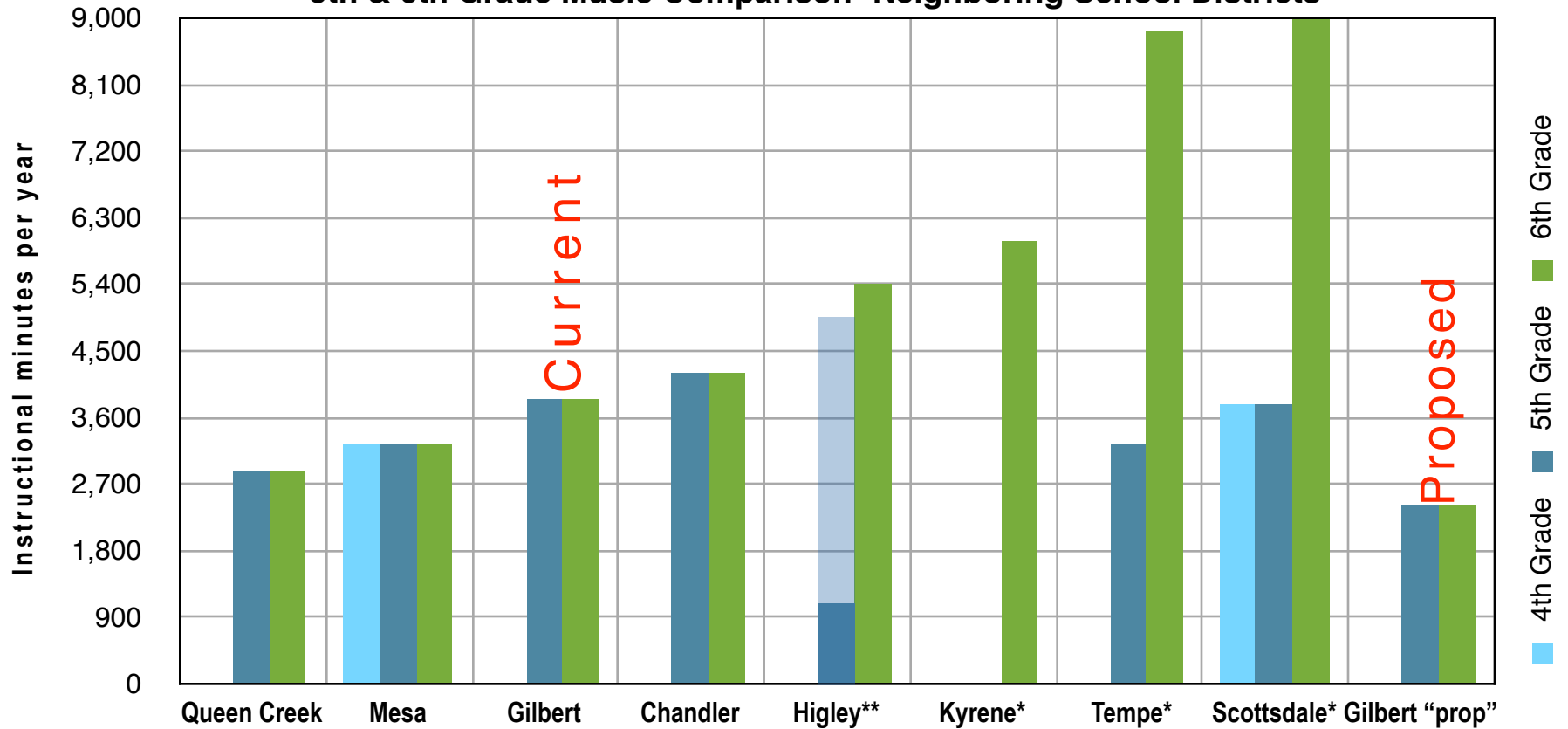


5th & 6th Grade Music Comparison- Neighboring School Districts



School District	Start Grade	Class Type	Specials on 1/2 days?	Frequency	x Class Length =	Instructional minutes/year
Queen Creek	5th	full	yes	2/5 school days	30 minutes	2880: 5th and 6th
Mesa	4th Orch, 5th Band	classroom pull-out	yes	3/5 school days	30 minutes	3240: 5th and 6th
Gilbert (Current)	5th	homogenous & full	no	4/6 school days	35 minutes	3850: 5th and 6th
Chandler	5th	homogenous & full	yes	4/6 school days	35 minutes	4200: 5th and 6th
Higley	6th	homogenous & full	yes	3/5 school days	50 minutes	1080-4860: 5th** 5976: 6th
Kyrene	6th	full	yes	5/10 days	68 minutes	1080: 5th 5976: 6th
Scottsdale	4th (Band & Orch)	homogenous & full	yes	3/5 days 5th grade 5/5 days 6th Grade	35 minutes 50 minutes	3780: 5th 9000: 6th
Tempe	5th	full	yes	3/5 days 5th grade 5/5 days 6th grade	30 minutes 49 minutes	3240: 5th 8820: 6th
Gilbert (Proposed)	5th	by classroom	no	2/5 days (Wed, Fri)	40 minutes	2400: 5th and 6th

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How was the information collected? As a concerned parent, I started making calls (choosing an elementary school in each school district at random) and asking questions. I wanted to know where we currently stand and where this new program will position us.

***6th grade middle school:** in school districts where 6th grade is a part of the middle school, band and orchestra are typically delayed until the change in school. General music opportunities continue through the 5th grade.

****Higley School District:** is an exception. They offer before/after school band for students in the 5th grade, but it is not an official district sponsored activity. Teachers are not paid for it, but are sometimes able to receive 301 credit for their time and service. The school I contacted in Higley holds band 3 times per week for 45 minutes.

Before/After School Programs: Are they a viable option? No, for several reasons. First, participation numbers would go way, WAY down. Will our Highland High School Orchestra be playing at Carnegie Hall in 5 years with only 25 students? No. Second, before school programs work in small school districts or as exceptions to the rule. In our district, each band/orchestra teacher teaches at 3 (sometimes 4) schools per day. He cannot be in multiple places at one time. Finally, to consider moving to a plan wherein we expect teachers to volunteer more of their time as part of a job requirement is just wrong. We *will* lose our great teachers to competing school districts.

General Music: In districts where General Music is offered concurrently with instrumental music, that time was calculated into the chart as well. It is, after all, music instruction time. Mesa is one example of this: all students attend General Music one time per week. Band/Orchestra students attend instrumental music class two times per week. What we are seeking to show in this chart are opportunities for music instruction. As in Gilbert, some students will choose to embrace the opportunity to have more, others will not.

Class Type: This is a very important consideration. Students learn best in homogenous groups (like instruments together) but the opportunity to participate as a full band/orchestra together is very important as well. For example, each instrument has unique technical demands which requires specialized instruction. All like-instruments should attend together so they can receive instrument specific instruction. In addition, students cannot be peer models and collaborate effectively when playing different instruments. Pull-out programs and “by classroom” groupings are the least effective way to learn.

Frequency: Frequency in music (like exercise) is key. Music teachers are teaching skills *while* training the muscles necessary to play an instrument.

Class Length: The large variation of class lengths is primarily due to the elementary school vs. middle school scenario for 6th graders. It is important to note, however, that the difference in the opportunity for learning is significant.