

Oregon

MUSIC EDUCATOR

Fall 2017

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College of Liberal Arts | School of Arts and Communication

Oregon State University MUSIC



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February 19 • OSU Campus (Corvallis)
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2018 Events & Deadlines

State Small Chamber Ensemble Contest

Registration Deadline: March 13, 2018
Event: April 27, 2018, Pacific University
Rules: oregonmusic.org/files/files/2017RulesOregonChamberEnsembleChampionship.pdf
OMEA Chair: Dan Judd

OSAA State Solo Contest

Registration Deadline: March 19, 2018
Event: April 28, 2018, Pacific University
Website: osaa.org/activities/sol
OMEA Chair: Tom Muller
OSAA Solo Administrator: Kyle Stanfield

OSAA Choir Championships

Registration Deadline: April 14, 2018
Event: May 3-5, 2018, George Fox University
2A, 1A and 3A Choir: May 3, 2018
4A and 5A Choir: May 4, 2018
6A Choir: May 5, 2018
Website: osaa.org/choir
OMEA Chair: Matt Strauser
OSAA Choir Administrator: Kelly Foster

OSAA Band/Orchestra Championships

Registration Deadline: April 14, 2018
Event: May 9 -12, 2018, Oregon State University
3A and 4A Band: May 9, 2018
String and Full Orchestra: May 10, 2018
2A and 5A Band: May 11, 2018
6A Band: May 12, 2018
Website: osaa.org/activities/bnd
OMEA Chair: Chuck Bolton
Band/Orchestra Administrator: Cindy Simmons

OMEA State Jazz Competition

Registration & Recording Deadline: April 21, 2018
Event: May 19, 2018 Mt Hood Community College
Website: oregonmusic.org/state-jazz-championships.html
OMEA Jazz Chair: Dan Davey

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Welcome Back!

Todd Zimbelman

OMEA President

I hope the 2017–2018 school year is off to a great start! As we all know, change is inevitable. It is with a very sad heart that we must say goodbye to Jane and Jim Howell. They have served as the Co-Executive Directors of OMEA for many years and it's simply impossible to put into words the impact they've had on music education in our state. We wish them well as they focus on Jim's health and their retirement.

The Executive Board met in August and we interviewed the final candidates. It is our pleasure to announce that Carolyn Sutton, from Grants Pass, will be the new Executive Director for OMEA. Please congratulate her when you have the chance.

As we look toward our annual conference, I truly hope everyone will view this as one of our best opportunities to grow. Supporting our students by encouraging them to apply/audition for All-State Honor Ensembles is critical. Attending the conference is absolute. Kathy Briggs will be in charge of the 2018 OMEA conference. Conference sessions should be about finalized, but if you have any questions or ideas, contact Kathy as soon as possible (kathy.briggs@smapdx.org). The entire planning committee is working hard to bring you an outstanding conference.

From The Band Room

LEADERSHIP! Student leadership can be an amazing aspect to any music program. Cultivating student leadership takes time and consistency. There are three levels of leadership that I focus on. Level One: Band Council. Level Two: Marching Band Drum Majors and Section Leaders. Level Three: Concert Ensemble Section Leaders/Principal Players. All three levels work together to help manage and run the band program. Here is an example of the job descriptions for the Level One organization.

BAND COUNCIL JOB DESCRIPTIONS

President

- Organizes and Leads meetings (council should meet once a month)
- Represents the students to the booster board (attends monthly band booster board meetings) Longer phrases are always better.
- Meets with directors (as needed)
- Oversees the updating and presentation of all awards and award cases
- Oversees all other Council positions



Vice President

- Attend all meetings
- Runs meetings in the absence of the President
- Oversees the Reps from each ensemble (keep track and pass along information about all events, performances, fundraisers, etc.)
- Oversees organization of band room, practice rooms, equipment rooms, and all areas

Secretary

- Attend all meetings
- Takes minutes at all meetings
- Sends notices of meetings via email and posts agendas
- Assists with clerical work in the office (as needed)

Music Librarian

- Attend all meetings
- Creates and maintains all music folders
- Fills music request forms
- Organizes and maintains band library (director will update computer files)

Historian/PR

- Attend all meetings
- Collects pictures and videos from each season (gives copies to director)
- Sends brief write-ups after events, competitions, and achievements to school paper, community paper, front office newsletter, band booster secretary
- Creates press releases for upcoming events and concerts
- Tracks history of achievements and submits to director (ensemble and individual honors)

Equipment Representative

- Attend all meetings
- Assists with the management of all equipment (stands, chairs, instruments, furniture, field equipment)
- Organizes and assists in the maintenance of equipment (painting/tightening stands, repairing chairs, other light repairs as needed)
- Manages checklists of all equipment when traveling (work with percussion students and directors)
- Helps with props as needed, organizes work crews for props (consult with director)

Wind Ensemble Representative

- Attend all meetings
- Represents Wind Ensemble to Council
- Helps takes attendance at all events
- Makes announcements about upcoming events, performances, and fundraisers
- Organizes rehearsal set-up for class and overall organization of band room, storage of chairs, stands, instruments

Advanced Band Representative

- Attend all meetings
- Represents Advanced Band to Council
- Helps takes attendance at all events
- Makes announcements about upcoming events, performances, and fundraisers
- Organizes rehearsal set-up for class and overall organization of band room, storage of chairs, stands, instruments

Concert Band Representative

- Attend all meetings
- Represents Concert Band to Council
- Helps takes attendance at all events
- Makes announcements about upcoming events, performances, and fundraisers
- Organizes rehearsal set-up for class and overall organization of band room, storage of chairs, stands, instruments

Percussion Ensemble Representative

- Attend all meetings
- Represents Percussion Ensemble to Council
- Helps takes attendance at all events
- Makes announcements about upcoming events, performances, and fundraisers
- Organizes rehearsal set-up for class and overall organization of percussion room/areas, storage of equipment, etc.

Jazz Ensemble Representative(s)

- Attend all meetings
- Represents Jazz Ensemble(s) to Council
- Helps takes attendance at all events
- Makes announcements about upcoming events, performances, and fundraisers
- Organizes rehearsal set-up for class and overall organization of percussion room/areas, storage of equipment, etc.

Guard Representative

- Attend all meetings
- Represents Guard to Council
- Helps takes attendance at all events
- Makes announcements about upcoming events, performances, and fundraisers
- Organizes rehearsal set-up for class and all rehearsals, overall organization of guard room, storage of equipment

Members at Large

- Attend all meetings
- Additional representation of your section to the band council
- Fulfill duties on assigned tasks and committees

I look forward to seeing everyone at the conference in January!

2019 Oregon All State Honor Groups at All Northwest Conference in Portland



Janet Lea

2nd Vice President, 2019 Mega Conference Chair

Get ready for a change in 2019! Our Oregon All-State Honor Groups will coincide and perform in conjunction with the All-Northwest Conference (February 14-17) at the Oregon Convention Center in the heart of Portland.

Scott Ketron, Executive Director for the Washington Music Educators Association (WMEA), and a team of All-Northwest and OMEA members have already met to discuss how we can best collaborate. I am confident that this team will make this "Mega Conference" an event not to miss!

Many details are still in the works and this is what we know so far:

- All-Northwest conference sessions will be put on by WMEA who is contracted by NAFME at the Oregon Convention Center (OCC) in Portland, Feb. 14th-17th, 2019.
- OMEA All-State high school students will rehearse in and near the Portland Convention Center and all high school honor group performances will be located there as well.

- The high school strings honor group will be a large string ensemble as voted upon by our orchestra members.
- Due to the large numbers of student participants in 2019, we will follow the same format from 2013, and not have an All-State Jazz Band.
- The goal is to have middle school and elementary honor groups housed, rehearsed and performing all in a central location, easily accessible and somewhat close to OCC.
- Stay tuned for more details!

I am excited to collaborate with OMEA area and group managers as well as OMEA, WMEA, and All-Northwest executives to bring us the best possible "mega" conference experience. Mark your calendars. You won't want to miss it.



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Louder Than Words

Why You Should Attend the OMEA State Conference

Kathy Briggs

OMEA President Elect

This 2018 OMEA State Conference “Louder than Words” is an event teachers and students will not want to miss this January. In addition to our All-State honor ensembles and performances, we are designing a schedule full of enrichment, relevant professional development, networking, and camaraderie among our membership. The conference success, of course, is dependent upon attendance from our state’s teachers and college students. If you are an annual attendee, you know the enormous benefit of attending our state conference. Reach out and encourage other teachers in your school, district, or cohort to attend.

