

Project summary*

Please summarize your project in one or two sentences.

The ZCS elementary music team requests to participate in the American Orff-Schulwerk Association (AOSA) conference held November 19-22, 2025 in Lexington, Kentucky to enhance elementary music education for all ZCS students in kindergarten through fourth grade. By engaging with leading music educators, we will acquire new techniques and processes to improve our instruction and maximize the use of our high-quality instruments and resources.

Project description*

Please provide a description of your professional development opportunity. What is the purpose of the opportunity and why do you want to pursue this experience?

The American Orff Schulwerk Association (AOSA) provides an annual professional development conference for music educators across the country that emphasizes subject matter in the elementary/general music classroom. Attending the national AOSA conference is highly valuable for the ZCS team of elementary music educators for several reasons including deepening pedagogical knowledge, hands on learning, exposure to new resources, and advancing team cohesion.

The Orff Schulwerk approach emphasizes creativity, movement, and student engagement. By attending this conference, music educators inevitably gain insights into best (or differentiated) practices, new teaching strategies, and innovative ways to implement the approach in their classrooms from teachers not only in our amazing Indiana bubble, but from teachers across the nation. A wonderful (and beneficial!) characteristic of elementary music is that it integrates hands-on learning in everyday instruction. No matter what musical concepts and skills we try to strengthen with our students, we are incorporating developmental life skills such as building a community space, developing reading fluency, and expressing social-emotional learning through creative outlets. Some of the ways in which we help to develop these skills are by reading stories with embedded body percussion, practicing coordination while playing instruments, teaching self-regulating through rhythm, and inhabiting a space where teamwork from all students is most crucial. Having our “normal” role reversed where educators get to be students fully immersed in daily clinics/workshops will allow us to be in the lens of our students and gain new insights to how we can improve our own instruction.

The 2025 AOSA Professional Development Conference marks the first opportunity for all six current ZCS elementary music teachers to attend a national conference together. By taking dedicated time to explore new ideas side-by-side, we can then reflect upon our shared experience, comparing notes and encouraging one another as a team. After gaining new experiences and furthering our own collaboration in such a focused and creative environment, we will then return more prepared

than ever to bring the highest possible quality of music education to every elementary student in Zionsville Community Schools.

Project Impact*

How will your project impact your students, classroom, colleagues, and/or school? What do you hope to bring back from the experience and what will it enable in your classroom, school, or district? Are there specific activities that you will implement for your students or colleagues upon your return?

The AOSA conference will encourage and support our music programs which reach every kindergartener through fourth grader in the district: a grand total of 2,917 children. We will have the opportunity to learn from and network with some of the best elementary music educators in the country and we will return reinvigorated with new ideas to implement right away. Thanks to ZEF's previous investments at each of our schools, we are blessed with a wide range of instruments and resources. Even with the best instruments and resources, professional growth is key. We want to continually learn new techniques and processes to make music more impactful for our students.

Project Link

For grant applications involving a conference or training, please provide a link to the conference/training website (if available.)

<https://member.aosa.org/member/conference/aosa-annual-conference>

Indiana Academic Standards*

What Indiana Academic Standards will this professional development opportunity help you teach?

1. State Standards

Indiana Academic General Music Standard #8- "Performing a varied repertoire of music by playing instruments, alone and with others, from rote memory and written notation."

Indiana Academic General Music Standard #9- "Creating a varied repertoire of music by improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments."

Indiana Academic General Music Standard #10- "Creating a varied repertoire of music by composing and arranging music with both traditional and non-traditional notation."

Secondary standards addressed at the AOSA Professional Development Conference:

Indiana Academic General Music Standard #5- Listening and responding to a varied repertoire of music by describing, interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating music in its elemental components."

Indiana Academic General Music Standard #6- "Listening and responding to a varied repertoire of music by interpreting and expressing music through movement."

Indiana Academic General Music Standard #7- "Performing a varied repertoire of music by singing, alone and with others, from rote memory and written notation."

What did we miss?

Is there any additional information about your professional development opportunity that would be helpful for the committee to know?

BUDGET

Total cost of project (dollar amount)*

- **Registration: \$1,860 (\$310/person)**
- **AOSA Membership: \$1,050 (\$175/person)**
- **Hotel: \$2,250 (3 rooms)**
- **Food: \$2,040 (\$340/person)**
- **Materials: \$1,546**
- **Mileage: \$294**

Total: \$9,040

Are there any other funding sources for your project?*

If yes, please list the source and the amount.

