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541-954-4589

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oregonmusicdirector@gmail.com  
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Aliyah.jackson@beaverton.k12.or.us  
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Southridge High School  
Anna.rikli@beaverton.k12.or.us  
503-356-2890

### Student Composition Chair

Kathy Briggs  
Saint Mary's Academy  
kathy.briggs@smapdx.org  
503-250-4259

### OMEA Journal Editor

Debbie Glaze  
Portland State University  
glazed@pdx.edu

Dianne Nelson  
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dnelson@central.k12.or.us

Danielle Davey  
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mjustice@ontario.k12.or.us

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danika.f.locey@gmail.com  
541-224-4465

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dbecker@lclark.edu  
503-407-4707

### NW NAFME Regional President

Tom Muller  
Retired  
tmuller2555@gmail.com

### NW NAFME Regional Past President

Scott Barnes  
NAFME  
barnessc@edmonds.wednet.edu

## PUBLISHING

### Cover Art & Journal Design

Aren Vandenburgh  
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# OMEA SUSTAINING MEMBERS

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# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR...

**JJ Sutton** OMEA Executive Director

Welcome to the spring edition of the *Oregon Music Educator*. I hope you enjoy the articles contributed by our colleagues. They serve to share a wealth of knowledge, expertise and inspiration. I also encourage you to patron our advertising partners. This publication would not be possible without the generous contributions of our advertisers and sustaining members. We are grateful for the businesses, universities, and professional ensembles who support OMEA and our members.

As we wrap the school year in less than two months, OMEA is already planning for 2023 – 2024! Following our conference this past January led by **Sean Williams**, the OMEA Board of Control approved the creation of Conference Chair. This position will operate in the same capacity as the All-State Chair, ensuring our annual conference in Eugene receives the same consistency and attention year to year as the All-State side of that weekend. **Elizabeth Soper** will be filling this role moving forward. She teaches music in the Lincoln County School District and has most recently served OMEA as the All-State Transportation Chair. Additionally, **Megan and Branden Hansen** will be stepping down after years of OMEA service as the All-State Co-Chairs. Filling that role will be **Kristi Stingle** from the Lake Oswego School District. She most recently served as the All-State High School Orchestra Co-Manager and is also a former OMEA Second Vice President. Adding Elizabeth and Kristi to the OMEA Executive Board cements our strength for years to come!

This past February, NAFME hosted their biennial regional conference in Bellevue, Washington. The conference, representing six northwestern states, was a weekend to remember! Oregon's **Pat Vandehey** received the 2023 Distinguished Service Award for a career of service and his influence on music education throughout the northwest United States. This conference was the last run by Oregon's own **Tom Muller**- he now moves into NAFME Northwest's past-presidency. **Dusty Molyneaux** of Montana begins his regional presidency which includes the All Northwest weekend in 2025 hosted in Spokane. Earlier this year the NAFME Northwest President-Elect position was filled by Washington's **Joe Dyvig**. His presidency will run from 2025 – 2027 including the 2027 All Northwest Conference, also scheduled for Spokane.

Looking forward to our own conference in 2024, **Sean Williams** passes his baton to **Erika Lockwood**. I won't issue any spoilers here but read her article for this year's theme and artwork!

Best wishes to each of you as we near the end of the school year. Please stay tuned for updates regarding All-State and the conference. Before you wrap the year at school, ensure your NAFME membership is current so that you can register your All-

State auditions in the fall. Additionally, please take advantage of registering for the conference by December 31st. The cost is significantly lower when you pre-register!

Finally, take time to congratulate yourself on the completion of another school year- for first year teachers, congratulations on the first of many! Days are long in the spring, especially down the final stretch. The school year never seems to wind down for music teachers. These final weeks are packed with performances, assemblies, and meetings. As you are stacking the last stand, hanging up the last bow, or simply dumping things in a box to deal with in September, reflect on what led you here. Know that you are difference makers, know that you matter.

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## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

**Ben Lawson** OMEA President

I would like to give a huge thank you and congratulations to our Conference Chair Sean Williams, and to our Co All-State Managers Branden and Megan Hansen for putting together an amazing conference for our students and educators. I would also like to thank and congratulate our Conference Planning Team for their amazing work, and the countless hours they put into making this conference run so smoothly. There are so many moving parts to our conference; bussing, housing, meals, student management, guest speakers, guest performers, equipment, luggage, AV, and finances. Each of these moving parts is vital to the success of our conference, and I am so grateful that the OMEA leadership is filled with amazing educators who care deeply about our organization and providing a quality experience for our students and educators. Their professionalism is unmatched.

During our winter board meeting some changes were made to the structure of the OMEA Executive Board. The position of Conference Chair has been created. This position will manage the technical aspects of the conference that stay the same from year to year, such as scheduling, communicating with clinicians and coordinating guest speakers and performers. These tasks were previously the duties of the 1st and 2nd Vice President. The 1st and 2nd Vice President will remain a vital part of the conference as they will be in charge of the visionary aspects of the conference such as the theme, logo and coordinating the banquet. The position of Conference Chair will allow the 1st Vice President and 2nd Vice President to focus on the

growth of our organization and the needs of our members. Since taking office I have heard from our membership that OMEA needs to become more than an “event planning” organization. This change to the executive board is the first step in that process.

In the past two years I've had multiple conversations with educators across the state about how their jobs have changed since COVID and the struggles they are facing. While it seems we are all experiencing troubles with reduced numbers, reduced FTE and reduced budgets, there are many other troubles that are different from region to region. With ever changing administrators, politically guided school boards, and the increased workload and expectations on educators we are all expiring these troubles differently. As I hear these stories of struggles, there is also a theme of positivity: our students are amazing, we love and care about them deeply, and we want to provide them with an amazing music education. As we navigate the ever changing landscape of the education field please reach out to OMEA for support. We want to hear your stories and we want to help you in any way possible. Please refer to the “Music Makers” page at the beginning of this journal and find your area and district chairs. These educators are your voice on the OMEA Board of Control. Please reach out to them and let them know how OMEA can best support your needs. OMEA is here to support you and your students!

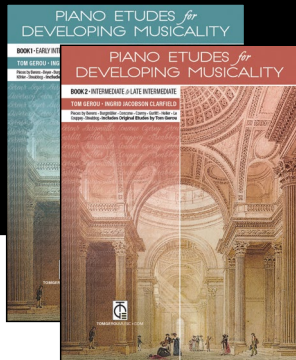
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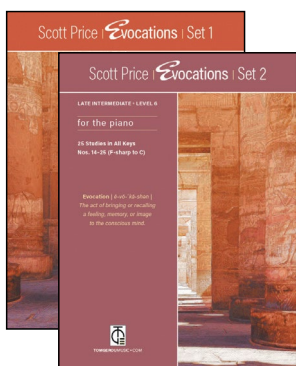
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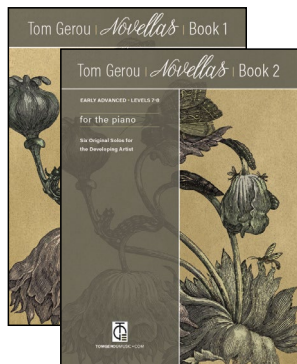
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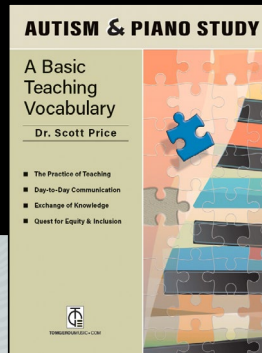
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# EDUCATION, THEN ACTION

Sean Williams OMEA 2nd Vice President

Fellow music educators:

I prepared the following remarks for the banquet at this year's conference, but when we got off schedule, I decided to save them for later.

Best wishes for a successful remainder of the school year!

Education, then action.

The theme of this year's conference is "Celebrating Diversity – Pursuing Harmony". I think that dovetails nicely with my previous statement. Education, then action. Learn about diversity. Embrace it. Love it. Then, take action to protect it and defend it.

Education, then action. Or, to put it in slightly different terms, telling is not teaching. How many of you have heard that phrase before? We know that the best learning occurs when students are able to apply their knowledge – and isn't that what we do every day in the music classroom? Education, then action.

The journey to this conference theme was not a quick one. In light of our nation's public reckoning with racial injustice over the past three years, I knew that I wanted the theme to emphasize diversity. I considered "Lift Every Voice", a reference to the hymn widely known as the Black National Anthem, but was wisely advised that this might be considered cultural appropriation. With guidance from many, but especially my friend Bruce Walker, I arrived instead at "Celebrating Diversity – Pursuing Harmony".

I am thrilled by the wide range of sessions that have been presented so far this weekend. We have had sessions on empowering students and embracing their personal musical heritages. We have had sessions on mariachi, jazz, rock, and a variety of other styles. I hope that this conference is seen as a step toward representing Oregon – all of Oregon – and the many ways we live our lives here.

And yet there is so much more to be done.

My stepmom – well, one of my stepmoms – my dad's wife – asked me probing questions, as she often does, about the conference theme and our offerings. "Do you have sessions on Russian and Ukrainian folk music?" she asked. "How about the music of China?" I didn't have a good answer for her. Clearly, there is more work to be done.

And what about my speech tonight? I had intended to start with a land acknowledgment. For those who are unfamiliar with the term, a land acknowledgement is a way of paying respect to the inhabitants of the land and thanking them for their stewardship. In the case of Eugene, it would be a tribute to the Kalapuya people, who have lived on this land from time immemorial.

But land acknowledgements come with ugly truths – that the Kalapuya people were dispossessed of their land in the 1800's through the actions of individual white settlers and the United States Government itself. They were forcibly

removed, first to the 1.1 million acre Coast Reservation, and later to the much smaller Siletz and Grand Ronde Reservations. Their descendants live today with the after-effects of these actions and the ongoing challenges of marginalization and racism.

I asked a friend of mine, a member of the Klamath Tribes, for her suggestions on how to proceed. For several days, she didn't respond – which made me nervous. When she finally wrote back, she shared her favorite resource on the topic, which was a blog post that basically said, "Don't do it, but if you do, follow it up with action" – actions like giving land back, protecting the environment, challenging ethnic stereotypes, and respecting tribal sovereignty.

Education, then action.

There is much more work to be done. It is messy, it is uncomfortable, but we can do it together. Celebrate diversity. Pursue harmony.

Serving as Conference Chair has been challenging but immensely rewarding. I am deeply grateful to all of the people who have worked to make this conference and All-State event a success. They include:

- Third party vendors: Marie Wirtz at The Garage, Aren Vandenburg, Rachel & Ashaundra at MAC Group
- Graduate hotel staff, especially Melody Kiser
- Conference Planning Team: Executive Board, Area Chairs, All-State Managers, and support staff

Friends and colleagues, this is your association. I encourage you all to participate and to contribute. Thank you.



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# SEEKING THE LIGHT WITHIN

Erika Lockwood OMEA President Elect

Hello, colleagues! I am excited to prepare for our 2024 All-State Conference: *Seeking the Light Within*. I hope you and your students will make plans to join us January 12-14, 2024 in beautiful Eugene, Oregon!

How many of us have enjoyed witnessing the transformation of a student in our programs when the *light* turns on? Perhaps it is a beginning instrumentalist, a young songwriter, or an older student who stumbled into the choir room with no prior singing experience. Maybe you remember your own moment of “spark” in a music classroom or stage. This illumination can occur when a student feels seen and included in your ensemble; it can happen during the realization of a new skill or trying a solo for the first time, with encouragement from peers or mentors, and of course during those magic moments when everything comes together in group performance. Every student deserves these experiences and I believe that every student has a *light* within that can be accessed through music engagement, and cultivated to enhance their life and community.

As we are rebuilding our music programs, think about which students are missing from our classrooms - how can we build

connections and access, while giving encouragement to those who are already invested?

*Seeking the Light Within* each student will help our programs grow and thrive, and is the first step in ensuring the future of music education. We need to be creative and forward-thinking in order to promote a more diverse representation of music teachers for the future. It's up to us!

I invite **YOU** to bring a performing group to the conference - show us how you cultivate the *light* in your orchestra, elementary choir, middle school band, chamber group, mariachi ensemble - yes, all levels and types of student groups are welcome!

Additionally, show us how you connect with students in meaningful ways by sharing an interest session with your colleagues. Your OMEA board would like representation from all kinds of programs and experiences in sessions and performances. Please submit your ensemble or session proposal, and encourage your friends to do the same! Head to our (not-yet-awesome) website now and get started - you can do it! [www.oregonmusic.org](http://www.oregonmusic.org)

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# 2023 ANNUAL OMEA AWARDS

**Jeremy Zander** OMEA Past President

On the evening of Saturday, January 14th, it was my privilege to present the annual OMEA awards to a deserving array of educators, administrators, and supporters of music education in Oregon. The OMEA Executive Board reviewed nominations and the following individuals were honored and presented with their awards at the annual OMEA banquet during the state conference.

## Outstanding Early Career Music Educator Award

**Cole Haole-Valenzuela**

This award recognizes a teacher in the beginning of their career who is showing exemplary work with their students and in their communities. The energy that the newest members of our profession bring is refreshing and inspiring.

This year's outstanding early career music educator is an Oregon native who was heavily involved in various Salem-Keizer performing arts programs while attending Sprague High School. He attended Oregon State University, earning both his Bachelor in Music Education and Music Education Master of Arts in Teaching degrees. He is currently the Director of Choirs at West Salem High School. He is currently serving on the OMEA board as chair for OMEA District 4 and in 2019 was presented with the Oregon ACDA Emerging Conductor Award.

Prior to West Salem, Cole Haole-Valenzuela taught at Silverton High School. His former colleague, band director Frank Petrik, shared that he "is one of the most genuine and loving people that I have had the pleasure to work with...Cole has taught me to be appreciate of the little wins, grasp tighter to the good things life presents and always find something positive in any situation no matter how challenging it may seem. Cole does this every day for his students and those who are lucky to be able to call him a friend or colleague." Steve Zielke, professor of music and Director of Choral Studies at Oregon State University, observed that "Cole was always the coolest guy in the room, but at the same time could be trusted to be kind and supportive of others... I have been so impressed at how he puts his head down and works, striving for the best from his students. But he does this without making it all about himself."

Carlos Ruiz, principal at West Salem High School, writes: "Cole is a gift because of who he is and who he is shows up in how he lives his passion for teaching and for embracing and elevating

human capital in his space. I am inspired every time I visit his space; yes because of the sounds (amazing voices), but more importantly how it feels to be in there."

Congratulations to our 2023 Outstanding Early Career Music Educator, Cole Haole-Valenzuela.

## Excellence in Elementary Music Education

**Allison Hedgepeth**

The Excellence in Elementary Music Education award recognizes an individual who has shown commitment to service in our profession and a focus on teaching children through music. This year's recipient has been deeply involved with the OMEA All-State Elementary Honor Choir, serving as a chaperone for seven years from 2012-2018, then serving as manager or co-manager of the ensemble ever since. She served as the elementary music coordinator for Lake Oswego School District from 2016-2020. She is a strong advocate for elementary music educators and *especially* for our state's youngest music education students. In 2018, she founded the OMEA District 14 Elementary Honor Choir and serves as manager to this day.

Music teacher Val Lock shared that "the characteristics of a master music teacher are embodied by Allison. She builds relationships with her students and coworkers, thus seeing that every student can and *will* succeed in their education. Any challenges that come her way are met with grace, humor and calm patience."



**Cole Haole-Valenzuela**



**Allison Hedgepeth**



In addition to being a master teacher, this year's recipient is also committed to the future of music education and regularly mentors novice teachers. Her colleague Lindsey McMahon shared that when Lindsay was "a first-year teacher six years ago...she would always give me her time and support me in everything with sage advice." Her former student teacher, Sarah Hotz, wrote that this year's recipient is "the most dedicated, innovative, and passionate educator that I have ever had the pleasure of working with and learning from. I am fortunate to have had Allison as my Cooperating Teacher as I was attending graduate school, and owe much of my career to her guidance. She continues to be a mentor to me, and has helped me (and other young educators) navigate the complexities of the education world."

Theresa Nute, a parent of one of her students wrote that Allison "made the school music program an inclusive space that all kids, regardless of innate musical ability, could thrive and have fun."

I could go on! Each and every letter written in support of this year's recipient mentioned her musicianship, leadership, positivity, level of organization, and her gift for mentorship and advocacy for students and colleagues.

Congratulations to our 2023 Excellence in Elementary Music Education Award winner, Allison Hedgepeth.

## Outstanding Middle School Music Educator

**Jennifer Kercher & Mandy Burton**

Last year, we introduced a new award category: the award for Outstanding Middle School Music Educator. This award recognizes our colleagues who have demonstrated excellence in teaching and music-making with that most magical age of middle school students. This year, we have two recipients for this award.



**Jennifer Kercher**



**Mandy Burton**

The first recipient's 20-year career has included positions at Crossler Middle School, Silverton High School, Mark Twain Middle School, and North Salem High School. She is currently the choir director at Walker Middle School in Salem-Keizer School District. Her colleague Danika Locey wrote that this year's recipient "is the epitome of what a middle school educator should be. She is kind and supportive to her students, and she cultivates a classroom where safe learning can take place." Stephen Lytle, the coordinator for music and drama for Salem-Keizer public schools said that her rehearsals are "focused, highly engaging, nurturing yet demanding, all while placing the student experience and culture of the ensemble at the forefront of the experience. She expertly balances "the conductor is in charge" with compelling student engagement and investment. It's magical to watch!"

Cole Haole-Valenzuela, who we honored earlier this evening, also wrote in on behalf of this amazing educator. Cole was actually a member of her choir when he was a student at Crossler Middle School. He reflected "Whenever I walked into her rehearsal, I was welcomed with a warm smile and enthusiasm... She was the positivity and support I needed in middle school." Later in his career, Cole was placed as a student teacher with this award recipient when she taught at Silverton. Cole eventually succeeded her as choir director at Silverton, then recently moved from Silverton to West Salem HS. He said "I have been asked why I made the transition to move from Silverton to West Salem. While there are practical reasons, an enormous reason was because I knew I would be working with Jennifer again... It was a great opportunity to learn from the best educator I have ever had the pleasure to learn from and know."

In addition to being an exemplary educator of students, her colleagues report that she is a wonderful teammate and advocate for other educators. Her colleagues know to connect with her for advice. As a colleague and PLC member, Jennifer is reliable, passionate and helpful. She is quick to offer accompaniment service, classroom management advice, repertoire requests or a listening ear when a colleague is having a difficult day.

It is my sincere honor to present the Outstanding Middle School Music Educator award to Jennifer Kercher.

Our second recipient is currently the band director at Harriet Tubman Middle School in Portland, OR, but has spent the bulk of her career teaching the bands at Highland Park Middle School.

Southridge HS principal David Nieslanik wrote "I had the pleasure of working with Mandy from 2012-2016 at Highland Park Middle School where I served as both Principal and Assistant Principal and Mandy served as our director of bands. After I moved to Southridge High School as Principal, I continued to interact with Mandy for

the next four years while she stayed at Highland Park Middle School as HPMS is a feeder school to Southridge, Beaverton, and Mountainside high schools. I can unequivocally say that Mandy single-handedly made all of our band programs better... hundreds of individuals fell in love with music under Mandy's instruction and continued to play and share their passion at both the high school and collegiate levels, and into adulthood. I would often sit in Mandy's classroom and be mesmerized."

Mandy's influence as an educator has expanded beyond the confines of her classroom, inspiring parents to become involved as supporters and advocates for music education. Her inspiration has had ripple effects that have extended well beyond the Beaverton community

Former band parents, Robert & Staci Blanding, wrote the following:

*Our three children were each taught by Mandy all three years of their middle school education over a consecutive ten-year period that gave us an extensive opportunity to observe and experience the impact of Mandy's instruction as a middle school band director and leader in her profession. In fact, there is no other teacher of our children across their entire school careers that has had a greater impact on our entire family than Mandy.*

*Neither of us are musicians nor did we take any music classes during our time in school. When our oldest entered sixth grade and was enrolled in Mandy's beginning band class, it was all new to us. All three of our children describe their classroom experience with Mandy as the best parts of being challenged – being held accountable; being pushed in a supportive manner beyond their comfort zone to stretch their capabilities and grow over time; and developing an understanding of being part of a team and being relied upon to deliver their part as well as support others as they do the same. They all became proficient in their instruments (with two of them becoming proficient in more than one), but more so they became better students and people overall – learning not only 'music', but also growing into more complete and functioning people through their three years in her class, plus time in jazz band for one, and with the spring marching program for all three – both of those activities including playing (and marching) in community events. Her students walk out not only with an education in music, but one in self-sufficiency, accountability, teamwork, and for many, leadership.*

Robert's letter went on to describe how Mandy's impact on music education extended beyond the classroom. He described how Mandy's creation of a 501c3 band booster organization inspired many parents, Robert and Staci included,

to continue their engagement with band programs beyond the middle school. More significantly, Robert became active in the leadership of the grassroots organization Beaverton Friends of Music – an organization that has had immeasurable impact on music and arts programs throughout Beaverton, and whose leaders helped organize a similar group for Portland Public Schools. Mandy has had a very direct impact in creating parent leaders through her passion for students, leadership, and advocacy – and thus a lasting impact for generations of middle school students not just in her school, but across the district. Robert and Staci's letter concluded "Mandy is the embodiment of what we think this award is about; not only should she win it, we'd name it after her if it were our choice."