Here are just a few of the reasons why you should attend our state conference

- 1. Sessions:** We have planned excellent sessions designed to help you and your students find success. Elementary, Band, Choir, Orchestra, Jazz, and Advocacy focused sessions offer pedagogical tips, managements skills, and rehearsal techniques to help you best serve your students. Add winds on top while both (B) teacher and students play an E-flat major scale in half notes and percussion loops.
- 2. PDUs:** You earn professional development hours. (Lots of them!) As a music teacher, these PDUs are among most focused and valuable opportunities you will find in state. A. B play 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 5, 3, 2, 1 over percussion loop.
- 3. Connections:** Sharing information with other teachers who teach the same subjects, have the same ensembles, and have similar classrooms as yours is invaluable. Finding a colleague with whom you can share ideas or a mentor who can advise you can be a treasured resource.
- 4. Performances:** Listen to other ensembles from schools around our state. Discover great literature and celebrate the success and joy of our colleagues’ student groups.



- 5. All-State:** Being a member of an All-State honor ensemble can be a life-changing experience for our students. Come support the best of the best as our young people meet other student musicians from around the state who share their same passion and create music together with a nationally-renown conductor. Also, a friendly reminder that if you have a student in an all-state ensemble you are required to attend the conference.
- 6. Collegiate and New Teacher Sessions:** Along with all of the other great sessions, we will offer some collegiate- and beginning teacher-focused sessions for our newest members of the profession to help with navigating the first few years of teaching, student-teaching, and other aspects of music education.
- 7. Fun:** Saturday evening we gather together at the banquet to celebrate music education and our teachers with a meal, awards, and entertainment. In addition to the banquet this year, we also are planning a few other social events throughout the conference for new members/attendees, a “Beer Choir” sponsored by ACDA, and collegiate receptions from some of our state universities.

Conference planning is a team effort from our board members, our area chairs, and our conference managers, for whom all of us are grateful. The conference requires copious hours of volunteer work, organization, and dedication to serve our membership.

Thank you to all who have shared time and expertise the past few months to organize a fantastic conference this January. If you haven't yet registered for the conference and booked a hotel room in Eugene, do so now. We look forward to having you join us at the Eugene Hilton, January 11–14, 2018.

Kató Havas

and the New Approach to Teaching Violin

Dijana Ihas

Orchestra Chair



There are four methods and approaches used most frequently for teaching beginning and intermediate string students in individual lessons and group-class settings: Shinichi Suzuki’s method, and the approaches of Paul Rolland, George Bornoff and Kató Havas. Of these, Kató Havas’ approach seems to be the least known to the string education community. The purpose of this article is to provide readers with a brief history and concise summary of the major principles and teaching strategies of Kató Havas’ *New Approach*. The article will conclude with a list of additional resources that might be of interest and use to beginning and intermediate orchestra teachers.

Havas’ Musical Upbringing and Career

Kató Havas was born on November 5th 1920, in the Transylvanian town of Kolozsvár in Hungary. She began playing violin at age five and had her first recital at seven. Hailed as a child prodigy, she was awarded a scholarship to study violin at the Royal Hungarian Frantz Liszt Academy in Budapest when she was nine. Her career unfolded in the 1930s, reaching an enviable climax in her acclaimed Carnegie Hall debut at the age of eighteen. After completing a demanding concert tour across the United States, Havas decided to withdraw from concertizing to dedicate time to her family that she formed with her husband, an American writer and three young daughters. During this time she began thinking about playing and teaching the violin in more analytical ways, and developed a revolutionary method of teaching that is based on finding logical and simple solutions to physical and psychological challenges associated with the violin. Havas’ long teaching career in England included providing applied lessons and training teachers in Dorset, London, and Oxford as well as conducting master classes in England and abroad. Throughout her career she also lectured at numerous medical conferences dedicated to an emerging medical field known as “music medicine.” Havas currently resides in Oxford, where at the age of 95, she, with the help of her assistants, trains teachers and accepts students on a limited basis.

Origination of the New Approach to Violin Playing

While at Frantz Liszt Academy in Budapest, Havas studied with Imre Waldbauer who also taught Paul Rolland. Waldbauer was a student of Jenő Hubay who in turn was student of the legendary Joseph Joachim. According to Havas, Waldbauer “was the first one to turn away from imitative Old School of teaching and was the first one in the history of violin pedagogy who began to experiment with Gestalt in his teaching” (Havas in Kennenson, p. 299). Gestalt theory is based on the premise that the whole of anything is greater than its parts and the aim of this theory is to explain how “things are put together” (Encyclopedia Britannica). Havas credits

her interests in the role of the whole body in violin playing, as well as her interests in the concepts of mutual dependency of natural body movements and fundamental balances, to her exposure to Waldbauer’s experiments with Gestalt in his violin studio. In addition to giving credit to her experience with Waldbauer’s innovative teaching, she acknowledges David Mendosa, with whom she studied violin while living in New York. He helped her develop ideas about left-hand techniques, in part by making her aware that the source of all movements and actions of the fingers originated in the tendons and muscles of the back of the hand, not in the fingers (Havas, 1973).

In addition to being influenced by string pedagogues who approached violin teaching in a more holistic manner, Havas often acknowledges several other important influences which contributed to the development of the *New Approach*. She credits renowned Gypsy violinist, Csicsó for modeling the “freedom of playing” concept that became one of the cornerstones of the *New Approach*. Her keen observations of the manner in which Jascha Heifetz held his violin led to the development of the *New Approach*’s exercises designed for the development of the lightness of the left arm and head, and the weightless feeling of the violin. Additionally, Havas incorporated many ideas from Zoltan Kodaly’s approach to teaching music, including “finding the inner pulse”, rhythmic training, and sight-singing.

As her reputation as an innovative violin teacher began growing, Noel Hale, a Music Education Adviser to the City of Reading, England, accidentally stumbled upon her private studio in Dorset. He asked Havas for permission to write a series of articles for *The Strad* about her approach. These articles attracted great interest within the string teaching community and Bosworth publishing company asked Havas to write a book about her “new approach.” The success of her first book: *A New Approach to Violin Playing* (1961) encouraged Havas to write four more books including *The Twelve Lessons Course* (1964); *Stage Freight, Its Causes and Cures* (1963) and *Freedom to Play* (1981). All of these books are still in print and have been translated in multiple languages. In 1991 Havas released her teaching video *A New Approach on the Causes and Cures of Physical Injuries in Violin and Viola Playing* in which she personally demonstrates and explains the basic principles of the *New Approach*.

In 1992, Havas was awarded the American String Teachers Association (ASTA) prestigious Isaac Stern International Award for her “unprecedented achievements” and in 2002 she was

appointed to the Order of the British Empire (OBE) by Queen Elizabeth II for “her service to music.” In 2013, the European Teachers Association presented Havas with an award “in celebration of a life-long contribution to music.”

Selected Principles and Teaching Strategies Used in the *New Approach*

The Principle of Fundamental Balances and Movement:

Havas proposes that students must be taught how to synchronize playing motions with the “internal balance” of the body from the onset of the instruction. To convey this principle, Havas uses the image of “see-saw” and explains that all arm movements originate in the big muscles located around the spine and the shoulder blade. These muscles act as one side of the “see-saw.” The other end of the “see-saw” can be either the right or left arm while the body acts as the pivot.



Kato Havas, age 96

The Principle of “Inside-Outside” Playing:

When learning a new piece of music, Havas asks students to first learn information about the composer, the piece and the style/era of the music in which the piece is composed. Next she asks the student to find the “inner pulse” by clapping the pulse and miming the playing movements. As in Kodaly’s method, she then asks students to “sight-sing” the entire piece using the letter names of the notes while also clapping the pulse, which leads to the development of “inner ear.” Only then, according to the *New Approach*, are students ready to start practicing their piece on the instruments.

The Major Causes of Physical Tension in Playing:

Havas identified several physical factors that contribute to physical tension in violin playing. She proposed the sense of “hardness of wood”, the material that violins are made of, as one of the major threats to the establishment of physical order that is necessary for the uninterrupted flow of music. To overcome this natural obstacle, Havas suggests various exercises including stroking the side of the violin neck with the player’s left thumb while imagining that they are “stroking a cat’s ear” to “sensitize” their touch to the “soft and silken” capacities of the instrument (Havas & Landsman, p. 8). She suggests younger players give their instruments a name to develop their love, respect, and sensitivity towards the instrument. Another physical obstacle that prevents players from playing without physical tension is “the eyes.” She noticed the fear that many string players have of playing in higher positions because their eyes, when they glance down the fingerboard, give them a false

perception about the real length of the fingerboard. She points out similar concerns about bowing in terms of using too much or too little bow. To remedy this fear, Havas asks players to carry a piece of thread in their cases so that they can measure the length of the fingerboard or the bow to help diminish optical illusions and relieve their anxieties. Yet another physical obstacle considered by Havas when developing freedom of playing is the concept of “holding the violin” and “holding the bow.” She proposes a unique dual concept for these basic playing techniques. Instead of holding the violin “with the chin” she proposes a “no violin” violin hold and instead of gripping the bow, suggests the “no bow hold” bow hold. *New Approach* uses an exercise called ‘Humming Fiddle’ to develop the feel of the “no violin hold” concept (Bakhayesh, 2010). In this exercise players first touch their neck to feel how soft it is. Next, with their left hand around the violin’s right rib and the hold of a “feather light touch”, the student swings the violin from their side to in front of their body and then to their neck. This lack of pressure causes the string to vibrate while “humming with apparent delight.” (Havas, 1964; Havas & Landsman, 1981).

