teaching music
JANUARY 2015 VOLUME 22, NUMBER 3

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*How they work together in the music classroom*

National Association for Music Education

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Photo Credit: Rob Davidson

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January 2015

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**MUSIC EDUCATION • ORCHESTRATING SUCCESS**

Music students learn cooperation, discipline, and teamwork.


**44** NANCY HOROWITZ AND FLUTISTS FROM HER PROGRAM AT SCHOOL 24

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COVER PHOTO: ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES; THIS PAGE: GEORGE GARBECK

January 2015

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LEFT TO RIGHT: SHANNON KELLY, NAFME ADVOCACY DIRECTOR; SCOTT HEDGECOCK, CALIFORNIA MEA PRESIDENT-ELECT; MICHAEL STONE, CMEA PRESIDENT; ASSEMBLYMEMBER JOAN BUCHANAN (D- ALAMO), CHAIR OF THE ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE; AND LYNNE FAULKS, CMEA LOBBYIST.



## DEPARTMENTS



U.S. ARMY ALL-AMERICAN MARCHING BAND



## NEWS



TEACHING STUDENTS HOW TO CONDUCT HAS MULTIPLE BENEFITS.





PHOTOS FROM TOP: COURTESY OF MICHAEL D. STONE; COURTESY OF CHRISTOPHER ANDRADE; ADRIAN MORGAN

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THE CONCERT BAND OF WESTMINSTER ACADEMY OF FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA, AT THE CASTILLO DE SAN CRISTOBAL, PUERTO RICO

## Florida Band Spreads Joy of Music to Puerto Rico

Have you ever considered taking a performing group out of the country but didn't want to have to deal with passports, currency exchange, foreign governments, and exhaustive documentation? If this has been a concern of yours, you may want to consider a concert tour to Puerto Rico.

The Concert Band of Westminster Academy in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, has traveled far and wide off the beaten path to share their music. Over the years, we have been to Quito (Ecuador), Merida (Mexico), Tegucigalpa (Honduras), Costa Rica, and the Bahamas, but by far the easiest trip to put together was our last trip, which took us to Puerto Rico.

Because Puerto Rico is an unincorporated territory of the United States, travel is quite easy and comes without any of the burdens of visiting a foreign country. Performance opportunities abound if you are willing to search them out. Flights are readily available and reasonable, no passports are needed, land transportation by charter bus is the same as in the states, and the U.S. dollar is the currency. The official language is Spanish, but almost everyone speaks English and almost all signage is in English and Spanish.

During our five-day, four-night stay, our forty-piece concert band performed at the Puerto Rico Christian School in Levittown and Tasis School in Dorado, where our presentation was designed to encourage their students to participate in their own band programs. In addition to the school events, we had two performances in conjunction with the U.S. National Park Service at the historic forts of San Felipe del Morro and Castillo de San Cristobal. When not performing, we used our free time to be tourists with visits to Old San Juan, Rio Camuy Cave Park, El Yunque National Rain Forest, and the Luquillo Beach, where at each site students learned a great deal about the rich history, culture, and unique ecosystem of the island.

As with our past trips, this concert tour to Puerto Rico created memories for a lifetime. Friendships were strengthened, new friends were made, and we all learned a great deal about this diverse territory of the United States.

**—Jeff Carroll,** *director, the Concert Band of Westminster Academy in Fort Lauderdale, Florida; carrollj@wa.edu*

PHOTO: HOLLY CARROLL



## WRITE TO US!

Send your thoughts to CarolineA@nafme.org or fax a letter to 888-275-6362. Please include your full name, job title, school name, and the city and state where you teach.

# IMPLEMENTING & ASSESSING THE NEW NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS IS EASY WITH MUSICFIRST

*To learn more about the National Core Arts Standards, visit nationalartsstandards.org. To learn more about how MusicFirst can help you to implement and assess these standards, contact us today by visiting musicfirst.com or by calling us at 1 (855) 896-3344.*

The new National Core Arts Standards officially launched on Monday, October 20, 2014, after nearly five years of planning and spirited debate among administrators, educators, and art education organizations. While some teachers welcome them, others are wary of how the standards will impact their music programs.

At MusicFirst, we know that each music educator has unique talents and brings their own passion to their K-12 music programs, and we are here to help support them. The MusicFirst Online Classroom was designed by educators for educators; the tools and resources that we provide can help you to easily and painlessly implement and assess these new standards.

The National Core Arts Standards contain 11 Anchor Standards divided into 4 strands: **Creating**, **Performing**, **Responding** and **Connecting**. The resources and tools provided by the MusicFirst Online Classroom address all of the standards and strands with: world-class content; a one-of-a-kind, patent-pending assessment creation tool; and software that extends your music classroom by allowing students to address the standards at home.

## CREATING

Use one of six acclaimed cloud-based music creation tools paired with our incredible lesson plans and tasks (all tagged to the standards) to allow students to compose within specified guidelines outside of class time. These tools include Noteflight, Soundation 4 Education, Groovy Music, Morton Subotnick's Music Academy, O-Generator and Inside Music.

## PERFORMING

The optional record feature in the MusicFirst Online Classroom allows you to easily build digital portfolios for all of your instrumental and vocal students. The huge content library from Music Sales provides world-class instructional materials for your students to perform.

## RESPONDING

Embed web-based content into the exclusive Task and Assessment creator included with the MusicFirst Online Classroom and your students can listen and respond to your activities online – from the convenience of their own homes on any device, anytime, anywhere.

## CONNECTING

Our suite of cloud-based software tools provides students with everything that they need to make the critical connections between the arts, their personal lives, and historical and cultural contexts. Tools like Focus on Sound and Music Delta let students experience music in new interactive ways.

*The MusicFirst Online Classroom has the first ever research-based, patent-pending assessment creator developed specifically for music education. Choose from 7 different question types, including the ability to embed software tools and audio recording functionality directly in the assessment to provide you with the most authentic snapshot of a student's musical ability.*

musicfirst
teach music in a connected world

# It's time to start a Tri-M Music Honor Society chapter.

## Strengthen your school's Music. Honor. And Society.

Starting a Tri-M Music Honor Society chapter will help show the value of your music program to the school. It will also benefit your students by allowing them to:

- Build an impressive record for college
- Grow as leaders in music
- Serve their community

## Ready to start a chapter? Follow these easy steps:

1. Visit nafme.org/tri-m to download your chapter activation form or call 1-800-336-3768.
2. Send in the activation form with your chapter activation fee ($50-$125 based on the size of your school)
3. Receive a packet from NAfME with a guide to start your chapter – and get going!

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Tri-M Music
HONOR SOCIETY

BAND DIRECTOR BRANDON SANDERS CHARTERED A NEW TRI-M® CHAPTER IN 2014. THE STELLAR WORK OF THE ADVISOR'S STUDENTS WON THEM "MIDDLE SCHOOL CHAPTER OF THE YEAR."

# NAfME's Tri-M® Program Fosters Development of the Whole Child

**THE TRI-M MUSIC HONOR SOCIETY®** is an international music honor society for middle/junior high and high school students. A program of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME), it is designed to recognize students for their academic and musical achievements, reward them for their accomplishments and service activities, and inspire other students to excel at music and leadership.

Prior to the 2013–2014 school year, Brandon Sanders, then band director at Chesterfield-Ruby Middle School in Chesterfield, South Carolina, decided to charter a new Tri-M chapter at his school. He'd read about the program in *Teaching Music* and on the NAfME website, and believed that his students would benefit from the program, which teaches service and nurtures leadership skills.

His students learned those lessons so well—from partnering with another school organization for a Relay for Life fundraiser, to enthusiastically participating in a big brother/ little brother, big sister/little sister band buddy program—that the chapter was named 2014 National Tri-M Chapter of the Year.

Sanders taught at Chesterfield-Ruby for four years, his first teaching position after college. Now director of bands at Springfield Middle School in Fort Mill, South Carolina, he hopes to start a chapter at that school soon. He notes that the Tri-M Handbook and other materials NAfME offers to walk chapter advisors through establishing and running a chapter are very thorough. "When I went in to my administrator, I was able to show him it was well-respected, long-established program. The fact that Tri-M is an approved activity of NASSP (the National Association of Secondary School Principals) was an important selling point as well."

> "Tri-M gives students leadership skills and helps them set goals."

Sanders also says Tri-M helped to encourage community participation for his program, including parents who wanted to help to organize the school's chapter induction ceremony.

Sanders said he also likes the Tri-M program because it helps to foster a sense of accomplishment for students in other parts of their academic life. "I care about the whole child. I want to know students are doing well in all of their subjects, that they are learning and growing all of the time. Tri-M gives students leadership skills and helps them set goals," Sanders says. "It requires excellence."

It's not too late to charter a chapter for the 2014–15 school-year. Visit *nafme.org* and search for "Tri-M" for more information. Renewal or activation fees reflect the size of the school.

Should you want to start a chapter, NAfME offers a Tri-M learning guide to help you get started. In need of service ideas? Our *Quick Start Guide* also has several templates for service projects and also great fundraising ideas!

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF BRANDON SANDERS

# upbeat

News and notes for today's music educator By Rosalind C. Fehr

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PHOTOS: COURTESY OF BRANDON SANDERS

# Music Education Policy Roundtable Grows in Number and Influence

**IN THE PAST YEAR**, the Music Education Policy Roundtable—a coalition of music education organizations and supporters—has grown by 33 percent, with 11 members joining since November 2013. In 2014, we welcomed El Sistema USA, Little Kids Rock, College Band Directors National Association, Progressive Music, Barbershop Harmony Society, and Strathmore Hall Foundation into our membership. The Roundtable now includes 33 members, with more like-minded music organizations joining each month.

Together, this coalition advocates for sequential, standards-based classroom music taught by qualified music teachers. At the federal level, the Roundtable advocates for a set of legislative "asks" in support of the profession and those who benefit from it. This past June, Roundtable members joined NAfME leadership on Hill Day during National Assembly in visits to key congressional offices. The Roundtable Legislative Agenda and its seven "asks" were discussed and illuminated with personal stories on the importance of music education. Prior to Election Day, House and Senate Education and Appropriations Committee members received letters from the Roundtable asking for their expressed support of music education in federal education legislation.

As the Roundtable looks forward to further growth in 2015, they also wish to congratulate the outgoing president and CEO of one of its earliest members, Chorus America: Ann Meier Baker, who once served at NAfME and has been appointed as the Director of Music and Opera to the National Endowment for the Arts, effective January 12, 2015.

To stay updated on Roundtable news and access advocacy resources, including "Public Relations 101," visit *tinyurl.com/kv6tczz/.*

*By Catherina Hurlburt, Special Assistant to the Assistant Executive Director, Center for Advocacy and Constituent Engagement, NAfME*

# 31 Dates & Deadlines

## 2015 NAfME STUDENT COMPOSERS COMPETITION

***The entry deadline is February 15, 2015.***

**NAfME seeks original music written by student composers. Featured compositions will be performed during the Student Composers Concert at the 2015 NAfME National In-Service Conference in Nashville, Tennessee.**

**Teachers and students are encouraged to submit original compositions by students for possible inclusion in the concert. Students in elementary school, secondary school, college, and full-time graduate school are eligible to submit compositions. Compositions may be for solo instrument or voice, or for an ensemble of instruments and/or voices.**

***For more information visit, tinyurl.com/mggx3jq***

## 2015 NAfME ELECTRONIC MUSIC COMPETITION

***The contest deadline is April 15, 2015.***

**NAfME is accepting submissions for its 2015 Electronic Music Composition Contest, which recognizes outstanding compositions and highlights the effectiveness of music technology in the school curriculum.**

**Compositions will be judged based on their aesthetic quality, use of electronic media, and the power of the composition and its presentation in communicating the excitement and effectiveness of electronic music composition in the school curriculum.**

**Association member adjudicators will select a Collegiate winner as well as a winner for age-groups K–8 and 9–12. Entrants must be either a student of a NAfME member or an NAfME Collegiate member.**

***For complete contest rules and other information, visit tinyurl.com/k43la39***

# 2015 Collegiate Advocacy Summit

Join us on June 24–26 in Washington, D.C. for an unforgettable experience at the 2015 NAfME Collegiate Advocacy Summit! Share your passion for music education with the nation's leaders at our annual lobbying day on Capitol Hill, and take part in additional leadership and advocacy training tailored especially for NAfME Collegiate members.

Many colleges and universities offer individual and group grants to students who wish to participate in activities, programs, and special events that enhance the total learning experience. Do some research at your school and see if you are eligible for funding, or hold a Collegiate Chapter fund raiser to get the money to attend. The Summit will be a valuable experience for future music teachers.

Learn more and register at *hillday.nafme.org/registration.* The registration fee is $135.

FROM TOP: ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES; THINKSTOCK (2); PETER DOHERTY, NAFME

JUPITER'S TABOR STAMPER (LEFT) WITH THE BOSTON BRASS AND RAELYNN (CENTER) AT NAfME'S 2014 NATIONAL CONFERERENCE IN NASHVILLE

# Recording Artist RaeLynn's Song Celebrates Music In Our Schools Month®

**IN CELEBRATION OF** the 30th anniversary of Music In Our Schools Month (MIOSM®) in March 2015, Valory Music Company recording artist RaeLynn has written a new song, "Always Sing," which has been performed with Nicolle Galyon and Jimmy Robbins for music students everywhere. Raelyn introduced the song in during a performance with the Boston Brass at the NAfME National In-Service Conference at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center in Nashville, Tennessee in October 2014.

The sheet music and recording of "Always Sing" will be available for NAfME members for use with the Concert for Music In Our Schools Month in March 2015.

> The sheet music and recording of "Always Sing" will be available … for use with the Concert for Music In Our Schools Month® in March 2015.

For a second consecutive year, Big Machine (parent company of the Valory Music imprint) and Give a Note Foundation will partner for the Music In Our Schools Tour in March 2015. In conjunction with MIOSM, NAfME's Give a Note Foundation will ask schools across the country to submit their own versions of "Always Sing" for yet-to-be-announced surprises along the tour. Rick DeJonge from Jupiter Band Instruments worked with RaeLynn and her team to arrange the music for several types of ensembles.

The Give a Note Foundation was started in 2011 by the leaders of NAfME and has since provided over $1 million in grants to more than 75 schools. The foundation has received generous support from many groups and organizations. Through their partnership with Jupiter Band Instruments, Boston Brass has helped to raise awareness for the Give a Note Foundation at their concerts for about two years.

With the highest-charting debut single by a solo female artist in 2014, RaeLynn was recently selected as the first woman for iHeart Radio's "On the Verge," which showcases an artist who has the potential to "break out of the pack." From her slow ballad "Love Triangle" to her debut single "God Made Girls," this spunky 20-year-old has penned a diverse catalog of songs. *Taste of Country* magazine says that "fans of every age will find … lyrics to get behind" by the Texas native.

Music In Our Schools Month is NAfME's celebration each March that seeks to engage music educators, students, and communities in the United States and beyond in promoting the benefits of high-quality music education programs in schools.

## National Core Music Standards in Practice in the Classroom

**The new Standards provide teachers with frameworks that closely match the goals of their classes. The Standards are presented in a grade-by-grade sequence, preK–8; discrete "strands" address high school subjects such as ensembles and music composition/theory.**

**NAfME offers the following tools to show how to use the Standards in music classrooms:**

- **A short video at *youtu.be/RlSF56tkueA***
- **A webinar on the Standards and what they mean to music teachers at *vimeo.com/98255816***
- **A Q&A with two National Core Arts Standards writers, Richard Wells and Johanna Siebert, at *tinyurl.com/k5hue2e***

NAfME WANTS TO HELP MUSIC EDUCATORS INCORPORATE THE NEW MUSIC STANDARDS INTO THE CLASSROOM.

**The Standards include the development of traditional skills, knowledge, and dispositions as building blocks for music literacy. Draft lists of knowledge, skills, and dispositions have been provided by the NAfME Councils to help teachers and curriculum planners make these essential connections. Further lists are in preparation to serve as guides for other music classes. They may be found at *tinyurl.com/kz6udfx/*.**

PHOTOS FROM TOP: COURTESY OF BIG MACHINE GROUP; ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES

OVER THE YEARS, NAfME MEMBERS HAVE LED STUDENTS IN SONG AT A VARIETY OF CONCERT LOCATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND OVERSEAS.

# Music In Our Schools Month® Concert Celebrates 30 Years in March 2015

**WE'RE EAGERLY** anticipating Music in Our Schools Month® in March 2015! MIOSM® is NAfME's annual celebration that engages music educators, students, and communities from around the country in promoting the benefits of high-quality music education programs in schools. It began in 1973 as a single, statewide Advocacy Day and celebration in New York, and expanded to a month-long celebration by 1985. Each year throughout the month of March, we celebrate students and all of the ways that music education drives their personal and academic success. This year's theme is "Music Makes Me _____!"

