



Michigan Music Educator

v. 52, no. 1 fall 2014

Official Publication of the Michigan Music Education Association

The Future of Music Education TODAY!™



"This is a true revolution. Not just in music education, but in education in general. I absolutely love my Quaver Curriculum!"

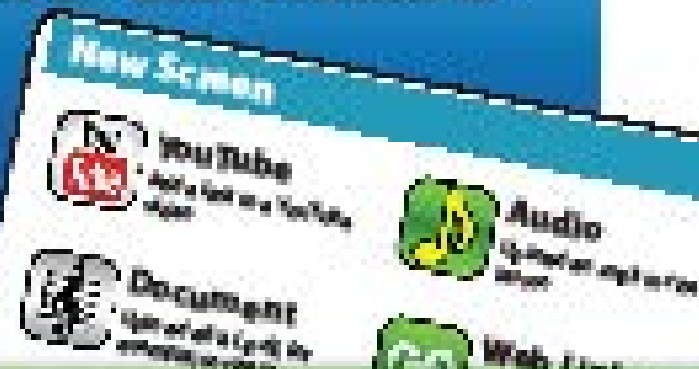
David Blanchard
Smith Elementary - Spring TX

Advanced Technology.
Teacher-Friendly.
SERIOUSLY FUN!



Customize Your Quaver Curriculum!

- Modify existing lessons or create your own from scratch!
- Insert other Quaver resources, or import your own files: MP3s, PDFs, YouTube links, and more!



Try 12 Lessons for FREE!

Just go to QuaverMusic.com/Preview and begin your FREE 30-day trial today!

Want your very own
FREE Quaver T-Shirt?

Just give us a call!
1-866-917-3633



From the Editor

Greetings! I am excited and honored to serve as editor for the Michigan Music Educator (MME), and I look forward to working with the Michigan Music Educators Association (MMEA) to provide our readers with a quality state journal. My thanks to colleagues Colleen Conway, Lisa Furman, and Marie McCarthy for serving as guest editors during the past year allowing me to clear my plate in preparation for taking on the new responsibilities as journal editor. Thanks also to previous editors for setting the bar high – the MME is a publication to be proud of! Finally, thanks to Cory Michael-Mays, executive director for MMEA, for his patience and assistance guiding me through this first issue.

The MME, the official publication of the Michigan Music Educators Association, serves music educators throughout the state. The purpose of the journal, of course, is to offer articles that inform, communicate, provoke, challenge, inspire and uplift. The journal includes regular columns for general music, instrumental, and vocal/choral teachers in addition to publishing featured articles intended to stimulate thinking, share knowledge, and raise awareness of critical and timely issues. The journal also publishes rotating columns focusing on a wide array of topics: technology, special learners, higher education (SMTE), early childhood, adult learners, policy and advocacy, cultural diversity/urban issues, world/ethnic music, composition, and jazz.

The journal is published thrice yearly – in the fall, winter, and spring/summer, both online and in print. It is my hope that you, our readers, will find nourishment or “food for thought” in each issue of the MME.

In this issue you will find a variety of articles. While there was no attempt to provide a unifying theme or “special focus” issue, the need to consider our responsibilities as educators, and to take action for the betterment of our profession and ultimately the students we teach, appears as a recurring theme. I am reminded of the discussion held last week in my Introduction to Music Education class where we explored what it means to be a member of a profession. The dialogue focused on responsibility, acting with integrity, ethical behavior, and working together for the greater good. These characteristics make us strong and give meaning to what we do. They are one of many reasons I am proud to be a music educator.

This past June marked an important “first” for music education in Michigan. The Michigan Partnership for Music Education Policy Development (PMEPD) hosted a summit meeting for educators and policy makers to initiate dialogue amongst all stakeholders regarding educational policy and its effect on music education. Ryan Shaw, editor for the policy and advocacy column, reports on this seminal event. Two top-

ics, teacher evaluation and the need for a state policy mandating elementary general music, were the focus of conversation. Senator Rebekah Warren, one of the invited speakers, reminded us of our responsibility for bringing our concerns to lawmakers. Our voices must be heard before we can hope for change. In a related article, Andrea VanDeusen shares PMEPD founding member Colleen Conway’s perspectives on policies and strategies for promoting the needs of music education. Conway emphasizes the importance of continued advocacy for music education. While organizations such as PMEPD serve as advocates for music education at the state level, Conway points out that efforts at the grass roots level are equally as important, a call to action echoed by MMEA President, Kelli Graham. (See the President’s Message in this issue). These articles highlight the need for action, both individually and collectively, in order to effect positive change.

Cynthia Taggart’s article, Room at the Table, a reprint of her keynote address for the Research Symposium hosted by the Michigan Music Conference in January, speaks about the value of using multiple research paradigms to investigate pressing issues. Taggart’s emphasis on the need for all music educators to ask and answer questions resonates with Senator Warren’s reminder that as music educators, our responsibilities extend beyond our classroom. As professionals, we strive to improve, to learn, and to stretch ourselves, and our students.

As the academic year kicks in, those of you seeking inspiration, words of wisdom, or just some fresh ideas will want to check out the journal’s regular columns. Looking for something new to use in your general music classes? Veteran teacher, Kathy Fox, shares her experiences teaching ukulele in the general music class. In promoting the ukulele as a classroom instrument Fox discusses benefits and challenges while offering suggestions for getting started. In the Choral Musings column, Chuck Norris reminds us of the importance of selecting repertoire that stimulates musical growth for singers and conductor. To illustrate his ideas, Norris takes us straight to the music, using exemplars from choral standards. Adam Kruse, editor for the instrumental column, shares with us a reprint from Robert Woody’s Blog. Woody challenges us to pay attention to the value of using accurate and specific feedback to promote learning in our classes and rehearsals.

