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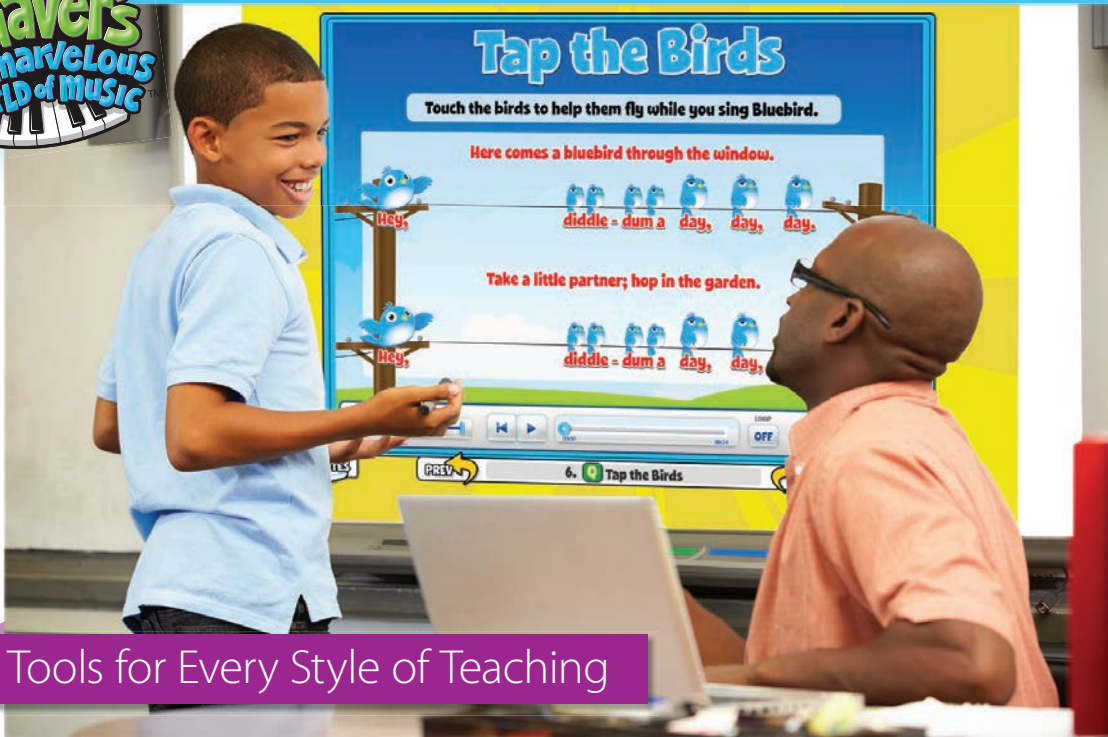
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36 **MEET THE ANHE CONDUCTORS!** The directors of the five 2018 All-National Honor Ensembles give their perspectives on what makes successful musicians and effective conductors.

FEATURES

18 **ACCORDION
ADVOCACY:
BRINGING THE
ACCORDION
INTO THE GENERAL
MUSIC CLASSROOM**

The accordion can make a strong—and festive—addition to your curriculum. Here's how to incorporate this instrument into the music classroom.

22 **TEACHERS'
VOICES—
RESULTS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

What is the status of music education in the U.S. right now, and where are we headed? The results of a recent study by Give A Note Foundation provide important insights—and food for thought.

28 **MAGNUM OPUS!**
For NAFME's 2018 National Conference, Opus Leaders are working to create and engage music educators in five key areas. Meet the Leaders and learn about each Opus.

32 **FINDING A WAY AT
FRANKLIN HIGH**
Jacqueline Hairston took a big chance when she revived the Marching Yellow Jackets of Franklin High School in Stockton, California, and was delighted that her efforts were met with an outpouring of support from alumni, parents, and the community.

contents



Members of Tri-M Chapter 6806 at Elizabeth Davis Middle School in Chester, Virginia

12



Method choice and classroom setup can ensure success in high school piano class.

56



**SPECIAL:
SUMMER
STUDY 39**

Looking for music education opportunities in the “off season”? Here is *Teaching Music’s* annual listing of summer programs.

DEPARTMENTS

CLASSROOMS

Tri-M® Chapter 6806 in Virginia works to help a nearby school. **12**

ADVOCACY

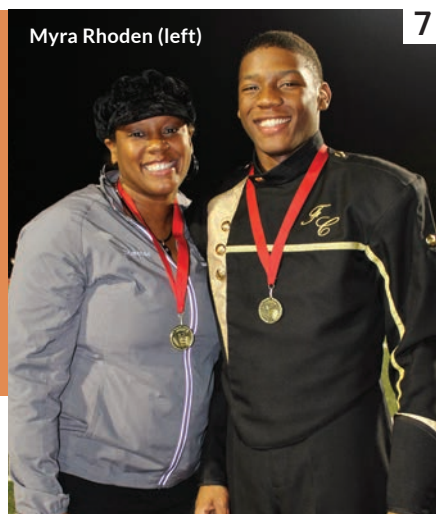
How is music education faring in the appropriations process on Capitol Hill? **14**

DISCOVERIES

Integrating students with special needs into a school band program **16**

PROFILES

7 Myra Rhoden is NAFME’s Band Director of the Year ... Fred Ritter recently retired from the Nebraska public schools ... Melissa Salguero is the winner of the 2018 GRAMMY® Music Educator Award™



Myra Rhoden (left)

7

WORKSHOP

General Music

Teaching the music of the Harlem Renaissance **46**

Brass & Woodwinds

Teaching spit-valve etiquette **47**

Strings

Jazz string orchestra fundamentals **47**

Percussion

Music featuring nontraditional and nonspecific instruments **48**

Choral & Vocal

Tuning up the middle school chorus **49**

Alternatives

Orff jamming **50**

STAGES

Elementary

How to build the best classroom music centers **55**

Secondary

Teaching (and surviving) high school piano class **56**

Collegiate

What questions should you ask in job interviews? **58**

RESOURCES

New media and accessories for the music classroom **60**

BRAVA!

Teaching Music salutes the late, great singer Ella Fitzgerald! **64**

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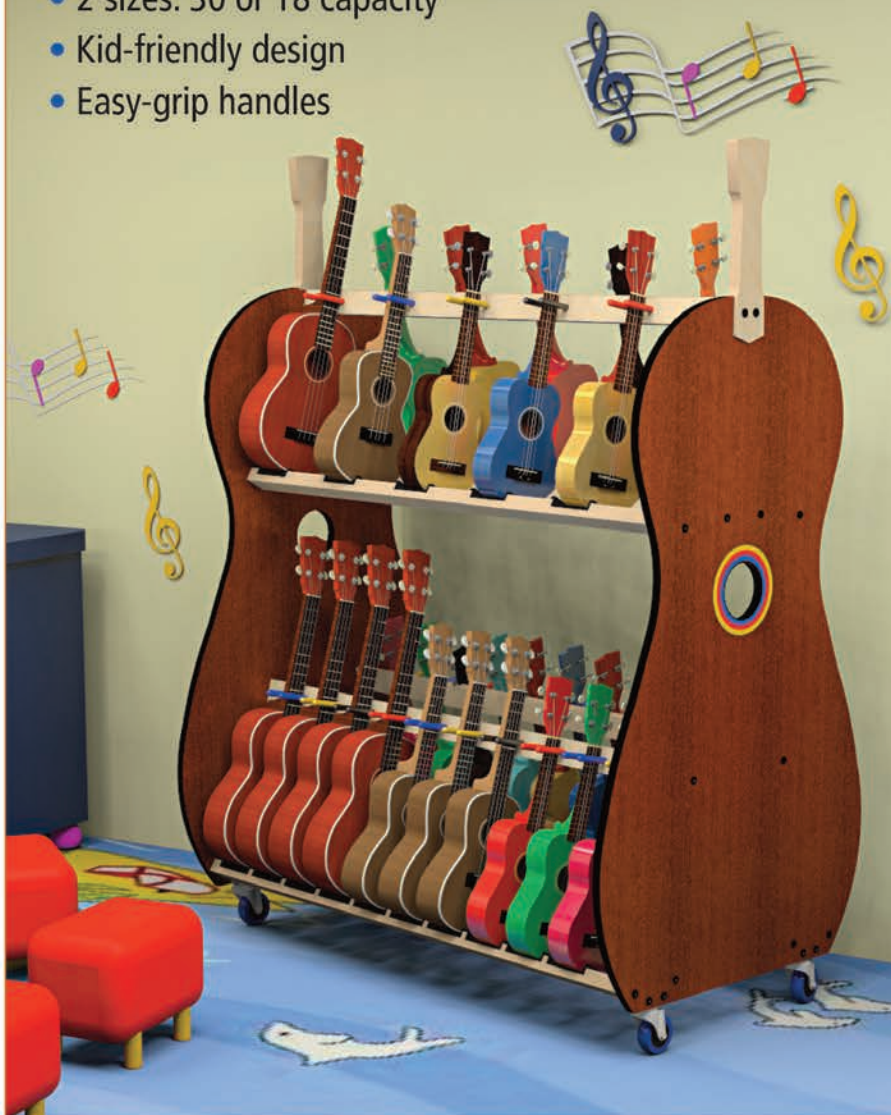
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profiles

Featuring NAFME's education professionals

MYRA RHODEN

By Lisa Ferber



Fayette County High School Band

Marching to Success

Myra Rhoden is NAFME's Band Director of the Year

MYRA RHODEN knows how to put it all together! Rhoden, NAFME's Band Director of the Year, is the director of the Fayette County High School Band in Fayetteville, Georgia, as well as the school's fine arts chairperson. For this award, NAFME partnered with the All-American Marching Band, which led to exciting meetings for Rhoden and her family. "We attended a lot of sessions and met a lot of two-, three-,

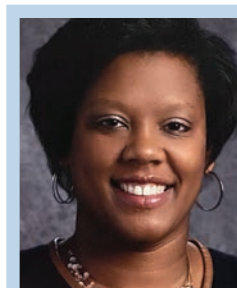
and four-star generals," she says. The sessions were part of the Band Directors' Academy she attended that week. She learned about the award when it was announced during the All-American Awards Ceremony held during Bowl Week in San Antonio, Texas. "My family was told that I was receiving the award so that we could have proper seats that would make it easier for me to walk to the stage. They did a good job keeping the secret," she said.

The NAFME member and Tuskegee native graduated from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa with a B.S and an M.A. in music education; she then earned her D.M.A. from the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.

Participating in a marching band encompasses a variety of skills, and Rhoden adds these in when the students are ready. "There is definitely a physical component," she says. "In the beginning, when we are training the kids, we separate the music and the marching, and we need to make sure they know how to move and how to hold their instruments, and have good posture. We have fundamentals in marching and in music as well, and we merge them together and create the show."

Her path started early. As a child,

Rhoden studied piano as well as clarinet. "And we had to learn how to be graceful, and we had to have music and gymnastics. My high school band director was very influential and encouraged me to do things outside the house." This led to Rhoden meeting more people, which had an impact on her. "I thought it would



MYRA RHODEN,
Director, Fayette County High School Band, Fayetteville, Georgia

"Kids all the time will come back and say, 'I'm glad you didn't let me quit. I'm glad you encouraged me. It was the best decision I've ever made.'"

Photo top by Melissa Holcombe. Photo bottom courtesy of Myra Rhoden.

be nice to give back by doing that for my students as well, to explore the world through music.”

She notes that being part of a marching band offers skills and areas of satisfaction beyond performing. “It’s how to work together as a team and take the ups and the downs, and take disappointment, and learn how to be gracious winners, too. You learn how to be people and good citizens.”

While she has had students who have wanted to quit—or not wanted to join—because they fear that they can’t play well or handle the time commitment, Rhoden has had plenty of success convincing them otherwise. “Kids all the time will come back and say, ‘I’m glad you didn’t let me quit. I’m glad you encouraged me. It was the best decision I’ve ever made.’”



NAfME Band Director of the Year Myra Rhoden with NAFME President Denese Odegaard

FRED RITTER By Lori Schwartz Reichl



Fred Ritter conducting at NCDA

“I love doing choral festivals, but it’s nothing like the everyday work of teaching. I miss taking music, working it together, and making it performance-worthy.”

recently retired from teaching elementary music in Neligh, Nebraska; and Duane Ritter remained on the farm.

Fred Ritter and his wife, Becky—an elementary Title I reading specialist—have five children, four of whom received musical degrees. The oldest son, Jacob, even replaced Ritter as the vocal music teacher at Columbus High School when his father retired.

Ritter served as President of NCDA, the North Central Jazz Chair for American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), and most recently as President of Nebraska Music Education Association (NMEA). During his final year of teaching, Ritter was the recipient of the Cornell Runestad Award for Lifetime Dedication to Choral Music in Nebraska, the 2015 Columbus Public Schools Foundation’s Educator of the Year Award, and Doane University’s Platt Alumni Music Award for Outstanding Achievement in Music.

In addition to working as a music educator, Ritter directed several community choirs; sang with the Pathfinder

Pursuing His Passions: Faith, Family, Farm, and Music

Fred Ritter recently retired from the Nebraska public schools.

AFTER A REMARKABLE 37-year career, Fred Ritter retired from teaching vocal music in the Nebraska public schools in 2015. Ritter began teaching in 1978 in the North Platte School District, first at the junior high and then at the high school. After 12 years, he moved to Columbus High School, where he remained for the rest of his career. “I am most known for starting one of the first vocal jazz programs in Nebraska in 1994,” says Ritter. He also launched the first vocal jazz festival for Nebraska Choral Directors Association

(NCDA) by inviting clinicians to adjudicate and inspire young vocalists. NCDA has since added an All-State Vocal Jazz Ensemble to its summer convention.

Ritter is the product of a musical farm



FRED RITTER, retired music educator, Columbus, Nebraska

family from northeast Nebraska. His father, Frederick, is a WWII veteran who played trumpet and sang bass in a gospel quartet and church choir. Ritter’s mother, Clara, sang alto in the church choir, too. The couple had four children, three of whom pursued music. Dale Ritter is a band and choir director in Alma, Nebraska; Pat Miller

Top photo courtesy of NAFME. Bottom photos courtesy of Fred Ritter.

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Chorus, Nebraska's premier a cappella chorus; and sang professionally with the Norman Luboff Choir. When asked what he misses most about the classroom, he states, "working with the kids, for sure. That's why I love doing choral festivals, but it's nothing like the everyday work of teaching. I miss taking music, working it together, and making it performance-worthy."

He is staying incredibly active during retirement. He plays bass on his church worship team and in a local "oldies" dance band called Cruisin'. He also serves as a disc jockey on occasion and is an active choral clinician and adjudicator. However, on most days he says, "I go out to the farm,



kiss my daughter and granddaughter good morning, and then cut logs into rustic furniture with my son-in-law." In the circle of life, Ritter continues with the passionate path his parents prepared for him: faith, family, farm, and music.

MELISSA SALGUERO By Lisa Ferber

From Doc Martens to Banana Pianos

Melissa Salguero is the Winner of the 2018 GRAMMY® Music Educator Award™.

"IT ALL STARTED with this little Casio keyboard when I was nine or 10 years old," says Melissa Salguero, NAFME member and winner of the GRAMMY Foundation's 2018 Music Educator Award. "I got it for Christmas and I did not stop playing that thing." Her dream was to be in a rock band. She taught herself how to play the Casio, her parents got her a guitar, and she wore "heavy metal and goth-ed-out and chains and Doc Martens." She joined a band and was given the trombone, and eventually she was playing Strauss and Sousa marches around the house.

