

► The problem: a large proportion of Victorian primary school children have little or no access to music education.

► Vision: all Victorian primary school children need, and have the right to a quality, sequential and ongoing music education.



The benefits of a quality, sequential and ongoing music education

Practical effects (physical development/practical skills)

Understanding space and time

Music learning is a tool to develop spatial awareness, which in turn assists with the development of logic processing.

Helping attitudes, behaviours and teamwork

Music learning fosters empathy on both an emotional and cognitive level. It also promotes prosocial behaviour and effective teamwork due to the "rich opportunity to nurture positive citizenship skills [through the music ensemble experience] that includes respect, equality, sharing, cohesion, teamwork, and, above all, the enhancement of listening as a major constituent of understanding and cooperation". (p58)⁵²

Cognitive developments are the processes and skills that are aligned with brain development in the area of thinking and learning skills. Human developments are the processes and skills that are aligned with emotional and behavioural skills.

These processes and skills are of course interlinked and impact on each other. For example, increased academic confidence has been found to directly improve academic attainment. (Collins, 2016; Hallam 2015)

A teal-colored triangle pointing to the right, located in the top left corner of the slide.

The benefits of a quality, sequential and ongoing music education (continued)

Cognitive effects (learning development)

Processing sound

Music learning is a tool to train the auditory processing system to function effectively. It is for this reason that many music education methodologies begin at the age of 1 and why music learning is seen as a complementary learning activity during K-2 when children are refining their language skills and learning how to read.

Assigning sound to symbols

Music learning supports the process from verbal language to reading, writing and understanding language. It is for this reason research has found that musically trained children perform better in standardised tests on language; acquire language including words, syntax and prosody more effectively and earlier; and utilise language more effectively.

Logic processing

Music learning is a tool to train the logic and sensory structures and functions of the brain to develop in a highly effective way. It is for this reason that there are strong correlations between academic attainment and music learning.

Memory

Music learning encourages the development of working memory, particularly auditory working memory. This development is thought to be one of the mechanisms that assists students in processing verbal information quickly and without the need for repetition, remembering multi-step processes and independently managing busy schedules. The development of effective working memory is thought to contribute to the effective creation, storage and retrieval of other types of memories.



Non-cognitive effects



Non-cognitive effects (human development)

Understanding of self

Music learning improves students' confidence in their sense of self and realistic sense of their capacities and abilities. A strong and well-defined sense of self will inform students' approach to learning and management of relationships.

Regulation of self

Music learning assists students to control their own emotional and behaviour responses while also understanding other student, teacher and parent responses. This promotes independence in learning and the ability to remain on task and work towards set goals.

Healthy development

Music learning promotes healthy development by better integrating the cognitive, emotional, social and physical development of every student.

Social cohesion

Music learning promotes social cohesion through the experience of physiological synchronicity, tolerance of diversity and desire to seek out and value novelty and difference.

Best practice in music education

The following factors are identified as core components of a quality music education. These factors have been shown to improve sound musical development and permanent cognitive enhancement. This can be seen through improved results in academic attainment, standardised testing, tertiary study, human development, and musical achievement.

1 Start early

A focus in high-quality music education in preschool will have profound effects on student development.

2 Recognise that all children are musical

Music education is as beneficial for human and cognitive development as it is for the training of expert musicians. Therefore, quality music learning is valuable for students to thrive in all subject areas.

3 Commit to quality music education

Both cognitive and musical development cannot occur without a commitment to quality programs, teachers and pedagogy.

4 Learn a complex musical instrument

Choosing a musical instrument that will provide both musical and cognitive development is important. Instruments such as complex strings, wind, brass and percussion take years to master and require consistent effort, but it is this effort that will result in positive cognitive development. Simpler instruments such as ukuleles, simple percussion and recorders are great starting or gateway instruments to the more complex instruments.



Best practice cont.



⑤ Learn music (classroom and/or instrument) over a long period of time (3-7 years)

To achieve cognitive, musical and cultural development outcomes, a music education needs to be ongoing, active, structured and sequential. One-off or short-term music experiences do not constitute a quality music education as they do not result in these outcomes on their own. However, they are an excellent complement to quality, ongoing music programs.

⑥ Maintain a high level of engagement (age appropriate level of 30 minutes to 7 hours per week during the academic year)

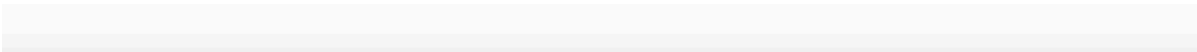
Music learning is a discipline and as such cognitive and musical development needs to happen over time.

⑦ Support high levels of teacher expertise

Formal qualification and professional development is imperative.

⑧ Utilise teaching pedagogy that is active, formal and structured

Including activities related to pitch, rhythm, singing, instrumental work, composition and improvisation, and reading notation.



Barriers to the provision of quality Music Education

1 Systemic inequity

Support of music education is varied and differs across and within educational systems.

2 Teacher education and training

There are currently insufficient numbers of trained and/or upskilled teachers of music in all systems.

3 School leader education and expectations

There is a lack of access to and understanding of cutting-edge research into music education and brain development among school principals and other leaders. A deep understanding of the nature of music education provision within their schools and the opportunities this could provide is also lacking.

4 Australian Curriculum

Resources to inform the structure and interpretation across states/territories and systems of the Australian Curriculum requirements and benefits of music education are not available.

5 **NAPLAN and STEM**

The ability for the general public to see and compare schools via NAPLAN results (published on the MySchool website) has forced literacy and numeracy into a privileged position over all other subject areas. The impact of a STEM curriculum focus has done the same for STEM subjects and content.

6 **Professional collaboration**

There are a number of professional organisations, both not-for-profits and representative bodies, which make active representations to policy makers and politicians and deliver professional development. Although there appears to be a willingness to collaborate in the sector, to date these organisations have worked largely in their own spheres.

7 **The value of music education**

There is not a shared understanding of the value or place and purpose of music in every Australian child's education.

