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Teaching Philosophy

It all started with a teacher who believed. Believed I belonged, encouraged me to be myself, and believed that music education was a necessity. Because of these values of my first band director, music education has long been understood as a vital part of my schooling. As a kid, there was no place where I felt more at home than in the music room; it gave me a place to be myself, express myself, and gave me a voice, all parts of growing up where I otherwise struggled. But learning to be a musician taught me more than just how to play an instrument: it taught me discipline, teamwork, patience, time management, and gave me a sense of purpose, all strengthened by a teacher who set the tone for respect, integrity, and genuine passion. Music has the impact to change people's lives; it gives kids a place where they can feel welcome to take risks, connect with others, learn from mistakes in a supportive environment, and most importantly, have fun along the way. Without music, I would not be the person I am today. Without music, I may not have learned some of the valuable life lessons I did at a young age. I want to use what I have learned to change the lives of others, giving all students a home in the music room to express themselves, connect with others, and share ideas within a supportive community.

Highly effective music learning requires highly effective music *doing*. Since its inception, music has been a centerpiece of society for culture, community-building, and participation. Music inspires connection and relationship-building and I find it imperative to not only incorporate that into the classroom, but to prioritize it. Relationships are the foundation for community, and ensuring a strong foundation requires that I set the tone for respect, integrity, curiosity, and support between students and teacher as well as students among students. Strong relationships, because they enhance support between individuals, enable the possibility of students developing their musical fluency – music performance, listening, analyzing, and responding to music, as well as creating it – and their individual musical identity, which, as stated above, was one of the most life-changing moments for myself as a child. I consider it a mission of mine to share that experience for the lifelong benefit of others.

No music education would be complete without a plan for the future. In looking ahead, I find myself committed to turning the music room into a trusting home for students to connect with peers, take risks, and support each other through both successes and mistakes. I am committed to building strong relationships to set the foundation for sharing and creating memorable experiences as well as promise opportunities for success in the future. Future success can only be guaranteed by effective assessment in the moment, both of students and of myself. The willingness of students to participate in learning is a reflection of the environment I have created, so remaining dedicated so setting the model for respect, for integrity, and for making good decisions is my single highest priority. Without music education, children would be missing a key component of their human development. Music education makes better people. Music education is irreplaceable.