

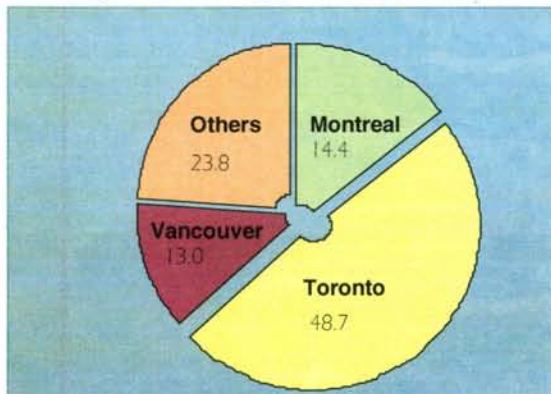
# Intercultural Dialogue through Music Education: The Case of A Bridge to Toronto's Communities

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Within the last 40 years, Toronto has seen its ethno-racial diversity grow from 3% of its population in 1961, to more than 50% in 2004. This trend has led to a significant change in the social landscape of the city, with increasing numbers of residents originating from Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Caribbean.

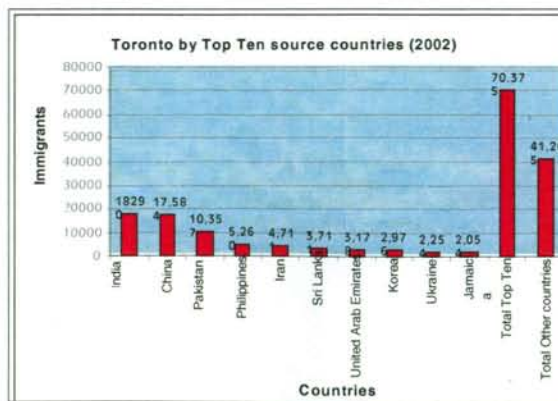
What does it mean to be a “Conservatory” in a country undergoing rapid ethnocultural change? If a conservatory is involved in the creation and conservation of values, how should it reflect the values and traditions of the country's new constituents?

**Graph No. 1**  
Settlement Pattern of Recent Immigrants in 3 largest CMAs: 2001



Source: Citizen and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures 2002: Immigration Overview.

**Graph No. 2**



Source: Citizen and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures 2002: Immigration Overview.

**Graph No. 3**



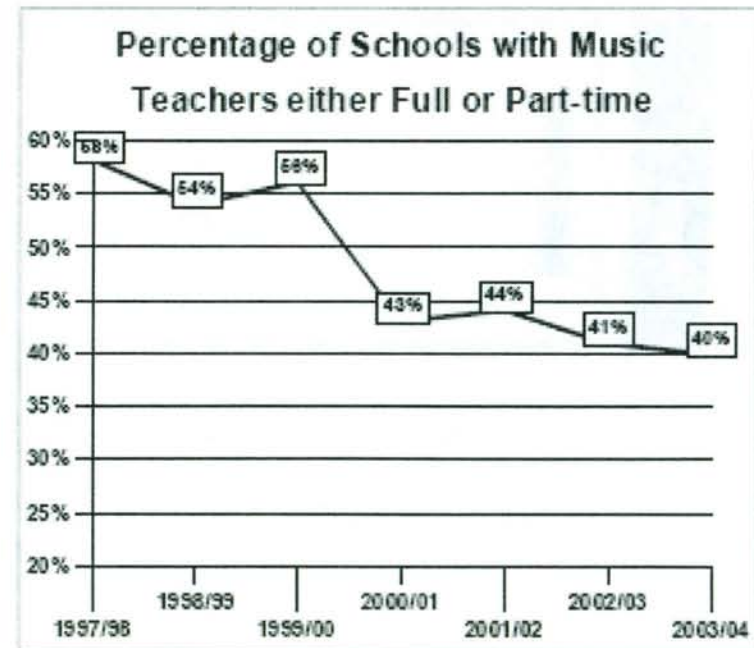
Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 91-541-XIE, 2005.