The Major Causes of Mental Tension in Playing:

Havas also identified several common techniques and beliefs about violin playing that contribute to “mental tension” in players. She proposes that most violin schools emphasize “downward motions” which, in addition to the forces of gravity, contribute to an immobile feeling in players and excessive tension throughout the body. An example of this would be “the downward pressure of the head on the chinrest, and the downward pressure of the fingers on the fingerboard and the bow”

(Grindea, ed. p. 17). To remedy this tendency related to posture, Havas proposes practicing opening the arms in front of the body in a “horizontal plane” which produces a psychologically liberating sensation. For diminishing the vertical pressure in the fingers of a player’s left hand, in addition to bending the left wrist inward and creating the “gypsy” or “giving hand” position, she suggests a three step process for placing the fingers on the string: (a) “Slide”: When the fingers are placed on the string they “swing” backward then forward across the strings horizontally creating the movement that Havas calls “lateral slide”; (b) “Cuddle”: One finger is placed on the string with the other fingers surrounding it in a “halo-like” fashion creating a resonating “sound chamber” and (c) “Tilt” or “Lean”: Immediately upon contact with the string, the player’s finger tilts towards the scroll to prevent a vertical finger pressure. This enables players to locate the “harmonic” of the desired pitch first, which leads to “purer tone quality”, better intonation, and playing with less tension.

Strategies for Curing Stage Fright and Avoiding Playing Injuries:

In her book *Stage Fright* (1973), Havas suggests several psychological techniques useful to all musicians to help control

stage fright: (a) Players should avoid heavy “soul-searching” and judgmental attitudes towards music performances; (b) Players should avoid dwelling on mistakes and they should avoid obsession with “perfect cosmetics” such as a bow which is perfectly parallel with the bridge and (c) She reminds players to always look for ease in playing, suggesting that players repeat to themselves “it is either easy or impossible.” According to Havas’ teaching videos, all common injuries in violin playing such as tendinitis, fibrositis, bursitis, tenosynovitis, carpal tunnel syndrome, can be prevented and cured by obeying the principles of the *New Approach* which are proved by research and endorsed by the medical community as being therapeutically beneficial to players who suffer from performance related afflictions.

Useful resources for beginning/intermediate orchestra teachers:

In addition to Havas’ books and teaching videos, beginning and intermediate level orchestra teachers may find books written by Havas’ associates to be interesting and useful. These method books provide many well-illustrated exercises applicable to teaching young students:

- Chet Porcino, *Flying Fiddles*, Bosworth and Co.
- Gloria Bakhshayesh, *Dancing Bows*, Bosworth and Co.
- Gloria Bakhshayesh, *Ringling Strings*, Bosworth and Co.
- Ian Bewley, *A Cellist’s Inner Voice*, Bosworth and Co.

The Kató Havas Association for the New Approach (KHANA) is a professional organization founded by Havas’ former students with the purpose of spreading *New Approach* ideas worldwide. KHANA issues a twice-yearly newsletter that features editorials written by Havas. <http://www.katohavas.com/khana.html>

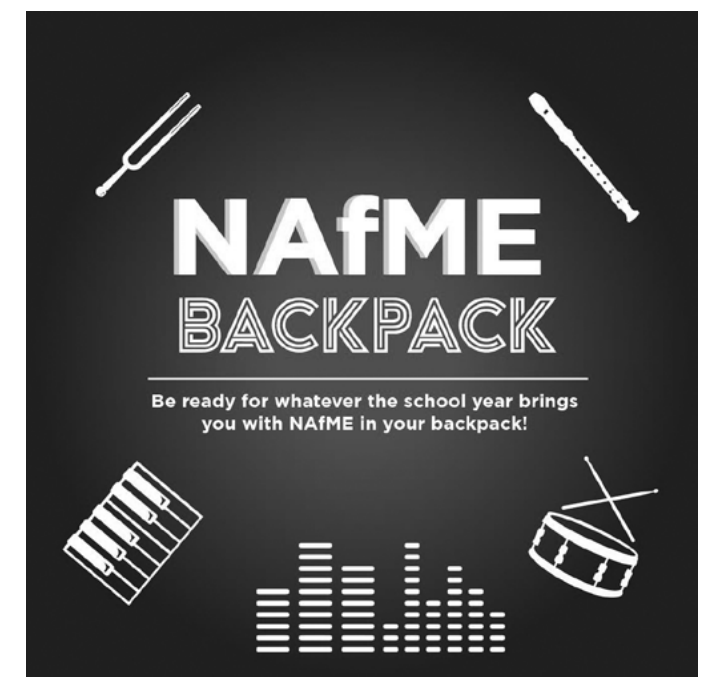
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Dijana Ihas conducting.

Dr. Dijana Ihas is an Associate Professor of Music Education at Pacific University, in Forest Grove, Oregon, where she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in music education, serves as an applied viola instructor, supervises student-teachers, and conducts university orchestra. She is a Founding Director and Master Teacher of the String Project, the first and only program of its kind in Oregon. While teaching in public schools, her orchestras won numerous state and national competitions. Dr. Ihas’ research interests evolve around instructional strategies, mentoring undergraduate research, and application of string pedagogy methods and approaches in orchestra classes. Her publications appeared in *American String Teacher* (AST) magazine, *Journal of String Research*, and *Council for Undergraduate Research* (CUR) Quarterly. Dr. Ihas’ educational background include MFA in Viola Performance (University of California, Irvine), MM in Music Education (University of Arizona) and PhD in Music Education (University of Oregon).



Lessons from Enabled Musicians

David Nabb

Professor of music (woodwinds) at the University of Nebraska at Kearney

Perhaps sometime in the past you have thought, “I’m not sure what to do with _____, the child with a physical disability who wants to participate in band or orchestra. I would like to include this individual, but where do I begin?” I had the privilege of visiting the Cincinnati [Ohio] Assistive Music Camp (CAMC) for three days in July 2016, and I’m certain that some of the innovative ideas CAMC uses to enable students with disabilities can benefit all your students, whether they’re living with a disability or not. This article points out five of these ideas that can be especially useful to instrumental music teachers.

Our young musicians with disabilities are not deterred by the enormous challenges they face. In my three days at CAMC, I met young people without arms playing the piano or cello with their feet (for the cello, this means placing the instrument horizontally in a special stand on the floor and using the bow with one foot while stopping the strings with toes on the other foot; for piano, it means playing with the toes). The lessons I learned at CAMC can be applied to students with disabilities



Kharan Wilbur plays cello with a prosthetic device that helps him hold the bow. Photo credit: Rob Amend



as well as able-bodied students. Other students were playing guitar, trumpet, euphonium, French horn, saxophone, recorder, violin, or cello with just one hand. Consider the motivation required by the students and teachers in such circumstances.

An Inclusive Approach

Research tells us that students with disabilities have the same interests in music as their able-bodied peers.¹ We also know that music educators would like to work with students with disabilities.² Therefore, if our minds are open to alternative performance techniques, there is no reason a student with a disability should not play an instrument.

Lesson 1: The Desire and Drive to Make Music Is Extraordinarily Powerful in Humans, Whether Able-Bodied or Disabled

This truth should be obvious to music teachers. Nevertheless, this desire and this drive can be easy to overlook. It is imperative that music educators never forget this and not take it for granted. I saw this principle in effect at CAMC more than anywhere else I’ve been. What students can do is often underestimated by music educators. Lesson 1 holds true for able-bodied students, and it’s likely even more true for students with disabilities since these students are facing the very real possibility that they may never again get the chance to make music. This might be part of what makes so many students with disabilities absolutely fearless.

CAMC is a week of high spirits and creativity that brings together young musicians with disabilities, their parents, music educators, engineers, inventors, and therapists. The success of the CAMC program comes from the integration of exceptional students, a team of caring and creative engineers, faculty members

experienced in working with music students with disabilities, and world-class facilities.

Lesson 2: Hardworking, Intellectually Curious Students Are the Essence of Any Learning Experience

All students at CAMC have serious disabilities: The majority have an “upper-limb difference.” Included in this group are students with upper-limb loss or limited range of motion caused by either (a) partially formed upper limbs, (b) amputations, or (c) cerebral palsy or other neurological conditions. These differences may be present from birth or stem from an event later in life.

