

**Free After-School Suzuki Violin Lessons
For At-Risk Youth in Grand Rapids, Michigan**

**Larissa Fall
Final Proposal
AAD 660 - 201: Social and Cultural Entrepreneurship in the Arts
University of Kentucky
Professor Gretchen McIntosh**



**Suzuki Association
of the Americas**

WZZM 13 / Gannett Foundation

Attention: Catherine Behrendt

645 3 Mile Road NW

Grand Rapids, Michigan 49544

Dear Ms. Behrendt:

On behalf of the board of directors and staff at the Suzuki Association of the Americas, I am honored to submit the following proposal requesting consideration of a grant of \$10,000 to the Free Suzuki Violin After-School Music Education Program at Stocking Elementary School in Grand Rapids, Michigan to assist us in procuring all instruments and music supplies for at-risk youth in the Stocking Elementary School. This program is a free violin-music education instruction program established in cooperation with the 501(c)3 organization Suzuki Association of the Americas.

Established in 1972, the mission of Suzuki Association of the Americas is to improve the quality of life in the Americas through Suzuki education. It seeks to create a learning community, which embraces excellence and nurtures the human spirit. The Suzuki Association of the Americas is a coalition of teachers, parents, educators, and others who are interested in making music education available to all children. Through partnering with Stocking Elementary School and Meyer Music this free after-school program will improve discipline and nurture self-confidence.

Because of your commitment to encouraging education we sincerely hope that the Gannett Foundation will join us as our partner in this important program. Should you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 000-000-0000. We deeply appreciate your consideration of our request and look forward to hearing from in in September if not before.

Sincerely,

Larissa Fall, Program Director and SAA Violinist



Suzuki Association
of the **Americas**

Executive Summary:

The Free Suzuki Violin After-School Music Education Program at Stocking Elementary School intends to provide violin instruction to at-risk children in underserved areas from K-5th grade in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Through instructors procured by the 501(c) 3 organization Suzuki Association of the Americas the music education program will empower youth improve classroom behavior, extend attention span, strengthen motor skills and hand-eye coordination, and give children a jump-start in academic subjects that include math, language and science.

The program would be held at Stocking Elementary School three days a week and would employ the use of three Suzuki Trained violin instructors and a program director. Apart from the instructors and program director instruments and music supplies would be provided from Meyer Music a local instrument rental provider. The GRPS-Grand Rapids Public School System consists of a total of 31 elementary schools and as a pilot program Stocking Elementary School located at the Western side of downtown Grand Rapids, Michigan will allow us to focus our attention on project analysis. The program wishes to educate 15-30 students in the coming academic calendar year.

No other program like this exists in Grand Rapids, Michigan that would be able to offer free instruments and instruction. The educational benefits and improved behaviors of children will increase quality of life.

Problem Statement:

As 23% of Kent County children are in a state of poverty and 80% of schools in the United States are cutting funding for the arts, it is crucial to provide quality arts and cultural education. At-risk students in Michigan K-5th grade need easily accessible arts education opportunities that are currently not offered in their schools. Access to free after-school instrumental music education will give at-risk children increased developmental opportunities, greater concentration in class, discipline, and a creative outlet. This Suzuki violin after-school program will provide at-risk children with the resources necessary to be involved in arts and music education which will aid in their future success and boost their academic knowledge and behavior.

In a study from 2012, despite state requirements some 108,000 Michigan students lack access to arts education and the average elementary school spends less than a penny a day per pupil on arts experiences. With benefits physically, mentally, and emotionally funding for a free violin instrumental music education after-school group class at Stocking Elementary School in Grand Rapids, Michigan should be obtained. Increase in music education opportunities such as this will boost achievement and mental health of these children.

