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Making Amends: How to Move Past the Consequences of the No Child Left Behind Act on Music Education: Bibliography

The purpose of this bibliography is to provide resources for further research into the adverse effects that the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 has had on music education in terms of funding, enrollment, and policy enactment. The ultimate goal of this is to better understand how broad policy can influence individual communities so that practical solutions for overcoming such obstacles may be better solidified and enacted by the public.

Beveridge, Tina. "No Child Left Behind and Fine Arts Classes." *Arts Education Policy Review* 111, no. 1 (Fall 2010): 4-7. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10632910903228090>.

Beveridge's article provides an overview of the NCLB act of 2001, describing it as a relatively serious phenomenon that fails to be taken seriously enough by educators and administrators who struggle with increased budget cuts in elective areas. She breaks her analysis down into four main sections, which focus on available funding being linked to reaching yearly benchmarks in standardized testing, narrow scheduling policies that leave little room for arts classes, tepid bipartisan support that doesn't take seriously the ramifications of the law, and solutions for overcoming such consequences. Her main criticism against the act, and subsequent call to action, is regarding the timeline for improvement that the model follows, which she shows is closely related to the way businesses conduct internal reforms. Claiming that this doesn't allow for flexibility in scheduling, and results in a narrowly focused and menial education, she provides a strong argument for teachers and administrators alike to regard the law and its consequences as something to be taken seriously, and not as simply a passing trend in education.

Cirillo, Patricia, Aimee DeMuro, and Amber Young. *Colorado Visual and Performing Arts Education Survey Statistical Report*. Shaker Heights, OH: Cypress Research Group, 2008.

Cirillo's survey takes a multi-angle approach to measuring the efficacy of music education in Colorado, taking in factors such as availability of certified teachers and trainers, proportion of schools with formal arts classes, minutes per week of arts instruction, number of disciplines offered, changes in funding over time, classrooms that are well-equipped for arts instruction, and local graduation requirements, to name a few. She combines these results to create an "Arts Index" number for each school, which she then organizes along several different axes to illustrate the correlation between varying factors such as socioeconomic status, time dedicated to instruction, etc., and overall well-being of music programs. This survey, while showing that Colorado is generally in a good place in terms of music education, also illuminates some of the more important factors related to success in music programs, the most effective factor being the amount of time dedicated to music instruction each week.

Dillon, Sam. "Schools Cut Back Subjects to Push Reading and Math." *New York Times*, March 26, 2006. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

While Dillon describes an overall trend of apathy/cooperation with the NCLB act amongst middle and high schools, he highlights some special areas of concern that shows the unavoidable situations that the law has placed several schools and districts. For example, he cites a survey of education policy that shows that 71% of districts nationwide, in response to the act, has drastically reduced the amount of time dedicated to arts instruction. He also shows how,

although the U.S. has indeed gone through countless education reforms and movements that have widely affected curriculum choices (all of which are typically influenced by the wider national context and attitude towards advancement in society), the NCLB act is unique in its methods of standardized testing and outcome pressures that lead many schools to take drastic measures to meet these requirements yearly. This point could be effective in providing reasons to avoid taking this kind of closed-ended approach to education reform in the future.

Elpus, Kenneth. "Evaluating the Effect of No Child Left Behind on U.S. Music Course Enrollments." *Journal of Research in Music Education* 62, no. 3 (Fall 2014): 215-33.
<https://www-jstor-org.du.idm.oclc.org/stable/43900252>.

Elpus' article presents a nationwide analysis taken of 10 high school transcript studies between 1982 and 2009, seeking to find changes in trends that coincided with the implementation of the 2001 NCLB act. His findings shed light on an interesting and counterintuitive phenomenon; that while overall enrollment in music courses in high schools generally did not decline over time, there was a negative trend within the specific groups of students labelled as Hispanic, English Language Learners, and Individualized Education Plan students. Seeing as the NCLB act sought to target these specific groups of pupils through a disaggregated approach, the ultimate consequence was that teachers were forced to hold many of these students back from participating in electives in lieu of spending an exorbitant amount of time in remedial courses to produce higher test scores. White, Asian, high-achieving, and other unclassified groups of pupils did not test as being affected in this way. This article lends credence to the notion that the strictures of the NCLB act, while mainly well-intentioned,

produced an ultimately adverse effect on the groups of students who already struggle the most to obtain a well-rounded and enriched curriculum.

