

# **The Value of Music Education in Maynard: A Survey of MHS Music Program Alumni**

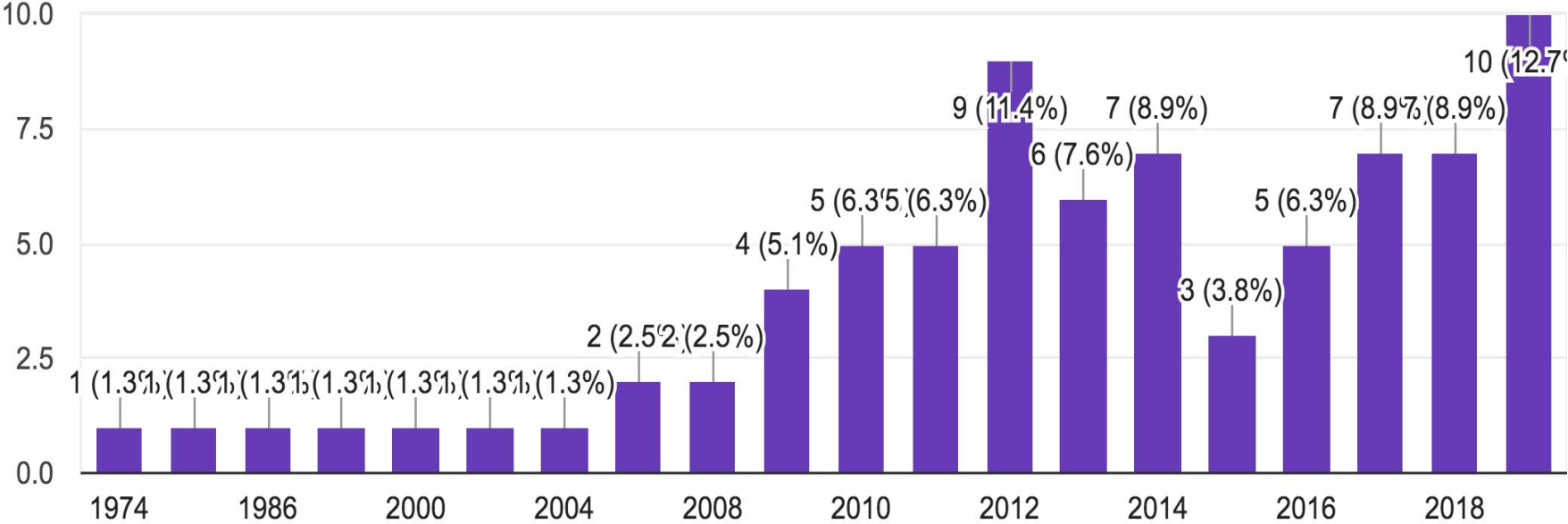
January 2020



**By the numbers...**  
**79 responses from**  
**1974-2019**

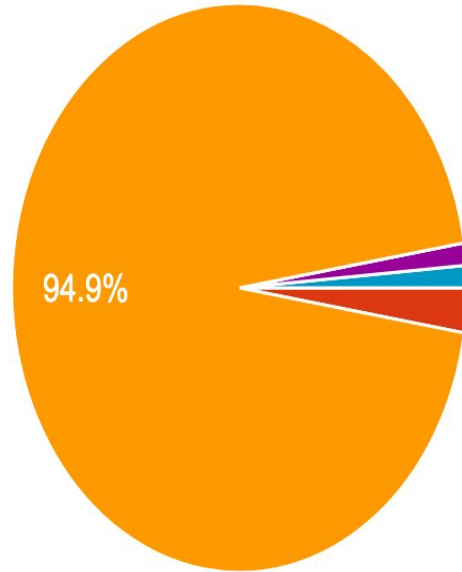
# What was your graduation year from Maynard?