In closing, I want to wish you all a successful and productive year. If you have suggestions for topics, content or the structure of the MME, I would appreciate hearing from you. Your feedback matters!

Abby Butler, Editor

Educator

v. 52, no. 1 fall 2014

President
Kelli Graham
8358 Riverbend Drive
Portland, MI 48875
C) 517-862-1920 W) 517-688-3521
kelli.t.graham@gmail.com

President-Elect
Karen Salvador
University of Michigan-Flint
126 French Hall, 303 E. Kearsley Street
Flint, MI 48502
C) 517-862-1982
ksalvado@umflint.edu

Acting Past President
Christina Hornbach
Hope College Department of Music
127 East 12th Street
Holland, MI 49422
C) 517-803-2325 O) 616-395-7650
hornbach@hope.edu

Secretary
Lindsey Micheel-Mays
1006 West Washington Avenue
Jackson, MI 49203
H) 734-330-4342 O) 517-764-5200
lmicheelmays@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer
Lisa DuPrey
404 Aloha
Davison, MI 48423
C) 586-524-2837 W) 810-591-0839
lduprey@davisonschools.org

Executive Director
Cory L. Micheel-Mays
1006 West Washington Avenue
Jackson, MI 49203
O) 517-748-6518
cmicheelmays@sbcglobal.net

Official Publication of the Michigan Music Education Association www.mmeamichigan.org

Published three times annually: August 30, December 31, and April 30. All correspondence relating to editorial content should be addressed to the Executive Director, Cory Micheel-Mays: 1006 W. Washington Ave Jackson, MI 49203, O) 517-748-6518, cmicheelmays@sbcglobal.net

Correspondence relating to circulation or advertising should be addressed to: Joyce Nutzmann, 11878 Parklane St., Mount Morris, MI 48458, nutzmannel@att.net

Designed by: Cory Micheel-Mays
Printed by: Pleasant Graphics

Subscription price is \$20 annually for non-members. Single copy is \$7.

The Michigan Music Education Association is the federated state unit of The National Association for Music Education, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston, Virginia, 20191 • (703) 860-4000 www.nafme.org

Executive Committee

Contents

departments

- 2 From the Editor
- 5 President’s Message

columns

- 13: *General Music*
Choose Your Uke and Teach it Too: A Guide to the Ukulele in the General Music Classroom
- 17: *Band*
Feedback in Music Teaching: Why “Good!” is Not Good Eonough
- 20: *Choral*
Repertoire that Inspires: Three Favorites
- 23: *Research*
Room at the Table: 2014 Michigan Music Conference Research Symposium Keynote Address

articles

- 8 Vernacular Music in the Classroom: Creating a Bi-Musical Culture
- 29 Report on the Partnership for Music Education Policy Development’s Summit Meeting: June 14, 2014

- 33 An Interview with Dr. Colleen Conway: Partnership for Music Education Policy Development Innau-gural Summit

news

- 4 MMEA Board Members
- 5 Advertising & Corporate Sponsorship
- 7 Editorial Board
- 19 Elementary Honors Choir
- 22 Elementary Choral Festivals
- 27 Research Symposium Call for Papers
- 31 Calendar of Events
- 32 Guidelines for Submitting Articles
- forms**
- 12 Fall Workshop Registration
- 35 Honors Composition Concert Application
- 45 Media Consent & Release

Advertisers in this Issue

Please support these advertisers; they support music education in Michigan!

Quaver Music.....	Inside Front Cover	MMC Collage Concert.....	18
NafME.....	4	Eastern Michigan University.....	21
JWPepper & Son.....	6	NafME.....	26
Central Michigan University.....	7	JWPepper & Son.....	34
WestMusic.....	11	Rico/D’Addario.....	Inside Back Cover
Yamaha.....	16	Rico/D’Addario....	Outside Back Cover

MMEA Board Members

OPERATIONS	SUMMER/FALL WORKSHOP	RESEARCH
EDITOR; CHAIR, EDITORIAL COMM. • Abby Butler, ag7752@wayne.edu	• Lisa Ebener, lisa.ebener@nwschools.org	• Phillip Hash, pmh3@calvin.edu
WEBMASTER • Diane Mehringer, DMEHRINGER@twmi.rr.com	ELEMENTARY CHORAL FESTIVALS •Deidra Ross, rossd@reeths-puffer.org	PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS & OUTREACH • Denise Wilkinson, wilkinsond@glcomets.net
ADVERTSTISING COORDINATOR • Joyce Nutzmann, nutzmannel@att.net	COLLEGIATE NafME REPS • John West, jmwes@umich.edu	SOCIETY FOR GENERAL MUSIC • Heather Shouldice, Heathershouldice@gmail.com
DATA/MEMBERSHIP • Linda Louisell, lindalouisell@gmail.com	COLLEGIATE NafME ADVISOR • Sam McIlhagga, Smcilhagga@albion.edu	SOCIETY FOR MUSIC TEACHER ED. • Colleen Conway (see Instrumental Adv.)
INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY • Denise Lewis, dlewis@wpcschoools.org	EARLY CARERRS • Kelly Ritter, krritter1@gmail.com	SPECIAL LEARNERS • Angela Snell, snell@chartermi.net
ARCHIVIST • Ruth Ann Knapp (See Gov’t Relations)	GOVERNMENT RELATIONS • Ruth Ann Knapp, rakui43@yahoo.com	REGION REPRESENTATIVES
PROGRAM CHAIRS/MEMBERS	MICHIGAN YOUTH ARTS • Ruth Ann Knapp (see Gov’t Relations)	Region A • Cathy Wilkinson, CWilkinson@jkl.school.org
MICHIGAN MUSIC CONFERENCE <i>Executive Committee</i> • Kelli Graham (see President) • Cory Micheel-Mays (see Exec. Dir.) <i>Planning Committee</i> • Karen Salvador (see President-Elect) • Carin McEvoy, carin.mcevoy@gmail.com	MUSIC IN OUR SCHOOLS MONTH • Diane Mehringer (see Webmaster)	Region B • Holly Olszewski, Olszewskho@tcaps.net
DIVERSITY & URBAN STUDIES • Lisa Furman, lfurman@olivetcollege.edu	TRI-M • Alan Posner, alfposner@gmail.com	Region C • Ali Bendert, Ali.bendert@gmail.com
MEMBER AT LARGE • Dan De Zwaan, dezwaandan@allendale.k12.mi.us • Linda Louisell (see Data/Membership)	HONORS COMPOSITION PROJECT • Brooke Broughton, BroughtonB@dewitt-schools.net • Adam Busuttil, msudrums@gmail.com	Region D • Dan Steele (see Michigan Youth Arts)
	INSTRUMENTAL ADVISOR • Colleen Conway, conwaycm@umich.edu	REGION F • Erick Senkmajer, Erick.s@mac.com
	CHORAL ADVISOR • Jo-Ann Sheffer, JoniSyngs@aol.com	Region G • Yael Rothfeld, yaelrothfeld@gmail.com
	RETIREES • Joyce Nutzmann (see Adv. Coordinator)	Region J • Denise Lewis (see Instructional Tech.)