The students at CAMC have enviable work ethics and intellectual curiosity. I spent a day teaching third through sixth graders at CAMC alto clef reading skills. Not once was I asked, “Why do I have to learn this? I don’t play viola.” The sheer willingness and enthusiasm of CAMC students to learn came to me as a pleasant surprise.

How can we encourage and develop these attributes in more of our students? At camp, I observed faculty members nurturing this through focusing on each student’s individuality. When difficulties were encountered, the approach taken was never that the student was incapable of something or not good at it but only that we had yet to find the best way for that student to approach a task. In most conventional instrumental programs, there is considerable emphasis on conforming to norms. Many school programs also face the additional burden of trying to get an I rating at concert. If nothing else, this may highlight a weakness in our current system. It will benefit us all if we become more aware of limitations inherent in focusing on conventional ways of doing things. Past practices may not take us to the next level.

Lesson 3: Technical Considerations Can Make All the Difference, Especially for Students with Disabilities

One of the most essential aspects of CAMC is the contribution of a volunteer organization of Cincinnati engineers called “May We Help?” Their volunteers provide free consultation with onsite design and development of prosthetic musical instrument adaptations. For example, I observed a child with only one fully functional arm who wanted to play the trumpet. She could do everything with the trumpet normally but because of the upper-limb deficiency couldn’t hold or stabilize the trumpet. A May We Help engineer had extensive consultations with the student, the brass teacher, her parents, and several other



Ava Astleford plays guitar with a prosthetic pick holder. Photo credit: Rob Amend

faculty members. Shortly thereafter, a trumpet stand mount was designed on the engineer’s computer and created on a 3D printer at Xavier University’s Center for Innovation, and the student was making music with the stand the next day. If the first iteration of an adaptive device is not ideal, it can be quickly edited or redesigned on a computer, 3D printed, and tried again the subsequent day (or days) until a solution is found.

The trumpet stand solution enabled this student to return home after CAMC and participate in band class with her able-bodied peers with no extra time required from her home band director. The goal of CAMC is for students to leave with enough technical help and adaptive strategies so their school music teachers will not need to give them more time than they do other students. For that student, the disability has disappeared from their musical life. In this way, CAMC provides the individualized time and expertise that students with disabilities need to get them involved in their local school music program. Many CAMC students return year after year to follow up on redesigning their prosthetic devices or gain more ideas of how they can adapt to more fully integrate with their ensembles. This was particularly true for the violinists and cellists, who play in nontraditional configurations. All the students who were using a foot or a deformed hand to bow had unique computer-designed “bow holders” that had been individually fitted to each child.



Kharan Wilbur plays cello with a prosthetic device that helps him hold the bow.
Photo credit: Rob Amend

Lesson 4: Successful Faculty Are Resourceful and Fearless about Thinking Outside the Box and Developing Creative Solutions

The faculty is led by the CAMC directors Jennifer Petry and Deb Amend and includes specialists in guitar, piano, strings, woodwinds, and brass. Often, a student with a disability can only benefit from unconventional practices. At CAMC, music-making is about what students *can* do—never about what they *can't* do. I met Anna, a guitarist who has one able-bodied leg and one able-bodied hand. Anna uses a floor stand to hold the guitar upright in front of her; she frets the strings with her left hand and strums with her right foot. This year at CAMC, she learned that various *scordatura* guitar tunings (which make certain passages easier to play) can at times be beneficial to a student with a disability, whereas an able-bodied student may not need them. Although one might think that the students would get confused when some of them are using different fingerings and holding positions, from what I saw, this was not an issue.

Lesson 5: Don't Be Afraid to Ask for Help from Others with Special Resources or Expertise

While CAMC began in 2013 as a summer vacation project at a CAMC director's home, Xavier University in Cincinnati now plays a vital role. Xavier is making available first-class housing, classrooms within the Department of Music, and technical support from engineers from Xavier's Center for Innovation. Often, more people are willing to help us than we might initially realize. As more people are included in our musical projects, the sense of community and the momentum supporting these endeavors will grow.

A Fundamental Experience

We can all learn from the young musicians with disabilities at CAMC. Think about why a person with a disability would go to these extraordinary lengths to make music. These young people are not trying to prove that it's really better technique to play cello with one's feet than one's hands. Rather, a performance technique that may seem completely unorthodox to an able-bodied person could be the best option available to a musician with a disability. And musicians with disabilities do not seek to prove that they have more talent or ability than their able-bodied peers: They simply want to make music.

I believe that making music is a fundamental part of the human experience. Music-making is as human as chatting with a friend or falling in love. When young musicians with disabilities make music, they are expressing

their humanity. For more information about Cincinnati Adaptive Music Camp, visit <http://cincinnatiadaptivemusiccamp.org/> and see how physical difference can be transcended by creativity and excellent music education.

NOTES

1. Judith A. Jellison and Patricia J. Flowers, "Talking about Music: Interviews with Disabled and Nondisabled Children," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 39, no. 4 (1991): 322–33.
2. David Nabb and Emily Balcetis, "Access to Music Education: Nebraska Band Directors' Experiences and Attitudes Regarding Students with Physical Disabilities," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 57, no. 4 (2010): 308–19.

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Playing Marimbas

Foundations and Adaptations to Help Build Success

Val Ellett

NW Representative, NAfME Council for General Music

Playing marimbas in music classes, using real marimbas or Orff instruments, can be an extremely valuable and enjoyable experience for all students. Time must be taken by you, the music teacher to really plan out in detail how, what, and why you want students to learn a particular piece of music. Since marimba playing is essentially a gross-motor skill activity, even students who lack basic fine-motor skills can find success in this enjoyable ensemble experience, as opposed to tackling ensemble skills with recorders or guitars. We do all of these in my district, but I make sure to spend some time focusing on drums and marimbas, as well. Drums and marimbas offer a higher percentage of success in more students.

Be prepared, and know your kids

In my inner city, high poverty, and very multicultural school district, I have a wide variety of different instructional needs for this diverse population. IEP's, 504's, behavior plans, and English learners make differentiated instruction essential. Over the years, I have collected some little "tricks and tips" to help make sure you get every student involved in successful marimba playing, no matter their circumstance.

Physical set up

To prepare for lessons in marimba playing, it is important that your classroom be already set up with instruments, and conducive to the teacher's moving around during teaching. Proximity to all students is important, and students should expect to see you move around the room, while you talk to them (as they stand/sit at their instruments).

YOU, the teacher, should be able to play every single part you will teach them from memory, upside down and backwards! You will most likely be standing on the other side of the students while they are at their instruments. Not only are you the teacher, but the students are teachers of each other. Setting up the room so that other students can get around to help each other even just observe over the shoulder of another student is imperative. Social and emotional learning occurs in a safe environment where they can try, fail, and try again.

Plans for Individual Practice

Practicing one's part (in a group of over 30 students) could happen with hands or fingers, saving full on mallet usage for "full class" playing. Teach the students HOW to practice. Show them what it looks like and sounds like, and proper mallet technique. Tell them what to do with themselves once they



have their part nailed down. Always keep the positive spin on what you WANT them to do, and not necessarily what you don't, or they will just go there. Be ready to assign harder parts for those fast learners who are already bored. Play a beat-keeping instrument with them, like a cowbell or a shaker.

Eliminate distractions, organize your space, and have everyone's attention before you present students with new tasks to participate in, from the basic singing of parts, all the way to playing as a group. Do you have a simple "stop signal" that you use every time, for everything? Teach it and practice it again. If you give information in very small chunks, and then repeat those small chunks often, students will more likely internalize that information.

Be sure that all rules about marimbas have been pre-taught, and practiced, to save everyone from headaches. For example: In my classroom, non-musical sounds are not tolerated. My classroom motto is clearly posted and taught, "Together, We Rock!". The motto is not, "By yourself, go ahead and play whatever you want right now..." Our reading teacher's classroom is right next door to my room; therefore, "noise" is not conducive to learning, and practice time sounds different than "goof-off" time. If you want, you could allow for some semi-structured goof off time, allowing the essential desire for child-like play, as opposed to the desired performance skills. Remind students that we should always treat instruments and each other with respect.

Foundational Skills

Sing the parts, in small sections, in key – students repeat. Sing the letters, in small sections, in key (as that's how marimbas are labeled) – students repeat. Have words to go with the song, even if you or the students just make them up. For example, I often use "Cho-co-late" to indicate any syncopated triplet-like rhythm. Whatever you decide to do, keep it consistent. When it comes back around in another way (ie: playing recorders or drums), then they will recognize it, and be more successful.

When a student moves in, have a plan in place for how they will catch up. Will they learn from another student? Maybe pick several kids to be on call. One kid might sing a part, "Hey, it goes like this – dooo daaaaahhh", and another kid might say, "Here watch me play it". And still another kid might say, "It's 5 of these

and 7 of those". See? Kids know how to differentiate for each other already, using kid-friendly language.

