

[www.GilbertMusicMatters.com](http://www.GilbertMusicMatters.com)

## **Gilbert Advocates for Music Education**

*Seeking a Balanced Approach To Elementary Music Scheduling*



### **Gilbert at a Crossroads:**

**A race to excellence? A race to average? Or a race to the bottom?**

SEEKING A BALANCED APPROACH TO  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCHEDULING



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# We Support District Scheduling Goals

- **STUDY HALL:** The existing schedule does not maximize instructional time. When special classes such as band and strings pull out, the remaining students are in a study hall period where the classroom teacher cannot teach new material. While to some degree, this can be helpful for remedial teaching or one on one instruction, excessive study hall periods amount to a significant inefficiency to classroom instructional time.
- **COMMON PREP TIME:** The new schedules should allow grade level teachers to share common prep time for curriculum coordination, collaboration, discussion of issues and students, etc. In addition, there is a goal to increase prep time for classroom teachers by ten minutes per day.
- **CONSISTENCY:** Teachers would like to see subjects such as math occur at regular times during the day and for special pull-outs to occur on the same day(s) each week. The existing schedule can be difficult to organize and difficult to follow. As a note, we've discovered that the proposed schedule introduced a new set of complexity in organizing.
- **ACADEMIC CHUNKING:** Teachers are required to teach certain subjects (such as reading) for a longer periods of time without interruption.
- **CLARITY:** For example, it would help if it were easier for students to know what day to bring PE shoes or instruments. Having PE on the same day every week helps with this.
- **CURRICULUM:** Classroom teachers are seeking additional time in order to teach science and social studies every day.
- **MANDATES:** No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top have added a layer of complexity to the scheduling mix making grade level schedules a challenge.

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**But hang on there!**

*Let's fix the schedule, but...*

...not at the disproportionate or detrimental expense of our music programs.

Let's take more time, work with all stakeholders, and we'll figure out how to get it right!

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# Full and Balanced Education

- Music is not more important than other subjects.
- But...music is not less important either. Music is not peripheral.
- **We want a balanced education.**

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# What are the goals of the new schedule?

- Why is music the only subject to receive such dramatic cuts?
- Are music cuts an unintended consequence?
- Or...are music cuts an unstated, yet desired outcome of the proposed schedule?

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# Appropriate Balance?

- Are current music instructional times excessive or are they appropriate for the subject matter and student/teacher ratios?
- Can we meet the district's scheduling goals without disproportionate impacts to music?
- **The proposal cuts elementary music by 38%.**  
Is that balanced?

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# Have you asked: At what cost?

- What are the impacts of elementary music cuts to Junior High and High School programs?
  - Lower enrollment/transition to Jr. High.
  - Families move to Gilbert because of the quality of music education. Cuts would reduce a key competitive edge.
  - Decreased ability to attract and retain high quality teachers.
- What non-musical academic and educational benefits of music will be lost?
  - Music education produces extensive and well documented benefits in test scores and overall academic performance.
- Will the reductions actually be financially more expensive?
  - Reductions to music at all levels requires more full time teachers to make up the higher student/teacher ratios in music classes.

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# Is Gilbert at a Crossroads?

- These cuts will have far reaching impact on Gilbert's music programs all the way through High School.
- Are we contemplating a fundamental and philosophical change of commitment to a decades long support of music education?



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# What are we asking you to do?

1. Preserve music education in Gilbert by **supporting the elementary programs as the foundation for Jr. and Sr. High programs.**
2. Clearly identify whether cutting music is an unintended consequence or a desired outcome. **Define and address goals openly.**
3. Enable us to **work together with all stakeholders** to fix the schedule without harming music. We can do this with more time and more group collaboration.

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# How do we compare?

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# Comparing to Other Districts

- Success should not be justification to scale back to average or below.
- Current instructional times are within proportion to neighboring districts.
- Proposed 38% cuts would put Gilbert below average.
- **These cuts are not a race to average, they are a race to the bottom!**

