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for the common
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—Wendy Moy

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**NAfME National
In-Service Conference**
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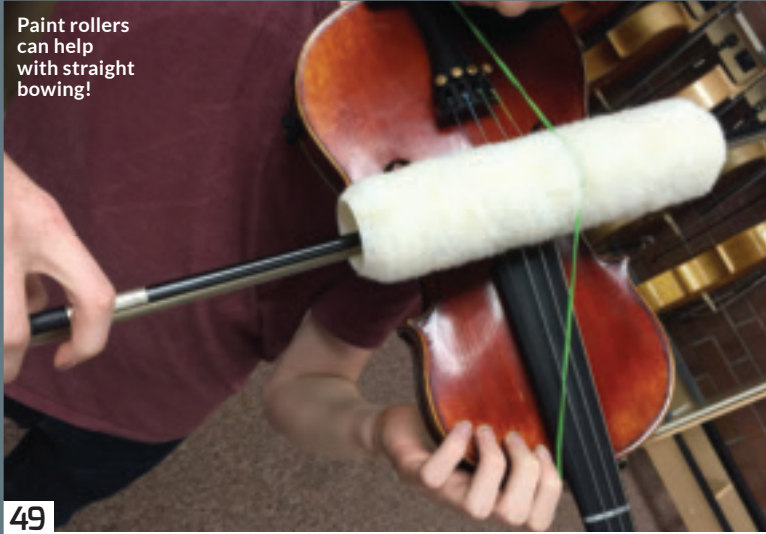
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For a listing of the NAfME National Executive Board, please see our website: nafme.org.

Articles in *Teaching Music* do not necessarily represent the official policy of the National Association for Music Education.

Teaching Music is created for NAfME by In Tune Partners, LLC.
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The National Association for Music Education is a voluntary, nonprofit organization representing all phases of music education in schools, colleges, universities, and teacher-education institutions. Active NAfME membership is open to all people engaged in music teaching or other educational work in music. Associate membership is open to those providing studio/private teaching, working in the music industry, or advocating for music education. *Teaching Music* (ISSN 1069-7446), an official magazine of the National Association for Music Education, is issued to members four times per year in August, October, January, and April at an annual subscription price of \$10. **Office of publication: National Association for Music Education, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston, VA 20191-4348, U.S.A.; 703-860-4000.** Produced by In Tune Partners, LLC. Institutions may purchase one volume year of four print issues for \$200. Single copies of issues are \$30. A limited number of back issues are available for purchase. Permission requests to reproduce or otherwise use material published in this journal should be submitted to Caroline Arlington at CarolineA@nafme.org. Periodicals postage for *Teaching Music* is paid at Herndon, VA 20170, and at additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *Teaching Music*, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston, VA 20191-4348, U.S.A. Copyright ©2016 by the National Association for Music Education. Printed in the U.S.A.

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upbeat

Teaching in today's music classroom By Rosalind C. Fehr

Attendees of the 2015 NAFME National In-Service Conference benefited from professional development they could immediately apply in the classroom.



Ready, Set, Learn at NAFME's 2016 National In-Service Conference

FROM ALL PARTS of the United States and beyond, attendees of the National Association for Music Education's 2016 National In-Service Conference will gather November 10–13 at the Gaylord Texan Resort in Grapevine, Texas. NAFME's annual conference will attract music educators, teacher educators, future music educators, students, and performers.

Conference attendees will have the chance to learn from one another and acquire innovative teaching techniques. Visit bit.ly/NAfME2016 for information about registration, lodging, and 130+ professional development sessions. Attendees can receive up to 17 contact hours of professional development recognition for attending this year's conference.

HIGHLIGHTED PRESENTERS

• **Jimmie Abbington** will present two sessions: "The Negro Spiritual Revisited:

Its Meaning and Performance Practices for Elementary School Students" and "Choral Works for High Schools by New and Contemporary African-American Composers."

• **Peter Boonshaft** will offer his popular Band Directors Academy, a two-part session that allows band directors of

all levels to develop their skills and understand while playing in an ensemble. Sign up at bit.ly/BandDirectorsAcademy.

• **John Feierabend** will give three breakout sessions on his "First Steps in Music" and "12 Steps to Musical Literacy using Conversational Solfège" methods.

• **Jim Henry** will lead the Male Directors' Chorus hosted by the Barbershop Harmony Society.

MUSICED TALKS

• **Warren Zanes** will highlight connections between music technologies, those of both the creators and the consumers, and broader music and social studies

Music helps shape the way our students understand themselves and the world around them.

STAY CONNECTED TO GRAPEVINE!

Follow #NAfME2016 on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook for updates on NAFME's National In-Service Conference. Download the conference app to make connections throughout the event at nationalconference.nafme.org.

themes, including technology and modern life, the African-American voice on record, and the Civil Rights era, and the many ways in which popular recordings have both reflected and changed American identity.

• **Jim Cavanaugh** of the Super-Sensitive Musical Strings Company will cover "The Science of Strings in the Classroom"—the science of sound associated with orchestral instruments.

SPECIAL INTEREST TRACKS

• At the Standards and Assessment daylong track, attendees will deepen their understanding of the new 2014 Music Standards, work hands-on with the Model Cornerstone Assessments (MCAs), and discuss ways to use and adapt the MCAs to measure student achievement.

• The Students with Behavioral and Emotional Special Needs (continued) ➔



➔ (continued) Focus Event, spearheaded by **Alice Hammel** on Saturday, November 12, will include several rock stars of the profession, such as **Judith Jellison**, as well as up-and-coming music educators with classroom-tested strategies to meet the needs of all students, including those with special challenges.

This conference provides an opportunity to reflect on the importance and power of music as a core characteristic in developing a well-rounded education for all, to celebrate the diversity of experiences afforded to us, and to admire and learn from the expertise of many great music educators in attendance. The sessions and concerts you will experience will both inspire and motivate you.

Lance Nielsen, NAFME Professional Development Chair, Immediate Past-President, North Central Division

Conductors to Lead NAFME All-National Honor Ensembles



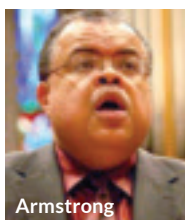
Crider

PAULA A. CRIDER (BAND), a University of Texas professor emerita, maintains an active schedule as a guest conductor, lecturer, clinician, and adjudicator that has taken her through 47 U.S. states as well as Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom, France, Singapore, Italy, Germany, Spain, and Australia. She has taught in the public schools at all levels. Her Crockett High School Bands in Austin, Texas, received both state and national recognition for musical excellence on the concert stage and were twice named the Texas 5A State Marching Champions.

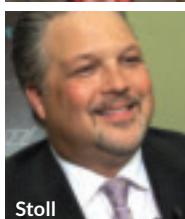


Jones

WILLIAM LARUE JONES (ORCHESTRA) has worked with orchestras on five continents in engagements with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Minneapolis Pops, and with symphonies in Malaysia, Chile, Australia, and China. He has conducted over 100 All-State orchestras and in festivals/clinics in all U.S. states and Canadian provinces. He is the founder and artistic director of the Conductor's Workshop of America, has been on the conducting faculty for the League of American Orchestras and the International Workshops, and is director of orchestral studies at the University of Iowa in Iowa City.



Armstrong



Stoll

ANTON ARMSTRONG (CHOIR), the Tosdal Professor of Music at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, and conductor of the St. Olaf Choir, served on the faculty of Calvin College and led the Calvin College Alumni Choir, the Grand Rapids Symphony Chorus, and the St. Cecilia Youth Chorale. He is editor of a choral series for Earthsongs Publica-



Crenshaw

tions and coeditor of the revised St. Olaf Choral Series for Augsburg Fortress Publishers. Armstrong was guest conductor for the Houston Chamber Choir and the Vocal Arts Ensemble of Cincinnati, conducted the 2016 Indiana All-State Choir, and was a plenary speaker for the North Central American Choral Directors Association Conference in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

TODD STOLL (JAZZ), is vice-president of education for Jazz at Lincoln Center. Stoll has spent more than 25 years as an educator, performer, and leading advocate for jazz education and performance. A graduate of the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music, he has taught music at all levels from elementary through collegiate, including a decade as curriculum coordinator for Westerville City Schools in central Ohio. He was the founding director of the Columbus [Ohio] Youth Jazz Orchestra. A leader in the music education community, he served as Ohio president of the International Association of Jazz Educators and the inaugural chair of jazz events for the Ohio Music Education Association.

CHRIS CRENSHAW (JAZZ), a Jazz at Lincoln Center trombonist, guest conductor, and soloist, received his bachelor's degree with honors in jazz performance from Valdosta [Georgia] State University, and was also chosen as the Most Outstanding Student in the VSU Music Department and College of Arts. He also received a master's degree in jazz studies from the Juilliard School in New York City. In 2006, he joined the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra.

Harriet Mogge Led a Life of Music, Education, and Service



HARRIET MORGAN MOGGE, who worked for MENC (Music Educators National Conference, the predecessor of the National Association for Music Education) from 1974 to 1993, passed away in June at the age of 88. An important force in the organization for 20 years, she served in various positions on the MENC staff, the last as director of meetings and conventions.

Born in Cleveland, Ohio, Mogge grew up in a family that valued education and music. Her father, Russell Van Dyke Morgan, was MENC president (1930–1932), and her mother, the late Grace Adeline Wells, encouraged music study in their home. Mogge is remembered at NAFME as a person willing to teach others and as a dedicated team member and leader. She loved good stories and American history, was adventurous, and enjoyed travel.

According to her obituary in *The Washington Post*, Mogge received a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Northwestern University

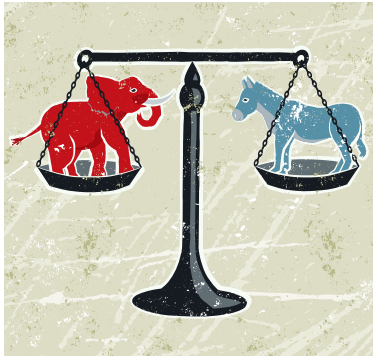
in Evanston, Illinois, and did postgraduate work in special education at Illinois State University, Normal. She taught music in the public schools of Evanston and Watseka, Illinois. In 1964, Mogge joined the Summy-Birchard Publishing Company, where she served as educational director until leaving to join MENC.

She was the founding executive secretary of the Suzuki Association of the Americas, receiving their Distinguished Service Award in 1996. Mogge was a member of the music fraternity Mu Phi Epsilon and a national officer of the Kappa Delta Sorority, as well as the National Association of Exposition Managers, becoming their national president in 1990.

Mogge is survived by daughter Linda Mogge Hartman, a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and a great-great grandchild.

Portions of this piece were published in *The Washington Post* on June 25, 2016. Read the entire notice at bit.ly/HarrietMogge.

ANALYZE THIS: 2016 DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN EDUCATION VIEWS



As Americans move toward the general elections on November 8, voters can study each of the two major party platforms to see what each Presidential and Congressional candidate represents.

REPUBLICANS highlighted five key points in education policy in their 2016 platform:

- Academic Excellence for All
- Choice in Education
- Title IX
- College Costs
- Improving Higher Education.

DEMOCRATS also highlighted five key points in education policy in their 2016 platform:

- Making Debt-Free College a Reality
- Providing Relief from Crushing Student Debt
- Supporting Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority-Serving Institutions
- Cracking Down on Predatory For-Profit Schools
- Guaranteeing Universal Preschool and Good Schools for Every Child.

The Democratic Party also devotes a section of their

platform to the promotion of "Arts and Culture," which includes a mention of supporting music and arts education within primary and secondary schools.

Read both parties' platforms at nafme.org/2016-republican-democratic-party-platforms. Visit bit.ly/NAfMEadvocacy for updates from the NafME Advocacy Team, and follow developments with the Every Student Succeeds Act at bit.ly/NCLBends.
—Ronny Lau, NafME Policy Advisor

Build Student Leaders by Reactivating Your Tri-M® Chapter

THE TRI-M® MUSIC HONOR SOCIETY is a NafME program that focuses on creating future leaders in music education and music advocacy. Tri-M is the only national honor society in the United States for student musicians in grades 6–12. There are more than 1,775 chapters across all 50 states, involving more than 75,000 students.

Each year, these students contribute approximately 750,000 service hours to their schools and local communities, and they raise nearly \$1 million for causes they care about. NafME awards more than \$2,000 in scholarships each year to chapters that demonstrate exceptional service and leadership.

Reactivate your Tri-M chapter for the 2016–17 school year, start a chapter today and start building your



students' leadership abilities. Think you're too busy? We can show you how to empower your students to take charge of your chapter and make a difference. Visit bit.ly/NAfMETri-M for more information.

One of Tri-M's most important programs is the Chapter of the Year competition. The National Chapter of the Year Program is designed to motivate and reward chapters that perform service projects, encourage Chapter Officers to perform their duties properly, and increase awareness and interest in what other Tri-M chapters are doing. All active chapters are eligible to participate in the 2016–17 Chapter of the Year competition.

Congratulations to the Tri-M Music Honor Society Chapter of the Year Winners and Runners-Up for the 2015–16 school year, and thanks to the students and advisors in all of the chapters that participated!



NAFME OFFERS A VIRTUAL BACKPACK FOR A PRODUCTIVE SCHOOL YEAR

As you settle in your routine this fall, the National Association for Music Education offers a variety of online teaching resources you will find helpful during the school year.

SOME USEFUL TOOLS:

- NafME's Printable School-Year-at-a-Glance Calendar
- Parent-Teacher Meeting Tips
- Lesson Plans and Classroom Tips
- Copyright 101
- Tri-M® Music Honor Society
- Student Performance Opportunities
- Awards, Competitions, and Scholarships
- NafME In-Service Conference
- Give a Note Foundation
- Professional Development Opportunities
- Advocacy Updates

To access the NafME's virtual Backpack, visit bit.ly/NAfMEBackpack.



Senior Division Chapter of the Year Winners, Homestead High School

TRI-M MUSIC HONOR SOCIETY CHAPTER OF THE YEAR WINNERS

SENIOR DIVISION WINNERS:

Chapter of the Year—Homestead High School, Cupertino, California

First Runner-Up—Half Hollow Hills High School West, Dix Hills, New York

Second Runner-Up—San Marcos High School, San Marcos, Texas

JUNIOR DIVISION WINNERS:

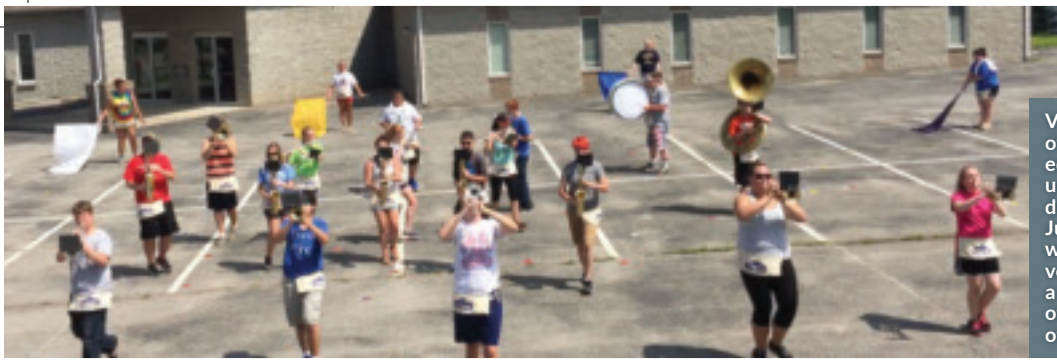
Chapter of the Year—Ranney Middle School, Tinton Falls, New Jersey

First Runner-Up—Hunters Creek Middle School, Jacksonville, North Carolina

Second Runner-Up—Elizabeth Davis Middle School, Chester, Virginia

Scholarships are presented to the winners and runners-up in both divisions.

- **Senior Division**
Chapter of the Year: \$1,000
1st Runner-Up: \$800
2nd Runner-Up: \$600
- **Junior Division**
Chapter of the Year: \$800
1st Runner-Up: \$600
2nd Runner-Up: \$400



Virtually all of the band's equipment and uniforms were destroyed in the June flood, but with help from volunteers, a band camp offered a sense of normalcy.

Thousand-Year Flood Destroys High School, but Support Helps Restore Band Program

ON JUNE 23, a massive flood swept through Greenbrier County, West Virginia. Water came in through a window in the cafeteria at Herbert Hoover High School, home of the Marching Huskies. The boiler room had 10 feet of water, and the rest of the first floor had seven feet of water. After the flood receded, a water line was visible all the way around the building.

Chemicals from the chemistry lab floated through the hallways. In the music room, soggy band uniforms lay on the floor, instruments were full of mud, and the fighting Huskies even lost all of their sheet music, including their beloved fight song.

FEMA officials decided that the school, which opened in 1963, needed to be demolished. It is projected that the new school will take at least three years to build. Because President Obama had declared this part of West Virginia an official disaster area, FEMA will provide funding for up to 90 percent of the cost of the new building.

Band director and NAFME member Meleah Fisher allowed herself only a brief time to lament what had happened; She knew she had work to do before school started in early August. She wanted to give her music students as normal a school year as possible. In the hopes of doing that, Fisher posted the story on a Band Director page on Facebook, and received a widespread outpouring of support. Former Hoover band members also helped spread the word. Instruments, uniforms, and music stands were donated, as was sheet music. A nearby church offered its facilities so the band could run its summer camp in the parking lot. One former student delivered a donation from a car dealership, while another helped re-create the Huskies' fight song.

Later in the summer, Fisher changed her Facebook profile to

a graphic of a roadway sign: "The Road to Success is Under Construction." That statement is literally and figuratively true. To begin the 2016–17 school year, Herbert Hoover students split half days with nearby Elkview Middle School students until portable trailers are installed on the football field at Elkview. Clendenin Elementary students will do likewise at Bridge Elementary.