It is OMEA's joyful honor to present Mandy Burton with the Outstanding Middle School Music Educator Award.

## Outstanding Contributor Award

### Randy Kem

The Outstanding Contributor Award may be awarded to an individual, business, or organization that has contributed to music education in an extraordinary manner through service, leadership, or advocacy. This year's recipient has been involved in instrument sales and repair since 1977. He started full time instrument repair in 1987 for Weathers Music in Salem and continued his work there until Weather's closed in 2012. Starting in 2011, he has been co-owner and operator of Willamette Valley Music, also in Salem. Willamette Valley Music is a full service, independent store that provides repair services, instruments, and accessories to the entire state and beyond.

In addition to providing exemplary service to music programs statewide, this year's recipient is also an accomplished performer as a clinician for both Yamaha and Jupiter saxophones. He is generous and enthusiastic when sharing his knowledge and expertise. Jaimie Hall, band director at Straub Middle School in Salem, wrote that "in addition to performing on numerous high school jazz nights, his store has provided area students with monthly jam sessions backed by a professional rhythm section."

North Salem HS band director Nathan Compton wrote that this year's recipient for this award "has been a foundational part of my program and my life. For two years, Randy taught me private lessons and planted the musical seeds that would grow into my deep passion for music. Since then, he has been a great mentor and friend to me. Willamette Valley Music Company and his work there have been critical in keeping our equipment functioning... Randy's life's work has



Randy Kem

amounted to an incredible amount of support and success for music all over the mid-Willamette valley and beyond!"

On behalf of everyone in the Salem region and in our entire state who benefit from his enormous contributions to our students, OMEA congratulates our 2023 Outstanding Contributor for Music Education, Randy Kem.

## Outstanding Administrator Award

### David Nieslanik

The Outstanding Administrator award is given in recognition of contributions to music education through administrative support. We work in an area of education that seems to need endless advocacy. Support for music education from an administrator is of the utmost importance and something for which we are always grateful and never take for granted. This year's recipient is currently the principal at Southridge High School in Beaverton, OR and also currently serves on the executive board of the Oregon State Activities Association as the activities representative. Prior to his time at Southridge, he was an assistant principal then head principal at Highland Park Middle School.

Southridge Choir Director Anna Rikli wrote, "In my 15 years of teaching I have worked with at least that many building administrators, many of whom appreciated the arts and loved seeing students explore their artistic passions, but David outpaces all of them. He attends every performing arts department performance, including multiple showings of our musical, and he stops students in the hall to ask them about our current theater production or the upcoming adjudicated festival. David ensures our programs receive an appropriate budget to support the purchase of music and instrument repair. He consistently includes our performing arts department in face-to-face meetings to get our input on building schedules, calendars, and outreach events."

David is an administrator who truly has a heart for music and performing arts education. Jeremy Zander shared, "David was principal at Southridge during my final year at the school. My wind ensemble had been selected to perform as part of the 2017 OMEA conference, and we were working hard towards the performance. Unfortunately, in the week leading up to the conference, Beaverton got nearly twelve inches of snow. The school district announced, of course, that everything was shut down and they canceled my band's trip to the conference. Without hesitation, David got on the phone and battled on our behalf, making the case that this performance would be one of the most important performances of many of these students' high school careers. Eventually, the powers-that-be relented, and I received word that we could go on the trip after all. Of the members of that ensemble, eleven of those students are currently pursuing music as

a career, with six of them attending this 2023 conference as current or future music educators!"

Mandy Burton, who worked under David for several years while they were both at Highland Park, wrote: "As an administrator, Mr. Nieslanik is everything you hope for as a music educator. He is a compassionate and effective leader, supportive of the arts and all teachers, as well as gregarious and involved with students. David was present at all concerts, fundraisers and important events for the band. He worked diligently on things like scheduling and budget to ensure equity of access, as well as quality of programs. The year that I taught the staff how to play "Jingle Bells" for a winter assembly, Mr. Nieslanik was enthusiastically playing tuba in the back row."

David's support of music education and of music teachers has impacted and will continue to impact thousands of students. For all you do for your community, your school, and for OSAA, OMEA honors Mr. David Nieslanik as our 2023 OMEA Outstanding Administrator.

## Exemplary Service to the Profession

### Scott McKee

The Exemplary Service to the Profession award recognizes significant contributions to music education through leadership, service, and advocacy. This year's recipient is a member of the American Bandmasters Association, the CEO of The American Band College, Organizing Director of the Western International Band Clinic, Editor of Bandworld Magazine, and Co-founder of the Pacific Honors Ensemble Program. He is a leader in our state, region, and across the United States. His work and operational management of the Western International Band Clinic has helped hundreds of band directors and thousands of students. WIBC continues to be a marker for a conference and honor band event that is run with precision, excellence, and enthusiasm. As CEO of the American Band College, he has elevated the teaching, conducting and artistry of thousands of band directors across



David Nieslanik



Scott McKee

the United States and beyond. The guest artists, clinicians, and conductors that he brings in for both WIBC and ABC are world class, but what sets this recipient apart is how he treats everyone like family. He forges authentic relationships with everyone he encounters, and his leadership continues to be unmatched in our region. It is our honor to recognize Scott McKee with OMEA's award for Exemplary Service to the Profession. Thank you, Scott!

## Outstanding Music Educator

### Robert Ponto

The Outstanding Music Educator award is given in recognition of exemplary teaching and outstanding achievement. This year's recipient started his teaching career in the public schools of West St. Paul, Minnesota and served on the faculties of the Oberlin Conservatory, East Carolina University and Pacific Lutheran University before making his way to the University of Oregon where he served as Director of Bands and Assistant Dean for 29 years.

Anyone who has ever worked under his leadership in an ensemble can attest to the brilliance, musicality, passion, and podium presence of this year's recipient. Dr. Nicholas Papador, one of his former students who is currently Professor of Music at the University of Windsor wrote, "He explained and showed the goals of the music in such a way that every moment on stage or in rehearsal felt profound and urgent... In my current job, I now sometimes lead our wind ensemble and I think about [his] presence at the podium daily. [His] 'beat three' gesture in a climactic *maestoso* passage is something I try to replicate constantly...it's as if the air is giving active resistance through which his baton is steadily moving, making the musical goal seem elusive and hard won, but absolutely necessary."

Several of tonight's previous award winners also wrote in about this recipient. Scott McKee wrote "I have been so fortunate to see over 100 guest conductors and guest composers at the

Western International Band Clinic and the American Band College and [he] has been my favorite conductor and music educator of them all. His joy for music is infectious when he is on the podium working with honor band students and adult wind ensemble members." Mandy Burton wrote "His passion for the music was always so apparent, and I hoped to convey *half* as much from the podium. [He] inspired me to show my students that I love the music, that I love what I'm doing, and that making music with others is a privilege."

As brilliant as a musician, conductor and educator as he is, he remains a genuine person and congenial person who can seemingly relate well with just about anyone. Rodney Dorsey, who succeeded him as director of bands at U of O, wrote "You seldom meet someone who has so much knowledge, but is also so down to earth. Bob's commitment to the musical intention of the composer is always present and his dedication to his students is so obvious."

Congratulations to OMEA's 2023 Outstanding Music Educator, Robert Ponto.

## John C. McManus Distinguished Teacher Award

### Scott Tuomi

John C. McManus defined the standard of service for music educators through a life of selfless service to his students and colleagues. The criteria for this award is a lifetime of exemplary service to Oregon music education, characterized by the highest professional standards; a distinguished record of leadership and teaching; and a record of significant and notable honors and influence.

This year's recipient is currently Professor of Music and Director of Choral and Vocal Activities at Pacific University in Forest Grove, where he also serves as chair of the music department. Now in his 36th year at Pacific University, Scott has conducted the Pacific University Chamber Singers in concert tours both nationally and internationally, including tours to Europe, Ireland, and Taiwan. The Chamber Singers performed last May at the Northwest ACDA Regional Conference in Spokane last March. Most recently, just a few hours ago, in fact, the Chamber Singers performed just a few miles from here as part of this very conference!

Beyond Pacific University, he directs several other choirs, including the *Balladeers* at the Multnomah Athletic Club and *Tsunami* (a choir for young tenors and basses which is a part of the Pacific Youth Choir choral organization). He is director and conductor at St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church in Portland.



Robert Ponto



Scott Tuomi

Dr. Michael Burch Pesses, his colleague at Pacific University wrote: "Scott is, above all, a fine musician...The Chamber Singers reflect Scott's professional, scholarly, and creative skill, and his 'standing room only' audiences attest to the extraordinary success of his teaching and conducting."

Dr. Burch Pesses elaborated on several accomplishments of our recipient during the last decade:

- He led the effort to institute Pacific University's music therapy degree program. Music therapy majors now account for about half of Pacific's music majors.
- He convinced the PU administration of the urgent need to renovate and expand the music building. He spearheaded, planned, and oversaw every aspect of the renovation of Taylor-Meade hall's lower level rehearsal room, including reconfiguring storage areas, adding instrument lockers, soundproofing as needed, and installing a state-of-the-art AV system.
- He made all arrangements – including faculty, scheduling, and classroom availability – to accommodate the music therapy majors who came to Pacific when Marylhurst University closed its doors. Many of those students reported that they immediately felt welcomed and accommodated.

Beyond his outstanding leadership at Pacific University, this year's recipient has served our profession in many ways. He

has served as Collegiate Repertoire chair and the governor of the Cascade chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing. Most recently, he completed a term as president of Oregon's chapter of the American Choral Directors Association. He is highly sought after as a clinician and is regarded by many to be a valued mentor.

Kristen Caldwell, director of choirs at Jesuit High School, wrote: I worked with Scott at Pacific University for two years as the director of the Concert Choir. It was my first university job and I had a healthy dose of imposter's syndrome. He was so encouraging and supportive, and he really shaped my time there as a formative professional experience... As Scott prepares to retire from his long-held position at Pacific University, I know he will be a bright light as a mentor to so many in our choral arts profession – adjudicating, helping in our classrooms, teaching our students private voice lessons. We are so blessed to have him in Oregon, and I can think of no one better to honor this year with this distinguished award for a lifetime of service and excellence in our profession." We absolutely agree with you Kristen, and so it is OMEA's honor to present this year's John C. McManus Distinguished Teacher Award to Scott Tuomi.

If you know of someone deserving of recognition with one of our OMEA awards at our 2024 conference, please submit your nominations through the OMEA website next fall.



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# ALL-STATE CO-CHAIR UPDATE

Branden and Megan Hansen OMEA All-State Co-Chairs

We hope you all had a wonderful time at the 2023 conference. It was a joy to get to reconnect with so many of you and to see so many students taking part in our great All-State ensembles.

We absolutely want to give a huge shoutout to all of the unsung heroes on the conference planning team who really make the entire event happen. From the ensemble managers to the luggage driver and everyone in between, we owe all of these volunteers a huge debt of gratitude. If you know *anyone* who helped put on the event or was involved in some capacity, please thank them for their efforts.

Now that the 2023 event is wrapped up, we are already working on the 2024 All-State ensembles with the goal of improving on the most recent conference's successes. With that in mind, if you have not done so already, please consider completing the "OMEA All-State Feedback Form" that was sent out via email. You can also access it at this web address: <https://tinyurl.com/OregonAllStateFeedback>. This form is intended for teachers, students, and parents/guardians. You can also send feedback to [allstatechair@gmail.com](mailto:allstatechair@gmail.com) as well. We greatly value everyone's feedback as we continue to improve and change our events for the better.

Speaking of change, we are very excited that the OMEA Board is adding a counterpart to our All-State chair position. As you may have heard, the board approved the creation of a Conference Chair position. This would serve as the counterpart to the All-State Chair position with the All-State Chair focusing on the student experience at the conference, and the Conference Chair focusing on the teacher experience. This will bring continuity to that side of the event that will only enhance the experience for attendees.

Also, along the lines of change, we are stepping down as All-State co-chairs at the end of this school year. We have greatly enjoyed working with the OMEA board, conference planning team, and ensemble managers, and appreciate everyone's support as we worked to get this position off the ground. Although this will be our last year helping in this capacity, we will work with our replacement(s) to ensure a smooth transition so that students continue to have a great All-State experience.

Thank you again to Sean Williams for chairing such a great conference, the planning team for doing such marvelous work, and to all of you for attending the event!



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# NEXT STEPS

**Tom Muller** NAFME Northwest Division President

As the school year begins to wind down, and summer approaches, I hope that this has been a rewarding year for you! I have no doubt your students have had wonderful experiences in your classrooms.

It was great to see so many teachers and reconnect at the All-Northwest Conference. Your students in the Honor Groups sounded incredible! What an amazing testament to the fine teaching that is happening all over the Northwest Division. I want to thank everyone who helped with organizing, planning and attending the conference. The feedback has been much appreciated, and suggestions that I have received have been very thoughtful.

Moving forward, it is time to put into motion the Small School Initiative mentioned at regional All-State Conferences. I am very excited to put into motion the ideas that have been front and center since the idea's inception. I have spoken with many teachers around the division, and I am confident that the starting point will get this moving in the right direction from the beginning.

I have shared that I want this initiative to address and meet as many of the unique challenges small school/rural teachers deal with. The task force members represent teachers from various backgrounds from across the country. Most are facing the same issues as we are, and a national presence and focus will create opportunities and resources for teachers facing challenges in their regions as well.

Our teaching profession is evolving at a rapid rate, and we want to make sure to have a seat at the table. The national office is working diligently to advocate and have input in policy changes on Capitol Hill, but the need for local advocacy is as important as it has always been. Getting coordinated with other teachers in your area to guard against cuts, and to help expand our programs is as important as ever. Be sure to attend school board meetings, organize Hill Days, and find ways to get involved with your NAFME districts.

Service to the profession has always been an important area to develop. We are all NAFME and serving in various capacities over the years have left lasting impressions on myself. It has been rewarding to be part of the changes now happening. I encourage teachers to get involved with leadership in your areas. We are NAFME, and evolution of our profession with new ideas and insights will ensure music education will stay current with the times.

Colleagues, to put it simply, you inspire me. Your energy, and enthusiasm is contagious, and you are our future. The conversations I have had with you, and your colleagues from across the division show that our future is in good hands. As I told many of you, become leaders in your state MEA's. We need your help to bring the ideas you shared with me to fruition.

Dusty Molyneaux will be your next Northwest President. Under his leadership, the Northwest Division will continue to have a voice with national policy changes. He is well respected as a member of the National Executive Board, and I am looking forward to assisting him in any way I can.

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# CALL TO ADVOCATES

Julie Bounds OMEA Advocacy Co-Chair

## Ad-vo-cate

*verb (used with object), ad-vo-cat-ed, ad-vo-cat-ing.*

*to speak or write in favor of; support or urge by argument; recommend publicly:*

*noun*

*a person who publicly supports or recommends a particular cause or policy.*

During the COVID closure, I moved from serving on the OMEA state board as the District 12 Representative to serving as the Advocacy Co-Chair with Laura Arthur. As I look back, I think the biggest reason I decided to step into this role with Laura was because I have always been an advocate for music education. I have always **publicly supported the idea that all students should have access to a high quality music education taught by a highly qualified teacher.** I also believe that music education (like all arts education) should be considered a core subject and should be accessible to all students. I believe that music educators (like all teachers) should be supported and valued for their contribution to our students' educations. I also believe that most music teachers share in this belief, too.

In reflection, I think I have always been an advocate for others and an advocate for music education, however being a "music education advocate" is a broad term and an even broader position. What does it mean to be the "Advocacy Co-Chair", and what *specifically* are we advocating for? Are we advocating for programs at the local level? State level? Federal level? Are we advocating for students to have equitable access to music education? Are we advocating for teachers to have what they need to effectively teach their students, including functional schedules, time, support, and fair compensation? Does our scope include music educators who work with our students but are not serving as credentialed music teachers in schools? This list can go on and on.

Focusing the lens of the OMEA State Advocacy Chairs has been almost debilitating for Laura and I. The position is huge and so are the possible endeavors we could explore as Advocacy Chairs. With this broad scope, it feels daunting for us to narrow in on what OMEA, both as an organization and membership corps, would like us to focus our efforts on. While our focus still might not be clear and will probably always be evolving and changing, I personally have found some clarity in terms of what I want to advocate for moving forward in this position.

The first is the concept that we are ALL advocates and we ALL have to begin to see ourselves as such to do the hard work together. Being an advocate isn't just the sole job of the

Advocacy Chairs or the Advocacy Committee, whether that is at the district, state, or federal level. We all need to be champions for music education. That also means being a champion for change in our professional organizations, including OMEA. Right now, I see myself as an advocate for change with Oregon Music Educators Association to help bring about change to support our music educators.

As you may know, OMEA released a first-of-it's-kind survey, asking both attendees and non-attendees of our January conference to give feedback about their experiences. Thank you to those who gave their candid feedback – we appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts. After having a chance to look at the responses and data, I found a few major themes, and have thought on some possible steps forward that would have an impact on future conferences as well as the direction of OMEA:

### #1 - Encourage our peers, both in and outside the state, to be presenters at our conference.

We cannot have more diverse offerings if we don't have more diverse applications for presentation topics. If there is a kind of session you want to see offered, encourage someone to present on that topic or present yourself! *If you have concerns or questions about the application process, reach out to a board member or past presenter. Our OMEA conference application process is very simple!*

### #2 - Create a conference schedule that is tailored with "small school directors in mind".

Members were very clear that they wanted fewer conflicts between broad high-impact sessions (such as the reading sessions) and also asked for a track specifically for small schools directors. We had a fantastic discussion about this at our OMEA board conference debrief and I'm excited to see us refine our schedule and offerings even more based on feedback from our Small Schools Advocacy chair, Melissa Jmaeff.

### #3 - Encourage diversity in our All-State ensembles.

We need to find ways to remove barriers so that all motivated students will feel welcomed and encouraged to audition and participate in this life-changing experience. It is our *responsibility* as the organizing body to identify ways we can support a pathway to participation for ALL of the incredible musicians around the state, including exploring more revenue streams so that we can mitigate the participation costs for our students and teachers.

#### #4 - Develop a more robust system for coordinating for the “back side” of the conference, including moving of equipment, setting up sessions etc.

A good portion of this work falls on the shoulders of a very small number of individuals. How can we find ways to engage more of our membership, including our future music educators, to assist in running the “back” of the conference? I am encouraged about the new paid positions (Conference Chair and All-State Chair) that the board has approved and hope it will energize members to get involved.

While not directly related to the conference, my last three suggestions apply directly to the way our organization runs as a whole, and come from conversations both at the conference and with our membership over the last year:

#### #5 - Revise our board system to provide more support for our local district chairs.

This means reviewing our Policies and Procedures to have one or more of our executive board members directly responsible for districts (could be a current vice president, past president, or current president). I hope that providing clearer systems and frameworks from the state board on how our districts are expected to run will encourage a culture of local leadership as well as more pathways for members to be involved.

#### #6 - Revise the timeline and year-long schedule for board members and meetings.

We need less reporting at our board meetings and more actions and forward thinking. The leadership team of our organization is almost entirely volunteer, and all members *also* have the all-consuming job of teaching music. The burden of “one more thing” is heavy, but the alternative means that positive changes will happen very slowly. With how we have all seen education change in the past three years, I feel like we just can’t move at that pace anymore if we want to effectively support and advocate for music teachers and students.

#### #7-Expanding our OMEA reach beyond hosting conferences and festivals:

- Create a strategic plan with values, mission, and visioning as core components. As part of their strategic plan, California MEA has implemented a highly successful state wide Music in the Schools month campaign, employed a lobbyist at the state level, and now passed a statewide initiative, Proposition 28 in 2022 that passed by the highest majority in the state history (it received nearly 65% of the vote). This state-wide law “Provides Additional Funding for Arts and Music Education in all K-12 public schools (including charter schools) by annually allocating

from state General Fund an amount equaling 1% of required state and local funding for public schools.”

- Make Music in our Schools Month a statewide advocacy campaign that begins to have as much importance as our state conference. This also encourages making connections with local, state and federal legislators. California has been making huge strides in this area.
- Continue to curate and expand our connections with stakeholders who have direct impact on how music education functions at both the state and local level (including the Oregon Legislature and the members of their new [Arts & Culture Caucus](#), ODE, the Oregon Arts Commission, the Oregon Cultural Trust, school boards, school administrator organizations, etc).