In fifth grade, she had a pivotal moment. "I always wanted to be a leader, and I was super jealous of the safety patrols who would raise a flag each day." Her grades and behavior weren't good enough, but her teacher, Deborah Bauer, wanted to make her a safety patrol. "In that moment, when she believed in me and

gave me a chance to be a leader, I knew that whatever I did with my life, it would be to help others." With the Music Educator Award prize money, Salguero flew Bauer in for the award night. "She is the kindest and sweetest teacher I ever had, and she really impacted my life and put me on the right course."

In high school, Salguero was given the baritone horn, which weighs about 15 pounds. "Imagine the girl in Doc Martens and JNCO jeans in the hot sun, like, I don't want to do pushups. And my parents said, 'You're committed to this. Your word is your bond.' It was probably the best decision of my life."

She holds a B.A. in music education from University of South Florida in Tampa and an M.S. in elementary education at



MELISSA SALGUERO,
general music and band
teacher, P.S. 48 Joseph R.
Drake, Bronx, New York

University of Bridgeport in Connecticut. She teaches third- through fifth-grade general music and fifth-grade band at P.S. 48 Joseph R. Drake in the Bronx in New York City, and she is a member of Sigma Alpha Iota International Music Fraternity.

In 2013, Salguero walked into school to find her desk upside down and instruments

missing and broken—acts of vandalism that led to her appearance on *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*. "And the thing that makes me so proud is my students brought me lyrics the next day: 'You're not gonna tear us down, 'cause we're strong/ We will rise from the ashes, 'cause we're strong.'" People in the community sent her story to DeGeneres's show, and Salguero found herself in a guest chair, receiving a bevy of instruments and \$50,000.

Speaking of the Award, Salguero notes, "I think what grabbed the attention of the judges is my unique teaching style where I am not only teaching music: I'm teaching life, science, history, English, math, and it's all incorporated into every single lesson. So, I'm hooking up bananas to my computer and we are playing the banana piano, and we talk about circuitry and how to build a circuit, and that goes into computers, and it all stems from these science experiments. I'm an advocate of talk less, teach more." ■

"I'm an advocate of talk less, teach more."



Melissa Salguero directing her students in concert.



Setting out on the Oregon Trail with Tri-M® Chapter 6806

Music students in Virginia work to help a nearby school.

IN 2016, after only five years as part of Tri-M, the Elizabeth Davis Middle School's Chapter 6806 won the Junior Division Chapter of the Year. However, the group, based in Chester, Virginia, continues to raise the bar.

The chapter's list of accomplishments is a long one. They completed 2,500 service hours doing basic things like performing the "The Star-Spangled Banner" at basketball games and acting as tour guides for new students and special guests. They've raised \$4,000, which was \$1,500 over their goal, according to Jon Schoepflin, their music teacher and chapter advisor. The school concerts are free to attend, but they receive donations at perfor-

mances where they discuss the mission of Tri-M. Most performances net between \$300 and \$400, and money is raised with yard sales and event concessions as well.

One of the chapter's ongoing missions is to help a Title I city school six miles from Elizabeth Davis that doesn't even have a band room. "A few years ago, our Tri-M group went over and did a side-by-side rehearsal with them, and we have done that every year since. Annually, we look to get something to help progress their band," Schoepflin said. For example, the city school kids had to use chairs as music stands, so Chapter 6806 bought new music stands for them with the money they raised. "We

have found that by helping that particular group, it raised community awareness, and it appears the town has surveyed that city school building in order to build a band room."

Another high-profile project for the chapter comes in the form of an interdisciplinary approach to learning about the Oregon Trail. The sixth grade gets together in groups to theoretically travel the Oregon Trail, which is really the community's cross-country path. Students get a profile. For example: You are 35 years old, and you have to get five people to your destination alive. Along the way, everyone has to find food, avoid dysentery, and so forth. The Tri-M students, with a little help from their music teachers, learn several pieces of music such as "Oh Susanna!" that were written during the time period, and they play at spots along the journey.

Another music-related project has to do with the eighth-grade Tri-M students teaching the younger kids. "About 18 to 20 kids in our band or orchestra want to play in the other instrument class next year. With the help of the Tri-M kids and our summer camp, those that want to learn other instruments will be able to walk right into class and play at the eighth-grade level of the other instrument class," says Schoepflin. ■

"We have found that by helping that particular group, it raised community awareness."

GRADUATE WITH TRI-M!

It's time to order your Tri-M Music Honor Society graduation regalia for your 2018 graduating seniors! Pink is the academic color for music and the signature color for Tri-M. This year's graduation regalia features pink double honor cords and tassels, a white honor stole, and medallion with the Tri-M key design.

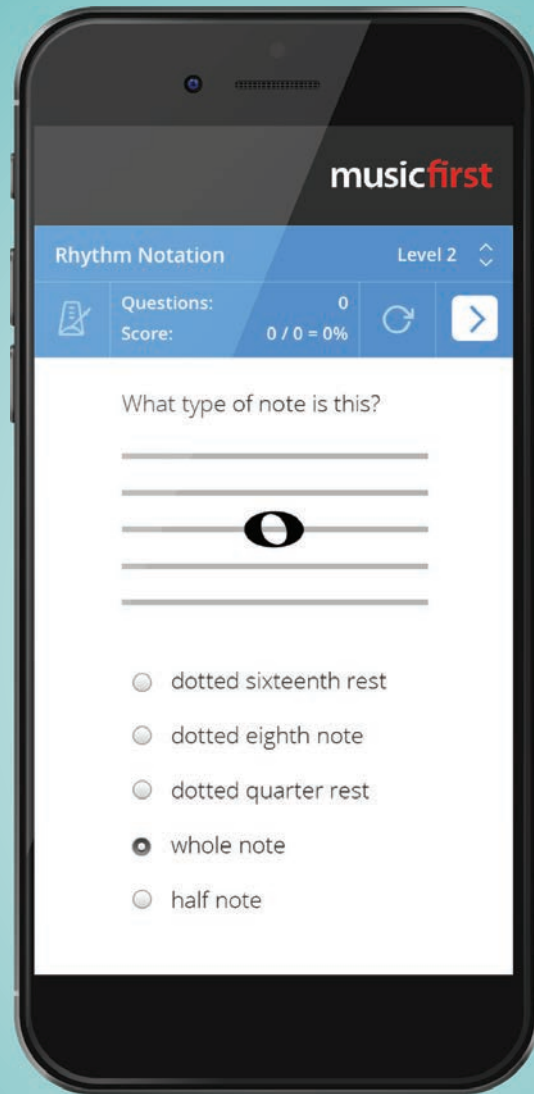
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We now have seat at the table, but we need to leverage the position and continue our good work.



The Appropriations Process on Capitol Hill

How is music education faring?

ON MARCH 23, Congress passed a bipartisan omnibus appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2018. The details of the bill turned out to be very good news, to which NAFME released a response. It reads, in part:

“The National Association for Music Education (NAfME) is thrilled to support Congress’s FY 2018 bipartisan omnibus appropriations bill. This spending proposal not only rejects several of the President’s proposed eliminations, but also provides notable increases to several key well-rounded education programs. We are most thrilled with Congress’s decision to provide \$1.1 billion in FY 2018 funding for the Title IV-A block grant, otherwise known as the Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) grants. Since the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), achieving full funding for Title IV-A has remained NAFME’s

top legislative priority, and this figure represents a 250% increase from last year’s inadequate funding level of \$400 million. With this funding increase, Title IV-A will finally operate as a formula grant program for all states, as intended by law, and will provide numerous school districts with the true flexibility they deserve to invest in a well-rounded curriculum that includes providing access to sequential and standards-based music education. In addition, this agreement also would provide robust funding for several other key well-rounded education programs, including \$15.8 billion for Title I-A, \$2.1 billion for Title II-A, and \$29.0 million for the Arts in Education program.”

Despite the great news, Ronny Lau, NAFME’s Public Policy Advisor, emphasizes the need for continued action.

“Advocacy didn’t stop when we got music included in ‘well-rounded education’ as defined by the Every Student Succeeds Act. We now have seat at the table, but we need to leverage the position and continue our good work.”

What can NAFME members do? “Continue to be engaged by following the news on education policy and funding. At the state and local level, we encourage music advocates to take action and urge your state and local decision-makers to make the proper investments in not only music education, but also overall education funding. And finally, hold members of Congress accountable for what they prioritized in ESSA, which is providing all students access to a well-rounded education, including music.”

According to Lau, “Grassroots is most effective when it happens in a timely and appropriate fashion. We encourage all members and music advocates to visit NAFME’s Grassroots Action Center (bit.ly/NAfMEGrassroots) to thank Congress for funding Title IV-A at \$1.1 billion and providing robust funding for public education. In addition, on the page members will find access to our latest advocacy webinar, where we discuss how Title IV funding can be used to support music education in local school districts.”

The full text of NAFME’s statement in support of the bipartisan omnibus agreement can be found at bit.ly/2018omnibus. ■

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It is more important than ever to be in the know about how public policy and advocacy can shape your music program. Visit our public policy resources at nafme.org to up your advocacy game!

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- Everything ESSA contains the latest on ESSA, the latest reauthorization of the federal landmark education K-12 legislation, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).
- The Advocacy Bulletin keeps NAFME members apprised of the most current developments on Capitol Hill, at the U.S. Department of Education, and about education policy and issues in the states.
- The Grassroots Action Center provides the tools to instantly be involved in the federal legislative process and reach your Members of Congress to ask them to support music education.
- Join our quarterly advocacy webinars to learn about the federal landscape as well as strategies to advocate at the local level for your music programs.

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Integrating Students with Special Needs into a School Band Program



MICHAEL C. PALERMO is a band director for the Mayfield City Schools in Mayfield, Ohio, as well as an adjunct professor in music at Notre Dame College in South Euclid, Ohio. He can be contacted at MPALERMO@mayfieldschools.org.

IN A POST on a music forum, a friend of mine recently described how distraught she was when she was told that her teenage daughter, who has played in her school's band for three years and who has Asperger's syndrome, was told that she did not meet the band director's performance criteria to continue in the band program as a high school student. Band is the only group activity in which her daughter has ever shown an interest.

Hearing this story broke my heart. As a band director for 25 years and a college instructor for the last 10, I find this to be an unacceptable attitude and an insensitive practice. This situation prompted me to share some of the techniques I've picked up to help keep *all* students successful in a band program.

Students with special needs are often interested in listening to and learning to play music. In my teaching, I've observed that these activities can be

effective calming techniques and may help to deescalate students' tension and fear. Music can be either a solo or a group activity. As my friend who shared the story of her daughter implied, finding a group activity in which a student with autism or other special needs wants to participate is often a challenge. Thus, encouraging continued participation in activities students already enjoy should be a priority for teachers and parents.

As you read the following suggestions, keep in mind that you may encounter students who are unable to read, or who struggle with reading. Not having the ability to read words does not necessarily mean that a student cannot read music, but you, the teacher, may have to learn new techniques that may initially seem to go against the principles by which you now teach. Understand that these suggestions are only that—things you can try with students. In my program, I accept any child and will create accommodations and adapt my teaching for any student, including those with multiple disabilities, autism, and behavioral issues. I have always found as a director, as well

"Inside the word teach is 'each,' and I believe that no matter the student, no matter the disability, and no matter the challenge, we should give the kid a chance."



as parent, that students with special needs need a place to belong and, for some, the band world can be that place.

Tips for Teaching Special Learners to Play a Musical Instrument

● **Teach music by ear.** Some children have an amazing ability to hear something once and repeat it. I had a percussion student with high-functioning autism who could do just that: I would play a rhythmic pattern once, and he could repeat it perfectly. The kicker: He was mathematically gifted and could count the rhythms while playing. This can be very helpful when learning parts for group band. Students can practice this skill by learning to play a song they enjoy listening to. Success is more important than music-reading skills with special learners. The ability to play something by ear or to learn a piece by ear can be beneficial for any student. For those with disabilities, this activity can be a learning tool that can help them advance their musical knowledge. Band is oftentimes a difficult place for

Photos courtesy of Michael C. Palermo.

LINKS SHOWING SUCCESSFUL KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN A MUSIC ENVIRONMENT:

- [youtube.com/watch?v=_0u2Le1R-8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_0u2Le1R-8)
- [youtube.com/watch?v=7aTVU6oalA8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7aTVU6oalA8)

“*Students with special needs need a place to belong and, for some, the band world can be that place.*”

rote-style learning, but if it is incorporated in a way that also includes note-reading, all students can be successful.

● **Focus on rhythm reading in isolation.** Reading rhythm is typically easier for students than reading notes. You can write out the rhythms of band music and write the note names above the rhythms. If you are a music teacher, you may be cringing at this suggestion, but what most music educators learned about teaching music was geared toward the needs of one style of learners. Music just happens to be a subject where basic mathematics can be used to

count basic rhythms. This practice can help students with special needs to be successful, and we are teaching across the curriculum using math.

● **Recognize diverse learning styles.**

We have to change the way we teach because our students have diverse learning styles. Not all of our students will become professional musicians. However, we have the ability to give every student a skill—the ability to play music—from which they can reap enjoyment for their entire lives.

Because our students have a variety of approaches to learning, it is necessary to teach a skill such as rhythm-reading in multiple ways. Simply put, students with special needs must have the conducive environment to feel successful as challenges are thrown their way.

An honors child is not as challenged as a non-honors student in a

regular education environment. We, as educators at all levels, need to find ways to adapt teaching styles for students of all kinds.

● **Slowly scaffold the process of reading music.** Make your first staff one line (it will be one note). Place your rhythms on the one line. Have students practice reading the rhythms with the one note. When mastered, add a second note either just below or just above the one line. When they can master reading two notes, add the other space note, then add another line, and so on until they are able to read a full staff. This may sound rather silly, but the progression really does work. I have used this technique with success with younger learners as well as special learners.

● **Incorporate simple math, like addition, subtraction, and division when teaching note values.** The idea of adding time signatures is a strong stretch, but when using the division concept, a basic-level student will understand the beat concepts.

● **Some of your students may be able to associate musical notes with colors.**

An example of this would be that every time they hear a “C,” they see green. You may be able to color-code the notes on the paper to further assist in your student’s success.

● **Help all students get and stay organized.** Students with special needs often benefit from structures such as practice charts, step-by-step sequences (with illustrations), and access to videos that clearly demonstrate the techniques you want to teach. Repetition is easier if challenges can be presented in several ways and broken into small chunks so tasks don’t seem overwhelming.

Band Directors: Keep in Mind

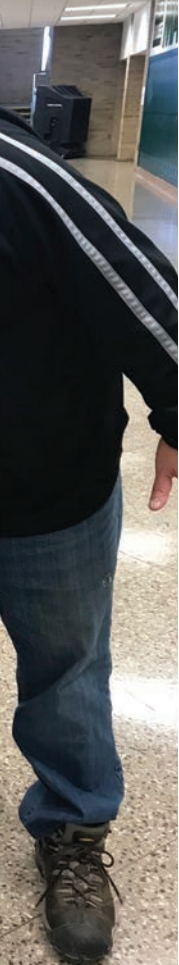
● **What is your goal?** Is your goal to train only children who will grow up to be professional musicians, or to give every child the lifelong gift of having the ability to play an instrument? I am not asking you to lower standards for those with the ability to excel; I’m just asking that you do your best to accommodate those who learn differently.