**THE 2015 MIOSM CONCERT SONGS:**
- "Feel the Beat!"
- "Funga Alafia"
- "J'entends le moulin
- "Soldiers' Joy"
- "The Star-Spangled Banner"
- "We the People"
- "Why We Sing"

The deadline for NAfME members to submit a video for NAfME's annual MIOSM online concert is January 31, 2015. Contact NAfME's Susan Lambert at *SusanL@nafme.org* for more information on how to submit a video. Participating teachers must be active members, and the free sheet music and audio tracks are available only to members at *tinyurl.com/lk8tyz5*. The songs included in the 2015 Concert program were based on teachers' suggestions of their favorite titles from past Concerts. Music publisher Hal Leonard generously donated the sheet music for use by NAfME members.

In addition to this concert repertoire, Valory Music Company recording artist RaeLynn, along with Nicolle Galyon and Jimmy Robbins, has written a new song, "Always Sing," for music students everywhere. Raelyn introduced the song during a performance with the Boston Brass at the NAfME 2014 National In-Service Conference at the Gaylord Opryland Resort in Nashville, Tennessee.

"Always Sing" is available for NAfME members for use with the Concert for Music In Our Schools Month in March, 2015. Visit *nafme.org/programs/miosm/* for sheet music and other information.

**For more information, visit *nafme.org/programs/miosm***

# Mark Your Calendar for NAfME's 2015 National In-Service Conference

NAfME's 2015 National In-Service Conference will be held October 25–28, 2015, at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center in Nashville, Tennessee.

The 2015 Conference theme will be "Empower Creativity." With the new Standards, STEAM-driven education, 21st-century skills, and the local community, music teachers today work in an environment driven by the imperative to promote creativity.

Conference sessions

can help teachers unlock their own creativity as and help them discover new ways to develop creativity in their students. Sessions will also address the theme in the areas of general music, band, chorus, orchestra, emerging ensembles, jazz, technology, and composition, among others. This event is not to be missed!

Look for conference updates at *nafme.org*.

# Celebrate Music Education in Your Classroom with MIOSM® Items

**Music In Our Schools Month® (MIOSM®) is NAfME's annual March celebration when it asks music educators, students, and communities throughout the world to promote the benefits of high-quality music education programs in schools.**

**Music Makes Me_____is the 2015 MIOSM theme, and NAfME urges teachers to use it as a way to engage students in a discussion about what music means to them and how it makes them feel. Happy? Talented? Excited? Smart?**

**Teachers can also encourage class participation by using MIOSM items to reward or encourage their students. NAfME's offers fun, brightly colored MIOSM pencils, pens, buttons, egg shakers, rulers, stickers, and even sunglasses and T-shirts.**

**Teachers can also treat themselves with a "Keep Calm and Pretend It's on the Lesson Plan" mug or an MIOSM umbrella. Visit *shop.nafme.org/product-category/miosm/* to order any of these items.**

**Music In Our Schools Month began as a single, statewide Advocacy Day and celebration in New York in 1973. It grew over the years to become a monthlong celebration of school music by 1985.**


PHOTOS FROM TOP: NAfME; GAYLORD OPRYLAND RESORT; NAfME

# Finalists Set for GRAMMY® Music Educator Award

**THE FINALISTS** for the 2015 GRAMMY Music Educator Award™ were announced in December. In the previous round, 19 members of NAfME (see box—members in bold) were in the group of 25 semifinalists for the award, which is presented by The Recording Academy® and the GRAMMY Foundation®.

Over 7,000 initial nominations were submitted from all 50 states. The GRAMMY Music Educator will be selected from the 10 finalists and recognized for his or her remarkable impact on students' lives.

In February, the winner will be flown to Los Angeles to accept the award, attend the GRAMMY Awards ceremony, and receive a $10,000 honorarium. The other nine finalists will each receive a $1,000 honorarium; the schools of all 10 finalists will receive matching grants.

NAfME member Kent Knappenberger of Westfield Academy and Central School in Westfield, New York, was the first recipient of the award in 2014. He was recognized during the 56th Annual GRAMMY Awards, telecast in a segment featuring President/CEO of The Recording Academy and GRAMMY Foundation® President/CEO Neil Portnow, along with nine-time GRAMMY winner John Legend and GRAMMY Foundation Honorary Chair Ryan Seacrest. "Music education has such an important impact on our cultural fabric," says Seacrest. "It's a privilege to join the GRAMMY Foundation and Ford Motor Company to applaud the efforts of our nation's top 25 music teachers and work with their schools to help raise awareness about the importance of music in schools."

The GRAMMY Music Educator Award is supported by the NAMM Foundation, NAfME, and the National Education Association. For further information, visit *grammymusicteacher.com*. Applications are now being accepted for the 2016 GRAMMY Music Educator.

Glenn E. Nierman, President and Board Chair of NAfME, participated in the finalist selection committee for the upcoming 2015 Music Educator Award.

LAST YEAR'S WINNER KENT KNAPPENBERGER

## THE SEMIFINALISTS

- **Diane Abrahamian**
- Steven Acciani
- **Phil Aguglia**
- **William Bennett**
- **Jared Cassedy**
- Caleb Chapman
- **Josh Chodoroff**
- Buddy Clements
- **Charles Cushinery**
- **David Dehner**
- Jamal Dickerson
- **Terry Eberhardt**
- **Krista Fanning**
- **Elizabeth Fortune**
- **Vivian Gonzalez**
- **Micah Haven**
- **Aaron Hill Sr.**
- **Stevi Marks**
- Richard Maxwell
- **Debra Reilly**
- **Huber Smith**
- **Michael Smith**
- **James Story**
- Nancie Tobison
- **Danny Yancey**

FROM TOP: COURTESY OF THE RECORDING ACADEMY®/WIREIMAGE.COM, PHOTO BY STEVE GRANITZ © 2014; ADRIAN MORGAN

## Band Directors: Nominate Your Outstanding Juniors for the 2016 All-American Marching Band

There's still time to nominate outstanding high school juniors for next year's United States Army All-American Marching Band—an all-expenses-paid, amazing experience. Nominations for the 2016 USAAAMB close on January 31, 2015. Students do not have to be nominated to audition, but all students who are nominated and complete the audition will receive a certificate of recognition.

Each student nominated must be a member of his or her high school marching band and on track to graduate in 2016. An overview of the program as well as instructions on the nomination process can be found at *tinyurl.com/nbfuxmy*.

Students selected for the USAAAMB program receive an impressive list of perks, including: national recognition through NAfME and news media outlets; an all-expenses paid trip to San Antonio to perform as a member of the U.S. Army All-American Marching Band (which includes airfare, hotel, food, rehearsal gear, performance gear, instrument loan, and more); a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to rehearse and perform alongside the finest high school marching musicians in the nation; an All-American Selection press conference at the student's school to announce their elite accomplishment to media, school administration, and fellow community members; and—last but not least—an opportunity to perform at half-time in the U.S. Army All-American Bowl in San Antonio, Texas, in front of 50,000 spectators.

Student musicians who are selected for the United States Army All-American Marching Band will also have the opportunity to work with an all-star marching band staff made up of directors from the most respected high school and collegiate marching band programs in the United States, as well as musicians from the U.S. Army Field Band.

## NAfME Staff at Your State MEA Conference

Many NAfME federated state associations hold their annual professional development conferences in January, February, and March. NAfME staff will attend some of the state gatherings to talk with members about NAfME programs, from the Beyond the Bubbles advocacy initiative to the Tri-M Music Honor Society®. They can also answer questions, and will have a variety of NAfME products for sale, including popular items for Music In Our Schools Month.

Check your state conference program, and if you see a listing for a NAfME booth, be sure to drop by!

SASHA AUFSCHNEIDER'S STUDENTS WILL BE PERFORMING WITH THE WELLINGTON INTERNATIONAL UKULELE ORCHESTRA.

# Ring of (Ukulele) Fire

## With help from a local organization, a music program in Florida is up and strumming.

**THE UKULELE** has long since been welcomed into the music classroom as a tool for discovery. Sasha Aufschneider, music teacher at Oakland Terrace School for the Visual and Performing Arts in Panama City, Florida, has been using the instrument to excellent effect with her classroom's new ukulele orchestra.

Aufschneider, who recently began teaching music at her school, had never played the ukulele before taking on the position. "Music has been in my life for as long as I can remember and, of course, I knew what the ukulele was, but I had never learned how to play anything but the piano. I've been a singer for about 25 years, and I've had some of the best music teachers around, so that has helped a lot [with leading the ukulele ensemble]."

It has been advantageous that Aufschneider is new to the ukulele. As students have seen her overcome technical obstacles to become more proficient on the instrument, they have been given permission to make mistakes and grow as players along with her. "I think it's important to let the kids see that I am human just like them and that it takes patience, time, and practice to master an instrument. Many of them seemed defeated at first, but I think it helped for them to see their own teacher make mistakes and keep pushing through," she notes.

While inexpensive ukuleles are certainly available for classroom use, Aufschneider was fortunate in that her students' instruments were donated by the Bay Arts Alliance, a local nonprofit arts agency that sponsored the project. These instruments readily appealed to her students. "They are so bright, colorful, and fun. The kids really love them."

A lot of mileage can be had from a few simple chord grips on the ukulele, and the Bay Arts Alliance has provided Aufschneider with easy but satisfying arrangements of popular music using these harmonies. "Right now, the kids are really enjoying learning 'Radioactive' by Imagine Dragons and 'Ring of Fire' by Johnny Cash, which they'll get to perform with the Wellington International Ukulele Orchestra when it's in town from New Zealand," she says.

Aufschneider teaches the ukulele so that everyone plays the same voicings, but some students have been inspired to dig deeper and challenge themselves musically—for instance, to sing the songs as they strum them. "It has been so cool to see the excitement on their faces when they accomplish something. They are so proud."

At the same time, some of the students have become explorative on their instruments as they discover how to play melodies and more complex accompaniment patterns. Says Aufschneider, "They've had a really great time experimenting and getting to know their talents and capabilities. It's important to give them that time to explore and to realize that there are a lot of things they can do that they never thought would be possible."

*"It has been so cool to see the excitement on their faces when they accomplish something."*

### FACTS & FIGURES

**OAKLAND TERRACE SCHOOL FOR THE VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**
Panama City, Florida
**GRADES PreK–5**

**STUDENTS:** Approximately **400**

**PERCENTAGE OF LOW-INCOME STUDENTS:** **0%**

**ETHNICITY OF STUDENT BODY:**
- **44%** White
- **30%** African American
- **14%** Hispanic
- **8%** Two or more races
- **3%** Asian

**NUMBER OF MUSIC TEACHERS:** **1**

**CLASSES/ ENSEMBLES:** **3**
1 General, 1 Ukulele, 1 Movement

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SASHA AUFSCHNEIDER

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# United We Stand … For Music!

## Stand Up 4 Music works to support music education in California.

**WITH STAND UP 4 MUSIC,** California music educators seem to be getting it right and making real progress in ensuring that all California students have the opportunity to experience the arts. The idea for the organization sprang up around 2011 when the Music Supervisor's Group of the California Music Educators Association (CMEA) realized that California did not have a strategic infrastructure for its advocacy work in the state capitol. Stand Up 4 Music provides a way for all California music educators to unite around advocacy, notes Michael D. Stone, coordinator of the Visual and Performing Arts Department of the Bakersfield City School District and president of the CMEA.

During the 1970s, educational funding was drastically cut and many music teacher positions were eliminated and never reinstated. In 2012, CMEA leaders went to The California Arts Project (TCAP) for support in creating a strategic plan for its work. "Out of the strategic planning process, advocacy came front and center in CMEA's work. That was the beginning of Stand Up 4 Music," explains Stone.

NAMM, too, has been supportive of Stand Up 4 Music from the beginning, and their January meeting has been where "'Music Education Advocates Convene.' We come together to develop policy and legislative priorities. In 2014, priorities include pushing for timely adoption of the new National Core Arts Standards. We will take this to Advocacy Day in May," says Stone. He notes that Advocacy Day also allows Stand Up 4 Music to give kudos to California's governor, Jerry Brown, for improvements in the state's education system. "Funding has improved dramatically with his new educational funding law, Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF)," remarks Stone. Now, every school district in California is getting more money. My district, Bakersfield, for example, has an additional $11 million and we have been able to add music teachers."

Getting the word out to the general public is also key. Therefore, Stand Up 4 Music is creating a database of supporters with the goals of obtaining sponsorship that will enable them to introduce legislation. Additionally, Stand up 4 Music is also working on an app through which parents can register and lend their support to the cause, as well as donate to the organization.

"Stand Up 4 Music is precedent-setting," remarks Stone. "The organization has even welcomed the Community College Music Association into the mix. They have really been struggling with budget cuts to the community college system, so we are going to be putting a lot of effort into helping them as well." ▮

> *"Getting the word out to the general public is also key."*

### ADVOCACY DAY

Stand Up 4 Music had its second Advocacy Day this past May. Attendance at their first Advocacy Day was small, but this past May, over 40 people comprised a delegation that visted more than 25 legislative offices.

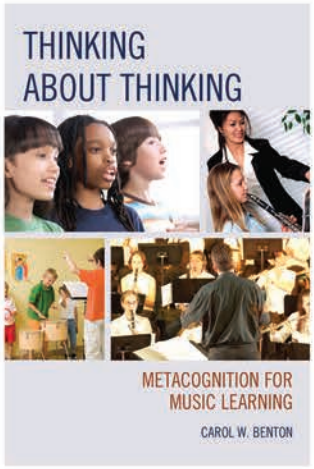
Stone notes that, this past year, the atmosphere was very festive. "We brought in Kenny G. as a celebrity spokesman. He talked about experiences he had in the Seattle Public Schools—how they changed his life." School bands were also playing at the Capitol during the Stand Up 4 Music press conference. "For the first time, we were also able to deliver the new 'Beyond the Bubbles' advocacy materials to every member of the assembly and senate."

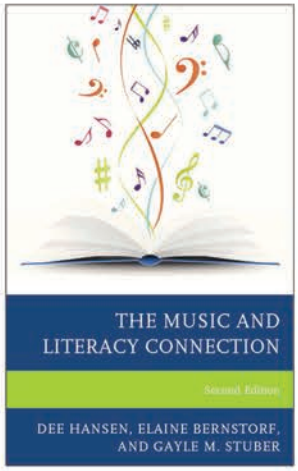
Other work to be done involves the education code in California, which states that all children shall be provided a visual and performing arts course of study in grades 1–6, and should have access to courses in grades 7–12. "And we know, that has not been going on. So, we are now looking at following up with a campaign to educate the general public about the law."

Preparations are under way for the next Advocacy Day, which is scheduled for May 21, 2015. That is the appropriations day. "It's the best time to be at the Capitol when the legislature is making final decisions about their budget for the next year!"

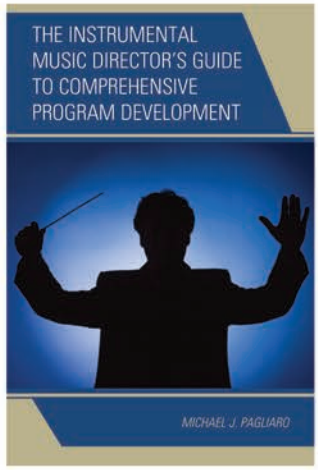
PHOTO: COURTESY OF MICHAEL D. STONE

# New NAfME Publications








## Thinking about Thinking: Metacognition for Music Learning

Carol N. Benton

*Thinking about Thinking: Metacognition for Music Learning* provides music teacehrs with information, inspiration, and practical suggestions for teaching music. Written for music educators in multiple content areas and grade levels, the book sets forth guidelines for promoting the use of metacognitive skills among music students. Along with presenting an extensive overview of research on the topic, Carol Benton shows how ideas gleaned from research can be put into daily practice in music classrooms and studios. General music teachers, directors of choral and instrumental ensembles, applied music teachers, future music educators, and music education faculty will find useful ideas and information here. In the current educational climate where all teachers are required to demonstrate that they encourage higher order thinking among their students, *Thinking about Thinking: Metacognition for Music Learning* gives music educators the tools they need to accomplish the task.

978-1-4758-0512-3 • © 2014

## The Music and Literacy Connection

Dee Hansen, Elaine Bernstorf, and Gayle M. Stuber

The second edition of *The Music and Literacy Connection* expands our understanding of the links between reading and music by examining those skills and learning processes that are directly parallel for music learning and language arts literacy at the pre-K, elementary, and secondary levels. This edition includes two new chapters: one dedicated to secondary music education and teacher evaluation, and another that offers a literature review of latest literacy research in education, neuroscience, and neuropsychology. Readers will find extensive instructional examples for music and reading teachers so that they can enrich and support each other in alignment with current initiatives for 21st-century curricula. Instructional examples are aligned with The National Core Music Standards and the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Media Arts. The book includes an in-depth review of the benefits of music learning in the listening, viewing, speaking and writing literacy as well as comprehensive information for children with special needs. *The Music and Literacy Connection* is a valuable resource for professional development, college literacy courses, and curriculum administrators.

978-1-4758-0599-4 • © 2014

## UKE Can Do It!

Philip Tamberino

Affordable, versatile, portable, and popular once again, the ukulele is an ideal instrument for lifelong music-making that can also be an engaging component of school music programs. At the elementary or secondary level, students can use the ukulele to explore everything from music theory, improvisation, composition, and ear training, to repertoire that includes contemporary popular music. At a lesser expense than any other instrument that can do as much, the ukulele is perfect for breathing fresh air into any music program.