I believe at least one of the suggestions above will resonate with you – let’s work together to improve music education in the state of Oregon! I hope you will join me into this call to action to all of us as music educators – **we are ALL advocates.**

A poster for Portland Piano International. The background is teal. At the top, the text "PORTLAND PIANO" is in large, bold, black letters, with "INTERNATIONAL" in smaller, bold, black letters below it. In the center, the text "ARE YOU A PIANO TEACHER?" is in bold, yellow letters. Below the text, there is a silhouette of a woman standing with her hands on her hips, a silhouette of a woman sitting at a piano, and a silhouette of a grand piano. At the bottom, there is a white box with black text that reads: "IF SO, AT PORTLAND PIANO INTERNATIONAL, WE THINK THAT YOU ARE ONE OF THE BRAVEST PEOPLE IN OREGON. YOU ARE ON THE FRONT LINE, FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT TO ENSURE THAT WE WILL HAVE GREAT MUSICAL CITIZENS IN THE FUTURE. ISN'T IT TIME FOR YOU TO HAVE A LITTLE REFRESHMENT AND ENCOURAGEMENT IN YOUR OWN PLAYING AND TEACHING? PLEASE CONSIDER THE THOLEN FELLOWSHIPS FROM PORTLAND PIANO INTERNATIONAL." At the very bottom, there is a white box with black text that reads: "LEARN MORE ON OUR WEB-PAGE, PORTLANDPIANO.ORG/THOLENFELLOWS OR, CALL 503.228.1388."



# OREGON CHOIR NEWS

**Kathy Briggs** OMEA Choral Chair and OR-ACDA Liaison

OMEA and Oregon ACDA continue to partner to bring the best possible experiences to our choir students and teachers in the state. Here are a couple of the items we are currently discussing.

## OMEA /OSAA Vocal Chamber Ensemble Contest Categories

While no decisions or changes have been made as of the writing of this article, ACDA and OMEA are partnering to look at the logistics of expanding the repertoire categories for chamber vocal entries. There is ongoing and growing interest in contemporary vocal ensembles among our students. We have had several vocal ensembles competing with technically challenging repertoire from the genres of contemporary a cappella, barbershop, and vocal jazz at the state level, having advanced with the same repertoire from their district contests. Some ensembles performing contemporary vocal literature have been deducted points for their performance of this repertoire (Rule 3.4.4) instead of "an art song or music representing master literature" (Rule 3.4.1), as is the current rule to do so. This deduction, however, has been inconsistent among adjudicators and has resulted in confusion and complaints.

3.4.1 Vocal: Students will perform an art song or music representing master literature.

3.4.4 Judges are instructed to grade down in the literature category if the previous rules are not met.

Opening the vocal ensemble repertoire to be more inclusive of other genres will encourage more participation from student ensembles and the addition of these categories would eliminate the comparison of musically valuable, yet technically different genres.

Unlike our instrumental colleagues, Oregon does not currently have a large number of vocal jazz, contemporary a cappella, or barbershop festivals in place in our districts or equally accessible across the state. ACDA is partnering with OMEA to make this possible for all of our schools and this will provide more opportunities to more students, along with incentive and structure

for those ensembles looking to advance to a state level contest. If participation in contemporary vocal ensemble categories grows, future steps may include branching off from the OMEA State Chamber Contest and creating a separate contemporary vocal contest, similar to the OMEA State Jazz Championships. Other future steps may include a similar proposal to include a musical theater category for solo vocal music, similar to NATS.

I reiterate that these are discussions taking place at this time, and no changes have yet been made to the contest rules. However, we hope soon to be able to provide increased opportunities for more diverse repertoire and ensembles to be represented and celebrated at our district and state chamber festivals and contests.

## All-State Choir

We are also looking to increase opportunities for participation in our All-State Choirs. Our current model rotates between a one SATB choir and two same-voiced ensembles (SSAA and TTBB) on alternating years. There are, as always, a myriad of logistics to consider when increasing student numbers such as hotel rooms, rehearsal spaces, meals, transportation, etc. However, increasing the amount of students who are able to experience an all-state weekend makes these inquiries worth the effort. Both ACDA and OMEA both agree that alternating between mixed-voice ensembles and same-voiced ensembles is a strong model. We are looking at the possibility of increasing the numbers in the SSAA and TTBB choirs, and investigating the possibilities for two choirs during the SATB years, similar to the Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band model. One possibility would add 9-10 All-State Honor Choir and a 11-12 All-State Honor Choir. There are other models from other states and ACDA honor choirs that we are looking at as well. Again, nothing has changed at this time, but these possibilities are being discussed to provide our students and teachers with the best educational and inspiring musical opportunities.

If you have thoughts, concerns, or ideas about these topics or any other choral education topics, please reach out to me. I welcome your input and will bring your thoughts, comments, and ideas to our ACDA and OMEA leadership.



## DONATE TO OMEA ALL-STATE

Use the QR Code to donate to OMEA. These funds will be used to lower the cost of participation to our All-State students.





# DID YOU KNOW? FUN, ENGAGING PROGRAM NOTES

Krista DeBolt OMEA Orchestra Chair

Did you know that Ireland is the only country with a musical instrument as its symbol? Tango was once outlawed in Argentina, Greece invented the Yo-yo and Panama City is the only world's capital with a tropical rain forest in its city limits. These are all fun facts my students found related to the music we are currently working on in class. We have a concert coming soon with the theme World Tour 2023! included in our study of composers, time periods, and pieces is the country the music is representing.

I started having kids research their own program notes one year when I was overwhelmed with trying to get it done myself. At that time I realized that this could be a fun way for all kids to get together to research, talk, and put together ideas that they think are interesting. I do not know why I saved all the fun for myself – I love researching music and finding out why, how, when it was written. My students find way more interesting facts than I do and it gives them ownership in learning about the piece instead of me just talking at them all the time – I do that way too much anyway.

This year I divided our music up by orchestra and section so that each section only had one part of something to research. In the past, I have let them choose their own groups or their own piece. There are many ways to do it; drawing names out of a hat is fun too. "Chamber Orchestra Violin 1 – country of Panama," "Chamber Orchestra violin 2 – composer William Grant Still," "String Orchestra viola – country of Greece," "Concert Orchestra low strings--Dublin" are some examples of student groups and topics. Students had 15-20 minutes with chromebooks to do their own research on the topic they were given and then came together to make posters of interesting facts they found. The research parameter was to look for anything interesting to them that would also be interesting to others.

Once completed, the posters are hung in our room. Each group has a chance to share what they learned and chose to put on their posters. This is a good way for all students in the class to get exposed to all of the information learned about each piece, composer, and country for this particular concert. We also put up all three orchestra class's posters so we could learn what everyone was working on in class before our combined concert. Students were excited to share what they learned with each other and me.

The final step of this activity was for each student to choose a piece, country, or composer and write his or her own program notes. This is a graded portion of the project where I chose excerpts of well-done program notes for students to read at the concert in between pieces and during stage changes. Here are some of the paragraphs that the student's came up with:

## Allegretto from the Creatures of Prometheus, Beethoven – arranged by Rick England:

**EB:** The Creatures of Prometheus is a ballet written by Ludwig van Beethoven representing

the myth of Prometheus. In the Greek myth, Prometheus steals fire to give to mankind; however, Zeus finds out and punishes Prometheus by chaining him to a rock and allowing his innards to be beaten out by an eagle each morning. Beethoven discovered this myth from a French novel and adapted the myth into a ballet. Allegretto is one out of the sixteen parts of the ballet, each representing a different part of the story. Overall, the piece is played in a joyful manner, with contrasting dynamics and unique bow strokes that seem to represent a kind of joyful dance or celebration.

**DC:** This piece seems like it is supposed to be fun, the audience should want to jump out of their seats and join the dancers on stage.

*"To play a wrong note is insignificant. To play without passion is inexcusable!" - Ludwig Van Beethoven*

**KR:** I listened to parts of the piece and noticed two things in particular. The first was that there is a lot of variety in the playing and mood. The phrasing is very easy to spot, which is something I have recently been working on in my own playing. They have dynamic changes in there that are incredible. The second thing I noticed was how many different things that are happening at once in this piece. In certain places, each instrument is playing something that compliments the melody, but is not at all like any other part. This really interested me because it is very rare that I, as a second violin especially, have a part entirely different from everyone else, be that rhythmically, or note-wise.



## Blue Caves of Zakynthos by Doug Spata:

**AG:** "Greece was a muse. It inspired creativity in magical ways that I can't even begin to understand or explain."

– Joe Bonamassa

Doug Spata was born in St. Louis, Missouri in 1975, but also spent time in Sri Lanka, which created an interest in world cultures that we see in many of his compositions. His piece, The Blue Caves of Zakynthos was inspired by a unique system of caves on the northwest side of the Zakynthos Island in Greece.

**BC:** As my group researched Zakynthos, Greece, I found the backstory of Navagio Beach fairly intriguing. This isolated and sandy cove is known as Shipwreck Beach, for Navagio is the Greek term for Shipwreck, and is also infamously nicknamed Smugglers Cove. Allegedly, a boat from Turkey was carrying contraband cigarettes on October 2, 1980. Said ship was directed to transport the cigarettes to Turkey to sell them. However, there were complications between two Italian crewmates and their Greek captain regarding the distribution of profits. Eventually, their boat had engine difficulties, ran into a storm, and was shipwrecked on the coast of Zakynthos. Its valuable cargo had long been looted after the incident, but the remains of the boat remain on Navagio Beach. Now, the beach is a popular destination for tourists and photographers all over the globe and has been used as the main setting of a Korean drama called Descendants of the Sun.

## Libertango by Astor Piazzolla, arranged by James Kazik :

**AN:** Libertango is a very energetic and lively piece. This is a song that is to be danced to, not just listened to. The first second you hear it will take you by surprise by the violin and cello strong introduction. The violas might take you by surprise as well so watch out for them.

Libertango is a great way to describe the culture and music of Argentina. With the bit of spice and energy added into this piece, you'll feel like you're taking a walk right through the country. Tango has a very special part in the music industry and a crucial part of history. As Piazzolla said, "They should look at me as the savior of tango; I performed plastic surgery on it."

**MC:** Born in Mar del Plata, Argentina to two Italian parents, Astor Pantaleon Piazzolla goes on to write Libertango which is heavily influenced by its culture. He was a traditional tango composer that would often play his own compositions with his bandoneon. Having written many songs he decided to experiment with other genres and incorporated jazz and traditional

aspects into tango creating a new genre of music labeled "Nuevo Tango" or New Tango. Although many went on to criticize his work, Astor Piazzolla went on to write over 3,000 songs and record about 500.

"I still can't believe that some pseudo critics continue to accuse me of having murdered tango. They have it backwards. They should look at me as the savior of tango."

– Astor Pantaleon Piazzolla

## Dublin by Richard Meyer:

**AR:** Ireland is so much more riveting and complex than just wearing some green on St. Patrick's Day. Actually, it is where Halloween originally started during the ancient festival of Samhain. (SAH-Win) A pagan religious festival where bonfires light away the presence of ghosts and people would celebrate the end of summer harvest. Furthermore, Ireland is the only country to have an instrument as its national symbol, which surprisingly enough is not the bagpipes, but the harp.

**SL:** When most people think of Ireland, they may think of leprechauns, shamrocks, and St. Patrick's Day. But most people probably don't know that Ireland has the largest population of redheads than any other country in the world or that their national symbol is a musical instrument. Whether it's the home country of the band U2 or traditional Irish folk tunes, Ireland is definitely connected to music.

The piece Dublin, is a musical tribute to an Irish Festival in Dublin, Ohio by the composer, Bob Phillips. The Dublin Irish Festival is an internationally known festival filled with Irish culture, music, dance, and tradition. The main theme of the piece is based on an Irish tune called the Minstrel Boy in a beautiful, flowing fantasia that changes key four times. A fantasia is a composition free in form and inspiration, usually for an instrumental soloist. This rich, gorgeous piece gives the feeling of being in the streets of a small, bustling town in the peaceful countryside of Ireland.

## Dances of Panama by William Grant Still:

**LC:** Panama is a unique blend of cultures, histories, and music styles. Before the Europeans' arrival, the area was settled by the Chibchan, the Chocoan, and the Cueva peoples. In 1501, Rodrigo de Bastidas explored the Isthmus of Panama and made its presence known to the world. Not long after, the Spanish came to the new world and claimed the Panamanian area as theirs, blending many cultural aspects such as traditions, food, and music. This can be heard clearly in William Grant Still's "Panama", which features a wide variety of styles and even percussive sounds. Geographically, Panama is a fascinating anomaly. The country is an Isthmus, meaning it is located between two seas (in this case the Pacific and Atlantic oceans). This makes it the ideal location for the famous Panama Canal, which accounts for an astounding 33% of the country's economy. It also possesses the only capital city with a tropical rainforest within its limits. The rainforests of Panama include almost 1000 different bird species, some of which are exclusive to Panama. Overall, Panama is unlike any other country in the world.

**BG:** Panama has the oldest continually operating railroad and something unique about Panama is that it is the only place in the world where one can see the sun rise over the Pacific ocean and set on the Atlantic ocean at the same time. Its music, for example, includes a mix of many styles such as reggae, salsa, and Argentine tango. Our piece, Dances of Panama by William Grant Still, is a combination of dances like Punto and Cumbia. Their food includes items such as milk candy, coconut water ice cream, Panamanian tamales, and sopa de pata (cow's feet soup). Panama is known for its many festivals. Some of them are the Carnaval which corresponds with Mardi Gras, the Flower and Coffee festival, and the Sobresaltos Dance festival. A popular sport in Panama is basketball. Overall, Panama is a very lively and interesting place.

**HH:** William Grant Still (May 11, 1895 – December 3, 1978) was an American composer, arranger, and conductor, and was the first African-American to conduct a symphony orchestra in the United States. He is known for his compositions that incorporate elements of jazz and blues into classical music, and for his arrangements of spirituals and folk songs. Still's compositions include operas, ballets, symphonies, and other works for orchestra, as well as works for choir and solo voice. He was also a conductor, and led several orchestras during his career.

**Lion City by Soon Hee Newbold:**

**AD:** Singapore is an independent state, situated in between Malaysia and Indonesia. Due to conflicting political values and economic issues, the Proclamation of Singapore was signed in order to alleviate conflict and legally separate these two nations from each other. As a result, Singapore has a diverse and multiethnic society; along with customs that originated from surrounding countries. Similar to Chinese tradition, Singaporeans address others by an honorific title or a surname until given permission to refer to that individual differently. Many conservative citizens of Singapore strictly adhere to these social rules, and consider it rude if proper etiquette isn't shown to elders or those of higher status. However, neither Malay nor Indian people typically have surnames, so they instead use the father's name with a connecting word "bin" (binti for women), or place the initials of their fathers name in front of the child's name. These cultural practices are derived from India, Japan, and various other countries, setting Singapore apart from the regions nearby. Because of the Singaporean government's focus on the people and the environment, the nation is regarded as one of the safest countries to live in, with consistently low crime rates and a city that accentuates its natural environment through architecture and the use of natural resources.

**RS:** There are many interesting things about Singapore, But here are some I found really interesting. There is no gum aloud in Singapore. Singapore has changed their time

zone six times. And they speak Singlish. Also for breakfast they eat kaya with pandan leaf on it which makes it taste like freshly cut grass

**MH:** Lion City is a piece that was composed by Soon Hee Newbold. Who was born on November 11th, 1974, in South Korea. The piece is based off of the diverse culture of Singapore, such as Chinese, Malay, Indian and Western cultures. The word Lion City is a translation for Singapore. This piece has so many instruments that are being used, like a pipa, rain sticks, violins, cellos, violas, and basses. Soon Hee Newbold, the composer was adopted when she was just a baby by loving people. She has composed more than 50 songs, studied the piano at 5, and at the age of 7 she studied violin. She is also a conductor and an actress. Soon Hee is also a police woman.

It makes me happy to see kids engaged in what we are doing with music and coming up with ideas from what they themselves learned about the pieces, places, and composers. Anytime we can encourage our students and excite them about learning more will help them on the journey to learn the pieces and become better musicians. Find ways to get them talking with each other – Did you know.....?

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# INTERSECTIONS IN MUSIC EDUCATION:

## Implications of Universal Design for Learning, Culturally Responsive Education, and Trauma-Informed Education for P-12 Praxis

**Karen Salvador** Associate Professor and Chair of the Music Education Area, Michigan State University

**Mara E. Culp** Associate Professor of Music Teaching and Learning, Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester

By critically reflecting on their own biases and teaching approaches and incorporating responsive actions, educators can help more students feel welcomed and valued in the music classroom.

### Abstract:

To increase equity in music education, teachers can strive to know each student as a whole child, proactively remove barriers to learning, and seek to honor students' multifaceted and intersectional identities. In this article, we first define intersectionality and examine demographic graphics in music education. Then, we summarize three asset-based pedagogical approaches (Universal Design for Learning, Culturally Responsive Education, and Trauma-Informed Education) and synthesize their similarities. Finally, we present implications in the form of generative ideas for music educator praxis, or values-guided action. We hope our suggestions help music educators create music experiences where students (and families) feel seen, safe, welcomed, and valued as musicians and people. We also hope our suggestions can contribute to music teacher collegiality and collaboration by providing educators with tools to develop positive relationships with colleagues who are different from themselves.

### Keywords:

Culturally Responsive Education, intersectionality, music education, Trauma Informed Education, Universal Design for Learning

All humans occupy multifaceted identities that affect their experiences in various ways. Identities help individuals understand who they are and can be developed through interactions at home, at school, and in other environments. A person's beliefs about their identities and how they are treated by others can affect their beliefs and actions. Conversely, a person's actions and achievements and others' perceptions of those may also affect the person's actions and achievements and others' perceptions of those may also affect the person's perceptions of their identities or self. For example, watching a similar person succeed can increase a person's *self-efficacy* (beliefs about their ability to accomplish a particular task). The interplay among one's environment, characteristics, and experiences creates a circuit of beliefs and behaviors that can influence the construction and expression of identities, which may include whether students identify as musicians.

Someone's past experiences, beliefs about themselves, and beliefs about others can affect their decisions and how they treat others, which can include biases. For example, there is a preponderance of women in the music teaching profession,<sup>1</sup> and beliefs about women as nurturing caregivers may be a contributing factor. Women may be socialized into ideas of caregiving early in life. This could fuel women's beliefs that caregiving is an appropriate role for themselves and other women and (consciously or subconsciously) influence their decision to encourage or support women to pursue the teaching profession. Such beliefs may also help to explain why men who teach elementary general music sometimes grapple with expectations related to performance of gender and with their own identities as playful and nurturing.<sup>2</sup> In either case, people who are transgender, nonbinary, or agender may experience gender normative bias.

Although single identity characteristics (e.g., ability, age, class, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation) can contribute to variation among individuals' lived experiences, the combination of a person's identities affects the ways in which individuals experience their world. Legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw<sup>3</sup> used the term *intersectionality* to describe this phenomenon. For example, a student may experience barriers or obstacles due to particular identity intersection, such as being a child of color who is also labeled as having a disability. To increase equity in music education, teachers can strive to know each student as a *whole child*, proactively remove barriers to learning, and seek to honor students' intersectional identities. In this article, we first discuss

intersectionality and examine music student and teacher demographics. Then, we summarize three asset-based pedagogical approaches (Universal Design for Learning, Culturally Responsive Education, and Trauma-Informed Education) and synthesize their similarities. Finally, we present implications in the form of generative ideas for music educator *praxis*, or values-guided action. We hope our suggestions help music educators create music experiences where students and their families feel seen, safe, welcomed, and valued as musicians and people. We also hope our suggestions can contribute to music teacher collegiality and collaboration by providing educators with tools to develop positive relationships with colleagues who are different from themselves.

### Positionality: Our Story

As intentional practitioners who seek to work for equity, we recommend teachers examine biases and work to avoid assumptions by getting to know themselves and others.

Reflecting on one's *positionality* (how one is positioned in relation to others within a context) is important for all citizens of this world and especially for teachers who wish to examine intersectionality in music education. Recognizing how their own social identities may be afforded more or less privilege and power within a particular context may help teachers learn to notice biased thinking and stop enacting it (see Sidebar 1 for ideas about disrupting bias). Rather than making assumptions about a person's identities, teachers can provide opportunities for others to self-identify and describe their identities (e.g., race, gender, religion). Doing so could help teachers learn about students, families, and communities in ways that foster empathy and sensitivity.