Add in claps and/or body percussion to the rhythms of the parts while singing it. If the melody line moves to the left or right on the instrument, be prepared to mirror the melody in movement, so that their movements will correctly go in the direction of where their mallets will eventually go. It's important not to skip the movement part, because anything learned with physical motion is more readily recalled when they get out to physically play their instruments.

While students are still seated (not on instruments yet) demonstrate how the marimba parts sound. Be ready to play on a marimba, in front of the class, upside down, so that they can watch you. Get the instrument as close to the students as possible. I've been known to even tip it towards them, holding it with my feet, while playing the parts upside down and backwards!

At this point everyone is excited to get on the instruments and play. But it's important to note that the foundational skills are a key component to build success and make for a rockin' good time for the students and you!

Let's Go PLAY!

Figure out how you want them to move out to the instruments. Do you want your behaviorally challenged students to be together or to sit with someone specifically prepared to help them be successful? Do you want fast-access to special learners to help them learn their parts quicker? Do you want students to play right away ("free time") or do you have a plan in place for once they get there? Figure this all out ahead of time, and tell the students your expectations. Have them tell you what the expectations are, then have them *tell each other*.

Pick high quality music, even if it's "easy". The most helpful tips in teaching the students new marimba material, is to teach it several different ways apart from the marimba, such as singing, body percussion, and movement. The best student-learning sticks when it incorporates all of these learning styles and more, AND the students have had lots of time to practice. You are using multiple modalities of learning.

Typically in my classroom I use actual marimba music composed with various intertwining parts (like music written by Walt Hampton), but you could start with music that will build student confidence and skills, and work up to more complex compositions. You could use a solid bordun to maintain a steady beat, or you and the students could create a unique ostinato. Of course, you should use marimba parts that contain simple unison-rhythms for younger students. As they get older and increase their abilities (you know your kids!), throw in parts that contain complimentary rhythms to the main part. Especially when syncopation is introduced, be sure to clearly teach that separate from the marimbas.

And Now...The Disclaimer...

I recognize there is a wondrous variety in pedagogical approaches to teaching music, and I am very respectful of that.... This is my own approach to teaching marimbas (and many other music units). What works in my classroom may not work in your classroom, or for your own personality or training. With that being said.....

The Student-Work Begins

Certainly, playing marimbas means learning ensemble skills. Everyone learns everything... every part, which gives me a chance to recognize the part that might be easier for specific kids. I sing in small, short sections (on key and in tempo), that students are expected to echo-play right after me. I do this several times per mini-section until I hear that most students "got it". I usually have the parts written on the board for younger students, and then provide "lettered-in" standard notation sheets for the older students, to be given at a later date.

Did you read the disclaimer?... Be careful, and don't allow NOTATION to be the focus. You could leave out any reference to standard notation at all, until students are several class sessions into their marimba work. Get them playing first, not reading. Presenting students immediately with notation could get very frustrating for the students and for you. Kids may think more about the paper in front of them, not the music to be made on the instrument or the ensemble skills they are learning. If you feel like students are understanding the physical and rhythmic components of playing their parts, then provide the paper with the notation in an intentional, meaningful way....

"See? THIS is what you just played! How cool is it, that you can already DO this!? Notice the bass line's quarter notes we talked about, and that you already practiced right here..."

Written melodic musical notation (but not rhythmic) for me, becomes more prevalent when they are learning recorders, band/orchestra instruments, and simple singing skills, when playing and practicing happens more often. Decoding skills must be firmly in place before notation reading. I can't tell you how many people I've talked to who quit their early piano lessons because the teacher demanded that they read music before they played the piano! However, the bottom line is this... if it works for you, and your kids are successful, then you need to do what works for you!

Differentiation For All Learners

Provide a non-standard notation sheet, that has only capital letters ie: on a post it, or index card, right ON the marimba, so the student can see it faster. Align the post-it so that it doesn't interfere with playing the part. Point and speak or sing the letters on the post-it, as you demonstrate for the student on the instrument, at the same time (assuming you have two hands).

Use color-coded instruments (if you have them) that coincide with color-coded notes/letters on your teacher-created "notation"... which could be as simple as drawing the direction of the music to be played. Have a large, detailed marimba visual aid to hang up. In my room, we laugh about how terrible my paper-laminated marimba sounds, while I'm re-showing specific information to the class.

Give lots of opportunities for self-practice, using hands or fingers – and then mallets at the appropriate times. I usually

mosey around the room and do several "check-ins" with students to see if they need additional assistance. However, be aware that sometimes students will get nervous or frustrated if you are "hovering", so become skilled at spotting those who need help from across the room, when perhaps they think you are not watching.

Use post-its stuck to the marimba that mark which note to start on, or label an entire part.

Be a Part of Your Teaching Community

Utilize your occupational therapists, counselors, classroom assistants, other students, and of course, classroom teachers to get ideas on how your special learners will respond best to your instruction. Be sure to read up ahead of time on any special documentation your students may have (ie: 504 plans, IEP's, etc.), as several successful learning tactics will already be spelled out for all the teachers to know.

Label instruments with Braille, in order to help those students who are visually impaired. Get any worksheets, books, or other print material labeled with Braille MONTHS in advance. Be aware that music-Braille is different than traditional Braille letters. Can I read Braille? No. But I requested a sighted-person "cheat sheet" that allowed me to help my student with a tad more know-how.

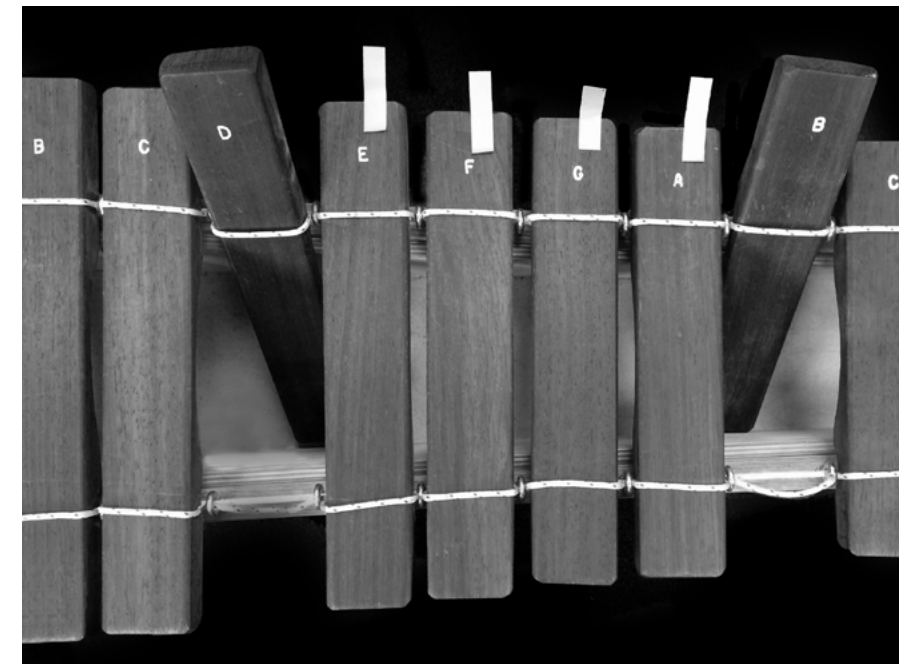
Create special mallets that will work for those students who have physical impairments. Be thinking of the student's gripping capabilities, and their ability to aim at the bars. Work on rigging up marimbas or mallets for appropriate height and distance requirements, if your student uses a wheelchair. Keep student safety in mind.

Make sound-adaptations for a loud music room, by having noise-dampening headphones on hand for the student who may be extremely sensitive. Remove pipes, dampen bars with cloth underneath, or perhaps even leave out using any larger/louder instruments that might cause a student to be overwhelmed.

Use a classroom microphone system for students who need to hear you better. Believe it or not, that is MOST students! Having your voice at a slightly higher volume helps kids pay better attention in class. Don't yell, raise your vocal pitch too high, or otherwise you'll hurt your teaching voice! I've



A marimba marked with easy-notation, letters only.



A marimba dually marked with a single part, and extraneous bars removed.

discovered that I can actually talk very calmly and quietly with our new classroom microphone system. Be sure to recognize when the audio system is too loud. Remember to talk softly and keep the volume at a reasonable level. If you want students quiet, remember your stop signal, be patient, reteach, and practice.

Some Last Thoughts

These are just samples of some ideas to assist you in adaptations for playing marimbas for all learners. You, as the teacher must know your students. I just can't stress this enough. Learn to read their social cues and their emotional state of mind as best you can, and be ready for "on the fly" adjustments to your lessons. Make students feel good about whatever it is they *can* do on marimbas, and any other instruments. Keep track of their improvements by goal setting and explicitly stating what skill they have achieved, rather than comparing students to other students.