No free after-school instrumental music education programs currently exist in the Grand Rapids Area of West Michigan. According to a recent news study, 23% of children live in poverty in Kent County, a 40% increase over the last 6 years. With 23% of Kent County's children in poverty access to not only food but also cultural outlets for self-expression and learning need to be gained. Music has been proven to increase language development, IQ, spatial-temporal skills, creativity, and basic attention span. With current lack of funding and access to arts education, students miss out on crucial mental, physical, and emotional outlets to learn. According to the journal of Neuroscience, "playing a musical instrument changes the anatomy and function of the brain...and adults who received formal music instruction as children have more robust brainstem responses to sound than peers without."³

Stocking Elementary School is located in the Western district of downtown Grand Rapids, Michigan at 863 7th Street NW. and was recently reopened in 2013.⁴ As it is a newly revived school it is an opportune placed to implement this after-school violin group lesson program for Grand Rapids Public Elementary School students. With funding the program will be able to provide access to musical instruments, materials, instruction, and space. Weekly classes will aid in language development, IQ, creativity, musicality, attention span, discipline, and cultural education.

Stocking Elementary is one of 31 schools in the Grand Rapids Public School system and would be the first to implement the program in collaboration with local Suzuki violin

instructors. The Suzuki Association of the Americas is a network of professional musicians and teachers that have training and a combined teaching method that is recognized worldwide.

The Suzuki method has been called the 'mother-tongue approach' and consists of the idea that through loving encouragement and constant repetition every child can learn. The free after-school violin group class instruction program would implement the Suzuki Teaching Methodology and use only Suzuki Trained violin instructors.⁵ The consistency of the program and of the repertoire and lesson plans used by each teacher would bring a level of consistency that would aid in education and a sense of belonging with each child. Group and individual lessons would be available as teachers were.

For the materials used in the implementation of the program musical instruments would be rented from the local vendor Meyer Music through funding. Each student enrolled in the program would be individually fitted for an instrument before the first class. The program would be held once weekly after-school at Stocking Elementary for the duration of the school year and would follow the Grand Rapids Public Calendar.

When learning music a child must tap into multiple skill sets including math, language, and hand-eye coordination. No other subject brings all physical, mental, and emotional aspects into the same realm of learning, as does music. With free access to excellent teaching, musical instruments/materials, and a space provided all at-risk children would have the opportunity to grow and develop at the Stocking Elementary School. If the program succeeds the improved community would see better school behavior and improved learning from these children would be evident. Future funding would be sought from Michigan Council for the Arts and local funders.

Methods & Goals

Our primary objective in 2016 for the Stocking Elementary School Strings Instrumental Music Education Program will employ the goals and methods as outlined below. These methods will allow the creation and implementation of not only a pilot music program at the Stocking Elementary School in Grand Rapids, Michigan, but also the elements to track the success and progress of this program and its effectiveness for at-risk children in the underserved area of West Michigan.

The overall goal of the program will be that at-Risk children at Stocking Elementary will receive free after-school instrumental music education in the violin and will show increased social and academic skills. To increase the musical, academic, and social competence of the at-risk elementary children in Grand Rapids Public-Stocking Elementary School by progressing all students through Book 1 of the Suzuki method, giving each individual and group lessons, and nurturing them through love and encouragement.

In the pilot program at least 15 students will be enrolled, parents and school teachers will assess the behavioral and academic capacity of the students enrolled in the program, Book 1 of the Suzuki Method will be completed and taught throughout the 40 week school calendar year, at the end of the academic year there will be a group recital to showcase all students' growth and as a benefit dinner for the next year of the program. All classes will be given at the Stocking Elementary School in large classrooms with windows to provide safety and accessibility. The classes will be offered Monday-Wednesday weekly from 3pm-5:30pm. These will include individual lessons as well as group classes weekly. Throughout the course of the year evaluations will be taken by the program director to assess the programs level of efficiency and effectiveness. If the program is effective, there will be decreased behavioral issues, an increase in motor skills and comprehension

All teachers will be selected by the Program Director through the Suzuki Association of the Americas. All Suzuki certified teachers must have gone through an audition and certification process before being hired on. The Suzuki method is a crucial element to the success of this program due to its worldwide consistency in teaching and method. All teachers have been trained and use the same material. Wherever these students are in their learning, the teachers will meet them at their need. All music and education through the program will be directly relatable to any other Suzuki program worldwide.

