

National Association *for* Music Education

A REPORT OF THE NAFME NATIONAL LEADERSHIP ASSEMBLY 2022 "Together We Are NAFME"

The NAfME National Assembly (NASS) functions to advise the National Executive Board, to serve as a leadership conference, and to provide a clearinghouse for the exchange of information concerning state, Division, and national policies, organizational functions, and activities. This is an annual event in which the State MEA Presidents, the elected Division and National leaders, the Chairs of the Societies and Councils, and key NAfME staffers gather to share ideas and information about our family of associations as well as factors that impact music education. Additionally, meetings are held by the State Executive Directors and State Editors. The 2022 NASS event was held on June 22–24 in a hybrid format that included approximately 85 participants who attended in person in Reston, Virginia, and approximately 40 additional attendees who participated virtually. This year's in-person event included only official delegates as outlined in the NAfME Bylaws, due to concerns surrounding the pandemic and financial considerations. Additional leaders and members were invited to participate virtually. This was the first hybrid NASS event following two fully virtual events in 2020 and 2021.

The following report contains highlights of the activities that took place during the 2022 National Assembly. Links are imbedded in this report to various handouts and videos from the event.

Wednesday, June 22

President Scott R. Sheehan, who took office on June 15, 2022, welcomed all who were in attendance, and then attendees from each Division met to share information about current happenings in each of their respective state associations. President Sheehan met with the chairs of the NAfME Societies and Councils who make up the President's Cabinet to discuss each group's plans and priorities for the coming year and to establish protocols for scheduling future meetings and events.

NASS Opening

The official opening of the National Assembly began at 10:30 a.m. ET with the **Roll Call** by Immediate Past President Mackie V. Spradley. Opening Video

Celebrations

President Sheehan recognized two recipients of the **Lowell Mason Fellow Award. Ron Meers** from Tennessee and **John Stroube** from Kentucky received this prestigious recognition. President Sheehan then honored **Mackie V. Spradley** for her time serving as NAfME President from June 2020 through June 2022. Celebrations Video

Mackie Spradley and President Sheehan recognized leaders from the **National Association for the Study and Performance of African American Music** (NASPAAM) in honor of their 50th Anniversary celebration. A formal resolution that was passed by the NAfME National Executive Board was shared with all attendees. (View the proclamation.) NAfME recognized the role that the harmful actions of NAfME (then MENC) had in the founding of NASPAAM five decades ago. Although we are just beginning to forge a new relationship, the leaders of NAfME and NASPAAM are confident we will find ways to support one another, and NASPAAM members will always have a place to belong at NAfME. NASPAAM Celebration Video

State of the Association

President Sheehan, NAfME Executive Director Christopher Woodside, along with the chairs of the Professional Learning and Partnerships Committee, Past President Spradley, and the chairs for Society for Research in Music Education and the Society for Music Teacher Education, presented the **State of the Association** address which highlighted many of the accomplishments and directions of various aspects of the association, along with factors that are impacting the music education profession. State of the Association Video; Society and Council Highlights Video

Strategic Plan Development

The process of developing the new NAfME Strategic Plan began in June 2020 during the National Assembly under the leadership of Mackie Spradley and was followed by several Town Hall meetings that were open to all members. Additional input was gathered during the fall Division meetings and the 2021 National Assembly. Using data from all the prior discussions as well as from the annual budget surveys, writing teams were assembled and began their work in the fall of 2021. Following the creation of an initial draft, the plan was shared for public review with all members in the spring of 2022 and was reviewed by the Equity Committee. During the 2022 National Assembly, attendees reviewed and discussed the revised draft and final stages of the new NAfME Strategic Plan. This is a conceptual model that defines who NAfME is, what NAfME does, and what NAfME believes about music and why it should be taught. A new mission and vision for the association were shared. The plan includes the three cornerstones of (1) Advocacy & Public Policy, (2) Professional Learning & Growth, and (3) Music Research & Music Teacher Education. The plan is centered around the keystone of Equity in Music Education. The graphic for the plan was also shared. Following the National Assembly, final review and revisions were made, and the plan was presented to the National Executive Board for approval in September 2022. Equity Video



Thursday, June 23

The second day of the 2022 National Leadership Assembly was spent discussing critical issues impacting the profession and the association. The morning began with a discussion by the NAfME Executive Committee called "**Leadership in the Upside Down**." This conversation focused on the critical role of leadership that has been highlighted by the pandemic and the ever-evolving political landscape that has taken place during the past two years. Information was also shared about Divisive Concept Laws that are impacting music education in several states. Following this discussion, the State Executives and State Editors held virtual meetings, and there was a series of breakout sessions that are summarized below.

