

H. Peter White, re, Reinstatement of Full Band, Choir, Vocal and Instrumental Music Classes

My children are driven in many ways by music, both academically and socially (via in-class and extracurricular activities). They have friends and classmates who also make their connection to education and to the school community via these offerings. They were excited to go to their local high school in part because of the range of musical opportunities that were offered, both during school hours and outside schedule. These offerings were denied to them the past years, driven in-part by pandemic restrictions. This has resulted in too many students without the opportunity to play and explore music with peers and to advance their skills with academic guidance.

Just as with sports, there has been much effort put into understanding how to move forward and re-invest in music for our students. There have been strategies put forward from organizations like the Ontario Music Educators' Association (<https://www.omea.on.ca/covid19/>), the National Arts Centre (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/naco-orchestra-alexander-shelley-audiences-pandemic-1.6170810>) and others. The OCDSB is in a position to consider and quickly implement these strategies with respect to their individual school resources. Many students need this connection towards pursuing academic success and social development. Musical opportunities (not just one opportunity, but many) are required to be brought back to the high schools. Just like a variety of sports and a variety of sciences are required to advance well rounded academic development, so to do we require a variety of musical opportunities be offered. Schools have access to the outdoors, to auditoriums and gymnasiums, and other large spaces for well spaced group student musicians education assemblies, and smaller spaces for individual development for students without access to instruments at home, or a space to play them.

Let's support the needs of these students and support the quick reintegration of music into their academic development.

Thank you.

H.Peter White