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## The Instrumental Music Director's Guide to Comprehensive Program Development

Michael J. Pagliaro

*The Instrumental Music Director's Guide to Comprehensive Program Development* offers practical solutions to the many issues that confront music directors. Topics addressed include:

- A review of tests that can be used to develop an all-inclusive student profile identifying strengths and weaknesses as a prologue to preparing individualized curricula.
- A discussion of the "informed approach" predicated on understanding relationships among music, logical deduction, and the acoustic sciences, thereby accelerating the learning process in music, increasing the knowledge base, and developing cognitive skills that can be applied to other studies.
- A measuring process used to accurately calculate the size of a beginning student in relation to the size of the selected instrument to ensure the two will be compatible.
- A procedure for introducing students to the many different instruments.
- The protocol for developing a symbiotic dealer/teacher relationship that will ensure a smooth-running, fully equipped program throughout the year.
- Purchasing, renting, and caring for instruments. All administrative tasks that form the backbone of a successful school instrumental music program.

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*"If music is an ongoing part of children's education, it can have a profound impact."*

# Words and Music

## Music training can help to bridge the achievement gap with at-risk students.

IN THE STUDY, NEURAL PROBES MEASURED SPEECH PROCESSING IN 44 CHILDREN.

**FOR MUSICIANS,** collaboration means hearing cues and responding. Attentive listening makes for good partners, and good partners make good music. But it looks like good listening also means good speaking and reading as well. And the benefit does not restrict itself to experienced musicians, but extends to any child who has some consistent musical training.

Nina Kraus, who heads a team of researchers at the Auditory Neuroscience Laboratory at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, has measured the neurological effects of music training with a group of Los Angeles–area children in the Harmony Project, a nonprofit founded in 2001 that provides free music education to students from low-income families. Kraus's lab—whose work can be viewed at *brainvolts.northwestern.edu*—studies brain function in music and many different other areas, with an aim toward understanding and improving human communication.

Students in the Harmony Project had neural probes attached to their heads, and were measured for speech processing. The study, published in *The Journal of Neuroscience* this past September, measured 44 students in all. About half had participated in after-school music programs for one year, and the rest for two years.

Kraus notes that the probes allowed her team to measure speech processing with unprecedented precision. The study followed the students, ages six through nine, in their ability to process stop consonants—in this case "b" and "g"—which is a key neural mechanism that is linked to reading and language skills. Students who had been through two years of musical training were consistently more capable of transferring the subtle listening skills from music to speech processing.

Crucial to the findings were the fact that the benefits of music training began to appear after only the second year. "It's a mistake to think of music education as a quick fix," Kraus notes. "If music is an ongoing part of children's education, it can have a profound impact."

The study purports to be the first to examine at-risk children. Kraus is hopeful that by providing objective biological evidence showing that music programs improve speech processing, reading, and other language skills, community and co-curricular programs can attract increased funding. ▮

## MUSIC AND THE WAR AGAINST POVERTY

The benefits to at-risk students and the subsequent positive results in combatting the achievement gap have fueled Kraus's research. "The neuro signature for poverty was that children process sounds less precisely," she says. "When they start learning music, something changes after two years. There was a dosage effect. Children who spent more hours engaged in music classes showed the largest gains."

As Kraus's works shows, these music programs accomplish more than just providing children with enjoyment: The students perform better in school, stay in school longer, and are more likely to participate in post-secondary education.

The results for the Harmony Project are staggering. More than 90 percent of the high school seniors who participated in that program—in an area where up to half the students typically drop out of school—went to college.

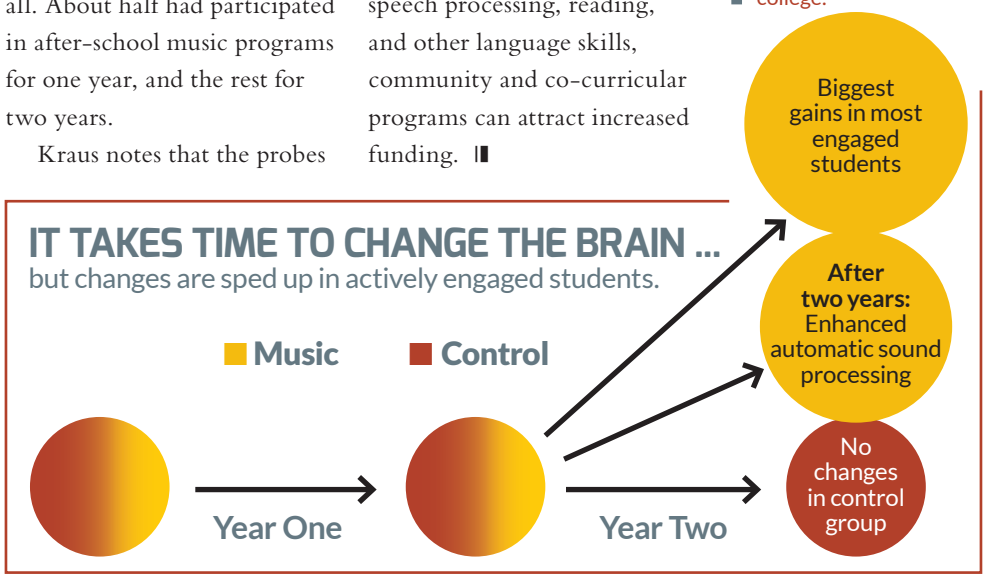


PHOTO: COURTESY OF AUDITORY NEUROSCIENCE LAB; SOURCE: "MUSIC ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS IMPROVE THE NEURAL ENCODING OF SPEECH IN AT-RISK CHILDREN," *THE JOURNAL OF NEUROSCIENCE*, 3 SEPTEMBER 2014, VOLUME 34, NUMBER 36, PGS. 11913–11918 (SEE *JNEUROSCI.ORG/CONTENT/34/36/11913.ABSTRACT*)

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FROM LEFT: KATE DAVIS, MUSICIAN AND YOUNGARTS ALUMNA; ANTUAN SANTANA, COMMUNITY AND CITIZENSHIP MANAGER, MICROSOFT; ROBERT L. LYNCH, PRESIDENT AND CEO, AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS; BEN FOLDS, MUSICIAN AND ARTS EDUCATION ADVOCATE; DAVID A. DIK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, YOUNG AUDIENCES ARTS FOR LEARNING

# The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards

## The members of the NCCAS have worked together since 2010.

**IN OCTOBER,** after three years of development, the National Core Arts Standards were announced. This research involved 10 influential arts organizations that consulted among each other and with thousands of educators, artists, parents, and students.

These new Standards were created by the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards. The NCCAS was formed in 2010 after an organizing meeting convened by one of the members—the State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education (SEADAE)—to revise the previous standards in light of the newly adopted Core Curriculum. NAfME helped found the coalition, as did other organizations specializing in educational issues in dance, music, theatre, visual arts, and media arts. The NCCAS has convened weekly since 2011, and continues to meet via conference calls and web-based meetings. A key ingredient to the coalition's effort, Blakeslee points out, has been the creation of an interactive web site, *nationalartsstandards.org,* which offers options for teachers to customize the Standards to meet the needs of their own curricula.

"The unifying factor is that the Standards talk about artistic literacy. But they have to become true to what happens in the classroom," remarks Mike Blakeslee, NAfME's Deputy Executive Director and COO. "We are saying, 'Here are the models, now articulate these for your own programs.'"

Blakeslee remarks that, "We had federal funding from a small NEA grant to get input from our artists, but for the most part the work has been self-funded from the coalition. By our very structure, including all of the arts, we are hoping that decision makers will be able to see that the Standards cut across all art forms. Our fundamental goal was enduring understanding. In the case of music, for instance, if we want to have musically literate adults, what kinds of achievements do we need to steer them toward as students?"

The coalition engaged 130 writers to create the initial Standards framework, which was then vetted by more than 6,000 teachers, parents, students, artists, and focus groups. Americans for the Arts, part of the NCCAS coalition, is helping with a states-based effort to generate support. "The Standards have huge implications for policy," Blakeslee says, "but they are truly voluntary. That's the main difference from the Common Core State standards. Even though politicians call them voluntary, they are driven largely by the funding that gets tied to them."

Blakeslee further notes that, "Nothing in these Standards says that you have to throw out any of the good things you do now. It simply challenges teachers to say, 'Does this help ensure that what I teach will be relevant to my students 40 years from now?'" ▮

> *"Our fundamental goal was enduring understanding."*

### NCCAS LEADERSHIP ORGANIZATIONS

These ten organizations have been working since 2011 to create an update to the National Core Arts Standards. "As the states adopt the Standards," Blakeslee says, "they will become drivers of curriculum. They won't have any official sway until after individual teachers get a chance to learn about them and adapt."

**Americans for the Arts**
*americansforthearts.org*

**American Alliance for Theatre and Education (AATE)**
*aate.com*

**Educational Theatre Association (EdTA)**
*schooltheatre.org*

**The College Board**
*collegeboard.org*

**The National Association for Music Education (NAfME)**
*nafme.org*

**National Art Education Association (NAEA)**
*arteducators.org*

**National Dance Education Organization (NDEO)**
*ndeo.org*

**State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education (SEADAE)**
*seadae.org*

**Media Arts Committee of the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards**
*mediaartseducation.org*

**Young Audiences Arts for Learning**
*youngaudiences.org*

PHOTO: MARCUS ROMERO, YOUNG AUDIENCES ARTS FOR LEARNING

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# Figurative Language: The Most Effective Gadget in a Music Teacher's Toolbox

The creative use of language can bring students to a whole new level of musical understanding.


**MATTHEW SPIEKER** *is a professor of music education and violin at the University of Arizona, Tucson, and director of the Arizona Philharmonic Orchestra. He can be contacted at mspieker@email.arizona.edu.*

**DURING THE 2012 DEBATES,** Senator Paul Ryan poked fun at Vice-President Joe Biden's propensity for making gaffes. Ryan said, "I think the Vice-President very well knows that sometimes the words don't come out of your mouth the right way." Biden laughed, shook his finger, and said, "But I always say what I mean." Politicians live in a world where every word is scrutinized. Music educators might not have their discourse publicly posted, but they have students who are listening.

Music teachers must balance verbal and nonverbal instruction. The essence of music is nonverbal, but understanding it requires verbal instruction. Therefore, it is important for teachers to master both language and music. In their 1984 book *Principles and Processes of Music Education: New Perspectives*, music educators Malcolm Tait and Paul Haack said, "If we are genuine concerned with developing the quality of the musical, experience we need to explore the language connection … language is the essential tool that allows us to conceptualize and think about, to analyze and teach about these vital musical matters that ultimately can take us beyond words."

*"Those little mints don't look like much, but they pack a powerful punch."*

So, is language an essential skill in our teaching toolbox?

I define "figurative language" broadly as any type of language or activity used with the intent to teach concepts creatively. This language includes the use of metaphors, analogies, short stories, drama, etc. Following are some examples.

**Concise:** "These staccato eighth notes are to be played lightly and quickly, like touching a hot iron."

**Analogy:** "This passage reminds listeners of a parent giving a child a goodnight kiss."

**Drama:** A band director put on a purple choir robe, crowned himself with a Burger King hat, and waved to an imaginary crowd as the band played. He wanted students to have a more regal and stately sound. The band never played that piece quite the same way. This is figurative language at its best—when it changes the outcome of the performance.

## Uses of Figurative Language

Many musical concepts are abstract and multilevel. After students master basic notation, there remain multiple layers to the concept, such as articulation, dynamics, and phrasings. Bennett Reimer said in his 2003 work *A Philosophy of Music Education: Advancing the Vision* that music teachers "are expected to clarify what music is all about, by helping our students compose, perform, improvise, listen, more adequately and satisfyingly, and to understand what they are doing and why."

How do music teachers make the ineffable understandable? I have had student teachers who were competent musicians and understood music, yet their communication skills often lacked figurative language. Universities and cooperating teachers can help future music educators use figurative language at the early stages of their careers.

PHOTOS FROM TOP: COURTESY OF MATTHEW SPIEKER; ISTOCK

"FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE ... CAN REALLY HELP BRING A CLASS TO THE ESSENCE OF MUSICAL INTERPRETATION." —*MATTHEW SPIEKER*

New teachers usually talk a lot and use mostly uninspiring, analytical language. Talking less is best, however, some spoken language is required. The ability to incorporate figurative language successfully can make a point in an economical fashion. Eric Jensen, an education expert in brain-based research, wrote in his 1998 book *Super Teaching: Master Strategies for Building Student Success*, "Analogy is one of the most useful of all communication tools. It can be the perfect vehicle by which your students understand in 10 seconds something which might ordinarily take 60 seconds or even 60 minutes."

In February of 2007, I conducted an honor orchestra in Beijing, China. I explained to the ensemble that I wanted them to have a powerful sound, even though they were young and small. I wanted them to be just like a strong mint. "Those little mints don't look like much, but they pack a powerful punch." After this, there were smiles and a focused determination to create a potent sound.

Figurative language, described here as "likeness statements," can really help bring a class to the essence of musical interpretation. A teacher can invite students to consider an idea such as a gentle mountain stream as it curves around rocks and trees. A steady pulse can magically be performed when students envision a precise, marching army stepping alongside them.

## Getting Started

Watch an old video of yourself teaching and count the number of times you used figurative language and the number of times you used analytical language. You might be shocked how little the former was used.

Have the goal of including at least three figurative language moments in each class. For instance, try using a phrase beginning with "It's like …" Consider figurative language when talking about rhythms, phrasings, articulations, or even technical issues such as embouchure, bowings, playing posture, breathing, etc. Take a few moments to memorize what you want to say, and then eventually trust yourself to improvise figurative language on the spot. Tape a note to your stand stating, "It's like ..."

Think of a story for a piece of music. Sometimes the work is programmatic and the story was written by the composer. If it wasn't, make one up. Ask your students to help you. Take time to have the class listen to Sergei Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf.* Ask students "How did the instruments play to convey their characters?"

Take an hour with your ensemble to create a drama. Take a look at Phyllis Young's *Playing the String Game* and *The String Play.* These books are for string ensembles, but their ideas can be adapted for other music classes.

## Personal Satisfaction of Figurative Language

Using language as a creative outlet can be nearly as much fun as creating music. Enter each rehearsal with the expectation that you are about to have a rewarding experience, because you know something creative will flow out, not only in music, but in language as well. It is simply improvisation with language.

Helping students to achieve musical understanding is a goal for every music teacher, and doing this effectively and economically is the mark of a master teacher. Become that master teacher who has a collection of word pictures into which you regularly invite your students. Be the curator of this amazing place, and use it to open up new worlds of understanding for budding musicians.

# The Well-Informed Choir (and Director)

Taking the time to choose repertoire and educational experiences that are relevant to your singers is key to student engagement.

**BY ANTHONY BERNARDUCCI** *is a Ph.D. candidate in music education/choral conducting at Florida State University in Tallahassee. He can be contacted at bernarducci@gmail.com.*

As music educators, we ask ourselves many questions: Is what I am teaching relevant to my students? Does the repertoire I pick excite them, or are they just humoring me? Are the activities in my classroom challenging my students? Our lives are moving increasingly faster. Many basic questions can be answered instantly via Internet searches, and the concept of waiting for results or molding a final product is usually not part of the teenage mindset.

In a world of instant gratification, can we make the process of learning and making music something truly meaningful in our students' lives? Yes. This process can be enhanced by offering appropriate choices of literature, providing tools for student-driven learning, and incorporating historical and biographical context for the music being prepared. Here are some techniques for each step of this process.

## Literature Selection

Finding music for your choirs can be a time-consuming task because there are so many factors that contribute to music selection for your ensembles. The level of your students' musical ability, the demographics of the student population, and the available resources are just a few of these considerations. I suggest these basic guidelines for choosing appropriate literature.

**BE PASSIONATE ABOUT THE MUSIC.** Students take their cue from the teacher's level of interest in the music. They trust the teacher as their musical leader, and it is only natural for them to imitate the level of excitement you model. There is so much music available—why spend two to three months working on something you don't enjoy? When we are passionate, our teaching is most effective, and our students deserve nothing less from us.

**CHOOSE MUSIC APPROPRIATE TO THE LEVEL OF YOUR STUDENTS.** Students intrinsically want to improve and have a desire to succeed. It is up to the teacher to select literature that creates a positive educational experience and provides a platform for growth. What do you want to accomplish by the end of the year? Ensembles need to build on positive experiences to reach those goals. One quick tool to gauge students' goals and shortcomings is to distribute an index card to each student during the first week of school. Have students write down three goals: The first two should be personal, and the third should be for the choir as a whole. Read the cards, and then return them to the students. Let them keep these cards in their folders as constant reminders of their objectives. You can also have your students gauge and chart their progress

PHOTO AND GRAPHIC: COURTESY OF ANTHONY BERNARDUCCI


"STUDENTS TAKE THEIR CUE FROM THE TEACHER'S LEVEL OF INTEREST." —ANTHONY BERNARDUCCI

each quarter on these cards. This not only provides them an opportunity to identify where they need to improve, but also gives you an idea of what musical concepts need to be addressed through warm-ups and literature. With careful monitoring of these goals, there should be obvious measurable improvements throughout the year.

