



Manitoba Orff Chapter
MUSIC FOR CHILDREN - CARL ORFF CANADA - MUSIQUE POUR ENFANTS



Planning for School Reopening in the Fall of 2020 ~

MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE EARLY YEARS' CLASSROOM

Suggestions for Teaching Music in a Different Way

“We know that music is really important, especially when you’ve gone through a difficult time. These types of experiences are really highly valued when there’s high stress level so it’s vital that these programs continue,” *B.C. Teachers Federation President, Teri Mooring*

Please Note: This is a guide written for Music Specialists by Music Specialists in Manitoba. We are NOT intending for this information to replace official MB Government Rules and Regulations, but to merely offer practical tips and suggestions for planning how to safely teach music, to the best of our professional opinion, as we prepare for the reopening of schools following their closure due to COVID-19.

Preparing for Uncertainty

In the Music Room with the following suggestions:

- When at school, specialists work in collaboration with classroom teachers to prepare students to use technology platforms for home learning (to prepare in advance for possible second wave school closures)
- Key concepts are taught at school so that they can continue to be developed when students switch to remote learning
- Prior to beginning remote learning, students receive packages, equipment, and/or instruments to support their learning at home

Physical Space

- Class sizes determined by the most recent information from the public health officer and the province, in addition to consideration of the size of the music room
- Careful planning with regards to the spacing of equipment and instruments
- Careful planning with regards to the type of activities that can be safely performed by students including partner games and movement activities
- Use of floor markings to promote safe spacing
- More activities where students work on their own with minimal equipment such as body percussion, non-locomotor movement, mirroring activities, and non-touch folk dances
- Use outdoor spaces when possible and as weather permits

Personal & Classroom Equipment

Personal Equipment & Supplies

- Students have their own music supply bag that they transport to and from class that could include a recorder, small percussion instrument, mallets, movement props, or writing supplies
- Recorders are stored in sealed bags and in student backpacks

Classroom Equipment & Supplies

- Where sharing of equipment and instruments cannot be eliminated, careful planning to ensure that the instruments have been sanitized/cleaned before being used by another student. An example is sanitizing mallets after every use, or planning for one class to use a particular instrument one particular day, allowing time for proper cleaning in the evening and between classes
- Careful set up of equipment in advance. An example is to pre-remove bars from xylophones so that they are not touched by students
- Use of instruments that can be easily sanitized such as boom whackers, rhythm sticks, etc.

Cleaning Recommendations

- Music Room cleaning is done by custodial staff with additional sanitization of high traffic surfaces
- Music teachers take on responsibility of sanitizing equipment during the day as required and using products approved by the school division

Timetable

- Hand washing/sanitization upon entering and leaving – the receiving teacher will be responsible for this process
- Adequate spacing for students to line up
- Planning of directional routines so that one class leaves in one direction and another enters in the opposite direction
- Possible transition time in timetable so that there is time for one class to leave before another enters and time for the music teacher to do any necessary sanitizing

Music Programming

Music programs continue to be delivered by trained music specialists

- Music programs continue to highlight community, cooperation, expression and delight, because in uncertain times, more than ever, we need the sense of joy and well-being that music can nurture.
- Teacher planning process expanded to include social distancing/health guidelines
- Use of more activities that include: non-touch movement; body percussion; interactive video/whiteboard activities including online platforms such as Seesaw, Flipgrid, Teams, and websites such as Musicplayonline, Incredibox and Chrome Music Lab; seated work using

listening response sheets and other music activities on paper, as well as individual manipulatives and materials (eg. popsicle sticks, cups, paper plates)

- Replacing hand-over-hand or contact support with a non-touch alternative

Concerts & Performances

- Limited number of performers and audience members. This could look like many small concerts throughout the year featuring one or two classes at a time
- Live stream concerts
- Limit on number of audience members per performer
- Consider outdoor concerts when possible

Field Trips

- Planning according to current guidelines from the public health officer and province of Manitoba
- Extra buses to allow for safe spacing of students
- Virtual, online field trips done from the music room

Technology

- Continued use and access to online music platforms such as SeeSaw, Flipgrid, and Teams.
- Continued access to online music resources such as Musicplayonline , Incredibox, Chrome Music Lab and Fun with Composers, as well as apps such as Garage Band and Recording Studio.
- Ensuring that all music classrooms are equipped with computers, screens, and audio equipment
- Ensuring that all students are equipped with devices and wi-fi at home in case of second-wave school closures.
- Ensuring that all students have access to quality learning materials, even those without access to technology. One example is to continue to send home packages of music activities such as worksheets (puzzles, pencil/colouring games, skills, writing), musical family games and experiences, and online public videos and sites for limited internet availability.
- Ensuring that students with special needs are equipped with the individualized technology and support required to be successful

