



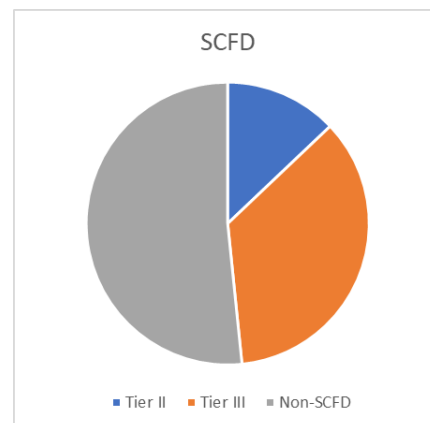
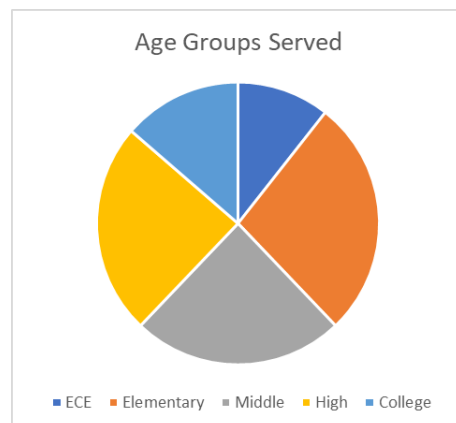
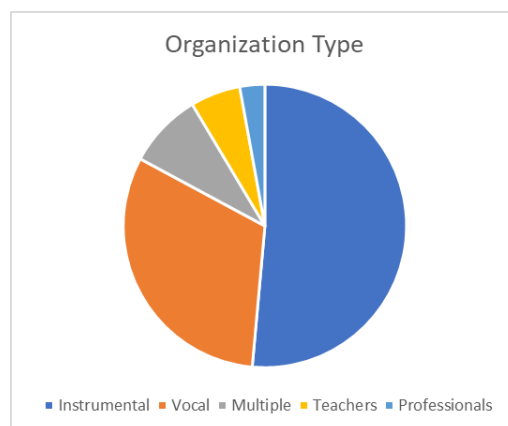
Survey of Denver Music Organizations - Results

By the numbers:

48 Organizations contacted; 31 Responses – 64.6%

Of the 31 who responded:

- Focus
 - Education – 19
 - Performance – 14
 - Resource – 3
- Type
 - Instrumental – 18
 - Vocal – 11
 - Multiple – 3
 - Teachers – 2
 - Professionals – 1
- Partnering with Denver Public Schools
 - Yes – 20
 - Partnered in the past – 3
 - Would like to partner in the future – 3
 - Occasionally/limited – 3
 - No – 2
- Age Levels (many organizations serve more than one population)
 - Early childhood – 7
 - Elementary School – 18
 - Middle School - 16
 - High School – 16
 - College – 9
- SCFD
 - Tier II – 4
 - Tier III – 11
 - Non-SCFD – 16
- How do issues of access, equity, diversity, and inclusivity rank among your organization's current priorities?
 - Near the top – 24
 - In the middle – 5
 - Not a priority yet – 1
 - Mixed – 1





How would you describe the music and/or music education landscape here in Denver?

Overall:

On the positive side, respondents described the Denver music landscape as diverse, vibrant, alive and growing. They noted that the landscape features both established events, venues and networks and an emergent, subcultural scene. They cited the opportunities to hear good live music, performed by committed, trained musicians.

Respondents' concerns about the overall Denver music landscape included the low fees paid to musicians, and the public's perception that musicians are only "hobby players"

Music Education:

The school-based music education landscape was described as "variable", with some pockets of schools doing well with sufficient resources and funding, and other pockets lacking the necessary resources. It was noted that administrators in each school allocate the resources provided by the district, and therefore determine the priority given to music education. Respondents felt that DPS is fortunate to have a music coordinator (there are only about 10 districts in the state that do) who is passionate and a willing resource to teachers. DPS has a lot of fabulous teachers who show up every day truly focused on the well-being of their students. They are open and actively looking for resources that will help them towards that goal. Concerns/suggestions regarding music programs in the schools included:

- Need to start at a younger age
- Should be treated as a major subject
- Declining resources (though some believed that the decline is slowing slightly)
- Should include more genres of music
- Middle School programs (in DPS) are lacking compared to Elementary and High School programs and DPS high schools have some holes in the instrumental area
- Music programs compete with athletics for funding
- Difficult to get the attention of DPS music educators and administrators to offer music assemblies/residencies
- Turnover is slightly higher in DPS than the nation-wide average
- DPS teacher morale has been a little low surrounding the pay and other workplace environmental factors

Regarding overall music education, respondents cited the great, robust options for Denver youth to engage in musical experiences, full of talent and aspirations with "a lot of great organizations doing a lot of great work". The opportunities are offset by barriers to access for communities of color and low-income youth, including cost and transportation. There was a feeling that various organizations are innovating to try to erase those barriers and fill gaps in school-based music education, and that results remain uneven and challenging. SCFD support was credited for the number of options available.



Concerns/suggestions include:

- Lack of funding
- Lack of coordination: individual organization efforts are disconnected and disjunct with few organizations working together
- Eurocentric arts, traditions, presentations, and institutions receive an inequitable amount of resources as compared to non-Eurocentric cultural musical opportunities
- Efforts are largely driven by individuals and their own desire or commitment for music/arts education.
- Audiences and organizations must actively seek out performances, as there isn't a place where classical music/chamber music performances are promoted.

