

## NINE FACTS ABOUT SCHOOL MUSIC

### 1. Music makes a contribution to kids' development that no other subject can match

*"Music education uniquely contributes to the emotional, physical, social and cognitive growth of all students."* National Review of School Music Education, Australia, 2005

### 2. Music students are more likely to be good citizens

A 10-year US study called 'Champions of Change' found that high school students who participate in arts programs, including in school bands, are less likely to be involved with drugs, crime or have behavioural problems.

### 3. Learning music helps under-performing students improve

US researchers found that young children aged 5-7 who had been lagging behind at school had caught up with their peers in reading and were ahead in maths after seven months of music lessons. The children's classroom attitudes and behavior improved too.

### 4. Musical training can enhance brain function

Brain imaging techniques (MRI) reveal that musical tasks such as sight-reading musical scores and playing music activate regions in all four lobes of the brain and parts of the cerebellum. Music is one of the few activities which engage the entire brain.

### 5. Incorporating music learning into other curriculum areas helps kids learn

A US study of fifth-grade students found that their attitudes to reading (and to music!) improved when music was incorporated into reading instruction. Other studies show that music students are better equipped to grasp maths and science concepts.

### 6. Playing music improves concentration, memory and ability to express feelings

A 2001 study in Switzerland involving more than 1200 children found that, when 3 other curriculum classes were replaced with music classes, young children made more rapid developments in speech and learned to read easier. They also learned to like each other more, were less stressed and enjoyed school more.

### 7. Australian parents want their kids to learn music at school

Household surveys by the Australian Music Association show that nearly 90% of respondents believe music education should be mandatory in Australian schools. More people made submissions to the National Review of School Music Education than to any other Commonwealth Government enquiry.

### 8. Learning music is good for Australia's social and economic growth

The Australian business community wants kids to learn music at school. The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) last year delivered its 'Skills for a Nation: A Blueprint for Improving Training and Education Policy 2007 – 2017'. Among its fifteen recommendations for improving children's education in the primary years was: 'There should be an opportunity for all students to learn a musical instrument in primary school.'

### 9. Australia lags behind other countries in the provision of music in school

The world's top academic countries such as Hungary, Netherlands and Japan have strong commitments to music in their schools from the early primary years. In Britain, where the problems in school music provision mirror those of Australia, the government has recently decided to fix the situation. Recognising the huge benefits to kids, it has announced its commitment – backed up by more than £300 million - 'to make every British primary school a musical school'.