Fisher said she was overwhelmed by the support the school music program received from all over the country. Several celebrities have helped with the recovery efforts. Actress Jennifer Garner, a West Virginia native, visited Clendenin and helped organize a Save the Children fundraiser to support the school, a disaster recovery center, and child care center. Garner visited several locations affected by the recent flooding and cheered the fact that residents "are trying to figure out the best way to take care of one another."

Country music star and West Virginia native Brad Paisley visited Hoover, where he talked with Fisher about the young musicians and band program. On Television News Channel WSAZ, he told Fisher, "I'm really impressed at how you're handling this. You're just getting started. You guys will get there, and we're all going to help—anything we can do." When she teared up, Paisley gave Fisher a hug, saying, "You're going to get through it. I wish I had a band teacher like her, guys!" Paisley started a GoFundMe page and contributed money of his own to the cause.

In August, Fisher said, "You just don't realize how good people can be until you have an event like this. We are blessed." School started on August 8, and she said that things were running as smoothly as possible—for a school without a real home.



BLOG POSTS SPOTLIGHT 2016 NAFME CONFERENCE SESSIONS

A number of high-power session presenters for the NAFME 2016 National In-Service Conference, November 10–13 in Grapevine, Texas, have written posts for NAFME's Music in a Minuet blog about their presentations. Some of the outstanding contributions include:

- "Balancing the Tripod: Tips for Student Teaching" by John M. Denis, Dakota Reynolds, and Jessica Coleman
- "Orchestra Gives You Wings: How to Propel Student Learning for a Flying Start," by Angela Harman
- "Improvisation Is Not a Bad Word: A Method for Teaching Improvisation to Beginning Instrumentalists" by Tina Krawczyk
- "7 Steps to Creating an Original Song with Your Choral Ensemble" by Michele Kaschub
- "The Instant Gratification Culture: Use it to Your Advantage!" by Chad Nicholson

Read these and other conference-session previews at bit.ly/NAFMEBlog



Photos courtesy of Meleah Fisher. Illustration right by istockphoto.com.

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pro·files

By Rosalind C. Fehr

Featuring NAFME's education professionals

TANIESHA HINES

String Teacher Encourages Diversity



Hines says string teachers can help create an equitable learning environment in their music classes.



TANIESHA HINES
Longleaf Middle School,
Columbia, South Carolina

NAFME MEMBER TANIESHA HINES wrote a blog post called “Colorless Teaching: A Guide to Breaking Cultural Barriers in Today’s Orchestra Classroom.” Read it at bit.ly/NAfMEBlog.

She will present a session by the same title at the 2016 NAFME In-Service Conference on Saturday, November 12, 2016. The conference will be held November 10–13 at the Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center in Grapevine.

Hines answered some questions about her string program and shared suggestions for working with students.

• **Why did you decide to be a music teacher, and where did you attend college?** I started strings in the fourth grade in Northern Virginia and had fantastic classroom teachers as well as private teachers that cared for me and stirred up my passion. As a result, I attended the University of South Carolina in Columbia in 2006. I’ve always concentrated on strings.

• **Please describe your music program and your school.** I am entering my sixth year at Longleaf Middle School in Columbia, South Carolina.

I have the opportunity to serve approximately 110 amazing students

each day. We have a diverse student body that includes a large, transient, military population. It is always my goal to establish relationships with my students in an effort to ignite their passion and appreciation for music.

• **In your blog post you suggest that teachers should learn as much as they can about their students, including how many siblings they have, what makes them sad, etc. What do you say to a teacher who might be uncomfortable getting that close to their students?**

While some teachers may be hesitant with this task, it has been my experience that the bonds formed with my students enable me to tap into their limitless potential.

• **Perhaps more important, how do teachers overcome any reluctance they might have? When we truly understand how tapping into a student’s life benefits his or her overall academic success, we will be more apt to overcome any reluctance we may have. Essentially, when we care about the student, they care about what we know.**

• **I like the idea of the question ball**

being tossed around the room. Do you see that as an icebreaker or something to use after students get settled into a routine? Both! I always use this activity to learn more about my students at the beginning of the school year. It is also beneficial for breaking up the daily

classroom routine, especially during the spring competition season.

• **You say that string programs are becoming more diverse. Did that happen naturally, or did teachers like yourself encourage it?** I definitely believe that teachers have to be more intentional about culturally expanding

their programs. I am confident that string programs are becoming more diverse because they are now more accessible to students from different cultures and socioeconomic backgrounds; however, in order for these programs to flourish, the educator must be deliberate about creating an equitable and engaging learning environment.

• **What role did professional development from South Carolina Music Educators Association (SCMEA) play in your music education career?** I have attended our state conference every year since 2011. Each year, I am fortunate enough to bring at least one new idea into my classroom. While our conference is always beneficial, I have learned the most from the phenomenal board that we have in the orchestra division of SCMEA. The relationships and advice that I have gleaned from these experienced string educators have helped groom me into the teacher I am today. ■

SUSAN SPAFFORD

Touchdown for Classical Music and Football

NAfME MEMBER SUSAN SPAFFORD

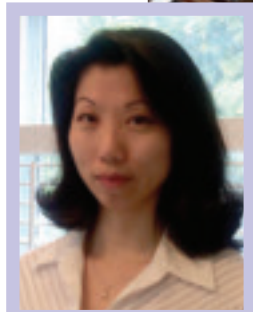
earned performance and education degrees, auditioned for orchestras, and taught privately and in schools. “But then,” she says, “I started adding other jobs because I wanted to explore the music world from different perspectives and I really enjoy new challenges.” She became a personnel manager, helped run a large youth orchestra and other educational programs for an orchestra, and took a job with the Music Paradigm, which she called “one of the most innovative endeavors I’ve ever encountered.” The group works around the world to bring live orchestral performances to varied audiences. Spafford states, “I count myself extremely fortunate that I’ve been able to do all these things while continuing to actively teach and perform.”

Through the Music Paradigm, Spafford has worked with conductor Roger Nierenberg, who has “found a way to bring classical music to audiences who might never set foot in a concert hall. [He] does it in such a way that the audiences connect to the professional orchestral musicians who are performing for them in a very meaningful, personal way. They gain an understanding for how an orchestra works, and they appreciate that what they’re hearing is the result of years and years of hard work and acquired special skills, not just some sort of unexplainable magic. For some people, it’s their very first experience with classical music and now they want to rush out and buy CDs so they can hear the music again. I’ve seen people moved to tears by what Roger and the musicians share.”

In July, there was an annual meeting of 250 collegiate football officials from three conferences: the Big Ten,



Orchestra members joined football officials in the audience and created a close-up experience with classical music.



SUSAN SPAFFORD
NAfME member and violinist

Mid-American, and the Missouri Valley Football Conferences. Spafford says, “Each summer, a few

hundred people gather to review the rulebook, discuss/learn about any rule or policy changes regarding how games will be run, and get new tools and training to help them do their jobs better. Normally, their presenters are strictly sports-related, but the official in charge of the clinic had experienced a Music Paradigm program and was impressed enough to take a chance,” she says.

Spafford also says that there were a few NFL officials in audience as well as and some staffers from the administrative offices of the collegiate conferences, as well as related areas including sports medicine, physical training, and tech support. In the Music Paradigm sessions, the audience is scattered throughout the orchestra so there’s no separation between performers and audience as in a traditional concert. But it’s not just the proximity to a musician that makes this such a unique experience. Nierenberg engages the audience as active participants by creating opportunities for them to join him on the podium, or by taking a microphone into the audience.

After the July 2016 performance, the 250 football officials erupted into applause and gave an immediate double standing ovation—one for the orchestra,

and one for the conductor.

Of the Music Paradigm program, Spafford says, “What I personally loved about this collaboration is that we so often hear about sports and music being at odds with each other, as if the two can’t be in the same room together. And people in many fields often refer to sports analogies when making a point about teamwork. At a very young age, a lot of kids start to absorb the idea that they can’t pursue sports and music at the same time or in equal measure. The overwhelmingly enthusiastic and passionate response from this group of diverse, highly-driven sports professionals makes it clear that way of ‘either/or’ thinking should be in the past.”

Big Ten football official Edward Feaster agreed, telling Spafford, “This concert/presentation was one of the best illustrations of effective leadership communication I’ve ever experienced! I was fascinated by how simply the dynamics of communication were taught to our group through music. We will be able to apply the communication and leadership lessons within our organization, within our crew, during game days, and to life in general.”

Spafford has taught privately, and on the elementary and secondary levels. She currently teaches at the Ridgewood Conservatory in New Jersey, and serves as a NYSSMA festival adjudicator. As a

music educator, she says her priority is “simply having every student receive music education as part of their overall education. Whether it’s orchestra, band, or chorus, there’s a kind of creativity that gets tapped into and an opportunity to develop your mind and your personality

in a way that is wholly unique to music.”

She adds, “For me, education is all about opportunity. As educators, we need to give children the opportunity to experience and connect to music in a meaningful way. Every child deserves a complete education, and none of us know

exactly what will unlock each student’s full potential.”

Spafford plays with groups including the Richmond Symphony in Virginia, the Cayuga Chamber Orchestra in Ithaca, New York, and the Allentown (Pennsylvania) Symphony. ■

CHERYL HARTMAN

New York Teacher Uses NAFME Tools

CHERYL HARTMAN says that the music program in the Patchogue-Medford School District “is an integral part of our curriculum. The special-area teachers meet monthly with the grade-level teachers to discuss our curricula. We find ways that we can integrate the different subjects into the various special-area subjects as well as ways that the classroom teachers can support what we are doing in the special areas.”

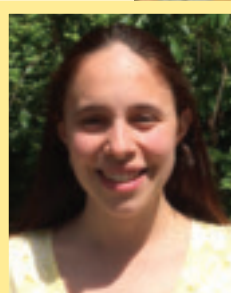
This school district on Long Island has been rated as a Best Community for Music Education by NAMM. Hartman is one of 22 music teachers in her district.

“This is my second year teaching in Patchogue-Medford, but I have been teaching for seven years in other districts on Long Island. I teach fourth- and fifth-grade band and general music at Barton Elementary School, and fifth-grade band at Medford Elementary School. At Barton Elementary School, the fourth-grade band has 32 students, and the fifth-grade band has 42 students. I also see 154 students for general music. At Medford Elementary School, the fifth-grade band has 32 students. In both buildings, there are three or four other music teachers who teach orchestra, chorus, general music, or band.”

STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE MUSIC PROGRAM

“I am lucky enough to work in a school that has such a supportive team of administrators and colleagues. Both of

Hartman who teaches band as well as general music at Medford Elementary School, says she takes a “light-hearted approach” with her students.



CHERYL HARTMAN
Patchogue-Medford School District, Suffolk County, New York

my principals are always ready to help and support me with anything I need. My district also has a director of music who is our biggest advocate. Our superintendent highly supports the arts as an integral part of

the curriculum. My colleagues and I are always collaborating on various projects and curriculum ideas. The classroom teachers are very supportive in accommodating the rotating lesson schedule and helping students to remember to bring their instruments and attend lessons.”

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

“I’ve learned so much from NAFME, which has been helpful in giving me lesson-plan ideas, management tips, and assurance that I am not the only one struggling with whatever was difficult that week! NYSSMA has helped me tremendously with professional development. Every year, my county’s MEA hosts at least six professional development courses on various topics. I try to attend

as many as I can. They also host various symposium days that include reading sessions, workshops, and vendors.”

CHERYL HARTMAN'S TEACHING TIPS

“I find that a light-hearted approach to teaching works best for both my students and me. This does not mean that everything is fun and games, but I feel that students respond best when they are comfortable. I try to incorporate humor into my teaching to get my students smiling and laughing. They know that it is all right to make mistakes, and everyone feels comfortable enough to play alone without fear of making a mistake. My best tip for classroom control is to establish routines with the students. All my students know the routine and my expectations for rehearsals and lessons. This allows me to make the most of my time with my students. One of the best pieces of advice I was ever given was to keep setting my musical expectations high for my students. They will rise to meet what you expect, and sometimes will even surprise you by surpassing your expectations!” ■



"It was pretty hilarious and also exciting to see how much money we were raising!"
—Meredith Hawkins

Change for Music Education

Meredith Hawkins ran an exciting coin drive to benefit Give a Note Foundation!

LAST MARCH, Meredith Hawkins spearheaded a schoolwide coin drive for Give a Note—the foundation that NAFME created in 2011 to bolster music education opportunities in this country. She didn't have to twist any arms to get the drive off the ground. Hawkins—the director of choral music, AP music theory teacher, and musical theater workshop leader at Miramonte High School, in Orinda, California—says, "A coin drive is meant to be competitive, so once that was established, it wasn't hard to get people involved!"

The drive was great fun for all involved. Each class in her school had a box in which the students inserted coins or paper money; coins counted as

positive points and bills as negative. Funds were counted at the end of each day and the results were posted to Twitter and Instagram. The students really went to town with the drive.

"Right off the bat, some of the classes started to strategize about when they would bring in coins for their own box, and when they would bring in paper money to sabotage other classes," Hawkins says. "On the last day, students were bringing in huge boxes and jars full of coins and shoving paper money into the first-place class's box. It was pretty hilarious and also exciting to see how much money we were raising!"

In the coin drive, competition was both a motivating factor and a hindrance. Toward

the end, some classes, seeing that they had fallen far behind the others, felt inclined just to give up. "We had to remind them that the coin drive was ultimately about helping Give a Note, not winning a competition," Hawkins says.

With so many coins—sometimes thousands of them—coming in every day, Hawkins encountered another problem in the drive: how to tally everything. Luckily, she learned that her school has a coin-counting machine, which greatly eased this burden. "Our financial technician had one and was more than happy to let us use it," Hawkins says. "If you don't have a coin-counting machine, I can't imagine how difficult it would be to keep track of all of those coins!"

In the end, the coins in Hawkins's drive amounted to \$901.86. She was surprised by this staggering sum, given that she went into the drive with low expectations, and was thrilled to present it all to Give a Note. She was also proud of the message her students took away from the coin drive. "Our school is in the very fortunate position of being located in a wealthy area, where the arts have an incredible amount of support. Our students know that this is not the norm, but they lose sight of that in the day-to-day minutia," she says. "I was grateful for the opportunity to remind them that we can and should seize the chance to help arts programs that are struggling." ■

"I was grateful for the opportunity to remind them that we can and should seize the chance to help arts programs that are struggling."

HOW TO HOST A COIN DRIVE

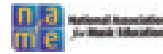
Here's how to host your own schoolwide coin drive in seven easy steps!

1. Select a number of consecutive school days—for example, five or 10—during which to hold the drive.
2. Supply each classroom with a large container such as a milk jug for collecting the coins, and be sure to label it clearly with identifying information.
3. Assign a value to each coin—for instance, a penny is one point, a nickel is minus five points, etc.
4. Collect the money at the end of every day and tally it, using a designated group of volunteers or an electronic coin counter.
5. Keep running totals on blackboards or on the web through Twitter, etc.
6. At the end of the drive, have your volunteers roll the coins, or submit them to a local bank.
7. Announce the grand total and celebrate!

Photo courtesy of Meredith Hawkins.

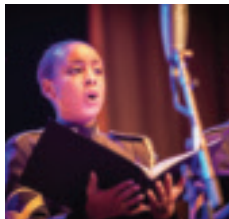
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"With area support, a music program can become a really important part of any community." —Stacey Burns

Singing from the Same Songbook

Teachers and students can work together to create local support for their programs.

AS THE SAYING GOES, "It takes a village to raise a child." That also holds true for a successful music program: The only way to have success in a goal-oriented education system is to have sustainable local support. "With area support, a music program can become a really important part of any community, and we all know the value that music adds to any event—more so if it's a local school providing the entertainment, and even better if it builds and shows off skills you're working on in the classroom! Concerts should be engaging, while creating new traditions as well," says NAFME member and PreK–12 music director in Elba, Nebraska, Stacey Burns.

Burns teaches in a very small district—she is the only music teacher, in fact. As the only music educator, she relies on her non-music educator

colleagues for support. "My network includes nonmusic teachers at my school, music teachers at other schools close by, and even music teachers in neighboring states! I consult with teachers that I view as mentors and peers, including those I meet at other fine arts events, who are not necessarily music teachers, but have some amazing things to say about coaching, learning and teaching."

As a PreK–12 educator, Burns recommends garnering support from the local community beyond the school: Let them see what your students are doing, and gather suggestions for furthering the causes of your program. "Invite everyone in: the musicians, the teachers, the local media, and even the community member who can't sing a note but is passionate about the group. You will find someone who

has the information you're looking for—just keep asking," says Burns. A side effect of involving individuals from beyond the school into your program is that you're making them part of your larger music education community—and when people feel part of something, they will often want to support it.

Burns also advocates involving the students themselves in the choices that involve the music program. "Make your students a priority and your room a safe space for ideas, and encourage your students to have a say in crafting your curriculum." Students will then be proud to showcase that program in their neighborhoods—which will gain your program even further support from the community. Involving the students, then, in this kind of grassroots activity also teaches them how to be advocates themselves. Learning how to advocate goes a long way to impress, but also offers skills that students can use as they move forward in school and beyond. "My students were clear that our band uniforms were old, see-through, and freezing during our October parade. Thus, priority number one was born. We had samples made, and students presented two uniforms to our school board, with their own opinions. It was my job to empower their voice and encourage them, and those new uniforms look great," says Burns. ■

Invite everyone in: the musicians, the teachers, the local media, and even the community member who can't sing a note but is passionate about the group.

LOCAL MEDIA CAN HELP

Local media and local businesses can help with long-term goals for a music program. "As a music teacher, we tend to filter out the advertising phone calls and the band gear emails, but I would suggest that attention be paid to local media and area festivals. By watching for these things, our school now annually participates in a local music broadcast on area television, caroling, parades, the state fair and even local festivals," according to Stacey Burns.

"Teachers don't have a ton of time to be asking random questions, so focus in on whom to speak with fast. Is there someone at the local newspaper, TV station, or radio network who covers schools specifically? It seems to be easiest to get the media interested when you have a visible product. Use Facebook or other electronic networks to show off," says Burns.