Vacant Regions: E & H



Members receive a 25% discount on all NAfME books!

Visit: musiced.nafme.org/resources or call 800-462-6420 for info

NAfME books are co-published by R&L Education





Many titles are now available as ebooks!

President's Message



Kelli Graham

Dear Esteemed Music Education Colleagues,

Hello. My name is Kelli Graham and I am very excited to serve as the new MMEA President. Our association has seen much growth in the past two years under the leadership of Christina Hornbach and I want to thank her for all that she has done for MMEA. One of her biggest goals was to increase membership and create a stronger network of music teachers within MMEA. In my two years as President I would like to continue the momentum gained through the membership campaign, providing even more for Michigan music educators.

As I write this column, summer is nearing its end and teachers throughout Michigan are busy setting up their classrooms, revamping curriculum and creating new lesson plans for their students. While many people think teachers have the entire summer "off," I know that each of you have been busy attending workshops, webinars, and taking advantage of other professional development offerings. These efforts all serve to provide a better experience for students in our classrooms. As music teachers we understand the value of music education for our students, but we must also remember to share this passionately outside our classrooms. Therefore, MMEA is beginning to ramp up its advocacy efforts.

In June, with Cory Micheel-Mays (Executive Director, MMEA), and Andrew Keiser (NAfME Collegiate member), I had the opportunity to meet with state legislators to advocate for the importance of music education in the schools in Michigan. As part of NAfME's Hill Day, NAfME leaders in music education from around the country visited lawmakers in Washington, D.C. with a unified message: Music education needs to remain a core subject in school as part of a child's development and needs to be a priority in education initiatives and policies. It is our hope that this message was received and that lawmakers will keep music students and music educators in mind when working on policies that may affect education. As part of a national push toward greater advocacy for music education, MMEA will soon unveil new statewide advocacy efforts. I urge you to be an active voice for music education in your community and at the state and national levels. Be sure to read our regular advocacy email updates, check our

website for important updates and review all NAfME correspondence regarding national advocacy efforts.

Also while at the National Assembly in June, I attended presentations unveiling the New National Core Arts Standards. If you have not yet checked them out, I encourage you to do so (<http://nafme.org/standards>). They are organized into four main components: Creating, Performing, Responding, and Connecting. Anchor Standards, Enduring Understandings, and Specific Grade Level Tasks are identified and then aligned with each of the four components. The 1994 National Standards have been re-imagined and will be a valuable tool for teachers in Michigan and around the country. Check them out today!

I look forward to seeing all of you at the various upcoming MMEA events, such as the 2nd annual Elementary General Fall Workshop, the new Elementary Honors Choir, regional elementary choral festivals, FAME Workshops, and more! I wish you all the best of the luck in the 2014-15 school year. Students all around Michigan are very fortunate to have such dedicated teachers like you.

Advertising and Corporate Sponsorship

We offer numerous advertising levels to fit your needs. Ads start at as little as \$75 per issue and include your logo and website hotlink on our website, www.mmeamichigan.org.

Corporate Sponsorships are also available at various levels designed to fit every budget. Support MMEA or be the title sponsor of one of our many fine events.

For more information please contact Cory Micheel-Mays, MMEA Exexutive Director: (517) 748-6518 OR cmicheelmays@sbcglobal.net

NEW SOLUTIONS FROM AN OLD FRIEND

pepperfundraising.com • jwpepper.com/choralmaster • cuedin.com • jwpepper.com/myscore

J.W. Pepper is dedicated to providing our customers with the very best of services. Our mission to provide solutions to all our customers' needs has led to the creation of a number of new resources for musicians, teachers, and music lovers of all kinds.



J.W. PEPPER

Editorial Board

We seek articles on special focus topics and other articles as they relate to broader areas of music teaching and learning. The editorial board urges readers to submit articles pertaining to these topics and encourages this important professional development activity for all members. Articles may be authored or co-authored, address other relevant topics/areas (see columns listed below), and may be considered at any time. Submitted articles will be peer-reviewed by the editor and editorial board members with editing and production in process for 5 to 6 months ahead of the publication date. See the published *Guidelines for Contributors* for further information.

