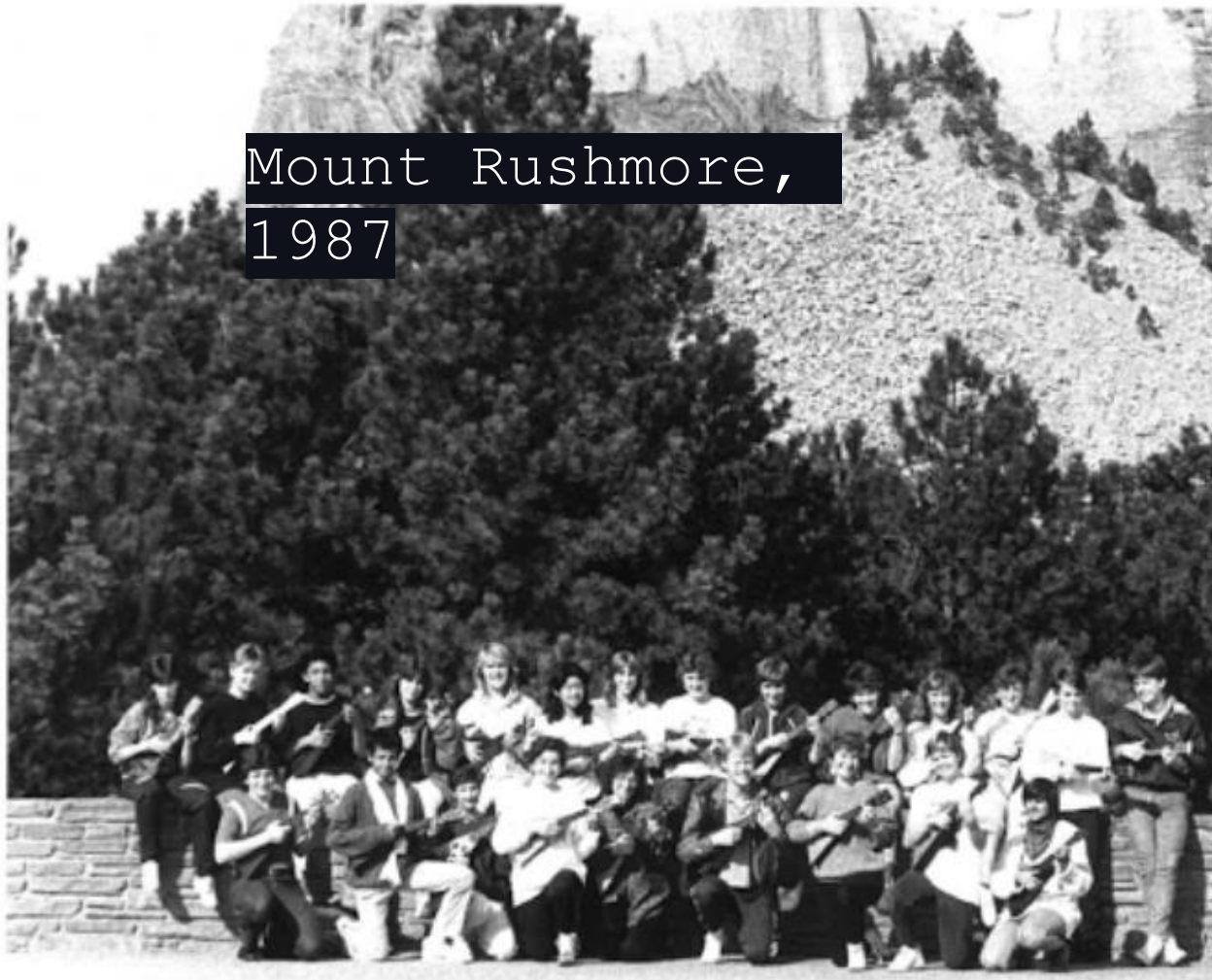


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Island Ukuleles has been operating as a very unique and wonderful SD61 program for 43 years.

Mount Rushmore,
1987





Each year, Island Ukuleles brings together more than 130 kindergarten through grade 12 students from 53 schools in Greater Victoria.

Each year, all of the professional teaching staff, youth teachers, parents and board members volunteer thousands of hours to this remarkable SD61 program, with the exception of our sole paid teacher who receives a 0.125 of teacher funding.

(This single block of teaching time enables all high school ukulele students to receive a high school music credit.)

Cutting Island Ukuleles
will save SD61 \$16,000.

And will cause SD61 to lose more than \$300,000 worth of volunteer time each year.

Island Ukuleles delivers more bang for the buck for students from 53 Greater Victoria schools than any other program.



The importance of Island Ukuleles for the mental and emotional health and well-being of SD61 students has come to light during COVID-19.

This year has been particularly hard on the mental health of many students. Attendance to school has dropped, as people attempt to protect themselves. Yet students continued to participate in Island Ukuleles in both face-to-face and online programs. Students, parents and teachers say Island Ukuleles has been essential to their emotional and mental health and well-being.

SD61 contributes approximately \$1000 every two years to support a district-wide music concert “Ukes Unlimited.” This small amount of money enables Island Ukuleles to mobilize hundreds of volunteer hours to produce concerts that have involved thousands of students.

Ukes Unlimited 1980's



Island Ukuleles uses a peer-teaching model. Older students teach younger students, and mixed-aged groups perform together. This facilitates students learning from one another and encourages them to strive together. This proven, successful approach to leadership and learning facilitates:

1. Identity formation in and through music.
2. Emotional benefits
3. Character-building and life skills
4. Social benefits
5. Positive impacts on students, families and teachers.

(Campbell, Connell and Beegle, 2007)

Hawaiian Concert Tour 2014



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

“Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support all learners’ physical and mental well-being.”

(SD61's 3rd stated goal of June 2020 Strategic Plan)

Island Ukuleles, and music programs more generally, are the best way to achieve this goal. Music crosses cultural borders, language barriers and ability competencies. Cutting Island Ukuleles will impact vulnerable students, robbing them of opportunities to express themselves, make new connections, feel accepted and learn in new and exciting ways. Cutting this low cost, high impact program will end up costing SD61 more in psychological services and learning assistance.

Students love making music with Island Ukuleles

There is abundant research to back up the benefits of learning music at a young age; regardless of socioeconomic background, students involved in music have significantly higher standardized test scores than students not involved in music. Learning musical skills can aid language development, literacy, numeracy, measures of intelligence, general attainment, creativity, fine motor coordination, concentration, self-confidence, emotional sensitivity, social skills, teamwork, self-discipline, and relaxation

(Catterall, Chapleau, and Iwanaga, 1999; Hallam, 2010; Johnson and Memmott, 2006;)

2019 Cultural Exchange to Nova Scotia
through “Experiences Canada”



Cutting Island Ukuleles funding would have a wider community impact.

Community service is an important part of Island Ukuleles. Students regularly perform at elementary schools and seniors events. They continued to perform socially distanced concerts during COVID-19, playing outside the windows of long term care and assisted living facilities for residents during lockdown.

Cuba
Concert Tour
2000



Island Ukuleles regularly fundraises to support national and international performance tours. These bring positive recognition - and international students - to Victoria, BC and Canada.

Washington, DC
National Music
Educator's
Conference 1990



Do not cut the budget for Island Ukuleles

Cutting a vibrant 43 year old program that delivers all of these benefits - and more - across 53 schools to save \$16,000 does not make educational or fiscal sense.



SAVE THE MUSIC