Find joy in your teaching and let some of your own quirky personality shine through in front of your students. If you love what you are about to teach them, they will be very motivated to learn right along with you!

EXTRAS!

Feel free to pilfer these resources I've created! You would not use every learning target for every grade level... as it's a steady progression of skills, and you know your kids. Also, certainly, your learning targets may vary for what your (and the student's) end goals will be. Remember to allow time during your unit for formative feedback along the way, so that they have time for corrections and growth, as they are able. The language written in the "Actions to Take" might be something I speak to students, not necessarily post up on a wall for all to try and read, but it gives you sense of the kind of feedback and goal-setting you could offer a student.

Sample Mallet Unit

Mallet Rubric – Overall Playing/Performing (Summative)

4. **correct notes and rhythms with appropriate mallet technique, no more than 1-2 mistakes**
3. **inconsistent rhythms / pitches / hand position, several mistakes**
2. **song is unrecognizable**
1. **no evidence of learning or skill**

Varying-Age Learning Targets, Student Self-Assessments, and Formative Feedback

- △ **yeah, I got this! Now what?**
- **Almost there, what should I do?**
- **Not really, what should I do?**

1. I Can Identify if the Melody Goes up, down, or stays the same:

- △ **The notes on the marimba have high notes and low notes, and I can show/see/hear the direction the melody goes.**

Action to take: Can you show this direction 3 different ways?...on your printed music, on your instrument, and explain it to someone else with words and/or singing?

- **I don't see/hear where the melody goes, can't show/see/hear.**

Action to take: How closely are you listening, before trying to demonstrate it? Can you copy someone else, or ask for help? Imagine: birds sound high, elephants sound LOW, and people sound about in the middle.

2. I Can Identify quarter notes, quarter rests:

- △ **I know (and can demonstrate) what quarter notes/quarter rests look like, and how to perform them.**

Action to take: Be sure you are confident. Can you still do the notes in a faster or slower tempo? Could you explain this concept to another student? What if there were a playing test right this minute? How do you think you would do?

- **I do not know (nor can I demonstrate) what quarter notes/quarter rests look like, and/or how to perform them.**

Action to take: Focus on your steady beat, use words to substitute for the notes, look at your printed music for clues, ask a neighbor or Ms. Ellett for more help.

3. I Can Play the Correct Notes:

- △ **Perfectly! No mistakes!**

Action to take: Continue to practice, or teach others near you to improve their playing. If you feel very confident, then stop playing out loud for now (as the noise-level in the room will decrease, thank you!). You can still use a "no-sound" technique on the instruments to keep practicing in your body.

- **Not bad! Only a couple of mistakes!**

Action to take: Ask for help from Ms. Ellett or a neighbor, ask questions and focus on where the trouble might be, take a look at which hand(s) are playing which notes, look at your music for clues. Keep at it, sometimes it takes a LONG time to master something.

- **I'm hardly ever playing the right notes.**

Action to take: Ask for help from Ms. Ellett or a neighbor, ask questions and focus on where the trouble might be, take a look at which hand(s) are playing which notes, look at your music for clues, ask to come in before or after school to work 1-on-1 with a fellow student or Ms. Ellett. Keep at it, avoid being frustrated. Sometimes it takes a LONG time to master something but you can do it!

4. I Can Play with Proper Technique (all 5 for the win!):

- △ **Fingers wrapped around, no pointer fingers**

- △ **Mallet plays in the middle of the bar, no sticks hitting the wood.**

- △ **Mallet bounces off the instrument, not stopping the sound**

- △ **I look at my instrument while I play, to see the notes.**

- △ **Palms down, tops of hands up.**

5. I Can Manage my Practice Time:

- △ **I know how to work independently on the marimba, using my hands/fingers to practice, and can be ready or almost ready when the teacher asks for attention.**

Action to take: Congratulations! You know how to wisely use your limited time in music class! Are you able to help someone else?

- **I need more help from Ms. Ellett or a friend, because I'm not sure what practicing by myself looks like.**

Action to take: Look around at those students who seem to "have it all together". What do they look like and sound like while they are practicing? You should ask Ms. Ellett or another student to help you, if that is a good way for you to learn.

- **I tend to socialize, look around the room, daydream, or otherwise not use my time wisely working on my part.**

Action to take: Same as above (blue), but you and Ms. Ellett may need to have a private conversation about taking responsibility for your learning. You don't have to have things perfect, and it's OKAY to be frustrated, confused, lost, or just "out of it".... But you are here to learn,

and NOT using your time wisely will reflect on you later in life. So what steps or plan are you making to improve your personal practice time? Do you need help? Can you put your needs into a statement or questions?

6. I Can Play with a Steady Beat:

- △ **My notes fall right in line with everyone else's, not too fast, not too slow.**

Action to take: Continue to keep your beat steady, without any distractions. Try staying steady, but playing FASTER or SLOWER.... Can you maintain a steady beat if the tempo changes? How will you help others to maintain their own steady beat?

- **My notes are mostly right with everyone else's, but I can quickly hear when I need to correct my steady beat.**

Action to take: Great job course-correcting yourself! That is a great skill to have, and shows that you are listening and paying attention to those around you! Now.... Read the green print, above....!

- **My notes are never with everyone else's.**

Action to take: Ask for help from Ms. Ellett or a neighbor, ask questions and focus on where the trouble might be, take a look at which hand(s) are playing which notes, look at your music for clues, ask to come in before or after school to work 1-on-1 with a fellow student or Ms. Ellett. Keep at it, avoid being frustrated. Sometimes it takes a LONG time to master something!

7. I Can Perform with Blend and Balance in an Ensemble:

- △ **I know exactly how my part fits with others, even if I mess up my notes.**

Action to take: Continue to keep your part not-too-loud or not-too-soft, without any distractions. Try staying steady, but playing FASTER or SLOWER.... Can you blend and balance your part if the tempo changes? How will you help others to maintain their own parts to blend and balance?

- **I sometimes don't know where I am, but can quickly figure it out by listening and trying again.**

Action to take: Great job course-correcting yourself! That is a great skill to have, and shows that you are listening and paying attention to those around you! Now.... Read the green print, above....!

- **I need more time to blend and balance with others.**

Action to take: Ask for help from Ms. Ellett or a neighbor, ask questions and focus on where the trouble might be, take a look at which hand(s) are playing which notes, look at your music for clues, ask to come in before or after school to work 1-on-1 with a fellow student or Ms. Ellett. Keep at it, avoid being frustrated. Sometimes it takes a LONG time to master something!

Jazz Column

Dan Davey

Director of Jazz Studies, Mt. Hood Community College



It is that time of year when we return to our band rooms rested, energized, and ready for a year with new experiences and opportunities for your students and your program. As I begin my second year as your OMEA Jazz Chair, I am excited about the direction of jazz education in our state. If there is any way I can be a resource for you or your program, please feel free to connect with me.

As we enter the second year using the newly revised Oregon Jazz Rubrics, please remember that these are required for use in order to qualify for the OMEA State Jazz Festival, held this year on Saturday, May 19, 2018 at Mt. Hood Community College. The rubrics can be downloaded from the "Members Only" section of the OMEA website. If you need help or information on hosting a qualifying festival, please feel free to reach out to me. I will also host a session at OMEA this January on the new rubrics and will give information on using them at your festival.

All-State Jazz Band

In recent years, the audition numbers for the All-State Jazz Band have been surprisingly low. Please encourage your students to audition for this honor jazz ensemble so we can continue to improve the quality and experience for your students. This year, Dan Gailey will be conducting our All-State Jazz Band. I know Dan to be a wonderful musician and educator and someone that your students will enjoy working with.

Dan Gailey, saxophonist/composer/arranger, is the Director of Jazz Studies and Professor of Music at the University of Kansas, where he directs Jazz Ensemble I and Jazz Combo I, and produces the annual KU Jazz Festival. Dan is the recipient of the 1996 International Association of Jazz Educators (IAJE) Gil Evans Fellowship, an annual award that identifies an emerging jazz composer from an international field of candidates. Under his direction, the KU Jazz Studies Program has been the recipient of 19 *DownBeat* Student Music Awards, including Jazz Ensemble I's award as Best College Big Band in the United States or Canada in 1997. Jazz Ensemble I has appeared under his direction at IAJE Conferences in New York City, Atlanta, and Boston, the 1992 Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago, and the 2008 Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland.

Dan holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Pacific Lutheran University and a Master of Music degree in Theory/Composition from the University of Northern Colorado. His compositions can be heard on numerous professional and college big band albums and are published exclusively through UNC Jazz Press. *What Did You Dream?*, his debut CD with the Dan Gailey Jazz Orchestra, was released in July 2010 on Origin/OA2 Records and features all original compositions.