Articles may be submitted for consideration in our regular columns:

- Higher Education (SMTE)
- Instrumental Corner
- General Music (SGM)
- Lesson Plan Corner
- Choral Musings

Articles may be submitted electronically to the Executive Director: Cory Micheel-Mays, cmicheelmays@sbcglobal.net

MMEA Editorial Board Positions

Research

Phillip Hash

Collegiate

Sam McIlhagga

Book & Media Reviews

Marie McCarthy

Band

Adam Kruse

Strings/Orchestra

Val Palmieri

Choral

Abby Butler

General Music

Heather Shouldice

Higher Education (SMTE)

Colleen Conway

Technology

Ken Smith

Early Childhood (SGM)

(see General Music)

Adult Learners

Joe Labuta

Policy/Advocacy

Ryan Shaw (guest editor)

Social Justice/Diversity

Barbara O'Hagin

Composition

Cynthia Page-Bogen

Jazz

Keith Hall

Vernacular Music in the Classroom: Creating a Bi-Musical Culture



Mark C. Adams

As a young child, Gary sat on the kitchen floor banging pots and pans together and singing nonsense songs about items and people in the room. As he grew older, he began plucking and strumming the strings of his guitar, trying to play along with his favorite songs on the radio. These early moments began shaping a love for music that eventually led him to participate in school music ensembles.

In elementary school, Gary's music teacher helped him make sense of strange symbols on his page and develop his embouchure technique, fingerings, and tone production. Even though this is not what originally made him passionate about music, Gary wanted to perfect the skills that the educator emphasized. He took his instrument home, but instead of practicing the music for class, he secretly improvised melodies over his favorite song by The Dave Matthews Band.

By high school, he had come to realize that the musical skills he used at home were not used in school, creating conflicting definitions of "school music" and "his music" firmly in his mind. However, Gary understood the worth and necessity of his school music activities, so he continued performing in the school ensembles. After much thought and discussion with his parents, Gary decided to enter college as a music education major. He went through many methods courses, practica, and student teaching placements, studied his texts and mimicked his cooperating teachers. After classes were done for the day, Gary could be found collaborating with friends in a rock band while composing original music together without using any written notation.

In his first teaching job, Gary found himself helping his young instrumentalists make sense of the strange symbols on their page and perfecting their embouchure technique, fingerings, and tone production; recreating his experiences as a music student and teaching to his current school district's expectations and assessment

model. He began to realize that he was not teaching the skills he uses in his music making outside of his classroom walls.

Gary contacted his vernacular musician friends, and asked them about their school music experiences. He was shocked to find that their formal music education experiences either left them unsatisfied to the point where they eventually left the school program altogether, or they found the environment unwelcoming and never participated in the first place. Many of them regretted not taking part in the formal music program saying they now understood the value of reading notation, learning additional instruments, understanding different styles of music, chord choices, and proper form.

Reexamining his own classroom, Gary begins to wonder what student needs he has neglected in his teachings. Perhaps he also has left students unsatisfied with their music education experience. He understands that there is a value to both of these musical worlds, and as an educator who strives to help his students become quality music makers, he begins asking himself, "Am I truly fulfilling that goal if I am ignoring skills found in the popular music making world?" Gary thinks about the skill sets he uses outside of the classroom walls that enable him to improvise, compose, and arrange music for his band. As he begins designing lessons that include vernacular music making methods he realizes he is on his own, since his undergraduate classes did not prepare him for this. He asks himself "How can I include authentic experiences in my classes that teach these vernacular skills?"

Educators are beginning to ask themselves this same question as they realize the importance of vernacular music making methods. Researchers such as Lucy Green, Robert Woody, Sharon Davis, and Shari Jaffurs have shown that not only are popular musician skills valid, but that these skills should have a place in our classrooms. Furthermore, teachers are encouraged to make their instruction of their students as authentic

to the cultures as possible (Campbell, Scott-Kassner, 2002). Since the music, practices, and environment of popular musicians represent a type of sub-culture, teachers will need to learn more about vernacular music skills and strategies associated with this musical culture. In essence, music educators will need to become “bi-musical”, that is knowledgeable in the music of two musical cultures (Waldron, 2007).

Developing a classroom environment that authentically incorporates the methods and skills of a traditional (or formal) classroom with those of the non-traditional (informal) vernacular culture can be difficult. Compared to traditional classrooms, members of non-traditional musical communities engage in what is sometimes called “informal music learning practices,” where they largely teach themselves. There is no licensed music educator present to provide leadership or feedback; instead, non-traditional musicians are encouraged and helped by peers and family members (Green, 2002; Jorgensen, 1997). For music educators with a traditional or “classical” background, this means learning the skill sets and learning strategies used by nontraditional or vernacular musicians. It also means rethinking their role in the music classroom, since the learning strategies employed by vernacular musicians are not teacher directed.

Skills and Learning Strategies

For many vernacular musicians, aural skills take precedence over reading traditional notation. While some vernacular musicians read a form of notation such as tablature or chord charts, few read the sort of traditional notation often found in formal music classrooms. Instead, many vernacular musicians strive to perfect “purposive listening,” where they listen to a recording or another player with the intention of fully recreating the melody, harmony, note durations and rhythm, timbre and other effects, as well as a given part’s role within the ensemble (Campbell, 1995). While classically trained musicians sometimes feel “attached to the sheet music,” vernacular musicians tend to be more focused on the aural transmission of musical information (Green, 2002). Conversely, “ear-trained” musicians often regret having no formal notation training, as they cannot communicate with other musicians easily or preserve their own work (Rodriguez, 2004).

In addition to aural skills, vernacular music culture values peer-directed and cooperative learning, which obviously differs from the teacher-led instruction found in more traditional classrooms. Just like traditional classrooms, many popular music groups work best when a leader teaches the rest of the band members; however, unlike traditional classrooms, all members of the group are actively involved in discussing and experimenting with the music. Vernacular musicians tend to practice alone, but when the group gathers together, a song leader (typically a lead singer, guitarist,

or the one who selected the song being rehearsed) will take charge, making decisions and directing the rest of the band (Green, 2002; Campbell, 1995). Unlike traditional ensembles, this leadership can be shared amongst the group, with members taking turns leading different songs. This form of peer-directed learning encourages vernacular musicians to develop a variety of musical skills based on their unique roles as composers, arrangers, and performers (Boespflug, 2004; Davis, 2005).

