

Dear Superintendent,

My name is Jennifer Greig and I was a student of Starr Elementary, Jane Addams Jr. High, and Clarence M. Kimball High School. It is my sincere regret to hear that Royal Oak Schools are considering getting rid of all vocal and instrumental programs.

I have personally come of age in these programs and they have shaped me so strongly as a person that I wish to convey my severe concern at the loss of these programs. Beginning with instrumental programs in the fourth grade, and joining the band in elementary and junior high I was enriched by the experience of music in my life. Moreover, I was able to gain close friendships as a result of these programs that last to this day. It was a very special experience to be part of something that was not related entirely to that of daily school activities, that required both our talents and our skills and required us to work together as a family to produce something.

These ideals flourished when I joined the Choir led by Debra Buffa in high school. I was a member for four years as well as being a member of the Madrigals special choir and a Choir Officer. I cannot tell you the wonders this program did for eliminating the cliches of high school. In the halls many of my choir mates were somewhat segregated from each other due to our friend groups and the politics of high school. However, besides the extremely rich vocal education I have today, I must tell you that these programs, by having us work together for a common goal, were extremely effective at boosting confidence in ourselves and eliminating barriers such as cliches at the school. I knew that my choir mates and I shared something special and everyone one of us who went through these programs felt an incredible bond to one another.

I am still very close to the people I have shared these experiences with and I must say that the arts programs in the Royal Oak Schools were by far the number one shaping aspect of my formative years at those schools. I deeply regret that you may be thinking of eliminating such a program and I am sure you will find that many in the community will agree that this is not the best course of action for Royal Oak. With such a rich history of arts, I would hope that you would please reconsider this on behalf of all of those yet to experience the incredible experience of the arts in Royal Oak Schools.

Thank you for your consideration and I pray that you will take my personal situation into account when making this decision.

Regards,

Jennifer Anne Greig, Kimball High School Alumni 2003