

**Program Evaluation:
GAMA Guitar Workshops**

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December 2008

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
GAMA Participants.....	2
GAMA Workshops.....	6
Professional Development	9
Implementing Guitar Classes.....	13
School Support and Sustaining Programs.....	15
Challenges to Implementing Guitar Classes.....	16
Student Engagement and Learning	17
About the Evaluator	22

Program Evaluation: GAMA Guitar Workshops

Introduction

During the 2007-2008 school year, participants in GAMA guitar workshops responded to two anonymous online surveys. There were 188 responses to the first survey and 131 responses to the second survey (a response rate of 36% and 25%). The surveys included a mix of rating scales and open-ended questions.

Results of the surveys were very positive, indicating broad interest in the GAMA workshops. The teachers believed the program was effective and valuable and would recommend it to other teachers. Teachers reported that they learned guitar and instructional skills that they can apply in their schools. Most school administrators support their efforts to sustain a guitar program. Guitar classes engaged new students in studying music, and students in guitar classes learned musical skills.

GAMA Participants

Most teachers responding to our first survey attended a GAMA workshop in 2007. About one-third attended a workshop in 2006 and less than one-fourth attended a workshop in 2005.

	2005	2006	2007
Attended GAMA workshop	21.3%	33.0%	52.7%

Almost all respondents took the Level One workshop. Some teachers also took the Level Two workshop.

	Percent
Took Level One Guitar Workshop	98.4%
Took Level Two Guitar Workshop	16.9%

Over half of the teachers had played guitar for at least three years. Over one-third had played guitar for at least six years. About one-fourth had little or no prior experience playing guitar.

Years of Experience Playing Guitar	Percent
Just Started	25.5%
1 to 2 years	21.8%
3 to 5 years	16.5%
6 to 10 years	6.4%
over 10 years	29.8%

Survey respondents had less experience in teaching guitar. About one-third of the music teachers had little or no guitar teaching experience. Over half of the teachers had less than two years of experience teaching guitar.

Years of Experience Teaching Guitar	Percent
Just Started	32.8%
1 to 2 years	27.4%
3 to 5 years	21.0%
6 to 10 years	8.6%
over 10 years	10.2%

Most survey respondents were middle school music teachers. About 40% were teaching in an elementary school and about one-third taught high school. Some teachers taught in more than one school level, such as elementary and middle school.

Currently a music teacher in:	Percent
Elementary School	39.9%
Middle School	55.9%
High school	34.6%

A large majority of the music teachers were teaching guitar when they were surveyed, and most planned to teach guitar next year.

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Are you teaching guitar this year?	80.3%	19.7%	
Will you be teaching a guitar class next year?	75.5%	2.2%	22.3%

Most taught Level One classes. About one-fourth taught Level One and Level Two.

How many levels of guitar are taught at your school?	Percent
Level One	71.5%
Level One and Two	23.6%
More than Two Levels	2.4%
Full 3-year Program	0.8%
Full 4-year Program	1.6%

About 60% of the music teachers had over 30 students enrolled in guitar classes. About one-third of the teachers had over 60 guitar students. Over one-fifth of the teachers had at least 90 students.

Guitar Students Enrolled	Percent
1 to 10	15.2%
11 to 20	8.8%
21 to 30	17.0%
31 to 40	11.1%
41 to 50	6.4%
51 to 60	7.6%
61 to 70	2.3%
71 to 80	7.6%
81 to 90	1.8%
91 to 100	4.1%
Over 100	18.1%

Survey Question: Why did you attend a guitar workshop?

Teachers attended workshops to gain guitar skills, develop a guitar program in their school, and as a requirement for re-certification.

Many teachers attended the workshop as preparation for teaching or starting a guitar class in their school.

- Wanted to start a guitar program.
- I thought that adding guitar to the middle school curriculum would be beneficial and interesting for the students.
- I hope to start a guitar class for the 2008-2009 school year and I wanted more information.
- I felt I needed a starting point. I wanted to find out some things that have worked and things that didn't work.
- I wanted to start a guitar program at my middle school, but had no experience teaching guitar.
- I am interested in creating variety in my teaching assignment and became interested in developing class guitar.
- I am working with our board of education to start up a guitar program.
- We were adding guitar as a music elective for our 8th grade students and felt the need for a common curriculum among the three teachers who had a section.
- I wanted to be able to start a beginning guitar course at my elementary school. I needed more skills.
- I heard great things about this workshop and needed some help in getting my guitar class started.

Teachers attended workshops to gain skills and techniques for teaching guitar in their schools.