79 responses



# After graduation from MHS, what did you pursue?

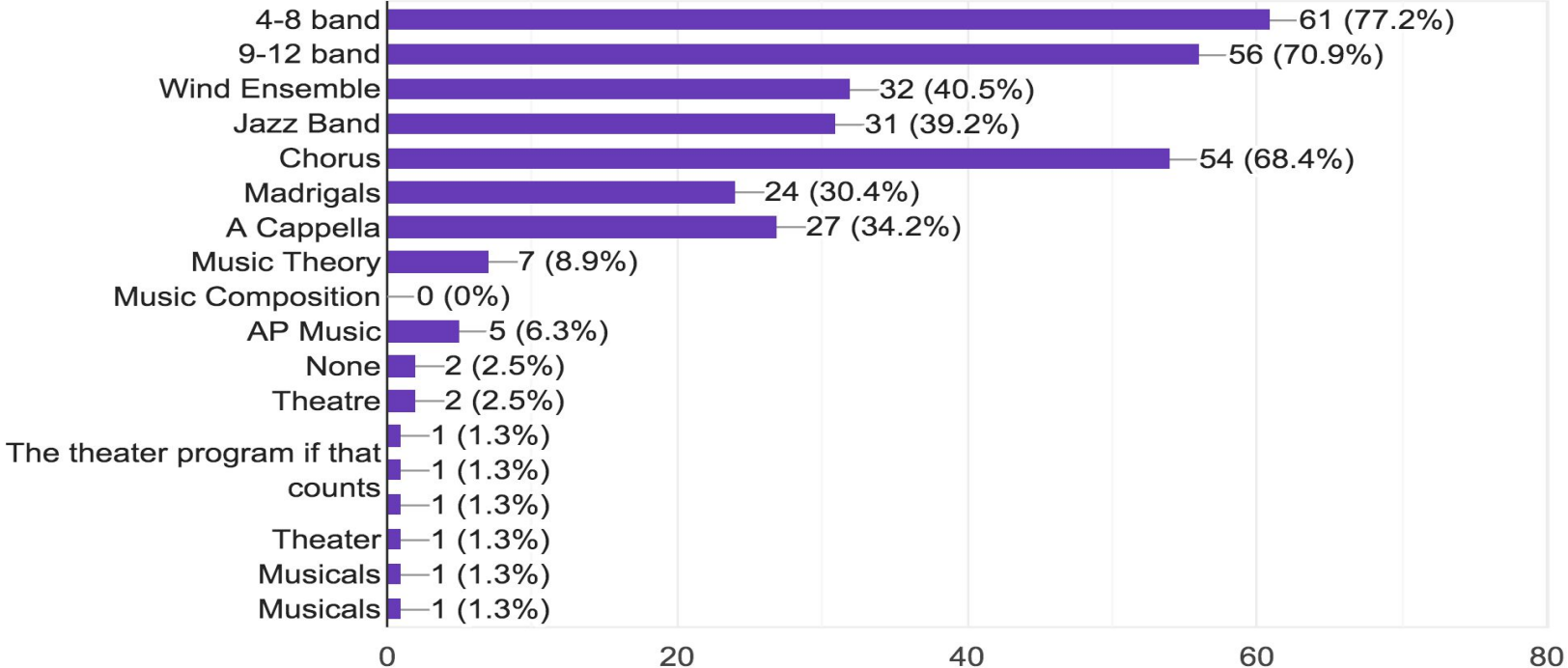
79 responses



- career/workforce
- Professional or vocational training
- 4 year college
- 2 year college
- gap year
- direct entry grad program