• Pathways To & Through the Profession – Deb Confredo

This discussion began by outlining the organization of the **Music Teacher Profession Initiative**, which has the goal of sharing ideas about barriers to and mitigations for the music teacher profession. Participants gathered in small groups to discuss this and returned to the large group to share thoughts and ideas. Here are **just some** of the many ideas brought forth (all feedback will be incorporated into the findings of the Music Teacher Profession Initiative).

Before the Degree Program, During the PK-12 Experience

- Scheduling and counseling don't always favor music students
- Financial inequities program and pay
- Access inequities: instruments, live music
- Offerings not always inclusive
- Lack of role models in both rural and urban settings
- HS internships may not include music
- CTE = opportunity
- Tri-M[®] should play a larger role
- Innovative music offerings that are accessible to more students, more culturally significant
- Music educators rather than _____ (fill in the blank) directors
- Elementary and middle school must have more emphasis.

Admission/Audition Process

- Disconnect between "needs" of studio vs. music education
- Auditions don't support the idea of music education generalists
- Economic inequities: lack of private instruction keeps students out
- College affordability a challenge for some
- Music education portfolio as part of admission process
- Secondary music educators important in mentoring prospective music ed majors
- BOC may not fit some who want to enter the profession
- Need a shift in required audition material; may not be culturally appropriate for all.

During the Degree Program

- Determine what is needed to be a successful music educator
- Review to determine what the most important and pertinent content should be
- Review student teacher placements to reflect reality in teaching
- Revamp music core to better suit music education students
- Review the 4-year timeline
- Review and/or eliminate biased examinations (PRAXIS)
- Better communications with other music faculty to help them understand our profession.

First Five Years in Profession

- Mentorship is important; mentors must be valued, must be a part of the professional workload
- Look to our MEAs who have strong frameworks
- Connect with administrators about the importance and need for mentorship
- Apprenticeship model may be effective
- Provide funding assistance for young teachers to attend conferences and PD
- Consistent and regular communication with new teachers is critical
- The association and MEAs must be welcoming of new teachers
- Teacher leadership programs needed for MEAs.

• Diversifying Music Curriculum – Rob Deemer

This breakout session focused on the topic of Repertoire Diversity. Over the previous year, Rob Deemer had interviewed almost 30 individuals covering a wide swath of the music education community as part of a Repertoire Diversity Task Force initiative, and the breakout session at National Assembly brought together the issues raised in those interviews. The breakout was separated into two sections: Current Issues and Action Items, each of which had several components to them. Current Issues included the concept of Creating Access (which itself covered both how educators discover music outside of the traditional canon and how retail and administrative mechanisms can create challenges to diversifying repertoire) and the concept of Expanding the Curriculum, which explored adjusting both the content of curricula in both K–12 and higher ed levels, as well as adjusting expectations at the praxis and national standards levels. The Action Items included a number of initiatives brought forth as a result of the interviews, including expansion of repertoire resources, curricular expansion in the classroom, analytical resources, policy changes, and best practices. All three breakout sessions were successful and seemed to generate both positive responses and thoughtful feedback from those taking part.

• Connecting the Dots: Tri-M & Collegiate – Susan Smith

The 2022 National Assembly attendees gathered to discuss encouraging more music education majors into the field by strengthening the connection between Tri-M[®] and NAfME Collegiate chapters. NAfME Assistant Executive Director for Student Programs Kristen Rencher gave an overview of the Tri-M[®] program and chapter involvement throughout the United States, as well as yearly events. Susan Smith, Collegiate Advisory Council Chair, gave an update on the activities of the Council and opportunities to connect with collegiates through social media and direct contact, specifically the collegiate Instagram platform: @nafmecollegiateofficial. Those in attendance shared via Padlet, and then around the room, possible ways to connect Tri-M[®] and collegiates in their states, programs they have in place for both groups and ways to continue to "connect the dots." The conversation in each breakout was informative and helpful to all. Ideas from the Padlet can be accessed here: https://padlet.com/susanlsmith1/h2mnu4mzsvbd81jv.