**VARY MUSICAL GENRES TO KEEP STUDENTS ENGAGED.** Whether an ensemble is singing Mozart's "Ave Verum Corpus" or an arrangement of "I'll Follow the Sun" by The Beatles, there must always be an educational purpose for the music. It is easy to flock to Mozart, Randall Thompson, and Samuel Barber, but our students want to sing a variety of music, and rightfully so. There are arrangements of pieces in many musical styles that are educationally sound, but finding them requires an investment of a teacher's time. Well-rounded musicians can step into and out of various genres with ease, however it is up to teachers to seek out


*"When we are passionate, our teaching is most effective, and our students deserve nothing less from us."*

those works that provide varied, rich experiences for their students.

**TRY SOMETHING NEW.** We can help our students experience music from the Renaissance to present day. It is easy to fall back on our old standards, but there is wonderful music being composed today. Find new pieces, look for multicultural music, and spend time studying the scores. Fully understand each work yourself before introducing it to your students. Consider having a work commissioned for your choir, or even compose/arrange a piece for them yourself.

## Student-Driven Learning

After the literature is selected, it becomes important to engage students in the learning process so they take ownership of both the music and the learning of it. Students are not empty vessels: They have intelligent thoughts and musical ideas to help shape the music. The following are several ways to engage your students as you rehearse.

**STUDENT LEADERS AND SECTIONALS.** Student leaders who run sectionals can be like members of parents' organizations—either beneficial or a handicap to the ensemble. Students need to be given the tools for becoming effective student leaders as well as respectful learners. The students may never realize their full potential in either of these roles without supervision, instruction, and clear expectations from the teacher. Once the process becomes a well-oiled machine, sending students into sectionals can put the note-learning into their own hands, enable them to take ownership of the learning, and prepare them for structured rehearsals when

you are absent and the class is managed by a substitute. This preparation creates a bond of trust between you and the students who are developing into independent and capable musicians.

**"STUDENT CONDUCTOR FRIDAY."** Students need to understand what it feels like to be in the front of a classroom, and allowing them to take on the conductor's role is an effective way to accomplish that. On Fridays, it can be valuable to have one or two students take 15 minutes each to address an aspect of the music they believe the choir as a whole finds challenging. However, these students need to be serious about the responsibility, so you should require either a written plan or a verbal discussion about what exactly student conductors will address and how they plan to accomplish their goals. A precursor to allowing students to conduct is to have a group conversation: Discuss expectations, how to address the class, and how what they have discovered about the process of learning music can help them plan for their time on the podium.

## TAXONOMY OF CRITICAL LISTENING

1. **PASSIVE** Listening mechanically and effortlessly without any intention at all.
2. **CONSCIOUS** Intentionally listening, causing an emotional response.
3. **FOCUSED** Intentionally listening and being able to hear a specific aspect of the music.
4. **CREATIVE** Listening with the ability to make decisions on how to affect the performance of a piece.

**ACTIVE CRITICAL LISTENING.** As musicians, we know that much of our thinking and processing occurs through the avenue of listening. We listen to evaluate the quality of sound, tone, dynamics, articulation, color, balance, intonation, etc. As conductors, our ability to listen, evaluate, and transform needs to be sharpened constantly throughout our careers; our students' abilities are no exception. Too often we assume that our students are listening with a high level of sophistication, have knowledge of performance practice, and hold values that are obtained through an experienced conductor's level of score study. To help students achieve these goals, we must hone their listening abilities and build them a repertoire of sounds and techniques from which they can draw in the future. By experiencing structured listening and evaluation, they should be able to hear more accurately and become more independent listeners. The taxonomy of critical listening (sidebar) can be used to focus and improve our students' listening skills. It includes terminology, expectations, and a rubric for what students are expected to achieve. It is a good idea to have them practice at each level of the taxonomy and, when they are ready, practice on multiple levels simultane-

ously. The most important strategy for using this taxonomy is to set clear expectations and ask for feedback—verbally, written, or in the sound they create.

## Context beyond the Score

We want our students to have a deep understanding of the musical aspects of the pieces they prepare, but there is so much more to providing a well-rounded music education. To achieve this depth, you can start by asking questions such as:

- When and why was the piece written?
- Who was the poet who wrote the text?
- What was happening politically and socially at the time?
- Can it be compared to other pieces in the composer's or poet's output, or to other works from the period?
- Were there any major events for which this piece was performed?

The answers to these questions can help the teacher and students understand the music more fully. Having this information tucked away in your score can aid with "teachable moments" as pieces of it become pertinent to the learning process. This material can also serve as full lessons or units during concert preparation. This information can make students' performance experiences much more meaningful and enriching.

What we do in a music classroom is not as simple as, say, downloading an app onto a smartphone. Think about just some of the concepts we teach: independent and cooperative learning, following instructions, living up to expectations, taking pride in work, developing critical thinking and listening skills, understanding historical and literary context, acquiring musicianship skills, and—perhaps most important—becoming increasingly creative human beings with a desire to be music-makers.

STUDENTS INTRINSICALLY WANT TO IMPROVE AND HAVE A DESIRE TO SUCCEED.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF ANTHONY BERNARDUCCI

# Technology

## IN THE NEW NATIONAL CORE MUSIC STANDARDS

**THE NEW STANDARDS ARE HERE! HOW CAN TECHNOLOGY HELP YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS TO MEET THEM?**

BY CHAD CRISWELL


Classroom Photos by Kim Grinnell

TWO STUDENTS WORK ON LIVE BEAT-MAKING WITH THE ABLETON PUSH.

**FOR TWO DECADES,** we have used the same nine standards to shape our music classroom curricula, but over time their generalities and simplicity have been overshadowed by a national move toward a core curriculum. In many circles, this in turn has lead to the old standards being seen as educationally insignificant. With the newly revised National Standards, we are now at a point where we can give further validity to the importance and significance of music's well-deserved place in our schools. Luckily, we also have a host of new technological tools that can be used to meet the new Standards in ways that not only enhance our current offerings, but also create new roads toward the ultimate goal of creating well-rounded, passionate musicians.

Getting to that point, however, requires that we first break free from the confusion and unwarranted fear that may accompany the new Standards upon reading them for the first time. There is a great misconception that the new Standards are somehow more difficult to put into use when, in truth, they are quite similar to the old ones, but with a 21st-century slant. When Elizabeth Sokolowski—division head for music education at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania—teaches her graduate students about these new Standards, she does her best to point this out and help allay their initial feelings that the redesign is a bit overwhelming.

"The first thing they say is 'Whoa, there is so much more here,'" remarks Sokolowski. "Then, we tell them to take a step back, look through the new Standards, and discover where and how the original nine standards reside in the new framework. They're in there, but an update to meet the student-centered vision of 21st-century education was needed. This is a critical and timely update for our profession within the field of education. The biggest shift is away from discrete skills and knowledge and into the three artistic processes of creating, performing, and responding, placing the emphasis on students and their measurable growth as musicians. Of course, foundationally, we begin with skills and knowledge (think original nine standards here!). But in this updated design, we are fostering teaching and learning environments that encompass the idea of teaching the whole musician."

She goes on to explain her thoughts regarding the processes behind the creation of the new Standards. "We looked at the original nine standards, the opportunity to learn standards, and also at the current adoption of many state standards for music. With this updated design, when we look at a curriculum for a K–12 program we are looking at the relevance of music in the 21st century. Are we providing programs to enable all students to achieve in music? For me the biggest thing with these Standards is that they substantiate our place in education while recognizing the diversity of the different types of music education classrooms that are flourishing in our nation's schools. We acknowledge the importance of having a solid K–8 program that will enhance and support the ensemble strands, but we also acknowledge the importance of things like mariachi, technology, guitar and ukulele, technology, rock bands, etc. as genres of music that are every bit as valid in an educational context. When we talk about job security and program growth, the more ways we can connect with students through music the more our programs will grow as a result."

Sokolowski also points out that much of the anxiety over the new Standards is unfounded because the majority of the items within them are already being addressed in most schools. She suggests first looking at the curricular documents for your school and uncovering all of the ways the updated Standards are being met. Then, by identifying the holes in the curricular documents, improvements and enhancements can be made. Says Sokolowski, "Are you creating performing, and responding to music in your classrooms? If so then you are already most of the way there."

A STUDENT RECORDS ARPEGGIATED CHORDS ON A MIDI CONTROLLER.

A STUDENT RECORDS INTO PRO TOOLS THROUGH A DYNAMIC MICROPHONE.

For Richard McCready, music teacher at River Hill High School in Clarksville, Maryland, the creation aspect of the new Standards is the most exciting and transformative part of the initiative. "I love how the new Standards include creation. Musical creativity was mentioned in the earlier standards but many people just kind of avoided it. In the past we had bands, orchestras, and other ensembles whose entire curriculum consisted of just recreating music. With the new Standards we are actively creating new music. Recreating is very teacher-centered, whereas creating music is student-centered." This philosophy may be nothing

new, but McCready hopes that the new Standards finally begin to push teachers to think outside of the box and get away from these outdated methods of teaching music. "I hope that we someday find ourselves in a time when we move away from being worried about what rating we are going to get at festival and instead look at what we can do in the classroom to help kids be creative. Wouldn't it be great to have your group go out there and play a piece of music that the kids composed rather than something you pulled off the shelf? Let your students get a deeper understanding of the music by not being so focused on the performance."

## Breaking the Mold

The majority of the fears regarding incorporating the new Standards seem to stem from traditional performance-based classes such as concert band, orchestra, choir and, to a lesser extent, the general music classroom. The traditional model in such classes has historically tended to be very performance-oriented with a much lower emphasis placed on studets responding to the music they are performing and often with little or no development of an individual's musical creativity outside of ensembles such as jazz band. Tim Purdum, K–5 general music teacher at Waterloo Community Schools points out that for some classrooms, "Some of the challenges teachers have now are the same challenges that teachers have had since the 1994 standards: That of finding ways to incorporate creating, improvising, and responding to music within the framework of a rehearsal."

The first thing to realize is that there is not an explicit expectation that every music class must provide rigorous opportunities in each of the four areas (creating, performing, responding, and connecting). Says Purdum, "I feel that even though the new Standards list a lot of new things for us to think about as teachers they are not intended to be balanced." Since a student's music education is cumulative throughout their many years in school, this provides some flexibility in terms of what should be done in an individual class. "You don't necessarily have to spend an equal amount of time on each one. All of the processes don't have to have equal weight in every classroom, because some of them will lend themselves more to one kind of class or another."

If you analyze your classroom offerings and find that your curriculum is heavy on one area but lacking in another, there are ways to fix it. Says McCready, "Any ensemble can find a way to introduce some kind of composition, and maybe they already do in a jazz band or similar context. Some teachers in music technology classrooms spend much of the year teaching composition but then often find ways to include the performance, refining, and responding elements as well."

Purdum likewise concurs that teachers should, "look at the pieces of the Standards that they don't currently do and start by trying to find small ways to incorporate new pieces into your existing activities." Technology, it turns out, can help a teacher incorporate these new but important pieces in

many different ways that can be both fun and educationally valid.

## Using Technology to Teach the Standards

The well-implemented use of technology, infused into common everyday classroom activities, can assist with meeting the new Standards in many different ways. Adding in the use of creative music apps in the general music classroom or utilizing programs such as SmartMusic to help encourage outside practice are just two of the many different examples of how technology can enhance rather than encumber curricula. In an ensemble-based classroom, for example, the almost ubiquitous availability of recording devices opens many doors for allowing students to select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation (as per Anchor Standard #4).

In regard to that specific standard, McCready says that recording technologies can be transformative tools in the classroom. "The ability to record and listen back to a student's performance is very important to the refining aspect of the new Standards." With digital audio and video recording capabilities built into almost every phone, tablet, and computer that we carry today, using them to record rehearsals, performances, and even solo practice sessions should be common occurrences. McCready continues by saying that, "We should regularly allow individual students to record themselves, listen to those recordings, critique them, and use that information to then refine and improve their performances based on what they heard themselves do."

But all of that takes time, and in the majority of classrooms across our country the emphasis continues to be on performance and often focusing on the concert at the end of the term. While it may never be possible to

## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

**STUDIO ONE FREE** *shop.presonus.com/products/studio-one-prods/Studio-One-Free*

Studio One Free is a complete digital audio workstation (DAW) with many professional-level features. It provides all of the recording and editing capabilities you should need for basic classroom and home use, and it's great for letting your students get creative and experience the fun of multitrack recording.

**SMARTMUSIC** *smartmusic.com*

Why not take the tedious tasks associated with playing tests and other evaluations, move them outside of the rehearsal, and free up some time to do other things? You can use SmartMusic to do a number of assessment tasks, and the software can save students' recordings and scores for use in their portfolios or as proof of their hard work.

**JAMHUB** *jamhub.com*

In ensemble classrooms, JamHub provides an easy way to allow small groups of students to work together at creating music. It also allows music educators to teach multiple bands or ensembles without disrupting other groups in the room.


**ABELTON PUSH** *ableton.com/en/push*

This hardware-based music sequencer is arranged in a grid of 64 pads. It's great for upper-level music technology classes where serious composition and performance are an integrated part of the curriculum.

**EDMODO** *edmodo.com*

Edmodo is already being used in general education classrooms all over the country, but it works great in music classes as well. You can use the social networking–style features of Edmodo to let your students collaborate, interact, and share their compositions, but it's also a place for you to share assignments, listening materials, and videos you want students to evaluate or respond to in some way. Students can even upload their own recordings right from their phones or tablets when they are away from school.

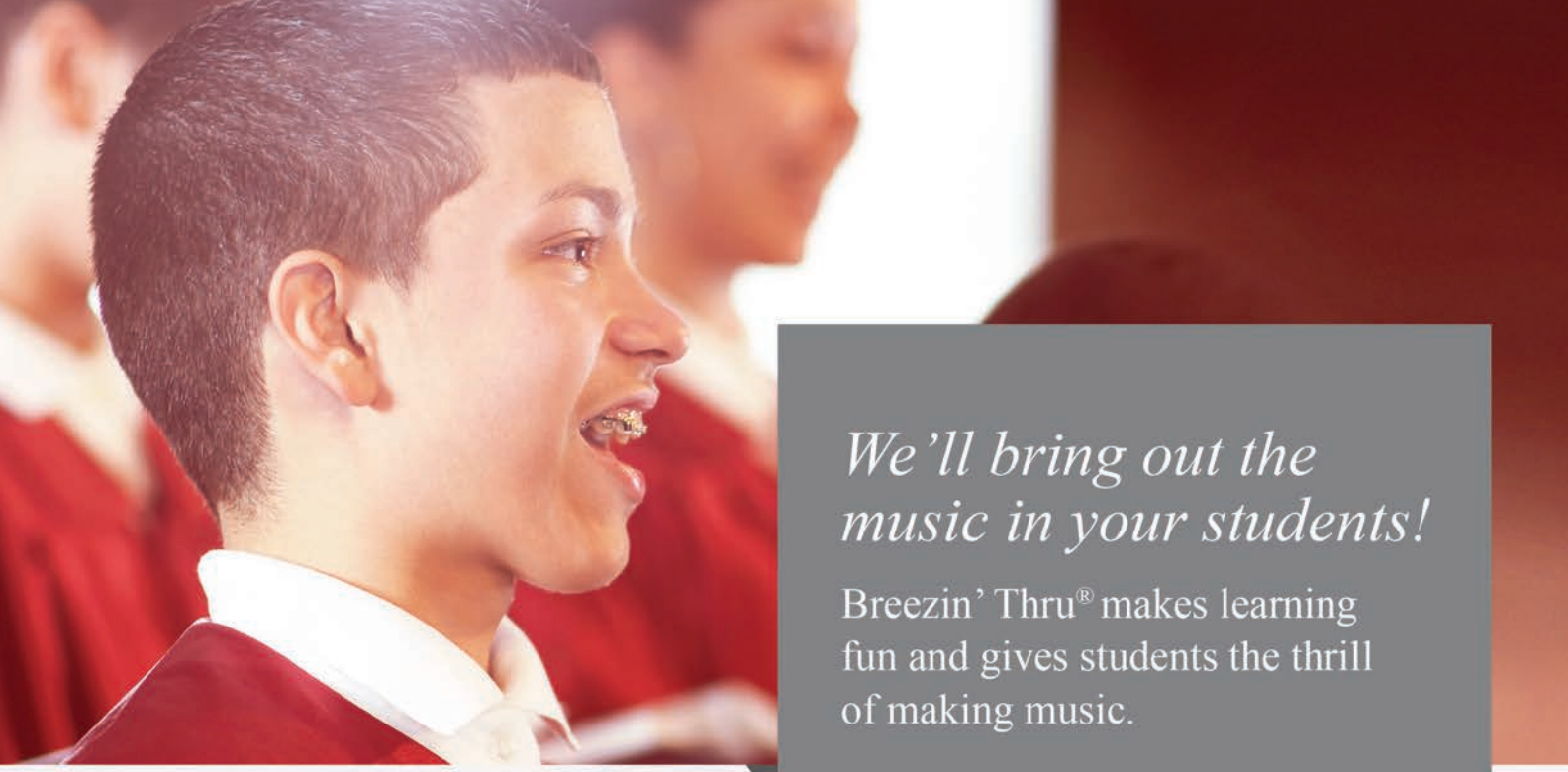


**REACTABLE** *reactable.com*

Available both as a tactile, physical table or as a much less expensive iOS and Android app versions, Reactable allows you to create music simply by dragging components into the field and making their sounds react to each other either by their proximity or through other factors associated with each piece.