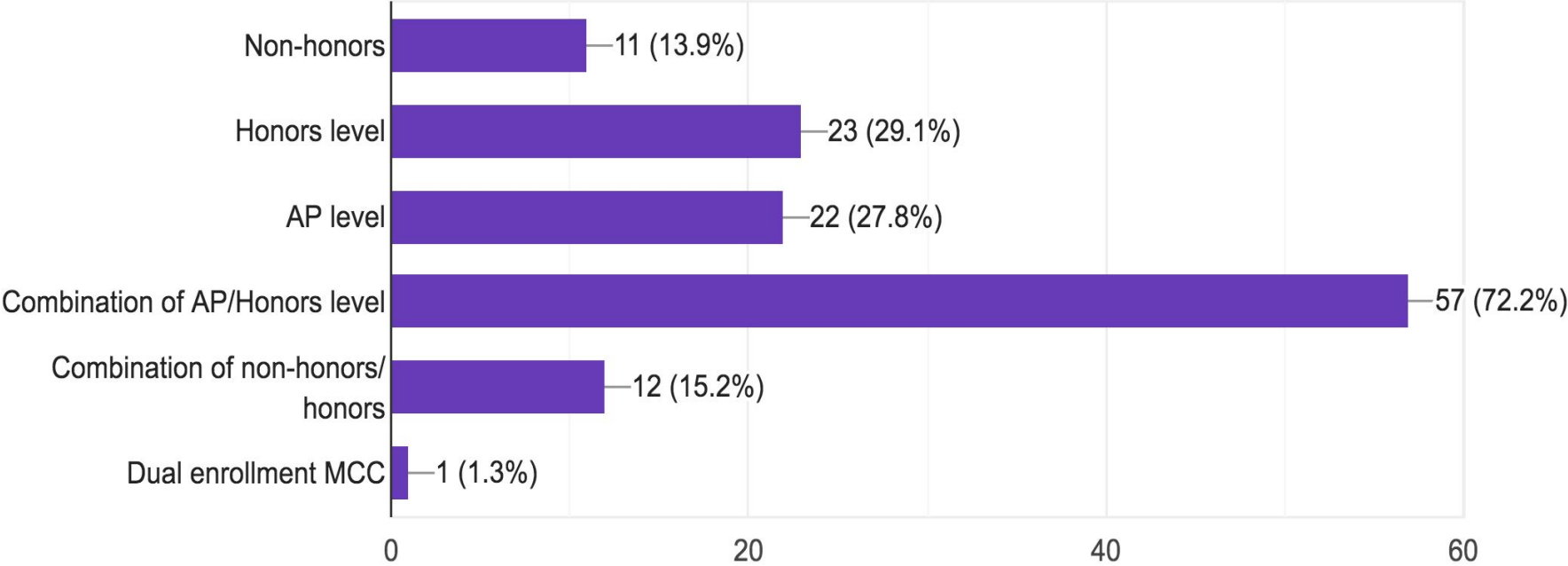
# What music education courses did you take while attending Maynard Public Schools?

79 responses



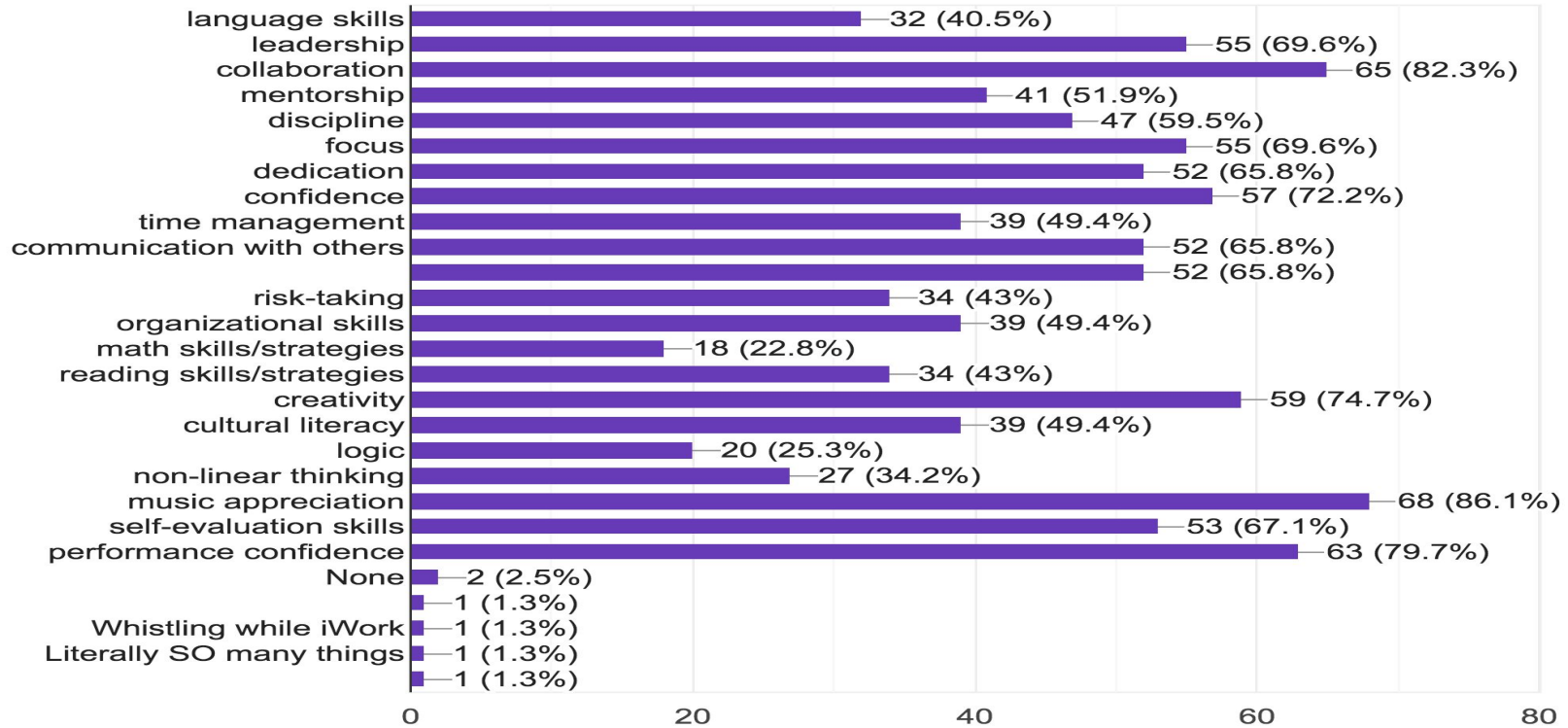
# What level of other academic courses did you take at MHS?