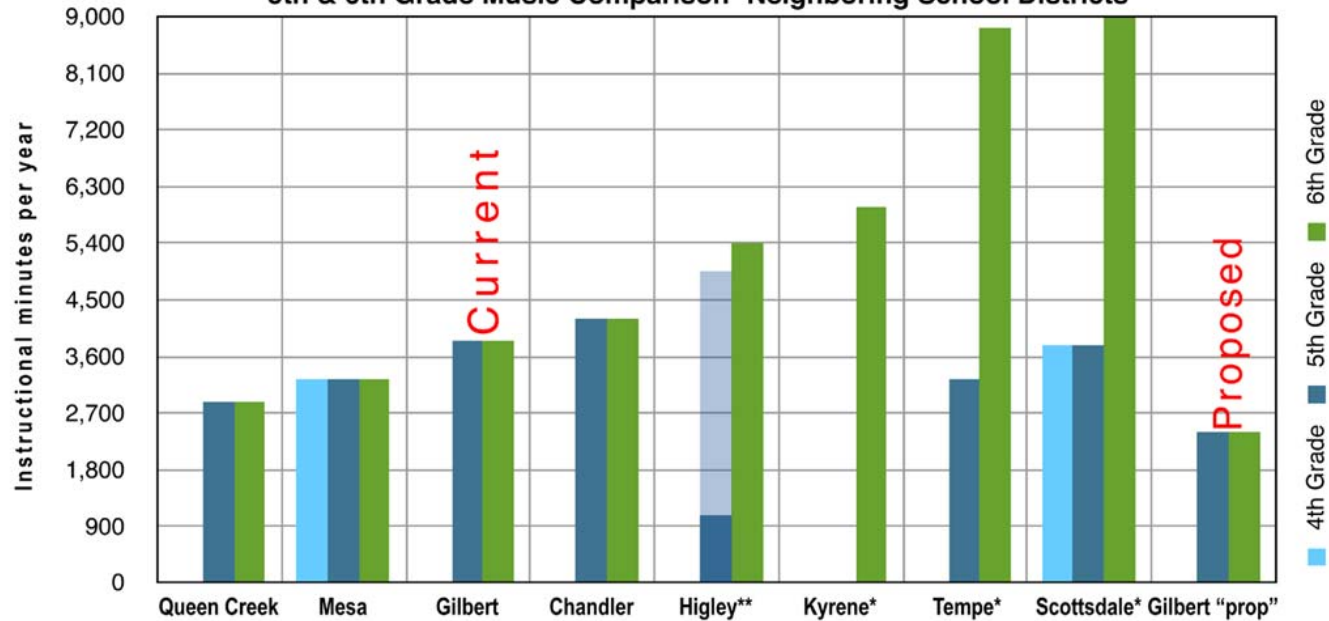
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5th & 6th Grade Music Comparison- Neighboring School Districts



School District	Start Grade	Class Type	Specials on 1/2 days?	Frequency	x Class Length	= Instructional minutes/year
Queen Creek	5th	full	yes	2/5 school days	30 minutes	2880: 5th and 6th
Mesa	4th Orch, 5th Band	classroom pull-out	yes	3/5 school days	30 minutes	3240: 5th and 6th
<b>Gilbert (Current)</b>	5th	homogenous & full	no	4/6 school days	35 minutes	3850: 5th and 6th
Chandler	5th	homogenous & full	yes	4/6 school days	35 minutes	4200: 5th and 6th
Higley	6th	homogenous & full	yes	3/5 school days	50 minutes	1080-4860: 5th** 5976: 6th
Kyrene	6th	full	yes	5/10 days	68 minutes	1080: 5th 5976: 6th
Scottsdale	4th (Band & Orch)	homogenous & full	yes	3/5 days 5th grade 5/5 days 6th Grade	35 minutes 50 minutes	3780: 5th 9000: 6th
Tempe	5th	full	yes	3/5 days 5th grade 5/5 days 6th grade	30 minutes 49 minutes	3240: 5th 8820: 6th
<b>Gilbert (Proposed)</b>	5th	by classroom	no	2/5 days (Wed, Fri)	40 minutes	2400: 5th and 6th

Julie Duty 2/1110

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## 5th & 6th Grade Music Comparison- Neighboring School Districts

**How was the Information collected?** As a concerned parent, I started making calls (choosing an elementary school in each school district at random) and asking questions. I wanted to know where we currently stand and where this new program will position us.

**\*6th grade middle school:** in school districts where 6th grade is a part of the middle school, band and orchestra are typically delayed until the change in school. General music opportunities continue through the 5th grade.

**\*\*Higley School District:** is an exception. They offer before/after school band for students in the 5th grade, but it is not an official district sponsored activity. Teachers are not paid for it, but are sometimes able to receive 301 credit for their time and service. The school I contacted in Higley holds band 3 times per week for 45 minutes.

**Before/After School Programs:** Are they a viable option? No, for several reasons. First, participation numbers would go way, WAY down. Will our Highland High School Orchestra be playing at Carnegie Hall in 5 years with only 25 students? No. Second, before school programs work in small school districts or as exceptions to the rule. In our district, each band/orchestra teacher teaches at 3 (sometimes 4) schools per day. He cannot be in multiple places at one time. Finally, to consider moving to a plan wherein we expect teachers to volunteer more of their time as part of a job requirement is just wrong. We *will* lose our great teachers to competing school districts.