● **How important is perfect form?** Some children are simply not capable of perfect embouchure or perfect finger positioning. This does not mean that they can’t play an instrument successfully. Find what the student can do well, and focus on that.

All kids who want to do so should be able to participate in an ensemble. There have been too many avenues created lately that label students. We have come up with ways to take them out of classes such as band, and by doing this, these students are being limited in their learning. Band, choir, orchestra, and other ensembles are musical environments that are not just about becoming a musician: They are activities in which a student’s socio-emotional character is enhanced. Young people make lifelong friends in these musical surroundings. Unless the student is a danger to others, no one should be limited or pushed away.

I understand the uphill challenges we face as band directors, but it is our job to educate everyone. Inside the word teach is “each,” and I believe that no matter the student, no matter the disability, and no matter the challenge, we should give the kid a chance. Isn’t that why we went into this field? Isn’t that why we call ourselves teachers? ■

NOTE: The author thanks Mindi Engdahl Phelps for the article’s inspiration, and Tammy Palermo for her support and encouragement.





Accordion Advocacy: Bringing the Accordion into the General Music Classroom



JACOB PROSEK teaches general music at Westmore Elementary School in Lombard, Illinois. An accordion and harmonica player and a NAFME member, he can be contacted at Jacob.Prosek@gmail.com.

A Brief History of Accordion Education

In her book *Squeeze This! A Cultural History of the Accordion in America*, author Marion Jacobson states, “The piano accordion was one of America’s most popular instruments between 1938 and 1963, and in the peak year of 1953, its sales rivaled those of all the band instruments combined.” However, the instrument has failed to gain widespread popularity in public schools. The accordion is not included in orchestra or band, and it wasn’t until relatively recently that alternative ensembles have gained popularity among public school educators.

During the accordion boom of the mid-20th century, the most popular way for Americans to learn the instrument was through the studio system (see Figure 1). Small studios throughout

the U.S. offered lessons, competitions, and various large group ensembles meeting frequently after school. These ensembles could range from accordion orchestras to marching bands or whatever the local market required. With the increased popularity of rock and roll and the general market shift away from music featuring the accordion, the instrument and these studios dwindled. Even with this lack of popularity, contemporary educators such as Rita Barnea and Edward Monteiro incorporated the accordion into their classrooms with enormous success. Although the instrument hasn’t had strong popularity in the past among educators, it has the potential for solving many of our current problems in music classes.



Figure 1



Accordion Basics

While the accordion may seem intimidating at first glance, it is in fact quite approachable. Let’s focus on the piano accordion. There are a variety of accordion options, but the piano accordion is by far the most popular and the most natural fit for most teachers (see instrument in photo above). There are three main components to the instrument: the keyboard (played with the right hand), the bellows (which generate the airstream), and the left-hand buttons. Anyone who has passed their college piano proficiency exam, even just barely, should have a strong command of the right hand with very little difficulty.

Most accordion music for the right hand is just the melodic line with the occasional third and fifth. The bellows can seem a bit awkward at first; however, many accordionists have

Photos top and far right by Courtney Morris, Pearl and ISD. Headshot courtesy of Jacob Prosek. Photo bottom left from the collection of Joan Grauman, Historian for the American Accordionists Association.



“What I found most useful was the portability of the instrument. Unlike with a piano, I am able to wear an accordion and walk around the room while playing.”

the instrument. What I found most useful was the portability of the instrument. Unlike with a piano, I am able to wear an accordion and walk around the room while playing. I am also able to sit on the floor with my kindergarten students while playing the accordion, allowing for classroom management techniques that are not possible with a full piano. Rita Barnea, an elementary music teacher for decades and a professional accordionist, also spoke about the ability to march with the students. This is a technique I have implemented frequently with my work on steady beat in various Orff-centered movement activities.



compared bellowing to breathing when singing. Although the action of operation is unique compared to many instruments with which educators are familiar, just remember to follow the phrasing instincts you learned on your primary instrument. The left hand Stradella bass system is designed around the circle of fifths. The center bass button is C, the button above is G, and the button below is F. Beside the main row of bass buttons is a secondary row of bass buttons pitched a major third above the fundamental. Below those rows are a variety of chord options (see Figure 2). If the player’s objective is to play music that consists mostly of tonic, dominant, and subdominant harmonies, then the instrument’s design is musically logical. Simply play the melody in the right hand, play a bass-chord pattern in the left hand, and bellow when you would breathe.

of having a student pressing a bass button to play the next song—a fun gag she says she was able to get away with until they were in third grade! It’s these charming extras that really bring joy and engagement into the classroom.

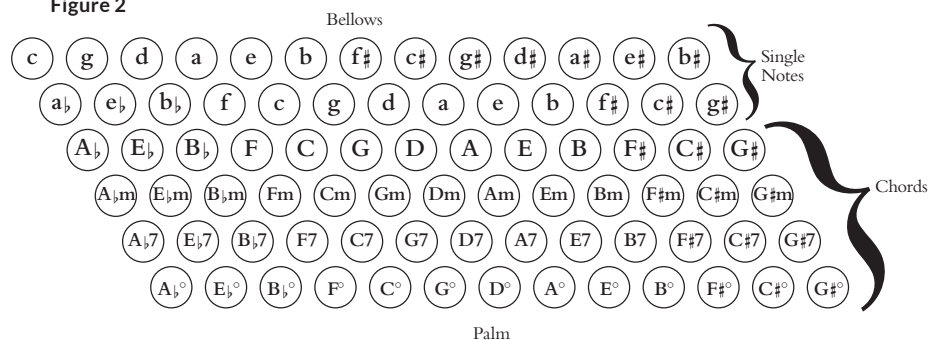
In contrast with the electric keyboards many music teachers use, the accordion is acoustic, so I never have to worry about batteries or finding a power source. One way that it has made my life easier as an educator is the instrument’s portability for events such as field trips and assemblies. I no longer need to worry about having the piano transported from the music room to the gymnasium when I can simply carry my accordion with me. It is also ideal for field trips where my prior options were a cumbersome keyboard or relying upon a provided piano. Barnea has also shared many of her “bits of business” that simply make using the accordion fun. She talks about the joy

What is perhaps most amazing about the accordion is the way in which it connects with the community. As a Chicago-based music teacher living in the heart of America’s polka belt, I’ve discovered that the instrument has always been associated in my mind with the music of Poland and Central Europe. However, I now know that this is by no means the only culture that cherishes the accordion. I currently have the opportunity to teach in a school with a high population of Hispanic students. The accordion’s

The Accordion in the Classroom

After learning to play the instrument, I immediately brought it into the classroom for my students. I first thought it would be a mere novelty, but the students were truly engaged with

Figure 2



popularity in Latin American music creates a strong connection between the students and the instrument. If you talk with accordionists and music teachers who use the accordion in their class-

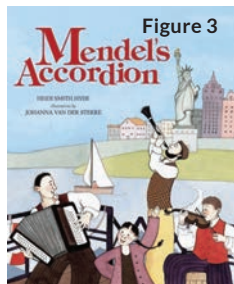


Figure 3

rooms, you'll find that diverse local cultures embrace the instrument. Many accordionists from New York speak of the strong Italian ties to the instrument, while in the South, the influence of Zydeco music is prevalent. One of my favorite books to use in the classroom is *Mendel's Accordion* by Heidi Smith Hyde (Figure 3). This book follows the story of a Jewish Eastern-European accordionist as he immigrates to America at the turn of the last century. Through this book, readers can see how the accordion waxes and wanes in popularity up to the present day. This immigration story is one to which many of my students have found a deep connection.

For those who have already begun to incorporate the accordion into their classroom as an accompaniment instrument, one may wonder what the next step could be. Sprinkled throughout the U.S. are a few schools that are beginning to implement accordion ensembles in their classrooms. Alterna-

tive music ensembles have been gaining popularity in recent years, and in the schools that have incorporated the accordion into their classrooms, the programs have been met with great success and optimism. One

of the most interesting programs is found at the H. C. Carlestone Elementary School in Pearland, Texas, under Brian Berlin. Berlin currently has 30 accordions in his elementary school general music classroom, and teaches full accordion ensemble. While students in other schools learn recorder or guitar, Berlin's students—more than 300 each year—get the opportunity to learn the accordion in third and fourth grade. Although the accordion can be used as an instrument of cultural ambassadorship, Berlin has found great success using it as a tool to teach all kinds of music.

At the high school level, individuals like Marilyn O'Neil have spearheaded initiatives to bring in accordions by means of grants. In O'Neil's case, the grant funding the program is supported in part by the Arts and Culture Collaborative, Waterbury, Connecticut, Region in partnership with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, Office of the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Through various workshops with experts, students with musical backgrounds have the chance to learn the accordion. At the end of this experience, students will have the opportunity to play their primary band or orchestra instrument in an accomplished accordion orchestra. If a student shows particular promise with the instrument, he or she may even have the opportunity to play the accordion with this orchestra.

It also behooves the budding accordion ensemble director to look outside the U.S. for inspiration.



Traditionally, accordion ensembles have been popular throughout Central Europe, especially in regions with a rich folk music heritage. In Asia, the instrument has swelled in popularity in recent decades, and is being used with great success both on its own and as a preparation for students of piano.

Pick up an Accordion!

Starting an accordion orchestra is probably not the top priority for the average music teacher. If, however, you are looking for an instrument that is relatively easy to learn, highly portable, and a wonderful way to connect with your school's community, then the accordion may be right for you. Although purchasing a new accordion can seem rather expensive, they are generally no more so than any other high-quality band or orchestra instrument. Additionally, there is a vibrant market for used accordions. I was able to get my first accordion from a colleague in exchange for a bag of candy. The four student accordions I use in my classroom were donated through a local school recycling center. Others have found success in procuring instruments through radio instrument drives and arrangements with local music dealers. Pick up an accordion and your favorite three-chord song, and get ready for your classroom to pick up something new! ■



Photo top by Courtney Morris. Photo bottom courtesy of Jacob Prosek.



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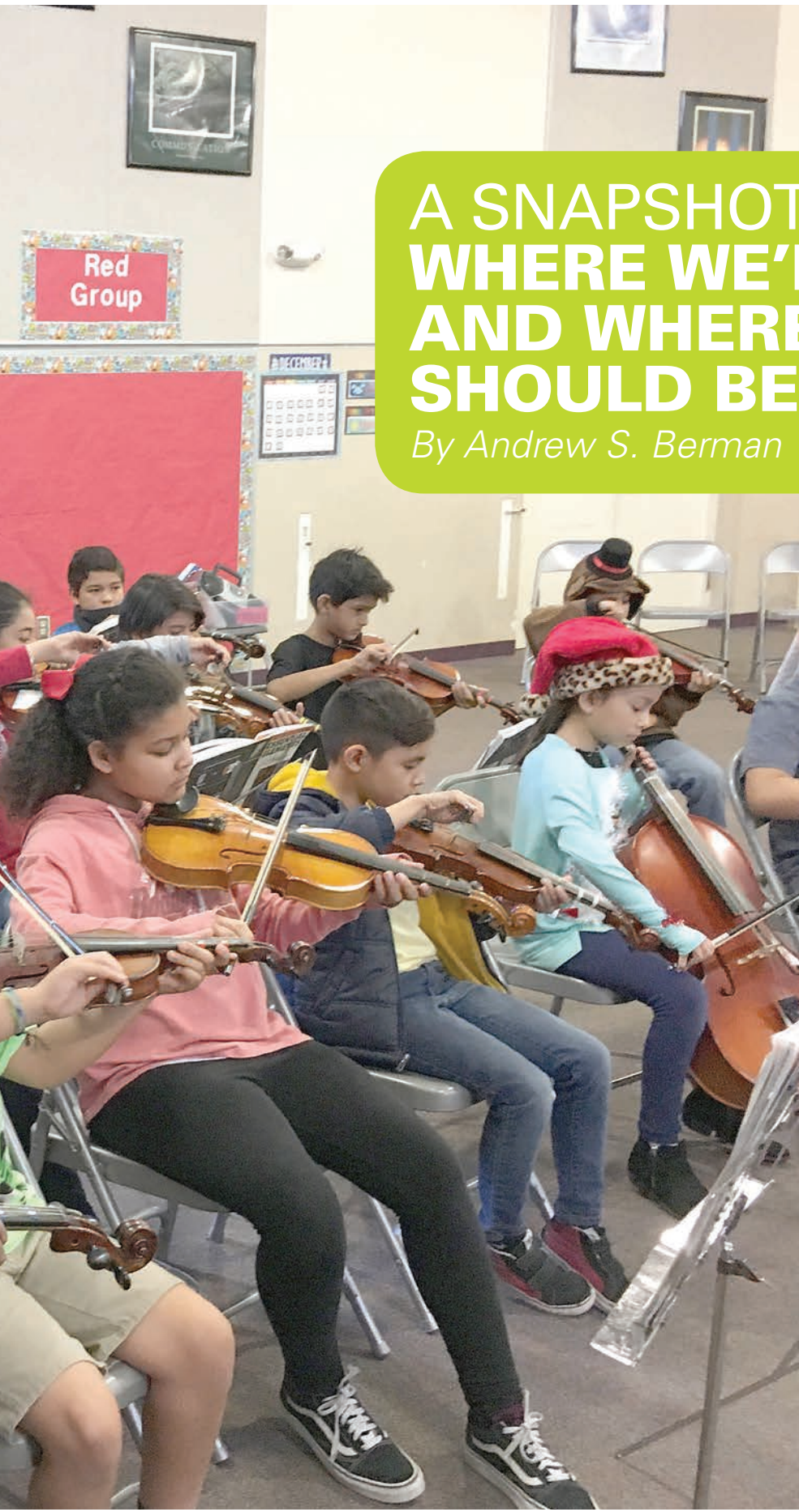


TEACHERS' VOICES

*Results and Recommendations
from “The Status of Music
Education in United States
Public Schools—2017”*



Normal Heights Elementary,
San Diego, California



A SNAPSHOT OF WHERE WE'RE HEADED, AND WHERE WE SHOULD BE GOING

By Andrew S. Berman

IN THE FALL OF 2017, Give A Note Foundation published a study that took a close look at music education in the U.S. The study is called “The Status of Music Education in United States Public Schools—2017” and its findings can be read in detail at bit.ly/MusicEdResearch. This study was funded by the Country Music Association (CMA) Foundation, which is a significant ally to Give A Note Foundation and NAFME in their stalwart support of music education. All three collaborated in this effort to understand “the nature of music teachers’ jobs, working conditions, and contexts as they currently exist in the U.S.,” explains the study’s principal investigator Kenneth Elpus, “with an eye toward understanding how philanthropic efforts to support music education might be most effectively invested.” Elpus, a NAFME member, is an associate professor of music

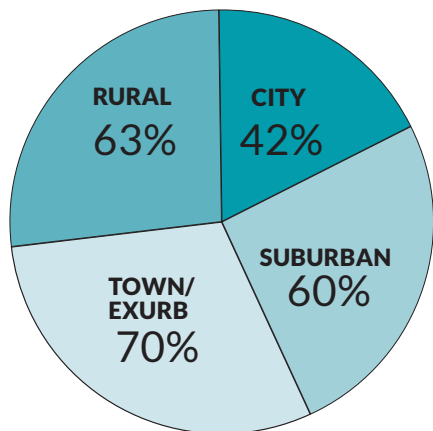
Photo by Russ Sperling.