Locating opportunities for systemic change in the states/territories and the schools

- Interventions to effect systems change should be designed on a state-by-state basis.
- Innovation exists where a principal can demonstrate leadership and mobilise human, financial and community resources to achieve an ambitious vision.

From “value” to “place and purpose”

- Discussions of value and the sense that music is undervalued have dominated the discourse within the sector and defined its advocacy strategy for decades.
- Recent research provides an opportunity for a new conversation about the place and purpose of music education within a holistic education framework.

Collaborating for impact

- There is a shared desire within the sector to collaborate and work together on advancing music education in Australia.
- The case of South Australia and the leadership group that created the Music Education Strategy demonstrates that models of collaboration can have a large, material impact on the music education system.

The crisis and innovation relationship

- A shared sense of crisis inspires and propels innovation, as seen in the South Australian Music Education Strategy.
- A challenge in music education is to uncouple the relationship between crisis and innovation, enabling the system to change when it can rather than when it has to.

The skills cliff

- Music education in Australia may be facing a new crisis as the availability of competent and confident music educators steadily diminishes.
- This area may benefit the most from cross-sector collaboration. If we can find an opportunity to collaborate today, we will be in better shape than if we wait for a crisis tomorrow.

Key Insights
and
opportunities

A quick comparison

Area: curriculum delivery

Australia

Public schools: most schools adhere to the direct interpretation of the Australian Curriculum, providing music education on an equal basis to all other arts from K-8. The common result is one hour, once a week for one term in each school year. It is widely recognised that it is impossible to reach the achievements standards in the time recommended^{vi} by the Australian Curriculum.

Catholic and independent schools: most schools have a sequential, developmentally-appropriate music program including classroom (Kodály or Orff) program and instrumental learning from preschool or kindergarten onwards (strings/percussion in pre-school/K-2 and wind/brass from Year 3 onwards). This will usually involve one hour per week all year of classroom learning as well as 30-120 minutes per week all year using an instrumental program.

International

Finland: students have compulsory music education from the age of 6-12 for 2-4 hours per week. This educational experience builds on government-subsidised day care and preschool where music education is taught for 30-60 minutes each day⁷³.

Canada: students experience music through an arts curriculum which is similar to the Australian Curriculum. The curriculum has a focus on music literacy and active music learning and is predominantly delivered in a class music format.

Australia

Early childhood: most Australian children are receiving music via a generalist early childhood teacher. In K-2 this is often the responsibility of their classroom teacher. Many schools take the opportunity to pay for externally-provided music experience programs each year to satisfy their music education curriculum requirements. A smaller number of schools employ an early childhood music specialist teacher, who has a generalist education degree and has taken on additional professional development to specialise in music. There are no mandated standards to be met for this qualification so low levels of professional development are often acceptable to principals.

Primary school: the current requirement for generalist primary teachers is that they will be able to deliver the music education as outlined in the Australian Curriculum up to Year 6. They are also required to do this for visual arts, dance, drama and media arts. There is as little as four hours' training across their entire teacher education degree in each art form and there is no requirement to continue professional development in the Arts for in-service teachers. The result is that many generalist teachers lack the confidence and competency to teach music effectively⁷⁴. Music education specialists are employed in some public primary schools and many in other education systems. Due to the lack of specialist primary education degrees, these teachers are often trained in high school education.

Queensland: due to the availability of ongoing, accredited professional development in recognised approaches to music learning (most notably Kodály), the number and level of music educational specialists is far higher in Queensland. It is reasonable to assume that this has been a factor in the observable high levels of musical achievement (as can be seen in the annual Creative Generation event) which has in turn maintained the higher value and perception placed on music education in schools.

International

Finland: teacher education is a widely accepted critical factor in Finland's success in education. Entry into teacher education requires very high personal education skills. Teachers have high rates of pay and are highly regarded in the community. In specialist areas such as music education the qualification requirements are even higher and thus music educators across early childhood to tertiary education have a high personal and professional level of training⁷⁵.

Canada: music is predominantly taught by specialist trained music teachers. The level of music studied at university level is very high - double degrees with music are very common. This allows for an ongoing workforce supply for the music performance, composition, research and education industries. Canada⁷⁶ is also arguably the home of neuroscience and psychology research into music learning.

Finland – High personal
Level of musical knowledge
and training

Canada – Music Specialists
Very high level of training
Home of neuroscience

Generalist receive as little as
6 hours across their degrees
Very few specialist primary
education degrees

Area: equity and resourcing

Australia

There is a significant issue with the equitable delivery of music education to all Australian children. In the current user-pays type system for anything beyond the very basic curriculum, children from disadvantaged schools are far less likely to receive music education that is delivered by well-trained music teachers or have access to musical instruments, music education teaching resources and music experiences provided by external providers.^{77, 78, 79, 80}

Resourcing is also a significant issue, mostly in terms of instruments. Numerous external education providers have created high-quality digital music education resources that are free to schools. However, sets of instruments for each school are in short supply as well as the required budget allocation to maintain these instruments. This type of resourcing is often ad hoc and supported as one-off contributions by philanthropists. This type of resourcing also creates issues of storage space, security and specialised instrumental teachers.

International

Finland: high-quality music education for all Finnish children is an educational and cultural expectation. As such, the resourcing of music programs has been undertaken by the government and most schools have large numbers of functioning instruments, materials and appropriate spaces for all children to access and musical role models they can look up to.

Canada: a similar educational and cultural expectation exists for Canada. The provision of resources is less effective, in part due to the geography and variability in philanthropic support that often goes towards the purchase of instruments. However, resourcing levels are still comparatively very high.



Perception and Value



Finland – music education is a core subject.

