



**National Association
for Music Education**

Four Questions for Scott Sheehan, Candidate for 2020-2022 NAfME National President-Elect

1. Describe the State and Division leadership experiences you have had, including significant accomplishments, that qualify you to be National President.

I am very fortunate to have had many opportunities to serve music education in several capacities. I have been active in the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) for over 20 years, highlighted by serving as State President from 2010-2012. Through my service with PMEA, I became more involved with MENC, now NAfME, and served as the Eastern Division President from 2015 – 2017. These leadership experiences have allowed me to grow in many ways and greatly broadened my capacity to develop strong communication skills and understand the value of diverse perspectives. I have become a passionate advocate for music education for all children and I am extremely committed to finding solutions to the varied challenges that are faced by our associations.

Prior to serving as PMEA State President, I served on the PMEA State Board as the District 4 President for two years and as Curriculum & Instruction Chair for one year. I also served on the Strategic Planning Committee in 2008. Additionally, I was a member of the inaugural PMEA Mentoring Team which serves novice teachers and I worked alongside the Mentor Chair to train new mentors. As Conference Chair for the Annual PMEA State In-Service Conferences in both 2009 and 2010, I oversaw the selection of sessions and performing groups, worked closely with office staff to develop the conference schedule, and presided over many aspects of the conferences.

During the time I served as State President, I oversaw several initiatives that improved PMEA and music education for students in Pennsylvania. I continued an initiative to implement a major change in PMEA's governance structure to create councils and improve the effectiveness of the state board. I also implemented the first "Music Education Advocacy Day" at the Pennsylvania State Capitol modeled after the NAfME Hill Day, and I established the Outstanding Young Music Educator Award. In addition, I convened and facilitated the inaugural meeting of the Pennsylvania Arts Education Advocacy Summit and worked closely with the Pennsylvania Educational Policy Leadership Center on a project regarding arts education in Pennsylvania.

In the time since serving as State President, I continue to be very involved with PMEA in a variety of ways. Currently I serve on the Past State Officers Council, and since 2013 I coordinate the PMEA Leadership Academy program by working with other state leaders to identify and recruit a network of participants who complete four learning modules throughout the year. Our goal is to empower young leaders to become more involved with PMEA and NAfME. I also serve as the coordinator for the PMEA Model Curriculum Framework (MCF) which was developed in 2015 in collaboration with Sharon Potter, Past PMEA State Professional Development Chair, to link the

Pennsylvania Standards and competencies with the 2014 National Music Standards in five different strands. I assisted with the development of MCF templates for lesson plans, curriculum mapping, curriculum evaluation, program evaluation, and instruction and assessment strategies. I regularly present MCF-related professional development workshops and corresponding training modules for presenters. Additionally, I was the facilitator for the PMEA Strategic Planning process in 2014 and 2017. In this capacity I coordinated all logistics and facilitated the committee's work to develop the association's mission, vision, values, strategic directions, and action plans. I also researched environmental impacts on music education in Pennsylvania to inform the committee's work. Most recently, I am serving on the PMEA Festival Task Force to determine the future of the festival system, as well as to examine existing policies and procedures through the lens of equity and access.

In addition to serving at the state level, I have had the opportunity to serve NAFME at the Division level. I am currently finishing a six-year term as Eastern Division President, President-Elect, and Immediate Past-President. During this time, I represented 13 music education associations and attended numerous conferences, meetings, and workshops throughout our Division. I had the pleasure of presiding over the Eastern Division Board and serving on committees that examined the logistics of the Eastern Conference and Honors Ensembles. Throughout this time, I have been greatly impressed by the countless outstanding music education opportunities that exist in every state, and perhaps more importantly, I have had the pleasure to meet hundreds, if not thousands, of passionate, driven, and skilled music educators. It has truly been a blessing to network and collaborate with so many amazing people!

At the National level I have also served in many roles. I have represented the Eastern Division on the National Executive Board (NEB), and served on the National Executive Committee, the Strategic Planning Committee, the Finance/Audit Committee, and served as the NEB liaison for the National Band Council.

Perhaps my most impactful contributions to NAFME have come through my work with the All-National Honors Ensembles program. I have worked diligently with our NAFME staff to ensure the program meets the expectations set forth by the NEB and provides a truly life-changing musical experience for the student participants. In the past four years, we have enhanced marketing and communication efforts, and consequently application rates have increased; we have added two new ensembles (Guitar and Modern Band) in addition to the traditional band, choir, orchestra and jazz ensembles; we have ensured that the conductors are using a standards-based approach to their instructional processes; we have added a parent track, director's academies, and a college fair; and we have worked to ensure that the principles of diversity, inclusion, access, and equity are at the forefront of our decision making. Although there is more work to be done, the All-National Honors Ensembles have become a true showcase for outstanding music making in a variety of styles, genres, and settings.