Although no one is entitled to another's personal story, we believe *voluntarily sharing to one's comfort level* in a particular space or context is a vulnerable act and an important step toward building relationships. When sharing, adults should establish boundaries that

preclude flooding others with information or sharing information that is not appropriate for the students/setting.<sup>4</sup> When learning about individuals, we suggest refraining from judging how much or what someone shared or "filling in" blanks. If a person does not disclose certain information about themselves (e.g., sexual orientation, religion, race), it does not necessarily mean that they are different from others who have shared or that they have any particular feelings. Take the time to build trust and

slowly get to know each person. To model our continued work toward these aims and provide an example, we believe it is important to share about ourselves to our levels of comfort in this space [professional journal] and how we come to this conversation. Informed by the suggestions noted previously, our descriptions are not exhaustive, and we recognize some teachers or students, like ourselves, may be comfortable sharing more than others. Both authors are married mothers who were born and raised in the Midwest, have doctorates in music education, work at universities, and have taught music in P-12 settings. We have been researching, writing, and presenting together on issues related to inclusion, equity, and intersectionality in music education since 2017. As individuals,

Salvador identifies as a White, atheist, cisgender female and does not identify as a person with a disability. Culp identifies as a biracial (Black/ White) cisgender female. As such, we occupy identities that allow for certain privileges and positional power within particular contexts and identities that are afforded less privilege or marginalized within other contexts. Although we share similarities, our experiences differ in part because of the complex intersections of our individual identities.

## Identities and Intersectionality in Music Education

To provide more equitable and inclusive music experiences, music educators can consider how students' multifaceted identities influence their experiences in music classrooms.

Specifically, the concept of intersectionality<sup>5</sup> can be a useful way to begin to understand student identities and recognize barriers and biases students may face. We use intersectionality to "referenc[e] the critical insight that race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, ability, and age operate not as unitary, mutually exclusive entities, but as reciprocally constructing phenomena that in turn shape complex social inequalities."<sup>6</sup> Thus, although considering a single identity characteristic, such as dis/ability, as a way to create equity may be a starting point, the intersectional viewpoint recognizes more complexity in each person's experience.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, we suggest teachers consider

intersectionality by honoring *the whole child* and their *unique circumstances*.

### Sidebar 1: Disrupting Bias and Stereotypes

Bias is "prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair" (Oxford Dictionary Online). Bias arises from socialization and media influences. Learning to identify assumptions or language that marks something or someone as deficient or lacking (i.e., deficit assumptions) and questioning their use can be an important step toward disrupting bias. Here are some ideas that may help reduce biased thinking and actions:

- "Positive" stereotypes are still stereotypes, which dismiss individual differences. Remind yourself and others that no group is monolithic. Characteristics within groups can be just as varied as differences between groups.
- When you think in a biased way, such as using deficit language or stereotypes, ask yourself: "Why do I think that? Can I find a basis in fact for that assumption?" • Reflect on times assumptions were made about you. How did you feel when you found out?
- Try an Implicit Association Test, such as one offered through Project Implicit (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>).
- Use the Cultural Competence Self-Assessment Checklist (<http://rapworkers.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/cultural-competence-selfassessment-checklist-1.pdf>). • Diversify the media and musics you consume, perhaps by visiting The Global Jukebox (<http://www.theglobaljukebox.org/>).
- Broaden your social interactions and the musics you select (for options, see <https://www.composerdiversity.com>).



- Ensure the music you select at school does not perpetuate stereotypes or bias (for ideas, see Waller-Pace, Batislaong, and McCauley, 2020: <https://vimeo.com/419122217>). • Engage in community asset mapping as a way to locate resources (relational, human, capital, and more) using resources such as the Community Legacy Program's Community Building Tool Packet (<https://naaee.org/sites/default/files/assetmappingworkbook2013.pdf>).

Noticing biases and learning to manage them is critical for an intersectional approach to music education. As you work on each of these suggestions, refer to the section in this article on asset-based pedagogies.

## Demographics in Music Education

Creating inclusive environments begins with understanding individuals, such as teachers and learners, in educational spaces.<sup>8</sup> Although class frequency and length vary widely, 94 percent of U.S. elementary school students have access to general music classes.<sup>9</sup> However, children in places with high concentrations of students from minoritized backgrounds are less likely to have music classes,<sup>10</sup> and children with special education needs may be pulled from music classes to receive services. At the secondary level, researchers have found that students who enroll in secondary ensembles differ from the school population across a number of demographic variables, including gender, special education status, race, and home language.<sup>11</sup> LGBTQ students may find refuge in the arts,<sup>12</sup> yet music and theatre students may also be more likely to experience bullying.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, for any student, being present in a music classroom is not the same as having equitable access to music instruction.

Because music students become music teachers, it is likely not surprising that music teacher candidates and the music teacher workforce have not been representative of the U.S. population.<sup>14</sup>

Most music educators are from middle class backgrounds, White (90%), and female (60%),<sup>15</sup> although women may be underrepresented in certain areas, such as band conducting.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, LGBTQ+ music educators may feel hesitant to reveal aspects of their identity at work.<sup>17</sup> Admission to university music programs often requires specific kinds of music skills, knowledge, and dispositions that privilege certain types of knowledge and access to resources,<sup>18</sup> and few supports are available for music teacher licensure candidates with disabilities.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, music teachers may not be prepared to teach in inclusive and responsive ways to honor the needs of students in terms of disability, culture, gender identity, or sexual orientation.<sup>20</sup> Music educator diversity and preparation matter because students can benefit from role models they identify with and from inclusive and responsive learning experiences.<sup>21</sup>

## Asset-Based Pedagogies

*Asset-based pedagogies* (ABPs) focus on individual strengths to improve learning. Researchers have demonstrated that intellectual development may increase when teachers believe in young students' potential.<sup>22</sup> As they grow older, student perceptions of their music teacher's beliefs about their capabilities may be related to persistence in high school music education programs.<sup>23</sup> Across age groups, student self-efficacy was reported as the most important predictor of achievement on music examinations.<sup>24</sup> In the next section, we offer brief overviews for three ABPs. We provide resources (see Sidebar 2)<sup>25</sup> and conclude by synthesizing commonalities.

## Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework to create inclusive learning environments characterized by equitable access to and participation in learning by all children. UDL reflects developments in architecture that sought to design universal access to spaces (e.g., ramps used for wheelchairs, strollers) and brain research that recognizes neural variation as the rule.<sup>26</sup> In considering strategic, affective, and recognition neural networks, researchers Tracey Hall, Anne Meyer, and David Rose<sup>27</sup> proposed that learning environments should include universal approaches that create *multiple means of engagement, multiple means of representation, and multiple means of action and expression*. Because all children have the potential to face barriers to learning, using the UDL framework to anticipate student needs and remove barriers from the outset has the potential to help all children.

## Culturally Responsive Education

Following music education scholar Vanessa Bond's example,<sup>28</sup> we use the term *Culturally Responsive Education* (CRE) to encompass culturally informed approaches to teaching. These include Culturally Relevant Pedagogy<sup>29</sup> and Culturally Responsive Teaching,<sup>30</sup> which focus on *responding* to students by using "cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant and effective."<sup>31</sup> Building on this work, education scholar Django Paris and H. Samy Alim, an anthropologist, advanced Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy as education that seeks to sustain student and community cultures.<sup>32</sup>

Music teachers who use CRE practice *cultural humility*, by "engaging power dynamics between their school and the communities they serve and refusing to stereotype,"<sup>33</sup> cultivating critical awareness of their own culture, and resisting to position it as "neutral" or the norm. CRE also requires that teachers strive to know families and communities and recognize community cultural wealth by "focus[ing] on and learn[ing] from the array of cultural knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed by socially marginalized groups that often go unrecognized and unacknowledged . . . [including] aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial and resistant capital."<sup>34</sup> Enacting CRE requires

developing *critical awareness* (awareness of sociohistorical influences on the trajectories of students who have been marginalized), building on students' *cultural knowledge* (e.g., prior knowledge, stories, musics), and employing *cultural content integration* (integrating knowledge that validates student experiences).<sup>35</sup> In these ways, music teachers who use CRE facilitate instruction that places student, family, community, and school cultures on a more equal footing by responding to students' needs and sustaining cultures. CRE often requires that teachers *reshape curriculum* to reflect what they learn about students and communities.

## Trauma-Informed Education

Trauma-informed care emerged from practices used when working with military veterans.<sup>36</sup> Because trauma informed educational approaches have a variety of names (practices, pedagogies, etc.), we emulated Bond's use of CRE as an umbrella term by referring to all these approaches as *Trauma Informed Education* (TIE). Trauma<sup>37</sup> can be understood as an injury that "has lasting adverse effects on [an] individual's functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being."<sup>38</sup> Scholars have observed relationships between childhood trauma and difficulty in school.<sup>39</sup> Because all students have the potential to face trauma, using TIE can help teachers create safe environments before or after a traumatic event occurs.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, six principles are key to a trauma informed approach.<sup>40</sup> First, children who have experienced trauma need *safety*. Teachers enacting TIE practices work to help children see school as a place where they are physically and psychologically protected from harm. Guided by the second element, *trustworthiness and transparency*, teachers build the sense of safety through warm, supportive interactions coupled with predictable, clearly communicated expectations. Teachers can also foster *peer support*, the third element, which can be accomplished through thoughtfully planned family projects or "buddy" systems. Following the fourth element, *collaboration and mutuality*, teachers work together with students toward shared educational goals. By using the fifth element of *empowerment, voice, and choice*, teachers work to ensure students know that their ideas, comfort, and preferences are considered, valued, and acted on. Finally, teachers allow *cultural, historical, and gender issues* to inform TIE.<sup>41</sup> This sixth element reflects the idea that people with particular characteristics have been more likely to experience trauma due to how they have been treated. Furthermore, due to intersections of identity characteristics, trauma may affect particular individuals more than others and in different ways.

## Shared Principles of UDL, CRE, and TIE

In summary, ABPs focus on learner strengths, recognize diversity in learning and experience as the rule, and foster student self-efficacy and agency to help improve learning. Teachers utilizing ABPs consider child, family, and com-

munity resources and design learning environments that welcome strengths and support differences to help children achieve. In these ways, ABPs stand in opposition to deficit-based approaches, which focus on assessing deficiencies and designing remediation, often accompanied by blaming the child or the child's culture for these supposed deficiencies.<sup>42</sup> In Table 1, we outline shared principles that we have identified among UDL, CRE, and TIE. We believe these common elements present opportunities for music educators to create more inclusive and equitable music education.

## Sidebar 2: Resources for UDL, CRE, and TIE

### Universal Design for Learning

#### 1) General Information

- a) CAST, Inc.: <https://www.cast.org>. This website is the official site for the organization that Tracey E. Hall, Anne Meyer, and David H. Rose (authors of original works on UDL) cofounded and have guided. It hosts many free resources, including:
  - i) UDL Guidelines, including FAQs: <https://udlguidelines.cast.org>.
  - ii) A UDL studio: <http://udlstudio.cast.org>. Visitors can use free resources and get tips on creating content using UDL.
  - iii) *Universal Design for Learning: Theory and Practice*. For a free multimedia edition of this book, go to <http://castpublishing.org/books-media/udl-theory-and-practice/> and scroll to the button: free multimedia edition.
  - iv) *Teaching Every Student in the Digital Age* (free online book): <http://www.cast.org/teachingeverystudent/>.
- b) Hall, Tracey E., Anne Meyer, and David H. Rose, eds. 2012. *Universal Design for Learning in the Classroom: Practical Applications*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- c) National Center on Universal Design for Learning: [www.udlcenter.org/](http://www.udlcenter.org/).

#### 1) Music/Arts-Specific

- a) Hourigan, Ryan. 2015. "Understanding Music and Universal Design for Learning: Strategies for Students with Learning Differences." In *Musicianship-Focused Curriculum and Assessment*, edited by Colleen Marie Conway, pp. 89–111. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications.

- b) Glass, Don, Anne Meyer, and David Rose. "Universal Design for Learning and the Arts." *Harvard Educational Review* 83, no. 1 (2013): 98–119.
- c) Darrow, Alice-Ann. "Music Education for All: Employing the Principles of Universal Design to Educational Practice." *General Music Today* 24, no. 1 (2010): 43–45. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1048371310376901>.
- d) "Rhonda Fuelberth: Universal Design for Learning." 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tERNkR2UmQ>, available from the collaborative music education series.

## Culturally Relevant Education

### 1) General Information

- a) \*Blitz, Lisa V., Denise Yull, and Matthew Clauhs. "Bringing Sanctuary to School: Assessing School Climate as a Foundation for Culturally Responsive Trauma-Informed Approaches for Urban Schools." *Urban Education* 55, no. 1 (2020): 95–124. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916651323>.
- b) Gay, Geneva. 2018. *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*. 3rd ed. New York, NY: Teacher's College Press.
- c) Ladson-Billings, Gloria. "Culturally Relevant Pedagogy 2.0: aka the Remix." *Harvard Educational Review* 84, no. 1 (2014): 74–84. <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.84.1.p2rj131485484751>.
- d) Paris, Django. "Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy: A Needed Change in Stance, Terminology, and Practice." *Educational Researcher* 41, no. 3 (2012): 93–97.
- e) Paris, Django, and H. Samy Alim, eds. 2017. *Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies: Teaching and Learning for Justice in a Changing World*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

### 2) Music-Specific

- a) Bond, Vanessa L. "Culturally Responsive Education in Music Education: A Literature Review." *Contributions to Music Education* 42 (2017): 153–80. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26367441>.
- b) Lind, Vicki R., and Constance McKoy. 2016. *Culturally Responsive Teaching in Music Education: From Understanding to Application*. London: Routledge.
- c) Shaw, Julia. "The Skin That We Sing: Culturally Responsive Choral Music Education." *Music Educators Journal* 98, no. 4 (2012): 75–81. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0027432112443561>.

## Trauma-Informed Education

### 1) General Information

- a) Chafouleas, Sandra M., Taylor A. Koriakin, Katrina D. Roundfield, and Stacy Overstreet. "Addressing Childhood Trauma in School Settings: A Framework for Evidence-Based Practice." *School Mental Health* 11, no. 1 (2019): 40–53. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-018-9256-5>.
- b) Gaffney, Carrie. "When Schools Cause Trauma." *Teaching Tolerance* 62 (2019). <https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/summer-2019/when-schools-cause-trauma>
- c) National Child Traumatic Stress Center: <https://www.nctsn.org>.
- d) *Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences | Violence Prevention | Injury Center | CDC*: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/aces/fastfact.html>
- e) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. 2014. *SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach* (HHS Publication No. (SMA) 14-4884; p. 27). Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. <http://store.samhsa.gov/product/SAMHSA-s-Concept-of-Trauma-and-Guidance-for-a-Trauma-Informed-Approach/SMA14-4884>.
- f) Walkley, Meg, and Tory L. Cox. "Building Trauma-Informed Schools and Communities." *Children & Schools* 35, no. 2 (2013): 123–26. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/cdt007>
- g) Wiest-Stevenson, Courtney, and Cindy Lee. "Trauma-Informed Schools." *Journal of Evidence-Informed Social Work* 13, no. 5 (2016): 498–503. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23761407.2016.1166855>

### 2) Music-Specific

- a) MacIntosh, Heather B., Amanda Tetraul, and Jean-Sebastien Vallée. "Trying to Sing through the Tears. Choral Music and Childhood Trauma: Results of a Pilot Study." *International Journal of Research in Choral Singing* 8 (2020) 22–50. <https://acda.org/2020/04/ijrcs-volume-8/>.
- b) \*McEvoy, Carin A., and Karen Salvador. "Aligning Culturally Responsive and Trauma-Informed Pedagogies in Elementary General Music." *General Music Today* 34, no. 1 (2020): 21–28. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1048371320909806>

\*Both CRE and TIE

**Table 1**

Descriptions of Shared Principles among Universal Design for Learning, Culturally Relevant Education, and Trauma-Informed Education

Principle	Enactment
Know and value individual student experiences and goals	Learn and care about students' lives, previous experiences, needs, preferences, musical goals and interests, and musics.
Build relationships with families and community	Cultivate positive perspectives on caregiving structures in their myriad forms, recognize family and student assets, and be involved in the community.
Honor student voice and provide choices	Actively seek and include student input and provide multiple ways students can participate in music.
Establish firm, healthy boundaries that maintain high expectations	Explicitly discuss and co-construct behavioral and musical expectations, determine performance expectations based on standards of quality drawn from the cultural contexts of the musics teachers and students select, and believe students can achieve these outcomes.
Reshape curriculum	Continuously and (pro)actively examine and adjust praxis (what is done, why it is done, how it is done) based on knowledge about students, families, the school's communities, and oneself to better serve learners.

**Table 2**

Generative Ideas for Praxis

Guiding Idea	Suggestion
<b>Practice cultural humility</b>	
Make a critical assessment of a practice to determine how it may be exclusionary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider what "low cost" means to you and your students in terms of concert attendance—work with the venue, the school, and local organizations to provide free admission for all students.</li> <li>• Consider any religious affiliations of the performance venue and whether all parties would feel comfortable there—do not connect out-of-school performances with school grades, openly discuss and disseminate information about venues with families, and provide multiple options for performance opportunities at different locations and with a variety of ways to participate (e.g., formatting the program, selecting the repertoire).</li> </ul>
Meaningfully integrate cultures different from your own.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine concert programs from the previous school year in terms of representation—select repertoire for the next program or concert that includes musics that represents different identities (e.g., religious, racial/ethnic, sexual orientation, gender) via composer characteristics or thematic/lyrical material. Feature genres that are different from what you have previously chosen or outside of your "comfort zone."</li> <li>• Examine how a piece of repertoire is presented to students and audiences—research all song literature and ensure that accurate and up-to-date background information is provided for all</li> </ul>
<b>Build relationships with families and communities</b>	
Intentionally learn about families and community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect on what you know about your learners' families and what you assume about them—use an intake form that includes information about who lives in a child's home(s), what languages they speak, what musics they listen to, and if anyone musics (e.g., sings, plays, dances).</li> <li>• Take an honest inventory of what you perceive as areas of strength and weakness in the community—challenge these beliefs by using community asset mapping (see Sidebar 1, disrupting bias).</li> </ul>

**Table 2 continued**

Guiding Idea	Suggestion
<b>Build relationships with families and communities</b>	
Find ways to incorporate family members and community partners as instructional partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Identify ways in which the program and students could be supported</i>—invite students' family members to share their musics in class, serve as musical mentors, or assist with performances/programming (e.g., accompanying, running sound, selecting repertoire, providing food, organizing transportation).</li> <li>• <i>Identify local artists or arts organizations in your community</i>—select one and work with them to design a mutually beneficial collaborative experience for your students and those community members.</li> </ul>
<b>Know and value individual student identities, circumstances, experiences, and goals</b>	
Actively demonstrate that you are an adult who will support students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Reflect on how you typically learn about students, any gaps in your knowledge, and assumptions you may make (e.g., based on appearance)</i>—rather than labeling, allow students to self-identify in terms of their identities (e.g., race, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation) and share any applicable terminology in their own time as you build relationships with them.</li> <li>• <i>Reflect on language and images used in your classroom in terms of the diversity of your school and the global community</i>—examine lyrical content for negative or stereotypical messages, immediately disrupt classroom talk that negatively depicts others (even in jest), and ensure that images in the music room reflect a variety of social identities.</li> </ul>
Find out about students' musical preferences and experiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Consider how students' musical interests could be incorporated into classes</i>—use a “playlist of my life” assignment and structure warm-ups or cool-downs based on students' selections.</li> <li>• <i>Consider how students' musical abilities could be incorporated into classes</i>—ask students to participate in a musical “show and tell” where they demonstrate a “[hidden] musical talent” or something musical they like to do outside of class, allowing students to complete this activity in class or in a more private way, such as using Flipgrid.</li> </ul>
<b>Honor student voice and choice</b>	
Learn from and with your students, valuing their expertise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Reflect on the ways you elicit and select volunteers from the class</i>—instead of calling on individual students in front of peers, ask the class for volunteers or privately approach a student to ask if they would like to serve as a model, assistant, or “expert” in an area that they have identified an interest or capability in (e.g., students may be more or less reserved during activities such as teaching classmates lyrics in a given language and/or talking about home culture or music).</li> <li>• <i>Reflect on your areas of musical strength and areas for potential growth in terms of skills and knowledge</i>—invite students to teach you techniques or musics you do not know by engaging them in skill-and knowledge-sharing experiences where they serve as experts.</li> </ul>
Create opportunities for student choice and power sharing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Consider how you select repertoire for a performance</i>—ask students to talk with three trusted persons about those persons' favorite musics and what they would like to see and hear at the next concert, engage the class in an open discussion, and use these ideas to inform decisions.</li> <li>• <i>Consider how your class operates in terms of organization and procedures</i>—engage students in a selection process where students are assigned rotating roles (e.g., music manager, instrument collector, recorder distributor) in the classroom to ensure interested students have opportunities, which could be determined by a class vote and also by teacher input.</li> </ul>

**Table 2 continued**

Guiding Idea	Suggestion
<b>Establish firm, healthy boundaries that maintain high expectations</b>	
Construct class expectations collectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Consider what “success” means to you in terms of a music practice/activity in your classroom—help students set personal goals for responding/performing/creating/connecting to a musical work, help them create plans to achieve these goals, and have them assess their achievement, progress, and effort.</i></li> <li>• <i>Reflect on your classroom policies (how were they developed, who may they disadvantage, what purpose do they serve, do they demonstrate trust for students)—lead a discussion with your students at the beginning of the year to establish three to five broad classroom expectations and the consequences for violating them; revisit periodically to see if adjustments should be made.</i></li> </ul>
Be willing to listen to students’ concerns, but do not engage in gossip or attempt to serve as a counselor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Reflect on the types of conversations students have in your classroom and whether they serve to raise others up—help students to view the music room as a safe space, both for them and others, by modeling and reminding them of applicable classroom norms (e.g., that we do not engage in negative or unhelpful speculative talk about others’ personal lives and circumstances).</i></li> <li>• <i>As related to students, reflect on what your roles are (e.g., teacher, role model, mentor, mandated reporter) and are not (e.g., a peer, licensed counselor, confidant—there are “secrets” teachers cannot keep)—as appropriate, listen to students’ genuine concerns, provide information to help them speak to the school counselor or other school personnel, and be transparent about your role as a mandated reporter.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Reshape curriculum</b>	
Develop new approaches and programming before the school year begins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Take an honest inventory of your mental energy, knowledge, and time (be kind, realistic, and accountable to yourself—trying to do too much at once can overwhelm you and affect the quality of the project)—select one level of planning (e.g., lesson, unit, concert, grade level, class) and start from scratch in terms of planning.</i></li> <li>• <i>Reflect on your areas of strength, potential areas for growth, and community and see how those relate to any professional development experiences you participated in during the previous semester—seek out professional development experiences that will help you grow in ways that can help you better serve your particular learners.</i></li> </ul>
Stay flexible throughout the school year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Reflect on the goals and expectations you have set for your learners and your program and how they align with the community—select one class or grade level, leave a portion (e.g., repertoire, a unit) of the curriculum “open” in the second semester, and brainstorm with your students to conceptualize something new based on their interests.</i></li> <li>• <i>Assess how students are doing in-the-moment—check in with learners to see how they are feeling about their progress and make adjustments using student feedback provided publicly (e.g., group discussion) and privately (e.g., anonymous questionnaire) and discuss any adjustments with the class.</i></li> </ul>

**Suggestions for Music Teachers**

In this section, we offer six principles that currently guide our praxes. Our ideas about and approaches to creating equity in music education spaces have evolved over time, are informed by the principles we believe are central to ABPs, and extend our previous work.<sup>43</sup> Table 2 offers generative ideas and suggestions for music educators, recognizing that teachers are the experts in their classrooms. Therefore, we suggest teachers select and adapt strategies for their particular contexts, which may necessitate involving other school per

sonnel (e.g., principals, counselors). In addition to the shared principles listed in Table 1, we suggest teachers begin by practicing cultural humility. This practice is aided by developing self knowledge, which is why we encourage teachers to recognize their identities, understand the interplay of those identities, and identify their positionality. This process of self-examination is not

about evaluating oneself or one’s culture as good or bad because such dualistic thinking is not helpful.<sup>44</sup> Instead, practicing cultural humility allows teachers to create spaces (and

equal footing) for musics, social practices, and ways of learning that foster equitable treatment among student, family, and community cultures.