What do you think would be important additions or improvements to the landscape here in Denver?



Some suggestions regard ways in which the schools can “offer excellent education at the beginning and cultivate equal and equitable access to music education” throughout all K-12 schools in DPS. Specific comments/suggestions include:

- Dramatically increase budgets for music
- Diversify in-classroom experiences to break up the routine and inspire students (bringing in clinicians/professionals to provide a different teaching perspective)
- Provide engaging out-of-classroom music experiences showing kids the rewards of music as a captivating and engaging career and/or a rewarding hobby/recreation
- Align music education with school-wide initiatives and goals
- Form a team of music educators that serve a group of elementary schools
- Increased teacher training on the importance of music and arts
- Back the Denver Children’s Chorale’s support of DPS by
 - Providing an economical way to transport large groups of singers and families in underserved neighborhoods to important performances
 - Providing funding to offer choral programs to schools who can't afford the very minimal fee

Many of the suggestions regarding non-school program focus on building a bridge between music organizations and school districts/individual schools, giving equal support and value to various genres of music, including commercial, classical and vernacular forms, and on providing music education



opportunities with a more diverse cultural focus. The goal is to “foster and cultivate a Denver music scene that encourages, welcomes, and creates a pathway for musicianship among youth and the community.” Many respondents mentioned the need for more cross-pollination and collaboration among organizations and genres. Specific comments/suggestions include:

- Ensure equitable access and funding
- Provide affordable performance opportunities, mentoring and networking for new and upcoming artists and songwriters, especially individuals working in niche or emergent forms
- Offer first generation college students, dreamers, low income, poorly served communities or non-traditional learners opportunities for progression via paid internships
- Strategically include students and new and upcoming or currently under-represented voices in discussions about the future of the music industry and music education so that the future is co-constructed.
- More options for Latino music and dance education
- More contemporary music to get the students engaged
- Develop the musicians and audiences of the future to diversify the face of classical music
- Educate musicians on the business side of music
- Develop a consortium of private instrumental music teachers to share best teaching practices and to be a community resource
- Present music workshops that are positive and helpful rather than demeaning and overly critical
- Realign resources to address the inequity in funding between Eurocentric music organizations and non-Eurocentric ones
- Private lessons for low income youth
- Shared rehearsal/performance spaces
- Shared transportation resources
- Parent education and family engagement
- College audition preparation and mentoring
- Professional development for teaching artists and educators
- Access to affordable/refurbished Instruments
- Develop a single website resource to support music opportunities for youth from birth to age 22
- Better access (both physical and informational) to information about music performances and events and to larger music organizations, such as the Colorado Symphony and Colleges/Universities
- More trauma-informed, liberatory and engaged music ed.



- Instrumental music educators may see outside organizations as their competitors.
- Transportation
- "New" Denver not buying into established cultural institutions
- Lack of dialogue between cultural organizations:
 - Results in lack of alignment among organizations
 - Fueled by ego, agendas, power, money, oppression, and on feelings of organizational entitlement around resources
 - Based on lack of understanding of each organization's place in the Denver music landscape
 - Difficulty prioritizing perceived needs of individual organizations with what might be best for all involved
 - Difficult to see the existing landscape with fresh eyes, so ensuring multiple perspectives are represented (and want to be represented) is key
 - No entity to do the coordinating



What kinds of conversations are you currently having in your organization about access, equity, diversity, and inclusivity?

All organizations reported that they are discussing access, equity, diversity, and inclusivity, and many are already taking actions, such as:

- Keeping ticket prices affordable and offering free tickets to those who can't afford it
- “Looking for ways to increase ethnic diversity of our audience and our orchestra (tougher)”
- Producing Spanish language concert programs
- Scheduling at least one concert per season that will appeal to Spanish speakers
- Reaching out to specific social groups/clubs that we believe might be attracted to a particular concert
- Working with local partners to consider how to best to engage with and support potential learners
- Reviewing student engagement and progress across all strands of our programs
- Including not only all genres of music but also information about all types / cultures of peoples
- Participating in a week-long retreat around equity, oppression, and liberation.
- Placing programming cycle designs in the hands of our Student Alliance, further de-centering the conductor bias and any hidden (or not-so-hidden) agendas
- Board adopting an Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access policy
- Trying to identify who's not at the table and why
- Trying to hire more teaching artists of color but aren't sure how to recruit/find them
- Conducting marketing analysis to help determine how to improve access
- Developing a plan to add more members representing as many segments of Denver's community as possible



How do you feel about the idea of bringing Denver music organizations together to work on a collective impact effort toward increased access, equity, diversity, and inclusivity?

- Range from “Great! Bring it on!” to “Cautiously optimistic”
- Specific Concerns/Suggestions:
 - Small is better than big
 - Especially useful if a broad and diverse range of voices can be engaged and a diverse range of musical forms and practices can be represented (commercial, classical, social and vernacular)
 - If the organizations that participate are only diverse organizations, then the impact and value is limited because of preaching to the choir
 - If mainstream organizations participate, their participation must go beyond presence and verbal commitment
 - Should be paired with efforts to reach elected officials who can impact budgets.
 - We deal with a different music audience and genre than our colleagues in the classical realm
 - Need a particular emphasis on racial equity
 - Organizations need to have a clear focus for themselves before engaging in partnerships.