

Expanding Musical Explorers at Carnegie Hall

TEACHER NOTES

Learning Objectives

- Analyze the merits of a music education program in relation to its objectives.
- Describe the benefits of strategic partnerships to increase an organization's reach and influence.
- Explain the advantages and disadvantages of incorporating technology into performance-based music education programs.
- Develop a recommendation for a music education program based on institutional and program goals.

Topics For Discussion

The case focuses on balancing an organization's priorities, mission, and values with the development, expansion, and execution of curricular offerings. This negotiation of how to maintain institutional values while expanding an organization's programmatic reach and sphere of influence is an inherent challenge that the arts leader must be prepared to address and navigate.

• Musical Explorers Priorities and Objectives

- ♦ Based on the history of the Musical Explorers program, the Learning & Engagement team has articulated what they believe to be the most important aspects of the Musical Explorers curriculum:
 - The program connects students with local artists in their communities.
 - The curriculum is highly participatory.
 - The program culminates with a live, in-person concert.
 - Final concerts are participatory and involve all students in the performance.
- ♦ In the eyes of the WML team, these priorities are what define the Musical Explorers program. Further, it is through these priorities that the program achieves the stated student objectives:
 - Become more musical with their voices through singing songs.
 - Learn age-appropriate vocal exercises, breathing exercises, and simple dance activities.
 - Increase their ability to retain and use music vocabulary.
 - Learn fundamental musical concepts such as rhythm and melody to better understand the unique sounds of the artists studied.
 - Gain an appreciation of the diverse heritage of music in New York City, helping students make personal connections through the music to their cultures and to others.

- ♦ Based on the stated student objectives and the curricular overview presented in the case, have students analyze the merits of the four stated priorities. How closely related are these priorities to the student objectives?
 - Given the student objectives of Musical Explorers, how important is it that the program culminate with a live, in-person concert experience?
 - Can the student objectives be met in a situation where artists are not from the same community as the students?
 - What level of concert participation can be achieved in a live-stream model?
 - How are Carnegie Hall's core values of excellence and aspiration either affirmed or challenged by the proposed expansion models?

- **The Partner Model**

- ♦ At the surface, the partner model seems like a sure-fire way to expand the Musical Explorers curriculum nationally. Through the Link Up program, WMI has gained a wealth of experience in crafting successful partnerships, and an infrastructure is already in place to support the partnerships.
 - What are the primary differences between the Link Up partner model and the potential Musical Explorers partnerships?
 - What obstacles does the WMI team face in identifying Musical Explorers partners?
 - What are the advantages and disadvantages of partners being required to enlist and collaborate with local artists?
 - How effective would the partner model be in underserved markets with limited resources?
 - What are some ways to handle the burdensome tasks of reviewing, editing, and approving all partner curricular materials?
 - What happens if a partner can only engage four artists or decides to only offer one curricular unit per year? Should Musical Explorers be customizable in this regard?
 - How does the level of curricular and programmatic flexibility reflect on Carnegie Hall as an institution?

- **The Digital Distribution Model**

- ♦ The digital distribution model is an attractive option for WMI in that it allows Carnegie Hall to retain ownership of the Musical Explorers curriculum development and concert production—two components with which the WMI team has had experience and success. Further, the digital distribution model follows the institution's commitment to technological innovation and has the potential to reach a global audience. However, there are other considerations:
 - To what extent is the Musical Explorers experience compromised if the program does not culminate with an in-person concert experience?
 - How does a participatory, live-streamed concert compare to an in-person concert? Is it better to have a live-streamed concert than no access to an in-person concert?
 - How does the individual student experience change if the artists featured are not from the same community as the students? What relationship does this potential change have to the stated student objectives?
 - What responsibility, if any, does Carnegie Hall assume regarding technology and access? What happens, for example, if students can only listen to a culminating concert because the school lacks equipment for video projection?
 - How does the potential for uneven reception of the digital distribution reflect on Carnegie Hall as an institution?

- **Alternatives to the Model**

- ♦ While this case asks the reader to evaluate two models that Carnegie Hall is considering and recommend one to the executive director, students should consider alternative models or a hybrid of the models.
 - Is there a way for Carnegie Hall to maintain the live-concert experience while incorporating digital elements?
 - Can Carnegie Hall enroll artists in such a way that connects the program to various markets throughout the country?
 - How can a live-performance component be maintained without burdening subscribers with curriculum development and artist recruitment?