When the media is behind you, "return the favor to your local networks by mentioning them when your students are visibly included—a great band picture on their Facebook page, for example," says Burns.

"Ultimately, dealing with local media should be part of what you do, but the task should be small enough that the time doesn't take away from teaching, but rather adds to community involvement as well as school and student buy-in."

Photo courtesy of Stacey Burns.

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“Opportunity is key and an important starting point.”



“After one year of participation in the program, children showed improvements in pitch perception and production.” —Beatriz Ilari

The Difference a Year Makes

El Sistema–inspired programs can reap rewards for underprivileged children.

ALTHOUGH MANY studies have shown that music is beneficial to young students, these studies have not necessarily focused on those from certain cultural or socioeconomic backgrounds. “Music education research has typically focused on what Canadian scholars Heinrich, Heine, and Norezayan call ‘WEIRD’ societies (White, English-speaking, Intelligent, Rich, and from Democratic societies), and may not apply to other cultural groups,” says NAFME member Beatriz Ilari, assistant professor of music education at the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music in Los Angeles. “Many claims have been made about the outcomes of children’s participation in El Sistema and El Sistema–inspired programs, but there is little evidence currently available.”

The program chosen to be the center of this study is the Youth Orchestra of Los

Angeles at Heart of Los Angeles (YOLA at HOLA). “We started working with our participants when children were about to start their participation in the program.” These children, she notes, “all came from underserved communities, with an average family income of \$19K. Some of our child participants came from families that were facing many difficulties, including very complex living arrangements, parental job insecurity, single parenthood, etc.” She cautions that YOLA is an especially rigorous program. “This particular El Sistema–inspired program was arguably more intense than many school music programs, and was extracurricular. So it is important to be cautious when interpreting our findings or applying them to different educational contexts.”

The skills and developmental areas under investigation

are myriad. “Aside from tracking down brain, cognitive, motor, and social–emotional development in participating children, musically speaking, we have been examining pitch and rhythmic perception, singing and vocal improvisation skills, rhythmic entrainment, and instrumental performance skills,” says Ilari. “Our study is comparing children who learn music in the El Sistema–inspired program, children who learn soccer in a similarly intense program, and a matched, control group of kids who are not involved in any intensive, extracurricular program.”

The ongoing study is in its fourth year, and the results so far are encouraging. “After one year of participation in the program, children showed improvements in pitch perception and singing skills. In terms of rhythmic entrainment, children in the music group showed stronger skills right at the beginning of the study than children in the other groups,” remarks Ilari. “It is clear to us that children, regardless of social markers like SES, ethnicity, cultural background, have the potential to develop their musical skills. Opportunity is key and an important starting point.” ■

USING STUDY RESULTS IN MUSIC ADVOCACY EFFORTS

It can be tempting to use study results in advocacy. “Basing music education advocacy efforts on high quality, applicable research is important to the cause,” says Wendy L. Sims, director of music education at the University of Missouri School of Music in Columbia.

However, one should be careful. “Although there have been positive relationships found between music study and academic variables such as standardized test scores, there have been several recent research studies indicating that this relationship is more complex than can be accounted for by some of the earlier correlational reports,” notes Sims.

“It has become clear via the research that mere music exposure or listening is not sufficient for many of the benefits of music to accrue—e.g., playing music during nap time or as background to dramatic play. Those are fine ways to expose children to a variety of music and should be used to do so. But it is through participation, including singing, moving, playing classroom instruments, learning to listen perceptively, and learning how sounds can be expressive that children develop the beginning skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will facilitate future music participation and study.”

SAVE THE DATE!
March 22–24, 2018
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Photo from the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Source: “The Development of Musical Skills of Underprivileged Children Over the Course of 1 Year: A Study in the Context of an El Sistema–Inspired Program,” *Frontiers in Psychology*, February 2016, Volume 7, Number 62 (see [dx.doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00062](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00062)).



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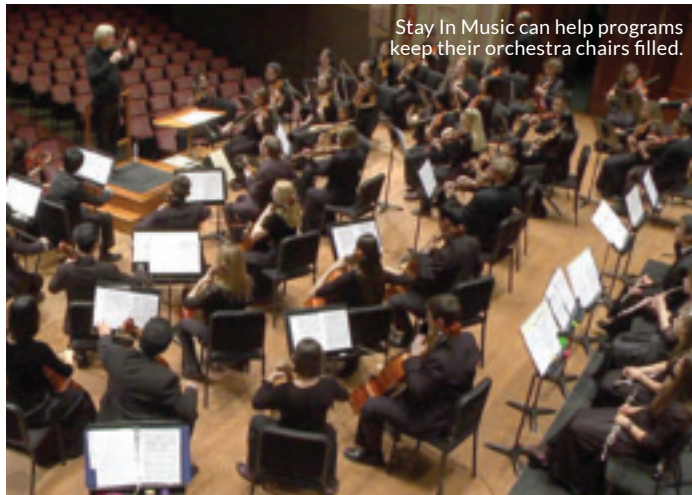
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Stay In Music!

New resources are available to help music educators recruit and retain students.

ABOUT FIVE YEARS ago, Scott Lang, a veteran band teacher of 16 years and a leadership trainer, recognized a scarcity of recruitment and retention materials for band instructors and decided to do something about this problem. “On a shoestring budget, I created Be Part of the Band—tools for teachers to use to communicate to students and parents the importance of band as a life-changing activity,” he says.

A couple of years later, Lang’s friend Jeff Connor, a trumpeter with Boston Brass, asked him what was next. Lang told him that if time and money weren’t an object, it would be to create a similar project for elementary school, but that he also had experience with only high school kids. But then, Lang says, “He told me, ‘If you’re not going to do it, who will?’ That really struck me, and I called my

team, raised some money, and got to work.”

Another turning point for Lang came at the 2015 NAMM show, when Yamaha vice president Rick Young and NAMM CEO Joe Lammond approached him to say that they’d been watching his work. “They said, ‘If we were to help, would you have a plan for what’s next? I said, ‘Of course,’ and on the spot, I sketched out the ideas I had in my head for the larger project called Be Part of the Music,” says Lang, referring to the series that also includes Be Part of the Orchestra and Be Part of the Band.

Lang’s latest series is Stay In Music (bepartofthemusic.org/stayinmusic). Like the “Be Part of” series, it’s a collection of tools—documents and videos—that music programs can use to recruit and keep as many students as possible. But it’s got a sleek, new look that

educators, students, and parents alike are sure to respond to. “We noticed how much kids love Apple,” Lang says. “So we borrowed from the company’s aesthetic look, using a clean presentation, on a white background, that is very approachable.”

At the heart of Stay In Music is the idea that a single issue—enrollment—can help the health of music education by both ensuring funding and a greater diversity of musical instruction. “There are tons of resources for everything from oboe technique and breathing to sight-singing, but before Stay In Music and Be Part of the Music, there weren’t resources that helped music teachers fill those seats with students,” says Lang. “Enrollment is the panacea that solves all problems.”

Although Stay In Music/Be Part of the Music is a relatively young program, the data is already promising. A study completed 18 months ago has shown 20% growth in enrollment when teachers have used its resources. “That’s an average of 11 new students per school, which can translate to up to 264 additional students over four years for a high school program,” Lang says. “We believe that the way to solve the problem in music education is to grow our way out of the problem. At this rate, we’re well on the way to our goal of enrolling a million new students in our nation’s school music programs.” ■

The way to solve the problem in music education is to grow our way out of the problem.

NEW RESOURCES FROM STAY IN MUSIC

Music teachers have traditionally created their own presentation materials when it comes to encouraging students to enroll in their classes, and these materials are not always as compelling as they could be. Stay In Music offers teachers a smart series of documents and videos.

The documents—which include materials on everything from a recruiting timeline to advice on social media postings—are available as free downloads in Microsoft Word format, which makes it easy for teachers to adapt them to suit their own needs.

The videos, also free, are downloadable on Stay In Music’s Vimeo page (vimeo.com/groups/342464). These high-quality resources offer exciting footage of student musicians in action. “The oldest performer in any of the videos is only 17 years old, so students really respond to seeing their peers in the videos,” Lang says. “We put a lot of time into figuring out how to make the highest-quality videos that really speak to the different demographics—so that the kids will really get a sense of the power of music and what it can do for their lives.”

Video still courtesy of Scott Lang.



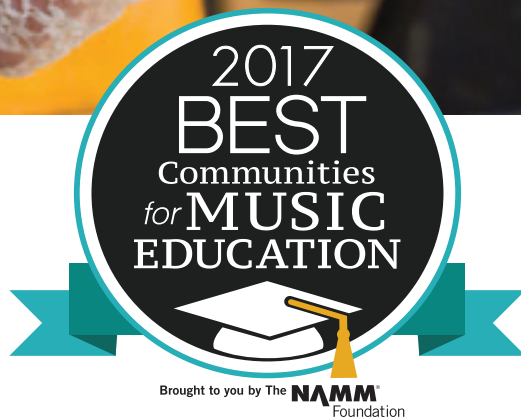
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Adding Urban Teaching Skills to Music Teacher Education

Future music educators need to be better prepared to teach in urban environments.



CORINTH D. LEWIS is the assistant director of bands at Hewitt Trussville Middle School in Trussville, Alabama. She can be contacted at corinth.lewis@trussvillecityschools.com.

I **BEGAN COLLEGE** with the goals of graduating and finding a teaching job in my childhood community; I was determined to revive the music education program in an urban school system. The product of inner-city education, I wanted to “give back.” However, when I finished my degree, I surprised myself by accepting a job at a quite different school. What happened?

Urban schools, often public institutions, serve students representing many minority groups and are for the most part under-resourced. When I was an undergraduate getting a teaching degree, there were very few opportunities to interact with students who attended urban schools, particularly in instrumental music programs. Most of my field experience and internship took place in schools serving predominately white students with middle- and upperclass socioeconomic backgrounds. My placement was at the ideal school, in an ideal setting, and with ideal students—a situation for which I was well prepared.

As a black educator with a degree from a predominately white university, I discovered that people assume I’m easily able to relate to both white and minority students. However, my training offered inadequate preparation

for teaching in an urban setting, and in part because of this, I chose to teach where I am now.

In an effort to prepare future music educators for a variety of teaching environments, I propose that all music teacher training programs implement an introductory course in urban music education.

An Urban Music Education Course

Before we decide what topics to include in an urban music education curriculum, we must address preconceived notions. Stereotypes about urban schools include but are not limited to: “large or small classes, scarcity of parent volunteers, ensembles that may not compete or travel, and ensembles that may not match the dominant pattern of instrumentation, genre, or style; often, they judge these programs, implicitly or explicitly, as deficient” (Frank Martignetti, Brent C. Talbot, Matthew Clauhs, Timothy Hawkins, and Nasim Niknafs, “You Got to Know Us’: A Hopeful Model for Music Education in Urban Schools,” *Visions of Research in Music Education* 23, June 2013, pg. 3). However, successful urban music education programs exist. To foster the creation of a greater number of successful urban music education program, we should first study methods that have proven effective. We also need to address the issues faced by teachers in urban schools. A number of studies have

“Our teacher education institutions need to be aware that, by transforming music education, we can create well-rounded teachers who are able to effectively teach in any school environment.” —Corinth D. Lewis



shown that effective music educators working in urban settings have certain characteristics, including empathy, patience, flexibility, enthusiasm, commitment, compassion, care, determination, and intellect (Vicki D. Baker, “Profile of an Effective Urban Music Educator,” *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 31, number 1, November 2012, pgs. 44–54).

Along with traditional music education classes, students should be required to enroll in programs dedicated to the understanding of music education in an urban classroom. The issues and objectives discussed under both curricula would be similar. However, the content within each category would be adapted to teaching music education in urban settings. After looking at a number of studies on music teachers at urban schools and examining urban curricula, I found that there were common themes; these topics could serve as a framework for urban music education curricula.

Urban Music Education Objectives

The following objectives were compiled after examining urban education curricula from various institutions,



Urban Music Education Themes

The first topic to emerge was parental support, a factor that's paramount for student success in music programs. A disconnect often exists between parent and teacher unless the teacher is adamant about initiating and maintaining parental contact and involvement. Strategies for keeping parents involved should be part of all teacher preparation, but for effective music teaching, this knowledge is a requirement.

Funding is also an important factor. Students attending urban schools are often from families in the lower socioeconomic strata of society (see *Urban Schools: The Challenge of Location and Poverty*, Washington DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics). Future requirements should include the ability to acquire outside funding for music programs. Therefore, music education students should also be versed in grant-writing and the allocation of resources for urban schools.

Many concerns centered on recruiting and retention—both essential components of successful programs. Gaining students' respect develops trust and improves participation. Creating unique recruiting strategies that appeal to students' interests would be a first step. Cultural diversity and teaching strategies were also important and involved creating activities and strategies to engage the students. Maintaining student engagement requires that educators develop a cultural knowledge base. Providing cultural dissimilarity discussions can expand a music educator's ethnic familiarity. Field experiences with urban music programs present an excellent foundation for expanding cultural knowledge. Other resources available to students participating in urban music education curricula could include music teachers effectively

teaching urban students' personal testimonies. Having music educators lecture and then discuss their successes and failures offers students a greater understanding, and could potentially eliminate misconceptions that are often associated with urban music programs.

Growing Diversity, Growing Needs

The need for urban music education curricula will increase as our cities continue to become increasingly diverse. We cannot afford to have ill-equipped music teachers in urban settings, or in any setting. Our teacher education institutions need to be aware that, by transforming music education, we can create well-rounded teachers who are able to effectively teach in any school environment.

Now in my first years of teaching, I don't regret my employment choice. I look forward to the learning, teaching, and transforming that will take place in both the students and myself. However, I do believe that I will return with a different outlook to the urban education from which I was produced.

A 1991 revision of the publication "The Child's Bill of Rights in Music" stated, in part, "the quality and quantity of children's music instruction must not depend upon their geographical location, social status, racial or ethnic status, urban/suburban/rural residence, or parental or community wealth" (poster included in the April 1992 *Music Educators Journal*, point 3). Music has the power to reach and enrich people from a vast array of cultures. Although the lack of diversity among music educators has been identified as a major concern, what is even more important is preparing music teachers to serve culturally different students effectively. Indeed, this is the comprehensive purpose of music education of the future. ■

including Bagwell College of Education at Kennesaw State University (Kennesaw, Georgia), California State University in Long Beach, and Harvard University in Boston, Massachusetts. I propose that all aspiring music teachers be able to do the following.

- **COMPARE** preconceived notions, stereotypes, and perceived cultural images of urban schools to the reality of practices in the field placement school.
- **EXAMINE** the influence of educational procedures and developments in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and funding on urban schools.
- **DEFINE/IDENTIFY** culturally responsive pedagogy, and locate resources for culturally responsive pedagogy in music education.
- **ARTICULATE** a philosophical approach to producing, managing, and maintaining a culturally sensitive musical environment in an urban school.
- **IDENTIFY** strategies for building and maintaining parent and student involvement in an urban school.

The ideas here are a starting point. Imagine the objectives, activities, and resources that could be uncovered by asking the advice of current urban music teachers when developing urban curricula.



“Can You Hear Me Now?”

Personal amplification systems can help music educators save their voices, and hold benefits for students as well.

MAKE NO MISTAKE: By their very nature, music classrooms can be very noisy places. Whether it’s choral, band, orchestra, or general music, the number of students in the room combined with the equipment adds up to a lot of ambient noise that students must mentally filter out in order to understand the teacher. For most music educators, raising our vocal intensity and projecting more forcefully is a subconscious and automatic method for dealing with this noise. Over time, however, and under the “right” circumstances, pushing our voices too hard can cause irreparable harm to the vocal mechanism that is so vital to our careers.

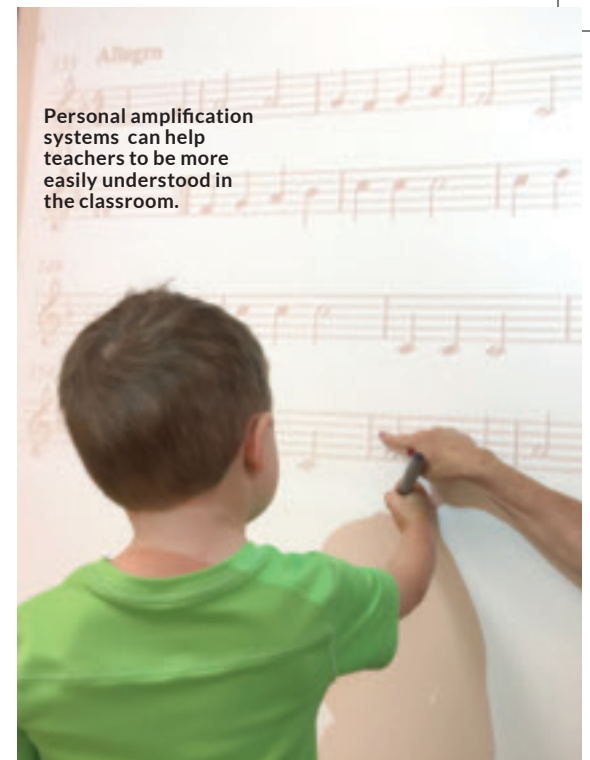
NAfME member Sharon L. Morrow—associate professor of music education at Westminster Choir College of Rider University in Princeton, New Jersey—has done research on this very problem, and her findings point to a very simple and effective way to prevent it. “As musicians, protecting our voices is incredibly important,” she says. “The louder that you speak, the more effort it takes. As your sound pressure level (vocal volume) and amount of time spent speaking or singing increase, your overall vocal load goes up.” High vocal loads for extended periods of time can cause inflammation and lead to permanent damage to the vocal cords. This stress can be exacerbated when combined with illness or allergies. “Our vocal cords are beautifully designed to be resilient, but they

are not designed to be used without some rest intervals for six or seven hours a day. For teachers with back-to-back teaching assignments all day, there will likely be consequences.”