## The need for music education in Toronto's poorest neighbourhoods

- While in 1981 37.4% of the poorest families living in highly impoverished neighbourhoods were members of visible minorities, in 2001 this percentage had escalated to 77.5%(Galabuzi, 2001)
- In Canada, music education is at large privately provided, with an aprox. cost of \$1600 US a year before the instrument.
- As displayed in *Graph No. 3*, only 40% of Ontario's elementary schools employ music teachers, down from 58% in 1997/98. Music programs are concentrated in the most affluent areas.
- Social infrastructure in the poorest neighbourhoods has precipitously eroded, meaning that arts education and cultural programming are also reduced at the neighbourhood level.
- Due to cuts in government spending, community centres and social agencies do not always provide high quality programming, neither can they guarantee continuity for their programs.

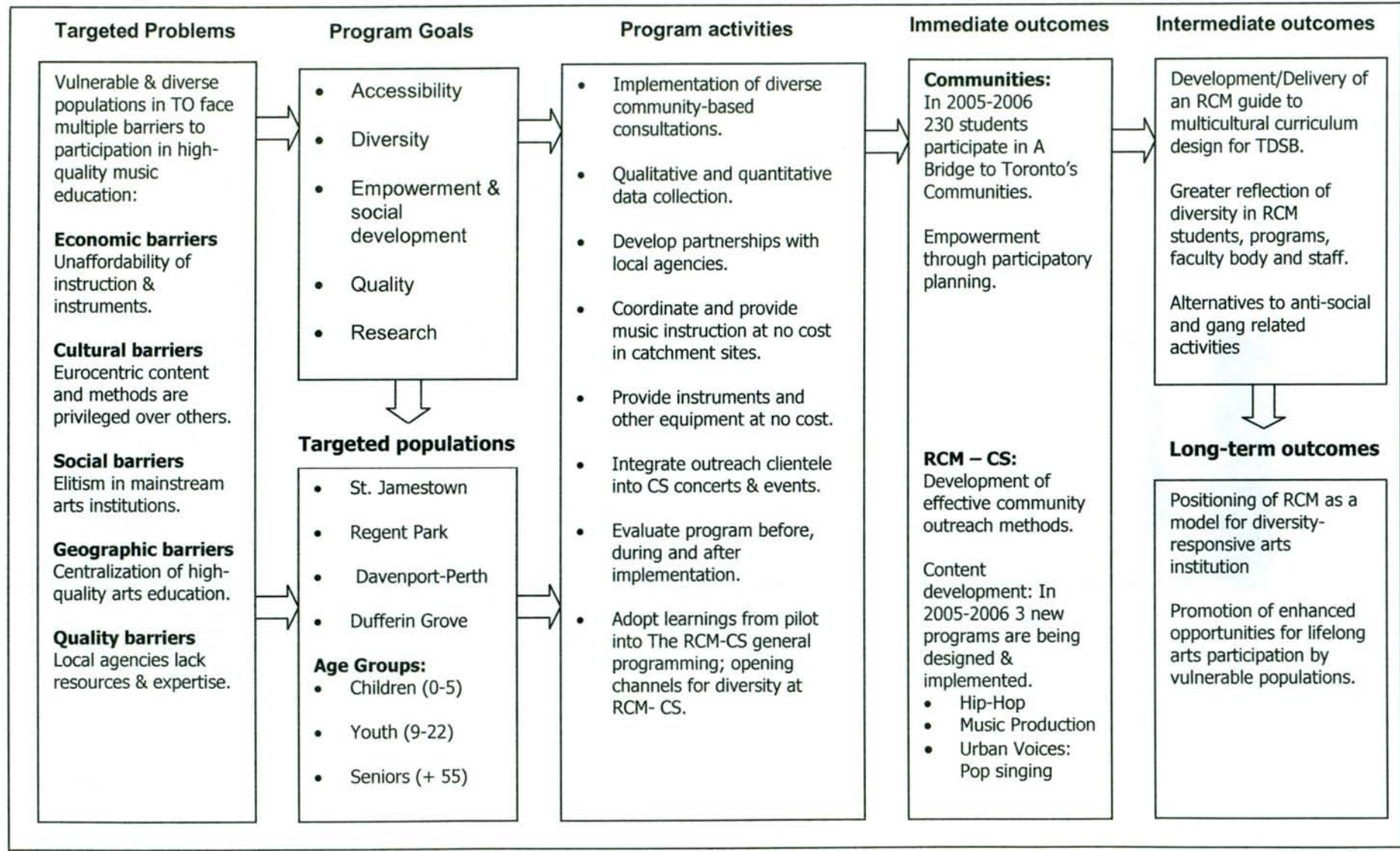
**Graph No. 3**

**Music teachers in Ontario (1997-2004)**



Source: 2004 Elementary Tracking Report. People for Education, Ontario.