Jazz Nuances and Ensemble Balance

As you begin your rehearsals for the year and prepare for upcoming festivals, I wanted to provide some ensemble tips to consider for you

and your students. We know that dynamic markings are guidelines for sections of the music and are relative. It is important to establish points of reference within your ensemble, empowering your students to make informed decisions while playing. Saying "That's not *piano!*" is less helpful than saying "Saxes, can you play your line underneath the sound of the trombones in this phrase?" This gives your students a point of reference for their volume and opens their ears to another aspect of the composition. Often times, the melody should be balanced the loudest, followed by the countermelody and then any supporting rhythmic or harmonic accompaniment.

We also know that each phrase within those dynamic markings needs shape and nuance to make it musical. Jazz phrases are generally shaped according to the contour of the melodic line. As the notes ascend, the volume increases and as they descend, the volume decreases. In addition, the first, last, and highest notes in the phrase are emphasized while the lower notes are "ghosted," or given less attention.

Jazz Articulations

Jazz was built on syncopation. The appropriateness of its style derives from the idea that parts of the beat which are generally unaccented will now receive more weight and attention. In traditional music, the emphasis is placed on the downbeats. In jazz, we slightly accent the upbeats, especially when followed by a rest or a tie. In longer phrases of eighth notes, the jazz articulation has us tongue the upbeats and slur into the downbeats. It is important to make sure that the lines are played in a legato style with each note connecting to the next.

Short notes in a swing style are typically accented, especially at the ends of phrases. I think of both staccato and "roof-top" accents with the articulation "DUHT." This interpretation gives the note more length and emphasis than the "DIT" articulation. I also have students articulate the start of the note with a firm "D" accent. Unlike traditional music, the end of the note may also be articulated to get an energetic stop to the note. This would depend on the style of the piece and not be appropriate for ballads. I recommend having your students sing articulations and match the approach. You can challenge your lead players to make these decisions and communicate them with the remainder of the section. I hope these concepts and ideas are helpful as you are laying the groundwork for this year. Please feel free to reach out if there is any way that I can assist you.

NAfME Northwest Division Conference Portland 2019



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Developing Independence in Elementary School

Mari Schay

OMEA General Music Chair



What if you were to think of your students as musicians instead of music classes? How would it shift your thinking? Your teaching? Their learning? Their approach to music?

After some conversation with a colleague, I made that shift several years ago with my third, fourth, and fifth graders. My goal was that my students would feel more connected to music, but there have been many wonderful unanticipated consequences. The kids no longer view me as the main decision-maker. Instead, they now suggest ways to change and improve the music we work on. They are able to determine what they are doing well and what needs work. They create new forms for the music and become experts on their favorite instruments. The end result is not so much that I see them as young musicians, but that they see themselves that way.

For me, this has been a gradual shift in thinking with lots of experimentation and more than a few dead ends. Below, I will describe some of the things that have worked for me.

Change the language

Use the word “musician” whenever you refer to the students. Set up expectations for what musicians do, how they stand when they sing, what they do with their instruments when they are not playing, how they approach learning new material, and how they collaborate with the other musicians in their ensembles.

Use the same musical vocabulary as professional musicians use. A fermata is not a “bird’s eye,” a guiro is not a “fish,” and eighth notes are not “ti-tis.” Teach your young musicians to use that vocabulary too. If they suggest something should get louder, repeat the sentence with correct vocabulary, “So, you think we should add a crescendo?”

Teach critical listening skills, then put young musicians in charge

What are the key things YOU listen for when working on a piece of music? Balance and blend, ensemble, intonation, enunciation, tonguing, technique, fingering? Whatever it is you listen for or look for, teach your students to listen and look for it, too, using the same vocabulary. Then, when the class is singing or playing, ask the students to identify two or three things to work on. Post them where the students can see, then assign one student to listen or watch for each aspect.

For example, when playing recorder, you want to see left hand on top, hear good tone without squeaks, and see correct fingerings so that you hear correct notes. Choose four students to listen and watch for each of those elements of good recorder technique (without playing themselves). At the end of the song, ask each student to describe what they saw and heard, then to rate the class as a whole, using whatever rubric you prefer. The next time through, choose new students and challenge the class to increase their scores. If the class is missing something you want to see improved, explain, describe, or model the missing element, then put a student in charge of analyzing the progress.

Allow young musicians to become “experts”

Give young musicians many musical platforms from which to jump. Singing is an essential part of good musicianship at any age. Develop a culture of singing so that your current first grade boys will be enthusiastic singers in fifth grade. At the same time, introduce as many different classroom instruments as possible. At the very least, your students should have the opportunity to play a melodic instrument (recorder, Orff instruments), a rhythm instrument (classroom percussion, drums), and a harmonic instrument (Orff instruments, piano, guitar, or ukulele). The more variety of experiences your young musicians have, the more likely they are to connect with some aspect of music making.

Once your musicians have had a variety of experiences, allow them at least one chance to choose their field of expertise. If possible, choose an ensemble that has room for Orff instruments, hand percussion, recorders, ukuleles, and vocalists. If that is too much, let students choose which part they sing, or whether to play recorder or sing on a certain song. Small choices give students more ownership over their musical experiences.

Let young musicians create arrangements and forms

Some music is composed and you sing or play it exactly as written, but lots of upper-level elementary music has room

for creativity. Like a good story, a good piece of music has a beginning, a middle, and an end (form); there is a setting (instrumentation); and there are even characters (okay, characteristics – such as dynamics, vocal quality, and tempo).

There are many decisions to make before it is performance ready:

1. **Form:** How should we start and end? What should happen in the middle to keep the audience’s interest?
2. **Setting:** What kind of accompaniment would complement the song? Are there any instruments or effects that would bring out the mood of the song?
3. **Characteristics:** How fast should the song go? Will it stay at that tempo? What dynamics should we use? Do we want any solos or small groups?

Whenever possible, let the students suggest additions, forms, instrumentation, or any other way to make the music their own. If time and circumstances allow, let your students suggest and try out two options for every decision, then vote on their preference. One key, though – if you let them vote, you MUST accept their decision, even if it is not your preference. Use intentional grouping and partnering

Any working group is only as strong as its weakest member. It is just as true for a relay team as for a musical ensemble. Establish the fact that each member of the ensemble needs to work together in order to be successful and that we are all responsible for the music we create. If someone is struggling, we are all going to struggle. Therefore, it is to all our advantage that we leave no one behind. Spend time thinking about work groups and partners that will be effective, much in the way the classroom teacher thinks about table groups. This does not mean you always separate friends, but that you think ahead about how to get everyone working to their best ability. The student who thrives with the gross motor skills needed to play hand drums may have a hard time with the fine motor skills needed to play a recorder. Partnering a student with excellent rhythm with a student with great fine motor skills will lead to better playing for both because one can quickly grasp the fingerings while the other can insure that the rhythm is accurate and that there is a consistent steady beat.

Use maestros and scouts to monitor behavior

Assign a maestro or scout to monitor behavior and make musical decisions. I know every school is different, so what works at my school may not work at yours, but here is what works for me. First, my school has standard school-wide expectations and a monthly character trait.

On my white board, there is a list of points available:

- _____ Be Respectful
- _____ Be Responsible
- _____ Be Safe
- _____ Work Ethic (character trait)

On each line is a magnetic card that has a check mark on one side and an X on the other. Each class tries to earn all four points. Sometimes they start with four and lose them; sometimes they start with none and earn them: it depends on how they have been doing. Sometimes I control the points, but it is usually more effective to assign specific students to monitor them.

When I greet the class in the hall, I can say (even to kindergarteners), “Julio and Natasha, can you please go in the room and watch the class come in. Julio, you look for the “safe” point and Natasha, you look for the “respectful” point.” Once we are in the room, I will assign two more students to monitor the other two points. Alternatively, I will hand the check/X cards to four students in the hall and assign them a point to monitor throughout class. The kids are much harder on each other than I am on them.

With older students, I have two maestros pre-selected each day (so that everyone gets a turn eventually). Their names are on the board and they are in charge of selecting the vocal warm-ups for the day and choosing the “star students” at the end of the day. They also help with passing out materials and monitoring the points as needed. If there are any quick musical decisions to make, the maestros make those, as well.

Let young musicians choose what to share

Musicians who choose the music they will perform will work harder to prepare it. If you do a musical for your concerts, try to let your students listen to selections from two different musicals and choose the one they are more excited about. If your concerts are more free-form, ask the musicians what they would like to share with their families. You can set up parameters for what needs to be included, but let them choose within that framework.