In the vernacular music culture, peer and self-assessment strategies take priority. Although most popular style musicians hold their own opinions highest in value, comments and criticism from band mates, audience members, friends and audio recordings all rank above teacher feedback (Lebler, 2007). In addition, many vernacular musicians use a variety of techniques to help with self-assessment, many of which include some method of audio or video recording. Using recordings at home, vernacular musicians incorporate purposive listening skills to improve their playing by mimicking what they hear in a recursive pattern of listening, playing, experimenting and assessing (Campbell, 1995).

The Educator’s Role

The typical vernacular music experience occurs without a music educator present. Therefore, if we are to create an authentic informal music experience within a formal classroom, the music educator must be willing to relinquish some control of the learning process and allow students to take charge. Allowing students to be in control of their own learning for a portion of a rehearsal or class can be challenging for some educators. However, there are many ways in which the music educator can still play an active role.

Foremost, it is important that the educator stays supportive and positive, especially when students involve themselves in more aural learning. To avoid pitfalls, the educator should begin lessons with clear criteria and direction, structuring boundaries yet still allowing students to experiment with music making possibilities as they work. As vernacular musicians try to mimic melodies or transfer data aurally, many mistakes will happen. In a classroom experience, the educator can help students problem solve, guiding them in the correct direction without necessarily giving away “the answer”. This trial and error is important for the aural development of vernacular musicians and needs to be encouraged, reinforcing the idea that mistakes eventually lead to the correct solution. In a supportive music group, a student can have more musical growth through interaction with peers, making an encouraging music classroom the ideal environment for such collaboration and sharing of ideas, values, and perspectives (Allsup, 2008).

One issue facing music education would be that of assess-

ment. Formal assessment strategies used prior to implementing non-traditional practices can still be used to assess students’ performance skills; however, alternative assessment techniques that honor the unique nature of the vernacular style should also be included.

For example, an important aspect of vernacular music making is the musician’s ability to work alone in addition to interacting with the other group members. Music teachers can assess these skills by evaluating “personal” and “interpersonal” behaviors. Tardiness, bringing equipment, and coming to rehearsal prepared by practicing at home are all indicators of success focusing on personal behaviors, while sharing ideas, participating in discussions, and providing and receiving feedback offer evidence of participation at the interpersonal level (Blom & Encarnacao, 2012).

Not only will educators need to adjust their strategies to include authentic assessment of skills associated with vernacular music making, they will also need to teach students how to function as both recipients and providers of peer assessment. This is especially true if the educator serves as the primary feedback source (Lebler, 2007). One way teachers can help is to model and discuss different aspects of peer-directed learning. By demonstrating how students can engage with their work as a musical master while still remaining students, teachers can educate and involve the students as both performers and assessors (Rust, O’Donovan, & Price, 2005). In doing so, teachers support the development of self-monitoring, an important skill for all types of professional musicians to possess.

Conclusions

No matter the amount of knowledge an educator may have, the size of school in which they teach, the ages of teachers or students, or the results that educators find in their bi-musical classroom, all experiences are viable and worthy of sharing. As the number of documented student and teacher experiences with informal learning grows, a more meaningful music classroom will be created, ultimately preparing our students for rich and vibrant musical lives outside our classroom walls. Nonetheless, this goal is not without its challenges.

A common deterrent arises from the lack of training or limited experiences most music educators have with regard to informal music making. While educators typically teach using methods with which they are familiar and comfortable, developing a bi-musical classroom is not out of reach for those inexperienced in the vernacular tradition. For teachers who want to incorporate vernacular strategies and skills into the classroom, there are many ways to begin. For example, learn a new instrument by observing others and playing by ear. Invite fellow music educators to an informal night of

music making where you listen to vernacular music in a specific style and recreate it on your new – or old – instruments without using traditional notation. You can also attend jam sessions together or alone and sit in with other local musicians to further your vernacular music making.

Just as the students will learn by trial and error, the educator will as well. Being prepared and comfortable with being “wrong” or making mistakes is a must. Whether your mistakes occur in your own music making or in the process of teaching your students try to let them go and learn from them. As in other aspects of education, your methods and exercises may not initially be as successful as you would like. These trial and error techniques are present in the informal student learning processes, and thus make the experience feel more authentic when practiced in the instructor’s teachings.

For further reading, Lucy Green’s How Popular Musicians Learn (2002) is a wonderful beginning step, as much of the current vernacular music making research is based on ideas from her work. In addition to this, Scott Emmons’ Preparing Teachers for Popular Music Processes and Practices (2004) offers additional insight, further investigating the purpose of including vernacular methods, and suggests lessons in informal music making practices. I also recommend exploring articles written by Robert H. Woody, Sharon Davis, and Sheri Jaffurs to further understand aspects of non-traditional music making.

In today’s musical world, the skills possessed by both classically trained and vernacular musicians are valid and beneficial to all musicians. By designing a classroom that utilizes skill sets from both of these cultures, we not only create a more inviting and meaningful music learning environment, we also provide our students with necessary tools to become life-long music users.

References

- Allsup, R. E. (2008). Creating an educational framework for popular music in public schools: Anticipating the second-wave. *Visions of Research in Music Education*, 12, 1-12.
- Blom, D., & Encarnacao, J. (2012). Student-chosen criteria for peer assessment of tertiary rock groups in rehearsal and performance: What’s important? *British Journal of Music Education*, 29(1), 25-43.
- Boespflug, G. (2004). The pop music ensemble in music education. In C. X. Rodriguez (Ed.), *Bridging the gap: Popular music and music education* (pp. 191-204). Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference.
- Campbell, P.S. (1995). Of garage bands and song-getting: The musical development of young rock musicians. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 4, 12-20.