79 responses



# What college and/or career readiness skills did you learn from music education in high school?

79 responses



**How MHS  
graduates kept  
music in their lives  
beyond their time  
in Maynard...**



## **Beyond high school (college/career), in which music-related activities did you or do you participate?**

- Band
- Theater and musical theater
- College pep band
- Took additional music courses in college, volunteered in school music programs
- I've been in multiple bands, sung on live TV, and played an additional 5 instruments
- Chorus, A Cappella
- I am the director of an arts-based preschool at the Community Music School of Springfield
- College chorus
- Community chorus, local band performances
- I play music at restaurants to help pay for college
- Music theory course in college, playing instruments has a hobby
- I participated in A capella in college as well.

## Beyond high school (college/career), in which music-related activities did you or do you participate? (Page 2)

- Orchestra, Symphonic Band
- College pep band, several rock bands with friends I graduated with
- School plays/musicals, outside musical theater groups, current college open mic night
- Chorus
- Just playing on my own
- Although I have not continued playing my instrument ,I am still performing and dancing at college.
- College band
- Orchestra at my university, jazz band, private lessons for my degree at New England Conservatory for which I had to qualify, solo and ensemble work with the colleges of the Fenway, music & the brain researcher at Northeastern University and Simmons University
- Collegiate marching band, wind ensemble, pep band, concert band and sax quartet
- I am in my college's concert choir
- A capella club, just playing music on my free time
- A capella
- Member of a chorus/music group
- After high school, I auditioned for and became a part of an a cappella group at a very musically competitive university. I am now the president of my group and a member of the executive board in which I plan, fundraise and oversee all matters for the group.
- Playing instruments, singing, writing music

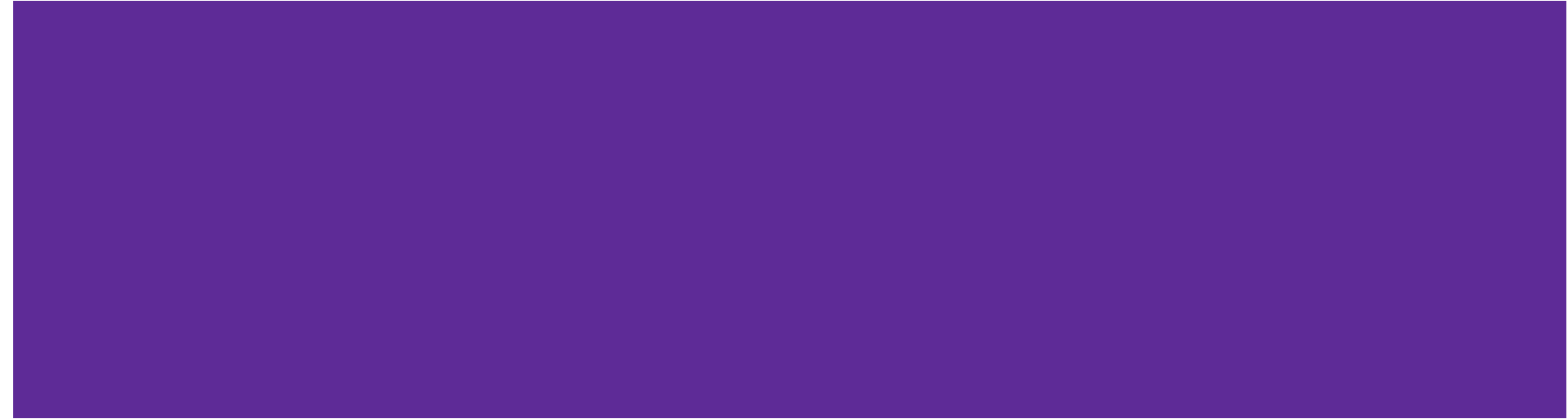
## Beyond high school (college/career), in which music-related activities did you or do you participate? (Page 3)