Planning and implementation will begin in 2016 of April. All teachers will meet with the program director in April to go over lesson planning phase 1. The contact point person at Stocking Elementary school will be contacted in April and an initial meeting will be held in May 2016. Recruitment materials for the new Strings Education Program along with outreach strategies for parents of students will be compiled and sent out by June 2016. Recruitment of students will take place through direct mail and in-school visits from May-August of 2016. The official launch date of the project will begin after Labor Day at Stocking Elementary School with a kick-off performance by all teachers. The first week of classes all

students enrolled in the program will be evaluated by the partnering music rental instrument program and fitted for a rental instrument. Evaluation and documentation of progress will commence through the direction of the Program Director starting after the first week of individual and group lessons. Suzuki Teachers will meet weekly to discuss lessons. At the end of the year a benefit dinner/recital concert will take place to showcase all the students' progress.

Program Evaluation Techniques:

To conduct the effectiveness, impact and efficiency of the Music Education Program at Stocking Elementary the following evaluation elements will be conducted:

Grand Rapids Public School Staff and Suzuki violin Instructors cooperating in the after-school music education program will measure student performance before and after program implementation. After each week's sessions of private and group lessons with the students involved, both the classroom teacher and the violin instructor will fill out an evaluation form with each student's progress and the outcome of that week's lesson. This quantitative data will be stored and recorded by the program director.

Behavioral results will be obtained through casual survey's with school teachers and parents of students. At the end of the academic year all students should have progressed through Book 1 of the Suzuki material and will go through a final recital. If parents and schoolteachers give positive feedback for both behavioral, academic, and social growth the program will be deemed effective.

Qualitative data, the number of students enrolled in the program, will be obtained through the Program Director. The qualitative data will have no baseline due to the programs pilot nature. At least 15-30 students should have been involved in this pilot program by the end of the academic year. The informal parent interviews will be conducted by the program director monthly. Questions in the informal interview will include parents' observations on student behavior after school, reading comprehension, musical knowledge, and on the parents' opinion of quality of lessons and attitudes of students. Group sessions with the violin instructors will happen consecutively to assess the teaching methods employed and to determine their efficiency and helpfulness to individual students as well as the group class.

The results of the qualitative interviews will be processed by the program director at the end of the academic year and the success will be measured by how effectively students behaved and learned musical concepts. If the number of students enrolled improved throughout the academic year then the success of the Stocking Elementary School Program will be deemed effective and beneficial for the student body. The qualitative data will be compiled and used as the baseline for the next year's program.

Sustainability:

The Free After-School Music Education Program at Stocking Elementary School intends to continue each and every school year. It is able to be sustained by the generous donations of the community and grants. Meyer Music and Stocking Elementary have both agreed to enter into long-term partnerships with the program for space and instrument rental/repair.

The program director plans to set up a benefit concert at the end of every school year that will showcase the students' improvement on their instruments as well as raise the necessary funds to obtain instruments and money needed for the teachers and program director each year.

The Stocking Elementary School has agreed to open up their music room, library, and gym after school three times every week for the program for \$100 a month. Apart from the spaces for classes then, the overhead costs only include paying the fee for violin instructors, program director, and renting of instruments/equipment from Meyer Music. The cost-effective model will provide the program with the necessary funds each year to sustain its classes through donations and benefit concerts.

