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## Rebecca Arndt: Why is MAEIA so important?

[Rebecca Arndt](#) [art](#), [arts assessment](#), [arts education](#), [assessments](#), [field-tested](#), [Leadership Fellows](#), [music education](#), [professional development](#)

I have been asked what is the MAEIA project and why so important? The simple answer is I want to give my students the best of me and the best opportunities to experience music and to develop an appreciation for all genres of music.

When I joined a MAEIA pilot program, I didn't know what I was really getting myself into. I just knew that I was going to be presenting assessments to my students and sending them out to get graded.

Doing these assessments was different, challenging and definitely rewarding to me as an educator. It was a great way for me to see exactly where my students were struggling and excelling. I am sure many of us have those students who you think are really getting it but when presented with an assessment that isn't a whole group activity they don't seem to grasp the concepts that have been presented.

These assessments give you a step by step way to test your students.

These assessments aren't changing what you are teaching but maybe how you instruct and gather informative and formative assessments.

After doing the first assessment I knew that I needed to change what I thought about my teaching and how my students learned.

I needed to do some pre teaching of different techniques. For example with melodic contour, I used to primarily use body movement or look at sheet music. Drawing the melody line was a foreign to me as Urdu. I knew that I needed to add this element to my teaching so that the students could perform this task without being unsure of the task.

Doing this type of activity was fun for them and for me as their teacher. They didn't even realize they were being assessed. They thought it was "art".

These assessment tools were a great way for me to teach concepts in a different manner than the Quaver curriculum that our district uses. Using the MAEIA assessments have helped me become a stronger teacher and in turn has helped my students' love of music continue to grow.

\*\*\*Rebecca D. Arndt is a K-5 general music teacher for the Taylor School District, she also teaches a 4/5 grade combined choir. Prior to teaching in Taylor she also taught in Waterford Schools for 13 years. While in Waterford she taught k-5 general music and choir. She is a MAEIA Leadership Fellow.