**General Music:** In districts where General Music is offered concurrently with instrumental music, that time was calculated into the chart as well. It is, after all, music instruction time. Mesa is one example of this: all students attend General Music one time per week. Band/Orchestra students attend instrumental music class two times per week. What we are seeking to show in this chart are opportunities for music instruction. As in Gilbert, some students will choose to embrace the opportunity to have more, others will not.

**Class Type:** This is a very important consideration. Students learn best in homogenous groups (like instruments together) but the opportunity to participate as a full band/orchestra together is very important as well. For example, each instrument has unique technical demands which requires specialized instruction. All like-instruments should attend together so they can receive instrument specific instruction. In addition, students cannot be peer models and collaborate effectively when playing different instruments. Pull-out programs and "by classroom" groupings are the least effective way to learn.

**Frequency:** Frequency in music (like exercise) is key. Music teachers are teaching skills *while* training the muscles necessary to play an instrument.

**Class Length:** The large variation of class lengths is primarily due to the elementary school vs. middle school scenario for 6th graders. It is important to note, however, that the difference in the opportunity for learning is significant.

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# History of Success

- Gilbert music programs have a history of amazing success. (*Rose Bowl, Inaugural Parade, Carnegie Hall, National Recognition, Leading the State and Region, and so much more.*)
- Other districts have scaled back their elementary programs at great cost to Junior and Senior High Programs.
- Scaling back our elementary programs will negatively impact the entire program.

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# Why does music have so much time?

- Large Numbers of Students Per Class
- Complex Skills
- Multi-disciplinary
- Extensive Repetition Required
- Extensive learning in both analytical and abstract thinking.
- Music is another language.
- Music requires physical and mental skill development.
- Music education is not just for music. It enriches academic performance and life skills.
- Music education nurtures creativity, collaboration, and compassion in our future leaders, inventors, scientists, and all other elements of a dynamic society.

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# Benjamin Bloom Multiple Learning Domains

Music enables students to integrate and learn in all three of Benjamin Bloom's learning domains:

1. **Cognitive**: mental skills (Knowledge)
2. **Affective**: growth in feelings or emotional areas (Attitude)
3. **Psychomotor**: manual or physical skills (Skills)

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# Academic and Educational Merits of Music

School children exposed to drama, music and dance may do a **better job at mastering reading, writing and math than those who focus solely on academics**, says a report by the Arts Education Partnership.

**"Notions that the arts are frivolous add-ons to a serious curriculum couldn't be further from the truth,"** says James Catterall, education professor at the University of California-Los Angeles, who coordinated the research.

USA Today, May 2002

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# Academic and Educational Merits of Music

"Music education can be a positive force on all aspects of a child's life, particularly on their academic success. **The study of music by children has been linked to higher scores on the SAT and other learning aptitude tests,** and has proven to be an invaluable tool in classrooms across the country. Given the impact music can have on our children's education, **we should support every effort to bring music into their classrooms.**"

Source: U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman (NM)

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# Academic and Educational Merits of Music

A Harvard-based study has found that **children who study a musical instrument for at least three years outperform children with no instrumental training** - not only in tests of auditory discrimination and finger dexterity (skills honed by the study of a musical instrument), but **also on tests measuring verbal ability and visual pattern completion** (skills not normally associated with music).

ScienceDaily (Nov. 5, 2008)

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# Academic and Educational Merits of Music

A ten-year study, tracking more than 25,000 students, shows that **music-making improves test scores**. Regardless of socioeconomic background, **music-making students get higher marks in standardized tests than those who had no music involvement**. The test scores studied were not only standardized tests, such as the SAT, but also in reading proficiency exams.

Source: Dr. James Catterall, UCLA, 1997

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# Music Makes a Better World

"If I were not a physicist, I would probably be a musician. I often think in music. I live my daydreams in music. I see my life in terms of music."

Albert Einstein

"A grounding in the arts will help our children to see; to bring a uniquely human perspective to science and technology. In short, it will help them as they grow smarter to also grow wiser."

Robert E. Allen  
Chairman/CEO  
AT&T Corporation

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# Music Makes a Better World

"I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history, naval architecture, navigation, commerce, and agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry, and porcelain."

John Adams

"The problem is not that we aim too high and fail, but that we aim too low and succeed."