Campbell, P.S., & Scott-Kassner, C. (2002). *Music in childhood: From preschool through the elementary grades* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Group.

Davis, S. G. (2005). "That thing you do!" Compositional processes of a rock band. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 6(16). Retrieved from <http://www.ijea.org/v6n16/>.

Emmons, S. E. (2004). Preparing teachers for popular music processes and practices. In C. X. Rodriguez (Ed.), *Bridging the gap: Popular music and music education*, (pp. 159-174). Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference.

Green, L. (2002). *How popular musicians learn: A way ahead for music education*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate.

Jaffurs, S. E. (2004a). The impact of informal music learning practices in the classroom, or how I learned to teach from a garage band. *International Journal of Music Education*, 22(3), 189-200.

Jorgensen, E. R. (1997). *In search of music education*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Lebler, D. (2007). Student-as-master? Reflections on a learning innovation in popular music pedagogy. *International Journal of Music Education*, 25(3), 205-221.

Rodriguez, C. X. (2004). Popular music in music education: Toward a new conception of musicality. In C. X. Rodriguez (Ed.), *Bridging the gap: Popular music and*

music education, (13-27). Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference.

Rust, C., O'Donovan, B., & Price, M. (2005). A social constructivist assessment process model: How the research literature shows us this could be best practice. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 30(3), 231-240.

Waldron, J. (2007). Once the beat gets going it really grooves: Informal music learning as experienced by two Irish traditional musicians. *International Journal of Community Music*, 1(1), 89-103.

Woody, R. H. (2012). Playing by ear: Foundation or frill? *Music Educators Journal*, 99(2), 82-88.

Woody, R. H. (in press). Vernacular musicianship: Moving beyond teenage popular music. In E. Costa-Giomi & S. J. Morrison (Eds.), *Research perspectives on the national standards*. National Association for Music Education.

Mark C. Adams is a PhD student in music education at Michigan State University. Previously, he has taught vocal, instrumental, and general music in Arizona, Nebraska, and Wyoming. Mark received his Bachelor of Music In Education and Master of Music degrees from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

Thank you for your support of the

Michigan Music Education Association!

Want to learn more about about MMEA and our programming? Please visit our website: www.mmeamichigan.org

Our new 2014-2015 school year catalog has arrived!



Haven't received your catalog yet?

Request yours today at westmusic.com/catalogrequest



An Invitation to the 2nd Annual



MMEA FALL ELEMENTARY MUSIC WORKSHOP

Saturday, October 18, 2014 (9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.)

at Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, MI

MMEA would like to invite all elementary general music teachers to the 2nd annual MMEA Fall Elementary Music Workshop, featuring Roger Sams as keynote presenter.



In addition to Mr. Sams' keynote and closing sessions, the conference also will feature presentations on a variety of topics, including:

- Movement in the Music Classroom (Judith Barthwell-Thompson)
- Reaching Elementary Students with Special Needs (Karen Salvador)
- Ukuleles for Upper Elementary Grades (Cathy Fox)
- Using Assessment to Improve Teaching and Learning (Cindy Taggart)
- Elementary Choral Reading Session (Erica Latowski)
- And more! Scan the QR-code below to view the program via Guidebook.

Lunch will be provided and is included in the registration fee. You may register on-site the day of the workshop for an increased fee; however, pre-registration is appreciated in order to ensure an accurate lunch count. Check-in and on-site registration will begin at 8:30 AM in the Alexander Music Building. Complimentary parking will be available across the street from the north side of the building. A campus map can be found at <http://www.emich.edu/maps/> or via the Guidebook app by scanning the QR code below. For questions or more information contact Heather Shouldice, MMEA General Music Representative and Workshop Chair, at hshouldi@emich.edu or by phone at 734-693-6067.

State Continuing Education Clock Hours (SCECHs) will be offered through the Michigan Department of Education. Additional fees do apply—please see the pricing list at the bottom of this form.



Special thanks to JW Pepper and Son, Inc. & Music Is Elementary for their generous sponsorship of this event!



Scan to view program via Guidebook!

2014 MMEA Fall Elementary Music Workshop Registration Form

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Phone () _____ E-mail: _____

Current Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ School: _____

Conference fee, advanced registration (lunch included): please check all that apply

MMEA Member Rate	\$35	_____
Non-Member Rate	\$50	_____
Student Rate	\$10	_____
On-Site Registration, additional	\$10	_____
SCECH Credits	\$10	_____

Mail this registration form and a check made payable to MMEA postmarked by October 11th to:
Cory Micheel-Mays
MMEA Executive Director
1006 W. Washington Avenue
Jackson, MI 49203

Choose Your Uke and Teach it, Too: A Guide to the Ukulele in the General Music Classroom

Cathy Fox

Picture a sixth grade general music class where students are engaged in small groups, learning songs together and accompanying themselves on instruments. Students in the class seek extra practice time at recess and argue (even the boys) over who gets to be the singer on the verses of their song. These students ask their parents for instruments as holiday gifts and form “bands” on the weekends with their friends. This could be your class if you choose to teach ukulele.

Why Choose Ukulele?

In most cases, music teachers have the freedom to choose how to implement the curriculum. “General Music” implies that teachers use a variety of means to achieve curricular goals. The decisions a teacher makes might be based on his or her personal musical experience, the school community’s musical interests, or the instruments and materials available to them. More importantly, general music teachers must consider what they want students to know and be able to do in the future. It is important that students have the skills and knowledge to go on to participate in school performing ensembles and to become life-long music makers. I believe teaching ukulele is a decision that enables students to achieve all of these goals.