Area: perception/value

Australia	International
<p>The value of music education for every child is still unclear across principals, parents, teachers, students and the general public. The National Review of Music Education found that 40% of respondents believed music education was not valued by the community⁸¹. If music is not highly valued this can translate to a lack of appropriately trained staff, declining time allocated to music education in curricula, lack of appropriate resourcing and designated music education and arts time being usurped for other school events.</p> <p>The issues identified in the National Review of Music Education have been repeated in a number of other reviews since 2005, including the Victorian Government Inquiry in 2013 which found that “despite several comprehensive reports on music education at both the state and national level, there have been few substantive improvements to the quality and provision of school music education in Victoria over the past two decades”.⁸²</p>	<p>Finland: music education is a core subject in Finland’s education system and is valued across parents, educators and policy makers. The level of music education is very high amongst the general population⁸³ and music education is well resourced in all schools.</p> <p>Canada: music education is considered very important for every child and 94%⁸⁴ of sustainable and comprehensive music programs are led by music education specialists. The 2010 report highlighted that “the strongest music education programs have appropriate funding, student interest and time, a strong specialist teacher, appropriate instruments and space, as well as a supportive principal and parents”. (p.2)⁷⁶</p>

Commonalities

The commonalities across music education systems that result in both sound musical development and permanent cognitive enhancement (as reflected in such measures as academic attainment, standardised testing, tertiary study, human development, and elite levels of musical achievement) are as follows:

Key message	Description
Start early	A focus on high-quality music education in preschool will have profound effects on student development.
Recognise that all children are musical	Music education is as beneficial for human and cognitive development as it is for the training of expert musicians. Therefore, quality music learning is vital for students to thrive in all subject areas.
Commit to a quality music education for every child	Both cognitive and musical development cannot occur without a commitment to quality programs, teachers and pedagogy.
Learn a complex musical instrument	Simply learning any instrument will not result in either cognitive or musical development. Ukuleles, simple percussion and recorders are great starting or gateway instruments to the more complex strings, brass and percussion. This learning is easiest and arguably most beneficial if it is commenced before the age of 7 years.
Learn music (classroom and/or instrument) over a long period of time (3-7 years)	To achieve cognitive, musical and cultural development outcomes, a music education needs to be ongoing, active, structured and sequential. One-off or short-term music experiences do not constitute a quality music education as they do not on their own result in these outcomes. They are, however, an excellent complement to quality, ongoing music programs.
Maintain high levels of engagement (age appropriate level of 30 minutes to 7 hours per week during the academic year)	Music learning is a discipline and as such cognitive and musical development needs to happen over time.
Support high levels of teacher expertise	Formal qualification and professional development is imperative and needs to be supported and encouraged.
Require teaching pedagogy that is active, formal and structured	Activities should include pitch, rhythm, singing, instrumental work, composition and improvisation, reading notation, group work and performance.

Start early
Commit to quality in
Teaching and music



State v State



New South Wales



New South Wales (NSW) is still operating off its own curriculum, which is regarded by practitioners within the state as more conducive to quality, sequential music education than many other state curricula. The NSW K-6 curriculum elevates visual arts and music above dance and drama and excludes media arts entirely. Music is also mandated in the 7-10 curriculum, giving it additional continuity beyond primary school. The latest iteration of the curriculum, though not yet approved by the Minister, is regarded by non-musically trained or experienced principals as something which makes music education legible and accessible. The new curriculum has created a sense of optimism that music may be better understood and valued in New South Wales in the future. New South Wales also has an active regional conservatorium network, which continues to have a positive impact on the provision of music in regional communities. The NSW Department of Education is currently reviewing its arts curriculum with the view to release an enhanced syllabus. This is significant as the NSW music curriculum has not undergone a significant revision since the implementation of the Australian Curriculum in 2015.

NSW elevates
Music and Visual Arts above
Dance and Drama and
excludes media arts altogether

NSW has a very active Regional
Conservatorium network that
Bolsters the regional schools.

**This is model that could be
pursued in Victoria.**

Victoria



Interviewees offered a variety of opinions on the state of music education in Victoria (VIC), which appears to be in a period of transition following a Victorian parliamentary inquiry in 2013. A favourable political climate has occasioned several funding initiatives in the last few years, including \$2m in funding for professional learning and school-based grants for instrument purchases. However, these efforts are still small and non-systemic in comparison to funding commitments made in South Australia and Queensland. One interviewee highlighted that Victoria had half as many students doing Year 12 Music as New South Wales but was unsure why this disparity was so great. Several interviewees commented that Victorian independent schools offer particularly exceptional music education programs.

Victoria is the only State/Territory
without regional conservatoriums.

Victoria is the only state that does
not supplement primary classroom
music with a selective instrumental
program for middle primary.

Victoria's ATAR scores are 'scaled'
to reward science and language
over the arts and humanities.

Music In Victorian Primary Schools

School leadership is vital to music education in schools but there is a dearth of research on the impact of leadership on musical experiences in the primary school. Buchan (2016) Collins (2016) Alberts review, (Collins, 2019) and in qualitative research by de Vries (2014) and Barrett et al. (2018).

The value v the purpose of music education Collins et al. have suggested that advocacy for music education would be better served by a focus on purpose rather than value. (2020) Collins (2016) Barrett, Zhukov & Welch, 2018; de Vries, 2016; King, 2012; Pascoe et al., 2005; Russell-Bowie, 2002

Resourcing - deficits impact opportunities, whether that be lack of time in the school day, lack of physical resources such as musical instruments or a space where music making and playing can take place safely, (Alberts, 2020; Barrett, Zhukov & Welch, 2018; de Vries, 2016; King, 2012; Pascoe et al., 2005; Russell-Bowie, 2002)

Lack of access to a relevant professional learning community and development opportunities (de Vries, 2011; 2017; Garvis & Pendergast, 2012, 2010; Hennessy, 2000, 2017; Holden & Button, 2006; Power & Kloppe, 2011).

Lack of skill, ability to teach with creativity, flexibility, agility, and confidence has been cited as correlating with the **reduction of hours devoted to music education in initial teacher education courses** in Australia (Alberts, 2020; Barton, Baguley, & MacDonald, 2013; Collins, 2020; Garvis & Pendergast, 2010, 2012; Hocking, 2009). Barrett, Zhukov & Welch, (2018) and Collins (2019) both suggest this reflects **educational policy** and the **influence of economic rationalism** and accountability that have continued to shape Initial Teacher Education (I.T.E), the profession and the curriculum, particularly through the introduction of NAPLAN in 2008, AITSL from 2010 and the Australian Curriculum from 2009 (Alberts, 2020; Ewing, 2010).

