Dear Administrator,

As a professional music educator, I am always looking for the best practices and techniques to educate the whole child. The Orff Schulwerk approach to music education is, for me, an authentic, creative approach supporting this goal. Orff Schulwerk music and movement pedagogy contributes to development of the individual far beyond specific skills and understandings in the arts. It gives me, as a music educator, the tools to develop skills for 21st century learning:

* **Intellectual:** The critical-thinking and problem-solving tasks involved in Orff Schulwerk call upon both linear and intuitive intellectual capacities. Carrying out creative ideas calls upon organizational abilities as well as artistic knowledge and skill.
* **Social:** Orff Schulwerk is a group model, requiring the collaboration and cooperative interaction of everyone involved, including the instructor. Artistic development occurs within a supportive human environment, where tolerance, patience, supportiveness, and other cooperative attitudes are consciously cultivated. The ensemble setting requires sensitivity to the group context and awareness of the role of each individual within it. Problem solving, improvisation, and the group composing process provide opportunities for developing leadership.
* **Emotional:** The artistic media involved, music and movement, provide the individual with avenues for non-verbal expression of emotion through communication and creativity. The exploratory and improvisatory activities can provide a focus for emotions, a means for release of tension and frustration,and a vehicle for the enhancement of self-esteem.
* **Aesthetic:** As knowledge of and skills in music and movement grow, students will have opportunities to develop a sense of “quality” that extends beyond the musical examples.

As an Orff Educator I am fortunate to be supported in my professional learning by the Alberta Chapter of Carl Orff Canada. (<http://www.albertaorff.ca/>) This organization is a professional learning community of the highest calibre and, as such, organizes regular professional learning opportunities for music educators wanting to learn and improve best practices in the Orff approach.

This year on May 12th, the Chapter is collaborating with the Winspear Center for Music Education to host a Children’s Day at the Winspear Center. This event will bring together 80 Edmonton-area students to work with 4 Orff music specialists for a day of movement, singing, instrument playing and creating. As a music educator I would benefit in attending this professional learning activity because I will be able to observe Orff teaching at its best. This event would also allow me to connect with the musical expertise of the Winspear Music Education team and learn about their educational initiatives. As well, this is a valuable opportunity for me to collaborate with my music educator colleagues. As the only music teacher in my school, this opportunity for collaboration would be of great value.

Children’s Day is an opportunity for me to become a better music educator and to improve the learning of my students. It is my hope that you will support my request to attend Children’s Day on May 12th, 2015.

Yours truly,