2. Describe other leadership experiences you have had, including significant accomplishments, that qualify you to be National President.

As a music educator and Music Department Chair for the Hollidaysburg Area School District, I have many opportunities to grow as an educator and leader. My primary responsibilities as Director of Bands include preparing, instructing, rehearsing, and assessing the Senior High Symphonic Wind Ensemble, Concert Band, Marching Band, and Jazz Bands; teaching instrumental lessons; and coaching chamber ensembles. I also teach Introduction to Guitar, "Rock, Rap, & Revolution!", Music Theory I, and AP Music Theory. I prepare students for County, District, Region, and All-State Festivals, as well as students who qualify for All-National, All-East, and Carnegie Hall Honors Ensembles. I design the show for our marching band which includes drill and music for performances, community parades and events, and I rehearse and conduct the student pit orchestra for our high school musicals.

I am committed to ensuring our students have creative and meaningful experiences as part of their high school music education and I've worked to expand the reach of our music program for all students. In the past four years we have added two levels of Guitar classes at the high school and an elective course called "Rock, Rap, and Revolution!". We have commissioned and premiered works for Concert Band and Jazz Band with several composers (see commissioned works list on my CV). Most recently, in 2018 we premiered a seven-movement suite called "Small Town, Big Dreams" by Rick Hirsch that captured the culture and history of our community and featured the Jazz Band, Select Choir, Chamber String Ensemble, and Jazz Quartet. Our Jazz Band has received numerous Superior Ratings at adjudication festivals and several students have been recognized as outstanding soloists. We have an ongoing partnership with Penn State University where the Hollidaysburg Wind Ensemble participates in a sight-reading clinic and side-by-side rehearsal with the PSU Symphonic Wind Ensemble. Through the support of our district foundation and music parents association we have been able to collaborate with numerous guest artists including: Brian Balmages, Jack Stamp, Rick Hirsch, "The President's Own" Marine Band, Navy Commodores & Concert Band, Donna Wissinger, Juilliard Jazz Orchestra, Dallas Brass, Will Schmid, Nick Page, and various collegiate ensembles and faculty. I also oversee the logistics for our music department trip to Walt Disney World every three years.

As Music Department Chair, I oversee curriculum development, budgeting, scheduling, and the coordination of many activities for the K-12 music program. I am also responsible for preparing interview materials and hiring new music faculty. During my tenure as Department Chair, Hollidaysburg has been recognized as "Best Community for Music Education" by the NAMM Foundation consistently since 2012. Currently, we are in the process of developing more diverse ensemble experiences for students in the elementary and Junior High levels, and hope to expand and integrate more opportunities for music technology at all levels.

I have developed a wide-range of administrative skills through my service to several district-level committees and initiatives that extend beyond music education. I work with other department chairs and administrators to coordinate district-wide initiatives and programs as a member of the Faculty Advisory Committee. I have assisted with the development of a comprehensive, district-wide vision and direction as a member of the Strategic Planning Committee. As a member of our School Improvement/Data Team, we annually analyze testing data and develop appropriate supports for faculty and students. Service on the Student Assistance Program Team provides me opportunities to work with other faculty and administrators to identify At-Risk students and

coordinate appropriate supports, and my membership on the Professional Development Committee keeps me involved with planning and coordination of professional development for the music faculty and the school district. Additionally, I serve on the Restore the Roar Committee to plan fundraising efforts to maintain and update district facilities.

Outside of my work at Hollidaysburg, PMEA and NAFME, I have been serving as a consultant for strategic planning with various music education associations. I coordinate all logistics and facilitate the committee's work to develop the association's mission, vision, values, strategic directions, action plans, and metric systems. I research environmental impact on music education in order to inform the committee's work and I coordinate with sub-committees and state leaders to survey both members and non-members to establish needs and priorities for the future. All of this is done with sensitivity to cultural responsiveness and with attention to diversity, inclusion, equity, and access.

I have always been mindful of the future of our profession and value the preparatory experiences of the next generation of music educators. I have been a cooperating teacher and mentor to numerous student teachers from Penn State University and I am a frequent guest lecturer for student teacher seminars at Penn State University, Clarion University, Messiah College, and Slippery Rock University. I truly enjoy sharing my experiences with college music education majors and learning from them as well.

As a college student myself, I had the honor of serving as the first President and Founding Father of the Omicron Mu chapter of Phi Mu Alpha at Clarion University. I learned many valuable leadership lessons during that process as an undergraduate student working with other musicians toward this goal. We went through all of the requirements to become a colony, worked with various university offices, and ultimately established a new fraternity that served the entire music department with various service projects. This was a very rewarding experience that I will never forget.

