



Music Educators Convening Executive Summary

What is the overall goal of this effort?

To identify and implement actions to increase equity, diversity, and inclusivity in youth music education in Denver in a transformational, measurable and sustainable manner

What is the specific goal of the Music Educator Convening?

To leverage Denver's many music education organizations to:

- Create a long-term shared vision of the desired future of music education in Denver to increase equity, diversity, and access.
- Develop a plan that addresses:
 - A strategy to provide a classical musical pathway for more access to music education
 - Ubiquitous, wrong perceptions of music education in Denver
 - How each organization will support/participate in implementation
 - How to implement EDI practices and align with DPS's new music pedagogy around culturally relevant instruction.
- Agree upon action items, responsible individuals/organizations, and timelines to begin plan implementation

How will the Convening work?

Denver music education organizations will be invited to participate in a day-long facilitated discussion focused on achieving the goals outlined above.





What has been done so far?

- A survey was sent to 48 organizations with some impact on youth music education. Thirty-one organizations replied, including universities; large established education/performance entities; newer, smaller organizations and resource organizations. Respondents support age levels from early childhood through college. About half receive SCFD Tier II or III funding.
- Research was conducted into programs in other cities, states, and on the federal level that share the goal of increasing equity, diversity, and inclusivity in music education

What did the survey and the research show?

- Many local entities report putting a high priority on increasing equity, diversity, and inclusivity in music education, and are already taking steps in that direction. They differ in their perceptions of the desired result and how to get there, including which genres of music should be emphasized.
- Existing music education in Denver is perceived as variable. In the school system, there are issues getting school administrators to prioritize music education and to dedicate sufficient resources. Outside of the school system, while there are many diverse programs available, barriers such as cost and transportation hinder participation by low-income youth.
- Organizations are largely siloed, with a "scarcity mentality" regarding funding and other resources. A lack of understanding leads to seeing other organizations as competitors, rather than as potential collaborators toward a common goal
- Other geographic areas have undertaken collaborative efforts to increase diversity in music education. Publicly available information portrays the efforts as highly successful, without providing details on measures of success or on program governance and funding.

Why is the Convening important?

- A collaborative effort can only be successful if the participating organizations share a common vision of the desired future and trust each other. These factors can best be developed in a facilitated face-to-face discussion.
- All 31 survey respondents expressed support for the Convening if it includes a diverse group of organizations and produces meaningful results.



- The Convening can identify and address potential public misconceptions regarding music education, including:
 - SCFD is providing adequate funding for arts education
 - Everyone has access to music and music education
 - There are plenty of music teachers qualified to meet the need

What remains to be done to prepare for a successful Convening?

- Identify location and time
- Invite appropriate entities
- Craft an agenda/meeting plan to help the group achieve the goals of the Convening, as identified above
- Conduct further investigation to clarify some survey responses and to get details of programs in other geographic areas
- Develop and distribute materials in advance of the meeting so that participants understand its goals and are prepared to contribute to the Convening's success