Budget Implications

- Purchasing of items for unshared student supply bags that could include a recorder, small percussion instrument, mallets, movement props, or writing supplies when it is not possible for these items to be purchased by families
- Purchasing of additional equipment, supplies, and instruments such as mallets so that there are enough pairs for students to use without having to sanitize after each class
- Funding for visual markers and props to support social distancing requirements
- Online music teaching platform licences for teacher and student use
- Support for professional development for music specialists to develop best teaching practices in a social distanced teaching setting

Some Final Thoughts

When classes resume in September, whether online, in school, or as a combination of both, it is our desire that this document will encourage officials and administrators to consider every possibility to keep our music education, as much as possible, in the music rooms. **Music, now more than ever, plays a valuable role in supporting the pursuit of mental health and well-being**, connecting us to a common language and shared experiences that cannot be communicated by other means. It **plays a vital role** in virtually every person's life as a means **to assist with your inner balance, your well-being, and your humanity**.

As we pursue to be effective music teachers, we strive to create **deep, meaningful relationships** with each student, paying particularly close attention to the individual needs of each child. **Our current model of online instruction** is proving to us that it is **extremely difficult to maintain our relationships successfully**, particularly with young children, and we are finding that it is not optimal for anyone. In elementary music, **we are used to making decisions quickly**, incorporating mindful transitions into our routines, **shaping our programs to meet the needs of students** and school communities. The online teaching that **music teachers have quickly adapted** to has proven that if need be, we can exercise our ability to adapt **to less-than-ideal teaching conditions** while continuing to teach certain aspects of the Manitoba Music Curriculum. However, we are very aware that our **students are missing out on a much richer musical and learning experience**, and are missing out on key curricular learning concepts when we are apart. Technology works, to a point, but considering its current limitations, such as the lag time of live online meetings, even the simple yet highly beneficial act of singing together becomes an almost impossible and frustrating undertaking. As well, we are acutely aware of the **many students and families that lack the technology** to even connect with teachers on a regular basis. Many of us educators are also lacking in technology in our own homes to continue offering a rich remote learning classroom that each child deserves in our province.

While we understand that running a music program could incur extra costs (as outlined above) during this unprecedented time, it is **our professional opinion that we simply cannot overlook the fact that music will provide the normalcy and creative outlet** that many of our students need, which in turn **can improve their state of mental health, sense of security, and general positive outlook on life**. We know our students are hurting and so we are anxious to **once again provide a creative and safe space for them** to experience the **deeply-needed community and connection** that we are all missing so much during this pandemic.

To close, we will include a quote from NAFME (National Association for Music Education):

"The healing and unifying power of the arts has been evident as the COVID-19 pandemic swept the country. We have seen and heard it play out through works of art on sidewalks, shared musical moments from porches, in plays and dance performances, and every other imaginable iteration of art making. As states [provinces] and schools work through multiple challenges in the years ahead, arts education must remain central to a well-rounded education and fully funded to support the wellbeing of all students and the entire school community."

Resources

Websites on Viral Containment Helpful for the Music Room:

Aerosols and masks : <https://www.oregonlive.com/coronavirus/2020/04/heres-the-science-of-coronavirus-infectious-aerosols-and-how-masks-can-help-block-them.html>

Cleaning supplies for instruments: <https://nafme.org/covid-19-instrument-cleaning-guidelines/>

Research Support

Number of Students Returning is a Wild Card as B.C. Schools Set to Reopen Monday

<https://www.msn.com/en-ca/news/canada/number-of-students-returning-is-a-wild-card-as-bc-schools-set-to-reopen-monday/ar-BB14QjFH?li=AAggXBV&ocid=hplocalnews>

Wellbeing in the Classroom: How an Evolutionary Perspective on Human Musicality Can Inform Music Education

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1146301.pdf>

Early Years Music Can Help Close the Attainment Gap for Young People with Complex Needs

<https://musiceducationworks.wordpress.com/2019/04/05/new-research-provides-powerful-evidence-that-every-child-should-have-the-right-to-access-music/>

Berlin Study Issues Recommendations for Orchestral Distancing

<https://www.thestrad.com/news/berlin-study-issues-recommendations-for-orchestral-distancing/10641.article>

Study Shows ‘No Increased Risk to Orchestral Musicians’ from Concerts

<https://www.thestrad.com/news/study-shows-no-increased-risk-to-orchestral-musicians-from-concerts/10687.article>

RESOURCES FOR TEACHING MUSIC DURING THE TIME OF COVID-19

<https://education.musicforall.org/covid19resources/>

ABA COVID-19 STUDENT SAFETY AND MUSIC PROGRAM CONTINUATION IDEAS FOR CONSIDERATION

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vqF_PRRU-RKybJngCKILNgtzI0-SuQyo/view

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The MOC is committed to providing any assistance and feedback necessary to assist teachers, administrators and policy makers moving forward. Please feel free to contact us if further information would be helpful. Visit us at www.manitobaorff.org