

Developing Musical Code-Switchers: Implications and Suggestions

Isbell, D. & Stanley, A. (2015)

Higher Education Faculty

- Consider the educational possibilities of honoring students' wider musical backgrounds, specifically addressing the acquisition of intrinsic musical skills that lend themselves to transference across multiple musical opportunities.
- Incorporate small, student-run ensembles, in a range of musical styles, incorporating creativity through improvisation, composition, and arranging.
- Encourage students to take ownership in their future musical career, by helping them think about how to use their talents in myriad ways.

P-12 Music Educators

- Allow entry points for musicians at any stage, experience level, or grade in school.
- Be willing to learn alongside your students, incorporating a diverse range of musical experiences: some of which you may be unfamiliar with or even dislike
- Try teaching and learning with and without notation.

Private Teachers

- Incorporate composition, improvisation, and learning music by ear, in addition to learning healthy technique and standard repertoire.
- Have your student assume an active role in selecting music, letting *you* know what *their* musical goals and aspirations are.
- Help your students find authentic, motivating public performance experiences.

Parents

- Bring music into your home from the start. Music doesn't need to be limited to recordings- sing and move rhythmically with your children in a playful way as a natural and fun part of regular family life.
- Help your children to see themselves as autonomous independent musicians- this often requires special attention when the initial, sudden burst of musical growth begins to level out and motivation may become more complicated or challenging.
- Encourage learning multiple instruments and musical styles.

Young Students

- Be musical in *every* way that you feel compelled to: learn several instruments, sing, and dance.
- Try copying your favorite music, and creating your own, on a regular basis. Do this alone; do this with others- both in and outside school
- Embrace opportunities to expand your musical palate: investigate styles you may not be familiar with. Participate actively in the musical ensembles in your school and community.

University Students

- Do not limit yourself by remaining tethered to musical practices with which you are comfortable. Be on a constant path of exploration of the many ways music can be taught, learned, and performed
- Understand that music performance and music teaching go hand in hand. Practicing your skills, and then sharing them with others, are mutually rewarding and beneficial endeavors.
- Look for friends and colleagues who listen to and play different music than you. Try to find common ground in shared, informal music-making that's just for fun.
- Challenge yourself to improve your skills in hearing and immediately responding to musical input: harmonizing melodies, spontaneously improvising.