Anonymous

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# Alternate Schedules

- We can't solve scheduling issues in a vacuum.
- We have ideas, but want to meet other stakeholder's goals as well.
- We met with Barb VeNard. She is open to creative alternatives, including a six-day block, as long as they meet the goals.
- **We would like to collaborate with all stakeholders in a work session format.**

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## Sample: New 6 day Block Schedule, 5th Grade

M 1	T 2	W 3	Th 4	F 5	M 6
Band 1 (20)	Band 2 (20)	Full (40)	Band 1 (20)	Band 2 (20)	Full (40)
Orch 1 (20)	Orch 2 (20)	Full (40)	Orch 1 (20)	Orch 2 (20)	Full (40)
		Gen (20)			Gen (20)
Art AB (30)	Art CD (30)		Art CD (20) Brass/H St only	Art AB (20) WW/Low St only	
Lib CD (30)	Lib AB (30)		Lib AB (20) Brass/H St only	Lib CD (20) WW/Low St only	
Team Prep	Team Prep	Team Prep	study hall (20)	study hall (20)	Team Prep

- This schedule assumes that Band and Orchestra are divided into two equally sized groups with like instruments. Not necessarily woodwinds/brass- but keeping all like instruments together. I.e. "Band 1" could include Flutes, Tubas and percussion, but it *would* include all of the flutes, tubas, and perc.

On average, 80% of all 5th graders participate in Band or Orchestra. Of 100 5th grade students, assume 80 in Band/Orchestra (B/O)

Teacher A: 25 students  
 Teacher B: 25 students  
 Teacher C: 25 students  
 Teacher D: 25 students



**Day 1a:**  
 40 in B/O, 30 in Art, 30 in Library  
 Teachers A & B send non-B/O to Art  
 Teachers C & D send non-B/O to Library

**Day 2a:**  
 40 in B/O, 30 in Art, 30 in Library  
 Teachers A & B send non-B/O to Library  
 Teachers C & D send non-B/O to Art

**Day 3a:**  
 80 in Band/Orch, 20 in General Music

**Day 4a:**  
 40 in B/O, 20 in Art, 20 in Lib, 20 study hall  
 • Teachers A & B send Brass & High String students to Library  
 • Teachers C & D send Brass & High String students to Library  
 • 20 students left for study hall

**Day 5a:**  
 40 in B/O, 20 in Art, 20 in Lib, 20 study hall  
 • Teachers A & B send WW and Low strings to Art  
 • Teachers C & D send WW and Low String students to Library  
 • 20 students left for study hall

**Day 6a:**  
 80 in Band/Orch, 20 in General Music  
 5th Grade TEAM PREP

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### Art AB, Art CD, Lib AB, Lib CD

In becoming part of the block, Art and Library teachers would no longer see their students as homeroom classes. All the children from 2 classes (teacher A and B, for example) *not* participating in Band/Orch on a given day would attend Library together. The next day, when the second group of Band/Orch students goes, Library would see the students from classes C and D. Days 4 and 5 of the rotation work the same, but the general music students who already attended both Art and Library on those days would have "study hall."

#### Cons:

- 2 days of "study hall" time for some students
- Teachers still must conquer confusing 6 day schedule
- Art is now meeting for a shorter time, every six days. If
- PE would continue to meet as it does now, as a special outside of the block, 2/6 days.

#### Pros:

- 4 Team Preps/6 Day cycle
- Band/Orchestra time stays the same
- 4 days (of 6 per teacher) with all students gone during block
- Band, Orch, Art, Library all occur during the same time slot each day allowing for fewer interruptions to the school day.
- Retention of physical education time and frequency
- Retention of daily library open check-out time

#### Sample Schedule Teacher A:

8:28 a.m. – First bell  
8:38 a.m. – Tardy bell  
8:38-8:50 - Announcements, attendance, etc.  
8:50-10:00 – Math  
10:00-10:40 – Science  
10:40-11:20 – Social Studies  
11:20-12:00 – Block (Band, Strings, General Music, Art, Library)  
12:05-12:45 – Lunch  
12:50-1:50 – Reading  
1:50-2:50 – Language  
2:50-3:05 – "Pride" reward time  
3:05-3:25 – quiet work  
3:25 p.m. – Dismissal

PE scheduled as a "special" 2/6 days.