The Issue of Vocal Stress in the Classroom

For Kamy Kellar, NAFME member and general music teacher at Southeast Polk Community Schools in Altoona, Iowa, her vocal stresses were the result of a mixture of factors both occupational and medical. “I will typically have 11 30-minute classes each day and, depending on how much I sing with them, at least 50% of the time I am vocally active,” says Kellar. “At the same time, there were other factors playing into my problems. Things like seasonal allergies combined with acid reflux disease were already affecting me, and those things combined with the large amount of singing time in class created the perfect storm. At one point, my doctor put me on vocal rest to the extent that I had to have a substitute teacher in class to do the speaking for me, as he was worried I would permanently damage my vocal cords if I didn’t back off.”

The solution for Kellar came as a result of a discussion with a fellow music teacher at Southeast Polk and NAFME member, Penny Zaugg. Says Zaugg, “I started using a microphone in class several years ago as a result of a combination of acid reflux and vocal stress. I was losing my voice.” This is a



Personal amplification systems can help teachers to be more easily understood in the classroom.

common occurrence in many music education and general education classrooms. Says Morrow, “Even teachers who think they have pipes of steel will eventually have problems down the line if they constantly stress their vocal cords. We can’t really change the pitch of our speaking voice or the amount of time we spend teaching, but we can decrease the required sound pressure levels exerted on our voice simply by using some means of electronic voice amplification.”

Classroom Voice Amplification Systems

Voice amplification systems come in many forms, from basic wireless microphones to full blown, dedicated amplification systems that are designed for that purpose alone. For both Zaugg and Kellar, the solution came in the form of a small wireless mic that could be hooked into a room’s existing sound system. Although there are many different brands and styles of such mics, they now use the Samson Airline Micro Earset System. Says Kellar, “The Airline Micro I use has the transmitter built into the ear piece. There is no wire or belt pack to deal with. Not having the belt pack is a nice feature,

Photo by Chad Criswell.



since it doesn't get caught on things and you don't have to make wardrobe decisions in the morning based on where the belt pack would be clipped."

Other teachers get by with wireless microphone systems that are more often used in auditoriums or performance settings, such as the Shure BLX14/PGA31 Headset Wireless System. These mics use the more common belt pack transmitters and an interchangeable microphone (for more information, see "The Wonderful World of Wireless Microphones" in the January 2014 issue of *Teaching Music*). The ear-mounted style of the Samson and the more common belt pack style of the Shure work great in situations where there is already a sound system in the room.

On the high end of such devices are the dedicated soundfield amplification systems. Intended as all-in-one solutions for a single classroom, these tend to consist of a dedicated wireless microphone that hangs on a lanyard around the teacher's neck. This microphone connects wirelessly to a dedicated amplifier and speaker system that is mounted somewhere in the room. Because of this design, they are ideal for classrooms that do not have a sound system already in place, or in rooms where the existing equipment is

not adequate to the task. Most of these systems, such as the Extron VoiceLift, come with additional features such as an audio-in jack that allows you to plug in an external device such as a computer or MP3 player and then control its volume directly. The VoiceLift in particular even has a special emergency alert feature built into it through which the teacher can speak to someone else in the building directly from the mic at the touch of a button.

Like the VoiceLift, the Lightspeed Redcat also hangs around the teacher's neck and includes an audio input. The Redcat, however, is a tabletop speaker system that can be moved from room to room as needed. While the addition of a speaker and other features results in a higher price tag, they can make a sense for a room without a sound system.

Purchase and Setup Considerations

When Kellar first started using her Airline Micro she ran into a few logistical issues. "I needed to play music through the room sound system at the same time I was speaking. My stereo didn't have a way for me to control the volume of the mic separately from the recording. It was a little inconvenient.

“Even teachers who think they have pipes of steel will eventually have problems down the line if they constantly stress their vocal cords.” —SHARON L. MORROW

If you have a multichannel sound system or a mixer, it solves that problem. Another potential problem depends on how your room has the speakers installed. If they are placed too close to where you stand when you are teaching, you can get feedback problems."

Fringe Benefits of Using Voice Amplification in the Classroom

"An unexpected positive outcome for some participants in our survey was that teachers found when using voice amplification there was a decrease in classroom management problems," says Morrow. "In addition, research also shows that amplification can be very helpful for second-language learners. The amplification seems to help these students decode the teacher's voice from the noise in the room more easily ... One first year teacher told me that he had no idea how much time he spent talking until he heard himself over the speaker. It helped him become much more aware of the amount of time he was using his voice." ■

"TESTING, TESTING ... 1 ... 2 ..." TIPS FOR USING MICROPHONES IN THE CLASSROOM

Using a mic in the classroom doesn't involve rocket science, but it does require the teacher to think ahead and make a few changes to the way that certain things are done. All of our teachers have learned through experience and have tips to share.

» "Learn where the mute button is on your mic and use it whenever you need to talk individually with a student. This is especially true if you go out in the hall to speak with someone. If you don't mute the mic, everyone in the room will hear your private conversations. Also, for some kids with hearing problems, using the mic doesn't make forcing them to sit in the front of the room as necessary." —Penny Zaugg

» "When working with younger students, I find that I need to turn down the mic or sing more softly. The younger kids won't sing as loudly if my mic is turned up too high. Likewise, stick with headset-style microphones: They just seem to work better in a noisy music classroom." —Kamy Kellar

» "First and foremost, music teachers should always strive to use good vocal technique when they speak or sing. However, having access to a voice amplification unit in addition to good vocal hygiene can also be important. There are some inexpensive styles where the speaker is built into the belt pack. These tend to have less audio fidelity, but even that is better than no amplification at all." —Sharon L. Morrow



Assessment in the Choral Rehearsal



DERRICK FOX is the director of choral activities at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He can be contacted at dafox@omaha.edu.

EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT is a vital component of successful music teaching and learning. Through this process, music educators obtain and interpret information about their students to determine where they are in their learning and how to proceed. Reliable and valid assessment is critical in documenting student learning in today's high-stakes, test-driven educational climate. Assessment in the choral classroom is sometimes viewed as stifling because of time constraints and lack of implementation strategies. In fact, music educators now have at their disposal myriad methods for maximizing academic learning time and assessment.

Maximize Learning Time

Academic learning time is an amalgamation of engaged time (a subset of allocated time), time on task, and success rate (David C. Berliner, "What's All the Fuss about Instructional Time?")

The Nature of Time in Schools: Theoretical Concepts, Practitioner Perceptions. Eds. M. Ben-Peretz and R. Bromme. New York: Teachers College Press, 1990, pgs. 3–35). Maximizing academic learning time improves student learning. Implementing questioning supports students' abilities to meet curricular outcomes. Effective use of academic learning time requires that choral educators examine the questions they ask.

Successful educators spend 35–45 percent of instructional time talking (teacher talk). Of that time, 60–70 percent of the questions asked are in the lower cognitive domain, and 20–30 percent are in the higher cognitive domain. Singers are often asked: "Name the key signature" or "Are you using good posture?"—questions that require rote memorization or are closed-ended. Although these low-

er-level questions are beneficial for quickly relaying information, they fail to offer insight into students' understanding. Rephrasing these questions can reveal students' comprehension and help shape future instruction (see Figure 1).

A consistent balance of lower-level and higher-level cognitive questioning encourages students to think more critically about their musicianship. Researchers have concluded that educators who use a variety of questions along the cognitive spectrum maximize students' learning potential.

Better Questions = Better Teaching

Developing oral questions during score preparation and strategically placing them before or after students' singing

FIGURE 1. TRANSFORM YOUR QUESTIONS

CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONS	OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS
What is the key signature?	How did you find the key signature?
Are you using good posture?	Can you describe good posture and how it improves singing?

Photo of Derrick Fox by Jenny Stockdale.



Photo by Howard Rockwin, Musical Memories Photography, musicalmemoriesphotography.com.

experiences can provide crucial, immediate feedback about student comprehension. Asking questions before an ensemble rehearses a piece focuses singers' attention on specific musical elements, increasing the likelihood of accurate execution of these elements. Asking students to mark various articulation changes in their scores before singing can help set singers up for mastery. Asking questions after an ensemble rehearses a piece allows vocalists to reflect on their singing and create improvement strategies before they sing the piece again.

Incorporating questions about text painting after students sing allows them to delve into the meaning of each word, garner an understanding of the techniques composers use to express the text, and assess their individual roles in communicating these concepts to the audience. Presenting oral questions that are directly related to specific musical elements is an effective method for focusing student learning. Choral educators who consistently develop and

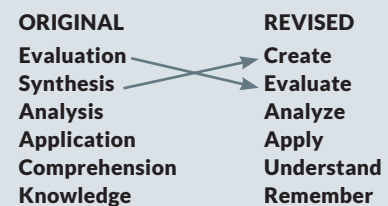
use comprehensive score preparation outlines and purposefully choose the placement and timing of their score-based questions help their students reach learning goals.

Revised Bloom's Taxonomy

The Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (RBT) helps choral educators implement concept-based instruction, unravel complex curriculum components for better student comprehension, and create effective strategies that encourage higher-level learning (H. Lynne Erickson, "Concept-Based Teaching and Learning," International Baccalaureate Organization, 2012, pgs. 3–4). The RBT model incorporates cognitive processes and knowledge domains that comprise the multifaceted concepts that the arts include. This model allows for more efficient concept-based instruction that supports students as they build enduring understandings around musical ideas that can be transferred among artistic experiences.

The RBT retools the original taxonomy by transforming the nouns of each cognitive level into verbs, acknowledging thinking as an action. The revision authors also believed creative cognition to be more complex than critical evaluation (Wendell Hanna, "The New Bloom's Taxonomy: Implications for Music Education," *Choral Journal*, 108, no. 4, March/April 2007, pg. 9). They interchanged some categories to represent the complexity of cognition as

FIGURE 2.
ORIGINAL vs.
REVISED BLOOM'S
TAXONOMY



one moves up the hierarchy (Figure 2). The new subcategories allow intricate aspects of music curriculum to be more readily addressed and provide teachers with language to create concept-based instruction that engages students in a deeper level of learning at a higher cognition level (Figure 3).

Assessments in Choral Rehearsal

Closed tasks, open tasks/constructed responses, performance tasks, informal assessments, and self-assessments represent the most effective models for implementing assessment in the choral classroom (see Figure 4). These activities involve students in the learning process, promote self-assessment, aid teachers in adjusting instruction, positively affect student motivation and self-esteem, and help educators provide actionable feedback to students.



Closed-task assessments include multiple-choice items, true/false items, fill in the blanks, and solve the problem (without showing process). These assessments are useful for assessing content-based standards: They assess

these assessments, teachers are able to glean information about students' ability to interpret and apply information, as well as their ability to communicate thinking.

Performance assessments incorporate

students' knowledge of facts and skills, and take less time, thus allowing more time for rehearsal. Open tasks and construct-ed-response assessments have a number of possible answers and different processes for determining the answers. Through

integrative tasks or extended projects. These tasks reveal students' ability to organize, synthesize, and apply information and skills as well as their use of resources. Informal assessments include teacher observations, teacher checklists, and conversation (class or individual). Informal evaluation may reveal a student's process of strategy, ability to reason, deeper understanding of a topic or concept and ability to communicate or collaborate, an integral part of being successful in the choral ensemble.

Self-assessment involves group reflection (class discussion) and self-evaluations. This method of assessment develops the students' awareness of strengths and weaknesses, reveals students understanding of topics, provides the opportunity for students to communicate their thinking in a less stressful way, and helps teachers and students identify learning goals. If executed effectively and consistently, these assessment methods will strengthen choral programs by fostering ownership in students, building student confidence, encouraging growth in singers' personal musicianship, and most important, providing individual feedback concerning learning, not only for the singers, but also for teachers, parents, and administrators.

FIGURE 3. REVISED BLOOM'S TAXONOMY APPLICATION IN THE CHORAL REHEARSAL

COGNITIVE LEVEL	DESCRIPTOR	SUBCATEGORIES	SAMPLE STUDENT ACTIVITIES
Create	Generating new ideas, products, or ways of viewing things	Designing, constructing, planning, producing, inventing	Students produce video program notes for concerts Technology implementation/ composition opportunities (Finale, GarageBand, Audacity, etc.) Design a warm-up using elements from the piece. Improvisation (in warm-ups using tonal areas of the pieces sung in class)
Evaluate	Justifying a decision or course of action	Checking, hypothesizing, critiquing, experimenting, judging	What elements contribute to measure X being the climax, and why? Using the state audition rubric or performance assessment rubrics, evaluate a rehearsal or concert performance.
Analyze	Breaking information into parts to explore understandings and relationships	Comparing/ contrasting, organizing, deconstructing, interrogating, exploring	Compare/contrast sections of a piece. (e.g., A vs. A'). Compare two musical settings of the same text.
Apply	Using information in another familiar situation	Implementing, carrying out, using, executing, synthesizing	Performance tasks: • singing exams • sight-reading • written exams
Understand	Explaining ideas or concepts	Interpreting, summarizing, paraphrasing, classifying, teaching	Explain good posture and its benefits. Paraphrase the text of a piece.
Remember	Recalling information	Recognizing, listing, identifying, retrieving, naming, defining	Define the term <i>mezzo forte</i> . Name the key signature.

Getting Started

Figuring out how to use assessments in the choral classroom can be challenging because assessment has been characterized as daunting, time-consuming, and disruptive to music-making. The following six actions can insure assessment enhances the choral classroom experience without hindering performance.

- 1. Choose only one to two assessments** to avoid feeling overwhelmed.
- 2. Be consistent in your use.** Consistency makes your assessments fair and reliable learning measures.
- 3. Avoid negative use of assessments**

FIGURE 4. ASSESSMENT MODELS ALIGNED WITH THE REVISED BLOOM'S TAXONOMY AND SAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION METHODS

ASSESSMENT MODELS	IMPLEMENTATION METHODS	BENEFITS
Closed Tasks (RBT: Remembering)	Key signature worksheet Define musical terms. Crossword puzzle using musical terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful for assessing content-based standards; not useful for process-based standards • Assess students' knowledge of facts, skills, or concepts. • Takes less time
Open Tasks and Constructed Responses (RBT: Understanding and/or Analyzing)	<p>USING A FACE-TO-FACE, self-conducting recording, give students two choices of pieces that they are currently learning, turn off the sound, and ask them to identify which piece you are conducting and how they arrived at their conclusion.</p> <p>SHOW YOUTUBE CLIPS of contrasting performances of a piece your ensemble is singing. Ask the singers to compare/contrast, and how those performances can inform their own singing of the piece.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to interpret • Ability to summarize information • Ability to communicate thinking
Performance tasks (RBT: Apply)	<p>SINGING TEST (INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP): The use of an iPad/tablet to record these exams can expedite this process. Students should hold the iPad/tablet for a predetermined amount of time, recording their face and their voice as they sing, demonstrating their synthesis of musical concepts, information, and skills. Assessment of these clips are to take place outside of academic learning time, leaving more time for rehearsal.</p> <p>INTERVAL SINGING DURING ATTENDANCE: Sing each student's name on an interval; their response should be to sing that interval back to you and speak the name of the interval. This task immediately engages students in music-making and focuses their attention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to synthesize and apply information and skills
Informal Assessments (RBT: Creating)	<p>TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION: Have students re-write, in their own words, the text of a piece they are learning (solo or choral). They will create a video or multimedia project that could be shown to the audience prior to performance to aid their understanding of the piece.</p> <p>TUTORIAL: Create video tutorial demonstrating predetermined musical ideas (e.g., How to check posture and explain the benefits, or How to use solfège as learning aid)</p> <p>MASH-UP/ REMIX/ ARRANGE/ COVER (MRAC): Students choose two choral pieces from the current performance repertory and create digital or acoustic MRAC of the piece. Describe the musical components (texture, harmony, melody, rhythm, form) of each individual piece and discuss how you manipulated them to create the mash-up.</p> <p>Students can create a cover of a choral piece in another style or the students' favorite style of music. Describe the musical components (texture, harmony, melody, rhythm, form) of each individual piece, and discuss how you manipulated them to create the cover.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depth of understanding of a topic or concept • Ability to communicate or collaborate
Self-Assessment (RBT: Evaluating)	<p>ENTRANCE OR EXIT ASSESSMENTS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What did you learn today? (Exit exercise at the end of class.) 2. What could your section do better today? (Possible entrance exercises using section leaders or class officers to help convey this sentiment to the choir.) 3. What are your strengths/weaknesses as a singer? 4. Why do you sing? 5. What is our goal today/this week/semester/year? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops awareness of strengths and weaknesses • Helps teachers and students evaluate learning

(punishment). Testing is not an effective classroom management tool.

4. Join professional choral music organizations. These offer tried-and-true methods and best practices.

5. Establish a circle of colleagues with whom to share ideas. Online resources offer a global bank of knowledge (e.g., *teacherspayteachers.com*, *sharemylesson.com*, *betterlesson.com*).

6. Consult textbooks. Method books

can provide sample assessments on which to build.

Choral educators may shy away from assessment due to the lack of readily available tools that demonstrate how it can maximize learning during the rehearsal process, generate higher level thinking in the singers, and build community through student collaboration. The choral classroom holds a special place in our schools. We deliver

curricula in innovative ways, and we can also help to develop the personal skills necessary for our students' success well beyond the classroom. It is imperative that we explore and encourage assessment in the choral arts, as it not only develops our singers' personal musicianship, but it also establishes pathways of understanding for our communities about the benefits of a choral music education. ■

By Andrew S. Berman

THE NEW ALTERNATIVES

New modes of learning and performing are stretching the boundaries of what it means to be “alternative” in the music classroom.

FOR AS LONG as most of us can remember and beyond, the three pillars of school music performance have been band, orchestra, and chorus. Anything outside of that was considered “alternative,” but that is an old definition. The most obvious counterexample is jazz, which was outside the norm for music classes when it first began to enter schools decades ago, but is now standard. As the years pass and students come and go, our conceptualization of what is mainstream, and what lies outside of it, is constantly changing.