## Conclusion

In this article, we offered information and suggestions intended to help music educators develop strategies to meaningfully engage with others in educational spaces. Recognizing intersectional identities is one way to begin to honor the uniqueness of an individual's experiences, see the whole child, and welcome each individual into music class. Rather than seeing differences as obstacles, embracing students' unique and multifaceted identities can provide valuable opportunities

to create, perform, and respond to music in ways that allow students to personally connect with the

content and enrich their and others' musical experiences. Employing such practices also could raise engagement among students who are not currently participating in school music, leading to increased and diversified enrollment and participation in musical activities. Furthermore, these strategies may assist music teachers in building meaningful relationships with families, communi-

ties, and colleagues, which could ultimately serve to improve instruction and create a more inclusive, diverse, and supportive professional environment.

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## ORCID iDs

Karen Salvador <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4282-5265>

Mara E. Culp <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2777-7173>

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# RIDING THE WAVE

Steve Phillips OMEA General Music Chair

At the 2023 OMEA State Conference, an exciting surprise met my eyes as I walked into the first elementary session. An overwhelming majority of the attendees were young music educators, in their first five years of teaching music. The excitement and energy that they showed was inspirational to all who attended the conference. It is exciting to know that the future is NOW, and Elementary Music education in Oregon is entering a time of renewed and refreshed vitality under the strong and capable hands of these amazing young music educators.

Yet, in the days and weeks following the conference, I kept wondering how we could support these young music teachers and energize their souls. These young music professionals need support and motivation, so they can inspire the next generation and keep music education a source of joy and strength for many years to come.

The research into why teachers are leaving their jobs is staggering. According to an Educator Week May 2021 article, about 8% of teachers are leaving the profession each year. Younger teachers, and those who are early in their career, are the most likely to leave the profession. In this same article, 84% of teachers surveyed said that teaching is more stressful now than before the Covid pandemic. Despite this exodus of teachers, the importance of music education continues to be increasingly important.

According to a NAFME 2014 article on the value of music education, aside from the development of reasoning and linguistic skills, music also KEEPS kids interested and engaged in school. Music education also promotes emotional development, which students need coming out of a global pandemic. Students who study music tend to have higher self-esteem and are better at coping with anxiety. If teachers are leaving music education, in record numbers, who will be teaching these vital skills to children? Where will they learn to cope? Young music educators need to feel valued, respected and important, so they can give their best to our children. By examining three important attributes, young music educators can feel empowered to make a difference in the lives of EVERY child.

First, we NEED to give young music educators opportunities for professional development. They need to meet each other, meet veteran music educators, and find new and exciting strategies for engaging music education for every student. Oregon is full of professional development opportunities with a wide range of topics for all music educators. For instance, the Portland Orff-Schulwerk Association provides workshops throughout the year that allow music educators to collaborate and learn Orff music strategies that can readily be taken back to their students. Southern Washington and

Oregon Kodaly educators also provide opportunities where all teachers can study and learn Kodaly strategies to use with their students. Portland State University has recently combined these pedagogies into an event called "Portland Kodorff Day," the first annual event hosted by P.S.U. on March 12, 2023. Another opportunity for professional development is the Oregon Music Education Association District 4, which hosts a fall inservice on the second Friday of October. This inservice brings in nationally recognized clinicians, who are ready and excited to share their craft with all music educators. Finally, another great professional development opportunity is the Oregon Music Education Association state conference. This four-day conference is dedicated to providing all music educators with a variety of workshops and sessions that are exciting, interesting, and enjoyable. My special focus over the last few years has been to provide a young music educators social hour; this allows these wonderful young educators to meet each other, meet veteran music educators and share the highs and lows of the current state of being a beginning music teacher. By providing a wide range of professional development opportunities, we are keeping music education fresh and engaging for all educators, who in turn pass it on to their students.

Second, young music educators need a MENTOR to share ideas and frustrations with. According to a May 2021 Education Week article, 92% of first year educators, who had a mentor, returned for a second year. In a June 2021 Education Hub article, young educators learned from their mentors: a) improved self-reflection and problem solving capacities, b) improved behavior management skills and c) the ability to put difficult experiences into perspective. When I began my career, my mentor was our elementary orchestra teacher. He met with me once a week, and we shared many discussions on educational philosophy, behavior management strategies and lesson planning organization and delivery. We also celebrated the highs and the lows of those first couple of years. I had someone in my corner to take a deep breath with, and it inspired me to keep going and persevere.

Recently, I have been blessed to have early music educators or student teachers come and visit and watch me teach. It's been surprising to me that these educators, in their college training, did not get much of a focus on elementary music education. A lot of their collegiate work experience is in secondary music education. I have seen many college music education candidates, at the start of their student teaching thinking they were going to be a secondary music educator, but found through their practicum and other experiences that elementary music education is where their true heart lies (myself included). If these young music educators decide to become elementary educators, they need a mentor to teach lesson planning and design, classroom management,

classroom organization as well as instrumental/choral technique for the elementary student. These young music educators need to be trained to be ELEMENTARY music educators, so they can inspire the young musician.

The last incredibly important attribute to bring to our young music educators is to teach these young professionals BALANCE in their lives. A U.S. News and World Report article in June 2022, found that educators have experienced the highest level of burnout among all other industries. This burnout is the leading cause why fifty five percent of educators have indicated that they are ready to leave the profession, according to a February 2022 Gallup Poll. Encourage these young educators to find other passions, outside of the classroom. Take a walk or a hike with them. Have them find one day a week where they put away their gradebook or lesson plans and make them get some sunshine. This push toward balance provides

a cleansing breath and mental relaxation that can allow these young educators to give their best for their students. Being a great music teacher DOES NOT mean having your car in your school's parking lot over the weekend.

The future of elementary music education is in strong and capable hands. With the increase in stresses, such as high standards, behavioral challenges, increased workload, and having to prove the importance of your position, we must do all we can to support and uplift our young music educators. One of the best compliments I have ever received came from a young music educator, who said, "I hope I have the energy to share the joy of music education that you have with the next generation of elementary music teachers". The future is NOW!! It's time to embrace it and make music education a source of joy for many years to come.



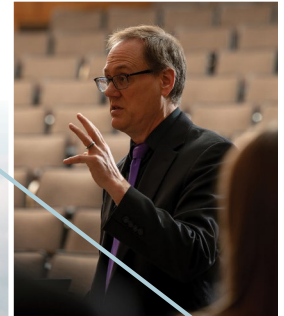
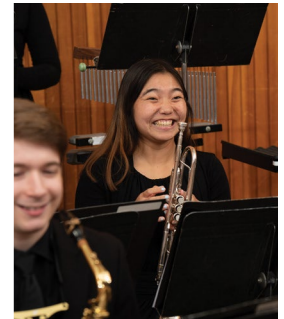
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# RECRUITING WOMEN INTO JAZZ ENSEMBLES AT THE SECONDARY & POST-SECONDARY LEVEL

Jessika Smith Parkrose Middle School, Director of Bands

I first started noticing the underrepresentation of women in jazz ensembles as early as high school. I participated in middle school jazz band and we had a nearly 50/50 split of male-identifying and female-identifying participants, but when it was time to sign up for band and jazz band in high school, many of my female peers decided to quit. I never really understood why – perhaps because the high school director was male, perhaps because it's a scary thing to be in high school anyway – but the disparity only got worse as I got older.

I was lucky to be a part of honors groups and participate in summer camps and other “extra” jazz opportunities in the corner of Eastern Washington I grew up in, and it became the norm for me to be the only female – maybe one of two females – in the band.

By the time I was headed to college, I'd already caught the jazz bug. I wanted to play saxophone and learn to improvise more than anything. I took classes at the community college during high school, which included improvisation, combo, jazz ensemble, and jazz history courses. It didn't matter to me at that point if I was the only girl in the band. I loved jazz for jazz's sake. The friendships and bonds came second, and I was pretty used to making friends with the boys at that point in my jazz journey.

When I reflect on each of my educational transitions, from middle school to high school, from high school to college, from undergrad (music education, emphasis on jazz performance) to a master's degree at the University of Oregon in Jazz Studies, there were a lot of times when I definitely would have quit if I hadn't had an underlying love for the music itself, and if I hadn't had amazing mentors who personally and individually encouraged me to continue. There are many various reasons kids decide to stick with something or quit it - something we'll talk more about below - but for me, I loved the music most of all.

One particular story sticks out to me when pondering how we can get and keep more girls in jazz ensembles. It happened about 5 years ago when a private student of mine called. I'd taught her private saxophone, mostly jazz lessons throughout middle school and she was a freshman at the high school now. We still had periodic sax lessons, but she was calling me to tell me she was quitting jazz band. She'd auditioned into the top jazz band at an *excellent* high school music program under the direction of a *superb* educator and jazz musician. I was shocked to hear her decision, and I needed to get to the bottom of *why* she'd make such a big decision after years of hard work in lessons and in middle school jazz band with me. The very first reason she gave me was that she was the only girl in the band and she just didn't relate with any of the 'jazz serious' boys in the class. Her director was a man. They were playing difficult and amazing music- she

had chances to improvise and make friends... but she was the only girl. She didn't feel like an equal contributor, she felt judged, she was stressed out, and she was afraid to speak up or make a mistake around peers so different from herself.

Long story short, I was able to persuade her to stay in jazz band. I told her to try it out for one semester to see if she could make friends with the boys and/or find some connection with the group and the director. She joined choir as well- that's where her friends were. She worked her tail off, made friends (kind of) with the boys, and ended up in the Oregon All-State Jazz Band her senior year. I had a couple of conversations with her new band director after that phone call, and he made it a goal to recruit and maintain girls in his program. It worked for our shared student, and I hope that some of the ideas below might help you balance out your bands, and get more girls to show up in your jazz bands in the first place.

1. Have more women in charge. If you're a woman, don't be afraid to take the reins on leading your school's jazz band. Ask someone like me for help. Join a community jazz band. Learn to improvise alongside your students. If you're able to have two bands or more at your school, make sure at least one of them is led by a female jazz musician/educator.
2. Don't be a bystander. Point it out when concerts you watch or recordings you're listening to in class are all male personnel. Bring it up when women are excluded at a jam session. It's so common to see all-male personnel in jazz groups, you might not even notice it. Your female students definitely notice it.
3. Celebrate literature written by women by intentionally programming music written by women and deliberately discussing the composer with your band. If you're struggling to find repertoire by women, check the social media groups (thankfully many folks are talking about diverse repertoire and the hive mind has a lot of ideas), or check out newly-formed publishing company Brava Jazz ([www.bravajazz.com](http://www.bravajazz.com)).
4. Hire women to run your sectionals and be your guest artists. If you hire adjudicators, clinicians, and judges for festivals, be sure you hire women. Representation matters.
5. Don't make jazz a competition. Competitive festivals are one thing, but the vibe behind chair challenges, jam sessions, and at times improvisation in general can be intimidating and a deal breaker for young people, and for

females in particular. Don't pit kids against each other: "we'll see who plays best on this solo during rehearsal, then that person will play the solo at the concert". We're in this together. If you want her to take the solo, give her the solo without any strings attached.

6. Brave is better than perfect. Point it out when it's only boys who volunteer to take a solo or improvise. Women are brave, too, and no one plays anything perfectly.
7. If you are male, don't recruit for your band alone. Bring your band (which hopefully has some females in it) so that the younger students see that both boys and girls are welcome and participate in jazz band.
8. Work with your beginning band feeders to deliberately recruit girls on jazz band instruments like trumpet, trombone and drums. If they all choose flute and violin from the beginning, there's not a very easy way to get them into a jazz band later.
9. Don't have a jazz band uniform. Especially if it's a shirt and tie. Or khakis and a Hawaiian shirt. All black is excellent- it lets all shapes and sizes of bodies be able to choose something flattering to wear at concerts.

10. Encourage your female students to audition for honor ensembles, to improvise, to compose, etc. It is not weird, creepy, or inappropriate to *individually* tell a student that you believe in their abilities and you think they should strive for the next challenge/chapter in their musical career. "Hey everybody, you should think about auditioning for All-State" isn't always good enough. *Specifically* ask the girls in your band to audition. It would be so nice to see a more balanced All-State band in the future, and without the applications coming in from female players, it'll never happen.

It's not hard to recruit more women into your programs. But it does take a deliberate, conscious choice on your part. You have to choose to include repertoire written by women. You have to choose to feature artists and educators who are women. And you have to choose to make opportunities both available and appealing to the young women in your music program.

It only takes a step to get going in the right direction, toward a more inclusive next generation for music education, and I do hope you'll find whatever steps you can take in your own program to create an inclusive space for everyone to experience music.



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# A CALL TO ACTION: SMALL SCHOOLS

**Melissa Jmaeff** OMEA Small Schools Chair

Small school music classrooms are amazing places. Whether making music in the gym, the cafeteria, or a traditional music room, what is required of music educators in small schools is innovative thinking and problem solving; the ability to be inclusive, as practiced each and every day by the very nature of the y'all come sing/play ensembles that tend to be the hallmark of small schools; the ability to build bridges between students of disparate skill sets and backgrounds; and the ability to harness the magic of each student and create with it an environment in which every student feels safe enough to take risks, push themselves, make mistakes, in short, to learn music. As OMEA continues to make strides with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion, it is time for small schools music educators to ask ourselves what role we would like to play in shaping the future of our professional organization in order to best serve our own professional development and therefore the development of our students. As music teachers in small schools, most of us are in the unique position of not only having a birds eye view of entire programs, but also truly understanding the value of the contributions that each individual student makes each day. I think that this makes us uniquely suited to step into roles of leadership when it comes to forging a path forward for ourselves, our students, and our professional organization.

At this year's OMEA conference, I had the pleasure of meeting many wonderful small schools music teachers (and advocates) from around the state. Through data collected at the Small Schools Roundtable session, as well as through various surveys, it is clear that small schools folks have a good sense of what is needed in order to feel better-supported. In the weeks since the conference, we've improved resources for small schools directors by adding to our growing small schools Google drive and creating an Oregon Small Schools Facebook page. And I must admit, I am thrilled that small schools music educators are enthusiastic about building this community.

As OMEA continues to examine what its future looks like and how to best approach its mission statement of being "dedicated to music education for all Oregonians", it will be up to us, small schools music educators, to ensure that our needs are being addressed by OMEA and that we are well-represented in our professional organization. No one but us truly knows what it takes to run these programs so it is likewise up to us to ensure that OMEA is meeting our needs by creating and applying to present meaningful sessions at our conference, continuing to provide OMEA with feedback about how it can best serve all music students and music educators statewide, and continuing to build our community.

I have compiled a list of session ideas that have been suggested by small school music educators. It is my hope that one of these ideas resonates with you and that you will feel encouraged to submit a proposal to present a session at next year's conference. Proposals will be due sometime this spring.

- Program support and sustainability
- Small schools recruiting
- Simple instrument repair
- Small Schools-specific reading sessions
- Roundtable sessions
- Session on how to take info from "bigger program" sessions and make it fit our students and ensembles.
- DEI in small school repertoire
- Fundraising and program building for small schools
- Arranging and writing parts (diy flex)
- Diversity in music without tokenism
- Festival & competitions for small schools
- Grading
- More small schools collaboration!
- Flex reading session with small school band focus
- Teaching drama
- Teaching choir with a band background
- Using the piano when you're not a piano player
- Elementary/General music classes for the secondary educator
- Guitar
- Poverty issues in the music room
- Rural music education
- Teaching "place"
- Using rubrics in music education
- Team/Confidence building activities

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# WINDS OF CHANGE:

## Embracing Cultural Context in the Instrumental Classroom

Wesley D. Brewer OMEA SMTE Chair

In reflecting on all of the wonderful events and conversations that transpired during the 2023 OMEA Conference I truly felt that the conference theme “Celebrating Diversity, Pursuing Harmony” could be felt across many different sessions. I applaud the conference organizing team for bringing this vision to fruition. Issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion have become critical to our university students who are trying to build a pathway towards success while keeping these concerns at the forefront of their decision making. As a result, many of our students were able to relate ideas we had been discussing in classes to those in conference sessions. This provided a powerful opportunity for engagement and connection, for future teachers to see current teachers in the field modeling the same curiosities and critical thinking we have been trying to foster.

During the past several years, the music education faculty members at Oregon State University have had a unique opportunity to engage in a total revision of our undergraduate teacher preparation curriculum. This has required interesting and sometimes difficult conversations about essential experiences and how to promote musical development while also fostering educator dispositions. We recognize that the landscape of the teaching profession continues to change as our societies change; at the forefront of this change is increasing attention to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We are fortunate to teach at a university that expects us to address such issues in our curriculum and also to be surrounded by colleagues in other areas of our music department such as musicology, performance, conducting, and contemporary music, that also share these values.

My teaching emphasis is in instrumental music education, with a particular focus on band. In my estimation, instrumental teachers have had more difficulty confronting and addressing these issues than our colleagues in general music and choir. The possible reasons for this difficulty are varied. One possible explanation for why instrumental music has tended to lag behind could include a lacking knowledge of available repertoire, which has been addressed in part by book projects like “The Horizon Leans Forward” by my colleague Erik Leung.<sup>1</sup> Additional challenges in creating change may relate to constraints in the instrumental ensemble format itself, including the standardized instrumentation of bands and orchestras. As music education scholar Juliet Hess has noted, “in the Western

ensemble paradigm, instruments typically available to students include instruments that belong in the concert band, wind ensemble, or orchestra. These instruments predetermine the music played, and the music played simultaneously dictates the instruments required.”<sup>2</sup> In the general music classroom, there are clearly greater opportunities for flexibility in this regard. As reflected in the session offerings at the last few OMEA conferences, culturally sensitive and responsive teaching practices have received a fair amount of attention in general music teaching contexts. Choral ensemble teachers have also been more forthright in confronting these issues than instrumental teachers.