What music is being experienced?

Both the repertoire and experiences are also often presentational rather than participatory (Turino, 2008, 2009) with the focus on a musical product rather than on what is being learned and experienced or expressed by the children (Allsup, 2016; Buchan, 2016; Thibeault, 2015) This aspect of 'what' has not been the focus of many research projects and therefore supports the method and questions I have argued are appropriate.

A singular approach that devalues the uniqueness of each arts learning area. A common story offered throughout research (Barrett et al, 2018; Buchan, 2016; Collins, 2016; de Vries, 2016) is the rotation of arts learning across the school year- for example, a focus of learning and development in one arts learning area for one school term follow by another arts learning area for another term.

Buchan (2016) reports on the **impact of cultural hegemony and the influence of the US mass produced music industry** on the selection of repertoire. Her research also highlights the potential of music and music education experiences that respect the voice, interests, cultural diversity, and developmental position of the child. (Buchan, 2016; Nikkanen, & Westerlund, 2017). It is the aim of this current inquiry that more of this aspect of 'what' will become understood.

There appeared to be **something distinctive and 'difficult' about music as a learning area**, which would lead to it being **marginalised more often** than other areas, and this is reflected in the literature (for example, (Barrett, Zhukov and Welch, 2019; Buchan, 2016; Hennessy, 2000; Holden & Button, 2006).

There have certainly been debates over music's place within the primary school and it is possible to position the subject as an enjoyable, **extra-curricular activity**, rather than as something that should be studied on an equal footing with more 'academic' domains (Burnard, 2006a; Collins, 2019).

The questions



The questions that underpin my research,
The key research questions for this study are:

- Who is enabled/hindered to teach music in Victorian primary schools *and how does this/has this happen/ed?*
- How do teachers adapt and adopt curriculum to enable *becoming musical* in their everyday classrooms?
- How is *becoming musical* reflected in the personal practical knowledge and the image of teachers in generalist classrooms, schools and principals?

‘What stories do staff tell us about their ‘becoming musical experiences?’ and ‘How do these stories and experiences provide insights and understanding of the influence of policy, person, place and where musical experiences in the classroom were, are and could be? and “How might the experiences that took place over the course of the intervention continue to shape the pedagogy, place and possibilities for more music in more schools?’ These are complex questions for which I was not expecting straightforward or definitive answers.

Method

Forum

Invitation to participate in Professional Learning – *Teach Talk & Tune*

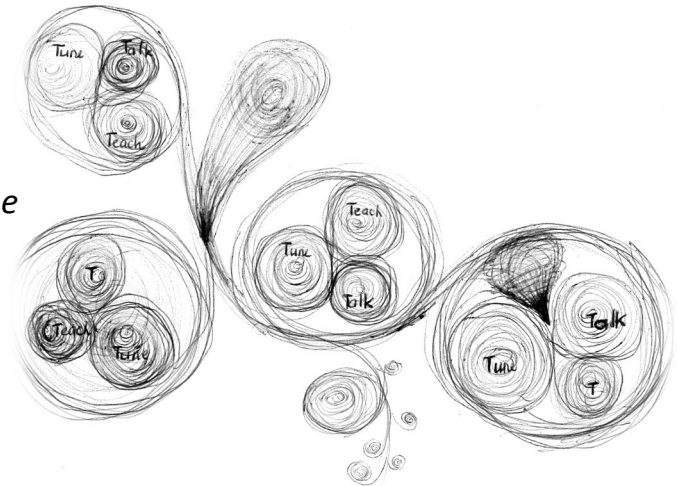
Three teaching staff and their principal opted in.

Participants – three (3) female, one (1) male staff

Levels 1 - 6 were represented across the teaching staff.

Principal's perspective

Music Memory Box Artifact elicitation



Teach Talk and Tune times

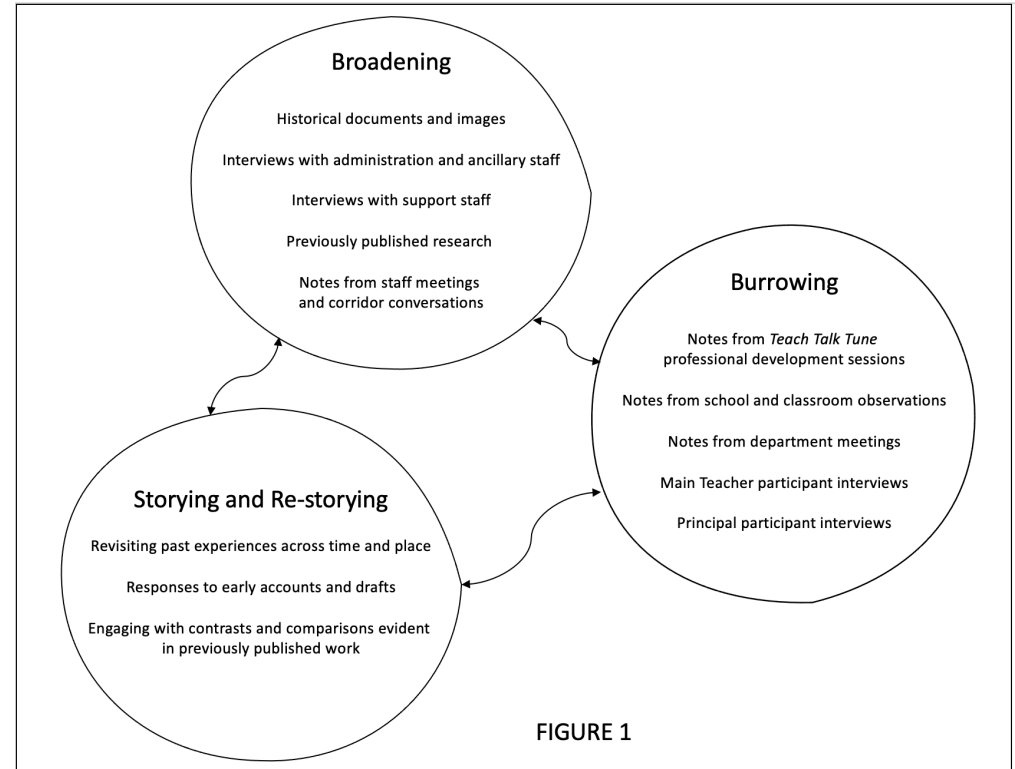
I kept **dot point brief jottings** and I used these to remind myself of things that had caught my gaze, my ear or my imagination. I was able to video, and audio record many experiences of “teaching” and “education” for **review and reflection alongside my colleagues** and these were used for the **‘Tune’ times**. After leaving the school, usually the same day, events were reconstructed in anthropological style field notes. **Field narratives**