A CLOSER LOOK AT FUNDRAISING

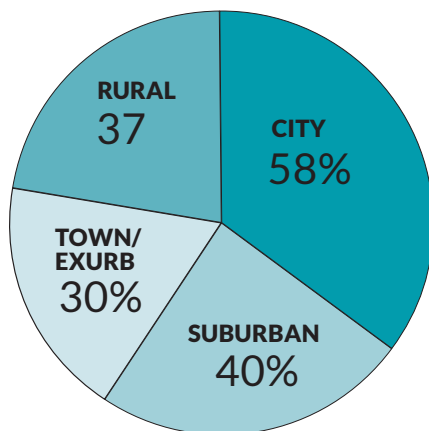
The more urban the school, the more vital fundraising is to the survival of the music program.

SOURCE: ELPUS K. "THE STATUS OF MUSIC EDUCATION IN UNITED STATES PUBLIC SCHOOLS—2017." GIVE A NOTE FOUNDATION.

FUNDRAISING ENRICHES THE MUSIC PROGRAM



FUNDRAISING IS NECESSARY FOR ADEQUATE MUSIC INSTRUCTION



education at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Preparation for the study began in early 2016, and it was administered over the course of the 2016–2017 school year. Results were tabulated the following summer and then published in the fall. The scope of the survey was broad, covering teacher specialization, the prevalence of traditional ensemble-based classrooms, music curriculum standards, the role of fundraising, access to professional development, the influence of local leadership, and more. Data from the survey ranged from expected to surprising. “I’m always excited to analyze new data, so my first

reaction was, as is usual for me, a geeky excitement,” admits Elpus. “One thing that surprised me as a music educator was that the traditional ways we conceive of music education in the U.S. are still the predominant ways that students learn in music schools.” Lynn Tuttle, Director of Public Policy, Research & Professional Development for NAFME, agreed that “we continue to be fairly traditional. I don’t know if we’re experimenting enough.” Overall, she said the study results “focused my understanding.” Tuttle worked closely with Elpus on the communication of the survey results. Russ Sperling—director of visual and performing arts at



San Diego Unified School District in California, and Western Division President on NAFME’s National Executive Board—participated in the initial focus groups prior to the development of the survey. He notes that the study largely confirmed his suspicions: “There’s no silver bullet” for combating the issues facing music education in this country.

THE ROLE OF FUNDRAISING

“It was sobering to see it brought home so starkly,” says Tuttle about the importance of fundraising for effective music education. Although a majority (58%) of respondents reported that “fundraising enriches the music program,” 42% of respondents said that fundraising is “necessary for delivering adequate music instruction,” indicating a significant subset of teachers who have to fundraise to keep their programs functional. This subset includes mostly

POINTS OF INTEREST FROM THE STUDY

- Band and chorus are the most prevalent courses offered in U.S. public high schools (reported present by 93% and 89% of respondents, respectively), which are followed by a sharp drop in respondents for jazz band (42%), general music (39%), and then orchestra and marching band (36% each).
- The study shows that more music programs align with the 2014 Music Standards (34% of those with a written curriculum guide) than with the 1994 National Standards for Music (11% of those with a written curriculum guide). This gratified Tuttle, who’d helped shepherd in the acceptance of the 2014 Standards. “The field has been so acclimated to the 1994 standards,” she explains. “I didn’t expect to see that pop in 2017.”
- When asked how respondents would spend an unexpected \$10,000 grant, 76% chose to purchase instruments, 48% chose to buy sheet music or method books, 38% opted for performance equipment such as risers or microphones, and 35% would bring in guest clinicians or composers (respondents were allowed to choose up to three options). Responses dropped below 20% after that.



A Hoover High School student the moment he earns he's getting a scholarship

“What are the roles of advocacy and philanthropy in relieving the fundraising burden on teachers and making sure we are offering music education to kids as it should be offered?”

—LYNN TUTTLE

teachers in urban schools, who make up 58% of the respondents who gave the latter answer (see the pie charts on page 24). Having taught at a school on the cusp of urban and suburban, Sperling knows that some teachers are fundraising for the basics. He shares the statistic that his home state of California ranks

46th in the nation for education spending per student (according to *Education Week's* 2017 Quality Counts¹). In his district and region, this often manifests itself as a lack of general music instruction. In the ensemble classrooms, “The school pays the teacher and provides the room and a modest budget,” but not much beyond that, he says. Fundraising can be expected for things like travel and clinicians, but “we don’t want you fundraising for reeds.”

Seeing these results, Tuttle wonders how districts and school boards prioritize fine arts education. As for the gap between urban schools and less populated communities, she concedes that the “disparity is here to stay for a while,” but empowers teachers to do what they can to ensure the gap narrows over time. She asks: “What are the roles of advocacy and philanthropy in relieving the fundraising burden on teachers and making sure we are

offering music education to kids as it should be offered?”

The report’s findings on music program fundraising resonated with Elpus, who reflects on the time and energy he spent on fundraising as a high school choral director. There was an annual, general fundraiser plus several targeted efforts throughout the year. He was lucky to have an active group of parents taking the lead on those campaigns, allowing him to focus more on teaching. Community support is important, but the ultimate responsibility still rests with the teacher, and though the level of burden varies from district to district, the study shows fundraising in music programs is ubiquitous in the U.S.

THE INFLUENCE OF LOCAL LEADERSHIP

“Even superstars struggle without a supportive principal,” observes Sperling. The influence of principals on the



music program—particularly in large, decentralized districts—is paramount. The study’s executive summary states: “Often the difference between a school with an outstanding music program and a neighboring school with a faltering or nonexistent music program is simply the principal’s desire to support or withhold support for music teaching and learning.” Elpus testifies, “I know of a large school district near me where some middle schools have excellent music programs and others have none, and the desire of the building principal to have a music program is the only determining factor.” Tuttle notes that the data about local leaders’ impact on music programs “strongly came out in this report, although it’s been trending that way.”

“Advocacy really comes down to the local level,” Tuttle reasons. “It’s very important to do state-level work, but truly, decision-making is resting with these administrators.” Further, she

“In a perfect world, professional development that districts provided for music teachers would be content-specific and context-relevant and all music teachers would have financial support to attend relevant music education association conferences.”

—KENNETH ELPUS

cites the alarming statistic that half of all principals in the U.S. quit after three years². This means that music teachers have to start from scratch every few years, making their case anew to a potentially novice administrator. Music teachers need to examine how they view themselves in the advocate role, Tuttle says. “This might be a not-so-comfortable place to be, but it’s part of what we do.” This finding prompts a conversation about what tools NAFME makes available (see nafme.org/advocacy) and what more they can do in that vein. The same is true of advocacy support at the state and federal levels.

ACCESS TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

“In a perfect world,” muses Elpus, “professional development that districts provided for music teachers would be content-specific and context-relevant



San Diego Unified School District School of Creative and Performing Arts Jazz Ensemble

aren't appropriate or aligned?" she asks. "We shouldn't do that to students or teachers." Tuttle doesn't expect districts to have music-specific PD at every opportunity, and suggests they consider other PD options for teachers who have difficulty accessing music-specific PD, such as partnering with neighboring districts to pool resources, and NAFME's own online learning platform: NAFME Academy (see bit.ly/nafmeAcademy).

TAKING WHAT WE'VE LEARNED AND MOVING FORWARD

The study covers more than just these three topics, and provides a snapshot of the state of music education that music teachers, supervisors, and organizational leaders can use as a jumping-off point. "The big takeaway for teachers," Tuttle points out, "is to reflect for a moment on their relationship to their principals and their districts, and understand the role they can play to make sure that music remains an important part of what happens in their districts." Elpus adds that this information "can help teachers, NAFME, and philanthropic organizations interested in supporting music education figure out where to focus their energies." ■

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- ¹Lloyd S. C., & Harwin, A. (2017). "In Latest Look, Nation's Grade Stays Decidedly Middle-of-Pack," *Education Week* 36 (16), 38–40.
- ²School Leaders Network (2014). "Churn: The High Cost of Principal Turnover." ConnectLeadsSucceed.org, 2014.

and all music teachers would have financial support to attend relevant music education association conferences." How close you are to that perfect world depends on how close you are to an urban center, according to the study. Most respondents in urban and suburban schools (84% and 59%, respectively) attended school- or district-provided, content-relevant professional development (PD), whereas teachers working in towns or exurbs attended such PD at a rate of 45%, and those in rural communities a low 32% (see line graph below). The data on

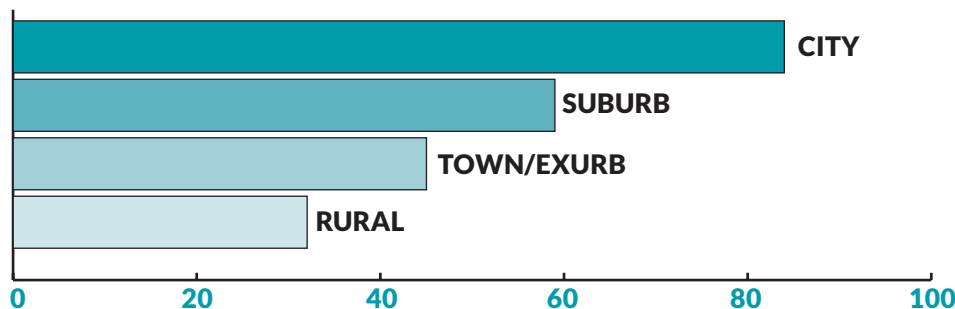
out-of-district PD shows a more even landscape: Teachers from all urbanities take advantage of out-of-district PD at a relatively similar rate (ranging from 62% to 72%), per the study.

Sperling concurs that, in rural to suburban environments, "It can be a struggle, unless you have a visionary principal who will send you to a NAFME conference." Tuttle recalls that she "certainly heard in the field a level of frustration with the administration for making them sit through PD that wasn't relevant to them. Why are we providing learning opportunities that

A CLOSER LOOK AT MUSIC TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Schools in more sparsely-populated communities have music teachers with lower rates of attending school/district music-related PD.

SOURCE: ELPUS K. "THE STATUS OF MUSIC EDUCATION IN UNITED STATES PUBLIC SCHOOLS – 2017." GIVE A NOTE FOUNDATION.



MAGNUM OPUS!

For NAfME's 2018 National Conference, six Opus Leaders are working to inspire and engage attendees in key areas.

“AMPLIFY:
LEAD.
ENGAGE.
INSPIRE.” **BY LISA FERBER**

THIS IS THE THEME OF NAfME'S 2018 NATIONAL CONFERENCE. It's all about all engagement—and all about the Opus. But what is “Opus”?

Simply put, an Opus is a longer block of time, similar to a workshop, that will allow participants to engage at a deeper level in a particular topic. While during previous conferences, attendees would go from, say, a general music seminar to another about teaching choral music, for this year's upcoming event music educators are being encouraged to attend one Opus strand for about 12 hours. “We are trying to focus on topics that are applicable to all music



Photos by Matt Janson Photography, mattjanson.com.



educators. The content builds on itself, so the breadth and depth you are receiving from one particular Opus is far greater than what you would receive from a 60-minute session,” says JJ Norman, NAFME’s Professional Development and Collegiate Program Manager.

The event organizers note that this new approach is about doing a deep dive and giving attendees a strong toolkit. Kristen Rencher, NAFME’s Director of Membership, Strategic Initiatives, and Student Programs, says, “It’s one thing to be in a session and take notes, and it’s another to be hands-on with other teachers and get perspective. We are continuously trying to improve and develop content that is



relevant and beneficial to our members.”

On November 10 and 11, preceding the conference itself, there will be three forums—Emerging Leaders, Music Program Leaders, and Collegiate—through which attendees can earn up to 20 hours of professional development. NAFME is creating a justification toolkit for those who need to prove to their employers why it is important they attend.

Lynn Tuttle, NAFME’s Director of Public Policy, Research, and Professional Development, says, “Research has shown that quality professional development needs to be related directly to what you do in your classroom every day. The Opus setup can give you time to practice what you are learning and how to bring it to your classroom. For example, the Opus Learning track focuses on learning about the new Music Standards regardless of what kind of music teacher you are. My background is instrumental, but I learn a ton when I’m learning with choral educators because they teach differently and they have different

modes of connecting with kids.”

Each Opus has lead facilitators and they will start the conference with “Music ED talks,” says Lance Nielsen, NAFME’s Professional Development Chair and Immediate Past-President of the North Central Division. The Music ED talks are opportunities for the facilitators to set the stage and inform attendees as to which Opus they may want to join. “The facilitators have generated wonderful ideas and there is a common thread of how we engage all students regardless of age, gender, race, or ability through music standards, creativity, innovative music-making, and technology,” says Nielsen. The conference also features standard shorter sessions in which selected clinicians will share best practices in music education. An additional new component is the “Best Practices” posters session, modeled after research conference poster sessions, where attendees can interact with other music educators to share new ideas and teaching strategies. “We are trying to avoid the sit-and-get type of conference and really provide opportunities for

educators to be engaged with new ideas and to leave the conference with lesson plans and strategies that they may implement in their classroom to support all students.” ■



NAFME'S 2018 NATIONAL CONFERENCE “AMPLIFY: LEAD. ENGAGE. INSPIRE.”

The 2018 National Conference will take place November 11–14, 2018, at the Gaylord Texan Resort in Grapevine, Texas.

- Registration Opens: April 12
- Early Bird Registration Dates: April 2–September 7
- Regular Registration Dates: September 8–November 2
- After November 2, registration will be available onsite.

The Conference will focus on the following areas:

AMPLIFY: LEARNING—Teaching Music as a Well-Rounded Subject

AMPLIFY: INNOVATION—Cultivating Innovative Music-Making

AMPLIFY: INVOLVEMENT—Engaging Diversity in Music-Making and Teaching

AMPLIFY: INSPIRATION—Inspiring Students through Music Creativity

AMPLIFY: TECHNOLOGY—Teaching the Tech-Savvy Generation

Up to 20 hours of professional development credit will be available, focusing on innovative content that opens doors to the future of music education, timeliness of topics to the field, and practical applications.

For more information, visit nationalconference.nafme.org.

OPUS LEADERS SHARE THEIR PLANS



ANNE FENNELL

AMPLIFY: INNOVATION CULTIVATING INNOVATIVE MUSIC-MAKING

How do we successfully embrace a variety of musical experiences with this generation of students?

Opus Innovation leader Anne Fennell says, “Within the Innovations strand, we will identify, promote, and expand innovative programs and practices in music education. Innovation in music education is about the process of teaching for a high level of engagement and learning that will truly transform both student and teacher. This is about teaching for learning, and to support creative and critical thinking while making deep connections to music. We will experience how learners can be a part of the decision-making and learning process. Traditionally, education has been teacher-centered, but now we know that when a learner co-creates and reflects on knowledge, profound growth occurs. Through interactive formats, teachers will participate in collaborative conversations and brainstorm to support this innovative approach. Intentional conversations about teaching for creative and critical thinking, while developing character dispositions through music, will be the common thread through our work. This innovative work is for all areas of music education, from all choral to any instrumental ensemble, general to world music, and for all grade levels. We will learn from leaders in the field, share ideas, and apply the ‘how’ of innovative and transformative music education. We hope you can join us as we co-create the future of music education and its many possible pathways!”



