

Music Education (Shelton SD)

Statutory and/or Budget Language

\$360,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 is provided solely for the Shelton School District to contract with an organization that provides a free early childhood music education to teach music literacy and key skills to prepare children for success in school. The organization must provide Spanish, Mam, and Q'anjob'al versions of the early learning music education program during the 2023–24 school year.

Purpose

Shelton School District contracted with Great Bend Center for Music (GBCM), a company that delivers free early childhood music education, to support the development of music literacy and essential skills that promote school readiness. The program was offered in Spanish, Mam, and Q'anjob'al during the 2023–24 school year to meet the linguistic needs of the district's diverse student population.

Description of Services Provided

Great Bend Center for Music provided early childhood music education to early elementary students through daily live interactive sessions via zoom, teaching music literacy, ear training, songcraft, collaboration, SEL skills and basic academics (shapes, colors, numbers, letters, etc.) There were additional participatory events and family classes held at the Shelton Early Learning Center and at various church and service organization locations throughout the year as well.

Criteria for Receiving Services and/or Grants

GBCM must provide:

- The program in English, Spanish, Mam, and Q'anjob'al.
- Align the program with the state standards for the arts, social emotional learning and early learning.
- Provide services to students in preschool, ages Three (3) to six (6) years for Thirty (30) minutes a day, five (5) days a week.
- Provide a class schedule, including dates, time grade level, teacher, and language group.
- Write a quarterly report that includes data of program offerings, student attendance, demographics, grade level, and progress in skill development.



Beneficiaries in the 2023–24 School Year

Number of School Districts	1
Number of Schools	3
Number of Students	92
Number of Educators	5
Other	36 classes

Are Federal or Other Funds Contingent on State Funding?

No

State Funding History

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2024	\$360,000	\$359,625

Number of Beneficiaries Per Fiscal Year (e.g. School Districts, Schools, Students, Educators, Other)

Fiscal Year	Number of Beneficiaries
2024	137

Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

None

Program Evaluation or Evaluation of Major Findings

The Sound Scholars™ curriculum was successfully translated from English to make it accessible to speakers of Spanish, Mam, and Q'anjob'al (SMQ classes). This included culturally sensitive modifications to incorporate Latinx culture in both tone and music presented. Terminology and tools were adjusted; for example, International Solfege syllables were used over Imperial Solfege. Additionally, an extra daily lesson plan was developed to facilitate English language acquisition, supporting the development of kindergarten readiness and prosocial learning skills in American classrooms.

The effectiveness of the classes for participating students was significant, as shown by growth in beginning and end-of-term evaluations in all areas aligned with the WaKIDS assessment. English language acquisition for SMQ classes also showed real growth. Participants consistently reenrolled for consecutive terms, maintaining engagement with the program at both the child and parent levels.

At the end of the school year, all participants demonstrated the ability to sight-read rhythms down to the 8th note subdivision, identify pitches on a treble staff, recognize all perfect intervals

by ear, sing the alphabet, identify basic shapes and colors by name, identify vowels by sound, letter, and embouchure, use correct musical vocabulary across all dimensions of music, and actively participate in daily SEL exercises focused on developing executive function, emotional awareness, and self-management skills.

Major Challenges Faced by the Program

The major challenges were two-fold: the Shelton School District did not actively follow through with community outreach to drive enrollment; and it was discovered that independent outreach to the Guatemalan community was labor and cost intensive without the school district's active engagement. Engaging Mam and Q'anjob'al speaking families required more than just classes; it needs regular outreach events and classes for families at church, their places of employment, or their small businesses to gain traction. Additionally, it requires classes for parents on managing basic educational technologies including Zoom and Google Classroom, and assistance with filling out online registration forms. By April of 2024, all of these strategies had been incorporated while developing relationships with the DCYF CWELN team and CPS, both of which now use the program as a resource for families receiving services. Relationships were also established with Guatemalan church leaders in both the north (Q'njob'al) and south (Mam) ends of the county, and the two top employers of Guatemalan workers: Lynch Creek Floral and Taylor United.

Future Opportunities

The program is currently being reformulated to meet the significant need for parental and family outreach and education, in addition to the core classes for preschoolers. The operational model is being adjusted while focusing on developing funding for these additional outside-of-the-classroom activities. It has been learned that making a community-wide impact on kindergarten readiness for migrant families involves a two-pronged effort that includes not only culturally sensitive classes in Spanish, Mam, and Q'anjob'al but also robust outreach and support for migrant families to drive enrollment and ongoing participation, considering their technological challenges. These challenges are not due to a lack of access to hardware but a lack of education for families on effectively using the technology available to them. For instance, it was discovered that while QR codes are standard for many families, they were novel for SMQ families, who preferred having a dedicated WhatsApp connection point for phone calls or texts.

Other Relevant Information

Although the program did not achieve the desired enrollment numbers, it successfully completed the critical tasks of translating the curriculum into new languages in culturally sensitive ways, training staff, building key stakeholder relationships, and identifying the widespread need for this type of SMQ early learning program across Washington State. There are high expectations for the regular impact this program will achieve within five years.

Schools/Districts Receiving Assistance

[Click here to see a list of all OSPI grant recipients in the 2024 Fiscal Year.](#)

Program Contact Information

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