



Essentially Ellington Celebrates 15 Years

Since the first year of *Essentially Ellington* (1995-96):

- 3,000+ schools have participated in the *Essentially Ellington* (EE) program from all 50 states, Canada and American schools abroad.
- 86 titles *EE* have been produced and published, with most still commercially available today.
- 90,000+ scores of music have been sent to *EE* member schools.
- 300,000+ students have played the music of *Essentially Ellington*.
- 200+ schools have participated in 17 *EE* Regional Festivals since 2005.
- 207 bands have participated in the *EE* Competition & Festival as Finalists in New York City.

EE Celebrates 15 Surveys

In celebration of the 15th Anniversary of *EE*, JALC launched a web-based survey to collect information and stories from various *Essentially Ellington* communities – Alumni, Band Directors, Parents, and General Fans. Below are some of the highlights we’ve learned from their responses:

- # of Surveys Received: **631** – representing all 15 years of *EE*.
(Alumni – 317, Band Directors – 124, Parents – 109, Fans – 83)

Top 15 words / phrases to describe *EE* (each respondent was asked to give five words – see word picture at the end of this packet):

Inspirational - 101
Exciting - 62
Fun - 61
Educational - 39
Amazing - 38
Life-Changing - 37
Challenging - 25
Experience - 22

Awesome - 19
Swingin' - 19
Eye-Opening - 18
Incredible - 18
Motivating - 16
Enlightening - 14
Unforgettable - 12

Top 15 *EE* Charts (each alumni was asked to pick their favorite):

Happy Go Lucky Local - 27
Rockin' in Rhythm - 17
Black and Tan Fantasy - 13
Roll 'Em - 10
Walkin' and Swingin' - 10
Perdido - 9
Blue Ramble - 7
Jumpin' Punkins - 7

Cottontail - 6
Flaming Sword - 6
Pyramid - 6
Such Sweet Thunder - 6
Symphony in Riffs - 6
Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue - 5
I Let a Song Go Out of My Heart - 5

Alumni Takeaways:



Participating in Essentially Ellington:

1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly Disagree

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Gave me a deeper understanding of big band music						233	1.2
Gave me a deeper understanding of the core concepts of jazz						233	1.4
Improved my overall musicianship						233	1.2
Made me more interested in jazz						233	1.3
Inspired me to play jazz beyond high school						233	1.8
Inspired me to listen to jazz beyond high school						233	1.4
Inspired a life-long appreciation of jazz						233	1.3

*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.



If you did not major or minor in music, did you play jazz music in college? Please select all that apply.

Answer	0%	100%	Number of Response(s)	Response Ratio
Yes - University Run Ensemble			51	35.6 %
Yes - Student Run Ensemble			15	10.4 %
Yes - Non-Academic Ensemble			16	11.1 %
I did not play music in college.			15	10.4 %
I majored or minored in music.			70	48.9 %
Other			13	9.0 %
Totals			143	100%

What impact has *Essentially Ellington* had on your life, personally and/or professionally?

Alumni - Prominent Themes: 192 alumni answered this question. Of those answers, the following themes came through:

EE taught me to appreciate jazz and the music of Ellington. (55%)

EE was a terrific experience. (48%)

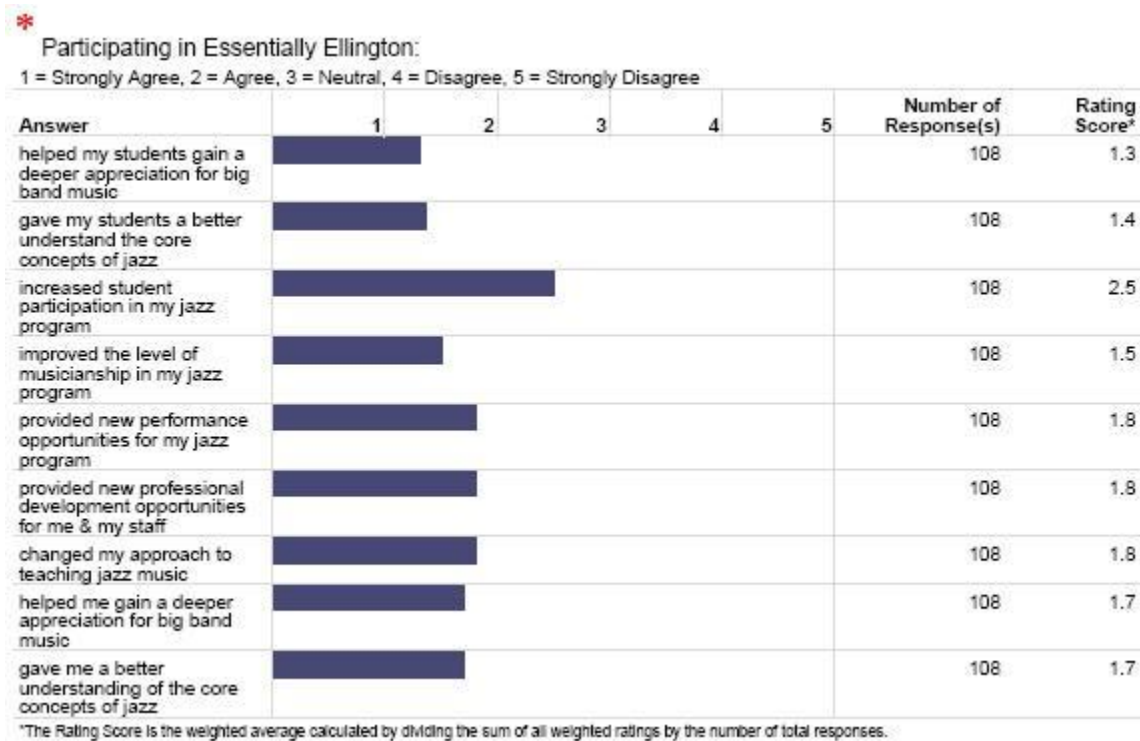
EE helped me grow as a musician. (47%)