- To get more ideas on how to teach my students more advanced techniques.
- So that I would feel comfortable in front of guitar classes, and have tools that would help me [to] be a more effective teacher.
- I was interested in learning about new method books and ways to keep my more advanced students involved and excited about the class.
- I had some basic guitar skills but I did not have the pedagogy to teach guitar, especially to eighth graders.
- To get an idea for designing the scope and sequence of my guitar classes, instead of “flying by the seat of my pants” as I had the previous year.
- I felt very inept when teaching guitar and was in need of direction for my classes.
- I didn’t play guitar well, and had no clue how to teach it. My first year with two periods of class guitar was literally a nightmare. I needed to do something to improve my knowledge of guitar and my teaching methods for those classes. I believe I would have lost my job or quit if I hadn’t gotten help that summer.
- I’m an experienced guitar player, but I was interested in starting a guitar program at the middle school level. I wanted to experience different classroom methods.

The workshops provided opportunities to learn from with other educators.

- To network with others who share my passion for the instrument.
- Love to connect with other educators, gain new knowledge of materials, learn to play and teach better.
- I wanted to get some new ideas and get out of my comfort zone. It was good to be working and sharing with other music teachers.
- To learn how other teachers teach class guitar and improve my classes. I was asked to teach guitar by my principal when he interviewed me for the orchestra job.

Teachers attended the workshops to develop guitar playing skills.

- I had just started teaching guitar to my eighth grade general music students, but I had very little training on how to play. I wanted to be a better player and know better teaching methods.
- I started my job and it included a guitar class which I had never played. I needed to learn!
- I attended the workshop to learn more about playing the guitar. I have taught so many years at the beginner level that I felt that I should expand my ability beyond first position and simple chords.
- To receive some formal training on the guitar.

Teachers attended workshops to fulfill requirements for re-certification and professional development.

- For teacher re-certification and to add a new dimension to our music program.
- Primarily for professional development hours for re-certification.
- The hours helped me renew my teaching certificate.

GAMA Workshops

GAMA workshops were effective at providing guitar instruction and developing teachers’ ability to start and sustain guitar programs.

According to survey responses, 84% of participating teachers “strongly agreed” that the workshops were well organized. 95% of the teachers “strongly agreed” that the workshop instructors were knowledgeable about their subject and 82% “strongly agreed” that the instructors were effective in communicating workshop content. All respondents indicated that they would recommend the workshops to other teachers.

GAMA Guitar Workshops	SA	A	N	D	SD
The guitar workshops were well organized.	84%	14%	1%	0%	1%
The workshop teachers were knowledgeable about guitars and guitar teaching.	95%	5%	0%	0%	0%
The workshop teachers were effective in communicating the workshop content.	82%	17%	0%	1%	0%
Adequate time was provided for discussion and questions.	63%	31%	2%	3%	1%
I would recommend the workshops to other teachers.	93%	7%	0%	0%	0%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

- 98% of teachers reported that the guitar workshops were well organized (when combining “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings).
- 100% of teachers reported that workshop instructors were knowledgeable about guitars and guitar teaching.
- 99% of teachers reported that workshop instructors were effective in communicating workshop content.
- 94% of teachers reported that adequate time was provided for discussion and questions.
- 100% of teachers reported that they would recommend the workshops to other teachers.

Survey Question: Did the workshop meet your expectations?

	Yes	No
Did the workshop meet your expectations?	96.8%	3.2%

Teachers reported that the workshops were effective at teaching guitar and instructional methods and addressed their individual needs.

- Exceeded my expectations. This was by far one of the best professional development experiences I have ever had. The class moved very quickly, and we all developed a high level of expertise even if we didn't have a lot of guitar experience coming into the workshop. I have used almost everything I received in that workshop, from supplies to techniques.
- The workshop was excellent. The instructors modeled excellent teaching and shared many strategies I was able to incorporate into my class to make it better.
- It was incredible.
- And then some. I really had no idea what was involved in playing a guitar. The teachers were excellent at explaining and demonstrating.
- One of the best run and most effective workshops I have ever had, and I have a Masters in music and am constantly taking classes.
- It went beyond my expectations. Great teachers and materials.
- I learned a great deal and received a lot of good material and supplies. Thank you.

Some teachers wanted more time spent on instructional methods.

- There were a lot of good things, but I felt there was more time spent on playing than in teaching.

Survey Question: What was the most valuable component of the guitar workshop?

Workshop presenters were knowledgeable and effective when providing and modeling guitar instruction.

- The most valuable component was the way the instructors modeled effective teaching practices for us. They made it easy to imagine even younger students learning how to play successfully in a short amount of time.
- We spent a lot of time discussing middle school students and how to specifically teach to that age.
- Really good and experienced teachers showing us good guitar technique and teaching strategies.
- One of the instructors was a middle school educator and his insight into how to teach to that age group is advice that I use every day.
- The instructors modeled some very useful techniques that I have used daily.
- It is so helpful to see how they teach various aspects of intermediate guitar.
- Every component was valuable, but if I had to say what was most valuable, it was the opportunity to learn how very successful guitar teachers run their classes. Everything from how to hand out guitars on the first day to the playlist of popular songs has been invaluable to me. Watching experts is always a very powerful way to learn. Often they "taught" us as they would their own classes. This example was very helpful to me.

