

Submission
No 3

**INQUIRY INTO ARTS AND MUSIC EDUCATION AND
TRAINING IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

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I live in Taree where there is an absence of music teachers in our primary schools and a paucity of music teachers in our secondary schools. It is well-established that the development of musical skills enhances brain function and is aligned with the part of the brain used in mathematics. The local Rotary clubs under a committee which I chair has for the best part of 10 years address this problem by working with the Australian Children's Music Foundation to employ professional musicians to work in five of our public schools. The children clearly engage with these musicians and the some of the students it gives them a reason to go to school.

I observed first-hand an end of year concert at one of our particularly disadvantaged primary schools which was frankly abysmal with children only miming words to songs, no one playing musical instruments other than a few children miming by playing air guitar. After three years of ACMF participation I returned to the end of year concert at that same school. The ACMF musician had assisted the children to write a school song which was sung enthusiastically by the whole school including teachers accompanied by an indigenous student playing the piano and some students playing guitar. The morale in the room was totally different to what I experience three years earlier and it was obvious that the children now had a pride in their school which did not previously exist.

This is but one example of the wonderful work done by the Australian children's music foundation. If the department can't afford to employ music teachers, then support for the ACMF program financially would be a very good idea.