Ukulele Fits our Current School Configuration

Recent economic hardships for Michigan’s public schools have resulted in the reconfiguration of school buildings within districts. Some school buildings have been closed and others consolidated, resulting in different configurations of grade levels within buildings. Some districts, like mine, have chosen to move sixth grade into the elementary school. Others have created a K-4 elementary building and a 5-6 intermediate school. This means that many former elementary general music teachers are

teaching sixth grade general music and former middle school choir teachers are teaching fifth grade general music. Music teachers may be left wondering what to do with these challenging-to-engage populations. What can we do to make general music class special in the way that playing recorder is to fourth graders and joining band and choir is to middle school students? Teaching ukulele is the answer.

Ukulele is an American instrument

The ukulele was created in Hawaii by Portuguese immigrants during the 1880’s by combining the qualities of several existing string instruments. It gained popularity in the United States as performers entertained the public at World’s Fairs in cities across the country. By 1915 ukulele was very popular on the west coast.¹ For two decades, the ukulele was popular and used in a variety of genres.

The ukulele’s popularity faded but regained in the 1950’s after World War II as servicemen returned from Pearl Harbor having heard the ukulele and Hawaiian music. The main reason for the ukulele’s second wave of favor was Arthur Godfrey, who hosted a hit television show titled “Arthur Godfrey and his Ukulele,” Godfrey performed on his ukulele and endorsed a special plastic ukulele, called the “TV Pal,” that you could buy for a few dollars and use to strum along with the show. Millions of these ukuleles were sold, as well as the original wooden type.²

The 1960’s brought rock music, and the guitar edged out the ukulele as the favorite string instrument. However, the 1990s started a third rise in the popularity of the ukulele, in part due to the performer Israel Kamakawiwo‘ole, whose 2003 version of *Somewhere Over the Rainbow/What a Wonderful World* helped bring the ukulele back into the public eye in television commercials.³

Ukulele is Current

Ukulele has the potential to attract student interest for a number of reasons. The ukulele has gained popularity in recent years, with pop performers such as Train and Jason Mraz using the ukulele in their songs. Even SpongeBob plays the ukulele! This gives the instrument credibility with students. This popularity has spawned the production of fairly good yet inexpensive ukuleles. For about thirty dollars you can purchase a ukulele in an array of attractive, shiny colors. This low cost allows students to purchase an instrument of their own and become a lifelong player. The ukulele is light, portable, and easy to play--many chords can be played using only one or two fingers on the frets. Compared to the guitar, the ukulele has only four strings and is easier to manage when playing either chords or tablature.

Ukulele is a Good Curricular Fit

The use of recorder in the general music classroom has often been seen as a preparatory wind instrument for students. The recorder is inexpensive and has a fairly good sound. It gives students the chance to play a melody instrument. The ukulele can be seen in the same way as a preparatory string instrument. Student ukuleles are also inexpensive and have a fairly good sound.

While the recorder is mainly a melody instrument, the ukulele allows for learning harmony as well as melody. This makes it a good complementary choice in the curriculum. Harmony has often been overlooked in the elementary curriculum, limited to singing rounds and playing borduns. Recent research suggests starting the teaching of harmony in early grades by singing and playing chord roots and chord tones.⁴ Putting chord changes on the ukulele in the upper grades is the culmination of that earlier study of harmony. Ukulele can prepare students for playing guitar or other string instruments. The skill of playing the ukulele and reading chords and tablature is easily transferred to guitar.

Ukulele is Social

The ukulele can be a solo instrument but it can also be a social instrument. Upper elementary students are often shy about singing in front of their peers. Having the ukulele tucked under their arm and performing with others gives them more confidence. I allow students in ukulele class to choose their own partners and groups. While I require students to perform independently for me to assess their progress, I allow them to perform for the class within the safety of the group. Students take ownership for their learning and the learning of their group members. They develop a bond with each other from their shared experience of performance. For example, one group of boys named their group, calling themselves “The Mariachi Band.” Students

who have previous guitar experience can be leaders in the class, sharing their knowledge and song ideas.

Getting Started With Ukulele

Once you have decided to teach ukuleles, give yourself enough time to prepare. You might consider purchasing your own ukulele so that you can stay ahead of students as they learn. You will want to prepare materials, choose literature, and get the ukuleles labeled and organized. Finding funding, shopping, and shipping all take time, so you will need to plan ahead.

Purchasing Ukuleles

One way to get started is to purchase a classroom set of soprano ukuleles. This might involve writing a grant or asking for financial assistance from your Parent Organization or Music Boosters. For under a thousand dollars, I was able to purchase a set of thirty ukuleles with the help of our Music Boosters association. A less-expensive alternative would be to purchase one ukulele for every two students and have them share. The ukuleles are housed in the music room and while they take up less space than guitars, you will need a place to safely store them with easy access for students. I number each ukulele and students are each assigned a number so that I can track potential damage to the instrument. Students sign a contract agreeing to the safe keeping of their uke and their responsibility should it become damaged.

Local music stores sell ukuleles and are usually accommodating to music educators. Online music stores also sell ukuleles and often have educator discounts. *Music123* and *Musician’s Friend* are a few of the online companies that work with teachers. Allow plenty of time for shipping, as the current popularity of the ukulele sometimes has them backordered.

If you are unable to fund a class set of ukuleles, there is another option. My colleague, Robin Giebelhausen, has a different approach. Students can bring their own ukulele from home or purchase one through the school as we currently do with recorders. She also purchases some ukuleles to use as “loaners” for students who cannot afford them. This means purchasing far fewer ukuleles and has the upside that most students will own their own instruments and may spend more time practicing now and in the future. Families may even take interest and learn to play!

Ukulele Resources

Ukulele literature can be songs that would normally be taught in the general music classroom or songs the students know from previous years. My colleague, Denise Wilkinson, starts with one-chord familiar rounds and moves on to two and three chord folk songs. She has found many free

ideas and resources on Pinterest. YouTube is also a great resource. It is full of both professional and amateur tutorials. Robin even makes her own tutorials so students can watch and learn at home!