- Music Appreciation Class
- I play piano
- Dance
- chorus in college; singing for theatre in college
- Campus band in college
- I'm a professional musician performer and educator
- I teach special Ed and use music in my classroom
- University Pep Band
- One class of music 100 at my university
- College Choir
- Went on to study Vocal Performance & then opera
- College level band
- A cappella, theater
- Assisted the production of Maynard's musical productions in 2015 and 2016, currently sing at open mic nights
- College chorus
- College Pep Band, Sinfonietta, concert Band, personal rock band
- Community band for 1 summer
- No formal music related activities, but I continued in my personal life.
- Community bands, a cappella groups, song writing, open mics, community parades
- I was stage manager for the school play in high school for 2 years, and was chorus secretary and section leader my senior year
- Singing in my car
- Musicals, Singing

## Beyond high school (college/career), in which music-related activities did you or do you participate? (Page 4)

- Helped start a concert band at Framingham State University and played all throughout college in this concert band
- Music history classes
- None
- Did summer band in Acton. Continue to play for fun and currently learning new instruments.
- Professional jazz/funk bands, orchestras/symphonic winds, music education
- Used music while teaching preschoolers. Used music while organizing Mission Groups.
- Some music theory classes
- I received a musical theatre scholarship for the university I attended and during my time there, I was able to competently audition and get cast in every musical my university put on. I was also apart of my university's concert choir; a rigorous audition-based chorus. During my time in said choir I completed 2 choir tours. None of this would have been possible had I not had my theatre and music education at MHS.
- none
- Listening to music
- Rochester oratorio society
- University chorus, acapella group, theater pit band

**What our MHS graduates are saying  
about music education:**



# Recent Grads:

“Music allowed me to not only grow as a student, but also grow as a person. Without music in my life I would not be the young woman that I am today and would most likely be lost. Music is so important and taking that away from students who need it and deserve it is criminal and should never be allowed.” - 2019 Graduate

“Music was and still is a huge part of my life, thanks to all the music education I received growing up.” - 2018 Graduate

“Being involved with the music program at Maynard has allowed me to develop a life-long passion of music that I can keep up with regardless of my career. It was a way to escape from the stresses of daily life and I made some of my closest friends through the program. I have learned leadership and time-management skills along with gaining confidence.” - 2019 Graduate

It was absolutely essential for me to be involved in these activities and it helped me to make friends when I was new to the school. This also prepared me and helped me to gain confidence speaking in front of people. I now lead meetings often in front of people and am not nervous because of the time I spent in front of audiences during high school.” - 2010 Graduate

# Fowler music prepares the way for MHS music ...

"I can assure you that as a four year varsity athlete/volunteer/math Olympiad participant/honors student, music did more for my development than any other type of program or extracurricular offered by Maynard Public Schools. Before I was a field hockey captain, I held elected leadership in band, chorus, and associated small ensemble groups. I had a lead role in the musical as a freshman, a feat I certainly could not have achieved without the strong background in music I gained from middle school music. I credit my successes, both personal and professional, directly to Maynard Public Schools, of which I am a proud alum. I hope that I will continue to be able to hold the same level of pride that I always have, and that can be achieved by not only refraining from cutting funding to the music program, but by devoting more resources to Maynard Music." - 2012 Graduate

"I would not be where I am today, pursuing my Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner graduate degree at Yale University, without the Maynard music program. Being involved in music starting in 4th grade (and truly, starting in preschool at Green Meadow) allowed me to pursue my only creative outlet-I never personally enjoyed art classes but I LOVED music, singing, playing instruments, and creating music with my team-the other members of band/chorus/small ensembles/musical theater, and on and on. I've remained in touch with my music teachers, who have shaped my career and life in ways I can't even begin to explain. Cutting the music program would be a gigantic mistake and one that I would be sure to remember as I consider where to raise my future children. I would love for them to be enriched by Maynard's rich music program. I can only hope that instead of cutting the program, leadership will instead choose to invest more fully into the music programs across the three schools." - 2012 Graduate