Our keenest understanding of what an alternative ensemble is comes when we focus more on the “alternative” part than the “ensemble” part. You can try to classify by instrumentation (banjo: alternative), or region (mariachi: mainstream in Texas, alternative in Iowa). However, “alternative” is really about broadening possibilities for your students, and meeting them where they are.

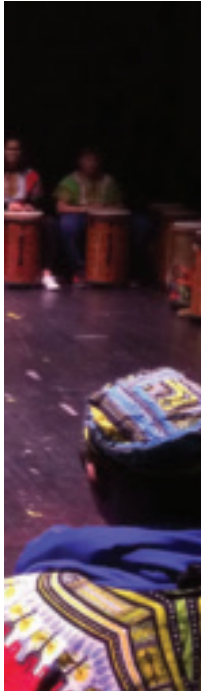
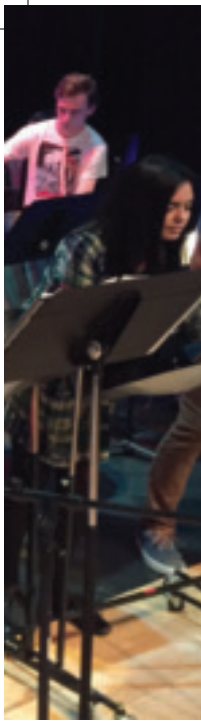
Turning the Podium Around

In typical school ensembles, there is a strong tradition of placing the conductor on the podium before a semicircle of students, all facing forward. The conductor makes all of the decisions about programming, interpretation of the score, who plays what part, etc. It’s a fine, time-tested model, but alternative ensembles may do it a little differently. “Our traditional, teacher-centered model has proven quite successful in producing a very particular type of polished performance,” says David Williams, associate director and associate professor of music education at the University of South Florida School of Music in Tampa, but alternative ensembles lend themselves to “learner-centered pedagogies that provide students a much greater level of autonomy.”

“It can’t be the conductor leading only, or we’re not giving them enough,” says Anne Fennell. Fennell is the performing arts chair at Mission Vista High School in Vista, California, where she teaches steel pan ensemble and music



Photos (left to right) top row: By Stacy Foster, Little Kids Rock. Middle row: Courtesy of James Mader, courtesy of Will Schmid, By Anne Fennell. Bottom row: By Lauren Morris, by Eric Songer.



**"Instead of getting bogged down in researching it, just start it; let the kids teach you."
—ERIC SONGER**



composition; she is also the Chair of NAFME's IN-ovations Council. As director of the steel pan ensemble, She teaches the music and coaches the students, but they choose the repertoire and do the arranging; leading the ensemble is a collaborative process. "They have massive discussions about the music," she describes. Students meet in teams to assign parts; decisions about music are made by committee. "Ownership of learning is key."

Eric Songer and his wife Heidi were inspired to bring popular music education to Chaska Middle School West in Chaska, Minnesota—where they are both music educators—after seeing the movie *School of Rock*. They created a program in which students learned to play the music they were hearing on the radio (or, perhaps more accurately, Pandora and other streaming services). The program became popular enough to spawn an upper-level course: garage band. Chaska Middle School West now boasts four garage bands, a bluegrass band, and burgeoning programs in hip hop, rap, electronic dance music, and more. Songer will present on nontraditional ensembles at the NAFME In-Service Conference in Grapevine, Texas, this November.

Songer didn't sweat it when a

banjo-playing student approached him to start a bluegrass band, something he knew little about. "Instead of getting bogged down in researching it, just start it; let the kids teach you," he counsels. Method books are helpful, but so are listening suggestions from the students who are immersed in the style. The convergence of popular styles with which kids are familiar and music education professionals is a perfect marriage. The students may be able to sing along with the music in their headphones, but teachers "skill 'em up," as Jeanne Reynolds puts it. She is the PreK-12 performing arts specialist for Pinellas County Schools in Clearwater, Florida, and outgoing Chair of NAFME's IN-ovations Council. She points out that students get a solid music education from qualified teachers no matter what the genre. The trick is to give students the tools they need to learn on their own, and then teacher and student can learn together. "All kinds of music have their own particular skills, but there are some musical elements you can teach no matter what," notes Reynolds. "Those elements are all there, and shame on us if we don't take the time to hold kids to a level of excellence no matter what they're playing."

Williams says that a learner-centered approach nurtures students as the creative musicians they are. "Ask the kids: 'What do you want to do? What has meaning for you?'" Opening this can of worms can be scary for the teacher at first. "In a teacher-centered model, I have to know everything," remarks Williams, but giving up some of the decision-making also transfers some of the responsibility for having all the answers. Colleen Filush's music classes at Central High School in Bridgeport, Connecticut, are highly collaborative. "They're learning to operate without a conductor," she says, and picking up communication, decision-making, team-building, and critical thinking skills along the way.

Filush's string ensemble may look traditional at first glance, until you notice the ukuleles and mandolins. The ukes came via a grant, but the mandolins entered her classroom by chance. Her alternative ensembles are the result of limited resources, so what her orchestra lacks in violas and basses, it makes up in whatever else she can find. Just like Fennell's steel pan ensemble and Songer's rock bands, Filush's string group is an opportunity for kids to take the lead. The result for her is a lot of YouTube listening, arranging, and

Photos from top courtesy of St. Petersburg College Music Industry Recording Arts, courtesy of David Williams.



“You may attract a different student—a whole different population. That’s a super-positive thing.”
—JEANNE REYNOLDS

one-on-one time with mandolin method books, but also students who are invested in and taking ownership of their music education.

The Cutting Edge

“Everyone is carrying an orchestra in their back pocket. It’s endless,” says Fennell. The advent of mobile devices and apps such as GarageBand and Logic have blown the doors off their hinges when it comes to instrumentation and programming. Williams notes that there is a student-led iPad ensemble at the University of South Florida called “Touch.” They did a *Wizard of Oz*-themed, interactive performance in which the audience gave directions to

the actors via Twitter. Songer directed a concert band performance that incorporated mobile devices as instruments in addition to acoustic instruments.

When it comes to incorporating current trends into mainstream music education, Williams sees digital instruments as the new jazz. Music educators need to accept digital instruments as a legitimate pursuit for modern music students. “We have to teach for what is next, not what is now,” adds Fennell. “If not, we’re just prepping them for what was.”

Pinellas County Schools boasts a full-time music technology teacher, but “that’s not something you would have seen 20 years ago,” Reynolds admits. She says that technology and alternative ensembles have made music more accessible to students than ever before. YouTube effortlessly brings high-quality performance models into the classroom, or wherever students happen to be. Reynolds observes, “They know what it is to be good, and they want to be good.” Songer’s experience of witnessing the tech revolution mirrors Reynolds’, noting that 20 years ago internet use was not permitted in the classroom, but now it’s essential. “Kids are so much more visual these days than 20 years ago,” he notes. “Video really captures their attention.”



“Ask the kids: ‘What do you want to do? What has meaning for you?’” —DAVID WILLIAMS

NONTRADITIONAL ENSEMBLE SESSIONS AT THE 2016 IN-SERVICE CONFERENCE

Check out these sessions this November in Grapevine, Texas!

■ **“I HAVE THE JOB—NOW WHAT? BUILDING AN INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM IN RURAL AND URBAN SCHOOLS”** by *Shane Colquhoun*
 Strategies/practices for building an instrumental music program in urban/rural instrumental settings. Focus is on six areas crucial to building an instrumental program: recruiting and retention, integrating technology, nontraditional and culturally relevant music ensembles, student-centered instruction, student ownership, and parental involvement/support.

■ **“MUSIC EDUCATION THROUGH MUSIC COMPOSITION AND TECHNOLOGY”** by *Anne M Fennell*
 Music Composition through technology opens the door to music education for all students of the current generation, providing the opportunity to create, learn, and apply knowledge, while creating a musical gestalt. Examples of student work, videos, and music will engage the audience, and Fennell will explore how to develop well-rounded musicians through composition while creating proficient composers. Participants will observe and listen to key student work samples, including the breakdown of a sequenced curriculum that develops composition skills, making it accessible for all learners and levels. Music composition—a constructivist and creative approach to music education for all students!

■ **“YOUR QUIRKY ENSEMBLE AND CLASSROOM TECH”** by *Colleen Filush*
 How a nontraditional ensemble (using any combination of instruments/voices) can be enhanced through the use of classroom technology (Google Classroom, Remind, Edmodo, Class Dojo, student phones). “Bring your own device” is becoming popular in school districts and can enhance individual/group learning. This free technology is universally available, even in schools without extensive tech support, and can provide a vehicle for parent/family involvement.

■ **“THE NEXT GENERATION OF MUSIC EDUCATION: NONTRADITIONAL ENSEMBLES”** by *Eric Songer*
 Rock bands. DJs. Bluegrass ensembles. Country bands. Electronica groups. Music and video production. Guitar classes. Eric Songer and the Chaska [Minnesota] Middle School music program have implemented these ensembles. Learn about learning finding music, securing funding, and purchasing gear/technology. Discover how students learn through these groups and how they coexist with traditional ensembles.



Bringing Music to the Whole School

“We have to look at the percentage of the music students we touch,” asserts Fennell. “Just because they’re not in a traditional ensemble, that doesn’t mean they don’t want to be in music.” The

PLAYING IN THE COMMUNITY

“You have to make the opportunities,” says Fennell. Her steel pan group has played at Starbucks, retirement homes, and places of worship. Her students also host a benefit concert called “Rock the Hill” in which the students choose the charity each year. Fennell also incorporates audience participation into the gigs, inviting spectators to come onstage to watch or join in.

Filush has taken her choir to sing the national anthem at a hockey game and outside the arena before the game. It was an opportunity to show younger students that music performance can happen outside of school. Her groups also do a multicultural night (in which the students perform music from their own cultures), a Black History Month event at the local city hall, and hallway-roaming performances during parents night and freshman orientation for which the students choose the repertoire.

Songers’ garage band students participate in an interdisciplinary performance called “Rock It,” which also features industrial, lighting, and sound designers, ceramicists, and dancers. Additionally, they’ve had gigs at the Mall of America, city festivals, and coffee shops.

Williams encourages alternative ensemble leaders to allow a little spontaneity in the planning of performances. Traditional ensembles tend to have very formal concerts with everything planned out way in advance, but alternative ensembles may tend more toward the opposite end of the spectrum. Leave the elements up to the students, and partially up to chance. Set a few parameters with the students, and then be surprised by the outcome.

addition of alternative ensembles to a music program broadens the appeal, and has the potential to increase music enrollment. Reynolds suggests that this can lead to greater diversity in the classroom: “You may attract a different student—a whole different population. That’s a super-positive thing.”

Although this isn’t necessarily the goal, alternative ensembles can serve as gateways to other music. Songer reports that a student who entered his music program through a garage band joined the jazz band and still plays today. Just as important are the kids who don’t see a reflection of themselves in band, orchestra, or chorus, but do find their niche in, say, the steel pan ensemble. “I want every kid to see themselves as a musician,” says Fennell, “and I don’t care what they play.”

Alternative ensembles don’t have to stay completely within the school. Nontraditional styles and repertoire open an ensemble to multiple community performance opportunities (see the sidebar for more information), including festivals for alternative ensembles. To use Florida as an example, the FMEA has a guitar festival and a steel pan festival, and this past May they debuted their new “Crossover” Multi-Genre Music Festival, celebrating over 20 genres. Reynolds appreciated it as an opportunity to highlight similarities across genres, and concepts such as balance and tone. Williams was gratified by the excitement surrounding

the festival and the momentum it created for acknowledging alternative ensembles in the future.

An Alternative Ensemble in Your School

“Sometimes you’ll have to build a culture,” says Reynolds of forming an ensemble. This may mean it has to start after school, which requires a different buy-in from the students and parents. Staffing may be an issue: You can’t do it all yourself, but you may be able to split a teacher with neighboring schools.

One key is to find similarities to what you know. In the case of rock bands, Songer says, “Go into it with a mindset of running a jazz band.” Many popular genres have rhythm sections, so he starts there. Filush taught her cellists to play pizzicato in the style of bluegrass upright bass. Don’t force the similarities, though. Alternative ensembles are their own thing. Williams says, “We sometimes approach guitar ensemble as if it’s concert band: sitting in a semicircle, with a method book in front of them, with a conductor. There’s nothing wrong with that, but I don’t think that’s terribly guitarlike.”

The ensemble is bound to attract a bunch of beginners—both experienced musicians who are new to the genre, and students who have never been in music before. Filush counsels to “Meet them where they are; be patient.” Filush recommends having them play for each



other early on. “They come in with fear of an audience, so work on that.” If the instrument is new for you, too, don’t be afraid to show them that you’re learning along with them.

More “Alternative” Than “Ensemble”

The benefits of students’ investment in and ownership of the music they’re making can happen outside the specific format of an ensemble. Williams says, “There are all kinds of ways to reach kids,” suggesting composition and music production/recording classes as alternatives to ensembles. Fennell adds, “Not every kid wants to be in an ensemble.” In her composition class, students composed hold music that is used in the phone system at their district offices. She introduces the kids to professional composers, has them exhibit their work in an audio gallery at the Apple Store, and teaches them the vocabulary they need to discuss their and their classmates’ music. “It has to be more than practice-and-perform,” comments Fennell.

Reynolds concurs, and notes that, even in the ensembles, there is a heavy focus on composing and arranging, which is all part of the learner-centered model so natural to the alternative sphere. One of the biggest changes in music education Reynolds has noticed “is from ensemble-focused to individual-focused. Even in the band setting, it’s about personal musicianship.” ■

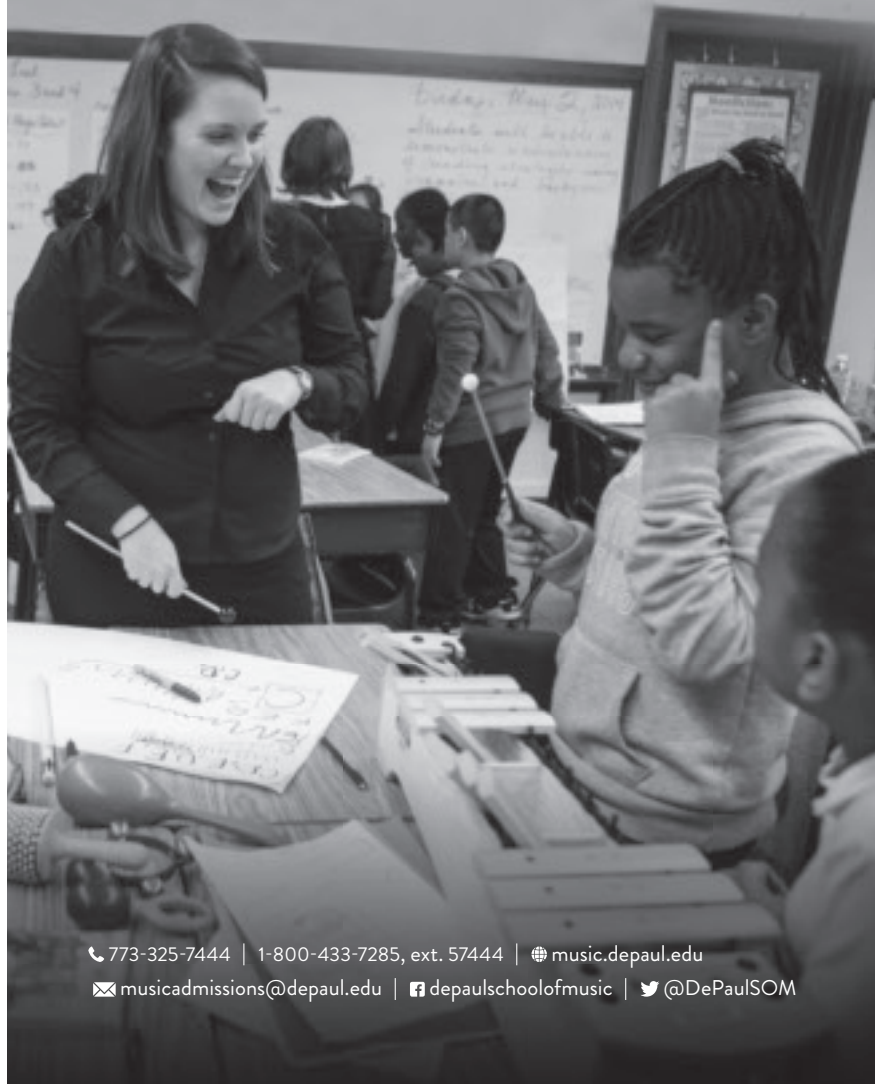
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WE ARE

BY CATHY APPLEFIELD OLSON

FAMILY

Creating and Sustaining Bonds in Performing Ensembles



Photo and illustration by iStockphoto.com.

GROUP DYNAMICS can be tricky in any situation. For performing ensembles, music educators can enlist a variety of techniques to help ensure that students are harmonizing on all levels. Most agree that when it comes to team building among students who hail from different backgrounds, grades, and temperaments, it's best to create a familial atmosphere early in the school year and lead by example.

"A big part of the way I design my classes, whether at the elementary level or even college kids, is about having to talk to each other in a way that brings in everybody's perspective," says 2016 NAFME In-Service Conference presenter Manju Durairaj, an adjunct professor of music curriculum at

VanderCook College of Music in Chicago, Illinois, and a music teacher in grades PreK–4 at Chicago's Latin School. "You have to set that up as teacher early on, or you're bound for failure."

For David Holdhusen, chairman of the music department and director of choral activities at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion, "The most important thing I do with the ensembles I've worked with at the university level, as well as in public schools, is to have some sort of retreat at the beginning of the year." Early timing is key, says this 2016 In-Service Conference presenter, "before they really get to know each other, to strip down those



preconceived ideas they may have coming in.”