The Collegiate Advisory Council and the Tri-M Advisory Council followed up on this feedback by hosting the first "Spotlight on Service" joint meeting of Tri-M and collegiate students and advisors during Kickoff Week. In addition, the Collegiate Advisory Council hosted an "Advisor Chat" to answer questions from advisors and share strategies for success. With the need for more teachers at the forefront of all our minds, strengthening and encouraging the pathway to becoming a music teacher through existing NAfME student programs is important and timely.

• Budgeting Beyond Dues Dollars – Chaudlier Moore & Chris Woodside

During our three (3) sessions, possibly the only common theme was our message – the importance of NAfME and affiliated MEAs expanding funding options for future operating expenses. NAfME staff discussed the idea of creating strategic plans and using advisory committees, development departments, and grant writers to identify additional funding sources.

NAfME's presentation asked attendees to explore additional funding options such as grants; fundraising; sponsorships, partnerships, and co-branding. During the first session, affiliate participants were receptive. Affiliates shared current or "in-process challenges" associated with additional revenue sources from foundation funding, in their own states (Wisconsin, Indiana, Louisiana, Washington, and Florida). Barriers cited included capacity, competing agendas from other organizations, and limits on fundraising between associations vs. foundations. During the second session, affiliate MEAs discussed funding from grant sources. They voiced concerns, from experience, with dealing with "strings-attached" challenges when accepting money from funders. More of the conversation swayed toward investing possibilities and NAfME's ability to assist or support affiliate MEAs' investing efforts.

The participants in the third session seemed more focused on NAfME providing or sharing grantwriting resources, and the plusses and minuses as well as importance of partnerships. This group expressed a strong show of support aimed toward identifying and working with partners in and around our space. Constructing a positive, mutually beneficial message when collaborating with partners was an important theme.

• The Future of NAfME Events – Sue Barre & Kristen Rencher

SHOULD NAFME CONTINUE TO OFFER ANHE, WHY OR WHY NOT?

YES

- Might be the only chance students have to compete at this high a level ensemble
- Could inspire other programs to start a guitar or modern band
- NAfME can fill the 550 student slots, just find a cheaper venue
- Provides opportunity for our likely future NAfME members
- While extremely expensive, it's the only performance-based program that provides Europe affiliate the opportunity to participate in a U.S.-based NAfME program
- Very positive experience for students overall
- Yes, but needs to add more diversity and equity
- Yes, but focus more on ensembles that are different from band, choir, and orchestra, as the larger ones are already at other partner events.

NO

- Why have national ensembles that compete with MEA and other affiliate programs?
- No, it goes against everything we are aiming to be. Does not reflect our upcoming new strategic plan goals or our commitment to DEIA, no matter the changes made will not be really equitable.
- No, it's not financially viable. NAfME needs to focus on building strong relationships with states to protect our future of affiliates.
- The cost is too excessive for NAfME, students, directors, families, etc.
- How can ANHE reflect the future of NAfME? Does not align.
- Use the time and resources and staff for something that impacts more students, just serving 550 is not in our best interest as a national and international organization.
- NAfME should be putting more emphasis on growing membership and serving current teacher needs.
- ANHE is not a differentiator, can be easily replaced by other organizations currently doing their own specific ensembles.

- There are too many other local and regional honor ensembles that are more attractive and financially viable for families.
- The cost prohibits all socioeconomic levels from participating.
- The ensembles aren't really "honor," they are geographically representative, meaning they're really not the strongest and don't compete with our division or competitors' ensembles.
- Audition requirements are not representative of the curricula taught in public schools, i.e., Students must be in private lessons in order play it.
- Many other organizations are already in this space; what can NAfME focus on to maintain relevancy and membership?
- Geographic travel is a huge barrier. Rotating locations will help but there are too many other barriers. Is also a huge amount of work for a very small population, and they're not even members and most of their directors who are members don't go.
- Money could be better allocated elsewhere.
- ANHE is perceived as "vanity," the only honor is emphasizing entitlement.