At the heart of these conversations is the need to put the cultural context of the music at the center of the rehearsal process. Considering the contextual origins of music has always been important, but as societal expectations are evolving, the need for serious exploration is now more urgent. Parents now expect us to exclude music that contains offensive stereotypes or music that is associated with practices such as minstrelsy. Teachers in the general music community have collaborated to identify commonly used songs with such histories and urged each other to abandon them. Choir teachers have also been more active in this regard, particularly with confronting issues of cultural appropriation and developing responsive practices. Many of the same problematic cultural respect and appropriation concerns are woven through band and orchestra repertoire, yet the related issues and changes in practice have not been explored in any systematic way by the instrumental community. How will instrumental teachers respond?

While there are many possibilities for change in this regard, and a complete outline of these issues is beyond the scope of this article, I believe it is becoming increasingly clear that instrumental teachers will need to begin heeding the calls for change. Comprehensive Musicianship through Performance strategies, which many of our colleagues in music education have promoted for years, ask us to carefully consider the origins of our repertoire and to consider learning opportunities within pieces beyond simply preparing for adjudication. Students should leave the concert cycle with not just knowledge of how to play their parts but a deeper understanding of the music itself, as well as its origins. I will provide here a few starting points based on questions for inquiry that are taken from

<sup>1</sup> Leung, Erik Kar Jun. *The Horizon Leans Forward...: Stories of Courage, Strength, and Triumph of Underrepresented Communities in the Wind Band Field*. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Hess, Juliet. “Becoming an Anti-racist Music Educator: Resisting Whiteness in Music Education.” *Music Educators Journal* 107, no. 4 (2021): 16

the “facets” model for interdisciplinary work outlined by Janet Barrett, Claire McCoy, and Kari Veblen.<sup>3</sup> For each piece that you program, consider how you and your students can (or cannot) answer the following questions and what information you might need to teach to enable this:

- Who created it?
- When and where was it created?
- Why and for whom was it created?
- What does it sound like or look like?
- What kind of structure or form does it have?
- What is its subject?
- What is being expressed?
- What techniques did its creator use to help us understand what is being expressed?

Imagine if each of your students was able to write or speak about these facets of the concert repertoire you are currently

preparing! I find beauty in these questions because they are specific enough to generate deep understanding of our repertoire and also broad enough to translate to other genres of music, as well as into other art forms such as visual art or theater arts. If exploring these questions for every piece you are doing seems like too much, start with one piece per concert cycle. In my experience, the educational payoff both in terms of engagement and increased quality of performance is immense.

In closing, I will say that I am very optimistic for the future of music education. Each day I am privileged to work with brilliant young teachers who are bringing new perspectives and new ideas to the table. Let us listen to them carefully, and work together to continue the pursuit of harmony and excellence that is already so apparent in our state. It is only through working together and learning from one another in the spirit of collaboration and kindness that we will be able to continue creating a profession that we are all proud to be part of.

<sup>3</sup> Barrett, Janet R. “Interdisciplinary Work and Musical Integrity.” *Music Educators Journal* 87, no. 5 (2001): 27-31

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# ARNOLD JACOBS RECONSIDERED

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The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Arnold Jacobs' birth provides an opportunity to remember and re-examine his legacy. Marking a centenary also risks placing Jacobs in a mythic status like that of golfing legend Ben Hogan. If the reader asks "Ben who?" then you know what the authors have experienced in speaking to audiences who never studied with, much less heard Arnold Jacobs perform with the Chicago Symphony. Is the Jacobs legacy nostalgia or urban myth? The answer is no.

Our media-dominated culture worships the new and, in so doing, trivializes the past. One could imagine Arnold Jacobs being categorized with a giant like Thomas Edison -- revered but not terribly relevant. In fact, Arnold Jacobs was a visionary and groundbreaking teacher and performer. He was to his musical peers as Tesla was to Edison. He was decades ahead of his time in his musical philosophies, and he helped transform how to make and understand music.

Arnold Jacobs understood people in their humanity, their physiology, and – most importantly – their musical mind. While science has taken quantum leaps in the past century, human beings are still "wired" similarly and their body systems still function in the same way. The teachings of Arnold Jacobs are as relevant today as they were in the 1960s when his teaching took off – even more so because Jacobs was very advanced in his application of techniques that have come to be understood as integral to training and re-mapping the brain.

All attempts to capture the essence of Arnold Jacobs (including this article) are limited because there is not a single Jacobs "method" that can be packaged and boxed for our convenience. Phrases like "song and wind" are only part of a larger picture. Arnold Jacobs was not about slogans, or gadgets, or even about York tubas and breathing. Jacobs was about one thing only: **MUSIC**. He knew that it was the musician who plays the instrument, often described by him as a "stupid piece of brass that has no brain." The instrument is a tool of expression and the body an animating mechanism to create the vibration that is resonated in the instrument. But all this begins in the brain, and it is here that Jacobs had the ultimate revelation that made him unique. There had first to be a compelling musical message in the mind of the musician.

His most rudimentary precepts are incredibly profound. He did not want us to discuss being a brass "player" lest it imply that we were technicians operating a machine. He wanted us to be musicians, artists, and most of all COMMUNICATORS of music to an audience. His knowledge of physiology and anatomy were encyclopedic, but all placed in service of the art form and the act of communication. He knew it all and could explain it with stunning eloquence, but would be the first to say, "I don't care whether you do it 'right or wrong,' I just want you to sound better than anyone else."

Northwestern University professor Rex Martin, a longtime Jacobs student, wrote, "Mr. Jacobs had a complete mastery of musical communication. Everything that he worked on with his students was to help them to communicate musical ideas to an audience. As he defined it, this was the psychology of performance. Learning to think like a great artist was the most important step to *becoming* a great artist."

Some skeptics have tried to characterize Jacobs' philosophies as one step above the "think system" of *The Music Man's* Professor Harold Hill. Not only are such attitudes ignorant, they miss the essence of what Arnold Jacobs lived to share: Making music can be a great joy if we only get out of our own way. Would you like to experience that joy and play much better with greater ease than ever before? The answer is Arnold Jacobs.

Decades before the power of visualization was embraced at the highest levels of professional sports, Jacobs was preaching the gospel from the basement of his modest home on South Normal Avenue in Chicago. Visualization and the mental aspect of world-class performance began to be known in the 1970s when it was observed in Soviet Olympic athletes, but it now is considered essential among top athletes. World champion golfer Jack Nicklaus said, "I never hit a shot, not even in practice, without having a very sharp in-focus picture of it in my head." It is this very concept of brain/body connection that Jacobs understood before most others in music.

Jacobs' studies of psychology revealed that the musical message must dominate, with over 90 percent of mental concentration devoted to the message, and a small fraction to anything else. As performers, we are too often caught thinking about how it feels vs. how it sounds. We become focused internally and the musical message is drowned out because we analyze while trying to perform. Communication to another person is thwarted in our earnest effort to produce the notes. We have become technicians and not communicators.

Arnold Jacobs was a natural musician with great innate talent that cannot be denied. When he learned as a child to play bugle calls by ear, imitating the notes played by his mother on the piano, he began training himself to respond to sound and pitch, not to lip tension. Imitation was one of Jacobs' most important concepts, for it demanded that there be something to imitate: a musical sound, a performance, or a recording. Consider this simple illustration that you can try: Imitate an accent or dialect using your voice. Maybe it's a British accent, or a faux-French accent, or a TV personality with a distinctive voice - just do your best to imitate the sound of that voice. Now ask yourself: How did you do that? You recalled the sound of that accent in your mind, and using your ability to speak altered your voice to try to match that accent or voice you had in mind.

Learning to be a fine musician uses the same methodology, but first demands that we program our brain with superb musical role models. Jacobs would often say, "Play this like Bud Herseth would play it," or he would take the student's tuba, demonstrate something, and ask the student to imitate him, or he might sing a phrase with his marvelous, resonant voice and ask you to imitate that. Jacobs heard great music making from the time he entered the Curtis Institute at 15 years old and was shaped by that, as well as by repeatedly taking the class on phrasing and solfège taught by Philadelphia Orchestra principal oboist Marcel Tabuteau. Jacobs passed the class but took it again every year he was at Curtis to get further steeped in the artistry that was being shared. Jacobs was a brilliant solfège artist who could sing anything, thereby giving him a perfect concept of the pitch he wanted to produce. And beyond pitch, there was a sophisticated concept of the attack, tone color, and every other facet of artistry. Jacobs had a vast musical vocabulary of shading and color in his playing, and it made his tuba playing thrilling.

There were and are today many excellent tuba players, but those who know Jacobs' playing intimately would agree that not only was his playing superb, it was uniformly *thrilling* – whether hearing him play a simple two-note solo passage in "Also Sprach Zarathustra" or providing the vibrant foundation to massive chords in a Bruckner symphony. It was a spine-tingling, larger-than-life presence that animated the entire brass section of the CSO and thereby the orchestra. Following a performance of Bruckner's Symphony No. 6 conducted by Rafael Kubelik, one of Bud Herseth's students commented to Mr. Herseth about how impressed he was by the playing of Arnold Jacobs. Herseth smiled and responded, "It's like he has his hand in the small of our back, gently urging us forward."

Jacobs' consistent high standards and inspiring musicianship earned the admiration of the world's greatest conductors and his legendary colleagues. The great Fritz Reiner thought Jacobs was the greatest tuba player in the world. Guest conductors of the CSO swooned over his playing and regularly tried to recruit him. Horn virtuoso Philip Farkas said he'd never heard a tuba player like Jacobs, and longtime CSO principal oboe Ray Still considered Jacobs not only one of his musical inspirations but the most important teacher he ever had. Jacobs' longtime CSO colleague bass trombonist Ed Kleinhammer said that sitting next to Jacobs was "a keyhole view into heaven."

What generated this great respect and even veneration? It didn't hurt that Arnold Jacobs was unfailingly kind, patient, and courteous to everyone from a famous player walking into his studio to the elevator operator at the Fine Arts Building, where he had his studio in later years. But aside from the personal aspects of this great man, it was his remarkable and thrilling musicianship that earned the highest accolades.

Jacobs taught hundreds of students over the decades. Students of virtually all wind instruments came to him for guidance, frequently saying that they never played as well or with as much ease as they did in his presence. He had the ability to inspire and get you quickly to focus on your musical message. If there was a physical issue with breathing or tension that

was inhibiting the student's ability to move air, he addressed it away from the instrument using gauges and devices to provide a visual cue. It was both effective and simple: If you control the ball, you are controlling your air. But the emphasis was on moving the ball (the product), not on how you did it.

Herein lies one of the great paradoxes of the Jacobs philosophy: It is incredibly simple, but not easy to change long-held habits that hold a player back. Playing a musical instrument, in Jacobs' lexicon, is a series of conditioned responses developed through a trial-and-error process in response to various stimuli. Most players came to Jacobs with conditioned responses that were getting in their way. They substituted tension and pressure for wind (air in motion). They played by pushing valves vs. conceiving of a clear pitch and sending that into the brass instrument. They substituted moving their body for taking a full, seamless breath. Some people could play in spite of these bad habits, but none reached their potential until new habits were developed over time -- NEW conditioned responses developed to a new set of stimuli. Jacobs' concept of teaching not by breaking old habits but replacing them with new, better habits was an early musical application of what we know today as neuroplasticity.

Science has affirmed that the human brain can reorganize itself by forming new neural connections as a result of experience. These changes happen by learning a new way of thinking about and doing something – such as taking a breath – and creating a new, better habit. Want to take a full breath? Jacobs advised to simply suck air at the lips and let it go where it will. Suction without friction is the correct cue to motivate a good breath vs. making a shape change in the body. Trying to play with inadequate air created its own set of tensions and made a full, resonant sound impossible.

Through careful practice and repetition, the new way would eventually replace the old habit and create a new conditioned response and a new pattern of neuronal activity. One of Jacobs' frequent comments was, "Don't correct what's wrong, go for what's right," and this was reinforced by urging students to rehearse success and not failure in practice. Dr. Frank Diaz, a music educator who has written numerous scholarly articles on the psychology of music, said, "Jacobs' notions on creating new habits rather than erasing old ones, and on using top-down approaches (mind controls meat) as a way of creating these new neural maps were insightful."

Jacobs met each student where he or she was, and adapted his teaching techniques to whatever that student needed most. There was no single, immovable "Jacobs method," and for that reason he resisted writing a textbook. Of course there were common problems that presented themselves, but how he addressed them and the words and images he used with each student were unique.

Jacobs' teaching was not magic or new-age mysticism. It was a scientifically-based, musically-oriented, and eminently practical way to allow people to realize their potential as musicians. And while the techniques varied student-to-student, what did not vary was the imperative for quality at all times: quality in tone,

intonation, interpretation, and telling a story with music. Notes were not enough. There had to be a story, a narrative expressed via the music. The musical line had to go somewhere, and for that reason he demanded that even simple exercises in the Arban book be played with a musical direction. Whatever it was, the emphasis was on quality.

Jacobs calibrated his musical demands to the ability of the student. If he had to begin with whole and half notes, they would be the finest whole and half notes with wonderful tone, perhaps in a Bach chorale or a great hymn. With repetition over time, excellent new habits would be built as a foundation for more sophisticated music, slowly developing the art form note by note. And he advised, "Don't practice, always perform." Jacobs said, "You should engage in the deliberate act of story-telling each day you practice." Make it *mean something*.

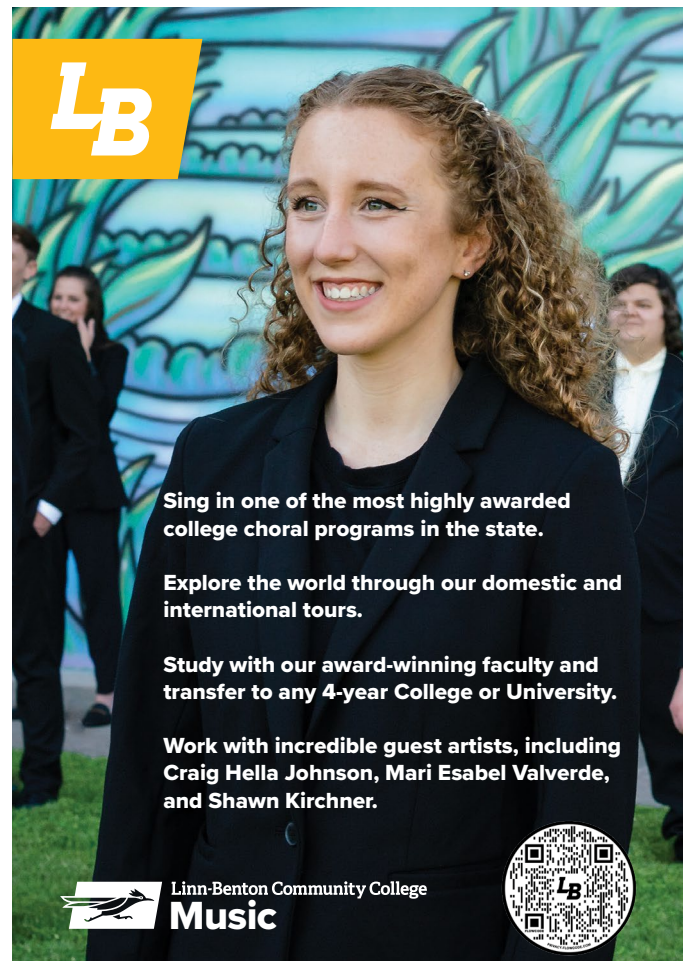
Asking a brass player to play on the mouthpiece would not only upset old habits and reorient the thinking, but would immediately solidify the connection between the pitch in the head and the pitch in the buzz, exposing a disconnect not as evident with the mouthpiece in the horn. Encouraging his students to play very familiar melodies on the mouthpiece assured there was a strong musical stimulus guiding the buzz. There was no doubt that the student knew the tune to "Happy Birthday," so he might start there. With that clear mental image of the melody, by trial and error the student learned to play that simple tune on the mouthpiece with accuracy and clarity, building new and more productive habits. At the same time, the student began moving much more air, and tension in the torso went away. Over time, more complicated songs and even solos could be buzzed. Jacobs said that the horn was only a big megaphone that amplified and colored the buzz that was being sent in, so he encouraged students to get the finest sound on the mouthpiece alone. This redirection of focus put the attention on pitch, sound, and music without the student being aware of what was happening.

It was genius. Through his study of medicine and psychology, Jacobs knew how to put the emphasis where it belonged: on developing the musical mind of the player. He knew how to teach change in form or function through music, not vice versa. If something needed to improve in the physical act of playing, there was always an aural motivation. With articulation, it was done with speech. If with another factor, he would assign a musical challenge that would create the physical response. If you needed to evaluate your playing, record it and listen to it later, putting a wall between the acts of making statements (performing) and asking questions (evaluating). Jacobs did the same in his own practice by recording himself frequently.

Jacobs died in 1998, a decade after retiring from his 44-year career in the Chicago Symphony. He left huge musical shoes to be filled, and no one understood this better than Gene Pokorny, who said upon being offered the job, "Nobody 'replaces' Arnold Jacobs." If the reader imagines that the Jacobs legacy is hagiography or has been enlarged in death, it is not

true. He can be sincerely appreciated even with knowledge of his humanity. He was not always very organized in his personal life. Remarkably dedicated to his wife, Gizella, he said that he should have devoted more time to his son. How many other parents might echo his words? The physiology and psychology of music became his job, his hobby, and his obsession, but there are also countless examples of his kindness and personal generosity to so many of his students, not to mention neighbors and friends. He cared about people and had a positive disposition that brightened the lives of those he knew. We can understand his complexity while still giving all respect and credit for his revolutionary approach to music.

Arnold Jacobs was a marvelous musical role model who can continue to inspire for generations to come. His teaching left an indelible mark on many whose lives he changed. Through his many great CSO recordings, we get a glimpse of his amazing artistry that, if we could magically hear it live again today, would thrill and motivate us even more. His greatest legacy, and the one that would please him the most, is that we aspire to his level of excellence in music and – most importantly – that we capture and emulate the joy that he radiated in every note.




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# TIME TO GET STUFF DONE

**Bill Humbert** Director of Bands and Instrumental Music Education, Glendale Community College

Music Educators have so many responsibilities in order to keep their program moving in a positive direction every day. Oftentimes we struggle to gather and embrace the many levels of administrative business necessary to provide an amazing learning experience for our students and our music education community. The items that follow may help you organize your thoughts and make a positive difference both in and out of the classroom for you and your students

## Taking Care of Business... On the Outside

It is important to be aware of your responsibilities outside of the classroom. Oftentimes we focus so much on the goals of our program, the teaching and learning in our own classroom that we “forget” or “procrastinate” on those obligations that we have as educators as a member of our school building faculty.

- Make sure that everything is in order with your job outside of the classroom.
- Take care of your professional obligations where the students are **not** concerned.
- When the paperwork comes across your desk (or your computer), take care of it that day. Paperwork and email procrastination will give you and your program a poor reputation with the people that get things done for you (Secretary, Administrator, Transportation Folks, and Parents). Make sure you take care of those who, at some point in time, you will need to take care of you.
- Know these things
  - ♦ Policies and Procedures
  - ♦ Grades and Paperwork
  - ♦ Administrative Procedures and Deadlines
  - ♦ Committee Work and Assignments

## Taking Care of Business... On the Inside

Are you ready to teach? So often, and unfortunately, this may be the last order of business before our students arrive.

Is Your Room Ready?

- Chairs and stands in good working order
- Orderly and neat room set-up
- A lack of clutter
- Percussion area (if necessary) neat and clean
- Bulletin boards and wall decorations/information

- Marker board or chalkboard neat and orderly
- Is your Lesson Ready?
- Know what you are going to do every minute of the rehearsal
  - ♦ The Opener: warm up process and announcements
  - ♦ The Main Event: the rehearsal plan for performance preparation
  - ♦ The Closer: rehearsal wrap-up and review of concepts
  - ♦ Don't forget the Fundamentals of ensemble excellence
    - Develop Tone
    - Develop Tuning and Intonation
    - Develop Style Concepts
    - Develop Timing and Pulse
- Use a lesson planning form or lesson outline. Don't just “wing it”.
- Have a “hip pocket” lesson plan just in case your initial ideas don't work
- Plan in advance:
  - ♦ Daily
  - ♦ Weekly
  - ♦ Monthly
  - ♦ Semester

Working to provide a meaningful implementation of your plan is essential. Are you communicating your intent and expectations in a way for your students to understand?

- Understand your plan and how you will get the ideas across to the students
- Remember that communication is not what you say, but what your students get. You may need to develop multiple strategies to teach the same topic or concept.

## R-E-S-P-E-C-T...Find Out What It Means...and Give It

It is often said that in order to coordinate a successful music program that it “takes a village”. It truly does. There are so many layers of responsibilities and commitments that center on people...on other people. We need the entire “village” to understand their importance and feel accepted into the process of being a part of the ensemble.