Elpus, Kenneth. "Justifying Music Education: Econometric Analyses of Issues in Music Education Policy." PhD diss., Northwestern University, Evanston, 2011. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

Kenneth Elpus' dissertation brings focus to the interdependence of music educators, researchers, and advocates, portraying these people as the ones who can most greatly influence the decisions of policymakers. He also highlights the importance of increasing the amount of reliable, bias-free empirical testing on the effects of music education on student performance so that all three of these groups of people are better equipped with representing the importance of music to the public in an effective way. Ultimately, this study emphasizes the weakness and unsupported claims that many media outlets and advocates make; that is, that music education should exist mainly to support extra-musical achievement-based outcomes (higher intelligence, financial earning, and advancement of business). Comparing existing empirical studies that were performed in response to the Goals 2000 incentives (widely considered the precursor to NCLB act of 2001), he shows that educators, researchers, and advocates need to seek avenues that support music's intrinsic, philosophical value as a fixture in any society, as opposed to what it is supposed to offer non-musical pursuits.

Fermanich, Mark. "Money for Music Education: A District Analysis of the How, What, and Where of Spending for Music Education." *Journal of Education Finance* 37, no. 2 (Fall 2011): 130-49. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41337590>.

Fermanich seeks to respond to a previously unanswered question in fiscal analysis in education; how are resources internally allocated amongst music programs in individual schools, and what factors determine how each school chooses to spend its reserves? He studies the internal mechanisms of schools in a single school district, mainly through obtaining administrative data on staff and students, distributing an online survey to principals and teachers in the district, and conducting interviews with principals, music specialists, and parents. His findings conclude that the largest influencing factors in how much a school spends per pupil in music programs are essentially general student spending, overall school budget and resources obtained outside of federal funding, and the experience and expertise of the teachers. Contrastingly, the general rates of poverty or low socioeconomic status of a given neighborhood's school had little to do with how much funding the music program received or how much public support the program was able to garner. This article, while limited in its scope of districts and timespan, can serve as an informative springboard for policymakers and advocates to more accurately judge whether making cuts to arts program funding is really going to improve a school's standing in the eyes of the nation's accountability measurements.

Henley, Joan, Jackie McBride, Julie Milligan, and Joe Nichols. "Robbing Elementary Students of their Childhood: The Perils of No Child Left Behind." *Education* 128, no. 1 (Fall 2007): 56-63.

<http://du.idm.oclc.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=27238987&site=ehost-live&scope=site>.

This article cites an example of where the NCLB act has left countless schools since its implementation in 2004, largely leaving their outlying students at both ends of the spectrum without their academic needs fostered. While not directly focusing on the effects this has on music education, music is mentioned among several programs that have either been slashed or greatly reduced, such as recess, P.E., arts instruction, gifted student programs, and specialized testing formulated for special education students who do not fit within the benchmark tests administered by each state. Henley demonstrates the overall performance-centric attitude of the law by citing an instance where teachers were instructed through a seminar to overlook the needs of bottom and top percentile students, since it was largely the ones in the middle that would contribute the most to rising test scores. This article, while not necessarily touching on music education in the NCLB era, nevertheless shows how low priorities have gotten for providing holistic, needs-based learning environments for the nation's students.

Irion, Theodore W.H. "Justifying Music Education." *Music Educators Journal* 25, no. 4 (Spring 1939): 21-2. <https://doi-org.du.idm.oclc.org/10.2307/3385206>.

Irion's article, written in 1939, can be taken as much as a tool for establishing historical context to the development of musical education, as a display of the current battles that we still currently face in the world of arts instruction. He spends the article reasoning out a way to legitimize music education in high schools as an equally academic pursuit to that of science, math, and reading classes. Providing perspective on the intellectual capacity one needs to develop in order to not only learn a piece of music, but also to appreciate it as a well-informed audience member (which in many ways is even more essential to personal enrichment), Irion makes the case for music education to be considered as much as a required or core class as the

other standard curricula. Given that this was written following the Great Depression and concurrent with World War II, it should also be noted that Irion wrote this during a time of social turmoil, when funding for schools was likely strapped and “special” classes were frequently being gutted and delegitimized in favor of other specialized and research-based classes being pushed forward for the war effort.

Persellin, Diane Cummings. “Policies, Practices, and Promises: Challenges to Early Childhood Music Education in the United States.” *Arts Education Policy Review* 109, no. 2 (Fall 2010): 54-61. <https://doi.org/10.3200/AEPR.109.2.54-64>.