Teachers learned instructional methods that were applicable in their own schools.

- The “completeness” of the course. I learned everything from A to Z about getting a guitar program off the ground as well as playing, instrument care and choosing materials. Without a doubt, it was the best class I have ever taken. As a beginner it was very intense, but worth every minute.
- Seeing what other educators are doing in their classrooms.
- Access to several methods of teaching beginning guitar that can be used in an elementary setting.
- Learning how to present material in group instruction.
- The tips on how to control a class. Management.

The workshops provided valuable opportunities for learning and playing guitar.

- Playing in ensembles learning proper technique
- Time on instrument. Hands-on learning is the only way to learn an instrument and therefore be able to teach it.
- Learning how to play (sort of)! I’m a pianist and singer and have always felt that the guitar was inaccessible for me as a musician.
- Learning to play notes on the guitar. I had only learned to play chords up to that point.
- Being forced to play/practice every day. Learning by doing.

Survey Question: What was most challenging about participating in the guitar workshop? Do you have any recommendations for improving the workshops?

Some teachers found it difficult to travel to workshop locations.

- Having to travel (plus lodging and food and car) 900 miles and no help from my building or my district. It was a pretty costly trip.
- Long hours, but really worth the time.
- I commuted to the workshop and the biggest challenge was getting there.
- The location was quite distant from my home. Guitar instruction in the schools is burgeoning here, and there are quite a few teachers here who could benefit but cannot afford to pay for transportation and room and board.

Some teachers recommended including different material or classes, or adjusting the length of the workshops.

- I would have liked to have some time dedicated to instrument maintenance, especially how to change strings on classical guitars.
- Please make a packet of printed material with notes. There was no time to take notes on the great stuff we were being taught because we were always playing.
- What would have been valuable for me is a discussion of differentiated instruction in guitar class: dealing with different skill levels in the same class.

- If the emphasis is to be on the participating teachers playing, then more time must be spent in elementary playing. If teaching of guitar is the aim, then more time on teaching strategies and methods, especially for the non-players.
- My only recommendation is to lengthen the workshop to two weeks. This would give us time to learn the material more thoroughly and let the instructors take a little more time with instruction.
- There is a lot of information presented in a short period of time. Perhaps a follow up/refresher course (not Guitar 2) would be beneficial.
- Please offer the Guitar 2 workshop at more locations.
- Provide MP3s of lessons. We covered so much so quickly that I wish I had the technology at the time to record lessons. I missed a lot.

Some teachers felt that the classes were too advanced for their playing level.

- Sometimes it was hard to keep up with the playing during class. Even though I knew the basic chords required before attending, we had so much new stuff in a short time it was hard to absorb and perform it all.
- It is challenging for a beginning guitar player to keep up. Someone recommended to the class through email in advance that we start “toughening up our fingers” which was a very worthwhile suggestion. Any amount of playing and preparation in advance would be helpful. I was glad that I prepared for a couple weeks prior to attending.
- There was a lot of info and I needed time to absorb and practice it all.
- My lack of guitar skills on entering the class made it a challenge. Though I tried to reach the basic skill level that they requested, my hold on those skills was somewhat tenuous.
- I had to learn very quickly. The emotional support from the teachers was great!

Some teachers requested more information on advocacy and funding sources.

- It would be helpful to know how to find the money and other resources necessary to persuade school and district administrators to adopt/approve guitar programs for schools.

Professional Development

Through GAMA workshops, teachers developed guitar skills, learned essential instructional approaches and use of appropriate resources, and learned how to implement and sustain guitar classes in their schools.

Teachers significantly gained from GAMA professional development, improving their ability to implement guitar classes in their school. 90% of the teachers “strongly agreed” that the workshop materials will be very helpful in their teaching. Over three-fourths of the teachers “strongly agreed” that they gained new guitar playing and instructional

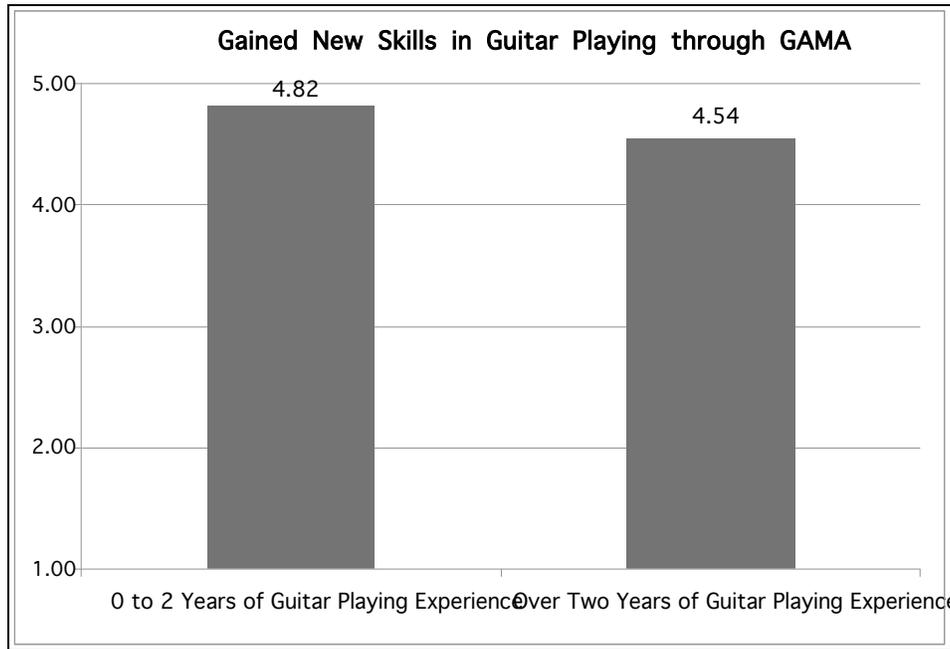
skills. Almost all of the teachers believed that the workshop content was relevant to their specific teaching situations.