**JOHANNA SIEBERT
& ARMALYN De La O**

AMPLIFY: LEARNING TEACHING MUSIC AS A WELL-ROUNDED SUBJECT

How do we move beyond the podium and include our students as active music-makers and leaders in our ensembles as promised in the 2014 Music Standards?

Johanna Siebert and Armalyn De La O guide the Learning Opus, which will offer music educators experiences they might not find in a state conference. “There is a focus on engagement for all those connected to music programs—students, teachers, and program leaders,” says Siebert. “We will be amplifying the work of music educators with respect to how they can incorporate the 2014 Standards, meaningful assessment, and instructional practices for effective teaching and student learning. We hope participants will enjoy the hands-on interactions among presenters and practitioners, and leave with renewed inspiration for developing their students’ musicianship. Participants and presenters will explore the use and relevance of the Standards, Model Cornerstone Assessments, and high-yield instructional strategies in supporting high-quality teaching, across varied classroom settings.”



JOHN MLYNCZAK

AMPLIFY: TECHNOLOGY TEACHING THE TECH-SAVVY GENERATION

How do we integrate technology in a meaningful way that engages students and provides new opportunities that were never before possible?

John Mlynczak is leading the Technology Opus called “Teaching the Tech-Savvy Generation,” which is presented in partnership with the Technology Institute for Music Educators. He says, “Our focus is using technology in all areas of music education to serve today’s tech-savvy student or ‘digital native.’ We will include presentations that demonstrate successful lesson ideas on creating and recording music, as well as incorporating live sound and audio production into the classroom. In addition, we will discuss ways to utilize the technology that students use, such as social media and mobile devices in order to recruit and retain more students in our music programs. Technological proficiency is not a requirement for this Opus, as we are focusing more on instructional practices than the technology. We will have a music technology lab set up and will include time to play with various music tech products and get hands-on demonstrations from product experts, so everyone will have the opportunity to get personalized instruction on technology that is relevant for their classrooms.”



CHRISTOPHER AZZARA

AMPLIFY: INSPIRATION INSPIRING STUDENTS THROUGH MUSIC CREATIVITY

How do we provide for the creation and improvisation of music throughout the curriculum, in instrumental, vocal, and general music settings?

Christopher Azzara will facilitate the Inspiration Opus, which he describes this way: “At this Opus, participants will explore the relationships among music listening, improvisation, reading, and composition. With an understanding of how these skills are related, participants will be able to implement sequential curriculum that will help their students learn how to improvise, improve listening and reading comprehension, compose original ideas, and gain a deeper understanding of literature. Sessions include ‘Creativity: Inspiration and Meaning for Music Teaching and Learning,’ ‘Six Principles of Music Teaching and Learning,’ ‘Assessing Music Improvisation,’ and sessions for ‘Inspiring Creativity and Improvisation in Early Childhood, Elementary Music, and Secondary Music.’”



ALICE HAMMEL

AMPLIFY: INVOLVEMENT ENGAGING DIVERSITY IN MUSIC-MAKING AND TEACHING

How do we create a fully inclusive classroom for all learners and all students, regardless of background, learning style, or level of musical experience?

Alice Hammel, who will lead the Involvement Opus, says, “We are going to study race and poverty. In particular, we will focus on the experience of African-American students and students who live in poverty as they access music education programs in the U.S. The Opus will include high-profile presenters from K–12 and university settings as well as a special presentation by the Smithsonian Folkways Institute and a poverty simulation. We are very excited about this unique and dynamic set of experiences and invite everyone to attend.”

FINDING A WAY AT FRANKLIN HIGH



Jacqueline Hairston took a big chance when she revived the Marching Yellow Jackets—and then was met with an outpouring of support from alumni, parents, and the community.

BY STEPHEN HOLLEY



Photo by Stockton Unified School District Community Relations Department.

IN

ONLY HER SECOND YEAR as the band director at Franklin High School in Stockton, California, Jacquie Hairston

stepped out on blind faith and, even though the music program was fading, made the decision to bring back the Marching Yellow Jackets. She sent out over 70 flyers to interested students, but was disheartened when only about 15 showed up to the first week of band camp. Not one to be discouraged, Hairston says, “Initially, I felt defeated, but still had to make this a good experience for those who did come. Those 15 students made enough noise during camp that they started getting the attention of others.” Unbeknownst to Hairston, band alumni began to raise support via the Franklin High School alumni page and a dedicated band alumni page on Facebook. Hairston used the social media outlets to introduce herself as the new band director and support began pouring in. By the time school began, the band had upwards of 70 members.

Hairston became the band director at the Title I school after years of director turnover. Surrounded by industrial parks and agricultural fields, the school suffered from low morale and band numbers were dwindling. “It has been a slow



process. The students and the program had been hurt by the constant turnover of teachers and was on its last leg. It took a lot of proving myself to students, parents, faculty, and administration by doing things that let them know I am in this for the long haul.”

The music program at Franklin High was a signature program of the school for years, but the program struggled after Hairston’s predecessor—a longtime, beloved director—retired from teaching. “A long time ago, music at Franklin High School was one of the driving forces behind the school. Looking through the music library, I found works that would be considered collegiate level, if not higher. I can only imagine the musicianship and support that it took to be able to produce that level of music. The bands traveled to places like New York, Texas, Canada, Japan, and others.”

Now, enrollment is up and the school and community are again excited about the music program. Even with the

support of the school, students, and parents, Hairston still has to cope with a variety of issues. In one situation, as the band was preparing for their first competition, they were still without the most basic of attire—shoes. “Someone posted on the Northern California Band Association Facebook page that they had a surplus of marching shoes. I jumped at the opportunity to secure shoes for the students, and wound up driving about two and a half hours to pick up about 200 pairs of shoes.”

Hairston was able to solve other difficulties through the kindness of colleagues. “I am thankful to be friends with the director of our ‘rival’ high school, who graciously allowed us to use two of his sousaphones. Another local high school donated their old winter guard uniforms that were

long yellow coats, which perfectly fit as a play on ‘yellow jackets.’”

From there, the support continued to pour in by means of a front-page article in the *Stockton Record*, continued alumni and parent support, and performance offers from the community. “The Monday after the story came out, we received phone calls inviting us to participate in the local Chinese New Year, Cinco de Mayo, and Fourth of July parades. We were also offered space at a local hall if we ever wanted to hold fundraiser dinners, and it was requested that we have a concert or two there.” The wave of support continued as Franklin High teachers, who were band alumni themselves, began sharing stories of the band in its heyday and offering their support. In terms of alumni support, Hairston states, “We post our fundraisers or some of our needs, and these alumni work their magic the best they can. Sometimes we end up with a monetary

donation or a referral for someone who can help us fix something.”

Stepping out on blind faith yet again, Hairston started a color guard that turned into a winter guard. “I had them

“I want my students to become lifelong participants and supporters of music.”





WITH JACQUELINE HAIRSTON

Q What do you know to be true about teaching music that you didn't know when you started? As much as you want to be able to disconnect, you can't, because you end up caring too much about these kids, who end up becoming like your own children.

Q If I weren't a music teacher I would ... probably be a veterinarian, since I have an extremely soft spot for animals.

Q What's the biggest lesson you want your students to learn while in your program? That everything they do matters to someone. Just like they have to work with others in band, they have to work with others in life.

Q The music education profession would be better if ... there was equal access for all students no matter where they are in this country. Socioeconomic status should not equal forgotten students.

Q What have you learned about students and parents through your work? Students want to know they are contributing to something. Seeing their children proud of the work they are able to accomplish, and that their children are part of something bigger that makes them happy, leads parents to ask the question, "How can I help?"

Q What advice would you give to a teacher trying to start a program similar to yours? If you have a vision for you and your program, go for it. Do not be afraid to ask for help from others in and out of your district. They want you to succeed just as much as you do.



asking how to become more involved."

Hairston's educational philosophy is directly in line with her school's learning environment and demographic. "I believe all students, no matter where they are—their socioeconomic background or overall ability—should have access to music education. I want to encourage and challenge my students to listen outside of their comfort zones so they can begin to shape their own unique musical tastes and still be open to other genres. I want my students to become lifelong participants and supporters of music."

Franklin High School has an interesting student-body makeup, as it offers an International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme. This enables Hairston to have a mix of ages and ability levels with students in grades seven through 12 in her intermediate and advanced ensembles. This plays well into her relaxed, yet strict, style of teaching. "The students know I like to have fun, but we all know when to focus on what needs to get done. I trust

my students, giving them some freedoms with the understanding of the responsibility behind their actions and how these actions can hurt the group, not just themselves. If nothing else positive happens for them during their day, I want them to at least have had a laugh or a moment where they could be themselves for an hour. If I didn't get them to not only have a breakthrough as a musician, but to be relaxed, laugh, or smile at least once in the day, then I feel like it wasn't as productive a day as it could have been."

With the immense growth of the program over the past two years—as well as the continued support of students, parents, administrators, and colleagues—Hairston's vision for the program is matched only by the desire of her students to build it and continue long held traditions. "I hope to bring the program back to where it used to be. I'd like to have students and performing groups that develop a passion and an interest in music that takes them beyond high school—to

have groups that get to experience performing at different venues and set a standard of higher level of achievement for students who will come into the program. I have always wanted to teach high school, and now that I am finally here I am going to fight to turn this program into something." ■

perform at our winter concert, and the teachers who attended were on the edges of their seats, surprised to see their students dancing and tossing flags and rifles." As the program continued to grow and gain traction, the parents stepped up as well to lend a hand when needed. "Our parent support is definitely changing for the better. Now that parents have seen their students investing in the program, and that this is something their children enjoy doing, we have more parents wanting to help set up carpools, providing lunches during long rehearsals or competitions, and



Top photos courtesy of Jacqueline Hairston. Bottom photo by Madrigal Photography.

BY LORI SCHWARTZ REICHL

MEET THE CONDUCTORS!

The NAFME All-National Honor Ensembles represent the top high school musicians in the U.S. These ensembles are a comprehensive musical and educational experience. The program will be held at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort in Orlando, Florida, under the batons of leaders in music education.

Let's meet the 2018 All-National Honor Ensembles conductors and discover their perspectives on what it takes to be successful and effective.



Dr. Jean Montès, Symphony Orchestra

Dr. Jean Montès is Director of Orchestra Studies and Coordinator of Strings at Loyola University in New Orleans, Louisiana. He conducts orchestral ensembles and teaches conducting, string education and pedagogy courses, and orchestration. In addition, he is the music director of The Greater New Orleans Youth Orchestra. Becoming a conductor was a dream of Montès beginning when he was 12. He was inspired by mentors and conductors such as Maitre Julio Racine and Dr. John Jost. While attending the Holy Trinity School of Music in Haiti, he met one of his favorite cello teachers, Ariel Witbeck, who instilled strict discipline, and yet was fun and creative. Haitian violinist Romel Joseph encouraged Montès by saying, "Cello could become the key that opens all the doors."

Montès notes that, "A successful musician is a sensitive human being, a communicator who is willing to take time to refine technique to the point of becoming one with the instrument. He/she is able to fully express oneself through music with such passion and details that using words and gestures would not be sufficient." Montès believes that an effective conductor is a great musician and leader who can create a nurturing environment where a passion for music is shared and can help the ensemble reach its full potential.



Photos courtesy of the featured conductors.



Dennis Glocke, Concert Band

Dennis Glocke is Director of Concert Bands at Pennsylvania State University in State College. He conducts the Symphonic Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band and teaches conducting and wind literature courses. His collegiate conductor, H. Robert Reynolds, had the most significant musical impact on him. "I remember my first rehearsal in the University of Wisconsin's Symphonic Band rehearsing *English Folk Song Suite*, which I had played in high school. Reynolds rehearsed the piece for five minutes when I realized that,



though I had reproduced most of the notes and rhythms Williams had written, I had never played the music. That was the catalyst for what became my life-long quest to do the same for my students."

Glocke insists, "Successful musicians have mastered their instrument. When weak musicians perform, one is very aware of the instrument; when great musicians perform, one is only aware of the music. Once the instrument is conquered, the performer needs to have something to 'say,' something inside that needs to be expressed." Glocke believes an effective conductor must be an excellent musician and have the people skills necessary to work with an ensemble.

Dr. Michael Quantz, Guitar Ensemble

Dr. Michael Quantz is Professor of Music at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley and is a pioneer in guitar ensemble curriculum. At the age of 12, he saw Freddie King in concert and was enthralled by the experience of seeing him play with such incredible verve; he was also inspired by his guitar teacher, Sam Hendricks, to become more deeply involved in music.



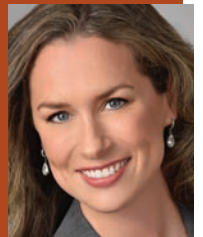
Quantz likes the idea that "Anyone who studies music to the point that they are communicating how they feel through the art is a successful musician." He insists that clarity makes an effective conductor. "There is a huge variety of approaches (gestures types, mannerisms, etc.) which distinguish great conductors. But, they all communicate an evocative spirit imbued within the music. The mechanical gestures should coincide with the needs of the ensemble to reach the evocative goals—some require frequent and precise signals, while others respond very well to more sweeping signals."



Dr. Amanda Quist, Mixed Choir

Dr. Amanda Quist is Associate Professor and Chair of the Conducting, Organ, and Sacred Music Department at Westminster Choir College in New Jersey, where she also conducts the Westminster Chapel Choir and Westminster Kantorei and teaches graduate and undergraduate conducting. She credits her parents for bringing music into her life at an early age, and was first inspired by her high school teacher, Mark Webb, to consider music as a career. She notes that her first college director, Duane Davis, "Changed my life, as I realized this [music] is what I really wanted to do."

Quist believes that "A successful musician has perseverance, determination, talent, and passion" and that an effective conductor combines the art of musicianship with humanity. "You must love people and the art of collective music-making. You must also know your score deeply and be a consummate musician. You must have strong ideas about the music based on study and scholarship, but also a deep passion about the people in front of you and their important role in the creative process."



Todd Stoll, Jazz Ensemble

Todd Stoll is the Vice President of Education at Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York City. He remarks, "I was blessed to have parents who loved music and a community that valued great music educators." Stoll was influenced by his junior high band director, Hap Ashenfelter, who took him to shows and let him sit next to him while he performed, and his high school orchestra conductor, John Smarelli, who taught him the value of programming great literature and demanding excellence. Tom Billing, Stoll's high school jazz band director, spoke to him about improvisation and swing. His first trumpet teacher, Marty Porter, taught him that music wasn't just about the notes, "It was deeper, and more profound than that."