Persellin’s article restates the obstacles caused by the NCLB act as many of the previous articles do, but takes her analysis a step further in investigating how the law has affected early childhood education programs such as Head Start, and delves into some of the progress that these programs have made and how to continue that progress. She provides several resources for early childhood music educators to investigate in order to develop more reliably-tested activities in the classroom (for example, R.L. Nardo’s 2001 publication in *Early Childhood Connections Journal*), and calls for a switch from NCLB’s testing-based accountability approach to a more well-funded researched approach. She also highlights the lean of education workshops and requirements to call for more pre-K music instructors with bachelor’s degrees, and encourages this trend. This article provides insight into an extremely important aspect of childhood learning and development, how the NCLB act has failed that particular sector, and ways in which we can strive to make up for these disadvantages and refocus our goals.

Punke, William. "A Comparison of Attitudes Between Colorado School Administrators and Colorado Music Teachers Concerning Music Education." PhD diss., University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, 1972. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

This 1972 dissertation analyzes the results collected from a uniquely test of Punke's own design that was meant to establish a solid idea of how beliefs about music education differ between music administrators and teachers. He provides information in the thesis about how the test was devised and distributed, what each selected group had to say, and how those responses were organized and analyzed. The areas of beliefs that he tested were five-fold, covering issues like public relations in music education, music as a mind and body discipline, the social and aesthetic value of music education, and how developing music knowledge and appreciation in youth can contribute to greater success in leisure-time activities later on. His testing reveals a disparity mainly in how much a successful musical performance is valued by teachers and administrators alike (admins were more likely to praise a successful sports victory than a well-executed concert or performance), whether music classes should be viewed as an academic pursuit (teachers believe it should, while admins do not), and whether there are enough opportunities to engage in musical experiences (teachers see a deficiency while admins are typically on the fence). While the information in this publication can be seen as rather dated and irrelevant to the residual challenges of NCLB nowadays, this does show a parallel between where administration stood on music education 40 years ago and where they stand today, and can provide useful information about what beliefs administrators and policymakers are susceptible to having.

Senechal, Diana, Jon Lasserp, David Pearson, Gene Maeroff, Samantha Plotner, and Sally Chrisman. "Reading, Rehashing, 'Rithmetic.'" *New York Times*, March 28, 2006. ProQuest Historical Newspapers.

This is a relatively short read, a collection of brief "To the Editor" responses of a variety of people weighing in on NCLB, which at the time had been implemented for only two years. Responses include one from Diana Senechal, a cellist and English language instructor calling for the end of the standardized accountability measures, stating that the emphasis on "strategies" leaves students with a million "tools" but no conceptual material to work them on. Dean and Professor of Education at UC Berkeley, David Pearson, has a similar response, while most provokingly a high school student from Virginia, who likely was recently jarred by the sudden emphasis on these testing strategies over intellectual content, also weighs in on how she disagrees with the provisions of the law. Even responses from proponents (or neutrals) of the act typically stipulate that it is still necessary to have well-trained, passionate instructors present in order to foster the deeper developmental needs of the classroom.

West, Chad. "Teaching Music in an Era of High-Stakes Testing and Budget Reductions." *Arts Education Policy Review* 110, no. 2 (Spring 2012): 75-9.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10632913.2012.656503>.

West's publication tracks the shifting perspectives and environments that music teachers face in the post NCLB school districts. Taking studies done by the Council for Basic Education and the Center on Educational Policy, West demonstrates a noticeable decline in the amount of time spent on music within school curricula (a 46% decrease by 2006, two years after the law's implementation), and a marked increase in the number of school principals that expected music

teachers to also dedicate class time to topics on reading and math. Moreso, this shift is felt strongly by teachers in districts that now require them to attend conferences on the High-Stakes testing subjects, leaving them little resources or time to dedicate to furthering their knowledge and training in actual musical pedagogy. Probably the most lamentable aspect of how NCLB is set up is the way in which even high-performing schools can lose their funding; because the law requires a certain percentage of increases in performance each year, schools that are already operating in the top tenth percentile cannot possibly achieve that percentage mark, and therefore do not meet the requirements set forth by the law. Imagine you are trying to grow a large forest, but resolve to cut down any trees that have stopped growing. Even the largest, oldest ones that provide the most shade and fruit. Your forest will never reach its potential that way. Ultimately, this article shows the ways in which music teachers must adapt going forward, highlighting the certain skills and awareness needed to better navigate the shifting priorities of the districts within they find themselves.