

Guidelines for adapting the SECE Curriculum within the ESA region

Suzuki Early Childhood Education

Suzuki Early Childhood Education (SECE) is a musical program for babies/toddlers (0-3 years) and their parents, developed by Dorothy and Sharon Jones with support of Dr. Shinichi Suzuki. It is designed as a three-year program.

SECE consists of a weekly group class of one-hour length, where parents/caregivers together with their children from age zero to three experience music and language through diverse activities, such as singing songs, reciting nursery rhymes, dancing to music and more.

The lesson is team-taught, with at least one SECE trained teacher. There is a week A and a week B repertoire.

SECE is the implementation of the SUZUKI™ philosophy and pedagogy within a program designed for children up to three years old. Therefore, three beliefs of Dr. Suzuki can be considered as the foundation of the course:

- Every child can learn
- Ability develops early
- The environment nurtures growth

In the SECE course, parent involvement and the development of the character are as important as the growth of musical language acquisition and social skills.

SECE in Europe

The curriculum of SECE is the structure of the course as defined by the ISA (International Suzuki Association).

Since some of the repertoire contains language, it seems appropriate for the ESA region to find adapted repertoire for each 'language region'. The choice of this repertoire is made by the SECE trained teachers of the respective language region together with the ESA SECE Teacher Trainer and SECE Development Committee.

Adapting the repertoire (the activities) into any language & culture means to respect the teaching environment as well as fulfilling all teaching points and key elements from the original curriculum (see below). Fulfilling the teaching points and key elements seems to be as important as the mother-tongue and the teaching environment to best guarantee the quality and the success of SECE.

The SECE course is, as with all SUZUKI™ learning, based on listening. It is, therefore, crucial to be able to offer good quality and easily accessible listening material for the teacher, parents and families.

Key elements

- There can be only one approved SECE repertoire per language region
- Every SECE teacher is free to use any approved repertoire if this makes sense to her / his teaching environment
- Nonverbal activities must not be changed
- As a common song and link to the topic of lullabies, one should include “Twinkle, twinkle little star” in the respective language (note: this is not part of the class repertoire)
- It is advisable to already check the copy right for later being able to proceed with the recording
- Good quality of songs and rhymes is essential. It is advisable to use the material that has stood the test of time.
- Once a draft of the adapted version for a SECE repertoire is ready, it can be submitted to the SECE dev. Committee (incl. translation, description, and video recording of all activities).
The Committee will evaluate and ask for feedback of all SECE teachers from and in the language region and decide to approve or refine certain parts of the repertoire
- Each language region which has an approved repertoire is in charge of offering good listening material to the SECE community.
- The project of recording the songs is going through the respective NSA – this includes all financial and legal issues and responsibilities (*note: this still means, the NSA can delegate it to a teacher / a group of teachers*)
- The recorded activates should be available on a (free) streaming platform (such as Spotify or similar), where it is freely available for teachers and families.
- The SECE ESA committee approves listening material and recommends them to use for teaching the respective approved SECE repertoires.
- There should be at least 80% of the SECE repertoire of each language covered
- To ensure inclusivity and accommodate diverse cultures and traditions, it is recommended to provide alternatives to songs and rhymes.
- The goal of each recording should be, to be of musically good quality, with simple, yet captivating arrangements. To make the recording musically attractive, one is encouraged to use different instruments, including percussions and does not have to use exclusively female voices.
- The process of recording SECE repertoire to be recommended by the ESA SECE dev. Committee should be in close collaboration with the committee