I also serve on my church's Session, which is the ruling board of elders that oversees all aspects of our church's work and ministry. This service keeps me grounded in my life outside of my job and allows me to learn from others who also provide leadership in both our church and community. We engage in many service and mission projects and provide assistance to elderly and disabled members of the community.

3. Please share other information concerning yourself that qualifies you to be National President. This might include, but is not limited to, your training (including degrees and granting institutions), services rendered, experiences, publications, recognitions and awards, and personal strengths.

Much of the information requested in this section can be found on my Curriculum Vitae and I encourage the committee to review that document found with my materials. I have made numerous presentations at workshops and conferences at the local, state, division, and national levels and have written several articles on leadership, advocacy, curriculum development, and strategic planning. I hold Bachelor's Degrees in Music Education and Music Marketing from Clarion University of Pennsylvania and a Master's Degree in Music Education from The Pennsylvania State University.

I am strong believer in teamwork, community, and camaraderie, and I have been blessed with amazing students and a great deal of support for the Hollidaysburg music program. I was named Teacher of the Year in 2014 by the Hollidaysburg Area School District, was inducted into Phi Beta Mu International Bandmasters Fraternity in 2015 and received the Outstanding Music Educator Award from Penn State University in 2017. Most recently, I was selected as a Finalist for the 2019 GRAMMY Music Educator Award. Although I feel extremely honored to have received recognition for my service and teaching, I have always felt that the accolades really recognize the students and our program.

My leadership style is one of service, collaboration, reflection, and action. I value the diverse opinions of others and carefully consider all options and outcomes before making decisions. Having sat through many meetings where rich discussion produced good ideas with few results, I strive to always follow through with what is asked of me or committees and organizations for which I serve. I always feel there is more work to be done and time must be used wisely and effectively. I am aware there are many expectations placed on leaders, and I look forward to facing challenges to ensure issues are resolved efficiently and with care.

Over the past few years I have been on a personal leadership journey. This was a journey that I did not expect to take, and I have come to realize that I may never reach the destination; frankly I hope I never do. During my service on the National Executive Board, NAFME faced many challenges in the areas of diversity, equity, access and inclusion. There were many difficult decisions to be made and tough conversations about what is truly best for our members, the future of the association, and the thousands, possibly millions of children who do not have access to a similar meaningful music education that my own students do.

Conversations about equity and access in music education have caused me to feel both empowered and reflective about my opportunities to serve and lead in various capacities. I feel empowered because I have found myself in positions to make a difference. I want to understand more about the disparities that exist; to help remove barriers to every child having a culturally relevant, sequential, standards-based music education. I feel reflective as I have come to realize that not everyone may want, and more importantly may not need, a music education steeped in the tradition of a high-performing wind ensemble, orchestra, or select choir; there are many types of music and ways to make music that should be valued and celebrated. I have begun to face my own biases and prejudices, and realize the privileges afforded me because I am a straight white male music educator who also teaches high school band. I have taken these reflections as opportunities to challenge myself to learn more and do more.

Since this leadership journey began, I spent many hours reading and having discussions about culturally responsive leadership. I learned how microaggressions create challenges for students, teachers, and leaders, and I look for ways to be supportive, empathetic, and transparent. I have tried to be more patient, listen more carefully, and seek more advice. As I said before, there is always more to do, and it takes hard work, perseverance, and a willingness to walk in some else's shoes. I'm thankful for the opportunities to discover more about myself, and I look forward to the discoveries future opportunities may bring.

Overall, these experiences have helped me better understand the diverse needs of music educators across the country. I have also gained a broader perspective about the many challenges that music educators face in many different settings. I will continue working to support NAFME's initiatives of becoming a more reflective and inclusive association and I will offer strong leadership toward removing barriers that hinder meaningful musical opportunities for teachers and students. I will also strive to build bridges among the many stakeholders who support music education with the goal of creating a powerful, unified voice.

4. If elected, what would be your vision for music education and NAFME and your strategies for realizing that vision?

My vision for music education is simple. I look forward to the day when all children study music in every school, in every grade, and in every culture regardless of where they live, their family's income, their personal identity, or the color of their skin. I envision the day where music is held in the same regard as STEM and other tested subjects. I foresee a future where every child can achieve their creative, musical potential and share their voice and place in society through their artistic contributions. When this vision is realized, our country will see a more creative and musically literate society where all children have access to a music education that is culturally relevant, sequential and standards-based, and sustainable.

