

Russell K. Sperling

Curriculum Vitae

The world will be a better place when all our children have a robust arts education. I commit my vision, energy and skill to this end.

Education and Credentials

M.M. Music—Conducting (Instrumental) San Diego State University 2003

M.A. Educational Leadership, Point Loma Nazarene University 1995

B.A. Political Science, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo 1990

California Clear Administrative Services Credential

California Clear Single Subject Teaching Credential in Music and Social Science

Administrative Experience

Director of Visual and Performing Arts, San Diego Unified School District, 2015-present

- Curriculum Director for the Visual and Performing Arts in all five arts disciplines in the state's second largest school district with \$5.0 million budget
- Supervises three other managers, four resource teachers, 27 elementary music teachers and three classified staff
- Serves as instructional leader for 260 VAPA teachers in 180 schools
- Leads work on the implementation of the district's Strategic Arts Education Plan
- Supervises the district's Title One-funded arts education programs including Learning Through the Arts and the Arts Education Project
- Serves as Secretary-Treasurer and district liaison to the VAPA Foundation, a foundation that raises funds to enhance arts education in the school district
- Implements district initiatives within the arts such as Standards-Based Grading, Ethnic Studies and Restorative Justice
- Works closely with the district's College, Career and Technical Education (CCTE) Department to align programs, especially within the Arts, Media and Entertainment sector
- Builds and maintains relationships with community arts organizations, the city, and other stakeholders
- Facilitates the work of the VAPA Advisory Council

Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator, San Diego County Office of Education, 2012-2015

- Visual and performing arts curriculum coordinator for the 42 school districts in San Diego County representing 500,000 schoolchildren
- Leader of Arts Empower San Diego, county-wide strategic arts initiative
 - Facilitated district strategic arts education plans
 - Coordinated Arts Empower Mega Conference in Balboa Park
- Leader of San Diego Arts Network (SDAN), for school administrators
- Facilitated Arts Education Resource Organization (AERO), network for arts provider organizations
- Region 9 Arts Lead for California Counties Superintendents and Educational Services Association (CCSESA)
- Facilitator of "Teaching the Arts: Exploring the Uncommon in Common Core," "Building Artistic Literacy through Common Core," and "Diving Deeper into National Core Arts Standards" professional learning opportunities for teachers and administrators

- Editor of “Leadership Matters,” bimonthly e-newsletter for district curriculum and instruction leaders

Director of Visual and Performing Arts, Sweetwater Union High School District, 2008-2012

- Curriculum Director for the Visual and Performing Arts with \$3.0 million budget
- Managed VAPA Department Office with seven staff, music library, costume collection, instrument repair shop, media team
- Served as instructional leader for 150 VAPA teachers in 25 secondary schools
- Facilitated Board of Trustees approved Arts Education Strategic Plan
- Responsible for all VAPA teacher professional development; emphasis on academic literacy through the arts
- Coordinated with site principals on each school’s arts program
- Responsible for organizing over 20 district arts events
- Coordinated with arts providers such as The Old Globe Theatre and The San Diego Opera

Program Manager, K-12 Music, San Diego Unified School District 2005-2008

- Functioned as second in charge of the district Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) Department
- Administered VAPA elementary music program
- Served as supervisor and instructional leader for 28 teachers in 122 schools
- Responsible for Elementary General Music (30 teachers)
- Coordinator of secondary music district-wide—72 teachers in 39 schools
- Collaborated with community arts organizations for partnership opportunities for K-12 music
- Acted as a district liaison to local, state, and national groups, universities and foundations in the area of music
- Coordinated music instruction at district arts magnet schools
- Organized elementary, middle and high school honor band, orchestra and choral concerts, festivals and other district events
- Maintained inventory of district-owned instruments, including new purchases (\$237,500/year), repair and maintenance requisitions (\$68,000 repair budget with numerous vendors)

Teaching Experience

Instrumental Music Director, Helix Charter High School 1991-2005

- Responsible for over 170 students enrolled in bands, orchestras, bagpipes and color guard team
- Coordinated with Booster Parent Group with \$150,000 yearly budget
- Organized all performances: approximately 20 marching band performances, 10 concerts and other events yearly