For example, for their final concert of elementary school, the fifth grade musicians will choose one song from every grade (fifth graders singing Baby Bumblebee!), one ensemble per classroom, and one pop song with ukulele accompaniment for the whole grade. They can also choose to sing or play their own song. That way, I make sure the families see a well-rounded curriculum as well as a progression of skills, but the kids buy into the actual selections and feel proud of their growth over time.

Fill your time with music...always

If you want your students to take music seriously, you must do so yourself. Make sure every activity you choose has a purpose and that every day of music class leads to better musicianship. Communicate this to your students, ideally in front of their classroom teacher, "Today, we are working on hearing and playing chord progressions. At the end of our class, you should know what a chord is, be able to hear when to change chords, and be able to shift between two chords on your ukulele. I hope it will change how you listen to music on the radio."

If your students earn points toward a reward, make that reward an active musical one. Earn time to have a drum circle or play a music game rather than watching a movie or going outside to play. Think about the message in every action you take and every word you say. Always convey the message

that making music is fun, that every person is musical, and that it music its own reward. Creating young musicians and empowering them to make musical decisions takes a shift in thinking and a willingness to be a teacher and advisor rather than a director or conductor. Initially, it may require simplifying the music itself so that there is time to provide decision-making opportunities. It also requires the teacher to let go of all the decisions.

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Team Beauty

Jeff Hornick

Band Area Chair

I had the good fortune last June to attend the conducting symposium at the University of Oregon with Dr. Rodney Dorsey, University of Oregon Director of Bands, and guest clinician Dr. Mallory Thompson, Director of Bands at Northwestern University. It was with these two words, "Team Beauty," that Dr. Thompson began her final classroom session with the workshop conductors. It was, in effect, her charge to us to approach our teaching, and in fact our lives, from an artistic standpoint, to be a member of Team Beauty.

Beauty is, of course, in the eye of the beholder and, I think it goes without saying that "beauty" isn't always "pretty." Beauty is, however, "authentic" and in order to achieve beauty we must always play music of the greatest worth. I wrote something similar my last journal column (which if you missed it I'd encourage you to take a look at www.budiansky.com/MUSIC.html for some great thoughts about the repertoire to which we often subject our students) but I'd like to go beyond that topic and discuss how we might, as conductors, lead our students to authenticity and beauty.

To start, I'd like to relate an experience I had several years ago while observing an All-State Band rehearsal. As an aside, I do really recommend taking some time at an All-State or All-Northwest conference to observe the honor groups' rehearsals. Watching these rehearsals made me, in a word, angry. There was no attempt that I could make out, at least, to lead the students down an artistic path. I remember no questions being asked of the students by the conductor nor any attempt to elevate the musicianship of the students. The rehearsals were a seemingly endless series of "reps," section by section of the music, with focus strictly on the technical details of the pieces devoid of any musical goal other than playing the right notes at the right time at the right dynamic level. It was, for me, depressing to watch the process knowing that the students were capable of so much more. As I've thought about it over the years though, I think that the atmosphere in the rehearsal hall was dictated by the repertoire that the conductor chose. In other words, the only possible rehearsal structure was the one I observed because there wasn't enough "music" to do anything else.

So, having chosen music of great worth (yes, there ARE grade 0.5, five-note beginning band pieces of great worth), and assuming that we want to lead our students to an artistic experience, what are the next steps? First, study the score. REALLY STUDY THE SCORE! Go well beyond what you can get by glancing at the page (key signatures, time signatures, ranges, etc.). Figure out instead how the composer has used his or her palette to create something worthwhile. And at this point you may find out that the piece has less worth than originally hoped for. How does orchestration change throughout the piece? Is the harmonic and/or melodic material varied throughout the piece or is it an endless series of eight-bar phrases with the same harmonic



structure and a melody reminiscent of musical pablum? Does the composer use humor or other musical devices to tell a story?

Having done the proper score study, next figure out how you're going to convey the information to the ensemble. If it's a purely technical skill, go ahead and teach it to the kids. No amount of wonderful baton technique will get the trumpets to play F# with the second valve. If, however, the problem is of a musical nature (phrasing, articulation, dynamics, line shape, etc.) then try and find a way to solve the issue with your conducting. In other words, make every gesture have some relationship to the music. (Yes, even in beginning band!) How do we know what that might be? Score study and practice!

After that, empower your students by asking them questions in rehearsal and listening to their answers. Teach them how to listen and correct problems with balance, blend, intonation, etc. Make it THEIR responsibility to correct those issues. Ask the students how THEY would would make something better. Have them come up with different phrasing options, trying the various "ways" and then voting for the one that works best. (Pro Tip: It will often be the one you'd have picked.) If appropriate, ask how they might have written something to make it "better" and then use those ideas as a stepping-stone for improvisation work, even in a non-jazz setting.

Going back to the conducting piece, don't be afraid to do more with the baton than just beat time. (Yes, even in beginning band!) Use the baton expressively (slash, push, pull, stroke, punch), whatever the music might demand. Don't be afraid to make mistakes! By correcting our mistakes, we grow as musicians (and as people...). As Dr. Thompson has written, "The only way to look like the music is to risk looking foolish."

Finally, I'll wrap this up with a quote that we discussed that I found inspirational. I hope that it resonates with you, as well.

Music is revelation! It must say something, it must tell truth that is human, or divine, or both. Just delivering notes, even if it's perfect, doesn't give this revelation at all. Performance is a personal witness...

— Herbert Blomstedt

Good luck with the start of your years and I hope to see you in Eugene!

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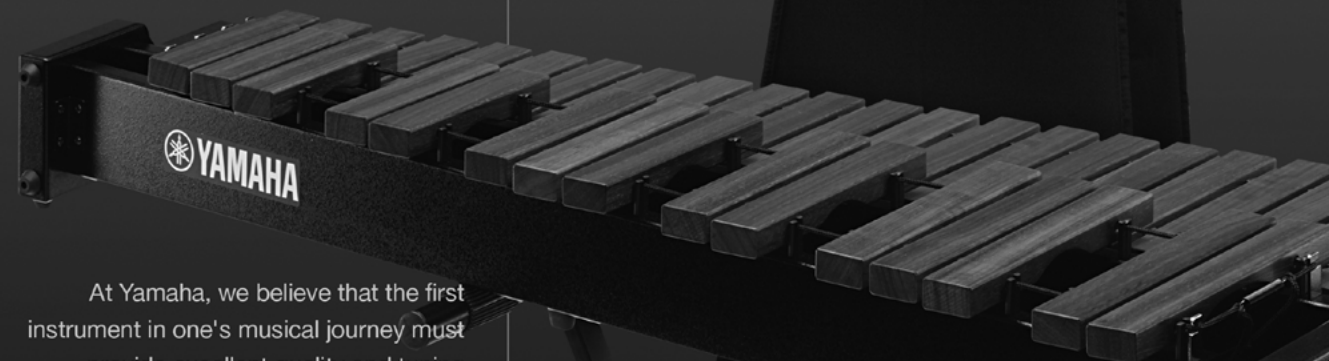
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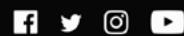


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“We are pleased to welcome two new faculty members to the music education program at the University of Oregon! This is an exciting time of growth for our program as we continue in our commitment to excellence in preparing future music educators for the 21st century.”

— Jason Silveira, Music Education Area Head

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DR. MELISSA BRUNKAN, CHORAL MUSIC EDUCATION

As the new choral music education specialist, Dr. Brunkan will teach graduate and undergraduate classes in the music education program and also conduct the University Singers. Brunkan holds degrees from the University of Minnesota, Northwestern University, and the University of Kansas and most recently taught at Louisiana State University as assistant professor of choral music education. Prior to her work at the university level, she taught in public and private schools in the Minneapolis/St. Paul, Milwaukee, and Chicago areas for twelve years, teaching students from pre-K through adult with an emphasis on secondary choral/vocal music. Her primary research interests include the use of gesture in choral/vocal pedagogy, lifespan voice pedagogy, singers with medical conditions affecting the voice, conductor gesture and behaviors, and the adolescent voice.

DR. ANDY STRIETELMEIER, STRING MUSIC EDUCATION

Dr. Strietelmeier joins the UO faculty as the string music education specialist. Strietelmeier holds degrees from Valparaiso University (BM) and University of Texas at Austin (MM, PhD). His teaching experience in orchestra, chamber music, and his private lesson studio includes working with students of all ages and ability levels, including students from three years old up to graduate students and adults. Prior to coming to UO, Strietelmeier conducted the orchestra and taught applied violin lessons at Denison University in Ohio. He taught strings at St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Austin, Texas, and all levels of orchestra and string ensembles with the University of Texas String Project. He served as a coach with the renowned Chamber Music Connection program in Columbus, Ohio, and as a teaching fellow at Stamford International Music Festival. Strietelmeier's research interests center on decisions and goal-directed behavior in the practice room.

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