Many years ago, President John F. Kennedy gave an address at Amherst College where he said, "I look forward to an America which will reward achievement in the arts as we reward achievement in business or statecraft. I look forward to an America which will steadily raise the standards of artistic accomplishment and which will steadily enlarge cultural opportunities for all of our citizens. And I look forward to an America which commands respect throughout the world not only for its strength but for its civilization as well." Although society has drastically changed since this speech was made, there are many places in our country where music education looks very similar to what did in the 1960's. While it is important that we embrace and support a traditional music education focused on large band, choir, and orchestra ensembles, we must also provide educational opportunities in a wide variety of styles, genres, and contexts. For me this is a "Yes-And" proposition, not an "Either-Or" decision. Schools must recognize that there are many unique forms of music and ways to make music, and each one has value because of the culture and intent from which it was created. In order to achieve the America that President Kennedy proposed, we must continue to advocate, not just to ensure everyone has access to music education in school, but also to ensure that education represents authentic, relevant, and appropriate opportunities for all children to grow musically.

The National Association for Music Education plays a key role in building the future and I believe there are three main areas for focus: Leadership, Relevance, and Relationships. NAFME, an association representing thousands of music educators, must provide leadership in the form of vision, direction, and action in ensuring that no child is deprived of a well-rounded education as outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act. We must work in tandem with educational systems to develop music programs that are appropriate, relevant, and authentic. Our work must continue to be focused on providing music education to all children by learning what barriers to music education may exist in communities, and then working with schools to develop an appropriate course of action. We must be a model and a resource to provide direction, guidance, and support to school systems to help them meet, or exceed, the Opportunity to Learn Standards. NAFME must be a voice where there is no voice; create opportunities where opportunities are lacking; and advocate for all children and all music.

The demographics of schools across the country are shifting, and the teaching profession, especially in music, does not always reflect the students in our classrooms. NAFME must provide the leadership to encourage people of all backgrounds to engage in music education in order to foster a more diverse population of future music educators and leaders. We must recognize the ways in which people are marginalized and be sure they have the opportunity to further their music education. We must work with higher education institutions to ensure systemic barriers are not preventing certain populations of people from being accepted into music education programs. Connie McKoy, SMTE Immediate Past Chair and Professor of Music Education at the University of North Carolina Greensboro, said that it all comes down to each one of us reaching someone else. NAFME must reach out to teachers, parents, administrators, legislators, students and stakeholders loud and clear, so that our message about the difference a music education makes resonates and ensure that those who hear our message are compelled to take action.

NAfME must be relevant, first to its members and potential members and their students, and then to the arts communities, education communities, and society as a whole. We need to make certain that all who support music education know what NAFME values, not only by what they read in a strategic plan, but rather by where we put our time, money, and resources. The goal of developing a more creative and musically literate society must be at the forefront of NAFME's programs and initiatives. The 2014 Standards provide a framework toward achieving music literacy, but there is much work to be done to realize a vision of a sustainable music education for all children. Our programs and initiatives need to serve as a model and showcase the value of music education for all children regardless of where they live. Whether children attend school in inner-city Philadelphia, suburban Chicago, or rural North Dakota, NAFME must help to prioritize the importance of a relevant, authentic, and appropriate music education.

Furthermore, our association must build upon the innovative work being done by the NAFME Councils and Societies to learn how music has inherent value and meaning in different cultural settings. We need to learn from the research and work that is being done by our specialized focus groups (SRIGs and ASPAs) to inform decisions and the development of new projects. We need to be nimble in our decision making and place our energy toward collaboration and open communication. In short, we must seek to understand before trying to be understood, and we need to look inward as an association before we look to extend our reach.

NAfME alone should not revolutionize the message of music education's value. We need to have influential partners and build strong, lasting relationships. We need to bring together the collective insights of all who value music in schools with the intention of gathering diverse perspectives for the greater good of music education. Over the past few years I have observed that there are many silos under the music education umbrella. All of these associations and companies are well intentioned, and most offer the same message. I believe we can greatly expand our combined reach if we work together, rather than politely engaging in cooptation which results in the dilution of a powerful, unified message. NAfME must recognize what other organizations do well, and perhaps better than us, and focus of our efforts on how we can support each other. It's time to start moving mountains, rather than just keep throwing snowballs at an iceberg! There is power in numbers and there is power in relationships. We must work together toward our common goal.

To quote Diana Ross at the 2019 Grammy Awards, "I believe in music and its power." Just as music possesses the power to bring people together, NAfME needs to strengthen sustainable relationships that express a unified message of ensuring music education for all children. We must guarantee that our association is relevant among today's diverse educational systems, is worthwhile and has value for our members. Through music, we have the power to change lives. We need to lead the way in harnessing this power towards building the musical and creative future our country so desperately needs.