Professional Development	SA	A	N	D	SD
The workshop content was relevant to my teaching situation.	65%	31%	2%	1%	1%
The workshop materials (such as guitar, books and accessories) will be very helpful in my teaching.	90%	8%	1%	0%	1%
I expect to be able to use the materials and knowledge from the workshop in my teaching.	80%	18%	1%	0%	1%
I gained new skills in guitar playing through the workshop.	76%	20%	1%	2%	1%
I gained a better understanding of how to teach guitar through the workshop.	84%	15%	0%	0%	1%
I learned specific instructional skills that I can apply when I'm teaching.	79%	20%	0%	0%	1%

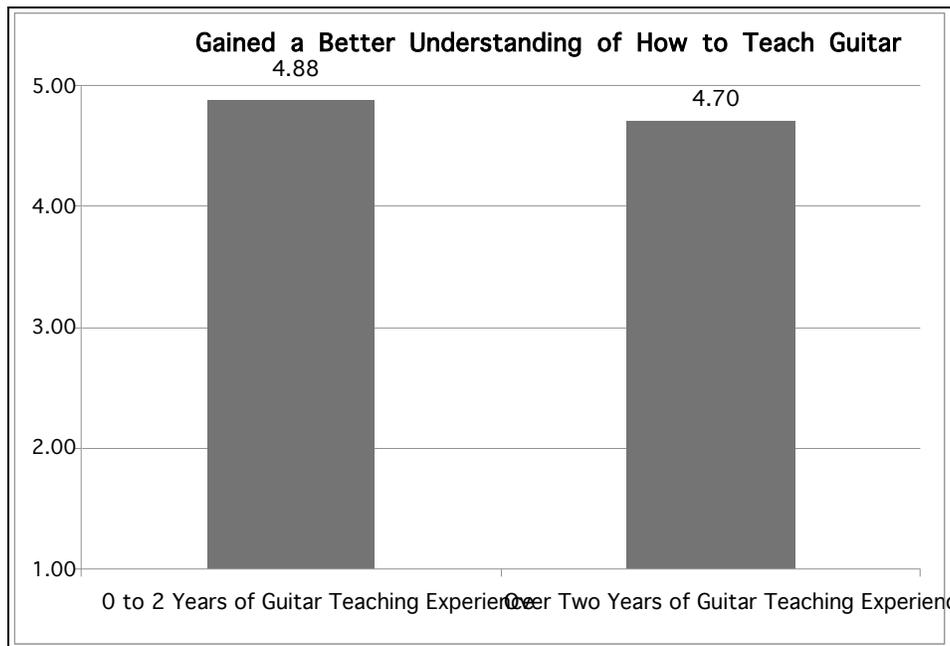
SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

- 96% of teachers reported that the workshop content was relevant to their teaching situation (when combining “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings).
- 98% of teachers reported that workshop materials will be very helpful in their teaching.
- 98% of teachers reported that they will be able to use materials and knowledge from the workshops in their teaching.
- 96% of teachers reported that they gained new guitar playing skills.
- 99% of teachers reported that they gained a better understanding of how to teach guitar.
- 99% of teachers reported that they learned instructional skills they can apply in their teaching.

Teachers with less than two years of guitar playing experience were more likely to report gains in guitar playing skills because of the workshops. GAMA helped teachers with little prior experience gain sufficient playing skills to establish guitar classes.¹



Teachers with less than two years of guitar teaching experience were more likely to report gains in their understanding how to teach guitar. GAMA helped teachers with little prior guitar teaching experience gain sufficient teaching skills to establish guitar classes.



¹ Because we used five-point rating scales in our survey (“Strongly Disagree” through “Strongly Agree”) average scores for each rating scale survey item could range from one to five.

About half of the teachers “strongly agreed” that the workshops adequately prepared them to teach guitar, and that teaching guitar has been a professionally rewarding experience. There were very few negative responses to these items.

