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The New Standards for Taiwanese School Music Curriculum and Its Implementation After COVID-19

Wen-Fu Li

Assistant Professor, National Taichung University of Education, Taiwan

Abstract

Respond to the individual and social need for the next digital generation, in 2019, the Ministry of Education, Taiwan has implemented the new music curriculum standards which are a portion of the arts curriculum in the 12-Year Basic Education Curriculum (12YBEC) for Taiwanese free education first to 12th grade.

A number of innovative adjustments have been made in the 2019 edition in order to align with the 12YBEC's core perspectives: taking initiative, engaging in interaction, and seeking the common good. The new arts curriculum reveals three highlights: (1) emphasize on enabling students to realize design thinking and employing digital technology to empower their creativity in arts expression; (2) focus on arts integration and interdisciplinary learning; and (3) entitle individual school and teachers to possess more freedom to design the teaching content and select instructional practices to create an equitable and diverse learning environment for students with different musical potential and cultural backgrounds.

The COVID-19 pandemic occurred in March 2020 has significantly impacted human daily life including entire education system all around the world. During campus lockdown with all face-to-face teaching suspended, most countries utilize online platforms as alternative ways to provide education. The pandemic is a big and rush change that push school education into a total digital age while the large majority of teachers and students from K-12 had no proper training related to remote or online learning. The sudden changes have raised concerns about whether (1) teachers possess the capacity of managing a high-quality teaching and assessments using online platforms; (2) schools and students' home are equipped with proper digital devices that are necessary for digital solutions; (3) parents also possess the capacity to support their children's remote or online learning at home; (4) distance learning can still meet students' needs of social and emotional learning. Additionally, in the aspect of music learning, whether (5) online learning can still fulfill the practice of music making which is considered as one of the core objectives for school music curriculum.

This article aims to explore the 12YBEC's origins, its development background, and compares its philosophy with other developed countries' contemporary policies for music education. The gap between the new music curriculum standards and school educational practices was investigated. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, finding the alternative ways for music teaching and learning when a school lockdown is enforced for a long period time was also discussed.