Wendy Moy, assistant professor of music and director of choral activities and music education at Connecticut College in New London, and a NAFME In-Service Conference presenter, is also a fan of retreats. And, she’s quick to point out, they don’t have to be as elaborate as some teachers may think. “They can be done simply, and they don’t have to be overnight,” she says. “Ideally you’d get off campus, but I’ve also done a retreat in the cafeteria during off-hours. We do group-building activities—things that let them get to know each other as people.”

Think Outside the Music Box

In fact, it’s the people, not the performance, that can really bond a group. During Holdhusen’s retreats, activities range from students tossing a ball of yarn around a circle and revealing something about themselves, or answering questions such as whether they like the movie or book version of a story better. “These are questions that get people out of their shell, things that have nothing to do with music,” he says. “They need to get comfortable with each other before the music can become important.”

Holdhusen’s 40-student college ensemble also holds a football game where it’s sopranos and tenors vs. basses and altos, a Halloween costume party, and a holiday party at the end of the semester. “One of the most important things I do with them is create that family atmosphere,” he says.

“My big word is ‘unity,’” says 2016 In-Service Conference presenter Lori Schwartz Reichl, a band director currently on leave from the Howard County Public School System in Maryland; beginning in October 2016 she will have a series published in the teacher’s edition of *In Tune Monthly*. “Everything you do within your ensemble must be about creating a

“They need to get comfortable with each other before the music can become important.”

—DAVID HOLDHUSEN

at Western Illinois University in Macomb, and also a NAFME In-Service Conference presenter, says that a cohesive unit starts with the teacher. “Most important, the behavior needs to be modeled,” he says. “Everything starts with the teacher/director. It starts with the teacher being interested in students’ lives and opinions. Gone are the days where the teacher does all of the thinking during pin-drop rehearsals. Effective learning occurs when the students are encouraged to be thoughtfully engaged and enabled to communicate with each other as well as the class and teacher. Every voice matters.”

sense of unity. My motto is: ‘One band, one sound, one family.’ It’s how I’ve come to teach. The goal is to create a superior sound together while also treating each member of the group with respect.”

Richard Cangro, associate professor of music education

The Young and the Introverted

Since many ensembles are grouped according to ability and not age, teachers should be proactive in integrating younger students with their older counterparts, as well as those who may be shy about participating.

Schwartz Reichl ran a summer band camp for students ranging from rising seventh- to 12th-graders. “Some of the high school kids were looking at some of the younger kids and thinking, ‘What the heck,’ but from the moment we begin I let them know that it by no means has to do with how old we are: It has to do with what benefits the whole sound,” she says. “Of course, we have to be really careful about a sixth-grader who might not be speaking the same language as an eighth-grader, and may not have the same confidence, or even know a single person in the band.”

Moy has found success in pairing younger kids with a “choir buddy.” “It’s wonderful to match up a newer person coming into an ensemble with someone who’s established who can show them the nature of the ensemble and the nuts and bolts,” she says. “A choral buddy goes a long way—and they don’t have to be best friends.”

Teachers can create situations that level the playing field for all members of an ensemble, says Moy. “If you’re going to

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Photo top by iStockphoto.com, bottom by Howard Rockwin, musicalmemoriesphotography.com



have discussion in rehearsal about, say, what we think a piece means, instead of just opening it up to the whole class to raise hands—which favors the extroverted kids—hand out a 3x5 card and ask them to put down their thoughts and then lead the discussion based on the cards,” she suggests.

Cangro advocates cooperative learning strategies where kids are encouraged to respond to each other, and all are held accountable for their work. To achieve the goal, he engages students in a variety of activities, including Think-Pair-Share, where students individually think about a solution for a posed question or problem and then, in pairs, compare answers and elaborate on their ideas, and Rally Robin, where students alternate generating oral responses to a posed question.

“The biggest problem I hear about from teachers is time,” Cangro says. “I suggest you do need to time these activities or they will eat up your whole rehearsal. Set an activity at two minutes, which is longer than you may think, and it can be a give-and-take with the teacher facilitating the conversation.”

Bullies and Cliques Be Gone

Acknowledge that bullying is “always going to happen, especially with younger kids,” says Durairaj. “Ideally, it’s good to have all these conversations way before something happens, reminding them of the rules of working together.”

Role-playing can be effective, Durairaj says, as is bringing in positive lessons from literature. A favorite of hers is the Jacqueline Woodson’s book *Each Kindness*. “I read it, then we talk about it. What constitutes bullying? What are the trigger images and words, or trigger situations? If kids don’t know what constitutes bullying, how are we going to prevent it? It’s about setting up classroom structures in such a way that everybody is worthy of respect.”

“Cliques tend to happen when there is a division of interest in the group,” says Schwartz Reichl. “But I’ve found if

I’m teaching unity throughout, demonstrating kindness and making it about the music, then ultimately you won’t have that sense of division.”

Nonverbal techniques are also effective, notes Schwartz Reichl. “When the teacher is talking too much without allowing the music to come through, the students may begin talking among themselves. The more you talk, the less they listen.” When her students enter the room, for example, she calls the group to attention and elicits posture checks by

gently stomping her feet. “They know: feet flat on the floor, in posture position,” she says.

For Moy, sometimes the answer is as easy as shifting the shape of the room. “If I saw something happening that was negative, I would quickly have everyone get up and switch seats,” she says. “Because if I’m noticing it, chances are other students are noticing, too.”



TEACHING STUDENTS HOW TO LEAD AND HOW TO FOLLOW

Many music ensembles place students in leadership roles. How can teachers foster interpersonal relations and leadership qualities while also promoting fairness, individual creativity, and a sense of belonging?

Holdhusen selects four to eight section leaders, while his students elect a handful of officers, with whom he tries to meet every other week. “We talk about ways they can lead the group,” he says. While things usually flow smoothly, “sometimes these leaders will think their position comes with more power than it probably should—a hard dynamic.” To help diffuse potential issues, he likes to have leadership understudies waiting in the wings. “That’s another checkpoint: a way for others in the ensemble to come back to me if they need to and say, ‘This is out of hand.’”

Schwartz Reichl assigns section leaders, who are typically the ones who are the most musically advanced but can also demonstrate commitment. “Sometimes the most advanced player might be the one who doesn’t always come to class prepared,” she deadpans. But her leadership ends there. “I don’t do much else with other roles. I have found over the years that if I name a president of the band or something like that, then the pompous confidence comes through—and that’s not what I want to happen.”

Durairaj says it’s all about “bringing the focus into what we are doing as an ensemble, and creating group empathy. We are working toward a common project where the end result is immediately evident—and to do this we all have to work together.”

Hitting a High Note

In the end, when it comes to performing groups, the bond comes back around to the music, educators say. Holdhusen’s off-site retreats conclude with all members of the ensemble setting and stating their musical goals. “It’s the music that’s the uniting factor. That’s the team part of it,” he says. “At an athletic event, the team comes together to learn the plays to win the game. Here, we come together so we can portray the artistry the composer has given us. It’s really about building a safe environment where students can emote the music in the space.”

“We are all there for the common love of music,” Moy says. “It’s good to have a discussion with the whole choir: ‘What are our goals?’ The teacher’s job is to lead—where we should be going, what type of ensemble we want to have, what kind of community environment will get us to where we want to go artistically.”

“Music teachers are in such a unique place where we see the kids through multiple years, and sometimes we are the only safe place for them,” says Durairaj. ■

THE ADVOCATE



JOHN J. GALLAGHER is devoted to advocating for his program, as well as helping other music educators learn how to advocate for theirs.

BY SUSAN POLINIAK

W

ITH AN ENROLLMENT of 1,000 students in instrumental music alone, the Longwood Central School District on Long Island, New York, is an example of a program that is certainly doing well—but this has not always been the case. At the end of 2010, they lost their fourth-grade beginning music program. “We had cuts all over the place: staffing, programming, athletics,” says NAFME member John J. Gallagher, who in 2006 joined the Longwood Central School District as director of fine arts, where he supervises art, music, and family and consumer science teachers K–12 and a secondary theater program. “We were lucky enough through our own local advocacy and public relations efforts to have our fourth-grade beginning music program reinstated for the 2015–2016 school year. Our community figured that after five years, it was time to bring it back. Regardless of the economy, they felt that the music program was valued. Things are moving in the right direction!”

The rest of the music program in the district is a healthy, much-beloved part of the local community. “We have band, orchestra, and chorus; we have fifth-, sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade ensembles, and in high school we combine the 9–10 groups and 11–12 groups. For a high-need/low-wealth district like ours, the community really loves it—we’ve been named one of the best communities for music education each year since 2008. Our ensembles have done well at NYSSMA adjudications.”

An active figure in music education advocacy, Gallagher has sat on the Executive Council of the New York State

School Music Association (NYSSMA) as its state chairperson for public relations and information since 2002, and in 2014 joined the Executive Board of the Suffolk County Music Educators Association (SCMEA) as its commercial membership chairperson. “I think it’s my duty to bring the importance of the arts to the leaders: administrators, fellow directors, the board of education, and our parents, who see what their children are doing,” he remarks. “I’m very proud to live and work here—anything I can do to promote our program is my duty.”

And it’s a great program that Gallagher has to promote—one that has been recognized in a variety of areas, not the least of which are diversity and inclusion. “We’re really very proud of what we’re doing in our community. The Suffolk County Anti-Bias Task Force put out a notification in 2014 to local school districts to recognize people, programs, or institutions that promote tolerance and dignity among all creeds, religion, races, colors, etc., and I nominated our arts program,” Gallagher notes. “We have a very mixed socioeconomic community. From our pit orchestra to our chamber ensembles to our marching band—our students truly enjoy being with each other. During rehearsals for the spring musical, the students practically live together, and it’s the same with those in the band. We appreciate the diversity in the students we serve. When that opportunity came about, I wanted to do something unique and nominate the program. We were lucky enough to have the program recognized. The artistic community is very giving, very tolerant. Being

involved in the arts exposes you to a lot of good things: teamwork, constructive criticism, and problem-solving.”

Not content to see just his own district’s program recognized for its



WITH JOHN J. GALLAGHER

Q What do you know to be true about teaching music that you didn’t know when you started?

Students are resilient, and everyone wants to do well. There are obviously different levels of talent throughout your program. Music teachers can help them to become better people, citizens, and musicians.

Q If I weren’t a music teacher I’d ... probably still be in arts-related promotions.

Q What advice would you give to a teacher who is trying to start a program similar to yours? Persevere. Look to other successful programs and see how you could mirror them. Market your ideas and build on them.

Q What’s the biggest lesson you want your students to learn while in your program? How to be good people, how to treat each other well, and how to enjoy music. I think they’re already doing that! I tell them that they do what they do because they enjoy being together. They enjoy working with each other to create a great product. If it’s not the spring musical, it’s the concert—it’s a product they’re putting out into the community, on their own time. We’re putting our creations out there for people to see. And I think that’s pretty special.

Q The music education profession would be better if ... we had more funding. With the new ESSA, there seems to be more federal funding that will be available. Teachers and districts should know how to access that to improve or reinstate their programs. We need to use our best public relations and advocacy skills to tell our principals, communities, and superintendents that the funds are there for us.

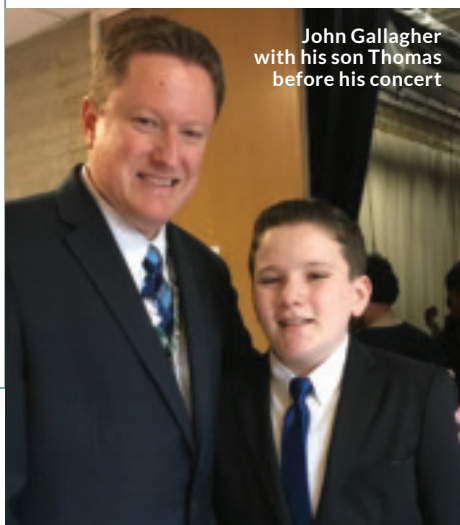
Q What have you learned about students and parents through your work? That the parents are appreciative of how we develop and cultivate the talents of their children. The parents can’t believe what we can get out of them. Our high school auditorium seats 1,000 people, and we sell out our shows. Our program is strong and getting stronger. It’s a quality program, but there is always room for improvement. Our district hasn’t had a failed budget in more than a decade. The parents and other community residents see what we do here—what we produce. What we do is tangible. We love what we do, and we feel supported.

achievements, about 10 years ago Gallagher created the Long Island Scholar Artist program. “It’s a way to recognize students’ achievements academically and artistically in Nassau and Suffolk counties. The 2016–2017 school year will mark the 10th anniversary of recognizing 12th-graders in five areas: music, dance, visual arts, media arts, and theatre. They are nominated in their junior year to be recognized in their senior year. Promoting 10 from each county on Long Island, student profiles run in *Newsday*, a local newspaper. We have celebrated more than 200 student artists. Along the way, we came up with a runner-up tier to honor another 20 as

Awards of Merit recipients. We end the year with a gala at the Tilles Center [on the Long Island University campus in Brookville] where we recognize all of them.”

Gallagher’s career path did not originally include music education. “Marketing and communication was my first career; I went back to school for music education,” he notes. “My doctoral work was focused on advocacy for music programs. Part of my dissertation was turned into a manual on how to market your music program. I’ve learned that music teachers don’t have much experience with marketing their programs—they haven’t taken classes in public relations or advertising. If you go to school to be a teacher, you’re taking

“I’m very proud to live and work here—anything I can do to promote our program is my duty.”



John Gallagher with his son Thomas before his concert

your methods classes and so forth. Where do you have it in your schedule to take a marketing or public relations or journalism class?”

His work with NYSSMA is in line with his aim to help music educators learn how to be skillful and successful advocates for their programs. “I’ve found my niche in NYSSMA; I’ve been doing their PR since 2002,” he

Photos by John J. Gallagher.



Michael Gallagher (lower left) and his friends at Longwood Middle School get ready to perform *The Lion King* for their spring 2016 musical.

remarks. “We are now active on social media: One of my colleagues created the Facebook page, and I got them onto Twitter. Social media is where it’s at right now: It’s a useful tool to disseminate information quickly. From a marketing and PR standpoint, NYSSMA has a pretty good presence on social media. It’s a really well-rounded series of efforts in terms

of marketing and communications.”

These efforts have included a resource that music educators throughout the U.S. may find to be very helpful. “It has to be about 10 or 11 years ago when I got the idea from NAFME (then MENC) to create a Press Room on the NYSSMA website. One section features what we call the ‘Swiss-cheese news releases.’ They’re

news release templates for, say, All-State students, or a band director’s retirement. Just fill in the holes, get approval, and send it to local media outlets.” All of these resources and more can be found at www.nyssma.org/information/press-room, and Gallagher notes that, “NYSSMA likes to share! Everything is up on the website; you’ll find a lot of different tools there. The



“Sometimes, we get stuck in our own four walls—we’re so focused on rehearsing for the concert or opening night—but we need to share what the kids are doing.”



With daughter Amanda before her marching band performance



Gallagher with a salutatorian (left) and a valedictorian (center), both NYSSMA recognised violinists

whole point of doing this, I feel, is to create all these different materials, these tools, to make local advocacy and PR efforts easier. Music teachers already have a million things to do, but if you want people to know what you’re doing with concerts and so forth, you need to be actively marketing your program. If I or NYSSMA can do something to help the cause, I want to be there. I love helping districts

advocate for their own programs!”

So, what are a few pointers that Gallagher can offer to music educators who are new to these kinds of advocacy efforts? “With social media, you have to have a business mindset: Know who your audience is, who are you writing for. You want to sound professional. You want to get permission in case the news crew wants to cover your band.” In terms of the resources that the NYSSMA site has to offer, he instructs that band directors, for example, “can use a Swiss-cheese news release and then, if

their district is lucky enough to have a public relations person and they are authorized to speak directly with them, they can work with them. Find out how the lines of communication work in your district. You’re the expert when it comes to your music program. Help the PR person by filling out one of those releases. Visit the NYSSMA Press Room for even more! You’ll get ideas as to what other kinds of stories are out there. Sometimes, we get stuck in our own four walls—we’re so focused on rehearsing for the concert or opening night—but we need to share what the

“The artistic community is very giving, very tolerant. Being involved in the arts exposes you to a lot of good things.”

kids are doing. A lot of good things are going on in our programs across the country. We have to brag about our local programs. Brag about the kids! And not just the All-State kids—brag about what the fifth-graders are doing in their recorder lesson! You can’t go wrong in this profession when you’re student-centered.” ■

Photos by John J. Gallagher.

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—Plato (born circa 428 BCE), Greek philosopher and founder of the Academy, one of the first institutions of higher learning in the Western world

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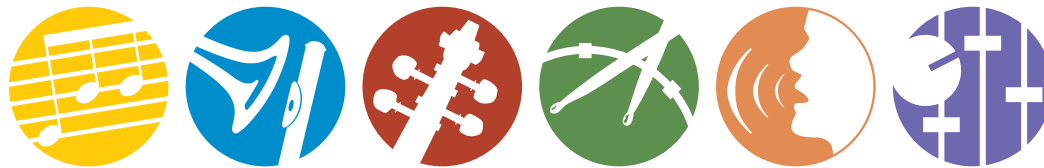


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GENERAL MUSIC

Using Pop Music to Teach Theory

In the 1950s and 1960s, many academics and critics considered pop and rock music to be of dubious merit. But now these idioms are fodder for serious study at all levels. NAFME member Ethan Lawrence, string orchestra and guitar teacher at John Champe High School in Aldie, Virginia, is one of a growing number of teachers using pop music to illuminate music theory concepts.

Lawrence finds that by focusing on music with which his students are familiar, they grasp theory more readily than they would with the standard classical repertoire. “Students tend to gravitate to similar styles of music, so drawing from their selected pool of choices allows me to hone in on material that they will definitely listen to, and hopefully remember the concepts much better.”

In demonstrating basic harmonic sequences, there are always plenty of current songs that can be mined. Most recently, Lawrence has used One Direction’s “What Makes You Beautiful” to teach the theory behind the progression and to get it into the students’ ears. He says, “It’s a very nice I-IV-V progression with the vi chord appearing only once or twice in the

prechorus and chorus.”

