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Article #5, Sending the Right Message
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Discussion

This article focused on the importance of sending the right message when it comes to music education to those students, parents, administration, guidance counselors, and community. It describes how music has faced scrutiny concerning value to students more than any other academic area. Facing this scrutiny has led to many challenges for music educators in all programs and areas. Communication is an especially important area to change the way the groups of people described before think about music. When there is a lack of academic importance on music, there are short-term and long-term affects. Those short-term affects are to teach those faculty members, students, parents, and community how music will affect the lives of those children who are taking it. These people will not know the stance a music educator has on the importance of music, and the impact of music on personal lives of students and how creativity and expression in music are transferrable to other areas of learning, if they do not stress it. Parents and students are the most important advocates of understanding why music is important, so they need the most clear understanding and in-depth knowledge of it. By having parents and students communicate with other members of the community, everyone will know the positive affects of music in the lives of students. It then talks about the long-term affects of students, which has two obstacles that are faced. The first is the success of many music programs is based primarily on the competitive aspects of music performance. This often hinders the musical growth of students' creativity, expression, and musical understanding. The second is the assessment process based on measuring learning is not defined in music programs, resulting in the perception that student grades are determined in ways other than qualitative achievement. To face these obstacles, adding nonperformance music courses into existing curriculums to balance competitive aspects and expressing to the students what is expected of them to learn and how to assess students' progress individually will improve these areas. Making music more academic and informing the public of the importance of music in everyone's lives will benefit music programs everywhere.