According to Stoll, "A successful musician has a combination of talent, desire, work ethic, and then a pinch of something less defined; it's mercurial and spiritual. It's something less definable, such as a touch of genius perhaps?" He believes that reliability, leadership, creativity, and entrepreneurship add to this, and that "an effective conductor must be understanding of the material at hand; whether it be the score, the definitive recordings of a piece, or the makeup of the ensemble." ■



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CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS	42
ELEMENTARY, JUNIOR, AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC SCHOOLS/CAMPS ..	42
GRADUATE MUSIC SCHOOLS	45
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	46
MULTILEVEL PROGRAMS	47

CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

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Email: runnerla@appstate.edu
Website: conferences-camps.appstate.edu/adult-programs/orff-schulwerk-teacher-education-courses

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– William Rhoden



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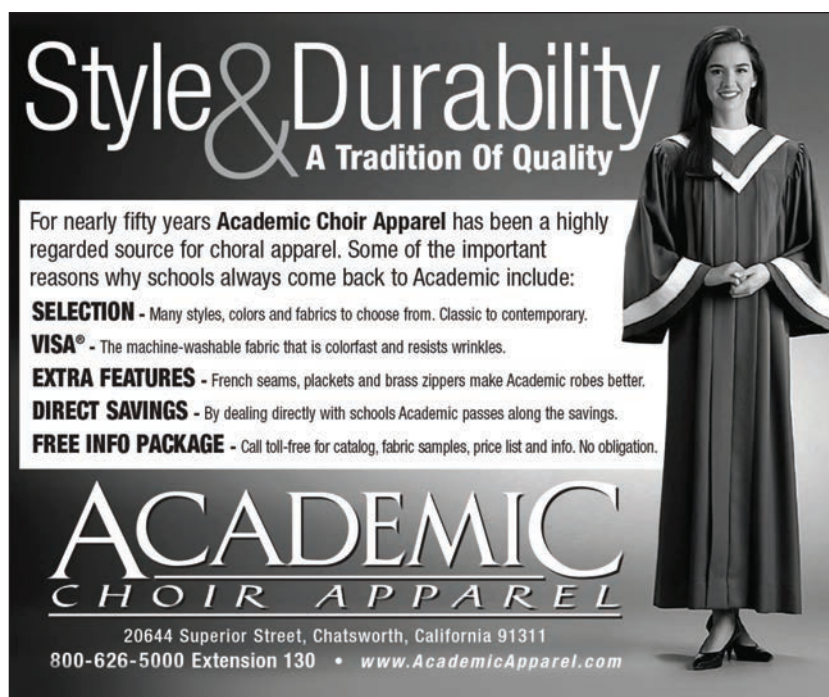
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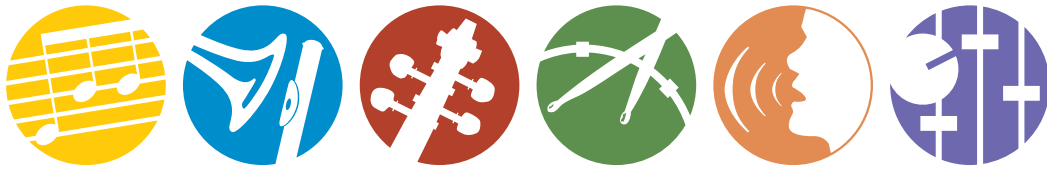
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GENERAL MUSIC

Teaching the Music of the Harlem Renaissance

As educators, we strive to find new ways of imparting knowledge to our students while also relying on the tried and true pedagogical methods of the past. Eric Dalio—who has spent a good part of the past two decades teaching middle and high school students in central Brooklyn in New York City—utilizes the shared history of the Caribbean and West Africa at the crossroads of American music. “It is essential that I am constantly challenging myself to make sure my students recognize themselves in the curriculum and find multiple pathways for engagement.”

Dalio relied on his experience in the classroom when asked to serve as a contributor for the New York Philharmonic’s “Young People’s Concert for Schools: Resource Materials for Teachers.” The over 30-page document, *An African American Legacy: The Harlem Renaissance* (available for download at nyphil.org), is divided into four units,



each with its own activities that are relatable to both musicians and nonmusicians alike.

“The Harlem Renaissance was an excellent jumping-off point for a culminating original music production project that charges them with identifying and musically communicating the unique and defining characteristics of their culture and neighborhoods.” The students first listen to *Lenox Avenue* by the American composer William Grant Still, a piece written at the height of the Harlem Renaissance. Afterwards, they listen to *Harlem* by Duke Ellington, paying particular attention to the

musical characteristics of each piece. “Both of these works are interpretations of the people, sights, and sounds that one might encounter in Harlem during this time.”

Dalio continues, “Individually and as a team, students reflect and develop research questions and select and analyze short musical themes from the repertoire. As a class, we co-create a collection of ingredient cards that illuminate the musical concepts, theory, and skills employed to compose the repertoire

samples.” Students decide how to creatively recombine those musical ingredients to create and notate an original musical idea via the cloud-based notation program *flat.io*.

“I made the shift to teaching this way over the last several years. It has been extremely rewarding to see students light up as they uncover their brilliance and get excited about exploring and creating music. As a traditionally-trained band director, it was definitely a shift in learning to release control, take risks, ask questions, and openly make mistakes in front of a class.” —Steve Holley



BRASS & WOODWINDS

Expectations for Expectorations: Teaching Spit-Valve Etiquette

Every band director must teach brass players not only the technique of emptying their spit-valves, but also the proper etiquette of this activity. NAFME member Melissa Nielsen offers some advice on how to deal with this potentially tricky subject. Nielsen is one of the band teachers at Valley Middle School in Apple Valley, Minnesota. A horn player who earned her bachelor's degree in music education from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, Nielsen began as a performance major in college. She switched her focus to education in her junior year.

Nielsen recommends that teachers approach the topic early. Ideally, this should be in private or small-group lessons as, in that context, it arises naturally. "In the very first few minutes of teaching a brass player, we have them begin with buzzing on their mouthpiece. Eventually, water comes out. We show them how to shake it out in the sink."

If private or small-group lessons are not possible, notes Nielsen, band directors should address the topic in their first rehearsal. "Set the expectations from day one. A good plan is to talk about this at the end of the first rehearsal. It should take no more than 10 minutes, so you don't lose the attention of the non-brass players in the band. You might have to repeat your instructions in subsequent rehearsals, but try to make it routine enough so that these problems don't arise in rehearsals."

Music educators must be proactive to prevent the natural tendency of some students to see the use of spit-valves as "gross." "Occasionally you see, for



Always have a trash can available.

example, trombone players collecting the liquid in water bottles. This is an opportunity for mischief." How can one prevent this? According to Nielsen, the best thing is to be straightforward. "Talk about it in a matter-of-fact way. It's not gross; it's just part of what we do as brass players. Explain how condensation works, asking students to imagine the moisture collecting on the outside of a cold glass of water on a hot day." She notes that carefully-chosen terminology can also help: "Use 'water' or 'condensation' instead of 'spit.'"

Finally, it is important to establish certain routines. For example, before and after each rehearsal, the students should empty their spit-valves into a trash can. (Always have a trash can available.) During rehearsal, students should never empty their spit-valves into any sort of cloth that will then go inside an instrument case, as mildew can result. Neither should they empty the valves onto a tile or wooden floor, as this can become a safety hazard. One ingenious solution is to use a sponge kept inside a Tupperware container. This avoids the risk of spilling the liquid. In fact, the container can safely be carried inside an instrument case. (Remind the students to regularly run the sponge and container through a dishwasher.) And, of course, everyone should make sure to empty their spit-valves before a concert.

—Michael Adelson



STRINGS

Jazz String Orchestra Fundamentals

"Classical orchestral literature is where my heart is," says Tom Bowling. A violinist, NAFME member and Chicago native, Bowling was orchestra director at Glenbard South High School in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, until his retirement in 2017. "I spent 12 years performing full-time professionally with orchestras, opera companies, and chamber ensembles across the United States and in Europe. Most of the music I teach is drawn from the great body of classical orchestral repertoire." However, Bowling also



"Playing jazz helps students develop technical skills and improve intonation." —Tom Bowling

worked on jazz with his school orchestra for over 18 years.

Why jazz for a string orchestra? Bowling offers two compelling answers. First, "To not offer a jazz component in any music program would be to deny students insight into one of the most important musical forms of the modern American experience. Second, playing jazz helps students develop technical skills and improve intonation, making them better listeners, more thoughtful musicians and, through this, they become more enthusiastic about orchestra."

How can orchestra directors start working on jazz with their students? Bowling offers some advice. First, “Join a rock, blues, or bluegrass band—any kind of band—and jam with people. Whatever level you’re at, find people and start doing it. You discover what it is you don’t know; you will see things through the eyes of a student. This is crucial, as the best teachers are those who are struggling to figure something out.” Second, assemble your materials; you can start by arranging favorite jazz standards. However, Bowling says, “Although I have done a fair amount of arranging, I can appreciate how it is not everyone’s cup of tea. It takes a lot of time. Most arrangements took multiple edits before I would ask students to perform them in public. If you are not inclined to put yourself through all that trouble, a possible approach might be to take an existing jazz band arrangement and rewrite it for strings. For example, trumpet parts can be rewritten for upper violins. Sax parts go to second violins and/or violas. Baritone sax and trombones go to cellos or basses. Rhythm section bass parts might stay the same. And you will have ready-made piano, guitar, and drum parts, saving you a lot of time. Once you have the parts entered in a notation program such as Finale or Sibelius, you can change the entire piece to a string-friendly key.”

Learning how to improvise is also important, “and with string orchestra students it probably won’t happen unless we are proactive.” Bowling developed a workbook to teach improvisation to string students, and he points out that there is a growing body of literature for string orchestra that provides opportunities for improvisation.

Incorporating jazz into a string orchestra curriculum requires work on part of the teacher to create and adapt

materials. “Not a lot of people are doing this because it’s difficult to pull off. Certainly, there is no one right way. But if you can get kids doing this, it can really take off and they can become more complete musicians.”

Tom Bowling is a fount of information about literature and resources, both musical and technical. He can be contacted at thomas.s.bowling@gmail.com.

—Michael Adelson



PERCUSSION
(Almost) Anything
but Instruments

My percussion teacher in college would always say that “percussion” is anything struck, shaken, or rattled to create a sound. This month’s Percussion Workshop column is special, in that it spotlights music featuring nontraditional and nonspecific percussion instruments. These compositions can make for



Perform *Coffee Break* using various-size paper coffee cups with lids and sleeves.

wonderful additions to a traditional concert program.

“No sticks—just hands for the Steve Reich composition *Clapping Music*,” states Phillip R. O’Banion, associate professor and director of percussion studies at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. “Reich’s duo for hand-clappers is based on the flamenco traditions of hand-clapping accompaniment. The pattern, written in 12/8, starts in unison, then changes as one

player shifts by an eighth note. This creates a continuous series of 12 rhythmic cycles, finally returning to unison to end the piece. Parts can be doubled or tripled to get more players in on the action.” O’Banion also recommends the cult classic, John Cage’s *Living Room Music*. This quartet requires no specific instruments—the sounds are largely left up to the creativity of the players themselves. You can use everything from coffee tables and furniture to empty boxes, coffee mugs, bowls, chopsticks, newspapers and magazines—literally anything you might find in a living room. Written in four short movements, the second movement consists entirely of the poetic recitation of a poem by Gertrude Stein, and the third movement involves some sort of ‘melodic’ instrument (whistling, recorder, glockenspiel, piano, etc.).”

Another fun specialty piece entitled *Coffee Break*, written by Mark Ford and Ewelina Bernacka, works great for high

school and college percussion ensembles. The instrumentation calls for five players using various-size paper coffee cups with lids and sleeves. A piece by Chris Crockarell called *Rung Again!* is scored for a quartet of ladders. The piece requires the use of four A-frame ladders, drumsticks, and paint paddles. Each of the four ladders is set up fully open, upright, and in a straight line so that each player can perform on the rungs while facing stage left. You can check out performance and tutorial videos of this piece at rowloff.com.

Composed with the idea that rhythmic patterns can be seen and heard, *Ballet for Bouncing Balls* is a creative and fun piece by New York City Opera percussionist Montgomery Hatch. Comprised of the various sound effects of balls bouncing on the floor, the piece employs five players who use a creative display of techniques including

dribbling, slapping, juggling, tossing, and bouncing. There is an innate element of theater and dance present throughout, and the rhythmic motives are relatively simple and groove oriented. The score comes with instructions of suggested staging ideas as well.

“Row-Loff Percussion also publishes several *Bucket Worx* (collections of short pieces for assorted sizes of cans or buckets),” notes O’Banion. “*Brooms Hilda* is a fun piece that uses six push brooms mimicking one of STOMP’s classic stage routines. Another great resource is Murray Houllif, who has several body percussion pieces like *Rockaway* and *Cajun Country*. Percussionists create a drum set by tapping on various parts of their body. Directors can have peace of mind knowing that no one will forget to bring their instruments to the performance! For the youngest students, pieces like

Boomwhacker City can introduce players to simple rhythms and melodic lines. If you don’t have chromatic boomwhackers, try using a ‘timbral’ setup consisting simply of various high to low sounds around the room. Send the students on a sound ‘scavenger hunt’ to find the best sounds that can be created from items and furniture in and around the classroom.”
—Steve Fidyle



“Creating an environment in which they are able to make mistakes and take risks helps students feel more comfortable with singing.” —Kelly Conforti



Tuning Up the Middle School Chorus

Pitch problems can occasionally derail an otherwise strong middle school choral ensemble, but why does this

happen? “Sometimes this is due to students having difficulty learning the pitches in a challenging piece. Other times pitch problems are due to a student’s changing voice or a student having difficulty matching pitch,” says Kelly Conforti, a NAFME member and choral director at Nyack Middle School in Nyack, New York. “Sometimes this can be attributed to the conductor when he or she focuses only on notes and rhythms and does not focus on techniques that can keep a choir in



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tune.” One of these techniques involves ensuring that the students are singing with uniform vowels. “Vowels should be tall with a lifted soft palate, and the corners of students’ mouths should be inward as opposed to spread.” She further notes that exercises in sight-singing and solfège can help, but proper breathing and posture can also keep pitch problems at bay. “Through experience, I have also learned that having students sit too long or stand too long can cause my groups to sing out of tune. We try to achieve a balance between standing, sitting, and movement breaks in my classes to avoid this.”

Another helpful technique that Conforti recommends is “a layering

technique that involves students repeating a section of music. We begin with one voice part alone. Once any incorrect pitches are fixed and the group is confident, we add the next voice part. We repeat this process until all voice parts have joined and are singing the section correctly and confidently.” She also notes, “Vocal sirens can help students find the right note when they are singing the notes in the wrong octave. Students can slide up or down to the proper note using these sirens.” On a related point, sectionals, too, can be useful. “Smaller groups of students allow the teacher to give much more personalized feedback. It also helps the teacher to establish rapport and have better relationships with students,” says Conforti. A choral director can also rehearse incorrect notes with a full section until the students are singing on pitch. “This can be achieved without calling out a specific student.”

However, it is possible that, an individual singer may be the root of the issue—or, at least, may be having significant trouble staying on pitch—but approaching and fixing this problem can prove tricky in a group, where a student may feel singled out and embarrassed. “Instead of pointing out an individual who is off pitch, nonverbal cues and proximity can fix the problem,” recommends Conforti. “The teacher can walk around the group as students are singing and give the individual a discrete signal to indicate that a student should be singing higher or lower than they are. Students in middle school are extremely self-conscious. They appreciate this method of personalized feedback because

their classmates do not notice it is happening.”

