

19 February, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

When my family and I moved here 5 ½ years ago, we knew no one. Our family of 6 came here to take a job with half the pay of our previous one, in a city with a much higher cost of living. As we struggled to find our footing in New Haven, Music Haven became a cornerstone of community and grounding, not only for our enrolled children, but for our whole family.

Not only does Music Haven provide quality after school programming, homework help, and music education, but they find ways to deepen and spread roots throughout the community. Through Music Haven we've been privileged to participate in services in Congregation Mishkin Israel, First United Methodist Church, and several others. We've connected to the immigrant and refugee community, the Arts and Ideas festival, and cultural events at Yale University. We've found belonging and place not only in Music Haven, but in New Haven, thanks to all the ways Music Haven connects and integrates communities and people.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Music Haven has offered tremendous logistical, practical, and moral support to all its families, not only continuing to provide high quality music education, but also technological and temporal support to keep families connected and children thriving during this time of hardship and uncertainty.

Please follow through on your commitment to fund Music Haven. What they accomplish is beyond price, but it does require money to operate.

Committee Chair Toni Walker [promised us this would happen](#). We are asking for accountability and follow through as parents, voters, and citizens. This is not only a matter of integrity, but a matter of critical investment in our communities, children, and future.

Best,

Samantha Stewart

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