



# Urban Music Education: A Practical Guide for Teachers

By Kate Fitzpatrick-Harnish

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The prevailing discourse surrounding urban music education suggests the deficit-laden notion that urban school settings are "less than," rather than "different than," their counterparts. Through the lens of contextually-specific teaching, this book provides a counternarrative on urban music education that encourages urban music teachers to focus on the strengths of their students as their primary resource.

Through a combination of research-based strategies and practical suggestions from the author's own experience teaching music in urban settings, the book highlights important issues for teachers to consider, such as culturally relevant pedagogy, the "opportunity gap," race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, musical content, curricular change, music program development, student motivation, and strategies for finding inspiration and support.

Throughout the book, the stories of five highly successful urban music teachers are highlighted, providing practical, real-world advice for music teachers across the domains of general, choral, band, and string music teaching. Recognizing that the term "urban" can encompass a wide variety of different school and community settings, this book challenges all teachers who work in under-served and under-resourced settings to take a critical look at their own music classroom and work to tailor their pedagogy to meet the particular needs of their students.

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#### Review

"...lucid, well-informed, generous, and grounded firmly in experience. The satisfactions and challenges of teaching music in urban settings are represented genuinely through her voice, and illustrated further through the voices of five music teachers whose experiences yield rich insights. Individuals who teach in urban settings, music teacher educators, and all those interested in social justice will find openings and possibilities for enriching students' lives and school communities through music in these pages."-Janet R. Barrett, Marilyn Pfleiderer Zimmerman Scholar and Professor of Music Education, University of Illinois

"Fitzpatrick-Harnish masterfully weaves personal narratives of urban music educators, with relevant research, and insightful ideas for teachers. In so doing, she offers a much-needed counter-narrative of students and teaching in urban schools that provokes, guides, and inspires."-Carlos R. Abril, Associate Professor of Music Education, University of Miami

"...[A] real and helpful guidance for teaching music in urban schools. Her insights are so valuable because they reflect a genuine respect for students and their families. Her experience teaching urban kids is evident in her commitment to bringing out their best. As a teacher, researcher, and teacher educator with a career-long focus on urban education, Kate's perspective on this vital topic comes out in well-written vignettes and crisp prose. It's an instructive, enjoyable read."-Tim Gerber, Professor of Music, The Ohio State University

"Fitzpatrick-Harnish has written a profoundly practical guide for urban music teachers...This inspiring, practical volume is a must for those who teach music education. Highly recommended."--*Choice*

#### About the Author

**Kate Fitzpatrick-Harnish**, Ph.D., is Associate Professor of Music Education at the University of Michigan. She has published and presented nationally and internationally on the topic of urban music education. An avid supporter of public school music programs, Fitzpatrick-Harnish is the former director of instrumental music at Northland High School in Columbus, Ohio, where she directed the district's largest band and orchestra program. Fitzpatrick-Harnish was the recipient of the 2003 God and Country Award, presented by the Salvation Army and the Brass Band of Columbus for her "outstanding, sensitive leadership of young people."

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