Preliminary narrative accounts (interim research texts) were prepared and shared with teachers. These accounts took the form of long narratives on the experiences I had been privy to as I inquired in the midst with each participant.

Method

The staff responded to the narrative accounts in the second of the above-noted interviews (June 2016 with Maggie and Peter and January 2017 with Sue and Kim). Their responses provided insight into their imagery as it was embodied in their practice. These responses, combined with the ongoing participant observation work, led to the preparation of a second narrative account and a brief discussion with each participating staff member in November 2017 and February 2018.

All data are collected into '**Field texts**'. These field texts are then transformed into research texts using three devices: **broadening, burrowing, and storying and re-storying**, as elaborated in FIGURE 1

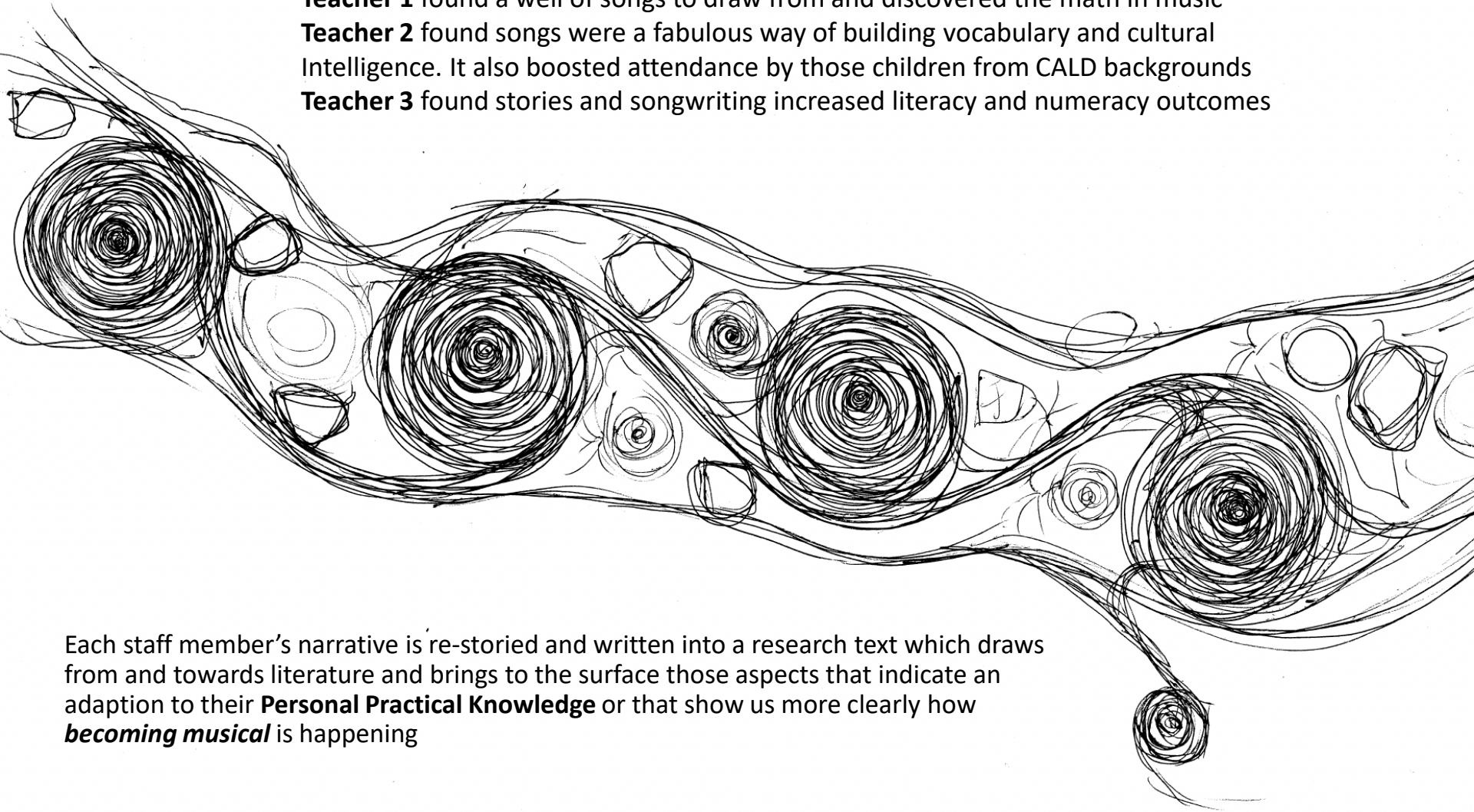


Narrative ponds

Teacher 1 found a well of songs to draw from and discovered the math in music

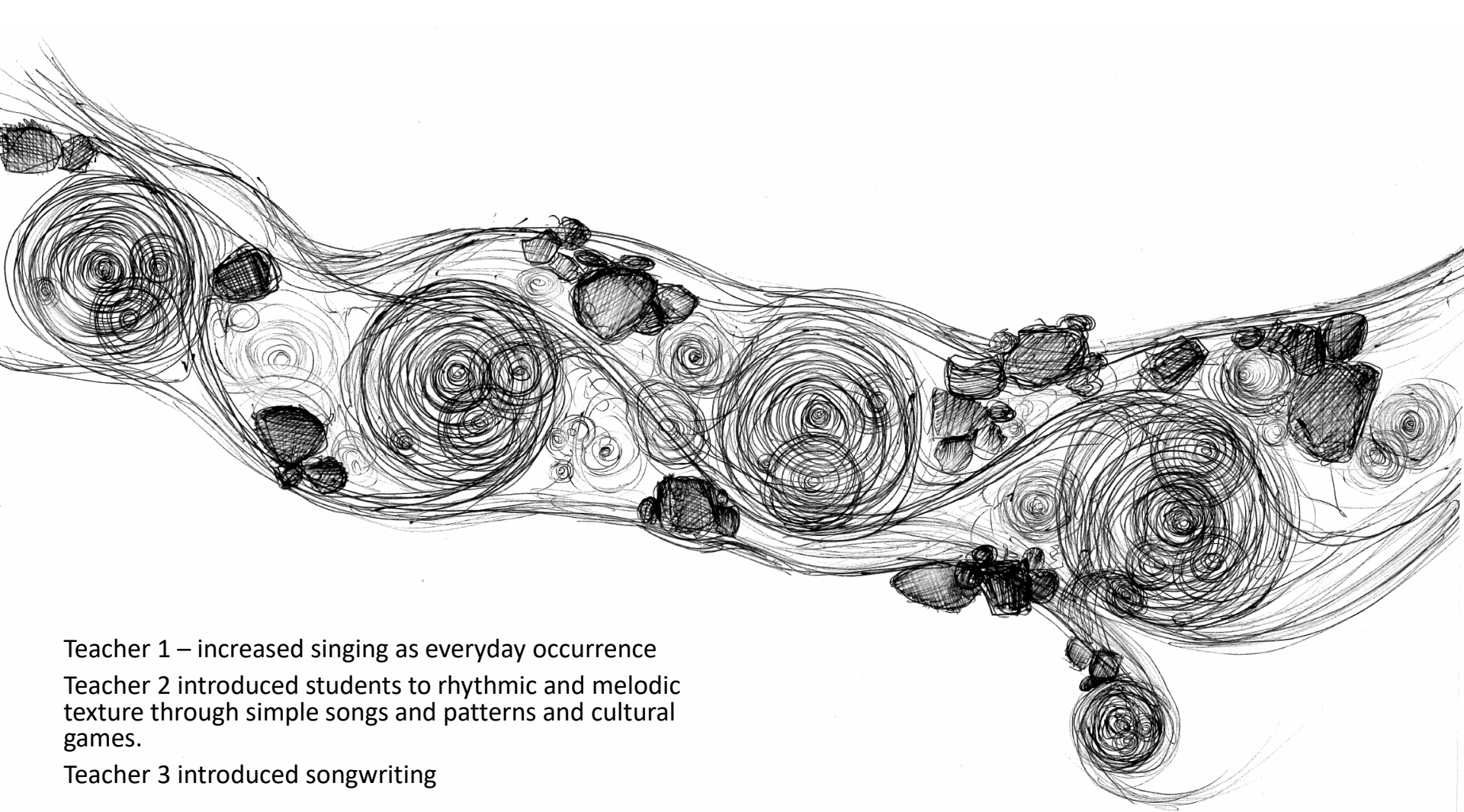
Teacher 2 found songs were a fabulous way of building vocabulary and cultural Intelligence. It also boosted attendance by those children from CALD backgrounds

Teacher 3 found stories and songwriting increased literacy and numeracy outcomes



Each staff member's narrative is re-storied and written into a research text which draws from and towards literature and brings to the surface those aspects that indicate an adaption to their **Personal Practical Knowledge** or that show us more clearly how *becoming musical* is happening

Principal participated and supported – he was a contemporary risk-taker



Teacher 1 – increased singing as everyday occurrence

Teacher 2 introduced students to rhythmic and melodic texture through simple songs and patterns and cultural games.