IF ANHE WERE TO CONTINUE, WHAT TIME OF YEAR WOULD YOU RECOMMEND

- November
- Every other year (3 similar recommendations)
- Early summer (12 similar recommendations)
- End of June (5 similar recommendations)
- Winter break.

IF ANHE WERE TO CONTINUE, WHAT LOCATION WOULD YOU RECOMMEND

- Select a geographically central college/university campus (6 similar recommendations)
- Disney (5 similar recommendations)
- Rotate by Division (14 similar recommendations).

SHOULD NAFME HAVE A NATIONAL CONFERENCE? WHY OR WHY NOT?

YES

• Yes, but we need to build a better business model. (3 similar recommendations)

NO

- Does not serve the full membership (8 similar recommendations)
- There are already enough industry events, symposia, Division and state conferences that cover the topics NAfME is offering and are less expensive and oftentimes more local (19 similar recommendations)
- Difficulty with travel and is very expensive (17 similar recommendations).

IF NAFME DID NOT HAVE FUTURE LARGE-SCALE EVENTS, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE FROM NAFME INSTEAD?

- Bring resources and presenters to state conferences to help them better their events, support don't flood the market, and rotate states evenly
- More support for and presence at MEA Conferences (26 recommendations)
- Continue to support SRME Research Conference
- Focus on publications and online resources, PD (8 similar recommendations).

PARTNERSHIPS

Ideas for possible partners with existing conferences and/or ensembles for which NAfME could consider partnering with to offer an event and/or honor ensemble?

**Keeping in mind partners would also need to find value in NAfME joining their existing event/ program.

- Partner with Disney again
- ACDA
- JEN
- Midwest
- NATS
- Chorus America
- NEMFA (New England Music Festival Association)
- Kodály
- Orff
- Dalcroze
- NAMM
- ASTA
- One of the NAfME Division Conferences
- Separate the ensembles with corresponding partner organizations (ex. Jazz with JEN, Modern Band with Little Kids Rock, Choir with ACDA, etc.).

WHAT AREAS OF FOCUS SHOULD NAFME OFFER WHETHER AT CONFERENCE OR ANHE (DIRECTORS PD TRACK)

- Focus more on online PD (5 similar recommendations)
- Offer PD during the school year only
- Offer advocacy opportunities to educate parents
- Host smaller interest area events/symposia that others may not, such as steel pans, leadership, guitar, modern band, etc. (6 similar recommendations).

OTHER FEEDBACK/IDEAS

- Conference and ANHE are too expensive to attend/participate and are not financially viable for the association. Should use funds to further support states. (18 similar recommendations)
- Alternate Conference with a Division Conference every 2 years (2024, 2026, 2028, 2030, etc.).
- ANHE is a recognition only, does not meet the national standards.
- Many state MEAs pay their participants' registration or offer at a much cheaper rate and are local, NAfME cannot compete. (8 similar recommendations)
- NAfME should offer Collegiate Leadership or Tri-M® events instead. (7 similar recommendations)
- In lieu of a National Conference, build relationships with states, rotating every 3 years at each MEA/Division conferences as was done in the past. (8 similar recommendations)
- Instead of honor ensembles, find a standards-aligned way to lift up and "honor/recognize" kids (creating, responding, connecting).
- Focus on all nontraditional ensembles, since other partners cover all existing ones, such as new music, multi-cultural ensembles, etc. (4 similar recommendations).

• We All Belong: Building a Bigger Table – Mackie Spradley

The groups' discussion critiqued ways in which our practices, policies, curricula, student activities, and uses of language have a direct impact on our efficacy in building an authentic sense of belonging at the local, state, and national level. During the breakout, participants discussed the ways in which we consciously or unconsciously etch boundaries in the MEAs and within NAfME as a collective association of MEAs. We are instructed along the way with various signage such as yield signs, stop signs, detour signs, no-entry signs, and Dead End, just to name a few! Participants acknowledged that we create boundaries by comparing, ranking, competing, and inflating our own sense of success and status. We also use language and behaviors that other individuals and groups, which removes them from the big table and repositions them at the kiddy table with little chairs. The participants concluded that we must accept the challenge to grow. It will mean that we must each recommit to being a lifelong learner and commit to a growth mindset. Participants overwhelmingly felt that it is time to reframe how we define "success." Success should be defined in terms of equity and belonging instead of competitions, performing-ensemble sizes, number of awards, invitational shows, and so on.

