

Te toi whakairo, ka ihiihi, ka wehiwehi, ka aweawe te ao katoa

Artistic excellence makes the world sit up in wonder.

Kia ora koutou katoa,

Our Arts curriculum whakataukī resonates strongly as we continue to navigate a significant period of change and opportunity within arts education in Aotearoa New Zealand. It reminds us that the arts are not simply about technical achievement, but about expression, identity, creativity, connection, and meaning-making. Music allows us to communicate beyond words, to make sense of the world around us, and to connect deeply with others and ourselves.

Over recent months, many of our members have contributed significant time, expertise, and thoughtful feedback into the Phase 1-4 curriculum consultation process, and I want to sincerely thank everyone involved. The feedback highlighted several important themes, including the need to keep creativity, joy, exploration, and cultural authenticity central to music education. Members spoke strongly about ensuring mātauranga Māori and te ao Māori are authentically woven throughout the curriculum, about maintaining the integrity and identity of music as a discipline, and about ensuring that curriculum expectations reflect the realities of diverse learners and school contexts across Aotearoa.

As we now look ahead to Phase 5, including work around Music and the proposed new subject of Music Technology, we strongly encourage educators from all sectors to continue engaging with the process. Every submission is read, every voice matters, and every piece of feedback contributes to shaping a curriculum that best reflects the aspirations and strengths of our learners and kaiako in Aotearoa New Zealand.



We welcome to our board, two co-opted members, Dr Opeloge Ah Sam and Elisha Fai-So'oiālo, to give our Pasifika kaiako and ākonga voice and perspectives within MENZA. We are excited to have these two amazing educators and musicians join us.

The spirit of collaboration and creativity was reflected beautifully at the recent Toi Ihiihi wānanga in Wellington, a cross-arts collaboration between Music and Visual Arts that opened exciting conversations about future interdisciplinary wānanga and shared learning opportunities across the arts.

Looking further ahead, we are excited to begin early planning for an across-arts combined conference in Auckland in April 2027. We look forward to sharing more information once initial planning hui are underway, and we are excited by the possibilities this collaboration across arts disciplines presents.

It is also an incredibly busy and vibrant time across the wider music community. We acknowledge the mahi happening through festivals and events around the motu, including Play It Strange - continuing to celebrate original songwriting by our young musicians, Smokefree Rockquest - championing original contemporary music, the Big Sing - providing our young choral singers with opportunities to perform at high levels, and the many jazz festivals, choir, ukulele and marimba festivals, and regional events that provide rich performance and creative opportunities for ākonga.

We are also looking forward to further PLD opportunities for choir educators through initiatives such as MEFA, and value the ongoing conversations and invitations to hui with the music industry, including the New Zealand Music Commission. Strengthening relationships across education, industry, community arts, and cultural organisations remains incredibly important as we continue advocating for music education in Aotearoa.

Finally, we remain deeply grateful for the support of the many individuals, organisations, trusts, and businesses who continue to champion music education and allow it to grow and flourish. Your support helps create opportunities for our young people to create, perform, connect, and discover who they are through music.

Ngā manaakitanga
Kat Daniela
MENZA Board Chair