Professional Development	SA	A	N	D	SD
The workshop adequately prepared me to teach guitar.	57%	36%	6%	1%	0%
Teaching guitar has been a professionally rewarding experience.	50%	41%	9%	0%	0%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

- 93% of teachers reported that the workshop adequately prepared them to teach guitar (when combining “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings).
- 91% of teachers reported that teaching guitar has been a professionally rewarding experience.

I would not have had the success I enjoyed this year without my GAMA workshop experience. It helped me set up a good curriculum, plus I used my syllabus from the class to teach this year.

The GAMA resources and class really gave me a shot in the arm to be able to teach guitar in my school. I feel like I’m better equipped to teach guitar.

Going through all the method books helped me to find the perfect book for my students. I felt so much more confident and prepared to teach guitar than ever before, having taken the workshop. Thank you!

Survey Question: What skills did you gain in the workshop?

Teachers gained knowledge and skills in playing guitar.

- I can now play guitar! I can play notes, chords and a little bass guitar. I am comfortable starting students on the guitar and teaching proper technique. I would not be teaching right now had I not taken the GAMA course.
- I feel a lot more confident in playing and changing between chords.
- My playing ability increased, and I learned many new ideas and techniques for teaching the guitar to students.
- I learned how to play the guitar! (Melodies, chords, strum techniques, how to change strings, how to manage a class of 30 with instruments in their hands).
- Playing in second and fifth position. More skill at barre chords. A greater fluency at using the full range of the fretboard.

Teachers learned instructional strategies, classroom management skills, and how to apply available resources.

- I learned to play well enough to be comfortable teaching, and I learned a lot of specific classroom management strategies.
- Classroom management skills. The most valuable is “rest position.” Now when it is time for me to talk they put their guitars in rest position and are better able to listen.
- I owe everything to this workshop. Classroom discipline has been the biggest change since I’ve learned to sequence my lessons better.
- I know that I teach better. It did not just make me a better teacher of guitar, but a better music teacher.
- I feel better able to communicate proper playing techniques to my students.
- My knowledge and confidence in teaching were greatly enhanced.
- Creative ways to teach the instrument. Many playing skills such as more complex chording, scales, proper holding, strumming and picking techniques. The list goes on and on!
- I also learned how to check for the desired student performance and behavior, and how to incorporate playing concepts in popular tunes that students could relate to.

Implementing Guitar Classes

Survey Question: What is the primary focus of your guitar classes? What do you spend the most time on?

GAMA participants addressed several of the National Standards for Music Education in their guitar classes, particularly Content Standards Two and Five (performing a varied repertoire on instruments and reading music). Teachers devoted most of their most class time to note reading, chords, and technique. Additionally, teachers incorporated music theory, rhythm, performance, and ensemble skills.

- We try to equally split our time between note playing and chord playing. We also spend a small amount of time learning about famous guitarists.
- I mostly teach students to play chords, and to know how many measures each chord gets played for. I also teach them how to tell if a chord is the I, IV, V or vi in a particular key, so they can hopefully transpose any song to fit the 6-7 chords they know.
- All students in the second grade play the guitar in their music classes. They are taught to play songs while plucking and strumming. They are taught basic music theory, frets, working together as a team.
- Learning how to read music. Most of my students read tabs and watch videos of the music they want to play. However, playing together in an ensemble opens their eyes to what is required beyond their “screaming” solo playing.
- The strings of the guitar and playing short melodies. We also spend a little time on chords and tuning the guitar.

- Learning notation while having fun, as well as playing songs and using the correct technique.
- Learning to play basic chords through chord progressions. We also learn to play melody on all 6 strings. I also stress the importance of learning how to read rhythms, melodies, and other musical symbols.
- I taught guitar as part of my chorus class, a little each week. We spent most of our time learning simple chords and on chord changes. We also composed.

Survey Question: What resources from the workshops have been most helpful in your guitar classes?

Teachers especially valued the guitar method books and guitar they received.

- The guitar and the instruction books.
- I love using the variety of method books I received. These have been so helpful.
- Got a variety of method books, which are very helpful, since they cover both chord and melody approaches.
- Receiving such a good quantity of quality guitar methods was of tremendous value to me.
- The multitude of texts and music has been helpful. I have not yet chosen a permanent text for next year, but have used bits and pieces to try and discover what works best with my students.

Teachers valued observing students' development of guitar skills and engagement in music.

- Watching kids gain confidence as they learn to accompany themselves while singing.
- Seeing previously non-musical students garner success.
- The look of pride I see in students' eyes when they master a particular skill or concept. Usually there is a smile that goes along with it too. I find that really cool.
- Watching students feel confident creating their own songs and sharing it with others.
- Students love the class and gain a sense of self-worth.
- Seeing kids show interest and make progress.

School Support and Sustaining Programs

Over half of the music teachers “strongly agreed” that their school administrators supported guitar classes.