**YOUTUBE AND VIMEO**
*youtube.com and vimeo.com*

Why listen only to your own ensembles when your students can listen to, evaluate, and respond to the performances of others as well? Sites such as these have thousands of recorded performances. You and your students can listen to different performances of the same piece by different ensembles as an opening to more creative discussions.



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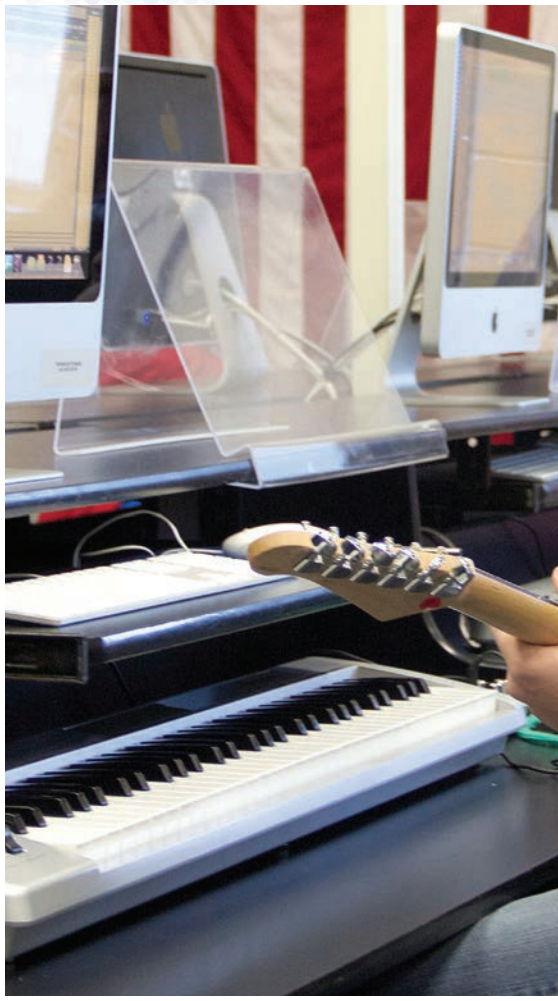
completely break with that model due to the demands and expectations of our schools and communities, it is possible through technology to enhance and infuse our ensemble classes with more aspects from the new Standards without having to completely change what we do.

With ensemble classes, recording technology is the key to opening this angle into the new Standards. "There is so much more we can do with a piece of music than just rehearse it and then do one concert with it," says McCready. "There are many more opportunities in this curriculum for people to refine and reflect during the rehearsal and development phase of a piece of music. The availability of these many new kinds of music technologies can actually free up more time in the band, choir, or orchestra room, allowing teachers to get away from the rehearsal and incorporate more opportunities for creativity and reflection."

Recording devices are not just a way to get kids to reflect on their performances, however: They are also an excellent way to allow kids to be creative and share that creativity with others. Says McCready, "Kids want to create from an early age, but at some point in the process we start to introduce inhibitions. Perhaps these inhibitions are born from the constant rehearsals, sometimes leading the kids to begin to think that they can't do it." In McCready's classroom, he does his best to break that self-conscious fear of failure and replace it with positive, pride-building activities that allow students to be creative without fearing that what they are doing isn't up to par. Whether they're playing on band instruments or Orff percussion instruments, or just using their voices, McCready tries to find many opportunities for students to become creators of music rather than just regurgitating music from a page. "Sometimes I just tell the kids to take their instrument, go be creative, and come back."

Today with the Internet and easy access to mobile communications devices, music education doesn't have to stop at the walls of the school. Technology has opened up many ways for students to continue their learning after they leave the classroom. In the area of online tools for teaching music, all of our experts have attested to the utility of one tool in particular: a suite of music applications from MusicFirst. MusicFirst Online Classroom (see "Resources" on page 62) is a standalone online solution for K–12 music education classrooms. It includes a suite of optional cloud-based software titles that can be seamlessly integrated into the music classroom. Says Sokolowski, "MusicFirst has an amazing array of applications for moving through these core processes of music education. Within MusicFirst, teachers have the opportunity to pick and choose between applications that would be useful in their particular classroom."



MusicFirst includes access to dozens of well-known music software titles, and provides them on a low-cost subscription basis to schools. Aural training and music theory titles such as Auralia and Musition, recording and music creation apps such as Soundation and O-Generator, access to the Naxos

Music Library, and the cross-platform music notation tool Noteflight are all a part of the MusicFirst catalog. What makes the MusicFirst service so significant to the music educator are the ways in which the different apps can be used to create and collect a complete digital portfolio of a student's musical education. Anything the student does within the apps can be saved and used for assessment purposes later on.

"Before MusicFirst, the kids were always tied to a single computer in a lab at school," says Sokolowski, "but with MusicFirst the kids can take their creativity outside the classroom and continue working with that application at home. This technology affords us the opportunity to get all of our students creating in and out of the classroom. MusicFirst has applications that are age-appropriate for every level."

Unlike traditional software packages that can cost hundreds of dollars for a site license, with MusicFirst a school pays a small amount per year per student (starting at as little as $1.00 per student). The total cost of the service varies depending on the tools the teacher wishes to make available to the class.

While there are literally hundreds of different technology tools that can help a teacher infuse new aspects of the National Standards into their classrooms, in the end it comes down to an individual teacher's initiative and dedication to the process. Sokolowski points out that this transition need not be done solo. "It's important to network with colleagues beyond our local school community to find out how they are tackling this in their own districts." In other words, don't be afraid to ask questions and network with colleagues beyond your immediate community. Speak with your peers in the music education community through your local NAfME chapter or join the discussions in the NAfME forums at *nafme.org/forums*. With a little bit of effort, you can find ways to work the concepts behind the new Standards into your teaching, not as add-ons but as integrated parts of your overall music curriculum.

## MUSIC TECHNOLOGY IN THE STANDARDS

**Just as the use of technology in the general education classroom has grown, so too have the ways in which we can use it to teach musical concepts. To emphasize this point, the new Standards include an entire set of requirements dedicated to those classes in which technological tools have become the primary source of learning. Sokolowski points out that, "There are five strands in the new Standards, and for the first time we have acknowledged technology as a viable thread within them." These technology Standards take the same form as the other strands, and work through the artistic processes as they relate to the anchor Standards.**

**Unlike some of the other strands that encompass multiple age ranges from early elementary through high school, the technology strand focuses solely on high school–level learners. "The set of technology Standards specifically applies to those educators who are teaching technology-based music classes," says McCready. "They are teaching music with the connection of technology—it's not like teaching a computer science class."**

**When you look closely, you can see how similar the technology strand is to the others.**

| A STANDARD IN THE ENSEMBLE STRAND: | A SIMILAR STANDARD IN THE TECHNOLOGY STRAND: |
|---|---|
| **MU:Cr1.1.E.5a Compose and improvise melodic and rhythmic ideas or motives that reflect characteristic(s) of music or text(s) studied in rehearsal.** | **MU:Cr1.1.T.Ia Generate melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic ideas for compositions or improvisations using digital tools.** |

**Although they differ slightly, it is easy to see how the two are related and center on the same basic concept of music education.**

**For those educators who are actively teaching a technology-based music class, the new technology strand Standards offer both validation and ideas to enhance existing classroom offerings. For those teachers who are considering such a program for their school, they offer an excellent road map for planning the curriculum from start to finish.**

BY ANDREW S. BERMAN

# When Every Performance Is Molto Agitato

## How can music educators help their students—and themselves—to overcome performance anxiety?

**ANXIETY IS A HEIGHTENED STATE.** In the best case, it manifests itself as excitement and provides some extra fuel to get the job done. However, anxiety is associated far more often with its negative effects, such as dwelling, over-dramatization, and, in extreme cases, breaking down. Even looking at the word "anxiety" on this page may make you a little anxious, and not in the good way. Now throw "performance" in front of that word and maybe your heart begins to beat a little faster, and images of your fifth-grade piano recital appear come to mind.

Performance anxiety is something that all musicians face from childhood through adulthood. Teachers have the benefit of experience on their side and, for the most part, adulthood brings some coping mechanisms and anxiety management techniques that become second nature. These same techniques may or may not work for your students, but fortunately performance anxiety is an area of study for a number of your colleagues. Learning more about it is the first step in helping young musicians (and yourself) become more comfortable and confident performers.

### Target the Source

To say that performance anxiety is due to a lack of adequate preparation and that the solution is to practice more is all an oversimplification. This view can be not only inaccurate but also dangerous, says Robert Woody, professor of music education at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. Treatment of performance anxiety depends on its source, and Woody defines three main categories: the person, the task, and the situation. If the source of the anxiety is within the student, and it's the way they think or feel about performance that is making them anxious, more practicing may only exacerbate the problem. The solution must be to help the student adopt a more rational thought process regarding performance.

Heather Hunnicutt, music department chair at Georgetown College in Georgetown, Kentucky, uses a

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"If I mess this up, I'll never get into All-State."

thought-stopping/replacing technique for students whose anxiety symptoms are cognitive. The teacher asks the student what they're specifically thinking or feeling when anxiety strikes—for example, "If I don't nail this solo, I'm a failure." The teacher then guides the student to a rational thought to replace the irrational one by asking questions: "What's the worst that can happen?" "How often do you feel that way?" "How often is it real?" Another technique is called "coping cards"—students write down positive feelings about their musical ability to read when they're feeling anxious. "We're in a different mental state when we're feeling anxious than we are most of the time. Our brain is playing tricks on us," says Hunnicutt. These coping cards remind the student of how they feel about themselves when they're in a more relaxed state.

Woody's other two sources of performance anxiety—the task and the situation—are external and can be targeted directly. When a student is anxious about a specific task—performing this piece on this date in this venue—the solution may very well be more preparation. In other words: Practice, practice, practice. The student can also benefit from simulated performances in front of an audience. Christopher Taborsky, band director at Monroe-Woodbury Middle School in Central Valley, New York, suggests starting with a small audience (family or, in the case of younger children, stuffed animals) and increasing its size incrementally. Hunnicutt uses this method of systematic desensitization as well: first inviting another listener to the private lesson, then having the student perform for the rest of the studio (i.e., other students on the same instrument), followed by performing at a student recital hour (i.e., an audience of fellow music students), and then, ultimately, having the student play at the target performance.


When the source is the situation, it may be something specific such as the time of day, the venue, or the performer's spot in the concert order. If the student (or the teacher) has control over the performance conditions, they may be able to avoid the source of the anxiety entirely. Even if the conditions are flexible, it may be better to use what Woody calls an anxiety hierarchy: He has the student make a list of all types of possible performing situations and then rank them according to the level of anxiety they induce. The student first tackles the easy situations and, once they are comfortable with those, moves on to the more difficult ones. "Performance anxiety makes students want to perform less, but the treatment is to perform more," he advises.


## Look at the Symptoms

Charlene Ryan, associate professor of music education at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts, identifies three primary manifestations of performance anxiety—behavioral, physiological, and psychological—and notes that success in managing this anxiety can be achieved by targeting and reducing its symptoms.

Hunnicutt further breaks down the symptoms into three levels: mild, moderate, and severe. Mild symptoms are normal and natural—a typical rise in blood pressure, for example. Moderate symptoms are those that begin to get in the way of the performance, and perhaps the enjoyment of music. Teachers can implement strategies to help students with moderate symptoms. Severe symptoms are debilitating and interfere with the task at hand. Profes-

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## WHAT ARE THE BEST—AND WORST—THINGS A MUSIC EDUCATOR CAN SAY TO AN ANXIOUS STUDENT?

### Christopher Taborsky

Focusing on positive aspects of a performance (dynamics, interpretation, tempo) rather than using negatives could help bolster a student's confidence over time: "Johnny, you have excellent rhythm, and I love how you interpreted the cadenza." A fallacy is believing that enough musical preparation will eliminate performance anxiety: "If you've prepared the music well enough, you won't feel nervous during the performance."

### Heather Hunnicutt

With novice teachers, there's the sense that the more they talk, the more wisdom they share, the better the teacher they are. The opposite can be true. The more the teacher butts in, the more anxiety the student feels. Often, it's better for the teacher to say less. When the teacher does speak, they should say "Do" instead of "Do not." Say "Do hold that note for its full value," instead of "Don't cut that note off early." Students can work with "do." "Don't" is a slap on the wrist.

### Robert Woody

Best: "You know how to do this. I've heard you do it many times. You are a fine performer. The audience wants you to do well and wants to enjoy the performance. Performance is just sharing music with other people. This performance is just one of many you'll do in the future." Worst: "You only have one chance. Don't blow it. This performance is big; lots of people will be there, wanting to see how you do."

### Charlene Ryan

I have found that when students tell teachers that they're anxious, many teachers appear not to know what to say or how to help, so they try to brush it under the table with comments like: "Don't be nervous" or "Don't worry" or "Relax." Unfortunately, this type of response really doesn't provide any assistance to the student and tends to invalidate the students' feelings. It's much better, I think, for the teacher to acknowledge students' anxiety—to let them know that this is a very common response to the performance context for musicians at all levels.

sional intervention is necessary for these cases, and it is important to note that a teacher should not play therapist.

Physiological symptoms are perhaps the easiest to spot, and include sweat, jitters, racing heart, and hyperventilation. Relaxation techniques, breathing exercises, and meditation can help with mild and moderate cases. Pharmacological approaches, such as beta-blockers and MAOI inhibitors, are controversial in the treatment of performance anxiety. Hunnicutt warns that they are only for severe physiological symptoms that hinder performance, and Taborsky notes that beta-blockers can diminish the benefits of anxiety: excitement and adrenaline. Ryan further remarks that beta-blockers carry risks. They should never be used by children, and should be used only under a doctor's supervision.

Behavioral symptoms require more attention to notice, and can include pacing, repetitive behaviors, grimacing, avoiding practice, and postponing a recital. Hunnicutt's strategy for these behavioral symptoms, and particularly avoidance, is to encourage the student to choose an accountability partner—someone they trust, respect, and won't get mad at when this person calls them out. The role of the accountability partner is to check in with the student: "Did you practice today?" The reason for this stems from the fact that when a performer indulges in behavioral symptoms, they're "binding" the anxiety by avoiding the symptoms. "It's like giving a dog a treat when they bite you. You're reinforcing the wrong behaviors," explains Hunnicutt. "Since it's so hard for a person in that mental state to help themselves, a buddy can do it for you."

The aforementioned coping cards and thought-replacement exercises work for cognitive symptoms, which include lack of focus, worry, and catastrophizing (i.e., imagining a worst possible—or even impossible—scenario). Hunnicutt also suggests a technique called "flooding," which is used to manage other types of anxiety as well. Flooding involves overwhelming the senses to a level where the person can no longer maintain their anxiety. The student is instructed that stress-inducing situations will occur during their rehearsal—other students will walk in and out, lights will go on and off, the accompanist may mess up, etc.—but the student must ignore all of this and keep on performing. This exercise is then followed by a period of debriefing and reflection. Since the student knows vaguely what's going to happen, and that this isn't the "real" performance, it's a safe situation in which to pick apart feelings of anxiety. After flooding, "Playing for a jury is less of a big deal," says Hunnicutt.

## The Teacher's Role

The concept of downplaying the performance is key to Woody's strategy to combat anxiety in his students. Teachers sometimes encourage their students to practice with the threat of an imminent concert, but this increases the likelihood of anxiety in those who are susceptible to it. "Don't present performance as high-stakes," advises Woody. "What performance is at its very nature is a person sharing music with other people. The audience wants to hear your music; they want you to do well. They're predisposed to liking what you play."

In private lessons, remember to tell the students what they are doing well, counsels Ryan. "Often, in private lessons, teachers focus on all the areas that need correcting or improvement. That's what students are paying for, after all—to get better!" Areas of improvement should be the focus of the lesson, but highlighting what the student is doing well is important to reducing anxiety. In other words, it's helpful to create a comfortable environment where a student's self-esteem can thrive.

Teachers themselves can impact

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students' performance anxiety in the classroom or ensemble rehearsal. "A big factor in anxiety is the student's perceived relationship with the teacher," says Hunnicutt. Student need to believe that you believe in them, and that you'll continue to do so even if they bomb. A study that Ryan did with Nicholle Andrews of University of Redlands in Redlands, California, found that conductors of adult choristers can significantly impact their performance anxiety. Ryan concludes, "Conductors who are anxious or moody, who single out individuals for criticism, who are unprepared, conduct poorly, or make last-minute changes were particularly problematic. So, avoiding any of those behaviors would be a good step in the right direction for rehearsal time."

## The Teacher's Anxiety

Performance anxiety stays with most of us for the duration of our performing lives. This means that many music teachers experience it from time to time. Woody reports that he sometimes overhears senior music education majors say, "I can't wait to be done with my recital so I never have to perform again." Teachers need to redefine their notion of performance so they can pass on a love of playing music to their students. Woody is a big believer in informal, off-stage performances: The more musicians perform in such a relaxed environment, the more they can see performance as just sharing music.