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## Sample: New 5 day Block Schedule, 5th Grade

M 1	T 2	W 3	Th 4	F 5
Band 1 (20)	Band 2 (20)	Band 1 (20)	Band 2 (20)	Full Band/Flex (40)
Orchestra 1 (20)	Orchestra 2 (20)	Orchestra 1 (20)	Orchestra 2 (20)	Full Orchestra/Flex (40)
	Gen ABCD (20)		Gen ABCD (20)	Flex
Art/Library AB (30)	Art/Library AB (20)	Art/Library CD (30)	Art/Library CD (20)	Flex
PE CD (30)	PE CD (20)	PE AB (30)	PE AB (20)	Flex
Team Prep	Team Prep	Team Prep	Team Prep	Team Prep

- This schedule assumes that Band and Orchestra are divided into two equally sized groups with like instruments. Not necessarily woodwinds/brass- but keeping all like instruments together. I.e. "Band 1" could include Flutes, Tubas and percussion, but it *would* include all of the flutes, tubas, and perc.
- Flex Days: General music students would have flex day every Friday. On full weeks, Band and Orchestra would use Friday as their one Full Group day. On shortened weeks, they would not have "Full" but instead use this day to make up the elective missed during the week.
- Art/Library rotate weeks
- Computer is taught by the classroom teacher and should not be considered if we are truly trying to create Team Prep time.

On average, 80% of all 5th graders participate in Band or Orchestra. Of 100 5th grade students, assume 80 in Band/Orchestra (B/O)

Teacher A: 25 students  
 Teacher B: 25 students  
 Teacher C: 25 students  
 Teacher D: 25 students



**Day 1:**  
 40 in B/O, 30 in Art, 30 in PE  
 Teachers A & B send non-B/O to Art  
 Teachers C & D send non-B/o to PE

**Day 2:**  
 40 in B/O, 20 in GM, 20 in Art, 20 in PE  
 Teachers A & B send non-B/O to Art  
 Teachers C & D send non-B/O to PE

**Day 3:**  
 40 in B/O, 30 in Art, 30 in PE  
 Teachers A & B send non-B/O to PE  
 Teachers C & D send non-B/o to Art

**Day 4:**  
 40 in B/O, 20 in GM, 20 in Art, 20 in PE  
 Teachers A & B send non-B/O to PE  
 Teachers C & D send non-B/O to Art

**Day 5:**  
 Full weeks: 80 in B/O, 20 in FLEX  
 Shortened weeks: All students in FLEX, Full Band/Orch only if GM is flex elective.

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### Art/Library AB, Art/Library CD, PE AB, PE CD

In becoming part of the block, Art and Library and PE teachers would no longer see their students as homeroom classes. For example, all the children from 2 classes (teacher A and B, for example) *not* participating in Band/Orch on a given day would attend Library together. The next day, when the second group of Band/Orch students goes, Library would see the rest of the students from classes A and B while the general music students have their music time.

#### Cons:

- Reduced Band/Orchestra time
- Reduced Art/Library time
- Reduced PE frequency (reduced from 6 day schedule-*increased* from district proposed schedule by 5.5 hours).
- Art, Library, and PE teachers see the students as parts of 2 classes instead of the whole of 1 class
- During FLEX weeks, band/orchestra would not see the children as a full group

#### Pros:

- No study hall time
- Increased band/orchestra time (compared with proposed schedule)
- All electives meet at the same time for each grade
- Library retains open check-out time
- Students are not faced with choosing/missing out on electives on FLEX day
- Band/Orchestra teachers retain homogenous groupings of students
- PE time stays approx. same as 6 day schedule
- Increased general music time

#### Sample Schedule Teacher A:

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11:20-12:00 – Block (Band, Strings, General Music, Art, Library, PE)  
12:05-12:45 – Lunch  
12:50-1:50 – Reading  
1:50-2:50 – Language  
2:50-3:05 – "Pride" reward time  
3:05-3:25 – quiet work  
3:25 p.m. – Dismissal

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**Wrap up...**

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# Why cut now if we don't have to?

- What extreme or compelling reason do we have to cut?
- This isn't the doomsday budget crisis yet. Why such dramatic cuts without equally dramatic justification?
- Is this how music will be treated if we face truly extreme budget cuts in the future? Will music be the first and biggest cut?

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# Does Gilbert Lead or Follow?

- “...if Gilbert expands the alternative schedule to all elementary schools, the band program will not be the ‘premiere’ program it is now.” (Principal Jason Martin)
- **This retreat from excellence goes beyond the elementary programs.**
- Cut to elementary music damages the Junior and Senior High School programs.
- If we repeat the mistakes other districts have made, we will **dismantle decades of progress that will take years to rebuild.**

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# Look to the Future: Choose Wisely

Gilbert is at crossroads. How we proceed now says everything about our long term commitment to music moving forward.

Solve tough problems like the schedule...  
but not entirely at the expense  
of our music programs.

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# Summary

- No disproportionate cuts to music. Do not race to the bottom.
- Confirm level of commitment to music.
- Collaborate with all stakeholders to solve scheduling.
- Conduct a survey to better assess level of support for music in Gilbert.
- Questions?

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