curriculum. Studies show that students who participate in band or orchestra show the lowest lifetime use of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs. Students that participate in music classes are less likely to be disruptive students in class. Among minority students, more identify their music teacher as role models than any other subject area. These students demonstrate higher self-esteem and thinking skills than their counterparts.²

Playing a musical instrument has cognitive benefits. A Stanford study has found that musical training improves how the brain processes spoken word – this could lead to improving the reading ability of children who have dyslexia and other reading problems.⁷ An increasing number of studies focusing on participation in musical activities and cognitive development in mathematics suggest that the two are closely related. Music at the basic level shows the obvious connection between music and mathematics.⁶

Students from a low socio-economic status (SES) who are highly involved in music consistently have higher standardized testing scores than their low-SES peers who have no involvement in music. Studies show that the absolute performance gaps between low SES students involved in music versus low SES non-music youth grows considerably between grades 8 and 12.⁶

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References

For Talking Points

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