For students who are able to process examples of greater harmonic sophistication, Lawrence might adapt other songs. For example, for his advanced orchestra class, he created a mash-up arrangement of Taylor Swift’s “Wildest Dreams” and Drake’s “Hotline Bling,”



Pop music can be used to teach concepts such as modulation.

so that the students would learn about modulating between the keys of A-flat major and D minor. “It was a great experience for me to show students that even some of the more challenging key signatures are common in pop music,” he says.

Other times, Lawrence has his students take a more hands-on approach. For example, he often asks his guitar students to pick a song of their choice and adapt it for classical guitar—an exercise that not only develops theory and ear-training chops, but also opens up broader technical and

conceptual questions. Lawrence explains, “This allows me to have conversations with the students on what is the style of classical guitar—and how it can be applied to songs that we enjoy with proper free-stroke and rest-stroke technique.”

Using pop songs as the source material for learning theory is not without its pitfalls. It can be difficult to find tunes, for instance, that are examples of sonata form. And some students have particular tastes: For example, there are the die-hard rockers and the classical purists. But Lawrence works with these different outlooks. “I encourage the development of opinions in the classroom. I just make sure the students understand that this is part of a lesson,” he says, explaining that the concepts are important, regardless of a student’s musical inclinations. —Adam Perlmutter

BRASS & WOODWINDS

Breathing Exercises to Build Endurance in Brass Players

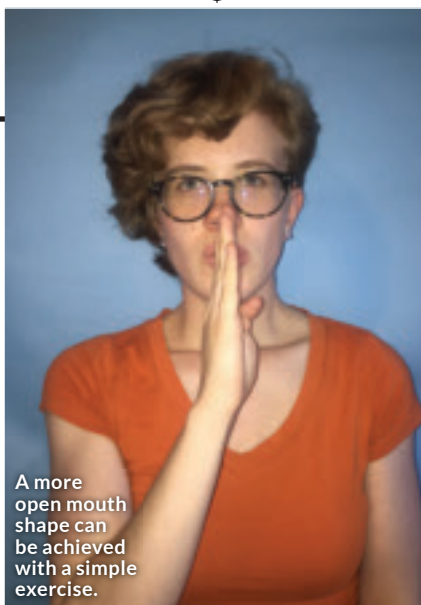
One of the keys to having a good brass sound is to have a good airstream. Ramon Vasquez, assistant band director at Lopez High School in Brownsville, Texas, offers some tips on encouraging proper breath support in young

Photo by iStockphoto.com.

musicians. As one would expect, diagnosing the problem is his first step. Says Vasquez, “I begin by listening for the quality of the sound. If it is small and not as resonant as it could be, I look into how much of their capacity they are really using. I then start some exercises to get them to expand that capacity by making the breath constant from beginning to end. More often than not, if I tell kids to take in more breath, some will eventually feel light-headed. I let them know that that’s a good thing because they are getting more air into their body than what they are used to.”

To teach the techniques to develop a good, solid air supply Vasquez relies heavily on the many techniques and exercises shown in the book and video titled *The Breathing Gym* by Sam Pilafian and Patrick Sheridan. “We use a lot of their exercises on a daily basis—exercises like Flow Monitor, Flow Awareness, and Variations on Inhalation and Exhalation.” These flow exercises serve to help the student become more aware of their true lung capacity and, over time, have that become a natural part of how they breathe and blow while playing.

Vasquez also makes use of physical stretching and other physical tools as a student becomes more experienced. “With individuals, I will use a 4”-long breathing tube made from 3/4”-diameter plastic tubing and have them use that when they breathe in. Almost immediately, they will notice that they can get more air into their body when they use the tube, which will make their oral cavity feel more open.” A similar method (if they do not have a breathing tube) is to have the student place an index finger against their lips and open their mouth to the distance between two knuckles to help them



A more open mouth shape can be achieved with a simple exercise.

obtain a more open mouth shape. “We also utilize stretching of the torso through trunk twists and side bends while breathing to help them get a bit more room internally to breathe.”

You can use these same techniques with ensembles as well and they almost always result in an improved ensemble sound. Vasquez continues, “In an ensemble situation, I utilize the same flow monitor exercises that I do with individuals. Taking a few moments to remind ourselves to use our air properly will help to improve the overall sound quality of the ensemble. The music will flow from the students, thus making the end result that much better.”

For some students, however, the idea of breathing in this way can lead to bad habits if not monitored and controlled. Says Vasquez, “The breath needs to be constant and consistent in terms of flow from beginning to end. I tell them that ‘Tension is a tone-killer.’ It isn’t a contest to see how long you can go on the breath, but instead it’s how efficiently you move the air through the body. They should never go to the point where they are squeezing or collapsing their body in order to maintain the airstream. Stay relaxed and focus the air to a steady stream. Keep the body on top of itself and use the air to make your music come alive.” —Chad Criswell

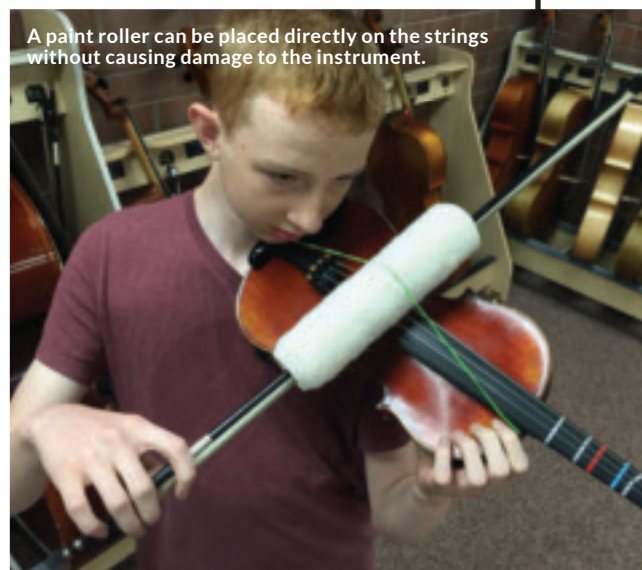


Using Props to Teach Straight Bowing

Among the many challenges facing the student string player, keeping one’s bow straight is particularly difficult. It is a hard skill to teach as well. However, “props can be particularly useful teaching tools,” says Angela Harman, orchestra teacher at Spanish Fork Junior High School in Spanish Fork, Utah. Harman is a NAFME member, a 2015 and 2016 In-Service Conference presenter, and a Give a Note grant recipient.

“In general,” says Harman, “children’s eyeballs pop with props. They keep the students interested and motivated.” To address the specific issue of straight bowing, even simple stickers placed on the bow can help focus the student’s attention. “They’ll look at their bows more.”

Tubes offer an even more direct aid to learning the technique. The basic idea is that bowing inside a tube forces one to keep the bow straight. “This idea isn’t totally new,” says Harman.



A paint roller can be placed directly on the strings without causing damage to the instrument.

“I’ve heard of teachers using a variety of tubular objects for students to practice straight bowing, such as toilet paper rolls, paper towel rolls, and PVC pipe.”

However, these bowing exercises are usually done away from the instrument. “For example, young violin and viola students will place a tube on their shoulder while bowing inside the tube. Cello players sometimes put tubes on their knees and place their bows inside.” This is a real disadvantage:

After practicing straight bowing using a tube, the student must then learn how to do the same when actually playing. But how to eliminate that extra step?

The solution is an easily available, inexpensive object: a paint roller. The soft surface is the key, notes Harman, “I realized that you could place a paint roller directly on the string for bowing practice without damaging the instrument or making any sound. Even the plastic interior of the roller quiets the

sound of the bow. It’s perfect for a strings classroom because students can do this themselves as the teacher monitors them. Or a teacher could have students practice in pairs: one student holding the tube while the other bows.”

Harman’s main instrument is viola, but now she more frequently plays violin. She has also studied cello and understands how to adapt the teaching aid to the idiosyncrasies of each instrument. A cellist, for example, can hold the roller in place with the left hand, while violinists and violists need an additional piece of equipment: a large rubber band of the sort used for shoulder rests. “By putting the band around the violin lengthwise, the roller easily slides underneath and will stay put even as students rock to different strings.”

Silent bowing can be fun, but it’s also a discipline. Students will get impatient and want to play. “Start with just five minutes a day for a week,” suggests Harman, “using background music and varying rhythms to keep it interesting.” — *Michael Adelson*

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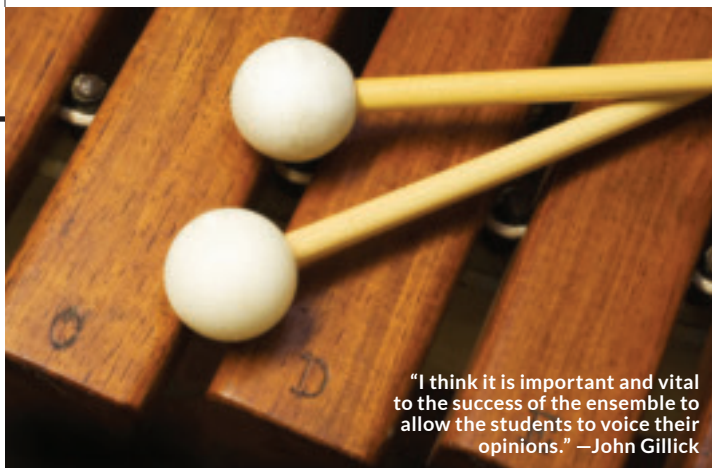
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A Creative Approach to Middle School Percussion Ensembles

For many band and orchestra educators, the middle school percussion experience can be extremely frustrating. Limited resources and class scheduling issues can often hamper the amount of teaching time one has with a class. If you are willing to be flexible and creative, however, having a percussion ensemble in your school can help your middle school students achieve higher levels of musical excellence.

“A middle school percussion ensemble gives all of the percussion



"I think it is important and vital to the success of the ensemble to allow the students to voice their opinions." —John Gillick

students more opportunities to perform all aspects of music and explore different genres. The students are not confined to rhythm or the occasional melodic line. In ensemble, the students will have to handle harmony, melody, and rhythmic aspects of the music," states NAFME member John Gillick, director of percussion activities at Terrill Middle School in Scotch Plains, New Jersey. "At my school, I have built two percussion ensembles from my grade seven and grade eight concert band. For my grade-eight ensemble, I meet with all members of the mallet and drum sections to gauge their interest and discuss ideas for music and genre. I think it is important and vital to the success of the ensemble to allow the students to voice their opinions on what they might like to play. I guarantee you will be surprised by their musical ideas! Once we pick music that they all agree to and would want to play, I look for arrangements. Row-Loff (rowloff.com) is a great resource for excellent and fun percussion ensemble music! Being a percussion arranger, I will arrange the music for the students as well. Plus, by arranging the music, I can really write for the talent of the section. In my situation, I have been able to make the percussion ensemble a pullout lesson as part of a rotating lesson schedule. Having the students for the 45-minute period, we have been able to work the music and aspects of performance. After a few months, it was fun to see the students start to take ownership of their program and, since the students had a hand in picking the

music, they really were able to help each other through issues such as sticking, listening, and how they were performing. By allowing the students to have a say in the programming, they are having fun because they feel that sense of ownership and togetherness. In middle school, it is my opinion that, as educators, we need to

allow our students the opportunity to explore musical options and build a sense of community and family. The students in my ensemble trust each other, and they have fun doing it. I truly believe that because I have a principal and supervisor who allow for the creative approach in the classroom, I can have a percussion ensemble that learns more about the worlds of music and percussion and a little bit about themselves, as well as having fun!" —Steve Fidyk

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CHORAL AND VOCAL

Composing with Your Choir

Here's something you may not know about your choir: It's full of composers! Or, at least, it can be if you embark on an original composition project with your singers.

Why would you want to do this? "The time invested in creating an original work with your choir pays off in so many ways," says NAFME member Michele Kaschub, professor of music education and coordinator of music teacher education at the University of Southern Maine School of Music in Gorham. "Students become more deeply invested in the group. They learn to think about music from the perspective of the composer—which means they attend to every marking in the score. They learn to think like

need to be curious about how music works, the sounds they can make with their voices, and how music can be shaped to invite a feelingful response."

According to Kaschub, music educators who wish to begin a composition project with their singers need to do a bit of advance planning, which includes considering "how the activity of composing will fit into the overall class/rehearsal schedule and the amount of time that can be devoted to the project are teacher tasks. Other considerations, such as what type of piece will be composed, what students might learn along the way, and how/when the composition will be performed should be collaboratively determined by the teacher and students. Collaboration in the early stages of planning increases student investment in the project and ensures that they feel a true ownership in their artistic work."

For the all-important kickoff to your singers' composition project, Kaschub recommends that teachers "invite students to imagine that they have created an original composition. Ask lots of questions that invite descriptions of what the piece sounds like. What makes it interesting? What makes it different? What is its mood? How does it work? Have the students describe how the audience will react when they hear the piece. Once lots of ideas are gathered, begin singing and testing them. As ideas begin to fit together, record or notate what works as the songs emerges."

In terms of keeping the process moving along, Kaschub cautions that the act of composing "can be noisy, and expectations for managing sound should be established before students set to work. Aside from that, students tend to invest deeply in composition projects and off-task behavior disappears." As regards the music educator's attitude, she notes that "The trick is, teachers have to become more process-oriented. They

need to believe that the students will come up with musical ideas and trust their evolving artistry. The music that finally emerges will make your heart sing."

For those wishing to begin a composition project with their choirs, Kaschub recommends the following publications: *Musicianship: Composing in Choir* (edited by Jody L. Kerchner and Katherine D. Strand, GIA Publications) and *Composing Our Future: Preparing Music Educators to Teach Composition* (edited by Michele Kaschub and Janice Smith, Oxford University Press).

—Susan Poliniak



ALTERNATIVES

Exploring the Sweet World of Appalachian Dulcimers

The Appalachian dulcimer—a three- or four-string fretted instrument belonging to the zither family—is the prototypical folk instrument. Often handmade, the dulcimer originated in the Appalachian Mountains in the early 19th century, courtesy of Scottish-Irish immigrants. Its elegant simplicity can be beneficial to music literacy, as educators such as NAFME member Joann Benson, vocal music teacher at Sandy-mount Elementary School in Finks-burg, Maryland, have discovered.

There are many advantages to using the dulcimer in a classroom setting, from teaching scales to rounds and harmony to sight-reading. And Benson finds that—in an era in which pop is dominated by electronic instruments—it instills an appreciation of acoustic music. She says, "The kids have the instrument on their laps so they're experiencing the music aurally and physically—they hug the instrument, in a way, to play it. It's not passive at all, which I love!"

"They learn to think about music from the perspective of the composer." —Michele Kaschub



listeners—so their interpretive performance skills grow. And, most importantly, they develop a self-assurance in their musicianship that is deeply gratifying and motivating."

To embark on one of these projects, your singers don't need years of music experience behind them. "Students can begin to create songs for group singing as early as kindergarten. As for choral settings, children's choirs often begin in grade three—and that's a perfect time to introduce full-ensemble composing," notes Kaschub. She continues that, in terms of skills needed, "The most important skill is curiosity. Students

Photos by iStockphoto.com.

A good-quality dulcimer is relatively inexpensive, selling at a group rate for as little as \$50 (or \$36 for a kit for self-assembly) through *backyardmusic.com*, which also has resources such as sheet music. It's a good idea to get an electronic tuner when teaching dulcimer. "I recommend getting a Snark tuner and hanging it around your neck," Benson says, advising that teachers be prepared for the time it takes to tune 28 or so dulcimers. Due to the dulcimer's diatonic/modal nature, Benson uses it to teach folk songs that her students can learn easily by ear—music that often captures the spirit of the region from which the instrument originated. "It's such an easy instrument to just pick and play, and I love to give the kids time to investigate what they can pick out on their own," she says. "The dulcimer fits in beautifully with our third-grade unit on Appalachian Scotch-Irish folk music. I also try to include some study of the original songcatchers like Jeanne Ritchie and how they preserved the musical culture of the Cumberland Mountains and Appalachia." For notation, the dulcimer uses a specialized numerical system, similar to guitar tablature, in which "3" is *do*. A simple tune like "Hot Cross Buns" is then notated as 5-4-3-rest. This makes it easy for both the students and the teacher to play and convey music. Benson says, "Writing music the kids

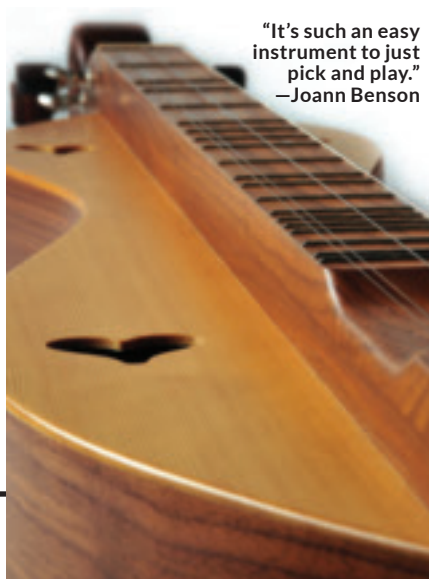
know in the numeric notation is a piece of cake." She finds that the dulcimer serves as an excellent gateway to all kinds of general music concepts. She started this year, for instance, teaching scales on the instrument before graduating to more advanced lessons. "I began with scales played in harmony and thirds," Benson says. "Scales made great building blocks

The song "Hot Cross Buns" makes for a nice exercise in diatonic harmony on the dulcimer.



for songs, and when we transitioned to recorder playing I just translated the [dulcimer's] numeric notation I was using into standard notation and off they went." —Adam Perlmutter

"It's such an easy instrument to just pick and play."
—Joann Benson



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BY MICHAEL ADELSON

An Invitation to the Orchestra

How can you prepare your students' for their first trip to a live orchestra concert?



