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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness and impact of a culturally responsive general music curriculum on student engagement and standardized skill acquisition. Over the course of two nine-week marking periods, I worked with eighth grade general music students to develop curriculum and instruction that employed their prior knowledge and reflected their interests. I used surveys, interviews, and class discussions to collect information about my students' musical experiences and their perceptions about home and school music. I used that information to work with students to create projects and assignments that both aligned with state and national standards and their own musical goals. I continued using surveys, interviews, and class discussions in conjunction with an observational field log and student work to gauge the effectiveness of these changes. My findings suggest that culturally relevant instruction may accelerate the acquisition of standardized music skills and that student choice in holistic assessments plays a significant role in student engagement.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
List of Figures.....	vi
Researcher Stance.....	1
Literature Review.....	9
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.....	14
Authenticity.....	16
Teacher Preparedness.....	18
Community Engagement.....	21
Student Choice.....	22
Voice/Student Choice.....	22
Conclusion.....	25
Methodology.....	28
Research Goals.....	28
Setting/Participants.....	28
Data Sources.....	30
Trustworthiness Statement.....	35

My Story.....38

 Rafael.....48

 Ethan.....51

 Kyle & Xander.....53

 Alice & Norani.....56

Data Analysis.....62

Research Findings.....74

Next Steps.....83

References.....85

Appendix.....88

 A HSIRB Proposal.....88

 B Parent Consent Form.....93

 C Student Assent Form.....94

 D Pre-Class Survey.....95

 E Home Music Survey.....96

 F Favorite Music Survey.....97

 G Course Reflection Survey.....98

 H Original Pre-Course Survey.....100

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Students' Previous Musical Experience

Figure 2: Anxiety Associated with Music Class

Figure 3: Excitement Associated with Music Class

Figure 4: Perception of Curricular Utility

Figure 5: Student Interest in Piano

Figure 6: Student Interest in Musical Form

Figure 7: Student Interest in Film Scores

Figure 8: Student Feedback: Aspects of the Curriculum to Keep (MP 1)

Figure 9: Student Feedback: Aspects of the Curriculum to Keep (MP 2)

Figure 10: Coding Index Graphic Organizer

Figure 11: Parent Descriptions of Heritage by Nationality

Figure 12: Final Competency Rating