It is this sensitivity to the many changes that middle school students are experiencing at their age that can help a director to navigate a potentially sticky issue while ensuring that the choral classroom environment is welcoming and encouraging. “Creating an environment in which they are able to make mistakes and take risks helps students feel more comfortable with singing,” notes Conforti. “Helping students achieve their best sound in a positive manner helps build trust and helps students and the conductor to achieve success.” —*Susan Poliniak*

 **ALTERNATIVES**
Orff Jamming

For a bit of blues-related fun in the context of music education, how about some Orff jamming? Yes? Right, then: Let’s get started!

First off, what are the best age groups for this activity? “Third grade and up is a great time to tap into a child’s creativity. By this time, they have built on their musical vocabulary to start applying it on a more advanced level,” says Debbie Degenhardt, a general music, chorus, and orchestra teacher at Merrimac Elementary School—which is part of the Sachus School District—in Holbrook, and an adjunct professor at Five Towns College in Dix Hills, all in New York. “However, there is nothing wrong with starting earlier. It’s up to the teacher and the readiness of their students. In third grade, we’ll explore the blues in E on recorder.



**JAZZ—DEMOCRATIC.
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This issue of *Teaching Music* includes a copy of the 2018 Smithsonian Jazz Appreciation Month poster. The colorful design shows several jazz greats such as Charles Mingus and Benny Goodman in action. Additional copies of the poster are available free to music teachers from the Smithsonian Institution at bit.ly/jazzposter.

Poster from The Smithsonian Institution.



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In terms of instruments, Degenhardt uses "whatever is available in the classroom. The beauty of jazz is that there is a lot of flexibility. They say Carl Orff was a big fan of jazz for that very reason. I also allow my students to bring their band and orchestra instruments if they like. It's

a great opportunity to teach them about transposition to concert keys, and add to their note vocabulary in a fun and organic way. Some students bring in their own guitars with the interest of learning to improvise and create melodies." Just for an idea of what's possible: In her own classroom, she has a bass xylophone, bass



Students earn their chance to play with mallets after demonstrating their understanding of the lesson.

metallophone, alto xylophones, alto metallophones, soprano xylophones, soprano metallophones, glockenspiels, and unpitched percussion.

The basic gist of Degenhardt's jamming activity begins with a nursery rhyme of your choosing, and the kids speaking it out loud as quickly (and as clearly) as they can, and then in a swing rhythm. From there, they speak and play the rhythm of the words on unpitched percussion instruments, with students speaking/playing solos of their own choosing while the rest of the students snap on beats 2 and 4. You can then add in an accompaniment (you on an instrument, or a looping recording of the blues). Next, students can play their "class poem" on their pitched instruments with a set of previously-determined (by you) pitches—for example, a pentatonic scale—but beginning first on only one pitch and working others into the mix from there. Degenhardt notes in particular that she uses a blues progression accompaniment in E major, but "the solos/improvisations are played in E minor, which naturally creates 'blue notes' and creates that sound we know as the blues."

This is just the outline of this exercise, and you can come up with your own variations based on this structure. However, Degenhardt notes that, "It's important to plan carefully in advance because the enthusiasm children have, learning how to play jazz/blues, the lesson moves incredibly quickly! You have to be ready, you have to be flexible and capable of making modifications on the fly." —Susan Poliniak

Photo by Stephanie Volpe.



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Centers of Attention

What are the building blocks of the best classroom music centers?



ACCORDING TO DAWN SLOAN, a general music educator at Paulding Elementary School in Paulding, Ohio, “A classroom music center is a hands-on, student-led, standards-based set of activities or games geared toward individual or small-group assessment.” Through centers—also known as stations or activities—students can experience, discover, listen, create, and learn music while also having fun.

Eight years ago, Sloan noticed that students in the special needs preschool class located next to her classroom were successfully learning through play. “The students looked so engaged, and I wanted to make that work in my classroom.” After speaking to the preschool and kindergarten teachers about centers in their classrooms, Sloan adapted the ideas for musical learning. “The first time I attempted a music

center, I had a plan, but I noticed that some things worked better with smaller groups of kids for less time.” Through trial and error, she created an equation that worked in her music room.

Sloan recommends placing only three or four students in a group for a span of five to six minutes with eight different centers. “Get to know your students so you know what their interests are.” She often groups students by either ability or placing a more advanced student with a struggling student to assist and motivate. “You need effective classroom management with clear expectations and very defined spaces.” Depending on your classroom’s design, centers can be separated with cones, rugs, signs, numbers taped to the floor, or dot spots. Each center should

have the activity, app, game, or website already set up, and students should be informed as to what they are expected to do and how to behave. Also, since volume from some centers can be distracting to students in other centers, providing headphones whenever possible can help.

Through the years, Sloan has created her own tips and tricks for creating magnificent classroom centers. She recommends that the best centers are often connected to what the students have been learning in class, and that one skill per center is most effective. These skills can include reading rhythms, identifying pitches, or recognizing composers. She also emphasizes the importance of maintaining variety among the centers by not placing similar activities in immediate rotational order.

If one includes technology, then the next should be hands-on, and so forth. Sloan also suggests introducing one new center at a time: If there are eight centers, then there should be seven concepts that are familiar to students. More than one new center does not allow for the teacher to maneuver through the classroom efficiently.

Some of the most popular centers that Sloan has used or created include a music version of “Busted” and those that utilize boom-whackers, xylophones, or pianos. “The more hands-on the center is and the more student-led, then the more successful the students will be.” ■

“Get to know your students so you know what their interests are.”

secondary

BY MICHAEL ADELSON

Surviving High School Piano Class

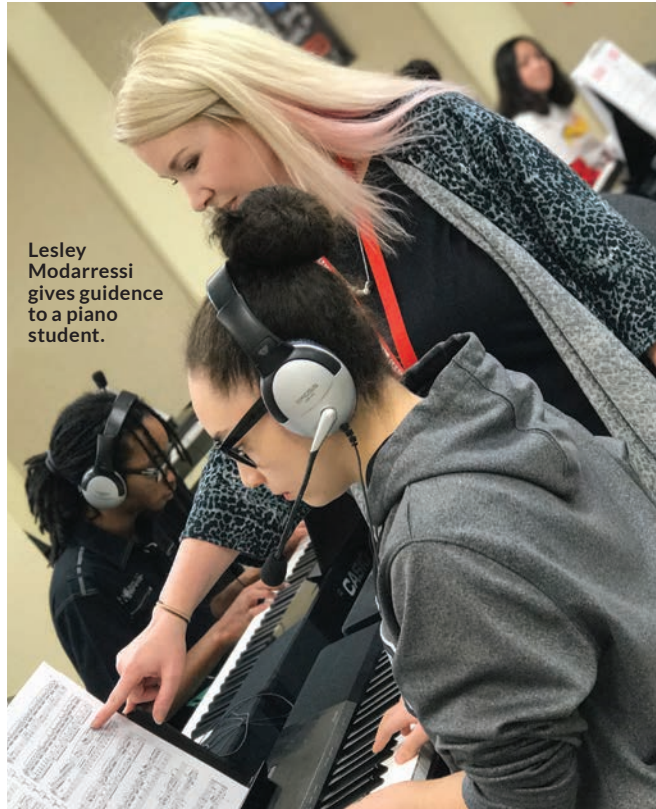
Method choice and classroom setup can help to ensure success.

TEACHING PIANO CLASS

presents its own particular challenges that differ from private piano lessons. According to Lesley Modarressi, the main issue is that if everything is going well, there will be a lot of differentiation among students in terms of skill levels as well as the pace and style of learning. In a piano class, one size does not fit all. Modarressi is now in her second year of teaching piano at North Side High School in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Although piano class students will become highly differentiated, Modarressi recommends starting everyone in the same place: with Alfred Music Publishing's *Adult All-In-One Course*. "It is an excellent book for starting out, even for students who are absolute beginners."

From there, "Students can quickly branch out when ready." She also points out that the book "has excellent diagrams to facilitate independent learning when the instructor is working with other students." In addition, she recommends the Keith Snell *Piano Repertoire* books for their variety and the fact that the books are leveled for students of varying abilities—a great help in a class in which



Lesley Modarressi gives guidance to a piano student.

"With the way my program is set up, I feel like I have a greater opportunity to make genuine connections with students."

students work at their own pace.

The physical setup of the classroom also makes a difference. In Modarressi's class there is a Casio Privia keyboard for each student, as well as headphones that allow them to work independently. She herself has a Yamaha keyboard at the front of the class. All of the keyboards are connected to a hub, and she can tune in to listen to any one of them. "This greatly facilitates differen-

tiated learning."

The students each work at their own pace, and Modarressi listens to them in turn, providing guidance where necessary via a microphone that allows her to address individual students through their headphones. She does move around the class, but often she will have a student come up to work at her keyboard. "There is more space there," she says. "and they have to play out loud for others, which many are reluctant to do."

Playing for others is important, of course, and in Modarressi's class it constitutes a significant part of assessment. "They have playing tests once a week. We also do formative assessment using small, low-stakes assignments such as practice worksheets. At the end of the semester their final exam is a recital in the school auditorium, for an audience of families and invited friends."

She notes, "With the way my program is set up, I feel like I have a greater opportunity to make genuine connections with students. Having those relationships really helps with motivation."

Lesley Modarressi can be contacted at Lesley.Modarressi@Fwcs.K12.In.Us. ■

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SESSION 1 JULY 2-6

(no classes July 4)

8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Body Mapping for Music Educators
Kay Hooper

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Music Educators
Rogério Boccato

Blending Pedagogy: Incorporating
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Vanessa Bond

SESSION 2 JULY 9-13

8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Hartt School Guitar Festival
*Christopher Ladd,
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Concert Percussion for
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Flute, Clarinet, and
Saxophone Refresher
8 a.m.-noon (2 Credit, Half-day)
Andrew Studenski

Double Reeds Refresher
1-5 p.m. (2 Credit, Half-day)
Scott Switzer

SESSION 3 JULY 16-20

8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Guitar Basics for the
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SESSION 4 JULY 23-27

8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Rehearsal Techniques and
Score Preparation
Glen Adsit, Edward Cumming

String Refresher—Cello Technique
1-5 p.m. (2 Credit, Half-day)
Carlynn Savot

Best Practices in
Upper Strings Teaching
8 a.m.-noon (2 Credit, Half-day)
Winifred Crock

A General Music
Ukulele Curriculum
Ken Trapp

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SESSIONS 4-5 JULY 23-AUG. 3

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SESSION 5 JULY 30-AUG. 3

8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Instrumental Conducting Clinic
Glen Adsit, Edward Cumming

Instrumental Music Literacy
Nate Strick

School String Fleet Maintenance
for Music Teachers
Glen Grigel

Diverse Learners in the
Music Classroom
Heather Wagner

Low Brass Refresher
1-5 p.m. (2 Credit, Half-day)
Haim Avitsur

High Brass Refresher
8 a.m.-noon (2 Credit, Half-day)
Cathryn Cummings

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The Big Asks

What questions should you raise in your first job interviews?

BASIC ADVICE for job interviews: Get there early, bring extra résumés, and be prepared to ask your own questions. That seems rudimentary, but what questions should you ask, and when in the interview process should you ask them? NAFME member Paul K. Fox, retired member coordinator for the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association and retired performing arts curriculum leader at the Upper St. Clair school district in Pennsylvania, advises that most hiring processes involve several interviews, and there are appropriate questions for each step.

Frequently, the first interview is a general screening: An administrator or human resources director meets with you to verify the details of your résumé. Here, Fox suggests that questions about professional development opportunities wouldn't go awry here: "As a curriculum leader, if I thought the candidate wasn't interested in professional development, they wouldn't advance in the interview process."

The meat of the process is the second interview, where often you'll meet with a committee that may consist of the principal, the department chair, and other teachers. At this stage, you may also be asked to demonstrate teaching or musical ability. Fox suggests that this is a good time to ask more specific questions: How are music classes scheduled? Do you see your students every day? Are students pulled out of other classes for instrumental lessons or



Paul K. Fox and student musicians

does music follow a fixed or rotating schedule or assigned time during lunch periods, or is it held before or after school? Questions about the music student body are also a good choice here: What percentage of students are involved in music? How many own their instruments and take private lessons? Fox says that you can show yourself to be a team player by asking about opportunities to assist with extracurricular activities.

You can set yourself above the other candidates by expressing interest in marching band, the school musical, and the curriculum-review process. "However, during the entire interview, be honest and say what you mean," cautions Fox. "If you agree to volunteer to serve in these programs, the principal will expect you to follow through."

There may be a final interview with a superintendent to decide among the

finalists for the position. If you left out any questions at the second interview, this is your final opportunity to get them in. One of Fox's favorite questions to hear from a candidate is: "How many periods are there in the school day?" It shows cognizance of the challenge to get music into the curriculum.

Fox advises against asking about salary and benefits until after you have received an offer. "I have been at interviews where it was an immediate turn-off," he recalls. He also suggests avoiding questions about duties such as cafeteria, hall, and/or bus. "Ask questions that demonstrate you are competent, fully engaged, done your homework, and really want the job," Fox summarizes. Paraphrasing *The Music Man*, he reminds all applicants that "you gotta know the territory." Do your research, prepare long in advance, and the work will pay off—but don't say "pay off" in your interview. ■

"Be honest and say what you mean."