Helix Highlander (Marching) Band Major Accomplishments

- 1998 Nickelodeon TV Land Band of the Year
- Many Mother Goose Parade Sweepstakes Awards
- Appearance on “A Salute to Teachers” Cox Cable Televised Awards Show 1998
- Half time performances at Chargers Football games 1999, 2005

Helix Wind Symphony Major Accomplishments

- Superiors at Festival 1997-2005
- Performance at California Band Directors Association Conference in Fresno 2000

Helix Orchestra Major Accomplishments

- Superiors at Festival 1999-2005
- Invited to perform with the Grossmont College Symphony 2001, 2005, 2006

Major Tours

- England-Scotland (Edinburgh Cavalcade Parade) 1996, 2004

- Washington, D.C. and New York City 1994, 2002
- Europe (France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy) 2000
- San Francisco 1993, 2003
- New York City and Boston 1998

Concert Band Director, Grossmont Community College 2001-2002, 2006-present

(adjunct part time)

- Enrollment typically 40-50 members consisting of Grossmont College students, students from surrounding universities and community members
- Band performs 5 concerts per year, including San Diego's annual "College Band Night" in Balboa Park
- Moved this course onto Canvas during the pandemic as a project-based learning class

Pit Orchestra Conductor, Sweetwater Union High School District Summer Theatre Institute

- Les Miserables 2011
- West Side Story 2012
- Miss Saigon 2013
- Pippin 2014

Honor Band Director

- San Diego Unified School District High School 2016
- San Dieguito Union High School District High School 2015
- Sweetwater Union High School District Middle School 2013
- San Diego Unified School District Middle School 2006, 2013
- San Diego Unified School District Elementary 2009, 2010
- Escondido Union High School District 2005

Leadership Experience

National Association for Music Education (NAfME), Western Division President cycle 2014-2020

- Served on NAfME Strategic Planning Committee
- Created Western Division Leadership Seminar
- Created Casting a Wider Net conference
- Part of NAfME's first delegation to India and presented there
- Leader/presenter in Cook-Ross study

NAfME Equity Committee, Member 2020-present

California Music Educators Association (CMEA), Advocacy Representative, 2014-present

VAPA Foundation, Founder and Secretary-Treasurer 2017-present

San Diego Regional Arts and Culture Coalition, Member 2017-present

California Music Educators Association (CMEA) President cycle 2010-2016

- Created the Stand Up 4 Music Coalition, the annual Advocacy Day in Sacramento, and hired CMEA's first lobbyist in Sacramento
- Led Strategic Planning process, reimagining CMEA out of the recession and away from near-bankruptcy

- Continued collaboration with the state's other music education organizations for the annual California All-State Music Education Conference (CASMEC)
- Expanded the number of local sections to increase equitable representation on the board

Arts Empower San Diego (County Arts Education Initiative) Planning Team member 2011-2012, and Steering Committee Chair, 2012-2015, Steering Committee Member 2015-present

California State School Superintendent Torlakson's Blueprint for Creative Schools Task Force Member 2012

San Diego Winds Founding President 2008-2015, Board Member 2015-present

California Music Project—San Diego Site Director and Board Member, 2007-2012

California Alliance for Arts Education (CAAE) Policy Council member 2010-2014

San Diego Unified School District VAPA Tiger Team member 2011

CMEA Music Supervisors Representative 2006-2010

CMEA—Southern Border Section President 2005-2007

Grossmont Union High School District Band Directors Council Chair 1996-2004

California Band Directors Association SCSBOA Representative 2000-2002

Performing Arts Department Chair, Helix Charter High School 1993-2001

Presentations at Professional Conferences

Making Music in the Post-COVID World, with Mike Stone, Marcheta Williams, Stacy Harris and Phil Mortensen, California All State Music Education Conference 2021

Opening Speaker, with Scott Hedgecock, NorCal Collegiate Music Advocacy Summit 2021

You're an Advocate!, Arts Empower Mega Rally 2020

Casting a Wider Net—Transforming Music Education, with Anne Fennell, National Association for Music Education National Assembly 2019 and NAFME Western Division Leadership Conference 2019