School Support	SA	A	N	D	SD
My school administration is supportive of my effort to bring guitar classes to my school.	53%	34%	9%	3%	1%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

- 87% of teachers reported that their school administration supports their efforts to bring guitar lessons to their school (when combining “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings).

About half of the music teachers “strongly agreed” that their school administrators supported guitar classes, and that they would be able to maintain a guitar program.

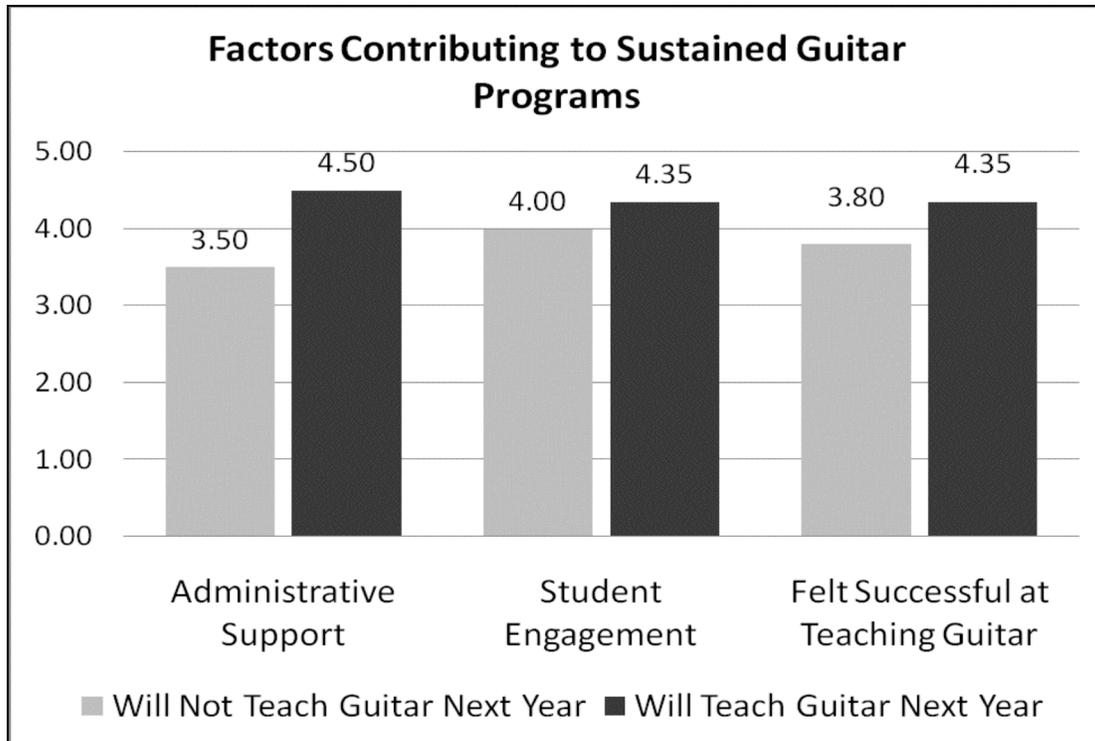
School Support	SA	A	N	D	SD
I expect to be able to maintain a guitar program in my school.	42%	47%	8%	2%	1%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

- 89% of teachers reported that they expect to maintain a guitar program in their school (when combining “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings).

Guitar programs are more likely to be sustained with strong administrative support, highly engaged students and effective teachers.

We compared the survey scores of teachers who expected to teach guitar next year with scores of teachers who did not expect to teach guitar.² There was a statistically significant difference between the two groups in three areas. Teachers were more likely to keep teaching guitar if they had: (1) strong support from school leadership, (2) highly engaged students, and (3) professional development that helped them become effective guitar instructors.



Challenges to Implementing Guitar Classes

Survey Question: What is most challenging about teaching guitar in your school?

Some teachers struggled with motivating their students and maintaining student interest.

- Students who really don't work at learning the notes, and only want to read tabs.
- Getting kids with tab background to learn to read notation.
- Starting with the basics. Everyone wants to play rock and roll from day one.

² Because we used five-point rating scales in our survey (“Strongly Disagree” through “Strongly Agree”) average scores for each rating scale survey item could range from one to five.

- Motivating students to read music and play in ensembles.
- Half of the students are not motivated to practice.
- Keeping the kids motivated for an entire semester. Finding songs they want to learn that they can actually play.

Some teachers struggled with scheduling classes and time management.

- Finding time to schedule classes – all classes must be held after or before school.
- I do it as a pullout, not as its own class, and therefore the classes meet irregularly.
- Administrators saying that we need to have large classes in order to schedule the class.
- Time! We have to meet during a breakfast period, for about 25 minutes, once every 6 school days.

Student Engagement and Learning

Guitar classes helped engage more students in music instruction. Hard-to-reach students participated in music classes for the first time.

Nearly two-thirds of the teachers “strongly agreed” that they were reaching students who otherwise might not participate in music classes. A large majority of teachers reported that guitar classes engaged and motivated students to participate in music. There were very few negative responses to items about student engagement.