# Confidence, leadership, community...

“Music was such an integral part of my high school experience, without the programs and support I received, I never would have been confident enough to develop the love and passion for music I have today. The confidence and leadership skills I gained from high school music programs have absolutely extended to other areas of my life from my participation in a comedy troupe to my career search. I have always been extremely proud of Maynard's music programs, being such a small school I felt immensely proud of our achievements and the size of both our chorus and band. Music program funding is absolutely crucial and more than worth the investment!” -2016 Graduate

““Music education gave me a creative outlet and space to be accepted for who I was. If I didn't have that in high school, I don't think I would have the confidence to take risks and put myself out there now. You are currently sending a message to the MHS students involved in music and theatre that their talents are less impressive, that their contribution to the community is not as valuable, and that their passion is less important than the students who find their gifts in athletics...something that has been speculated on since I was in high school, but is just being made blatantly obvious at this current moment. I was the 5th generation in my family to go to MHS and I am disgusted and disappointed by this whole situation. I hope you seriously consider what alum and students are saying about this, but if I'm being honest, I think you're minds are already made up and that you're going to make the cuts no matter what we have to say.” - 2012 Graduate

““Music is something that needs to be taught. It teaches you people skills, prepares you for performing in front of people (for presentations), and helps kids with learning in your feet (sight reading).” - 2015 Graduate



# Cultural literacy, teamwork, focus, motivation...

“I use music everyday during work to relieve stress and to slow the world around me down so I can better effectively do my job. It helps me focus on tasks at hand and can motivate me to make it through tough situations.” - 2010 Graduate

“Music education made me take leadership positions I never would have taken otherwise. Helped me build my college apps and get into my number one school.” - 2014 Graduate

“I think the music program is extremely important in Maynard. As more schools cut music programs and shift towards STEM extra-curriculars, students are losing an outlet to develop creativity and cultural literacy. I was never a great singer, but chorus taught me a lot about music, and has given me a greater appreciation for it since high school.” -2014 Graduate

“Music education shaped who I am today as a person and my career path.” - 2009 Graduate

“Playing music in school, especially starting at a young age, helped me realize that the first time you do something, it might not work. It might sound terrible and everyone is off. But with practice and working on it together, you can clean it up and make it 100000x better. In summary, it showed me that something might not be perfect, but with practice, work, and caring about what you're doing, you can get it pretty close to perfect. The Fowler music program was a vital part of my educational career. Setting a foundation for music at this young an age is beyond important and I still remember the experiences I had there, even now that I've graduated college. Cutting it would be an absolute disgrace to a town that prides itself on its art and culture.” - 2016 Graduate

# Critical thinking skills, soft skills, confidence, connection

“As a student in a STEM field graduating this year, music has been important in developing certain critical thinking skills that allow me to attack problems from a different perspective. A great STEM education is more than just math and physics; it requires a well-rounded individual. Music has helped me develop soft skills, which are just as important as technical skills. Many employers look for these soft skills when hiring because being able to effectively communicate your ideas is as important as creating those ideas. The leadership skills I learned as a section leader in band and working in a team are also critical skills that I have already used in my internships and will take with me into my career. Music also helps me personally rejuvenate mentally. I've had nights where I was having difficulty solving certain math problems, caught up in my homework. I'd go to pep band practice and come back two hours later with a fresh mind, ready to finish my homework. I am not alone. I go to a large university where STEM majors make up a little less than half of the student body yet most of the members in my organization (comprised of four bands) are in STEM-related majors. We don't receive academic credit for the class; everyone is there because they enjoy playing. Pep band has been a big part of my life and its where I've met my closest friends and made lifelong memories. Participating in music activities in middle school allowed me to develop as a musician and gain confidence. I would have never joined pep band if I didn't play in Maynard.” - 2016 Graduate

“Music education helped build confidence, patience, and determination which certainly helped prepare me for college and life beyond college.” - 2010 Graduate

“Music is also universal! I organize multiple Mission trips and work in different countries around the world. Music is used in many different ways with our groups including bridging and connecting us with other countries. We may not speak the other languages, but thru music we are connected!!” - 1983 Graduate