"Heed the advice you give your own students," says Taborsky. Just as people with phobias use incremental exposure to help them cope, teachers and students alike should perform as often as possible. Hunnicutt observes that, with adults, performance anxiety has less to do with lack of preparation and more to do with fear of negative impressions from others. "Know that even if your performance is terrible, it doesn't speak to your quality as a musician or music teacher. It happens."

Perhaps one of the best ways in which a teacher can help students cope and progress is for them to share their own experiences with performance anxiety. Taborsky recalls a high school all-county band festival. Before presenting at a conference, Woody reminds himself that "It's not a fluke that I've been asked to do this. I have something of value to share; people here are predisposed to find value in what I'm saying." Physical symptoms impacted Hunnicutt's singing when auditioning for college, but she learned how to put things in perspective and think realistically. A classical pianist, Ryan developed a poker face: "Whether I was anxious, calm, in control, or in trouble, I always had my game face that didn't betray my feelings. Believe it or not, I found this to be helpful in actually feeling more comfortable. Have you ever heard the expression 'fake it till you feel it'? Well, same concept."


**WHAT ARE YOUR BEST STRATAGIES FOR CALMING PERFORMANCE ANXIETY?**

Send your thoughts to *CarolineA@nafme.org* or fax a letter to 888-275-6362. Please include your full name, job title, school name, and the city and state where you teach.

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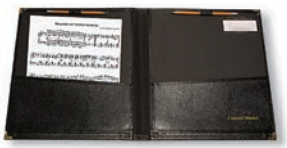

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NANCY HOROWITZ AND FLUTISTS FROM HER PROGRAM AT SCHOOL 24 IN PATERSON, NEW JERSEY

# Band and More at Scho

**Nancy Horowitz created an acclaimed band program from the ground up in Paterson, New Jersey, thanks to plenty of networking, heaps of donations, and an incredible amount of dedication.**

By Cynthia Darling

**AT SCHOOL 24** in Paterson, New Jersey, music teacher Nancy Horowitz heads a thriving middle school and elementary school band program. With a wide range of performances under its belt—including most notably a recent concert at Carnegie Hall with renowned flutist Sir James Galway—the band is enjoying its accomplishments. And yet, this powerhouse of a public school band program is not like many around the country. Says Horowitz, "We're an inner-city district and our students can't afford to rent or purchase instruments, so we rely on donations. Most students come to us without any prior knowledge of note reading, counting, or keeping a steady beat. I've only had one student ever who took a private lesson." Just how has this program risen to such acclaim? It's a story of chutzpah, resourcefulness, stops and starts, and a teacher possessed of an overwhelming vision for success.

The story of the program began over a decade ago. "I came to Paterson 11 years ago, after having taken a long break from teaching. When I heard that there was an instrumental music position available, I decided to leave my job as executive director of an education foundation. I wanted to spend more time making music with kids rather than granting funds for others to do so." Horowitz had taught band in the Bronx after college and so she "looked forward to working with inner-city students once again." She hoped to build an elementary school band program that "would give students the chance to see how much fun it is playing an instrument."

The first days were eye-opening.

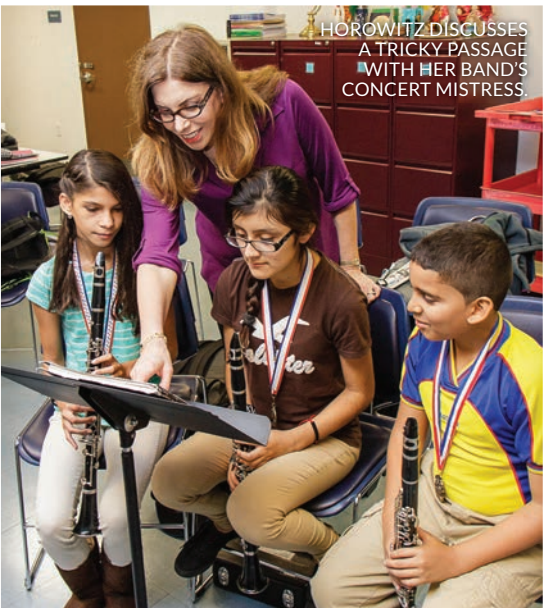
PHOTOS: GEORGE GARBECK

"The district supervisor hired me … but there were no instruments, music stands, books, or supplies—and there was no classroom." Obtaining instruments and supplies was her first priority. "That began my eight-year adventure of creating a program from nothing." She networked with a wide variety of sources during those early years, and her list of contacts makes the mind spin. "I wrote grants, networked, and asked friends and family for donations. The *Ridgewood News* sent a photographer and ran a front-page story about how my students needed instruments. The music director of St. Paul's Church here in Paterson reached out to his colleagues in the Episcopal Churches and collected used instruments. The


"THEY CONTINUE TO AMAZE ME AT HOW WELL THEY LEARN TO READ AND PERFORM THE MUSIC THAT I GIVE THEM."

# ol 24

instrument repair school in Redwood Falls, Minnesota, repaired them for free. The Ridgewood High School student organization Project Interact ran a drive to get us used instruments and funding to pay for repairing them. A bar mitzvah boy and a Girl Scout used our program as their service projects." With such active involvement from outside sources, "We finally had dozens of kids playing instruments—in the hallway." But, just as Horowitz's program was gaining ground, "As a result of budget cuts to education in 2010, I lost my job, along with just about every music, art, library, and world language teacher in Paterson."


HOROWITZ DISCUSSES A TRICKY PASSAGE WITH HER BAND'S CONCERT MISTRESS.

But the story doesn't stop there. "After a year I was called back, and sent to a new building. There I met the vice principal, who had been a teacher at my previous school. She knew what we had accomplished with the band and was happy to welcome me. She showed me that the school had two music stands. Nothing else."

Horowitz was not to be deterred. "So I started all over again. I wrote 13 grants to Donors Choose, starting with 'Our Dream is a Drum' for a bass drum. 'Bells Are Ringing' for a glockenspiel followed, plus 'Bits and Bobs for the Band,' 'A Great Reed,' and many more grants for music stands, reeds, music, everything." Her determination left no stone unturned. "I asked everyone I knew, including my high school classmates from New York's High School of Music and Art (now called La Guardia High School), relatives, friends, neighbors, and anyone who would listen. We received flutes, clarinets, trumpets, and, amazingly, alto and tenor saxophones, two euphoniums, a drum set, and a piano via Jackie Burrows, a letter carrier who connected us with a resident on her route. I wasn't in the hallway anymore, but in a back corner of the auditorium. Then, after two years, we got a new principal, Florita Cotto, who is a great advocate for the music program and moved me, my students, and all our equipment into a room. We had a band room!" At each step of the way, Horowitz's program has flourished with the help of outside musicians and programs that grant funds to educators. An administrator's support, as in the case of Cotto, has been invaluable.

**"The district supervisor hired me … but there were no instruments, music stands, books, or supplies—and there was no classroom."**

Horowitz's tales of gaining resources, support, and a venue for her band tell only half the story; the other half involves the dedication of the students themselves. The majority of students in her school begin playing without any music background. "We start with, 'This is a staff. This is a clef.'

HOROWITZ'S MUSICIANS DRESSED IN COLORFUL CLOTHING AND THEIR BAND MEDALS FOR THE SCHOOL'S HISPANIC HERITAGE FESTIVAL.

**"I always say that I'm not really teaching the kids to play instruments; I'm teaching decoding, counting, focus, working toward a goal, following directions, motor coordination, team work, positive behavior, self-control, compassion, kindness, persistence, and so much more."**

Our beginners work on sound production and learning to read notation—lots of homework! Articulation, breathing, intonation, and dynamics are introduced right away. Even beginners play scales, starting with just a few notes, and concert band students play four scales every day. We try to challenge our concert band students with increasingly difficult music. They continue to amaze me at how well they learn to read and perform the music that I give them."

Horowitz teaches grades five through eight, and sees her students several times a week. "I usually see fifth graders twice per week, and middle school kids more often. Some come three days, and others enjoy band so much that they opt out of art, computers, world language, and library to come and play their instruments every day. They progress nicely playing every day. One of Paterson's high schools, Rosa Parks, is a special school for fine and performing arts. It has a terrific band program. Last year, all five of my eighth graders took the admission audition and were admitted!"

Like many music educators, Horowitz has been faced with the issue of showing administrators that music matters. "Schools generally focus on academic programs, and rightfully so. Our students need to learn math and reading. My role has been to show administrators and colleagues how music can help support learning across the board. I always say that I'm not really teaching the kids to play instruments; I'm teaching decoding, counting, focus, working toward a goal, following directions, motor coordination, team work, positive behavior, self-control, compassion, kindness, persistence, and so much more."

WINTER HOLIDAY CONCERT

To take her musicians to the next level, Horowitz has brought in an amazing number of volunteers. Their contributions have included performances, private lessons, and master classes for her students. "Volunteers have been an important part of the program." Students have also worked alongside a local arts institution, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. "I would like to highlight how much help we have received from the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. Karl Herman, principal clarinet of the New Jersey Symphony, has already been to our school five times, and last year he brought his wife, pianist Erika Nickrenz, and NJSO principal flute, Bart Feller, to play some real virtuoso wind trios. They listened to our clarinet and flute players, and helped every one of them play better right away! The generosity of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra has enabled us to attend over 25 youth concerts at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center."

Horowitz shares the story of one student who had family issues that interfered with her academic success. "We started her on clarinet, and she took off immediately, also learning bass clarinet and tenor saxophone. She was talented enough to audition for Paterson's Rosa L. Parks School of Fine and Performing Arts, but had no one to take her there for the interview, which was in January. Finally, on the last day of school in June, she was able to get a ride to Rosa Parks. I called the music teacher, asked him to listen to her play, and she was admitted. After four years there, she's now in college, majoring in jazz performance at a school with a fantastic music program. Music turned her life around."

One hallmark of Horowitz's approach is her commitment to continue propelling School 24's band program forward. "I try to seize any opportunity to promote music and the

PHOTOS: GEORGE GARBECK

## Q & A

WITH NANCY HOROWITZ

**Q What do you know to be true about teaching music that you didn't know when you started?** I majored in music theory, not music education, so when I walked into my first job as a music teacher in the Bronx I didn't know what to expect. It took about a minute to realize that making music with kids is a lot of fun.

**Q If I weren't a music teacher I'd ...** I've worked as an elementary school teacher, fundraiser, public relations director, textbook editor, concert presenter, event coordinator, and art curator. Teaching band is the best!

**Q What's the biggest lesson you want your students to learn during their time in your classroom?** Learning to play an instrument, counting to play together in band, and performing in front of an audience are huge steps for a child. I tell my students that these are the hardest things they've done so far in their lives. Like in any group, some of our players learn their music faster than others, who might be experiencing difficulty. Some revel in performing in front of an audience, and others feel great anxiety. In the midst of all these new experiences, I try to stress to our students to be kind and compassionate toward each other. We're all trying our best, so be nice!

**Q The music education profession would be better if ...** we had more support—not news to anyone.

**Q What have you learned about students and parents through your work over the past years?** I work in a less traditional situation, since our students all play school instruments. Students and parents are relieved and grateful that there's no cost to them for instruments or books. We're always appreciative when we receive instrument donations and are happy when we have enough to go around.

arts. For example, two years ago, art teacher Briana Orefice and I saw an email announcing grant funding from Young Audiences New Jersey & Eastern Pennsylvania … After some online research, we created the idea of an Afro-Caribbean festival of drumming and artwork. This large project, which included around 200 student musicians, artists, and dancers each, required cooperation and support from our school administration, classroom teachers, district supervisors, and school board." This year, Horowitz and Orefice received another grant from Young Audiences for a brass quintet; each year brings a new opportunity for growth and change.

Horowitz has sound advice for educators facing circumstances similar to hers. Her gift of vision involves seeing possibility in unforeseen places—not only in the kids themselves but also in places for obtaining instruments. "Building a band program in an inner city can have its challenges when funding and resources are limited. My best advice is don't be deterred! There are unused instruments in attics and basements just waiting to be picked up and played, many musicians are happy to volunteer, and grants are available. It's hard work." But as the story of her program has shown, "The payoffs are amazing."

# workshop

Middle school percussion ensembles, common oboe problems, and more

GENERAL MUSIC

## Games in the General Music Classroom

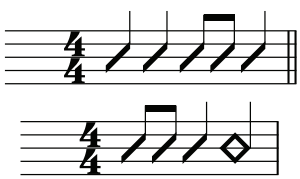
Children thrive on play, and grow both socially and intellectually through games—which them a natural fit for the music classroom. To get a sense of what musical games teachers are using—and how they are proving effective—we talked to Katie Traxler, PreK–5 music educator at Elias Howe Elementary in New York City.

Traxler, who uses games beginning in kindergarten and going all the way through fifth grade, finds that they motivate kids to master the content at hand, and to enjoy learning music in a new way—all while promoting efficiency in the classroom. "We use many of the games in my classroom in centers, which allows me to have my students working in small groups without me having to direct them. This frees me up to work with an assessment group or with a group of students who need extra help without wasting our precious little time together."

Traxler has games to address many facets of classroom music, and while they address these points in a comprehensive way, they also promote other important skills. "Games encourage character building, patience, and teamwork—skills that are extremely important in today's classrooms, where kids tend to play with their electronic devices all afternoon instead of going to the park. And they teach children to lose gracefully and settle disputes fairly." These are strengths that can serve them in all areas of life.

Traxler's students are fond of one game called "Busted." Popsicle sticks labeled with rhythmic patterns are retrieved from a jar; students then assemble in a circle and take turns clapping their rhythms. "You keep adding to your sticks to make the phrases longer and longer until you pull a stick with *busted* written on it and lose all your sticks and have to put them back in the jar. The person with the most sticks left at the end wins," explains Traxler.

KATIE TRAXLER'S STUDENTS PLAY "BUSTED."



IN A FUN GAME CALLED "BUSTED," WHICH BOLSTERS STUDENTS' RHYTHMIC AWARENESS, PATTERNS LIKE THESE ARE WRITTEN ON POPSICLE STICKS.

Another game in Traxler's classrooms is "Meter Match." This involves a set of cards with rhythmic phrases, which students have to match to the correct meters before clapping the rhythms or playing them on their instruments. There's also "Melody Bingo." Traxler says, "They have a bingo card with short melody fragments in each square and have to listen and figure out which melody I played or sang. This one can be quite challenging, but fantastic for building dictation and literacy skills."

For more game ideas, check out *katietraxler.com*. —*Adam Perlmutter*

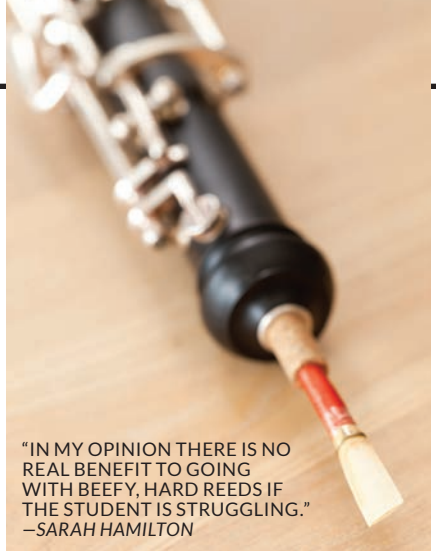
BRASS & WOODWINDS

## Fixing Common Problems on the Oboe

The oboe can be a challenging instrument to play well. Sarah Hamilton, associate professor of oboe at the State University of New York at Fredonia, has insights into ways to help young oboists fix some of the more common problems associated with the instrument.

No discussion on playing the oboe would be complete without first discussing reeds. Hamilton has a few significant thoughts as they relate to reeds and reed selection. "On a clarinet, you gradually advance to harder and harder reeds. On the oboe, I personally have never played

PHOTO: COURTESY OF KATIE TRAXLER



"IN MY OPINION THERE IS NO REAL BENEFIT TO GOING WITH BEEFY, HARD REEDS IF THE STUDENT IS STRUGGLING." —*SARAH HAMILTON*

on what I would call a hard reed. In my opinion there is no real benefit to going with beefy, hard reeds if the student is struggling." Aside from the hardness there is also the distinction of how the reed has been made in the first place. You can buy reeds that are fully machine-made (cheaper), hand-made (expensive) or some brands that are machine-made and then hand-finished. Hamilton recommends the latter as they tend to be the best for beginners and a good value for the money. She also suggests starting with American scrape reed styles rather than European reeds, and further recommends that students rotate between three to four reeds, soaking them in water rather than just the mouth to extend their life.

Hardware problems can drive a student to frustration if not caught and fixed in a timely manner. At every student's first lesson, she tests their instrument by playing on it to make sure it is functioning properly. She suggests using a repair shop that has a great deal of experience working on double reed instruments. "Not all repair shops have people that know how to fix and adjust an oboe properly." She recalls many occasions when a repair shop has told a student that everything is fine with their instrument, laying the blame on the reed or on the student's embouchure. "I can't tell you how many times I have changed someone's life by just twisting a screw."

