

**Submission
No 64**

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

Name: Mr Richard Tognetti

Date Received: 26 July 2024

Friday, 26 July 2024

Dear Committee,

As the beneficiary of a free music education in a NSW public school, I write to lend my support to this crucial parliamentary inquiry into music education and training in Australian schools.

I attended Pleasant Heights Public School in Wollongong and when I was 5 years old, a free Suzuki string program was implemented at the school.

I decided to give the violin a try, and the rest is history. If this free program was not made accessible to me at school, I likely would never have discovered my lifelong passion and calling as a musician.

The impact that a music education has had on my life extends far beyond my career as a performer and composer. I am quite certain that because of it I am a better listener and communicator, more collaborative, a more engaged citizen and it opened my eyes and ears to a world of possibilities beyond my small hometown.

I am not sure where my peers from Pleasant Heights Public School are now, but I am quite sure that that string program has also had a lasting impact on their lives and that as adults they are open to and engaged in arts and culture.

I passionately believe that a quality music education is the birth right of every child, and that we need government, policy makers, curriculum writers, training institutions and educational leaders to ensure this happens. If we do not, we will be failing the next generations of Australian citizens.

With regards,

Maestro Richard Tognetti AO
Principal Violinist & Artistic Director