# A Bridge to Toronto's Communities – Summary of the Planning Model



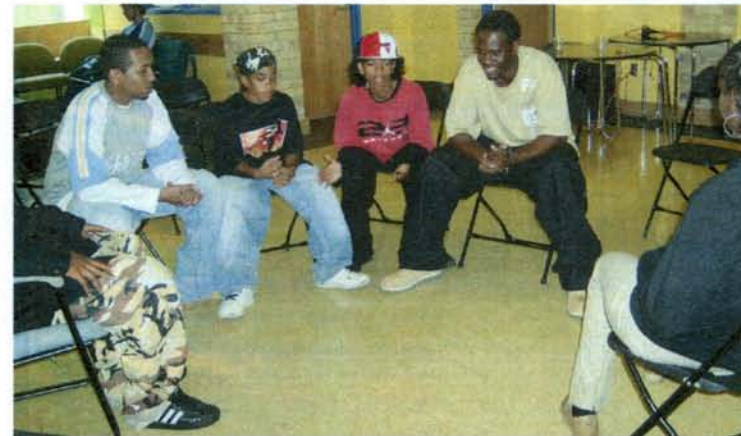
The program *A Bridge to Toronto's Communities* is intended to reduce the existent material barriers that prevent marginalized low-income communities of Toronto from participating in music making. Also, it aims at generating intercultural and cross-genre dialogue in music. Within The RCM Community School itself, it aims at fostering inclusive organizational practices.

## Braking barriers; building bridges

- Individual interviews with stakeholders (including community leaders, parents, music teachers, artists, policy makers)
- Group consultations
- Focus groups
- Parents' Surveys



Consultation session with Youth at Davenport-Perth, October 2005



Consultation session with Youth at Davenport-Perth, October 2005

## Results in 2005-2006

### **22 outreach programs in catchment neighbourhoods:**

13 for youth, 7 for children and 2 for seniors, including:

- Early Childhood Music Education
- Singing for Seniors
- African Drumming
- Steel Pan Band
- DJ Fundamentals
- Hip-Hop workshop
- Pop Singing for teens
- Music Production

### **Intercultural dialogue generated within The RCM:**

- Presence of new staff and faculty with culturally diverse backgrounds
- Creating an Urban Music Department, that would group together the teachers specialized in Hip-Hop, DJ Fundamentals and Pop.
- Investigating potential for Early Childhood Music Education immersion in languages different from English.
- Conducting consultations in preparation for delivering programs in Chinese Traditional Instruments.

## Quotes from our students & partners

"I feel that there are not many activities for young people like me in this neighbourhood. Sometimes I get bored. When I heard about the DJ program, I thought Wow! That's something really cool!"

15 year old youth, St Jamestown  
2005

"The thing I liked the most about the class, is that Penelope [the teacher] teaches us songs in different languages, so we get to sing in our own language, but also, learn some songs in the language of other people in the group."

Senior student at the *Seniors' Singing from Scratch*, at Davenport-Perth, 2005 (Translated from Spanish)

"With this program my child is learning to play with real instruments! He is also making new friends (...) He loves it because it's a new experience, and we never miss a class. (...) My husband works long hours and we (my child and me) stay at home most of the time, so I think that's why my child enjoys this program so much. Since we started coming, I've also seen positive changes in his development (...)"

Mother of a 4-year-old boy, St. Jamestown  
(Translated from Tamil)

"The collaboration between the RCM and Growing Together (Hincks-Dellcrest Children's Center) has enriched the children and families we serve by providing music programs to which they would otherwise not have access. This involvement exemplifies the RCM's commitment to being a true community partner".

Deirdre McKibbon, Children's Program  
Coordinator Growing Together,  
Hincks-Dellcrest Children's Center