



# LEARNING WITH MUSIC: AN INNOVATIVE, EVIDENCE-BASED MUSIC INTEGRATION PROGRAM



*Advancing self-regulatory skills is of critical interest, as these skills undergird school success for any intervention to show this type of impact would be a big deal, and the fact that the focal intervention is music is exciting because it aligns with an emergent research base suggesting the power of music for supporting early childhood development.*

— **Dr. Eleanor Brown**, PhD, Director of the Early Childhood Cognition and Emotions Lab (ECCEL) & psychology professor at West Chester University



*Investing in high-quality early childhood education and development for our most vulnerable children is one of the best public investments we can make.*

— **Art Rolnick**, Former senior vice president and director of research at the Federal Reserve Bank in Minneapolis, member MacPhail Learning with Music Advisory Board

## WHAT IS MACPHAIL CENTER FOR MUSIC & LEARNING WITH MUSIC?

MacPhail Center for Music is one of the nation's oldest and largest community-based music education centers. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit, we pride ourselves on being a statewide resource for music learning, events, and community partnerships.

MacPhail is home to one of the nation's oldest and most reputable early childhood music programs in the country, Sing Play Learn with MacPhail®. In 2004, the program's director, Dianna Babcock, posed the questions, "What would happen if we trained teachers to use music throughout the day in preschool classrooms? Will it help ease transitions so that children are better able to focus and regulate their behaviors?" Her hypothesis led to the development of the Learning with Music teacher training program.

## WHAT MAKES LEARNING WITH MUSIC UNIQUE?

Learning with Music addresses concerns that young children experiencing economic hardship face a higher probability of not being ready for school than others. This program uses music to help fix the problem.

- The strategic focus is on **training/coaching** early childhood teachers to make musical play a part of their teaching strategies. The implementation of strategies learned does not stop when the program is over.
- The program is **unique** as musical play becomes a part of the teaching strategy used throughout the day, every day. It is not relegated to "music time".
- Learning with Music focuses on early education programs with most of the students living in **economic hardship**. Children growing up in poverty must deal with more risk factors for poor outcomes than those not experiencing poverty.
- The program is **relatively simple to administrate**. Complexities in certain programs create burdens for families, which may result in lower access to needed services.

**MACPHAIL.ORG/LEARNING-WITH-MUSIC**

# FUNDING REQUEST

An appropriation of \$500,000 (\$250,000/ per year for 2 years) would be used to expand the Learning with Music Program to impact more young lives.

Through this program expansion, we will:

1. **Create professional development** training opportunities and online resources for early childhood educators.
2. Market and **share resources statewide** with early childhood educators.
3. Continue **direct programming to 6 early education center locations** which work with children experiencing economic hardship in the greater Twin Cities metro area.
4. **Assess program and results with a third-party reviewer** with the goal of creating evidence-based program replication and expansion across the state for early childhood providers.



## WHY FUND THIS BILL?

Learning with Music has demonstrated that early childhood music interventions in preschools improve children's learning potential and executive functioning skills, especially those living with economic stressors.

The program has been developed over two decades of research and program implementation.

This is a relatively low-cost intervention that has the potential to assist many early education teachers throughout the state of Minnesota in building the skills in vulnerable children that may significantly help close the achievement gap.

The skills learned are significant and long-lasting. Learning with Music is unique. By focusing on training/coaching early childhood teachers to make musical play a part of their teaching strategies, the program can be replicated across Minnesota early learning centers in a relatively short time frame.

### SCHOOL READINESS AND SELF-REGULATION OUTCOMES

- Evidence-based results indicate that the program's music interventions enhance young children's learning potential and executive functioning skills (emotion regulation/impulse control) necessary for school readiness
- For children receiving the Learning with Music program, results showed:
  - 150% greater growth across the year in inhibitory control\*
  - 25-40% increase in pre-reading skills
  - 15-20% increase in pre-math skills
- School readiness skills that improved:

Impulse control	Attention	Cognition	Language
Emotion regulation	Social/Emotional	Creativity	Motor Development

Research results available at [MacPhail.org/learning-with-music](http://MacPhail.org/learning-with-music)  
\*Early Childhood Research Quarterly  
□Wilder Results Report

## CONTACT US



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