Know your Students—Grow your Program!, with Anne Fennell, Arts Empower Mega Conference 2019

Making Great Music Requires Everyone: Including LGBTQ Students in your Music Classroom, Pennsylvania Music Educators Association Summer Conference 2019 and California All State Music Education Conference 2019

Keynote: Leadership in Our Changing World, Pennsylvania Music Educators Association Summer Conference 2019

How to Talk to Administrators, Conn Selmer West 2019

The In's and Out's of LGBT, Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association 2018

Leadership Development, NAFME Collegiate Summit 2018

Negotiating with your School Community to Widen Music Curriculum, Casting a Wider Net Conference 2018

Casting a Wider Net—Music Education for All, with Anne Fennell, Arts Empower Mega Conference 2018

NAfME and India: A New Era in Music Education and Classroom Music in United States Schools, Western Music Education Association (India) 2017

How Music Education Thrives: Casting a Wider Net, Nevada Music Educators Association Conference 2017

Workshop—Inclusivity in Action: Honoring LGBTQ Students in the Music Classroom, with Dr. Joshua Palkki, Stephen Paparo, and Mari Valverde, National Association for Music Education's National In-service Conference 2017

Perspectives: Music Education in Large School Districts, National Association for Music Education's Program Leaders Conference 2017

Casting a Wider Net Facilitated Conversation, Casting a Wider Net Conference 2017

Learning Through the Arts—Title I in SDUSD, Arts Education Learning Exchange, California Alliance for Arts Education 2016

Toward Full Inclusion, with Dr. Diana Hollinger, Dr. Joshua Palkki and Scott Hedgecock at National Association for Music Education's National In-service Conference 2016

Success Stories, General Session, Arts Empower Mega Conference 2015

Restoring Arts Education Capacity to California's largest K-6 School District: El Sistema and the Community Opus Project, with Dalouge Smith, Dr. John Nelson, and Heather Noonan, Arts Education Partnership 2014

Will Teaching Festival Music Through the Common Core Lens Make My Group Sound Better?, with Jonathan Grantham, California All State Music Education Conference 2014

Keynote and Advocacy in your Community, California Music Educators Association—Capitol Section Conference 2014

Take it to the Core!, with Rachel Fink, Leslie Johnson, and Samantha Wyer, Theatre Communications Group Conference 2014

Strategizing for the Future of Music Education, California Music Educators Association—Bay Section Conference 2013

Articles

Quarterly President articles, CMEA Magazine 2012-2014

Art Education Develops 21st Century Skills, Gifted Education Communicator, Fall 2008

Community

Diversionsary Theatre, Board Member 2020-present

San Diego Pride Youth Marching Band Coordinator 2015-present

Orchestra Conductor, Pacific Beach United Methodist Church for Easter and Christmas Productions 2000-2015

Awards

Artful Visionary Ovation Award, Arts Empower San Diego 2020

Volunteer of the Year, San Diego Pride 2019

Arts Education Advocate, Bravo San Diego Awards 2017

Administrator of the Year, California Art Education Association 2013

District Administrator of the Year, San Diego County Art Education Association 2012

Arts Education Leadership Award, SDSU School of Music and Dance 2009

District Administrator of the Year, California Music Educators Association—Southern Border Section 2009

“Prize Principal Award,” awarded by Point Loma Nazarene University 2008

Golden Apple, Helix Charter High School 2005

Band Director of the Year, California Music Educators Association—Southern Border Section 2000, 2004

References

Cindy Marten, Superintendent, San Diego Unified School District

Sofia Roditti, Chief of Staff, San Diego Unified School District

Tricia Williams, Program Director, Mr. Holland’s Opus Foundation

Kristine Alexander, Executive Director, The California Arts Project

Eric Ebel, Senior Project Manager, NAMM

Dalouge Smith, Executive Director, The Lewis Prize

Scott Sypkens, retired Executive Director, College and Career Readiness, San Diego County Office of Education

Ron Jessee, retired Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator, San Diego County Office of Education