Revenue & Expenses

Revenue	
Foundations/Sponsorships	\$10,000
Government	\$15,000
Corporations	\$20,000
Individual Contributions	\$25,000 (250 individuals at \$100 each)
TOTAL REVENUE	\$70,000
Expenses	
Program Director/Teacher 1	\$20,000
Teacher 2	\$11,200
Teacher 3	\$11,200
TOTAL	\$42,400
Payroll Taxes and benefits	.46(42,400)=\$19,504
Instruments/Repair (30 total)	\$6,000 (\$200 per student - 30 students)
School Rental (10 months)	\$1000 (\$100/month)
Marketing	\$300
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$69,204
Net Surplus	\$796

EXPENSES

Program Director/Teacher 1

- Suzuki Certified Violin Instructor
- Duties include collection of quantitative and qualitative data from parent satisfaction forms
- Setting up meetings with teachers
- Marketing materials
- Contacting students/parents
- Keeping track of student progress and inputting into database
- Setting up fundraising and benefit dinner
- Maintenance and upkeep of all student instruments
- Payroll

Pay \$20,000

WEEKLY MUSIC TEACHING SCHEDULE

30 Kids Enrolled

3 Teachers Total (Each Teacher has 10 individual students)

Monday – Individual Lessons (30 students total)

Teacher1 (music room)=5 30min individual lessons [2.5 hours teaching 3pm-5:30pm]

Teacher 2 (library)=5 30min individual lessons [2.5 hours teaching 3pm-5:30pm]

Teacher 3 (gym)=5 30min individual lessons [2.5 hours teaching 3pm-5:30pm]

Tuesday – Individual Lessons (30 students total)

Teacher1 (music room)=5 30min individual lessons [2.5 hours teaching 3pm-5:30pm]

Teacher 2 (library)=5 30min individual lessons [2.5 hours teaching 3pm-5:30pm]

Teacher 3 (gym)=5 30min individual lessons [2.5 hours teaching 3pm-5:30pm]

Wednesday- Group Lesson (30 students total)

Group Class with all 30 students in the Gym [1 hr teacher prep with 1 hr lesson]

All teachers will be present at the group class every week. But main teacher will rotate, other 2 will be helpers each week.

Teacher Pay

Teacher 1 week hours=7hrs

Teacher 2 week hours=7hrs

Teacher 3 week hours=7hrs

\$40 /hr

Teacher 1=\$280(40 weeks)= \$11,200

Teacher 2=\$11,200

Teacher 3=\$11,200

Teacher Yearly Total=**TOTAL \$42,400**

Instrument Costs

Full Violin Outfit 4/4 size =\$200(30)=**TOTAL \$6,000**

Marketing

Weekly Paper Printing (30*.10 cents*40 weeks)= \$120

Misc. Music

TOTAL=**\$300**

Organizational Background:

Larissa Fall, who is a violinist and teacher in the Grand Rapids area, established the Stocking Elementary School After-School Free Suzuki Violin Instruction Courses in 2015. The mission of the program is to musically educate at-risk youth through the Suzuki Method of teaching to improve their understanding of music, interpersonal behavior, motor skills, math skills, linguistic skills, and test scores. Partnering organizations include the 501(c)3 Suzuki Association of the Americas, Stocking Elementary School, and Meyer Music.

Using the Suzuki method of teaching Larissa along with the other two Suzuki teachers is able to create an environment for aural and visual learning of music to students of all ages in the Grand Rapids Public School District. Through partnering with the Grand Rapids Public School System the violin instructions classes can be held free of charge for any school child that decides to apply to the program. As of 2015, the program must comply with all school hours of operation and the Grand Rapids Public School calendar.

The goal is to inspire children to aim for their dreams and reach their full potential. Programs are organized and analyzed by the program director and 3 professional violinists who have training certification in the Suzuki Association of the Americas Method. With 1 full time staff person and 3 part time teachers the program is run through partnership at the Stocking Elementary School 3 times a week and has an annual benefit dinner/concert to raise money for the following academic year's program. The curriculum is set each year and will progress through the Suzuki Levels for each student. By providing these kids with valuable access to music lessons and skilled Suzuki teachers the program empowers children to live self-disciplined lives and gain values of hard work, dedication, and creativity. The Suzuki Method teaches that every child can learn, and this program gives every child the access needed to accomplish that learning.