Once the reed and instrument are in good working order, creating the proper embouchure becomes the next essential task. "I try to get a student to realize how they tune a note by rolling the reed into or out of the mouth on the lips. Rolling in with an 'ee' shape to the embouchure brings the pitch up while rolling out with an 'oo' shape takes it down. They need to realize and understand how that part of oboe intonation works." The embouchure is only one part of the mix, however, as good tone quality is ultimately built on a solid air support system. "We don't tune with our air—we tune with our face. Don't let kids try to play flatter by blowing less; it has to be an embouchure change while keeping the air support going." —*Chad Criswell*

STRINGS

## Teaching Young String Players How to Practice

This month, we're focusing on an oft-misunderstood aspect of student musicianship: practicing. Stacia Spencer—senior lecturer in string pedagogy at Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music in Evanston, Illinois, and string coordinator for the Northwestern Music Academy—offers her own practice techniques.

Spencer starts off with a basic rule of thumb. "A student is either practicing well, poorly, or not practicing at all." Just what do these various types of practicing look like? "When a student is practicing poorly, he or she will usually quickly and absent-mindedly run through the notes on the page. By doing this, the student is not taking the time to isolate measures or passages to solve problems with several repetitions." In this way, bad practice can often be worse than no practice. "Practicing quickly not only reinforces wrong notes, intonation problems, rhythmic issues, and poor technical execution, but can also reinforce existing physical tension problems and set-up issues along with a host of other issues."

Good practice is qualitatively different. "When students are practicing well, they come to the lesson able to play fluently the assignments given to them. Their playing may not be perfect, but the muscle memory of practice is evident in the fingers and bow. As the teacher, you can tell it is not the first time they have seen the music because they have already practiced it and you will not have to 'practice' with them."

For the practice-averse, Spencer has developed methods that make use of students' natural inclination for competition. "Periodically, we will hold 'Practice Olympics.' Each group chooses a country and team name. Each student receives a chart and records his or her daily practice time in minutes. At the end of the quarter, the minutes are added up and a winner in each class and an overall winning group class team is awarded. Gold, silver, and bronze medals are given out. This group effort inspires everyone to work together to help their team win."

Spencer also encourages teachers to help students set goals that will "help students see practicing as a means to an end. The teacher should set small, achievable goals to motivate the student at each lesson, and also have a long-term goal in the future to give a student's practice some direction." Playing a piece in group class for the student's peers, playing in a master class, or playing a solo in a recital are all great motivators.

"WHEN STUDENTS ARE PRACTICING WELL, THEY COME TO THE LESSON ABLE TO PLAY FLUENTLY THE ASSIGNMENTS GIVEN TO THEM." —*STACIA SPENCER*

PHOTOS FROM TOP: ISTOCK/GETTYIMAGES; COURTESY OF STACIA SPENCER

What is the ideal practice schedule? Spencer notes that it is unique to each individual. "Some students practice best in the morning and others do better later in the day. Daily practice should occur at a designated time of day." She recommends that an adult should be present to "monitor the practice and give positive reinforcement. Stickers may be awarded for small victories and bigger rewards for finishing a piece, performing in a recital, or finishing a book." Further, teachers should work to facilitate good relationships with the parents. "The teacher-parent-student relationship is crucial to any student's success. We often think of this as a triangle: all three have different yet equally important roles to fulfill. Fluid, open communication and trust need to exist in all angles of the relationship. As teachers, we do our best to establish a non-judgmental learning environment that the parent should seek to replicate at home. The student should be allowed to make mistakes; we should even welcome mistakes because they provide valuable information that helps us learn."

Spencer ends with the emphasis upon the parent's role. "In order to be effective during the week, parents should come to each lesson and take detailed notes so that they feel capable of teaching the student at home … When I look at the students in my class, the ones who are moving forward are the ones whose parents work with their kids at home on a consistent schedule."

**FIVE PRACTICE POINTERS**

- **Schedule:** Find a consistent time for daily practice.
- **Space:** Find a place to practice that is free of distractions.
- **Plan:** Practice with a practice chart.
- **Repeat:** Isolate trouble spots and practice several repetitions.
- **Listen:** Enjoy the music you are making and have fun!

*—Cynthia Darling*



PERCUSSION

## Starting a Middle School Percussion Ensemble

In middle schools across the country, you can find young student percussionists in the back of the room—counting rests, playing parts that may not be as demanding as their fellow musicians, and possibly misbehaving and disrupting the flow of rehearsal, thanks to the ratio of parts to players. Having a percussion ensemble program can help alleviate these issues and provide a unique opportunity for students to develop technique and musicianship. It might also spark a student's interest and excitement about other areas of percussion beyond classic marching bands or jazz ensembles.

"Finding percussion ensemble literature that will work for the number and ability of your students, as well as the instruments you have available, are two of the more difficult tasks," states Scott

Brown, assistant band director at Dickerson Middle School in Marietta, Georgia. "The easiest way to find the right match for your program is to attend as many percussion ensemble performances as possible and make notes in the programs of pieces that you like, and that you think could work. Also, talk to other percussion ensemble directors for ideas of pieces that have worked for them. The internet can be a valuable resource with simple searches on Google and YouTube. A YouTube search for 'middle + school + percussion + ensemble' has brought a result of over 32,000, with the first page having excellent results for appropriate literature with a wide range of instrumentation! Due to the variety in instrumentation and the number of performers required to play a piece, it is often necessary to make some adjustments. In many cases, the instruments required to perform a piece simply aren't available. Music for taiko drums and djembe can be played on concert toms and floor tome can function as Brazilian surdos. In many situations there are more students than there are parts. Keyboard parts are easily doubled if there are enough instruments."

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLES ALLOW STUDENTS TO DISCOVER MUSIC BEYOND STANDARD BAND REPERTOIRE.

PHOTO: ISTOCK/GETTYIMAGES

Once students are comfortable playing the notes and rhythms of a particular arrangement, focus the attention on technique and sound production. Recording rehearsals can certainly help with both objectives. Brown explains that "demonstrations of the correct technique or the desired sound should be intended for the entire ensemble so that it becomes a learning experience for all. It is also important to have students sing the music. Percussion is such an attack-based family of instruments that students often lose sight of musical line, phrases, and groove. Singing will allow them to hear the natural inflections of the voice. Singing the 'composite' of the different parts in the ensemble will help them to understand how their part fits in with the others."
*—Steve Fidyk*

CHORAL AND VOCAL

## Choral Singing: Vibrato or No Vibrato?

To use vibrato, or not to use vibrato? That's the question that may pop into many a choral director's mind when addressing a new group of singers. There are various reasons why, particularly as concerns

sopranos and mezzos, one option may be favored over the other.

So, why would a choral director prefer straight tone? "That may be what they themselves were taught—what their own choral directors appreciated," says Virginia Sublett, professor of voice and opera at North Dakota State University's Challey School of Music in Fargo. "They think it will improve intonation. They may have a prejudice against an operatic sound. They may prefer the sound of a boy choir or a show choir." Conversely, Sublett notes that a choir that employs the use of vibrato may have a more mature sound. "I think that people who are allowed to use the natural vibrato … are more connected with their breath. This allows for a greater potential for tone colors and tone choices. To achieve a genuinely straight tone, you tend to disconnect from the breath. If we're naturally hooked up to the breath, then we get that shimmer in the sound."

"TERMINOLOGY MATTERS."
*—VIRGINIA SUBLETT*

But must an all-or-nothing choice be made between "boy choir" and "shimmer"? Sublett suggests that a midpoint between the two extremes may be a more desirable goal for a choir's sound. "The shade of gray in the middle is always a good choice—the choir director may not want to go to the full-on vibrato that people would use to sing a Puccini opera. But a straight tone can be limiting, I think. There is a midpoint to be found, and that is worth exploring."

Having students vocalize on certain vowel sounds may help choir directors to find that midpoint and/or a straight tone that is technically and artistically viable. "Work with your choir singers on 'oo' sounds—it's a cooler sound and easier to take the extra vibrato out of that than an 'ah.' The 'oo' sound gets them with the idea of gathering the sound and putting it into a small space," notes Sublett.

In this context, your terminology can also greatly impact the sounds your singers create. "When you ask someone to sing straight tone, they're going to lock their jaws and tense up. If a student tries to sing loudly in a straight tone, it can sound forced—sopranos can sound harsh, mezzos can sound hooty. If you say to a soprano, 'Sing with a pure, focused tone. Think of a smaller space to put the sound in,' they can minimize the kind of vibrato that choir directors may not like," says Sublett. "Terminology matters. Everything we say to people we are standing in front of will evoke a response in their mind. If you say 'straighten out the sound,' that's what you'll get: a straight sound. But if what you actually want is a well-tuned chord, say 'Tune it up. Altos raise your pitch, sopranos lower yours, etc.' Ask for what you want. 'Sing right in the center of the pitch. Gather the sound. Imagine that you are singing the tone into a small space.' These ideas have resonances other than straight tone." *—Susan Poliniak*



ALTERNATIVES

## The Care and Feeding of Classroom Guitars

Classroom guitars are generally durable instruments, but they do need a little maintenance to be kept in optimal shape. To learn more about this, we consulted Bill Purse, chair of the music technology and guitar departments at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and the

PHOTO: ISTOCK/GETTYIMAGES

author of numerous educational publications, including *Sound Innovations for Guitar* (Alfred Music).

Guitars respond to fluctuations in temperature and humidity. Dryness in particular is the instrument's enemy. In the winter months, indoor heating can cause a guitar's wood to contract, resulting in suboptimal playability and even cracks in the instrument. To counteract this, there are humidifiers on the market—by Dampit, Planet Waves, and Oasis, to name just a few—that can be placed inside a guitar's soundhole. For a whole classroom of instruments, the costs can add up, so Purse offers improvised alternatives. "You can take a little plastic medicine canister, poke holes in it, place a damp sponge inside it, and put that in the case. And some people find that an apple or potato inside the case will also do the trick."

Strings sometimes break during classroom playing, so Purse recommends having a supply of individual strings (not full sets) for backup. In his classroom, he prefers those made by D'Addario. Strings lose their sonic luster over time, so it's important to change them periodically, perhaps every semester. When changing a full set of strings on a guitar, don't remove them all at once, but one by one to keep proper tension on the neck. "Never put steel strings on a nylon-string guitar!" warns Purse. "That can just destroy an instrument."

As for cleaning a guitar, avoid furniture polish, which can cause waxy buildup or even damage the finish. It's best to use a light treatment of a dedicated guitar polish such as that made by Virtuoso, or even a soft cloth dampened with water. Fretboards can get grimy, and to clean them you can use extra-fine (000) steel wool and a light coating of lemon oil, which gives the fretboard a smooth feel. "Don't gouge the fretboard; just lightly hit the frets, going with the grain of the wood, and after that apply the lemon oil," recommends Purse.

At the beginning of the summer or before any long break, it's a good idea to prepare guitars for rest by loosening the strings, tuning them down roughly a whole step to release tension on the neck and bridge. Purse says, "Keep them in the case, away from windows and sunlight so that they'll be in prime shape for the students to perform, arrange, and improvise together in the coming semester!" —*Adam Perlmutter*

PHOTO: LYNN EMBERG PURSE

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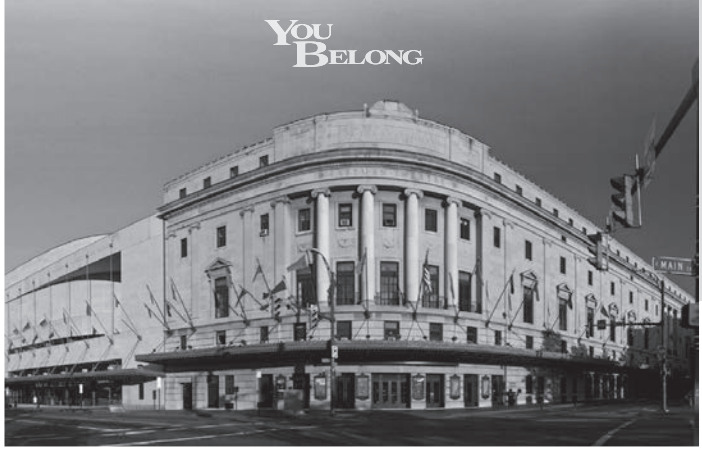


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BY PATIENCE MOORE

# Teaching American Folk and Patriotic Songs

## Old classics offer opportunities for movement, interdisciplinary work, and more.

**AMERICAN FOLK**, traditional children's, and patriotic songs are genres that have long held a place in the elementary music repertoire. For Rebecca Birnie, a lecturer in music education at Frostburg State University in Frostburg, Maryland, the reasons for including these classics are both clear and multilayered. First and foremost, she notes the inherent cultural value of the repertoire: "An elementary general music teacher's role in the teaching of American folk songs is critical to the enduring value of these songs and their importance to the cultural heritage of our nation."

PATRIOTIC SONGS CAN BE USED IN INTERDISCIPINARY WORK WITH ART CLASSES.

Years ago, prompted by what she saw as an alarming lack of knowledge in her students of this classic American repertoire, Birnie—a 20-year veteran of elementary music education—set about picking up the pieces of a genre that has been threatened with extinction. "I began purposeful planning in my own classroom to include repertoire related to these types of songs. The next generation of music educators needs to grasp the opportunity to teach songs of American cultural heritage, creating a foundational repertoire for students."

> "An elementary general music teacher's role in the teaching of American folk songs is critical."
> —REBECCA BIRNIE

The benefits of using this music in the elementary classroom are many. The strength of these songs "transcends grade levels," says Birnie, as they have proven to be "timeless, ageless, and have a broad sense of appeal of students of all ages. With continued use of songs and recurring repertoire themes … students not only learn the song, but memorize the text and internalize the song and its meaning in relation to music, history, and culture." The songs also provide opportunities for interdisciplinary learning with English, history, and social studies teachers or, if time allows, touching on the interdisciplinary connections with the students within the context of the music classroom.

Particularly rich in the elementary music context, most of this classic repertoire comes with attendant kinesthetic teaching options. Many of these songs are taught with accompanying movements and/or games that can be found in books, workshops, and online. For simple movements, Birnie recommends "She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain," "Here We Go Looby Loo," and "I've Been Workin' on the Railroad." Folk dances can be used with "Old Brass Wagon," "Turkey in the Straw," "Down the River," and "Oh! Susannah." Singing games may accompany songs such as "Cut the Cake," "Button, You Must Wander," "Old Mister Rabbit," "A Tisket, A Tasket," and "Acka Backa."

For Birnie, who often has her students play along on a washboard or spoons, "The songs are often simple in melody, form and structure, which makes them easy to learn, recall, and pass on to the next generation. Sometimes, simplicity is key."

PHOTO: COURTESY OF REBECCA BIRNIE

BY DEBBIE GALANTE BLOCK

# Introducing Students to Conducting

## Learning how to conduct improves students' musicianship and more.

**"MAKING SURE** that students have a thorough understanding of conducting gestures makes for much more effective musical communication," says Christopher Andrade, director of vocal music at Darien High School in Darien, Connecticut, who also teaches a youth choir of children from fourth through eighth grade. He notes three advantages to teaching students the basics of conducting. First, it can improve students' musicianship through a more physical sense of tempo, beat, dynamics, articulation, and phrasing. Second, it helps to establish and strengthen mutual respect between students and director. "Lastly, I believe we have an obligation to prepare our students for continued success once they leave us. Students should be prepared to be conducted. Program at least one a cappella selection, use a student accompanist; create opportunities for the conducting experience."

Andrade notes that it's best to introduce conducting as part of a rehearsal, but he generally waits until an opportunity presents itself—e.g., if a group is consistently missing an entrance. "'OK, music down. Everyone pick up your right hand and hold it in front of you with the palm facing down.' Conducting is a means to an end. It's most helpful if students can tie the knowledge of conducting directly to their own musical success."

Before learning how to conduct, students need to understand the beat pattern. "Start with a repeated downbeat. You might use 'Carol of the Bells' or a similar piece felt 'in one' as an example. Have the students count out loud, 'One, one, one…' as they conduct with you. I take them through one-, two-, three-, and four-beat patterns, always with them conducting along and counting aloud. Once the majority of the group has mastered this, I begin switching meters, reminding them to return to 'one' whenever we conduct a downbeat."

> "I believe we have an obligation to prepare our students for continued success once they leave us."
> —CHRISTOPHER ANDRADE

Once the beat pattern has been established, students can perform a simple phrase with different tempi, dynamic levels, and articulations. "Make wild differences within the phrase, far beyond what would be considered musically appropriate. It becomes a game, with students laughing when you catch them missing a cue. It's amazing how quickly they develop an intense focus, allowing you to then make much more subtle changes to which they'll respond with great energy and precision." Students can also pair off and take turns conducting each other, but Andrade recommends, "putting students in front of the whole group and encouraging them to make bold choices. There's something almost magical about having an entire group of one's peers respond to one's nonverbal direction."

ONCE STUDENTS GRASP A BEAT PATTERN, A CONDUCTING EXERCISE CAN BECOME A GAME.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF CHRISTOPHER ANDRADE

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# collegiate

BY ANDREW S. BERMAN

## Getting Your First Job as a Music Educator

Determination, strategy, and a variety of resources can help new graduates.