Our work must center on building a bigger table. To echo the words of one of the participants, "We need everyone in the picture."

Friday, June 24

Teacher Shortage Discussion

The day began with a discussion about the great need to continue to recruit and retain music teachers. There are many music positions across the United States that are not filled, creating a perceived shortage. Many factors were discussed that may be contributing to the issue. Further discussion and research will continue.

National Advocacy Celebration for Music Education

The National Assembly concluded with a National Advocacy Celebration for Music Education. During this event we had the honor of Secretary of Education **Miguel Cardona** joining us via Zoom to offer his views on supporting music and the arts in schools. Video of Secretary Cardona

Association Awards

Chair of the Collegiate Advisory Council Susan Smith presented the Collegiate Awards for 2021-2022.

Chapter of Excellence Recognition

Professional Development: Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana Professional Development: Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey Professional Development: University of Nebraska-Omaha, Omaha, Nebraska Professional Development: University of North Georgia, Dahlonega, Georgia Service: Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, Michigan Service: Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida Service: University of the Cumberlands, Williamsburg, Kentucky

Professional Achievement Award

Hannah Combs—Oakland University, Rochester, Michigan Amanda Herold—Sunderman Conservatory of Music, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania Aida Soria—University of Nebraska-Omaha, Omaha, Nebraska Kelsey Zetzl—Butler University, Indianapolis, Indiana

Excellence in Advocacy Award

Georgia Music Educators Association

2022 State Advocacy Award Grant Winners (made possible by the CMA Foundation)

Kansas Music Educators Association Louisiana Music Educators Association New Jersey Music Educators Association

Music Education Discussion Panel: The Next Movement

Following the awards presentation, NAfME Assistant Executive Director of Advocacy & Public Policy Amanda Karhuse led a panel discussion regarding music education moving beyond the pandemic. Panelists included James Weaver from NFHS, William Earvin from Conn-Selmer HBCU Collective, Mary Luehrsen from NAMM, Pamela Randall from CASEL, and Anna Backstrom from Deer Valley Unified School District, Phoenix, Arizona.

President Sheehan concluded the celebration with closing remarks.

Advocacy Celebration video.

Thank You!

Special thanks to the performing groups who shared their time and talents with those gathered at the 2022 National Assembly:

- East of the River Steelband
- Potomac Falls High School Guitar Quartet
- Reginald Golden and the Reginald Golden Singers

Annual Reports of the Societies and Councils

2022 NAfME National Leadership Assembly Delegates

(as of June 15, 2022)

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A Report of the NAfME National Leadership Assembly 2022

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Mississippi Tommy Creel, Brandon, MS

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South Carolina Joe Gulledge, Rock Hill, SC

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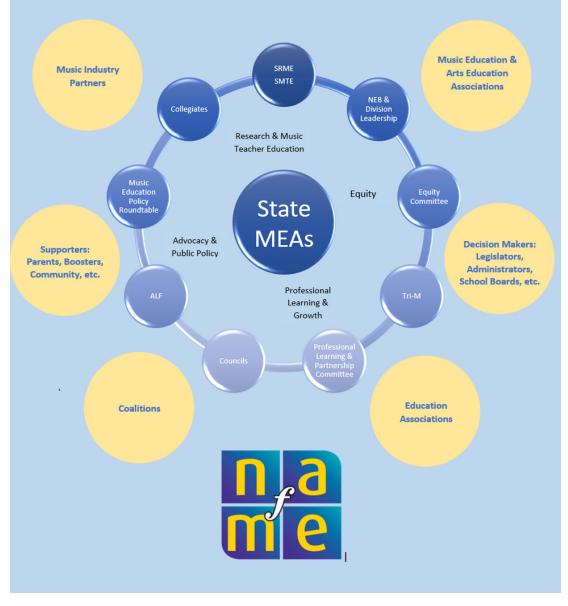
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