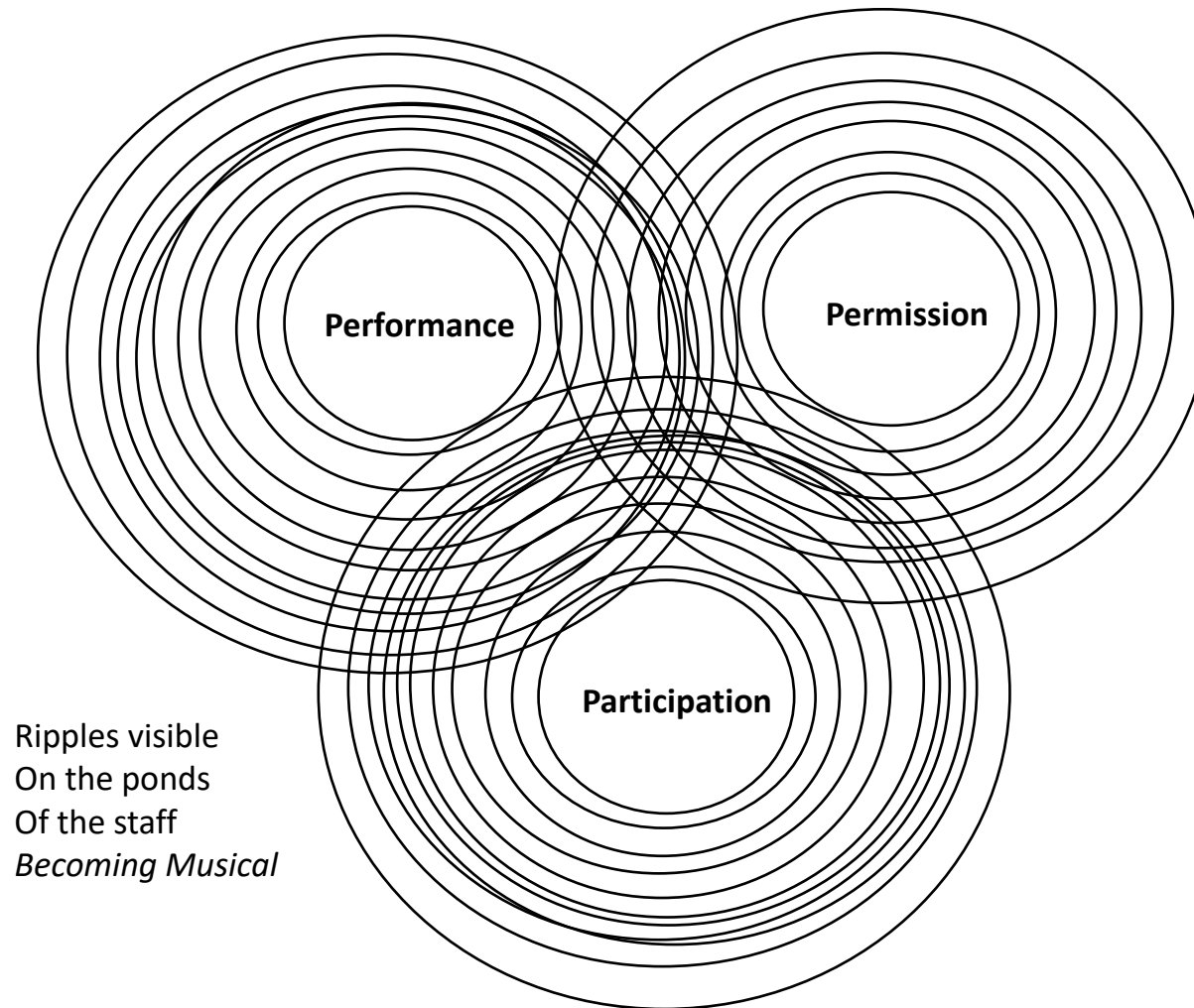
Teacher 3 introduced songwriting

They had to push back against pressure to measure.

They had to find ways of working in the spaces

They all participated and

**Becoming musical
becoming visible
at the surface**



Ripples visible
On the ponds
Of the staff
Becoming Musical

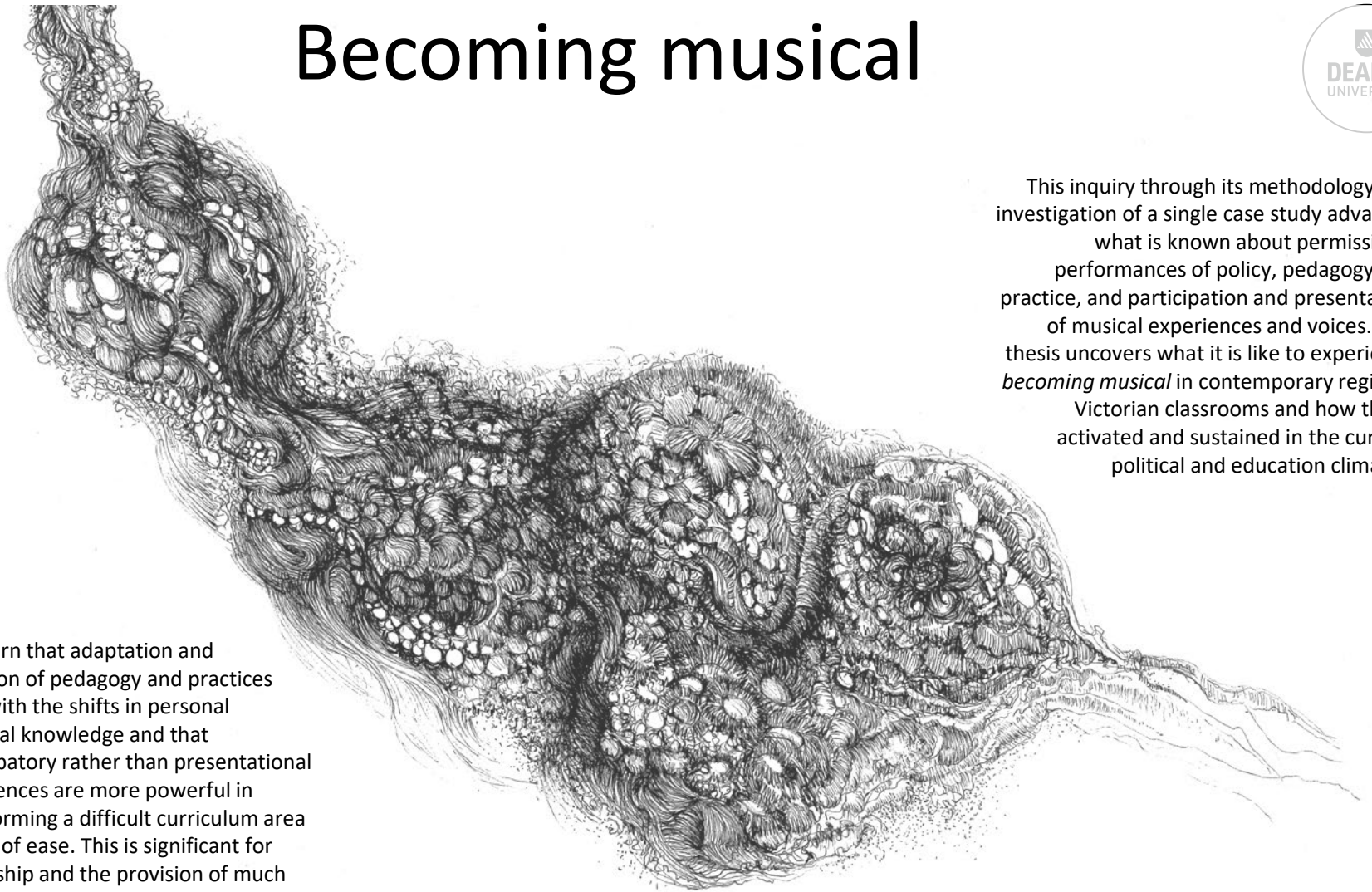
Three ripples across the ponds of all staff related to **performance - performative measures and discourses**. This ripple does much to impede *becoming musical* experiences. Performance features bump up against **participatory** experiences of music and music education – both past and present. **Self permission** that draws from the *best loved selves* of staff and **perceived permission** from the principal, further enable *becoming musical*

Becoming musical



This inquiry through its methodology and investigation of a single case study advances what is known about permissions, performances of policy, pedagogy and practice, and participation and presentation of musical experiences and voices. This thesis uncovers what it is like to experience *becoming musical* in contemporary regional Victorian classrooms and how this is activated and sustained in the current political and education climates.