- Students
  - ◆ Treat with respect
  - ◆ Acknowledge accomplishment...catch them doing it right
  - ◆ Be firm and fair with your expectations for the program
  - ◆ Avoid playing favorites
  - ◆ Support them in their school activities that are not "music related"
- Colleagues
  - ◆ They are facing the same challenges as you...work with your team and as a team.
  - ◆ Support and help if possible
  - ◆ Stay in touch...don't hibernate in your "music room cave" or office
- School Programs
  - ◆ Support other programs and clubs in your school
  - ◆ Participate with your program if possible
    - Assemblies
    - Campus Events
    - Community Events
    - Be Visible
- Community
  - ◆ Participate in community programs if possible
    - Parades, Community Festivals
  - ◆ Seek opportunities to give back to the community that is oftentimes giving to your program through financial or physical support.

## Sell, Sell, Sell

As a music educator, it is our responsibility to sell our program. We need to let others know what is happening with our program, so when we need their assistance, or want them to take an interest in our program, it is not a surprise that our program exists. Additionally, keeping others "in the know" about the success and growth of your program will pay dividends when tough decisions are being made about class schedules, budgeting, and curriculum changes in your school district. Areas of communication should not only be focused on students (current, former and future), but also on parents, administration at the school and district level, other faculty members, and community members. Let them know and celebrate with you all of the amazing things that are happening in your classroom and with your students.

Communication is the key to a less turbulent journey through your school year. Make it a priority to keep others informed. There should be no surprises. You need to stay informed... There should be no surprises to YOU. Students, Parents,

School Community, and School Administration should also be prioritized in your communication model. And, don't forget your feeder programs. The teachers, parents and students of your feeder schools should also know what is happening so that they can develop a sense of understanding and excitement towards supporting and being a part of your program in the future.

Enjoy the Ride.

Bill Humbert is currently in his 36th year teaching and 23rd year as the Director of Concert Bands and Director of Instrumental Music Education at Glendale Community College in Glendale, Arizona. In addition to his duties at the college, Bill is active throughout the country as a clinician and adjudicator in the areas of concert band, marching band, jazz band, and orchestra. He is the Founder and Director of *Bill Humbert Leadership*, which provides student leadership, team building, and motivational workshops throughout the country for collegiate, high school, junior high, and middle school students. Additionally, he is the Director of the *Arizona Leadership Conference*, a summer leadership program for high school music students, and is the Co-Director of the *California Leadership Academy*. Bill also serves as an Educational Clinician for the *Conn-Selmer Corporation*.



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In 2003, a group of people dedicated to the music scene in Oregon met to recognize artist and industry inductees from the many genres heard in our state. Once a year, members are nominated, evaluated and selected for induction into OMHOF. Induction is based on several criteria including individual and group contributions to music in Oregon as well as the impact on music they have had around the world. They include musicians, producers, radio disc jockeys,

promoters and others from Johnny Ray to Robert Cray to Portugal the Man. The next induction ceremony will be on October 7th at the Aladdin Theater in Portland.

Over the years scholarship winners have gone on to attend many different colleges and universities. Many have gone on to successful professional careers, teaching positions as well as music business endeavors. OMHOF scholarship recipients have attended Berklee School of Music, Amherst, St. Olaf, Julliard, University of North Texas, Oregon State and University of Oregon. The recipients have come from urban and suburban Portland, Salem, Medford, Bend and smaller towns like Philomath and Warrenton. Many of the recipients, now college graduates, are teaching music privately and in the Oregon school system, like 2016 winner, Elizabeth Soper at Toledo Jr/Sr High School teaching 7-12 band and choir. Others are working in orchestras across America. Recipients have continued to rise in national visibility like 2009 winner Kate Davis from West Linn High School who has a solo career as a vocalist and songwriter.

She was recently seen with Jon Batiste's band, sitting in on bass at the Steven Colbert show. Her sister, Emma Davis, was a 2011 scholarship winner and performed at the Grammy Awards with Portland's own Esperanza Spalding.

Along with this program OMHOF is responsible for hundreds of educational events with Aaron Meyer, noted violinist and composer, bringing these dynamic performances to the most rural areas of Oregon where no music programs are available. In these years when educational prospects have been severely affected by Covid-19, the OMHOF Scholarship Program offers a sense of hope for high school grads to move forward in their music pursuits and help the musical culture of Oregon to grow as well.

*J. Michael Kearsey is a member of the OMHOF Board of Directors and an OMHOF Inductee)*



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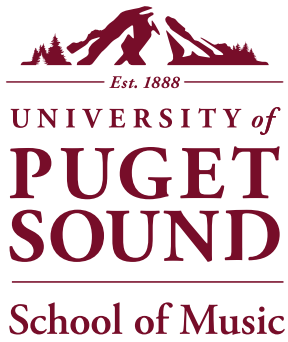
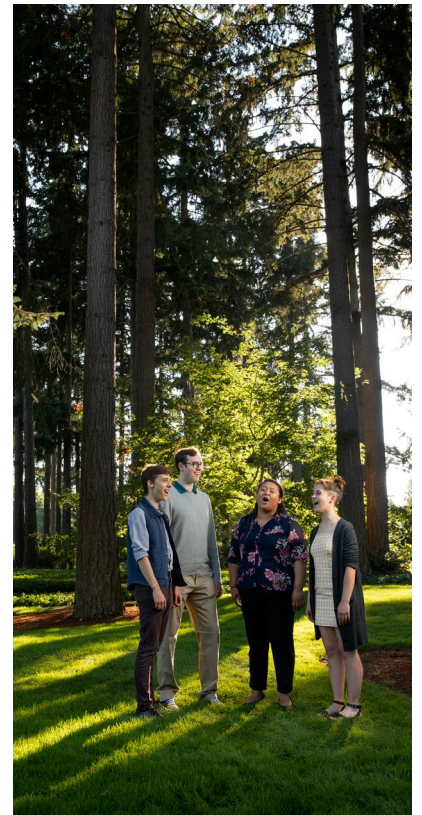
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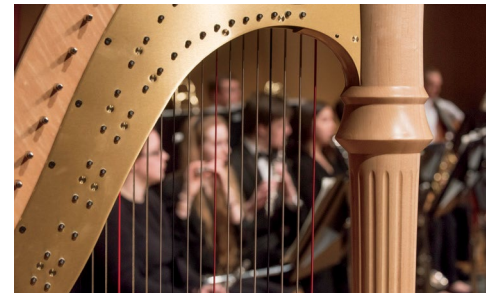
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# NAVIGATING THE FIRST YEAR:

## What Teaching Elementary General Music Taught Me About Beginning Band

Olivia Salzman-Coon Graduate Student, University of Oregon

In the 2005 text, *Understanding by Design*, authors Wiggins and McTighe outlined a method for instruction that would offer an efficient method for designing courses with deep understandings and authentic assessment in mind. While this system is presented as a prescriptive three step process in the text, it is actually in effect a method for teachers to reflect on their teaching practices. This reflective process when applied to music education offers a new perspective on how to structure ensemble courses. The purpose of this paper is to compare the structures of the typical beginning band class to typical structures of general elementary music to create a system of best practice that simplifies beginning band, incorporates tenets of backward design, and diversifies assessments and learning activities. To this effect it is important to begin with outlining the system of backward design, beginning with how to design a course.

The three steps for designing a course are (1) establishing what the big ideas or end goals for a course are, (2) planning assessments for authentically measuring understandings, and (3) planning learning activities (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). These steps can be approached through six facets of understanding that offer a means for students to demonstrate a solid understanding of a class's big ideas through lesson activities. The six facets of understanding are explanation, interpretation, application, perspective, empathy, and self-knowledge. Wiggins and McTighe explain that students with a true understanding and strong ability to transfer their understandings will be able to explain their interpretation of challenges in order to address them, consider the class material from a range of perspectives, empathize with other in the context of a class, and demonstrate self-knowledge in the content area (p. 84). While beginning band can achieve these facets of understanding, assessing solely based on instrumental performance ability may overlook the misunderstandings. Only planning lesson activities that require students to demonstrate understanding on their new instrument is not an effective assessment plan and allows for only limited evidence of understanding.

### Rethinking What "Beginning Band" Means

Separating the instrumental techniques from musical concepts is the first step to establishing the big ideas for beginning band. Both technique on the instrument and an understanding of music concepts should be assessed, but not always simultaneously. Performing on an instrument can offer an inauthentic measurement of understanding; is that trombone player misunderstanding how to read eighth notes, or are they struggling to remember where 5th position is? Do they even have time to worry about eighth notes while they hold the instrument and try to remember all the technique advice they've been peppered with?

Some rehearsal models of teaching situate the teacher as the source of all knowledge and the students as the participants diligently memorizing what to play and how to play it in the beginning band. The typical rehearsal model can be effective and address facets of understanding if it is applied when students have a grasp of instrumental, musical, and rehearsal techniques. Students with these fundamentals in mind will be able to apply their teacher's suggestions, their musical experiences and preferences, and their knowledge of their instrument to authentically participate and transfer their understanding to unique repertoire challenges. Asking for this transfer without first teaching the basics is not only ineffective, but it is at odds with the musical experiences most students will have before joining beginning band.

In my experience teaching in split positions that included both elementary general music and beginning band, I found the traditional duality of teaching structures in band and general music to be ineffective for students' needs. In an elementary class we can forgo the end goal of performing to explore and learn through diverse assessment and exploration of topics. When we did perform, it was understood by our audience that we were offering a snapshot of our class time together, not proof that they were achieving. Did my middle schoolers need low-stakes performances and diverse assessment opportunities/lesson activities less than my elementary students?

Mya Katherine Magnusson Scarlato (2021) detailed the stark difference in her teaching persona and structuring when teaching in a similar position. Scarlato posited that the ever-present focus on preparation and leading the class, rather than exploring music as a group, is to avoid what she terms an "uncritical education." This view offers a glimpse into the pressure to uphold tradition and performance-based achievements band directors face when working with a beginning band. In much the same vein, Jacques Derrida (1995) asserted that in creating groups or communities, we limit ourselves and in essence provide stagnation of progress. Newly forming communities or movements explore boundaries and advocate for change, but when language is used to define or name a mission, grouping, or purpose, othering occurs. In naming eleven-year-olds with instruments "beginning band" we effectively transform from a music teacher to a band director and bring our students into a rehearsal setting, rather than a classroom. This transformation begins the exclusionary othering of the elementary music techniques and values that had been serving students previously. We stagnate ourselves without consciously making the choices through labeling and under the guise of tradition.

### Making the Most of Our Training

In the state of Oregon, we offer a preK-12 licensure after the successful completion of a music education degree and student teaching. The techniques and strategies for all music specialties

can be effectively transferred across all music classrooms to best serve the diverse students in programs. This licensure norm means that all music teachers have experience in elementary general music to earn their license. It is within reach for all preservice and certified music teachers to employ elementary music strategies to help avoid band-specific instructional pitfalls Wiggins and McTighe warned against in *Understanding by Design*. Some of the most prevalent pitfalls in beginning band include front-loading information, treating a method book as a syllabus, adopting a coverage-style approach, testing without deep evidence, and accepting our expert blind spots.

An ensemble can teach performance techniques and teach through performance, but a beginning band member is not only learning the expectations of a performance-based classroom, but the elements of musical reading and instrument technique as well. In the first weeks of band, we ask students to learn to assemble, hold, and play a new instrument while they simultaneously work on notational reading, rehearsal expectations, and playing in a large group setting. Presenting all these concepts without careful sequencing can devolve into front-loading or covering all information in a class right away at the start of the class. This front-loading of information also reinforces the misconception that beginning band should adopt breadth over depth in an attempt to explore as many musical topics as possible in a one-year frame, which Wiggins and McTighe refer to as a “coverage model” or teaching. This model leads to only superficial understandings and a weak foundation for future learning.

Reinforcing this misunderstanding is the method book. Method books are a powerful tool in an ensemble setting, but they are a tool for a holistic approach to teaching, not the prescription for a successful beginning band. Treating the method book as a syllabus is not only a possible coverage model reinforcer, but one of the many expert blind spots band directors may not even realize is driving their teaching choices.

Another expert blind spot that can lead to high attrition rates, is assigning playing tests without teaching for deep understanding utilizing the six facets. This leads to some students deeply understanding the task and giving an authentic demonstration of understanding, some students memorizing what they know their teacher wants with very little understanding, and still some other students feeling overwhelmed and unsupported in beginning band. Diversifying the method of instruction we offer will allow students to transfer their musical understandings across activities. Breaking the mold of how we approach instructional planning can also address systemic barriers to inclusion documented in the band room.

## Reaching More Students

As of 2016, only seventeen percent of eighth grade students are participating in a band class (NAEP, 2016). We are overwhelmingly losing student enrollment in schools with gender, race, and family history and support affecting the number of students enrolling in beginning band and staying enrolled through middle school (Kinney 2010; NAEP, 2016).

The current model of band is not effectively serving middle school students. The limitations of traditional performance-based beginning band create exclusionary practices in what is typically selected to be taught in a music class.

In a study focusing on Australia and South Africa, de Villiers (2021), found that drama and dance have updated and restructured curriculum with an inclusive multicultural lens much more effectively than music, which still finds itself tied to the traditional western music content and traditions. Western traditions are a healthy aspect of a holistic music education, but are often used exclusively, to the exclusion of other genres. Gerard (2021) found in a US-based school that Latinx students appreciated the high standards their band director held them to, but the majority of the students were frustrated that the repertoire they were playing did not reflect their interests or why they decided to enroll in band in the first place. Reflective teaching and rehearsal practices that pose the questions, “why am I teaching this way” and “who am I serving when I teach this way” are at times lost to the onslaught of responsibilities a music teacher navigates in their unique position.

Band directors, and music teachers at large, navigate the challenges of stakeholder and administration pressures as all teachers face, but with the added demands specific to music. External pressures come from planning performances, demonstrating effective recruitment and retention, and deciding how to balance the demand for music that reflects students’ lives and interests without neglecting the traditional repertoire that some stakeholders expect from their days in music. Conway and Hibbard (2021) dubbed this web of challenges a “micropolitical landscape” which forms in unique ways at each school and with each music teacher. Teachers must pick and choose how to conduct themselves and structure their rehearsal to keep numbers high enough to justify their program while also demonstrating their “success” as a teacher for the community to see.

Conflicting pressures can encourage beginning band directors to fall into old habits of concert-prep as the primary focus of class. Including elements from elementary general music can not only ease the stress of looking for effective teaching strategies, but it can also reinforce high standards for band students. The reinforcement of musical concepts via diverse learning activities and assessments will allow students to practice transferring concepts often. Focusing on transfer opportunities will allow for future rehearsals that are less teacher-centered and foster more progress toward students understanding how to practice and prepare for class before rehearsals. In addition to supporting progress toward an effective rehearsal environment, interacting with a wide range of specialties and teaching techniques can offer a means for better addressing the values of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) 2014 standards, which are currently the standards adopted in thirty-eight states (NCAS, 2022).

## Making the Most of Our National Standards

The synthesis of the National Coalition of the Art’s (NCA) push to create the 2014 standards, commonly referred to as the NAfME

standards in music education, was to align with the common core initiative. The Common Core Initiative created a system for establishing evidence of understanding through anchor standards that not only aligned all “core” classes by grade and proficiency level, but also addressed the *No Child Left Behind* requirement for states. *No Child Left Behind* tasked states with establishing goals for student achievement and evidence those goals had been achieved to receive federal funding (CCSI, 2022; USDE, 2022b).

The Common Core Initiative suffered from poor PR during the increase in high stakes testing as a form of evidence to adhere to *No Child Left Behind*. What some stakeholders still fail to realize is that the Common Core Initiative and the NCA/NAfME standards offered a method of designing assessments and lesson activities detailed in *Understanding by Design*, not a focus on high stakes testing. Staples of Wiggins and McTighe’s system of backward design are featured heavily throughout the language and structuring of the standards, (e.g., enduring understandings, essential questions, and common anchors across disciplines in the arts).

Utilizing backward design does not guarantee successful course outcomes, but it does reflect a value placed on transfer ability and enduring understandings. In practice, the Common Core standards may have missed the mark, leading to an increased focus on literacy and math skills at the expense of other subjects. Meanwhile, the arts standards worked to align the standards toward a system of assessment that offered a means toward “artistic literacy” by focusing on philosophical goals for the arts and lifelong goals in the arts (NCAS, 2022). Effectively, while the CCSI led to a narrowing of courses and offerings, the NCA standards worked to expand the offerings in the arts with a common thread through theater, media and visual arts, and music.

Today the standards are still in practice, though the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) of 2015 replaced *No Child Left Behind* during the Obama Administration. ESSA is like *No Child Left Behind* in that it requires evidence of state-wide progress toward an achievement goal with subsequent funding relying on this evidence, but the language in the ESSA encourages competition toward progress, rather than the NCLB verbiage that revoked funding (USDE, 2022a). The ESSA differs from *No Child Left Behind* in the fact that it requires specific class offerings to avoid moving away from a holistic k-12 education as we saw in the era of high stakes testing and *No Child Left Behind* (The Nation, 2010). Essentially, our standards and our current legislation require a focus on including all students in a wide range of classes and establishing how to effectively demonstrate student achievement goals in a clear manner.

The NCAS/NAfME standards present the common anchors of creating, responding, performing, and connecting in the discipline-specific area of music. The essential questions and enduring understandings of all classes and grade levels remains constant, but the proficiency level for each grade is specified with varying complexity, allowing students to approach music with a spiral curriculum style of revisiting concepts (Kelly, 2011). Instead of focusing on sitting beginning band students in neat rows and prepping for a concert, we should be diversifying

the assessments and evidence we design as well as the lesson activities that will draw on students past musical experience and establish expectations for their future music making.

## **Inclusive Practices and Universal Design**

Diverse assessment also addresses barriers to inclusion inherent in the band room. Discriminatory instruction in the band room often takes the form of assigning passages or measure numbers to be learned outside of class to facilitate a speedier rehearsal in the coming days. This is common practice in the musical world, but if students have never practiced before, or do not have role models at home to help them effectively practice, there is little hope for effective learning in this isolated setting. Instead of assuming knowledge and relying on beginning band students self-teaching important tasks, the focus needs to be shifted to fewer, more in-depth explorations of enduring understandings using a Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

Universal Design was originally a concept derived from architecture, which posited that all designs should be functional and avoid losing accessibility by over focusing on the aesthetic elements of design (Darrow, 2010). When applied to a beginning band, it becomes easy to see the instructional barriers inherent in the tradition formatting. Why would we transition students from a general music setting that allows students to explore musical concepts through performing, singing, playing instruments, writing, reading, moving, and working in large and small groups without allowing for a transitional year from this model to a traditional rehearsal setting? We were not born knowing how to walk or talk, just like we were not born knowing how to participate in a rehearsal or practice our instruments.

Assessments and lesson activities that allow in-class exploration will also allow students to explore the facets of application, interpretation, and self-knowledge with the support and supervision of their teacher. Once this is demonstrated in class with checks for misunderstandings, at-home practice can be used effectively and a measurement of understanding, rather than a barrier. Instruction that mirrors life outside the classroom is more effective than relying on multiple assessments to motivate students to assess for understanding (Duke, 2009). In the spirit of inclusive practice, UDL, and authentic exploration of materials, all music educators should focus their attention on the elementary general music philosophies that actively work toward diverse instructional methods, active learning, and sequentially approaching musical concepts in a spiral style.

## **Adapting Elementary Approaches to Band Rehearsals**

The Kodaly method offers a spiral style approach to learning under the label of “prepare, present, practice,” (Choksy, 2019). Singing, clapping, and playing call and response passages as a class offers students the chance to create an aural memory of concepts before attempting to name them or apply them in the context of repertoire. This scaffolded approach will also safeguard against front-loading information, by including multiple concepts in a single rehearsal, but at all different levels

of prepare, present, and practice. Students can feel success and progress in the topics they are practicing and tackle more complex facets of understanding in these areas. Meanwhile, the material in the present stage of learning will feel like the bulk of their attention in the class period. The preparation stage should remain out of their focus, ideally as a warm-up, transitional activity, or exit ticket concept to keep these activities from taking up the bulk of the time or undermining the Kodaly structuring.

The Kodaly method also offers a process of using moveable-do to explore key centers and tonalities. Singing in solfege in this manner can act as a preparation toward explaining and exploring transposing instruments, again without front-loading information. A handout in the folder of each student with the first five notes for their instrument with solfege under each would act as a key for them to apply sung patterns to their instrument without worrying about what their neighbor is playing/reading. Then, when all students in all sections can sing and translate solfege patterns in the first five notes, the topic of transposition can be presented and practiced, the aural expectation already solidly in their minds.

While these techniques of the Kodaly approach effectively break instruction down into manageable pieces, they are still an exploration of general music methods in a typical teacher-centered rehearsal structure. To provide even more options for assessment and covering new topics in beginning band, the Orff-Schulwerk method of allowing for learning through play, imitation, and experimentation offers techniques that can foster musical development and a culture of community with band members (AOSA, 2022). Students working to discover through exploration and play can include composing short pieces in small groups, adapting circle games from elementary school to include instruments, and leading call and response opportunities in warm-ups. Decentering the teacher in this manner also gives an opportunity for transfer through creation and addressing the facet of self-knowledge by asking students to consider what they can perform on their instrument and how to convey that to their peers.