**WHEN THOMAS WEST**, instrumental music teacher at Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School in West Chester, Pennsylvania, was looking for his first job out of college, he spent two hours a day job hunting. In the second week of August, he got his offer. This experience bespeaks not only his prioritization of finding a job, but also his determination not to give up even as he closed in on the beginning of the school year.

Deborah Confredo, professor of music education at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, has experience in hiring and advises that there's no wrong time of year to look for a job: "There are a lot of positions that open up midyear. If you graduate midyear, you don't have to wait around." West recommends starting in February or March to apply for positions that begin in the fall, and provides an extensive list of job posting resources in his article "Hire Me! Tips for Finding Your First Music Teaching Job after Graduation" (*musicedmajor.net/2010/07/14/tips-for-finding-job*). He adds to this the Music Teachers and Band Directors groups on Facebook (*facebook.com/groups/musicpln* and *facebook.com/groups/banddirectors*, respectively), and the #mused and #musedchat hashtags on Twitter. Confredo suggests exploring campus career services and local job fairs. Attending events such as professional development conferences can be great opportunities to network and, as Confredo counsels, "Practice being professional."

> "The best you can do is just put your best foot forward."
> —THOMAS WEST

When it comes to the application process, West says, "Take any opportunity to write as an opportunity to personalize." Don't use the same cover letter repeatedly: Tell the hiring committee why you want to work at their school.

Outside of the public school system, rules and expectations may differ. "Charter schools are about offering a different choice. They may be looking for somebody who has an outside-of-the-box approach," says West. Also, a school's focus, mission, or religious affiliation may affect curriculum, so extra research is recommended.

West and Confredo agree that practical presentations such as performance and conducting demonstrations during interviews are rare, but they do occur. In most cases, applicants are warned in advance. "They want to see that you can prepare, are versatile, and can demonstrate good musicianship," says Confredo.

"The most important part from an interviewer's perspective is figuring out what the applicant will be like on the job," advises West, who stresses that applicants should be candid and not pander. "Don't tell them what you think they want to hear. You really don't know what they're looking for, so the best you can do is just put your best foot forward."

For those entering the profession later in life, distance in age from the students can be an asset: There's less chance of being seen as a "friend" figure. West coaches, "Play up your maturity." ▮

DEBORAH CONFREDO NOTES THAT THERE'S NO WRONG TIME OF YEAR TO LOOK FOR A JOB AS A MUSIC EDUCATOR.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF DEBORAH A. CONFREDO

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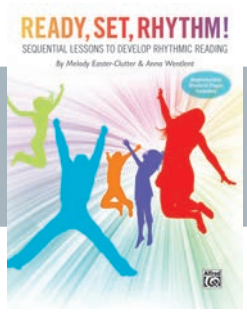


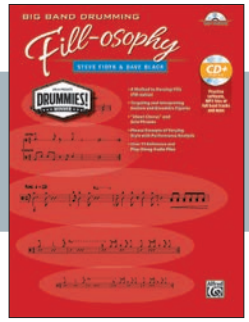


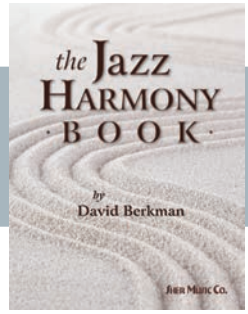


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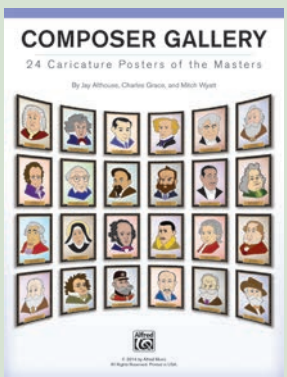
TEACHING AIDS ▶

## Composer Gallery




**By Jay Althouse, Charles Grace, and Mitch Wyatt** ($29.99) This full-color poster set depicts 24 of the most famous composers, illustrated as caricatures on 9" x 12" cardstock. The reverse side of each card includes biographical information, important dates, and historical information. Suitable for use on walls and for games in the music classroom, these posters can introduce students to the lives and music of: Bach, Beethoven, Berlin, Berlioz, Bernstein, Brahms, Chopin, Copland, Debussy, Dvorák, Ellington, Handel, Haydn, Hildegard of Bingen, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Morley, Rossini, Saint-Saëns, Schubert, Sousa, Stravinsky, Tchaikovsky, and Verdi. **Alfred Music,** *alfred.com*

BOOKS ▶

## Ready, Set, Rhythm!

### Sequential Lessons to Develop Rhythmic Reading

**By Melody Easter-Clutter and Anna Wentlent** (2013, paperback, 92 pgs., $24.99) This curriculum introduces rhythmic notation through movement-based activities. Designed to be integrated into a music class or rehearsal, each 10-minute kinesthetic exercise is presented in lesson-plan format with instructions and rhythmic concepts. The lessons are divided into eight progressive units, each of which concludes with a reproducible student assessment. Topics include tempo, note values, dictation, and more. Recommended for grades 4–9. **Alfred Music,** *alfred.com*

## Big Band Drumming Fill-osophy

**By Steve Fidyk and Dave Black** (2013, paperback with CD, 88 pgs., $21.99) This text offers a comprehensive approach to playing and interpreting fills in a big band setting. With advice on how to interpret section and ensemble figures, Steve Fidyk and Dave Black give detailed information that can strengthen a drummer's ability to recognize one-, two-, and four-bar section/ensemble figures quickly and easily. The companion MP3 CD contains over 75 reference and play-along examples extracted from real drum charts. These examples have been "looped" or repeated for thorough study. **Alfred Music,** *alfred.com*

## The Jazz Harmony Book

**By David Berkman** (2013, paperback with two CDs, 206 pgs., $32.00, also available as PDF/MP3 download) Starting from the most basic harmonic situations and progressing to contemporary harmony, this book shows how to select the best chord choices. Topics covered include basic functional harmony, diatonic substitutions, secondary dominants, tritone substitutions, color chords, and more. This text can help students speak the language of harmony and learn the changes of standard tunes. Includes two CDs with over 150 recordings of the examples in the book. **Sher Music Company,** *shermusic.com*

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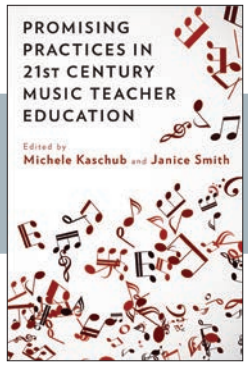
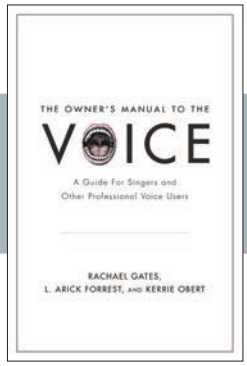



## Promising Practices in 21st-Century Music Teacher Education

**Edited by Michele Kaschub and Janice Smith** (2014, paperback, 272 pgs., $35.00, also available as hardcover and eBook) This survey of emerging music and education landscapes presents promising practices in music teacher education. Contributors explore the balance between curriculum and pedagogy, the power structures that influence education, and the challenges that surround institutional change. Models of programs featuring project-based fieldwork and more are offered. **Oxford University Press,** *oup.com*




## The Owner's Manual to the Voice

**By Rachael Gates, L. Arick Forrest, and Kerrie Obert** (2013, hardcover, 288 pgs., $99.00, also available in paperback and as an eBook) This text provides singers with the knowledge necessary to communicate effectively about their instrument. Included is an overview of vocal anatomy, as well as discussions on caring for the voice, common causes of vocal changes and problems, and information on choosing, talking to, and working with an ENT. *The Owner's Manual to the Voice* provides insights that any vocal professional may find helpful. **Oxford University Press,** *oup.com*


## A Composer's Guide to Game Music

**By Winifred Phillips** (2014, hardcover, 275 pgs., $29.95, also available as an eBook) Composers of video game music must master an array of specialized skills, including the creation of linear loops and compositional fragments for use within a generative framework. Winifred Phillips provides a practical guide that leads aspiring video game composers from acquiring the necessary creative skills to finding work in the field. Topics covered include musicianship, themes, music and game genres, working with a development team, audio technology, running a business, and more. **The MIT Press,** *mitpress.mit.edu*


CDS ▶

## Coloreando: Traditional Songs for Children in Spanish

**By Marta Gomez** (2013, 17 tracks, $14.99, also available as digital download) Featuring Marta Gomez and friends, this collection of traditional children's songs can be a fun and effective way for students to learn and practice Spanish. The album comes with a 24-page songbook with full English translations for sing-along applications. Songs include "Con Real y Medio" ("With a Nickel and a Half"), "El Barquito Chiquitito" ("The Little Boat"), "En Coche Va una Niña" ("A Girl Rides in a Carriage"), "La Pájara Pinta" ("The Spotted Bird"), "Naranja Dulce" ("Sweet Orange"), and more. **Global Language Project,** *glp4educators.org*


DVDS ▶

## Uke for Guitar Players

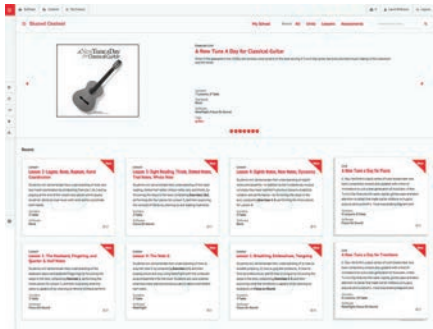
**Hosted by Marcy Marxer (175 minutes, $24.95) This DVD primer is designed to get students up and running with ukulele technique quickly. It covers, among other topics, the different types of ukuleles, various tunings, and technical subjects such as fingerings, with an approach that adapts to this instrument the knowledge that guitarists likely already possess. Non-guitarists alike can use this method as well, via learning each ukulele chord one at a time. The interactive format of this DVD allows the student to "play through," and includes lessons with instruction and demonstrations, which are immediately followed by video play-alongs where each technique is applied. This structure allows a student to proceed at his or her own pace, repeating lessons for further practice or moving forward with the instruction as concepts and techniques are mastered. eMedia Music Corporation,** ***emediamusic.com***

# resources
... CONTINUED

WEBSITES ▶

## MusicFirst

**By Music Sales Corporation** (Pricing from $2.00 per user per year) The cloud-based MusicFirst Online Classroom was created to provide students and teachers with an affordable, accessible suite of features and software options. It includes built-in testing and assessment tools, access to hundreds of online standards-based lesson plans and multimedia materials for K–12,



classroom management tools, access to a large library of instructional materials and sheet music from a variety of sources, and more. Accessible via any Internet-enabled device, MusicFirst allows students to work on their projects from home or at school. **MusicFirst,** *musicfirst.com*

ACCESSORIES ▶

## DBR Series Loudspeakers

**By Yamaha Corporation** (DBR10—$529.00, DBR12—$659.00, DBR15—$899.00) Comprised of 10", 12", and 15" models, the DBR Series loudspeakers include ergonomic handles; durable, lightweight cabinets optimized for front-of-house sound, floor-monitoring, and rigged applications; 50° wedge angles, and M8 rigging threads. Each model has two input channels, and can accept inputs from XLR, TRS phone, and RCA plugs for use with CD players and other stereo line-level sources. **Yamaha Corporation,** *usa.yamaha.com*

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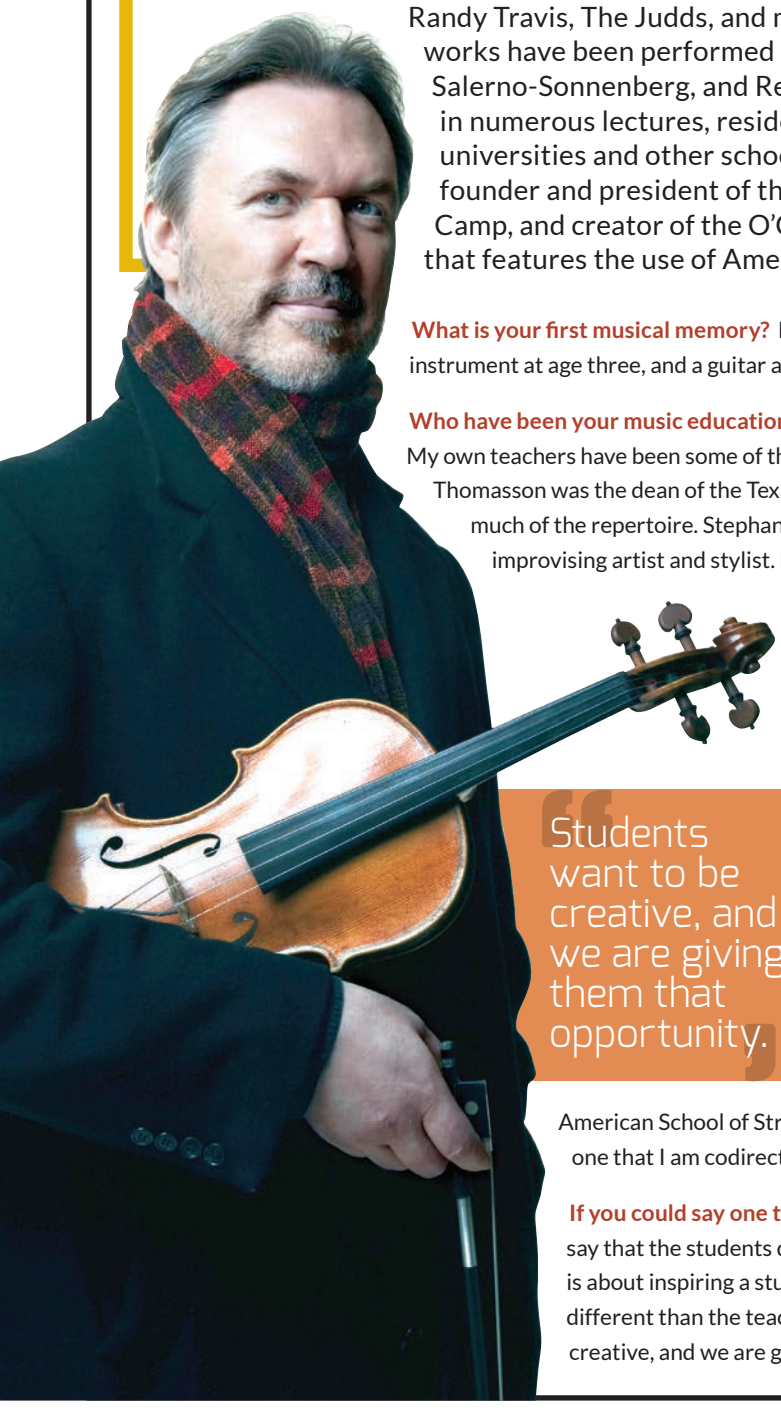
## MARK O'CONNOR

**VIOLINIST, COMPOSER, AND EDUCATOR** Mark O'Connor is an accomplished musician in every sense of the word. At the tender age of 13, he won the Grand Master Fiddler Championships and has since added many other awards to his list of accolades. As an instrumentalist, his work can be heard on dozens of recordings, from his own albums to the soundtracks of Ken Burns documentaries. The long list of musicians with whom he has played includes the likes of Dolly Parton, James Taylor, Paul Simon, Randy Travis, The Judds, and many others. A prolific composer, O'Connor's works have been performed by of the London Philharmonic, Yo-Yo Ma, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg, and Renee Fleming. As an educator, he has participated in numerous lectures, residencies, demonstrations, and workshops at universities and other schools throughout the United States, and is both founder and president of the internationally recognized Mark O'Connor String Camp, and creator of the O'Connor Method for strings, an innovative program that features the use of American music. He currently resides in New York City.



**What is your first musical memory?** Music on my folk's phonograph player is the first. I had a toy instrument at age three, and a guitar at age six.

**Who have been your music education heroes—the ones who have really made an impression on you?** My own teachers have been some of the greatest players and leaders on the instruments. Benny Thomasson was the dean of the Texas-style fiddlers; he transformed American fiddling and created much of the repertoire. Stephane Grappelli, the iconic jazz violinist from France, was the great improvising artist and stylist. He made jazz violin famous.

**How did learning about and playing music make you feel as a child?** I remember my first violin lessons at age 11. It was thrilling to learn this instrument and remember as an adult how it felt to first draw the bow across the strings. I remember that I felt the emotions of music in a new way: the joy of the hoedown, the spirit of the jig, the sentimentality of the waltz, and the hopeful optimism of the blues.

> "Students want to be creative, and we are giving them that opportunity."

**What has been your involvement in music education and music education advocacy?** I have released the O'Connor Method for violin and related strings instruments, including string orchestra. The books are authored for every level of student, from beginner to advanced, and for use in private study and in the classroom. We have tens of thousands of students learning from the O'Connor Method and the American School of String Playing. We host string camps in the summer, including a new one that I am codirecting with my wife Maggie in New York City, August 3–7, 2015.

**If you could say one thing to music educators everywhere, what would it be?** I would say that the students deserve more than they are getting. It is not about being correct, it is about inspiring a student to seek out their own truth in music. It could be very different than the teacher had planned. But that is beautiful. Students want to be creative, and we are giving them that opportunity.

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