

You recognize the **AUTHOR'S NAME**. He is known for supporting the local schools.

The author has given his **EMAIL ADDRESS**, so readers can contact him.

The **DATE** tells you the article was posted recently.

The **FIRST BOLD HEADING** tells you that the author thinks that cutting music in schools is a loss for the town.

The **SECOND BOLD HEADING** tells you that the author believes music education has many benefits.

Previewing a piece of writing

Town Music Shop Blows the Horn on Needed Music Education
by Henry Schwinkle
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The **TITLE** tells you that music education is needed. The author will share reasons for this.

The **SOCIAL MEDIA** icons let you know that the author wants his article to be shared.

(March 3, 2016) The recent unfortunate incident in our town has created speculation about ways to keep our children out of trouble. The case of Tina Tully (also known as Tiny) remains fresh in the minds of all residents. Tina Tully, eight years old, was recently accused of a series of thefts of musical instruments. When local police eventually caught Tina in the act, she confessed, explaining that she was only “borrowing” one instrument at a time. It happens that she longed to play an instrument, but was not sure which one to choose. So, during a period of several days she sampled a number of musical possibilities, somehow avoiding detection by the staff. She eventually settled on the tuba. When questioned, Tina expressed sadness that her three older brothers had been given access to music lessons while in the local schools. Budget cuts forced the elimination of music programs, so Tina took matters into her own hands. What’s a music store owner and police chief to do? That’s easy: Tina was forgiven and will perform community service at Tooters weekly for the next three months. Best of all, the store has donated a tuba rental and music lessons to Tina. Happy ending? Not so fast.

The day the music died—we have lost something. It is not difficult to establish a connection between this incident and the loss of music programs in our schools. Prior to 2012, students enjoyed many opportunities to participate in music activities, including weekly music class from a certified teacher; optional, free lessons on an instrument of their choice; affordable rentals with an option to buy the instrument; and joining the chorus, a performance orchestra, the marching band, or small, select instrumental groups. Students also could receive counseling and advice offered by music professionals at all schools in our city. Few people are aware that when it was decided to cut a program, the choice was either drama or music. The music program took the hit for the team. We need to bring music back to the schools.

Time on learning—deciding what’s important. All these programs have been cut or reduced due to policies that demand more time and focus on academic areas. Students have six hours in a school day, and those in control of those six hours have

dictated that academics rule. What about those students who thirst for music? As John Lennon said, “Music is everybody’s possession.” Let’s return to sharing that valuable possession. Reinstatement of music programs in our city will bring countless benefits to the children in our community.

Participation in an instrumental music program keeps kids busy and committed.

A well-run band program requires a time commitment of its participants. Students need time to take lessons, practice, perform, and compete. All these time commitments keep our youth busy and out of trouble. In the words of *The Music Man*, “Idle hands are the devil’s workshop.” Kids with nothing to do are more likely to engage in negative behaviors than those who fill their after-school hours with music.

Making music is a team effort. Some community members have suggested that sports and music are in competition in our community. They suggest that sports promote a team spirit and mentality. Music makers also participate in a team. A single musician discovers new possibilities when he or she joins an orchestra, band, or chorus, lending a solitary tune to a group production and creating a whole that is bigger than the sum of its parts.

Music allows “healthy” failure. Students who play instruments come to see learning as a process. They realize that the process is never finished, and they are always improving their skills and abilities. With positive instruction and support from those at home, young musicians can learn the value of playing a “sour note,” getting back on track, and continuing with the performance.

Learning an instrument enhances learning in other areas.

Children who participate in a music program cannot help but make connections to history, math, literature, science, and the other creative arts and subjects. Researchers have shown that kids who study music achieve higher grades in other subjects. Musicians themselves point out the connection between reading music and understanding math. Language and poetry have strong connections to music, using rhythm as a vehicle for communication.

Music helps keep non-academic kids in school. Kids have different interests and learning styles. Some young people do not respond to traditional math and reading instruction, but find a true connection with music. These students are more likely to stay in school if they can be doing something they love while attending school. For some, music might lead to a career.

The rest of the
BOLD HEADINGS
tell you why the
author believes
music education is
important.

The last paragraph
is the
CONCLUSION

The curtain is closing on children's music instruction in our town. Let's reopen that curtain and bring back the sounds of beautiful instruments—yes, even the tuba. The show must go on, and all kids should be seen and heard on the stage! Join us at an information session next Friday night to learn more about how you can be involved.