Student Participation	SA	A	N	D	SD
My students are receptive to the idea of learning to play guitar.	67%	28%	5%	0%	0%
Through guitar classes, I am able to reach students who otherwise might not participate in traditional music classes (like band or chorus).	63%	27%	8%	2%	0%
Students in my guitar classes wish to continue studying/playing guitar.	27%	62%	11%	0%	0%
My students were engaged by my guitar classes.	34%	60%	6%	0%	0%
My guitar classes got more students involved in music classes.	36%	43%	18%	2%	1%
My guitar classes were successful at motivating students to participate in music.	31%	60%	9%	0%	0%
My guitar classes helped engage at-risk students in learning about music.	25%	51%	21%	2%	1%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

- 95% of teachers reported that their students were receptive to playing guitar (when combining “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings).
- 90% of teachers reported that through guitar they were able to reach students who otherwise would not participate in music classes.
- 89% of teachers reported that their students wished to continue studying guitar.

- 94% of teachers reported that their students were engaged by guitar classes.
- 79% of teachers reported that guitar classes got more students involved in music.
- 91% of teachers reported that their guitar classes motivated students to participate in music.
- 76% of teachers reported that guitar classes helped engage at-risk students in learning about music.

Guitar classes made students excited about participating in music.

- I was seeing students truly get excited about what they have accomplished on the guitar and enjoying the learning experience.
- I love to connect with those students who “light up” as they discover the joys of this instrument.
- I have some students that now enjoy playing guitar that have never played music before this class. Some have come a long way since the start of school.
- Some of the kids who hate to sing or are totally uninvolved in music really got into it. It was something that they found that they could do that was different than their normal studies.
- Students tell me they are asking for a guitar for their birthday or Christmas so they can keep on playing. They learned enough to continue to enjoy it.
- After teaching guitar to second graders last year, three boys wanted lessons. I started with them and they are still taking lessons with me through the end of this year and probably will continue next year.
- The students are self-motivated and excited about learning.

Guitar classes got many students seriously involved in music education for the first time.

- I connected with the students who otherwise would have no interest in “traditional” general music class.
- I am seeing kids who would not otherwise participate in music.
- Reaching out to some students that have not been involved in music.
- We are engaging students who would otherwise not be in the music program. Many of my students are now taking private lessons as well.
- Kids who have not participated in any music activities for years (except for listening) are picking up an instrument and playing music.
- I am able to reach students that normally would never take a music class. It is something that many students really enjoy and they look forward and love to come to class.
- I know many more students in the school than I did before I began teaching the class.
- It is rewarding teaching the students who would not have taken any music classes or any instrumental classes.
- Adding these classes to our department also added about 70 non-music kids to our department!

Guitar classes engaged at-risk students who were otherwise alienated in school.

- We are reaching some of the at-risk students and developing a good rapport with them through guitar.
- At-risk students can feel good about something in their school career.
- Today I had a boy who is struggling in school. He played the first two lines of *Amazing Grace* on the guitar and was in seventh heaven. He face was just beaming.
- Students who don't do well elsewhere do well here.
- Many at-risk students find guitar class rewarding.

Because of the GAMA program, many students participated in music education classes. They learned music skills, basic guitar technique, and sometimes began to explore composition and improvisation. Students gained skills within the National Standards for Music Education, playing a varied repertoire on an instrument (Content Standard Two) and reading music (Content Standard Five).

Over one-third of the music teachers “strongly agreed” that their students learned to read and play music, and a large majority responded positively to items about music skills. Fewer teachers believed that their students learned composition and improvisation skills in guitar classes.

Music Skills	SA	A	N	D	SD
My guitar classes were successful this year at teaching students guitar playing skills.	37%	55%	6%	2%	0%
My students learned how to read music in my guitar classes.	33%	47%	13%	7%	0%
My students developed their ability to play songs and pieces in my guitar classes.	41%	54%	5%	0%	0%
My students learned about composition and improvisation in my guitar classes.	8%	33%	28%	28%	3%

SA = strongly agree A = agree N = not sure D = disagree SD = strongly disagree

- 91% of teachers reported that their guitar classes were successful at teaching guitar playing skills (when combining “strongly agree” and “agree” ratings).
- 80% of teachers reported that students learned to read music in their guitar classes.
- 95% of teachers reported that students developed their ability to play songs/pieces in their guitar classes.
- 41% of teachers reported that students learned about composition and improvisation in their guitar classes.

Students developed a stronger interest in music education, and particularly studying guitar.

- I have students come in weekly and ask if they can come and join the jazz ensemble, or if they can come in before school and jam with the band kids. And these are kids who have never stepped into my band room before!
- I've already had 10 parent emails: "My kid wants a guitar, what kind should I get?" And that's been very rewarding for me. The kids are really making music, and they are very proud of themselves.
- They've asked for summer lessons!
- Last year I had requests from 5 parents for recommendations of where to buy a guitar.

