Chapter 14 – Connections to Higher Education

By Phillip Payne and Jeffrey Ward

Abstract

This chapter contains three fictional vignettes that describe experiences of students who completed the tasks of the Model Cornerstone Assessments (MCA’s) in their music classroom. Each vignette was developed through an extensive review of the results from pre- and post-surveys of the MCA participants, quotes from participants and students, perceptions of the MCAs, and data provided by Research Associates throughout the process. Based on the vignettes, the researchers concluded that there were differences between outcomes as demonstrated through the Model Cornerstone Assessments and admission practices of higher education music programs. With admission practices typically limited to performance task, higher education may not be receiving a full picture of the potential of a prospective student’s music learning proficiencies. If teacher training is focused around the standards and MCAs, and school music teachers thoughtfully design music instruction upon the artistic processes in National Standards and administer the MCAs throughout curricula, training teachers to utilize the MCA’s, assessments beyond performance capacity will become invaluable in the collegiate entrance process. The authors conclude that due to the new standards and MCAs, there is a strong possibility that future music students will look, think, and perform differently than their predecessors, requiring higher education music faculty to examine their admissions standards and curricula to better identify competencies. MCAs might become a component of an ongoing process to measure student growth and development in the music profession.