2018 SUMMER WORKSHOPS

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June 24-29

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Warrenton, VA

July 16-20

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Elizabethtown, PA

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Northport (L.I.), NY

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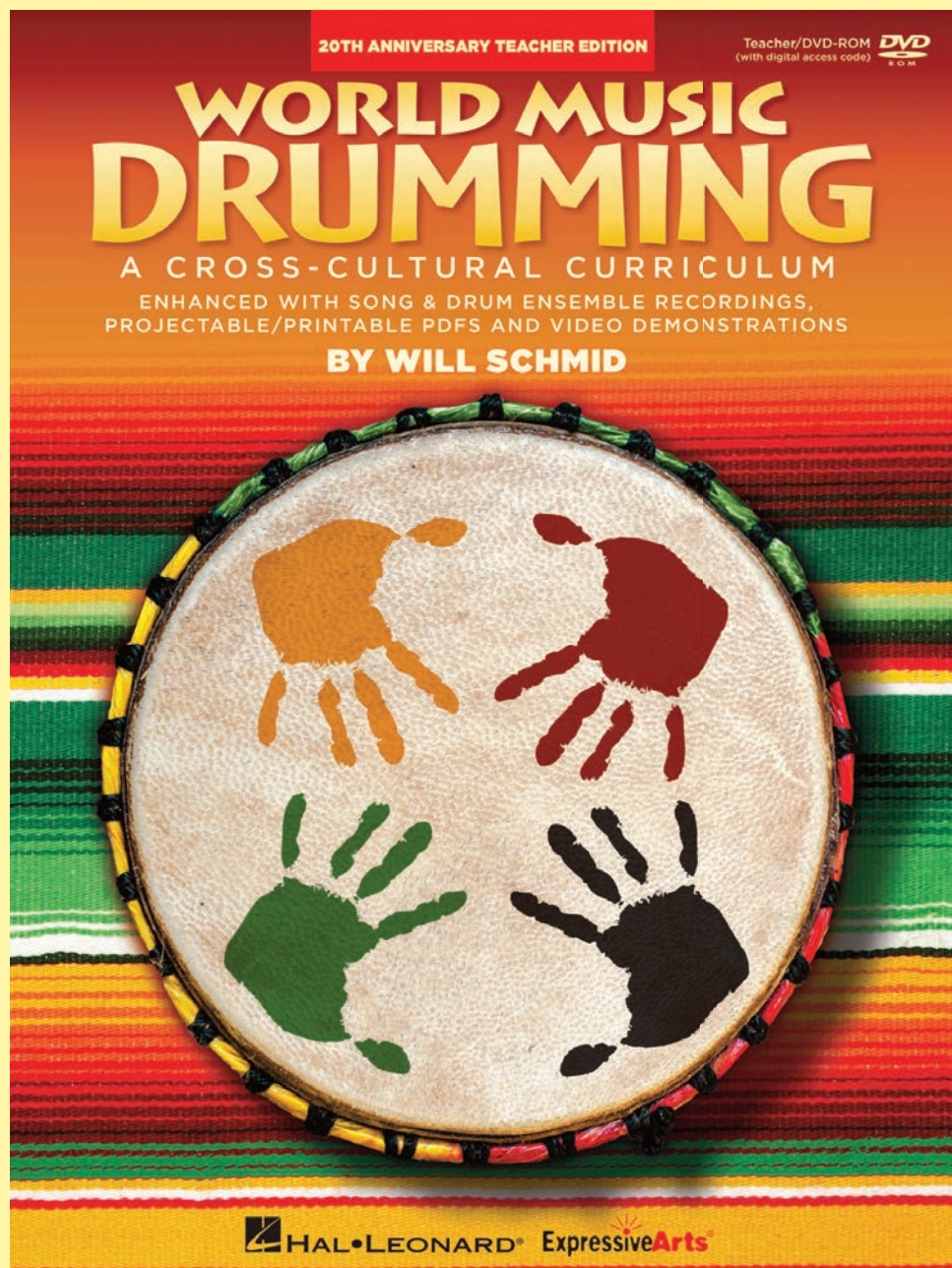
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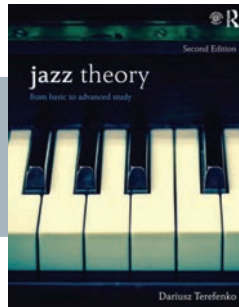
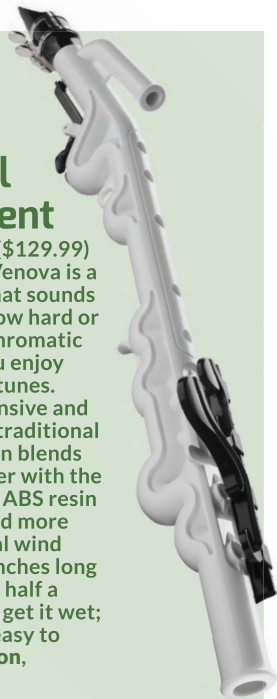
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Yamaha YVS-100 Venova Casual Wind Instrument

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BOOKS ►

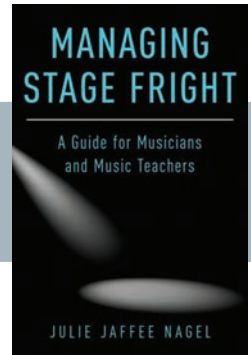
Jazz Theory: From Basic to Advanced Study, 2nd Edition

By Dariusz Terefenko (2017, 432 pgs., hardcover \$170.00, paperback \$74.95, eBook \$67.46) This comprehensive textbook is for those with no previous study in jazz, as well as those in advanced theory courses. Written to bridge theory and practice, it provides a theoretical foundation from music fundamentals to post-tonal theory, while integrating ear training, keyboard skills, and improvisation. Included are play-along audio tracks on a companion website, as well as a workbook, ear-training exercises, and an audio compilation of the musical examples featured in the book. **Routledge Taylor & Francis Group,** routledge.com



Mixing Audio: Concepts, Practices, and Tools, 3rd Edition

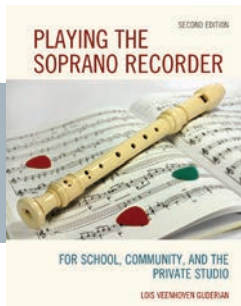
By Roey Izhaki (2017, 570 pgs., hardcover \$150.00, paperback \$64.95, eBook \$58.46) This book covers the entire mixing process, from fundamental concepts to advanced techniques. It teaches the importance of a mixing vision and how to craft and evaluate your mix, and describes the theory and tools used, and how these are put into practice. The companion website features over 2,000 audio samples as well as Pro Tools/Multitrack Audio Sessions, and this new edition includes a chapter that provides a cognitive/psychological overview of aspects related to and affecting mixing engineers. **Focal Press/Routledge Taylor & Francis Group,** routledge.com



Managing Stage Fright:

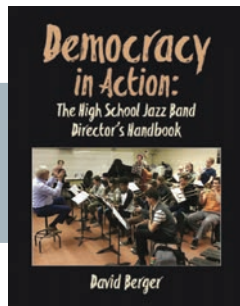
A Guide for
Musicians and
Music Teachers

By Julie Jaffee Nagel (2017, 232 pgs., hardcover \$74.00, paperback \$19.95, eBook price varies) Nagel unravels the mysteries of stage fright, taking the reader on an intensive backstage tour of the anxious performer's emotions to explain why stage fright happens and what performers can do to increase their comfort in the glare of the spotlight. Shedding new light on how the performer's emotional life is connected to every other facet of their life, the book encourages a deeper understanding of anxiety when performing. **Oxford University Press,** oup.com



Playing the Soprano Recorder: For School, Community, and the Private Studio, 2nd Edition

By Lois Veenhoven Guderian (2017, 352 pgs., spiral-bound \$40.00, eBook \$38.00) Written for general music classes, group and private instruction, and self-learners, this text is a sequential approach to learning Western music notation and soprano recorder technique. In addition to a practice/performance website, written piano accompaniments for all 76 pieces are included, many with optional, additional instrumental parts. There are many possibilities for interdisciplinary education and links to other areas within music. **NAfME/Rowman & Littlefield**, rowman.com



Democracy in Action: The High School Jazz Band Director's Handbook

By David Berger (2016, 152 pgs., paperback \$49.95) *Democracy in Action* has been designed to serve all high school band directors regardless of experience and expertise. The author, who travels to high schools around the country doing clinics with jazz bands, notes that "In this book I am going to tell you exactly my procedure and how to do it. At first some of these things I say and do may sound strange or even counterintuitive, but I have used them hundreds, maybe even thousands of times, and they work for me." **Such Sweet Thunder, Inc.**, suchsweetthundermusic.com



Songwriting: Strategies for Musical Self-Expression and Creativity

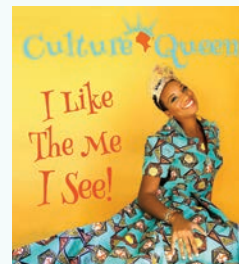
By Christian V. Hauser, Daniel R. Tomal, and Rekha S. Rajan (2017, 200 pgs., hardcover \$70.00, paperback \$35.00, eBook \$33.00) This book includes instruction on the core competencies of songwriting, elements of music, and lyrics for those who work in a variety of musical genres, including blues, country, hip hop, gospel, punk, classical, alternative, jingles, and rock. Features include writing lyrics, crafting musical compositions, musical styles, getting a contract, sustaining a career, publishers and agents, recording, and how to survive in the music industry. **NAfME/Rowman & Littlefield**, rowman.com



AUDIO RECORDINGS ►

Laurie Berkner: The Dance Remixes

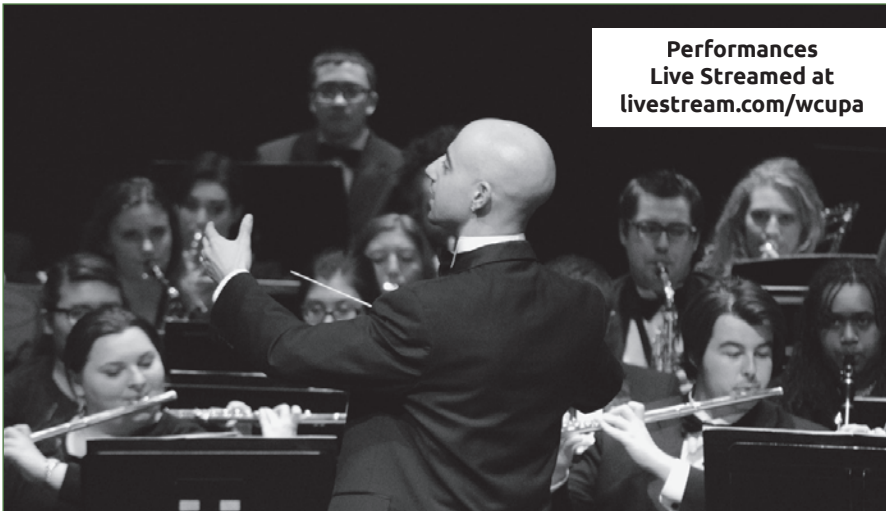
By Laurie Berkner (2017, 14 tracks, CD \$12.98, digital download \$9.99) This album includes Laurie Berkner's most beloved songs for kids, remixed into electronic dance songs. Older kids will recognize the tunes, including "Victor Vito" and "Bumblebee (Buzz Buzz)," while preschoolers can boogie to the beats. The album features a variety of EDM styles, such as the Latin-flavored "I'm Gonna Catch You." "The Cat Came Back" even gets an EDM makeover, and classic Laurie Berkner songs are included, bringing instant nostalgia to older listeners and introducing the songs to a new generation. **Two Tomatoes Records, LLC**, laurieberkner.com



I Like the Me I See

By Culture Queen (2016, 14 tracks, CD \$12.00) Culture Queen's debut album hits all the right notes for families and educators bringing up confident, culturally-aware, and curious children while delivering majestic affirmations while dancing across a fusion of rich calypso, afrobeat, jazz, and hip hop rhythms. Songs include the catchy "Culture Kingdom Theme," the soul-stirring "I'm A Tower of Royal Power," and the shimmy-worthy "Super Shaker Song." Jessica "Culture Queen" Smith helps children connect with their culture through self-affirming songs, storytelling, and body-positive dance. **Culture Kingdom Kids, LLC**, culturekingdomkids.com

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By Wenger Corporation (Price varies)

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APPS ►

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By Traktion Corporation (Price varies depending on version and upgrade path.) This major new release—the ninth generation of Waveform—includes a compelling range of new features, add-ons, and additional content to improve workflow and inspire creativity. These include a library of exclusive 24-track drum loop-construction kits. The expanded capabilities of the popular MIDI pattern generator include a global chord track, a custom plug-in faceplate designer, macro parameters, and track loops/presets. **Traktion Corporation**, traktion.com



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brava!

ELLA FITZGERALD

IN THIS ISSUE, we're deviating from our usual practice of speaking with a celebrity musician about their experiences and views on music education to cover the close of an important milestone during this Jazz Education Month. April 2018 marks the wrapping-up of a certain yearlong celebration: the 100th birthday of the undisputed queen of vocal jazz, the late Ella Fitzgerald. I've been a big fan of the First Lady of Song for many years, and love that she and I have a tiny connection: We share an April 25th birthday.

Ella was born in 1917 in Newport News, Virginia, from which she moved with her mother to Yonkers, New York. She was known as a youngster who enjoyed playing baseball with the neighborhood children in addition to dancing and singing—and, to help supplement the family income, worked as a runner for local gamblers, ferrying bets and money back and forth.

After her mother died in 1932—and not very long after, her stepfather as well—Ella hit a rough patch. Her grades fell, she started skipping school, and eventually she landed in enough trouble with the law to be sent to reform school—from which she made an escape. But just two years after these personal tragedies, she happened upon the inadvertent break that would change the course of her life.

In 1934, Ella was given the opportunity to perform in the weekly Amateur Night held at Harlem's Apollo Theater.

Originally planning to dance, she made a last-minute decision to sing the Hoagy Carmichael song "Judy"—and

that was that. The notoriously tough audience at the Apollo loved her. She was on her path.

It didn't hurt that saxophonist—and, later, lifelong friend and collaborator—Benny Carter was in the band that night, as he was able to introduce her to individuals in the music industry who could help her career. Eventually, she crossed paths with the bandleader and drummer Chick Webb and

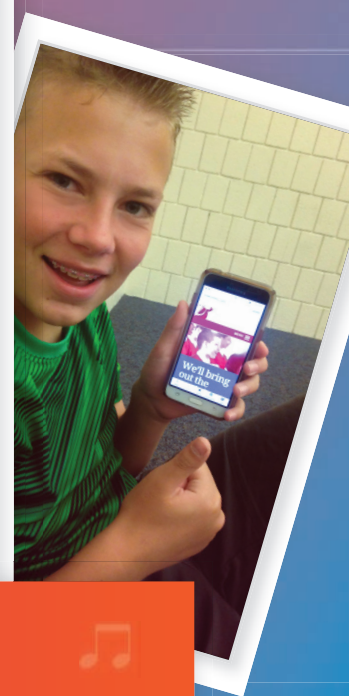
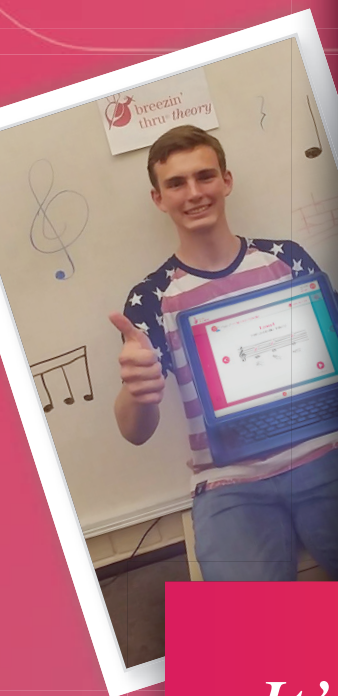
became the singer for his orchestra.

The year 1936 saw Ella's first foray into recording, "Love and Kisses." Two years later, she had her first huge hit in "A-Tisket, A-Tasket" (by the way, check out the 1942 Abbott and Costello film *Ride 'Em Cowboy* for an adorable version of this song—you can find the clip on tcm.com). From here on, thanks to this hit that sold over a million copies and sat on the pop charts for 17 weeks, she was famous.

In 1939, Chick Webb passed away and Ella took the helm of the orchestra, rechristened "Ella Fitzgerald and Her Famous Band." More music and a failed marriage followed until 1946 when she met bassist Ray Brown while they were both on tour with Dizzy Gillespie. Through Ray, she came to the greater attention of producer and manager Norman Granz, with whom she signed. Thanks to Granz, she joined the "Jazz at the Philharmonic" tour, recorded several albums with Louis Armstrong, and began working on her "Songbook" series. These albums—each devoted to the music of a different songwriter or songwriting team—are perhaps her best-known recordings, particularly outside of the realm of jazz fandom. (My personal favorite? *Ella Fitzgerald Sings the Rodgers and Hart Song Book*, although "Reaching for the Moon" on *Ella Fitzgerald Sings the Irving Berlin Songbook* also holds a special place in my heart.)

Many more recordings, television appearances, tours, club engagements, honors, and awards followed, including a Kennedy Center Honor, a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, the National Medal of Arts, and an induction into the *DownBeat* Hall of Fame. Eventually, ill health slowed and then stopped her touring and recording schedule, and Ella retired to spend time with her adopted son, Ray, Jr., and her granddaughter, Alice. She passed away at home in California on June 15, 1996.





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