Many teachers reported that their students are now seeking private lessons outside of the school environment.

- I have a few students that have become guitar majors and make their living teaching others!
- I just finished up with a group of seventh graders and they're so excited about the guitar that three of the boys who never showed an interest in music have bought guitars and signed up at the local music store for lessons.
- Many are asking to take private lessons and I direct them to the private teachers in town.
- Because of guitar class, I have had many students start taking lessons and purchase guitars so that they can continue on their own.

Students developed new skills in playing guitar and understanding music.

- As I have introduced my students to various styles of music and guitar, I have been surprised to see middle school students enjoy it all, even preferring the classical guitar styles.
- Many of my third grade guitar students are learning the A-D-E chords. I hope that we can perform a blues at a concert in the springtime.
- My students have learned to read music and have gained an overall appreciation for music. They are excited about playing in classical ensembles because it sounds "cool" on the guitar.
- My students are learning to read music, and some of them are able to build on their guitar skills as they progress to high school guitar class.

Students became more involved in school performances and other ensembles at their schools.

- The top guitar class students are starting to participate in my jazz band!
- Many have gone on to perform in other school ensembles such as jazz bands, marching bands, pep bands and percussion ensembles.
- I had one student who was able to participate in a rock band in his high school that was scheduled as a part of the curriculum because I had instituted the class at the middle level.

- My kids have performed at our school concerts for hundreds of people, some for the first time ever, and seeing their reaction and appreciation of this has been rewarding. I know they are learning a life skill that they will keep with them their entire lives!
- We use the guitar students in the performances of other groups such as chorus and orchestra.
- I have had several students develop a love for bass in guitar class. Some of these students have gone on to join our jazz band playing bass.
- I have one student who has become a pit performer in the musical theater class. A very valuable resource indeed!

Some students became more focused and disciplined as a result of the guitar classes.

- They have become more open-minded to different styles of playing. Many entered with their own idea of how one should play the guitar, and I think they now understand that with good skills they can play a variety of styles well.
- My students all eagerly practice the guitar on their own now. Since I approached my teaching from several angles the way my instructors did (note-reading, pima, ensembles, chords and strum patterns, power chords and rock tunes), the students all found something that interests them enough to continue playing.
- I have some students who play for 10 minutes before homeroom, practice during lunch and play the 20 minutes before their bus arrives 5 days a week. They love guitar!

Guitar playing provided meaningful social experiences for students.

- They love to share what they have learned with each other. It's the only class I have where students will stick around after the bell (it's the last period of the day) for up to 20 minutes playing and "showing off" to each other.
- The experience gives them an opportunity to work together with other students to create something that sounds good.
- Guitar playing give students that may not otherwise participate in group activities at school an opportunity to become involved in something meaningful and make new friends.
- It is rewarding when a current student shows me something that a student from a former class taught them. It is also fun to hear how the students are getting together outside of school to jam.
- Many have talked about meeting up with other kids who play guitar when they move on to college.

Students developed a deeper appreciation of guitar playing and music making.

- More students are enjoying music during their free periods and study halls. They are spending more time creating music than they did before.
- Many, many students are interested in having a guitar 2 class, so much so that they had a petition presented to the principal requesting it.

- One of my students has just enrolled in a college program to prepare to become a guitar teacher himself.

About the Evaluator

Dr. Robert Horowitz is Associate Director of the Center for Arts Education Research at Teachers College, Columbia University and consultant to arts organizations, schools, school districts, and foundations. As part of a group of researchers supported by The GE Fund and The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Dr. Horowitz investigated the impact of arts learning on several cognitive and social dimensions, such as creativity, personal expression, and school climate. The collective research, *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*, was published by the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities and the Arts Education Partnership. He is a recipient of the NAEA 2001 Manuel Barkan Memorial Award for the article based on this work, "Learning In and Through the Arts: The Question of Transfer" in *Studies in Art Education*. Most recently, Dr. Horowitz contributed to *Critical Links: Learning in the Arts and Student Academic and Social Development*, a compendium of 62 studies of arts learning and its connections to broader human development.

Dr. Horowitz helped develop numerous educational partnerships throughout the country. He is author of *From Service Provider to Partnership: A Manual for Planning, Developing and Implementing Collaborations with the New York City Public Schools* and co-author of *Institutionalizing Arts Education for New York City Public Schools*, the blueprint for the \$36 million Annenberg arts education initiative. He has written, lectured and conducted workshops on program evaluation, musical creativity, jazz improvisation, curriculum development, student assessment, partnership development and arts education policy issues.

After performing and recording widely as a guitarist, Rob Horowitz taught for five years at an alternative high school for at-risk students in New York City. Subsequently, he taught guitar at Teachers College, Columbia University, where he received his doctorate in 1994. Dr. Horowitz teaches research and assessment methods at Teachers College. Current projects include evaluation of arts partnerships, teacher professional development, and research on the impact of arts learning on cognitive and social development.