

The importance of performing arts in schools

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I love music more than anything else in the world. It is my passion. To me, music is a way to express myself and use my own voice to create beautiful sounds. I sing in the shower, I sing at night, I sing when I do homework, any free time I have I use it to sing. Unfortunately, during the day when I am at school, I cannot sing for 6 hours of the day.

That is why when I get home after a long day at school I must burst into song, otherwise I feel like I myself may burst. This is why it means so much to me that we have choir at my high school. To people like me, choir class is the only period of the day when I can relax and do something I love, and I'm sure that many other music fans would agree with me. However, if the privilege to learn music and develop our talents was taken away from us, any hope we have of pursuing music in the future becomes more difficult to fulfill. Because performing art programs are so important to our districts, they should not be affected by California budget cuts. I wasn't aware of how serious the current California budget crisis is until recently.

Last week my choir director took time to talk to us and tell us how the future is going to look if budget cuts remove choir from our list of elective choices. As she was talking to us, she told us how likely it would be for her to get laid off, and for many other teachers in the district to be in the same situation. She also informed us of how many choir classes may be cut if the new tax is not passed. She told us that many schools in Southern California don't even have music programs like our district has. I think she was trying to let us know that many are not aware of how fortunate to have a district that excels in music and have such great directors. People have to think about how great our music programs are, and what it would mean to lose them.

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To many, performing art programs provide this kind of indispensable knowledge. With California budget cuts, the creative electives that many students enjoy most about their days will be cut from our school districts altogether. To people like me, choir class is the only period of the day when I can relax and do something I love, and at the same time my choir and I are making beautiful music. If the privilege to learn music and develop our talents was taken away from us, any hope we have of pursuing music in the future becomes more difficult to fulfill. Performing art programs are extremely important to our districts and therefore should not be affected by California budget cuts. I understand the fact that our nation is in economic decline, but why is it that whenever our state has no money, education gets put on the chopping block? Children are the future, and if we can't have a proper education that contains a balance of academics and performing arts, how much will that influence our future? With no creative and musical outlook, the level of focus in classrooms may decline, and that could ultimately lead to lower test scores everywhere.

Many scientific studies done worldwide have proven that listening to music helps the mind focus, and creative music benefits creative thinking. This is true; music is so important because it allows us to learn a subject that doesn't involve numbers and letters, and at the same time express our emotions through song. It is vital that schools have programs like choir and band so we can take a break from all the stress of academic classes and allow our minds to relax and refocus. Music programs are also important to developing students into a model citizen of society. With hard work and dedication, we can reach any goal.

If we are passionate about music, we will work as hard as we can to improve our voices, or practice as long as we can to make sure we play all the right notes on our instrument. Music teaches students how to focus and practice in order to improve. It also teaches students how to develop confidence and communication with people of higher authority. For example, in choir, our director doesn't allow us to say " umm" or " yeah." By eliminating these terms in the choir classroom, I found myself correcting myself when I talk to my other teachers, or my family members. By making us speak in formal English, choir has also taught us to improve our public speaking skills.

As one can see, music is extremely important to our world. Where would we be without beautiful melodies to lift our spirits when everything starts going bad? If the budget cuts in California become so extreme that we will no longer have performing art programs at schools, so many students will be devastated. There will be no artistic outlet for us to look forward to, and we won't be able to express ourselves through song, develop our confidence, and discover our talent. Therefore, it is crucial that we all work together to save our music programs in schools, for those who love music, and for those who love to listen to it.