The final elementary method to consider including in the beginning band setting is the Feierabend method that poses all students can be musical and emphasizes the ability of students to be tuneful, beatful, and artful (FAME, 2019). This method is a near mirror copy of backward design under close inspection. Both methods pose that larger core ideas should be the guiding principle of instruction. Applying Feierabend to the beginning band setting, a student who can demonstrate the ability to be tuneful, beatful, and artful on their instrument has moved from the “press and blow” model of band into a thoughtful and expressive medium of performance.

## Parting Thoughts

Beginning band is an opportunity for young students to explore music through a rich and exciting medium of performance, but the medium should not take precedence over thoughtful instruction. Using the tenets of backward design and the Kodaly,

Orff-Schulwerk, and Feierabend philosophies can offer band teachers a richer array of instructional formats that facilitate authentic and reliable assessment opportunities. Music teacher licensure already exposes preservice teachers to elementary methods as well as ensemble-specific considerations, making the utilization of elementary philosophies within reach of all beginning band teachers.

My proposal is not to neglect the traditions of band, but rather to dismantle the barriers to success and retention inherent in the typical rehearsal structure of beginning band. This reflective exploration of instruction will not only address exclusionary practices, but also more effectively address the National Core Arts Standards and authentically assess students. Finally, meeting students where they are in the early days of band will ensure that the traditional rehearsal structure effectively includes more students and accurately reflects their musical understandings in the future. Building a strong foundation addressing musical and instrumental concepts individually and thoughtfully will address this challenge in the most effective manner.

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# VOCAL HEALTH FOR MUSIC EDUCATORS

**Kendra Taylor** Doctoral Candidate, University of Oregon

Vocal health is something that we need to be continually reminded of. It's so easy to forget to care for ourselves, to throw our own health out the window when we're tired, or getting ready for a concert, or are up against a deadline. As a teacher, you are an occupational voice user. Your vocal health is important to your effectiveness as a music educator and your longevity in the field. Vocal health is a concept your students may not be aware of, so it is important to not only advocate for your own vocal health, but that of your students. Some of what I have to share with you about vocal health you may already know, but I hope one or two ideas will spark new thinking in you, and you'll be able to bring those ideas to your students and colleagues.

In this article prevalence of voice disorders in teachers will be discussed, along with vocal behaviors and conditions that potentially lead to vocal fatigue or injury, and strategies you can use to promote vocal health in yourself and your students. Before addressing these issues it's important to acknowledge that we are individuals with unique voices. One vocal behavior may be helpful to one person and detrimental to another. There are not necessarily clearly defined right and wrong answers that apply to everyone.

Research presented in this article will refer to individuals who are anatomically female and have not used hormone therapy to transition. Research on vocal health in the trans and gender-expansive community is outside the scope of this article, but can be explored through Garrett & Palkki (2021) and Hearn & Kremer (2018).

## Vocal health education

Researchers have studied the effect of vocal health instruction on teacher and singer vocal health (Ziegler & Johns, 2012). Ziegler & Johns reported that instruction in vocal health can lead to a desire to change habits to improve vocal function. Education in vocal health can potentially help voice users preserve their voice and reduce the risk for vocal injury.

Ziegler & Johns (2012) recommend vocal health instruction that includes anatomy and physiology of the voice, education of healthy and unhealthy (phonotraumatic) behaviors, and examination of the potential impacts of phonotraumatic behaviors on the voice. Phonotrauma is defined as trauma or stress placed on the vocal folds when we use our voices beyond what our bodies can typically handle. An important component of vocal health education is the examination of vocal habits and lifestyle choices. Behaviors that are potentially phonotraumatic are identified so the voice user can create healthier vocal habits. "When employed as a preventative strategy, optimal vocal habits are reinforced in order to maintain a healthy voice and reduce injury to the vocal mechanism" (Behlau & Oliveira, 2009, p. 150).

When the voice doesn't function as it normally should such that it interferes with an individual's quality of life or communication, it may be considered a vocal disorder (Roy et al., 2004a; Porcaro et al., 2019). Researchers have reported that vocal disorders negatively impact; the intelligibility of speech, listener reaction time; recall of words; and the ability of the listener to draw inferences (Morton and Watson, 2001). Perception is also potentially impacted by voice disorders. "Quality of voice has a significant influence socially and in the workplace," (Porcaro et al., 2019, p. 499.e1). When an individual is dealing with a voice disorder they may participate in fewer social events, including conversations on the phone (Evitts et al., 2016).

## Prevalence of voice disorders in teachers

Teachers make up the largest group of professionals that use their voice as their primary tool of the trade (Roy et al., 2004b). Like telemarketers, lawyers, stage actors and clergy, teachers are occupational voice users. "Of all professions, teachers are the most at risk to develop voice disorders and are identified as the professional group most frequently treated for voice problems" (Porcaro et al., 2019, p. 499.e1). There is an estimated \$2.5 billion annual societal cost in the US due to missed work and treatment costs in teachers due to vocal disorders (Nix & Roy, 2012). Teachers with voice disorders have reported intentional reduction in voice use or teaching activities and a negative impact on instruction effectiveness caused by vocal issues (Sappir et al., 1993; Smith et al., 1998).

When comparing occurrences of voice disorders in teachers of all subjects, including physical education (P.E.) and when comparing with non-teachers, it is teachers of voice who report the highest instances of voice disorders (Roy et al., 2004; Thibeault et al., 2004). Voice teachers across the nation completed a survey questioning their vocal health problems. Twenty-one percent of teachers reported a current voice problem, while 64% reported having a voice problem in the past (Ziegler & Johns, 2012). Researchers have reported that music teachers who identified as female self-reported vocal health issues at a higher level than teachers identifying otherwise (Brown, 2020; Hunter and Banks, 2017). Brown reported that choir teachers were more at risk than other music teachers. When self-identified female teachers scored themselves using the Vocal Fatigue Index, which assesses vocal fatigue and vocal avoidance, the scores approached those that would be present with dysphonic individuals (Brown, 2020; Nanjundeswaran et al., 2014).

There is a positive correlation between job-related stress and vocal health of PreK-12 music teachers (Brown, 2020). Other factors that are positively correlated with voice disorders include: teaching as an occupation, years of experience teaching, family history of vocal disorders, and age (Roy et al., 2004). When

teachers have been monitored for vocal fatigue over the course of a week, there is a perceived increase of vocal fatigue when comparing pre-week and post-week scores (Porto et al., 2021). There is also a teacher perceived increase of vocal fatigue when comparing the start of a teaching year to the end of a teaching year (Cercal et al., 2020). While many teachers with vocal disorders could benefit from voice therapy, few enroll despite it being a potentially beneficial step for vocally fatigued teachers (Evitts et al., 2016). It is possible teachers do not realize they have a vocal issue when in fact they are potentially dealing with a disorder (Behlau & Oliveira, 2009).

## Signs of vocal fatigue

Avoidance is a form of vocal rest in which the voice user may choose to reduce their vocal load by varying degrees. This may occur as a result of vocal tiredness. Signs of vocal tiredness, or vocal fatigue, include frequent licking of the lips; increased effort for phonation, delayed onsets, attempts to alleviate tension (face, neck, shoulders); discomfort while using the voice, swallowing difficulties, chronic throat dryness or soreness, post-nasal drip, dehydration, postural change; more frequent or unplanned breaths; and excessive throat clearing or swallowing (Roy et al., 2004; Titze, 2000). There may be a lack of ability to sustain long phrases and the high and low ends of the range may sound weaker. Tone may be wobbly, shaky, breathy, less focused; there may be a loss of intensity and irregularities in the vibrato (Roy et al., 2004; Titze, 2000). An individual who is vocally fatigued may speak in a monotone or lower voice and have trouble speaking or singing softly. They may experience a bitter or acidic taste in the mouth, voice spasms, voice tiring and/or hoarseness (Roy et al., 2004; Titze, 2000).

## Potential causes of vocal fatigue and voice disorders

Before examining specific behaviors that can contribute to vocal fatigue, let's first examine environmental conditions that can impact your vocal effort. Teaching environments with high ambient noise or poor acoustic characteristics may encourage you and your singers to exert more effort to be heard over the noise than would usually be necessary in other conditions. When possible, eliminate extraneous background noise.

Medications can impact vocal health. Antihistamines dry out the surface of the vocal folds. The mucosa layer of the folds assist in efficient phonation (Titze, 2000). Roy et al. list the following medications as having the potential to impact the voice: decongestants, antidepressants, chemotherapy, steroids, oral contraceptives, and hormone replacement therapy (Roy et al., 2004). Singers that are exposed to poor air quality, such as the pollutants present in allergy season, may experience post-nasal drip and coughing, which in turn can impact vocal health. Post-nasal drip can also be the result of inadequate hydration (Porcaro et al., 2019). Researchers report a positive correlation between allergies, asthma, colds, and sinus infections and voice disorders (Porcaro et al., 2019)—they further report that teachers tend to experience these conditions more than non-teachers.

Behaviors that can potentially have a negative impact on the voice include: poor diet, throat clearing, inadequate hydration, excessive voice use, excessive caffeine or alcohol, neglect of one's own health, stress, and insufficient sleep (Porcaro et al., 2019; Smith, et al., 1998). Researchers point out that those that talk and sing loudly over extended periods of time are most at risk for developing a vocal disorder (Nix & Roy, 2012).

## Beliefs about singing

Fletcher et al., (2005) compiled a list of assumptions common to singing health. The researchers paired common beliefs with evidence based in research. The following activities could potentially be negative for some voice users; eating chocolate, sucking on medicated lozenges, and whispering. As a solid caffeine, chocolate can be dehydrating for some. Medicated lozenges are not bad in of themselves, but they can potentially cause the singer, who may be numb to pain, sing beyond their limits. Like lozenges, whispering is not bad on its own. Whispering can be damaging when the voice user exerts added effort to be heard while whispering (Fletcher et al., 2005).

Researchers list the following activities as potentially positive for the voice; breathing in through the nose, using a microphone, warming up the voice, resting a tired voice, resonant voice therapy and semi-occluded vocal tract exercises (SOVTE), and consumption of an apple (Fletcher et al., 2005; Jonsdottir et al., 2001). Apples have astringent action that aids in cleaning of the pharynx and mouth, which can help with resonance by decreasing mouth secretion (Moreti et al., 2016). Current researchers on vocal fatigue are comparing vocal rest to vocal exercises and are finding that, depending on the situation, resonant voice therapy and SOVTE could potentially help restore the voice more effectively than vocal rest alone (Fujiki et al., 2021; Imazue, 2017; Kang et al., 2020).

Researchers compiled a list of assumptions about vocal health from varying sources. Some of the statements included: "eating potato chips lubricates the vocal folds;" "smoking cigarettes immediately before a performance relaxes the vocal folds," and "whiskey is good for the throat and has a positive effect on the singing voice; other alcohols are bad" (Edgar & Michael, 2021, p. 202). The researchers asked teachers of voice if they had heard the statements before and to what degree they agree or disagree with the statement. In a similar study by Fletcher et al. (2005) voice care knowledge of individuals with healthy and dysphonic voices was examined. Individuals were asked if statements on vocal health were potentially good, bad, or neutral for the voice. It was reported that individuals with dysphonic voices thought that potentially negative behaviors, such as throat clearing, whispering, loud singing, drinking alcohol, shouting, and coughing were good for the voice. This is important for us to know as educators for two reasons; (1) we can't assume our students understand how to care for their voices without vocal health instruction and (2) if a student believes an unhealthy vocal behavior is healthy, they may engage in the behavior without knowing the potential consequences for their actions.

## Healthy vocal practices

To help to reduce vocal fatigue and the potential for vocal injury in ourselves, and our students, we can practice healthy vocal hygiene habits. Best practices for vocal hygiene include: speaking with your optimal speaking voice (which may not align with the speaker's habitual speaking voice); singing with healthy vocal technique and moderation (including daily warming up); proper hydration, limiting intake of dehydrating liquids (caffeine, alcohol); getting adequate sleep to ensure vocal rest and vocal fold regeneration; avoiding unnecessary drugs (prescription and over-the-counter as these can be drying); exercising to maintain fitness; staying healthy (washing your hands, practicing proper hygiene habits); not singing when you have laryngitis or hoarseness; and visiting a laryngologist or Ear Nose and Throat specialist when sick and when healthy to establish a baseline (McCoy, 2020, p. 87–92). Further, it is advisable to steam, as drinking water does not touch the vocal folds directly, whereas steaming with a facial steamer can. Steaming involves breathing in moist air through a facial steamer for three to ten minutes (Behrman et al., 2008). Researchers have compared pre and post steaming acoustic measures; following 10-minutes of oral mouth breathing, a three-minute steaming regimen resulted in a positive effect on acoustic measures of the voice (Mahalingam & Boominathan, 2016). If a voice is fatigued, possibly due to inflammation of the vocal folds, ginger and turmeric tea can be helpful in reducing that inflammation (Chainani-Wu, 2003). An effective technique for most singers, including singers with Parkinson's disease, are SOVTEs. You can use this technique as a warmup, cool down, and a reset throughout your own teaching day (Nix & Simpson, 2008). For more information on SOVTE via straw phonation visit the website [voicescienceworks.org](http://voicescienceworks.org).

## Preservation Strategies

If you are displaying signs of vocal fatigue, examine your behaviors to see if you can pinpoint a potential cause for your fatigue. Try to notice if you were competing with classroom noise, whether it was students or the air conditioner. You can reduce your vocal load by eliminating unnecessary environmental noise. When appropriate, use a microphone to reduce vocal effort. When possible, try to avoid singing or talking over your ensemble. You may wish to incorporate nonverbal communication when it appropriately fits your instruction plan, such as signing the letter "A" using American Sign Language to tell the choir where to start in the music. You can also make up signs for symbols in the International Phonetic Alphabet. You can work to preserve your voice by training your students to lead certain aspects of class, or by having systems in place so you do not need to explain procedures in class (e.g., your sight-reading procedure).

## Student vocal health

Singers in our ensembles do not always advocate for their needs. In one study examining female voice change in

adolescent singers, it was reported that some singers did not speak up when encountering vocal challenges because they wanted to serve the choir's needs over their own (Sweet, 2018). These students sang with discomfort which could lead to vocal fatigue. In another study on voice use in a summer choir camp, high school singers singing over the course of an intensive week of rehearsals self-reported perceived vocal fatigue. Although singers experienced fatigue, they did not change their vocal habits to remedy the situation (Bowers & Daugherty, 2008).

The demands of our singers can be intense, from choral rehearsals, to honor choir events, the school musical, solo festivals, voice lessons, carol choir... All our singers can benefit from vocal health knowledge. Let's work to take care of our own vocal health so we can model best practices for our singers. I'll leave you with one last thought. You may be the only person in your students' lives that is concerned with vocal health. I encourage you to impart your knowledge to them and continually remind them to practice healthy vocal habits. Consider asking them to remind you about healthy voice use too.

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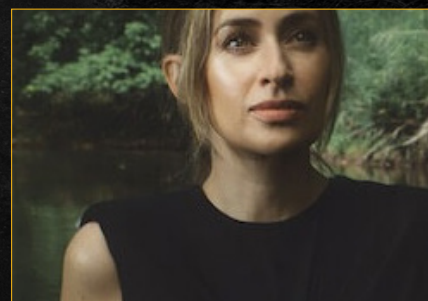
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# IN PRAISE OF ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS

**Michael Burch-Pesses** Director of Bands, Pacific University

I'm in my 28<sup>th</sup> year of teaching at the college level, and enjoying every minute. Despite the usual complaints about lack of time and a tight budget, I can't imagine enjoying the same level of job satisfaction in any other occupation. As time has gone on, however, I've come to realize that a great deal of my own job satisfaction is the result of the work of all the previous teachers who prepared my students to succeed in music. This is especially true of the elementary and middle school teachers who first took my students under their wing and caused them to fall in love with music.

We know from countless studies that, unless students are exposed to music by age ten, the chance that they'll be able to engage in the art and enjoy it diminishes at an astonishing rate of speed. Age ten is the fourth grade, and the elementary music teachers of today are faced with a daunting task – expose your fourth-grade students to the joy of music or risk losing them entirely. Never mind that you have to purchase your own supplies, or that the instruments at your disposal met their point of diminishing returns years ago. Never mind that school budget cuts always target the Arts first. Never mind that so many of today's students are behind in their academic, social and emotional growth because of the pandemic, and you have to help them catch up with all they missed while they were sequestered and tethered to Zoom classes. This requires truly good teaching. This is hard work. Great teaching is even harder, and don't we all want to be great teachers?

When those students move on to middle school, their new teachers really have their hands full. Classes begin early, with jazz band rehearsals taking place at zero hour, and teachers have to be on the job preparing for the day even earlier. Their students arrive at a transformative time in their lives, experiencing physical, hormonal, and emotional changes that

I have never had to face in the classroom. The teacher works with every student, gets to know them, helps them grow, encourages them at every turn, serves as a positive role model; and when the day is over, goes home physically and emotionally drained. Weekends often are devoted to grading, planning, and preparing for Monday.

Middle school teachers (elementary and high school, too) often must be bilingual to ensure they connect with every student. Students may come from an abusive home, a single-parent home, a poverty-stricken home, or a home crippled by drug use. These teachers strive to keep their students in school and engaged in music despite pressures to stay home: bullying, learning disabilities, and school shootings make this goal incredibly difficult.

I'm coming to realize that these magnificent teachers have done all the "grunt work" for which I'm the beneficiary. They have been sensitive to their students' needs, listened to them, engaged them and encouraged them to stick with their studies (and their private practice). This may actually be the most important work to take place in the classroom. All this only scratches the surface of the work that elementary and middle school teachers face, not to mention their own stressors at home and family issues that may ratchet up their anxiety. High school teachers, my heart goes out to you, too.

I'm immensely grateful to all the teachers who have embraced their critical role in the lives of my students, past and present. I have doubts that I could do what they do, and no words of praise seem sufficient to thank them for their talent, energy, and dedication.

Nevertheless, Thank You.

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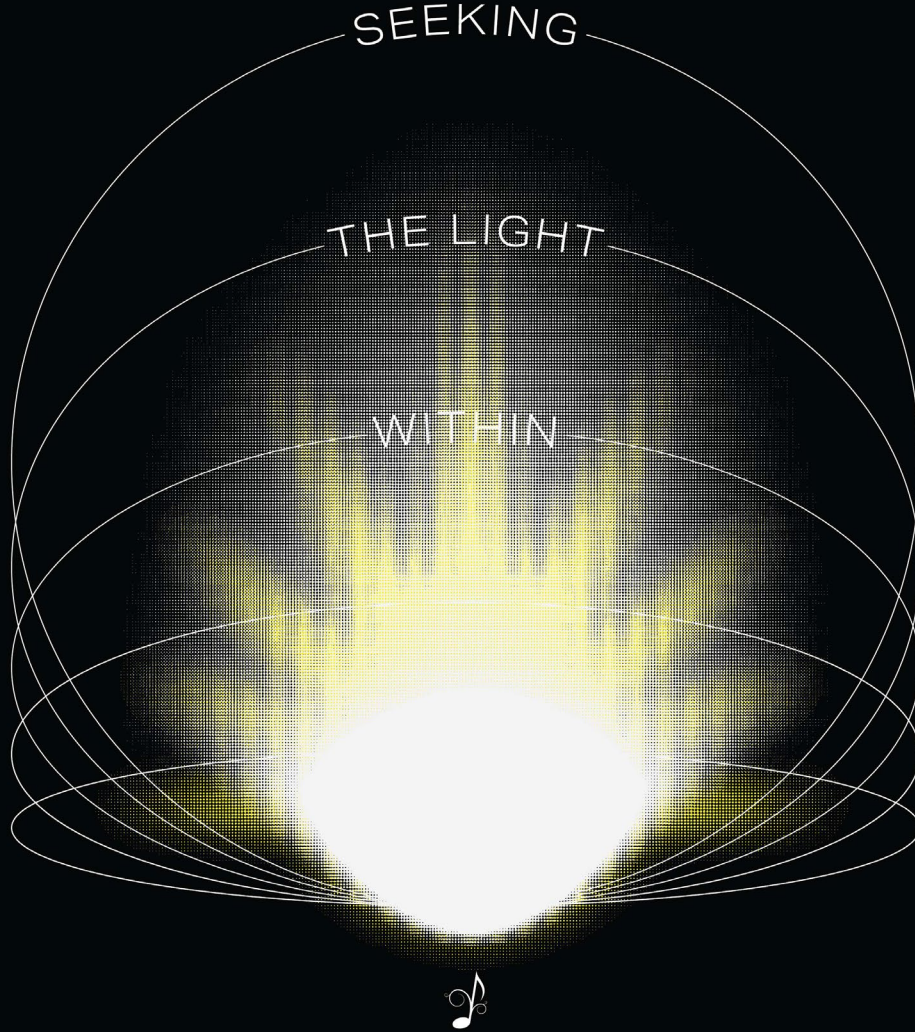


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