

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

Organisation: Alberts (Music Education: Right from the Start)

Date Received: 3 December 2024

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Ms Julia Finn MP
Chair, Joint Select Committee into Arts and Music Education
and Training in NSW
via ArtsandMusic@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Finn and Committee Members,

**MUSIC EDUCATION: RIGHT FROM THE START – SUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSION #2
TO JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO ARTS AND MUSIC EDUCATION AND
TRAINING IN NSW**

At the time of making our original submission to the Inquiry [25 July Submission No. 43], we indicated that Music Education: Right from the Start, together with the NSW Department of Education and the NSW Teachers Federation, was undertaking a survey of teachers in NSW government primary schools. Funding for this work was provided by Sound NSW. This original research seeks to provide an understanding of music learning in primary schools.

The online survey was in the field for four weeks from September 3 to October 4.

In 2023, there were 1,603 Primary and infant public schools in NSW, with a total enrolment of 471,970. ACER drew a representative sample, across school location (metro, regional, remote) and socioeconomic status (high, medium, low Socio-Economic Index for Areas), that aimed to draw a response from 100 NSW primary public schools to achieve a result that would see a rough reliability at around the +/-10% at 95% confidence interval level.

ACER sought responses from qualified teachers at the school completing the survey. These qualified teachers included classroom teachers, relief from face-to-face (RFF) teachers, non-teaching and teaching executives.

A high response rate saw responses from 706 primary teachers in 95 schools. This return rate means that the findings can be viewed confidently as a true representative sample.

The report is still in draft form as analysis of the data and initial review of the findings continue with a view to publication and release in the new year. For this reason, it would be premature to submit the full report to the Committee at this time.

However, given the pressing deadline for the Committee's report and the relevance of this research to your deliberations, we thought it important to provide some data indicative of the report's likely findings. It is important to note that data represents the percentage of responding teachers (not percentages of schools).

- Music is usually taught for one term per year (50%) and within school time (83%) across all year levels (87%).
- While 60% agreed or strongly agreed that music is a core activity on the national curriculum, 25% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed.
- 55% had less than 10 hours of time devoted to music learning in their Initial Teacher Education (ITE) with 82% responding that there was not enough time devoted in their ITE to teach music up to the Year 6 Curriculum. When asked the most useful aspects of the music education content in their ITE course 35% responded 'none'.
- 77% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that music is important (46%) or very important (31%) to students' educational experience.
- When asked to rank a range of Australian Curriculum subjects according to how confident they feel about teaching them, the 61% of respondents ranked English and 19% ranked Mathematics as their most confident subjects to teach (with these being the top two ranked) while 53% ranked music 10-13th in terms of confidence of all 13 subject areas they are required to teach.

In broad terms, Music Education: Right from the Start would suggest, among other matters, that the research indicates that Initial Teacher Education, professional learning and the hours allocated to music learning to enable sequential and ongoing learning warrant attention.

This research has been a highly collaborative endeavour which we are confident provides credible, valuable insights into the understanding and provision of music education in NSW primary schools.

Should the Committee reference the data we would ask that it be noted that this is a selection of data provided pre-publication and release of the research.

With our continuing appreciation of your efforts,

Kind regards,

Emily Albert
Executive Director, Alberts

