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To whom it may concern,

Tate Street Primary School is now over 90 years old and has a strong sense of history and connection to the local community. There are many families at the school whose members have attended our school for three generations. The Student Family Occupation Index is currently 0.65 at our school meaning that almost two thirds of our families are receiving some form of welfare benefits.

In this letter I wish to highlight the last few years of our school’s performing arts program, which has seen our students strongly immersed in both music and drama. The ‘Marimbataters’, our school’s marimba band have been invited to perform at the Port Fairy Folk Festival for the past 3 years and have recently produced a CD of their own music; our Grade 5 & 6 students were one of only 3 schools in the state of Victoria to perform for Prince Charles and Lady Camilla when they were on tour in Australia two years ago; our brass band (working with the Salvation Army’s ‘Just Brass’ program), performed at Dallas Brookes Hall in Melbourne to an audience of thousands - the spin-off benefits for all of these successes have been enormous – most importantly the students’ personal capabilities have been developed and their confidence to attempt something new is through-the-roof!

The Salvation Army’s ‘Just Brass’ program began here in 2010. Our students ‘lease’ (at zero cost) their instruments from the ‘Salvos’. They also receive individual or small group tutoring once a week and attend band practice after school once a week. This program has seen many of our students now able to play a brass instrument and has led to 4 of our students over the past 3 years receiving full 6-year music scholarships to Christian College, Geelong because of their ability to participate in that school’s brass band. Our school’s capacity to offer students the opportunity to attend an elite school such as Christian College, is something that we are very proud of and we are enormously grateful to the Salvation Army for this fact.

What is also impressive is the fact that since the school has become involved with performing arts over the last five years, our student’s results have seen vast improvement. I do not necessarily believe that the students’ involvement in a music program can directly contribute towards overall improvement in school’s NAPLAN results, but having our students involvement in our arts programs has definitely coincided with students being more interested in school, more focused, more engaged.

Have a look at the following table:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **GR. 5 TREND DATA** | | | | | | **GR. 3 TREND DATA** | | | | |
|  | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** |
| **READING** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **STATE** | *503* | *505* | *505* | *511* | *511* | *432* | *435* | *433* | *435* | *433* |
| **TATE ST.** | *425* | *469* | *478* | *511* | *526* | *362* | *403* | *408* | *469* | *448* |
| **WRITING** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **STATE** | *497* | *494* | *490* | *490* | *482* | *429* | *424* | *430* | *431* | *417* |
| **TATE ST.** | *437* | *436* | *472* | *479* | *468* | *378* | *369* | *415* | *444* | *459* |
| **NUMERACY** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **STATE** | *504* | *501* | *499* | *495* | *498* | *412* | *414* | *410* | *411* | *415* |
| **TATE ST.** | *430* | *490* | *491* | *483* | *550* | *374* | *401* | *407* | *405* | *433* |
| **SPELLING** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **STATE** | *495* | *492* | *499* | *500* | *501* | *413* | *418* | *424* | *420* | *420* |
| **TATE ST.** | *427* | *442* | *447* | *479* | *485* | *351* | *354* | *351* | *438* | *447* |
| **GRAMMAR & PUNCTUATION** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **STATE** | *513* | *511* | *499* | *508* | *509* | *434* | *435* | *438* | *441* | *437* |
| **TATE ST.** | *440* | *448* | *469* | *501* | *504* | *396* | *396* | *400* | *458* | *499* |

As you can clearly see there is incredible improvement, not just at one year level or in one subject area, but overall. It is because of these enormous gains that the entire school community is strongly endorsing the continued utilisation of performing arts at Tate St. Primary School, including the daily singing in the classrooms, the Marimba, Ukulele and Brass Bands and the ‘Western Edge Youth Arts’ drama program.

The Parent opinion Survey is also closely aligned with our overall school improvement. Have a look at the 2 bar graphs, one from 2009 (remembering that ‘Just Brass’ began here in 2010) and the second from 2013.

 

I realise it is difficult to read here but the coloured bars show the tremendous growth we have made in the opinion of the parents in the past 5 years with some areas doubling and tripling in size! We are now performing in the top 25% of schools in 5 different areas with another 5 not far behind! The 18 areas measured that are listed on the graph are (in order from the top down): School Improvement, Approachability, Teacher Morale, Parent Input, Stimulating Learning, Behaviour Management, Reporting, Learning Focus, Transitions, Extra Curricula, Homework, General Satisfaction, Student Safety, Classroom Behaviour, Connectedness to Peers, Student Motivation, Social Skills and School Connectedness. It has certainly been another fantastic year at Tate St and undoubtedly, the music program including Just Brass, has made a huge impact on these results.

Whichever way you look at it, this is all exciting data which plainly indicates how we are improving our outcomes for students in our school. The issue though is how to continue to do this with our severely limited budget and I hope that you see fit to assist the Salvation Army’s ‘Just Brass’ program in any way possible.

Yours sincerely,

***Terry Scott***

Terry Scott

Principal

Tate Street PS