



Renuntio

No nobler training exists but that which cherishes the good, the beautiful, and the true, thus producing disciples of knowledge and lovers of wisdom.

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Empowering Students through Music

You may become a Shakespeare, a Michelangelo, a Beethoven. You have the capacity for anything. Yes, you are a marvel. And when you grow up, can you then harm another who is, like, you a marvel?

We must all work to make the world worthy of its children."

-Pablo Casals, 'cellist

When I was a young child I was craving music in my life. I begged my parents for violin lessons, saxophone lessons, piano lessons, anything, but it was to no avail. So one day I decided I was going to prove to my parents that I deserved to have music lessons in my life. We had a small electronic keyboard in our house and I started to teach myself how to play the melody line to "Joy to the World." I can still remember how I learned it. I dug and found some of my dad's old piano books and saw what fingers were supposed to play what notes and then memorized a pattern to the notes. My parents were so impressed they stuck me in lessons the next week.

This is not the same story that will be repeated by other music students, and that is ok. Every student is different and learns and connects in different ways to the music. This is where my first real connection with music started.

Throughout my life I have had numerous influential music teachers that have made me who I am today. They empowered me to continually want to be better and improve myself. They made me feel I was worth it and could make a difference with my talents. This is what I want to impress on my students.

In my classes I believe that it doesn't matter that my students play or sing all the notes right. What matters is that their brain has a creative idea every day. To do this, I have to always be making opportunities for my students to practice and scaffold them in doing so.

If my students are always looking to me for the correct answer or for the correct rhythm, that is not very empowering. I have to show my students how to make mistakes and how to use their ears, as well as their hearts, to guide them on their musical journey. It is always ok to make mistakes in my classroom, in fact, I encourage them that if they are going to make a mistake to do so loudly. When my students make a mistake they should be proud of the fact that they are trying. That goes a whole lot further with me than someone who does nothing.

I am constantly assessing my classes and asking myself, what are they taking away from this? What will last with them when they leave my class? Will it be that they played all the notes right? Or will it be that they dove into the music and figured out how they connect and fit into the whole scheme of things in the music. That they were able to share some of their vulnerable feelings with their classmates because they feel that they are in a safe environment? That they know they didn't perform perfectly but that is the best part about music, is that it is never perfect, it is always changing, and growing, and learning.

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THE XAVIER PROMISE

Xavier Classical Charter Schools are dedicated to providing a classical, intellectually rigorous, content-rich, liberal arts education, preparing students to excel in every duty and guiding them toward wisdom and virtue.

UPCOMING EVENTS

1

- 2/14-16— Homework Club
- 2/15— Xavier Continuous Improvement Meeting @Xavier— 6-9 p.m.
- 2/17— Teacher In-Service **NO SCHOOL (K-12)**
- 2/20— Presidents Day **NO SCHOOL (K-12)**
- 2/21-23— Homework Club
- 2/24— **TWINS DRESS UP DAY**
- 2/25— Ski Club 1:15 p.m.
- 2/28-3/2— Homework Club
- 3/1— Xavier Blood Drive
- 3/3— Semi-Formal Winter Ball 7-10 p.m.
- 3/4— Ski Club 1:15 p.m.
- 3/7-9— Homework Club
- 3/8— Spring Photos
- 3/8— Board Meeting 6 p.m.
- 3/9— PFA Meeting 3:15 p.m.
- 3/14-16— Homework Club
- 3/14— Spring Choir Concert 7 p.m.
- 3/17-18— State Academic Decathlon
- 3/20-24— **SPRING BREAK NO SCHOOL (K-12)**

Empowering Students cont. —

Young children know how to be creative and somehow along the way they lose that self-esteem and they start caring about what others think. In my classroom I try to empower my students to open up their minds and put themselves in someone else's shoes. If they don't connect personally with a song, I encourage them to talk to their classmates and see how they connect to the song. Music is such a personal thing and I want my students to not feel vulnerable. I want them to feel like their thoughts and feelings are just as important as everyone else's.

To direct my teaching I like to ask myself, what is the heart of teaching music? It is the looks on my students' faces when they finally connect with a song and it makes them feel things that words could never make them feel. It is the letters from parents saying that their child finally feels like they are worth something because of music. It is the rumors of the "worst kid in school" who joins your music class and is successful at everything you ask them to do. It is the knowledge that the most meaningful things in life are felt with the heart and music has a great way of connecting you to that.

If empowering opportunities are presented, students will shine. They have always had the capability, sometimes they just need a little encouragement, a little self-worth to know that they can accomplish great things. Music is so powerful and so touching, why would I want anything other than my students feeling empowered by it? In a world where everything seems like it needs to be so perfect, I am happy to embrace the differences of every student. Differences make my choirs and bands unique and show them why they are a vital part of my program. Empowerment really is powerful. ~Amanda Hall— Secondary Music



OPEN AND RE-ENROLLMENT FEBRUARY 1 THROUGH MARCH 31

VIRTUE OF THE MONTH

COURAGE—WE ALWAYS DO WHAT WE KNOW TO BE RIGHT DESPITE FEAR, HARDSHIP, AND OPPOSITION. WE RESIST NEGATIVE PEER PRESSURE, DEFEND OUR RIGHTS AND THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS, AND ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO DO THE SAME.

Jan. 30-Feb. 3 — *"He is courageous who endures and fears the right thing, for the right motive, in the right way and at the right times."*

~Aristotle (Greek philosopher, b. 384-322 BC)

Feb. 6 — *"Courage is going from failure to failure without losing hope and enthusiasm."* ~Winston Churchill (British Prime Minister, b.1874-1965)

Feb. 13 — *"Courage is fear holding on one minute longer."* ~General George S. Patton (US World War II commander, b. 1885-1945)

Feb. 27-Mar. 3 — *"One man with courage makes a majority."*

~Andrew Jackson (7th US President, b. 1767-1845)

SOMETHING NEW!!!

WHAT?

**FIRST ANNUAL
STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL**

WHEN?

SATURDAY
MAY 13, 2017
1-4 PM

WHERE?

XAVIER CHARTER SCHOOL

HOW?

THROUGH A DELIBERATE EFFORT BY XAVIER
STAKEHOLDERS

WHY?

TO FOSTER CONTINUED
COMMUNITY AND TO RAISE CAPITAL CAM-
PAIGN MONIES FOR XAVIER
CHARTER SCHOOL

You would like to help?

GREAT!

We may be calling a phone number
near you...or **you** may volunteer by
emailing

lthompson@xaviercharter.org
or bbaird@xaviercharter.org