

I am writing in response to Bill 5005, to ask you to please maintain last year's funding for Music Haven through the upcoming year.

Music Haven provides essential educational and social enrichment for children living in disadvantaged neighborhoods in New Haven. Multiple scientific studies have shown that music education also provides students advantages in other core areas, including math and reading. Musical education is thus doubly important for students in schools with lower overall scores in math and reading, such as those in the New Haven Promise areas. Music Haven has also cultivated a strong community, providing support for students' families as well as helping students develop their own social skills. The Music Haven teachers get to know each student individually, becoming personal mentors and a safe adult that students can turn to when they need.

Although Music Haven's strong sense of community has allowed it to develop a dedicated donor base, they rely on state funding to make up what their donors cannot afford. Having a line in the state budget has allowed them to prove their sustainability to donors and to be truly sustainable. Please maintain that line in the budget for the upcoming year.