“There is nothing like the thrill of a live concert.” —Kay Edwards

“**NOTHING CAN COMPARE** to hearing music live,” says NAFME member Kay Edwards, professor and chair of music education at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. “Classroom music, recordings, YouTube—all of these are useful. But there is nothing like the thrill of a live concert. The whole experience can be exciting: getting to know the music, preparing ahead of time, trying out some instruments if possible, and then of course the trip to the concert hall.” Edwards has been an active clinician and author in the areas of elementary general music, guided listening, and multicultural music education for more than 20 years at the university level, and has 20 years of experience as an elementary general music teacher. She also writes for *classicsforkids.com*, a service of Cincinnati Public Radio. There, one can find over 250 pages of her lesson plans, along with useful tips and advice.

Edwards believes that combining recordings and live music can be an effective strategy. “As is true for all of us, children like what they know. So, we should take advantage of reasons to listen to a piece repeatedly, making it more familiar. Also, the listening experience should be active: Give the students specific things to listen for or do. This also will encourage repeated listening.”

To prepare for a concert field trip, Edwards advises, “Contact the orchestra well in advance. Many orchestras these days are doing extraordinary things for young people. In addition to providing information about their concerts online, they may offer free materials for classroom use leading up to the concert. Sometimes orchestra members will visit

the school. Then the kids will have met them ahead of time. That personal connection makes a big difference.”

Edwards notes that etiquette should begin in classroom. “Musical presentations are excellent opportunities to practice respectful listening and appropriate applause. Also, ask the students ‘What rules do we need?’ Even if they’re kindergarteners, they will come up with many helpful ideas, such as don’t talk, don’t kick the seat in front of you, be a good listener, be respectful, and enjoy the music. By doing this you involve them in the process; they own it.”

“The trip to the hall, the festive atmosphere, the dimming of the house lights, the entrance of the musicians—all this is magical.”

—KAY EDWARDS

Edwards continues, “When discussing what to wear, tell them the reason we dress up for a concert is because it is such a special event. (This will also help behavior.) And it points to how thrilling the concert experience itself can be: The trip to the hall, the festive atmosphere, the dimming of the house lights, the entrance of the musicians—all this is magical.”

Edwards notes that, “After the concert, there are many ways to follow up. Ask questions: ‘What was your favorite instrument? What part of the trip did you like the most?’ Have the class write thank-you notes to the musicians, or draw pictures to send to the orchestra. Listen to and discuss the music again.” ■

Strategies for Working in Title I Schools

Your local community can be your biggest fans—and most valuable supporters.

GABRIEL ARNOLD, a former high school teacher in Georgia's Dekalb and Cobb Counties, is no stranger to drumming up support in districts where the community and administrators don't expect much—however, you have to draw in the doubters. To achieve this, teachers need to make the first, most important step: getting the children to trust you. Says Arnold, who is currently professor of music and associate director of bands at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, "I want them on my side. I want to encourage them. They come from places where they are beaten down all of the time. I tell my students there is an invisible force once you step inside my room. I am going to pull out your potential. Every student needs to know they have a purpose. Once you look them in the eye, that gives them a new perspective on life. Remind them of goals."

Once the kids are excited about the program, they can get their parents involved. As a teacher, Arnold notes that music educators need to show parents that band is a path toward college: "My kids receive many scholarships every year from colleges that give money just because they participated in the band program." Another

key to winning over the parents is understanding the community from which they hail. "The last school I was in was predominantly Hispanic, and as an African-American male, I had to learn about the Catholic Church: I had to know what days I could have band practice, for example. It's all about relationships."

Once the children and the parents are aware of and interested in the music program, it's time to draw in the rest of the community, including local colleges. "College students will come out for free to work with the kids to gain community service hours," Arnold says. Those college students may also be able to get the word out to the community and to help with tasks such as social media. "Teachers need to use technology to

advertise what they are doing. A video can be posted on Facebook, for example. It doesn't cost anything."

Local officials, media—frankly, everyone—should be invited to performances. "Invite the local media to all of your performances," says Arnold. "Show them that the kids are excelling despite their odds." If you have T-shirts made up for the group, hand them out to the administrators and local leaders too, as this can make everyone feel invested in the program.

All of this wider awareness can lead to more money for a Title I program. Many grants exist for these schools, but teachers may need to seek them out. Arnold remarks, "You have to be creative in finding the opportunities. Many businesses in the community will give you sponsorships as well if they see you are doing something great. Every little bit helps." ■

"Every student needs to know they have a purpose."

—GABRIEL ARNOLD



"College students will come out for free to work with the kids to gain community service hours," —Gabriel Arnold

Photo courtesy of Gabriel Arnold.



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How can you maximize the professional conference experience?

“THE MOST EFFECTIVE teachers over time all have one thing in common,” says NAFME member Michael Stone, coordinator of Bakersfield City School District’s Visual and Performing Arts Department in Bakersfield, California, “they are lifelong learners.” Stone is also the immediate past president of the California Music Educators Association (CMEA), and knows that attending professional conferences is one of the best ways to ensure success in the field of music education.

Just as for lesson planning, preparation is essential for a productive experience. Stone suggests downloading the conference schedule in advance so you can plan your time. Particularly with a state conference, there’s a lot on offer, and “you can’t do it all!” For your first conference, focus on your specific professional needs and select sessions that address those areas—perhaps classroom management and organization for new or preservice teachers. The sessions that you miss you may be able to catch on video or via online transcript after the conference. Stone also advises getting plenty of rest before the conference, and arriving ready to immerse yourself in the experience.

Learning opportunities come not only in the seminars but also in the



“Networking is really just a natural outcome of attendance at conferences.” —Michael Stone

hallways and lobbies between sessions as you network with your peers. “Music education is one of the most giving professions,” Stone says. Your fellow teachers are always willing to share what works for them. “Networking,” he continues, “is really just a natural outcome of attendance at conferences.” Be open and friendly, and you’ll not only get the guidance you seek, but come away with lasting friendships. Don’t forget to bring business cards, and collect business cards from everyone you meet. There is often precious little time at a conference, and a lifetime of things to learn. Your collection of business cards will become a handy networking reference once you’re home.

Your professor or administrator may ask for a write-up of the conference. Even if they don’t, you can use this

activity as a valuable opportunity to review what you’ve learned, assess the experience, and decide what to do next. Stone extols the virtues of social media as a way not only to record your experience but also to get a glimpse into other attendees’ takeaways. Try not to get too absorbed (those BuzzFeed articles can wait), but take a moment now and then to share a valuable nugget, retweet something you may want to recall later, and/or do some digital networking.

Follow-up after the event is essential. Take the conference’s survey to improve the experience for yourself and others the next time. Flip through those business cards and new Facebook connections to offer quick thank-yous and nice-to-meet-yous, and then remember them weeks or months down the road when you have questions, or to offer your own feedback. ■

CONFERENCE CONNECTIONS

Follow #NAfME2016 on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook for updates on NAFME’s National In-Service Conference. Download the conference app to make connections throughout the event at nationalconference.nafme.org.



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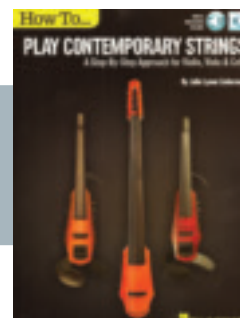
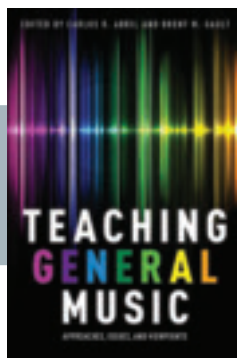
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BOOKS ►

Color Me Mozart:

Biographies, Recordings, and Coloring Pages for 25 Great Composers

By Anna Wentlent, Charles Grace, and Mitch Wyatt

(2015, 52 pgs., paperback with enhanced CD \$29.99) This 100% reproducible book includes a coloring page and information sheet each for 25 masters. From Bach surrounded by his children and Tchaikovsky conducting the ballet, to Gershwin strolling the streets of New York, these illustrations are both educational and enjoyable. Biographies, fun facts, and famous works are included for each, and the enhanced CD contains PDF files of the entire book, plus masterwork recordings for each composer. **Alfred Music**, alfred.com

Teaching General Music:

Approaches, Issues, and Viewpoints

Edited by Carlos R.

Abril and Brent M.

Gault (2016, 392 pgs.,

hardcover \$99.00,

paperback \$35.00,

eBook price varies)

General music is informed by a variety of pedagogical frameworks that guide teachers in planning and implementing instruction. *Teaching General Music* creates a panoramic view of general music pedagogy and provides critical lenses through which to view these frameworks. The text includes an examination of the most prevalent approaches and critical analyses of general music and teaching systems.

Oxford University Press, oup.com

Hear Dat:

A Guide to the Rich Musical Heritage & Lively Current Scene

By Michael Murphy

(2016, 208 pgs.,

paperback \$18.95)

One of the first questions visitors to New Orleans often ask is, "Where can I go to hear music?" A better question might be, "Where can I go and *not* hear music?" In *Hear Dat*, local expert Michael Murphy brings his sensibility to the Big Easy's largest draw. With in-depth recommendations for venues, musicians, and festivals, this book is a companion for anyone who wants to experience or otherwise learn about the sounds of New Orleans.

The Countryman Press, countrymanpress.com

How to Play Contemporary Strings:

A Step-by-Step Approach for Violin, Viola & Cello

By Julie Lyonn

Lieberman (2016, 128 pgs., paperback \$16.99)

The information and practice techniques in this book have been designed to enhance listening, playing, and ensemble expertise while adding dimension to traditional methods and repertoire. Creative musicianship, technology for strings, contemporary techniques, as well as fluency with musical structures from around the world are essential, whether you're teaching or are an amateur or professional player. Access to audio and video content is included.

Hal Leonard Corporation, halleonard.com

WEBSITES ►

MathScienceMusic.org

MathScienceMusic.org is a free toolkit for teachers presenting engaging curricula, games, apps, and other online elements that integrate music, math, and science into teaching and learning materials for K-12 and college students. The Thelonius Monk Institute of Jazz and jazz legend Herbie Hancock collaborated with international math, science, and music experts at seven leading universities to develop the program, which addresses the growing need for students to gain skills and knowledge in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) subjects and learn to think creatively.

Thelonius Monk Institute of Jazz, monkinstitute.org



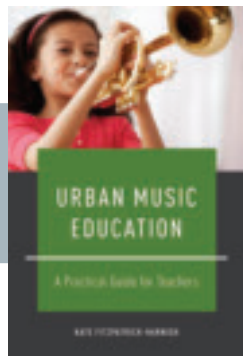
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Essays on Guitar History

By Matanya Ophee
(2016, 496 pgs.,
hardcover \$95.00)

Looking back over his lifetime of writing about the guitar, Ophee has compiled *Essays on Guitar History*, which has allowed him to revisit those articles with a more knowledgeable and critical eye and add updates and corrections where needed. The result is a reference source for teachers, students, and those with a passion for all things guitar. This book gathers more than 20 articles on topics regarding composers, repertoire, performance practice, and more. A preface, bibliography, indices, and music examples are included. **Editions Orphée, Inc.**, editionSORPHEE.com



Urban Music Education: A Practical Guide for Teachers

By Kate Fitzpatrick-Harnish

(2015, 160 pgs., hardcover \$99.00, paperback \$19.95, eBook price varies) The prevailing discourse surrounding urban music education suggests that urban school settings are “less than” rather than “different from” their counterparts. This book provides a counternarrative that encourages urban music teachers to focus on the strengths of their students as their primary resource. The book highlights important issues for teachers to consider, such as culturally relevant pedagogy and strategies for finding inspiration and support. **Oxford University Press**, oup.com



CDS ▶

Superhero

By The Laurie Berkner Band (2016, 23 tracks, CD \$12.98, digital download \$9.99) This album, intended for audiences ages 1–7, features 21 songs plus two bonus tracks that range from quiet, a cappella fingerplays to get-up-and-dance, full-band anthems. *Superhero* explores a range of musical styles, including 1960s pop, rootsy rock, lullabies, reggae, Latin, and more. Guest artists on this album include Ziggy Marley singing a duet with Laurie Berkner on the song “My My Marisol,” musical yogini Kira Willey on “Swing Me,” and Brady Rymer on “Opelika Alabama.” Other songs include “Tallulah Jones,” “Bicycle,” “I’ve Got So Much to Give,” “Bubbles,” and more. **The Laurie Berkner Band**, laurieberkner.com



You've Got Me

By Sara Lovell (2016, 17 tracks, CD \$15.00, digital download \$11.99) Celebrating the unbreakable connection between parent and child, independent recording artist Sara Lovell takes an adventurous leap forward with her first release for kids. The album—which incorporates genres as diverse as reggaeton, Afro-Caribbean, klezmer, and lounge—follows a day in the life of a child, beginning with a song to rouse even the sleepest sleepyhead and concluding with a lullaby as the sun goes down. Runaway socks, musical skeletons, and flying ships are just a few of the wonders to be encountered in this fanciful world. **Sara Lovell**, saralovell.com



ACCESSORIES ▶

Guitar Triller

(\$19.95) Meet the **Guitar Triller**, a handheld accessory for guitar and bass players that was carefully designed for striking strings in a powerful and expressive way to create a whole new world of sound possibilities. With three different playing positions—lead, chord, and pick—as well as dozens of possible techniques, the **Guitar Triller** goes beyond the use of picks and fingers to introduce entirely new sounds on the instrument. In making this accessory, the creators considered everything from ergonomics to string tension and guitar mechanics to put different sounds at your fingertips. The **Guitar Triller** is built on the foundation of control, comfort, and functionality to provide a wide assortment of creative possibilities. **Guitar Triller USA Inc.**, guitartriller.com

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APPS ▶



SoundBow

By Agoston Nagy (\$1.99, available for iPhone and iPad via Apple's App Store) This drawing-based musical instrument has a minimalistic interface where users can create calligraphic lines, and move elements in a unique sound experience. Players can create music by drawing curves over the screen with lines and gestural movements. Apart from drawing, one can rescale an instrument by moving graphical elements around. Players can also record their own sounds through the microphone to create melodies and soundscapes. Compositions can be exported as audio files. **Binaura**, binaura.net

Tuneblocks

By Jeanne Bamberger (\$0.99, available for iPad via Apple's App Store) Tuneblocks are basic melodic structures that are more often called motifs or melodic figures. Just as putting together a jigsaw puzzle will make a whole picture, putting tuneblocks together will make and play a whole tune, but with a difference: Unlike jigsaw pieces, tuneblocks are always on the move. This interactive music app helps users become active and engaged music makers, listeners, and performers. Playing with melody blocks as puzzle pieces, players rebuild familiar tunes and create new ones while building on their musical intuitions and discovering how music works. **Impromptu**, impromptumusicapps.com





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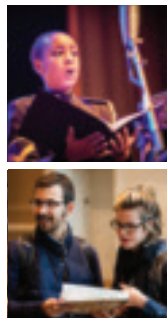
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bravo!

MARC SHAIMAN

COMPOSER Marc Shaiman has been writing music, lyrics, arrangements, and orchestrations since entering show business at the age of 16. He has been nominated for two Tony Awards (winning one for the score to *Hairspray* with co-lyricist Scott Wittman), four GRAMMY® Awards (winning one for the original cast album of *Hairspray*), 11 Emmy Awards (winning one for his work on Billy Crystal's Academy Awards hosting), and five Oscars. Besides *Hairspray*, his Broadway musicals include *Martin Short: Fame Becomes Me* and *Catch Me If You Can*, his television ventures include "The Sweeney Sisters" on *Saturday Night Live* and a collaboration with Bette Midler for Johnny Carson's penultimate *Tonight Show*, and his film work includes *When Harry Met Sally*, *The Addams Family*, and *A Few Good Men*—to name just a very few.

You started with the piano at a young age. What made you want to learn how to play? I only recently heard that one day, when I was very young, my sister had a piano lesson and then went out. My mom asked the piano teacher if she wanted to come upstairs for a cup of coffee, and as they were talking (about how my sister wanted to quit piano lessons, in fact), they heard the music of my sister's lesson being played. Befuddled, they looked downstairs and saw me there at the piano, playing it by ear.

And what made you decide to take the plunge into music as a career? I had a choice? Who knew?! Honestly, I have been full of music and lyrics from the time I was born, so there really wasn't any question about what my life would be. I moved to New York City at 16 and haven't stopped working since, although since I love what I do, I can hardly call it work.

You've had such an amazing career so far—Broadway, major motion pictures, *Saturday Night Live*, and just countless others. What have been your favorite accomplishments? Bette Midler's appearance as Johnny Carson's final guest. The *South Park* movie was a dream come true ... music/lyrics/arrangements/orchestrations/singing ... it was the best film job I ever got. And our musical *Hairspray* is the gift that keeps on giving—a joy to cocreate—and to watch it continue to flourish is indescribably satisfying on all levels.

You have *Hairspray Live!* coming up on NBC in December, and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* opening on Broadway next spring—both huge events. But what's next on the agenda for you? In the midst of those things, my co-lyricist Scott Wittman and I are in the middle of writing the songs for a new film sequel to *Mary Poppins* titled *Mary Poppins Returns*. It is a huge undertaking, and as one who grew up obsessed with everything about the *Mary Poppins* soundtrack (songs AND orchestrations), this is my dream job. Hopefully, it won't turn into a nightmare!

What advice do you have for kids who want to follow in your footsteps as a composer—and teachers who want to help them? Well, my path was so very unique to my life, I can't really ever offer a good answer, in as far as my own journey. But what I do tell all is JUST DO EVERYTHING! Go wherever you can to do

JUST DO EVERYTHING! Go wherever you can to do whatever you can. You never know where and when opportunity will knock.

whatever you can. You never know where and when opportunity will knock. I have a million examples from my own life to prove that. And just as important, when you are everywhere, doing everything,

enjoy it in the moment, and do not obsess over where it will get you next. You'll end up constantly chasing your own tail.