

### **A Little History...**

So, I was asked to write something about my experiences teaching music for Tacoma Public Schools and I have thoroughly enjoyed most of that time. During 38 years of teaching in Tacoma, I have taught at a number of elementary schools. After being a long-term sub at Oakland Elementary, I have been the main music teacher at 8 schools: Bryant, Franklin, Seward, Sheridan, Whitman, Sherman, Park Avenue and Boze. I have been the second music teacher at 4 schools: Manitou, McKinley, NE Tacoma, and two different times at Larchmont. And in a 19 year stretch from 1996-2015, I was the facilitator for the Instrument Scholarship Program. It started in 1993 with 16 instruments through a partnership with Ted Brown Music, and grew to over 400 instruments in 2015.

The staffing of elementary music teachers has varied during the years. When I started, we had a Director and a Facilitator. That was helpful, because there was someone at the director level to advocate for us. The facilitator, who was an elementary music teacher, did the staffing. When the person doing the staffing knows the job and the people doing the job, it works much better, not perfect but better. After the director position was eliminated, the facilitator position continued as the Arts facilitator through 2010, and those people were music teachers. After the arts facilitator position was eliminated, the facilitator position for music was combined with other subjects and became strictly curriculum and professional development. Since 2010, the staffing for elementary music and P.E. has been done by different people and departments, most recently given to an Elementary Director.

In about 2012?, the district declared that elementary specialists were CAB-deployed with no negotiations or pushback from TEA. Since then, programs, instruction, and the needs of students and specialist staff have been considered less and less when making staffing decisions. Involuntary transfers with no reasons and no recourse given have become more frequent. This has not gone well. Okay, before this becomes a novel, what I am saying is we need someone in administration who knows the job. Over the years, staffing has been done in different ways, but at the very least we should be notified of possible openings so that we can make the decision if we want that position.

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