EE taught me about hard work, dedication and commitment. (25%)

EE fostered a life-long interest in jazz. (23%)

EE taught me life skills. (17%)

Band Director Takeaways:



What impact has *Essentially Ellington* had on your life, personally and/or professionally?

Band Directors - Prominent Themes: 111 band directors answered this question. Of those answers, the following themes emerged:

- EE* has made me a better teacher. (49%)
- EE* provides a great resource in the charts and online materials. (46%)
- EE* taught me and my students more about jazz appreciation and Duke Ellington. (45%)
- Our school's jazz program has grown through our involvement with *EE*. (30%)
- EE* was a great experience for my students. (24%)
- EE* has made Ellington's music more accessible for our band. (12%)

Selected Survey Quotes:

Alumni:

EE has had a positive impact on both my personal and professional life. I often look back on my memories of EE, and the life lessons that experience taught me: dedication, striving for excellence, collaboration, and a spirit of fun. These are all lessons that apply in the workplace, at home, and in the community.

-W. Joe DeMiero - Mountlake Terrace High School, Mountlake Terrace, WA
(Joe now works for a web marketing business and runs a jazz festival on the side)

Essentially Ellington profoundly changed my life. Being involved in music and jazz became a focal point in my life that has not gone away. I now teach two high school jazz bands and I enjoy jazz music more than ever. The Ellington music taught me to notice and appreciate subtlety and beauty in all aspects of music.

-Matthew Ceresini - Upper Darby High School, Upper Darby, PA
(Matthew is now a band director at Central Dauphin HS in Harrisburg, PA, and his band attended the EE Regional at Temple University this year. Matthew won a scholarship to our Band Director Academy by being an outstanding director!)

My high school jazz experience, of which Essentially Ellington was a fundamental part, provided me with a thorough appreciation of discipline, focus, teamwork, humility and swing. The ability to relish work that is simultaneously complex, demanding, and fascinating was the most fundamental skill necessary to succeed in law school, and I learned that skill from my high school jazz program.

-Kevin Powers - Foxboro High School, Foxboro, MA (Kevin is now an attorney)

Band Directors:

EE has been the single finest program I have ever been associated with. The impact it has had on our jazz program has been immeasurable. The concepts learned playing Duke's music can be applied to all jazz styles, and studying the Ellington repertoire gives my students a much more sophisticated perspective on all music.

-Josh Murray - Rio Americano High School, Sacramento, CA (Finalist 2007 and 2010)

EE has helped make me a better person, a better musician and a better teacher. It not only changed me in profound ways, but it also changed my students, all of the schools I have worked for and even my own family. In the ten years I have been involved with EE, I have worked with well over one hundred students. Whether they have gone on to study music or another discipline at college, their lives were changed forever because of working so diligently on the music of Ellington and preparing for the EE festival.

-Howard Potter - 315 All-Stars - Manlius Pebble Hill School, Syracuse, NY
(Howard is now Associate Dean at Eastman and Director at the Eastman Community Music School)

Parent:

Both of my sons have been fortunate enough to attend EE with the Foxboro High School jazz band and both have learned so much about hard work, determination and respect. Respect for themselves, and of course for the hard work that all the other bands and band directors put into their craft. They've not only become better musicians but better young men due to the wonderful role models they've encountered through participation in the Essentially Ellington Festivals.

Mr. Marsalis and his entire "crew" are a classy group and they truly care about these kids and strive to make a difference in their young lives. And they really have!! As parents we couldn't ask for more from our devoted band director to the support our community gives to music and arts. We are indeed a very fortunate family to have been involved the Essentially Ellington community! Thank you!

-Kim Vacheron, parent from Foxboro High School, Foxboro, MA