# Hard work, dedication, achievement, professional skills

“While I didn't continue to pursue music in college, my time in the Maynard music program from 4th-12th grade was probably my most important experience in the Maynard schools. I made lifelong friendships and memories during my time in band, gained invaluable leadership skills, and was able to express my creativity in a non traditional classroom environment. The music program allowed me to grow my confidence exponentially and taught me the meaning of true hard work and dedication. I really don't think I would've been as successful as I was in high school (valedictorian, all AP/honors classes) or college (graduated magna cum laude from a top 25 University) if I hadn't had the opportunity to be a part of the Maynard music program. The thought that so many kids might not have this same opportunity for intellectual, creative, and personal growth is heartbreaking to me. I believe that what makes Maynard a great place to live and go to school is the music program, where we have produced many all-state musicians and contributed to the larger Maynard community in a positive way. Cutting funding for middle school music will effectively cut off the pipeline of talent that had supplied the high school for decades.” - 2015 Graduate

“It brought me to be a musician and now I am working as a professional opera singer in Europe.” - 2010 Graduate

“Being apart of band from 4th-12th grade had a large impact on my life, and Maynard school career. I would not be the person I am today if I had not taken apart in this program. Not only do I think being surrounded by music on a daily life helped to supplement my other academic skills I think it also helped my life skills. I will always use things I learned while being involved in music in college and beyond. No matter the level of participation in music it will influence the participant to an extreme level through high school and beyond.” -2019 Graduate

# Mentorship, academic success, career readiness skills

“ If it wasn't for the music/performance educators that I had at Maynard, I would not be as prepared for my future career as I am today. I am currently pursuing a degree in education in order to be an English teacher and being a part of the music program taught me more about teaching than any other class in the Maynard school system. I fulfilled many leadership positions in the music and theatre department at Maynard high school and learned all of the above skills and more. These skills weren't just confined to myself; when I was in high school, I was able to pass down the skills that I learned as a leader by mentoring other students. This created a merit-able culture of hard work in the music department which translated to the academic sphere. These skills went on to personally award me in college. I am now the president of my acappella group and have had to utilize the organizational and people skills I learned from Maynard music to organize rehearsals and performances, apply for grants, write an annual budget, communicate with advisors and promote and market our group successfully. These are skills that I will continue to utilize in my professional life and will likely benefit me in any work environment. If it weren't for my involvement in band from grades 4-8, I would have never gotten so heavily involved in the music/performance department in high school and I would have never learned these vital skills. Furthermore, in any school setting what students learn in the classroom is often just a building block; it supports them in the now and is necessary for moving on to the next step, but they rarely take much of that knowledge with them after graduation. The arts are not only primarily reason that children exceed academically, they also teach kids invaluable lessons that they carry with them for the rest of their lives. They teach them how to be people. Seeing that the skills I have learned from music at Maynard have been the most fruitful for my academic success and for my character, it would be ridiculous to assume that Maynard's music/performance departments are anything but essential.” - 2017 Graduate

# Music appreciation, the value of practice & performance

“I graduated with an engineering degree in the spring of 2019, and I currently work in an R&D lab at a biotech company. However, I consider Maynard’s music program to be one of the most impactful experiences of my education and childhood. Extra curricular groups such as jazz band showed me how to appreciate music more, and inspired me to practice much more often for band class. My practice paid off, and as early as sophomore year in high school, I was leading my section. This experience provided me with invaluable lessons in leadership, which helped to build my confidence overall, as well as in other student groups, and in my social circles. Much of my success in my college applications and beyond came from the skills and lessons that I learned in these groups, and I never would have worked as hard if I wasn’t in groups outside of class that made it feel like a more joyful and creative experience. In addition to all of this, I forged friendships that have lasted me more than a decade. I am nearly 24 years old, and I still play music with friends that I played with in jazz band when I was in 6th grade. I understand that my experiences may not reflect those of every student involved with music, but the program as it was structured made a monumental difference in my life. And I could probably name at least 10 students who gained more from the programs than I did. It would genuinely hurt me to see today’s students not receive the same opportunities.” - 2014 Graduate

“Collaboration, discipline, focus, confidence, time management, communication with others, conveying message & emotion through music or language, risk-taking, organizational skills, creativity, cultural literacy, non-linear thinking, music appreciation, self-evaluation skills, performance confidence - Because I now perform and teach music, everything that I learned from my music ed is applicable.” 1974 Graduate