

Michael Borrayo

Statement of Philosophy of Teaching

It is my firm belief that being an educator is one of the most fruitful career paths one can pursue. My affinity towards this field came about in the middle of my secondary education where I became an algebra tutor. It was there where I first discovered that, while I could see many potential career paths, only one could truly provide me with a path to better society even if it were a single child at a time. It is a treasure in itself to be a teacher, it is even more of a treasure to be a music teacher. As a musician, I have experienced firsthand the many joys and benefits of being exposed to a well rounded music education, and therefore understand that making music is of such paramount importance to the emotional, cognitive, creative, and social domains that it merits a place at the forefront of all we do in music education.

I believe as a music educator it is vital to recognize that a majority of the students' lives whom we touch will not continue onto a career in music. Due to this, it is my personal belief that as music educators it should be our first goal to foster an environment where students can grow an appreciation and connection for/with music that lasts them long after they sit in the seats of our classrooms. It is unlikely that a large portion of my students will pursue a career in music, but if I can share my love of music in a way that inspires each and everyone of my students to seek betterment (in all disciplines/subjects not solely music) while maintaining a love and appreciation for music that is nothing short of a success story. Music education should include a wide variety of topics that allows for students to develop a well rounded foundational knowledge.

As a music educator I believe it should be one's first goal to develop our students' musicianship. Musicianship entails much more than just one's ability to play a given instrument or sing, many of the skills musicianship entails are directly applicable to many other facets of life. Ultimately developing one's musicianship allows one to strive for success, and provides students with an incredibly unique "tool box" that cultivates learners who can be prepared for the world outside of the classroom. Like music, teaching is a practice where theory and performance are interwoven. To be an effective educator is to recognize and draw from all those who have come before who have paved the way for music education to be where it is today. Individuals like Vygotsky, Bloom, and Suzuki, are just some of the few who inspire my approach to teaching. I believe it is of the utmost importance for teachers to foster classrooms where students feel comfortable and safe to explore the boundless joy that is music, in this way students should not be product orientated when they step in my classroom. Classrooms should be places that encourage collaboration and exploration, where process is at the forefront of one's priorities, an approach that emphasizes process is one where education can have its most lasting impact. Ultimately when students are placed in environments where they are safe and welcomed they can strive to achieve their absolute best.

Leonard Bernstein has said "The point is, art never stopped a war and never got anybody a job. That was never its function. Art cannot change events. But it can change people. It can affect people so that they are changed...because people are changed by art - enriched, enabled, encouraged - then they act in a way that may affect the course of events." I, as a musician and educator, wholeheartedly believe that music has the ability to better the upcoming generations, one student at a time. Oftentimes the tangible impact that music has on our everyday lives is overlooked, I believe as a music educator it is my job to cultivate and foster a lifelong love and appreciation for music in each and every one of my students lives.