We learn that adaptation and adoption of pedagogy and practices align with the shifts in personal practical knowledge and that participatory rather than presentational experiences are more powerful in transforming a difficult curriculum area to one of ease. This is significant for leadership and the provision of much needed support to those who seek to provide best practices in professional learning for this learning area.



Heinze is Unique



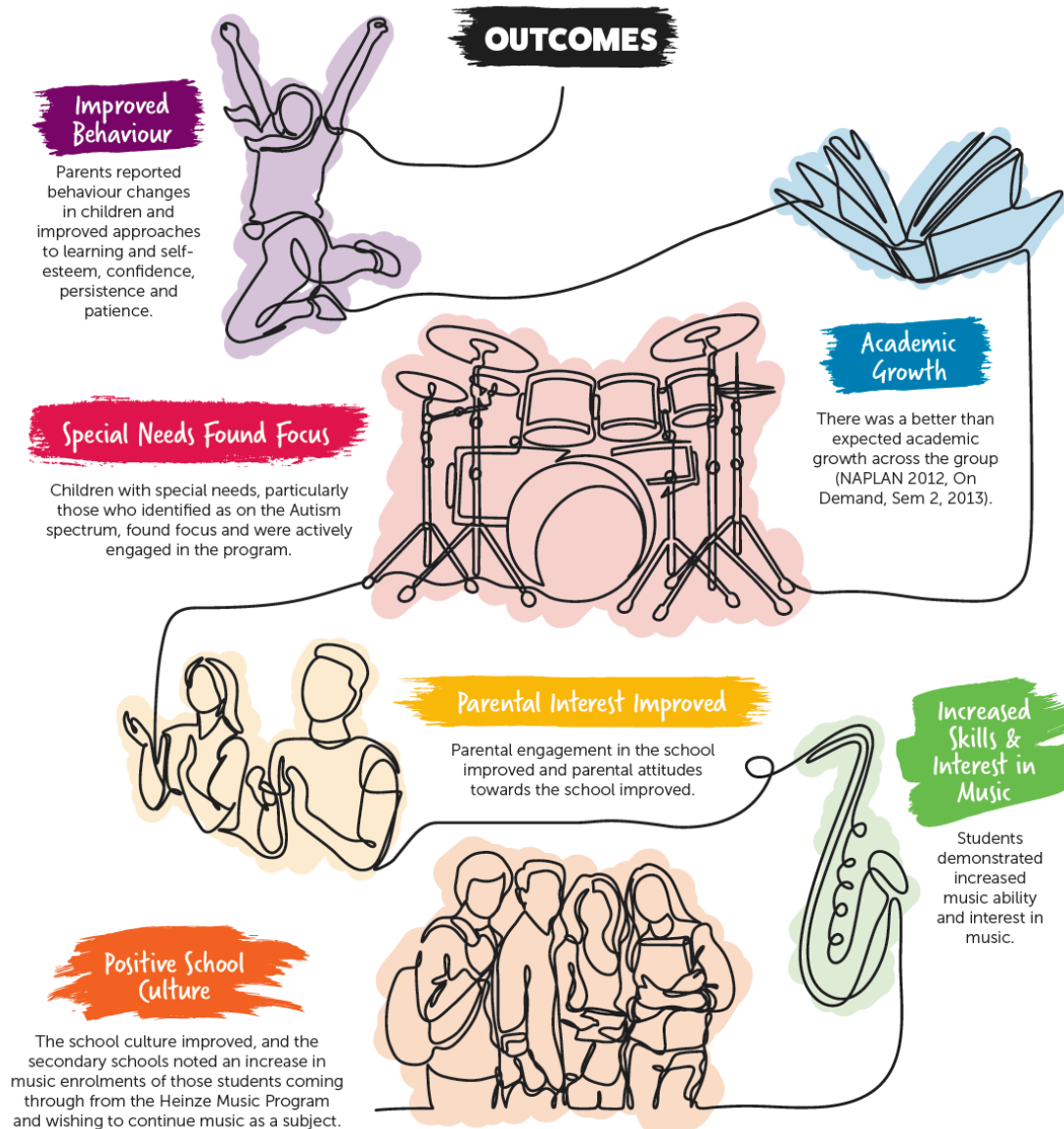
Build the first (or second) regional conservatorium for the arts.

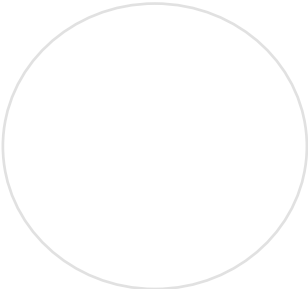

Warrnambool are on their way - joint funding?

The Heinze Music Program provides quality music education each year to over 180 children and young people in 7 low SES primary schools within and around Shepparton, enhancing engagement in learning, language development and social skills.

Four regional conservatoriums?

Outcomes





The Heinze Music Program is currently established in

7 PRIMARY SCHOOLS



Dhurringile Primary



Kialla West

Mooroopna Primary

Mooroopna Park Primary

Mooroopna North Primary



Murchison Primary

Tatura Primary

The catchment of Greater Shepparton has a total of 40 Primary Schools and a there is wait list of schools wishing to participate in the Program.





Music

Every child

Everyday

Everywhere