Once students have a few chords under their belts they can move on to contemporary music. Blues songs and current popular songs are possible once students know three to four chords. There are websites that not only have the chords for popular songs but can transpose songs to a key that is familiar to students. There are how-to websites that provide tuners, chords and tabs, strumming techniques and all the information you need to get started.⁵

Ukulele Class

I divide my 30-minute classes roughly in half, starting with singing and tonal and rhythmic skill development and ending with ukulele practice. All songs are sung first during that beginning time before they are performed on ukulele. Even the chord changes are taught aurally first so that students can hear them rather than just read them on the page. The ukuleles give students a reason to sing a song and learn the chord changes. Playing the ukulele at the end of class is motivation for them to practice skills in the beginning of class.

It is easy to work other musical skills in with ukulele study. For example, students can create a rhythm piece and use it as a B section with a ukulele song. Students can add non-pitched instrument ostinati to their uke songs. Students can create an arrangement, improvise introductions and codas, and create rhythmic strumming or sounds (like slapping the strings, bending, or sliding the strings). My students do a small group project where they choose a popular song and arrange it for ukulele and other percussion instruments and voices.

This year I taught tablature as well as chords. Tab is when you play a melody by plucking one string at a time rather than strumming. Students can compose their own songs with tab to work on melody and composition skills. Robin taught her 7th and 8th graders to improvise melodies using the blues scale. There are so many possibilities!

Possible Drawbacks

Before deciding to start teaching ukulele, there are a few challenges to consider. One of the cons about using the ukulele in general music class is that C is the easiest chord to play but is a low key for singing. To combat this, I now start with the C chord but quickly jump to songs in both C and F major. Another concern is that, especially at the beginning, we stay in major tonality for a long time while students struggle with the executive skills of playing the instrument. However, the A minor chord is simple, and

teaching that at an earlier time, perhaps to accompany a simple minor tonality round, would provide some tonal variety.

Another drawback of owning a class set of ukuleles is the time investment. In order for new instruments to maintain their tuning, the strings must be stretched and pulled multiple times. It can take four weeks before the ukuleles hold their tuning. Purchasing a “string winder” for a few dollars will save time (and muscle-ache). Once the strings have been stretched to their fullest, daily tuning remains a necessity. All instruments wear and it takes time (and resources) to keep the instruments tuned and repaired. I give the ukuleles a good tuning in the morning before class, and then tune the occasional uke that goes out of tune during the day. Denise starts the year using a tuning website that teaches the students to tune their instrument.⁶ This website includes a video tutorial and then a visual and the sound of each string’s pitch, which gives knowledge and a resource for students tuning their own instrument at home.

Choose Ukes!

The positives of choosing to teach ukulele in general music far outweigh the challenges. Ukuleles are attractive to students in the middle grades who are frequently difficult to engage. The recent popularity of the ukulele, combined with its long history in this country, give it social and curricular relevance in our schools. Learning to play the ukulele encompasses a wide variety of musical concepts and skills. Most importantly, learning to play the ukulele gives students the potential to become independent music makers. As music educators, our ultimate goal is for students to be lifelong musicians. You will feel good about your choice to teach ukulele when you see your students excited about making music, both in the classroom and beyond!

¹www.ukuleleguild.org

²www.ukulele.org

³Sisario, Ben. *Ukulele Crazy*. *New York Times*. April 15, 2011

⁴Denise M. Guilbault, “The Effect of Harmonic Accompaniment on the Tonal Achievement and Tonal Improvisations of Children in Kindergarten and First Grade,” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 52, no. 1 (2004); Denise M. Guilbault, “The Effects of Harmonic Accompaniment on the Tonal Improvisations of Students in First Through Sixth Grade,” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 57, no. 2 (2009)

⁵Uke Hunt (<http://ukulelehunt.com>) is a great place to go for beginner information, and Pineapple Pete’s Uke School (http://www.ukeschool.com/ukulele_tuner.html) has an online tuner.

⁶www.canaryuk.com/URC/tuning.html#2

Cathy Fox is currently teaching elementary general music in the Grand Ledge Public Schools. She taught music in Ohio, New York, and Connecticut before moving to Michigan in 2003. Cathy has Music Education degrees from Oberlin College and Northwestern University. She can be reached at FoxC@glcomets.net.

YAMAHA

Innovation that inspires

The new **Xeno** Series

With a variety of models and features, the new Xeno Series is designed to inspire, creating a new sound for the world. The Xeno Series is designed to inspire, creating a new sound for the world. The Xeno Series is designed to inspire, creating a new sound for the world.

©2011 Yamaha Corporation of America

Feedback in Music Teaching: Why “Good!” is Not Good Enough

Robert H. Woody

Originally posted on April 23, 2013 on Dr. Woody's Blog: *Being Musical, Being Human*

As a music teacher, I can get so preoccupied telling students what I'd like them to do, and trying to motivate them to do it, that I forget afterward to let them know how well they did. I may suppose that students don't need me to spell it out for them. Won't they hear it for themselves if their music sounds better? Or pick up on the grimace on my face if it doesn't? Receiving feedback, though, is a critical part of the learning process. If we as teachers are not making a point to communicate it to them, we shouldn't assume that our students are figuring it out on their own. And simply shouting “Good!” while student sing or play their instruments offers little in the long run.

Giving feedback is a hallmark of quality music instruction, but one that can be easily overlooked. Good teachers are keenly aware of the responsibility to manage how time is spent. Although hopefully the biggest proportion of lesson time is occupied by student music making, teachers must also take time to talk to students. In the throes of a well-paced lesson, teachers will want to be efficient with their verbalizations in giving directions and explaining musical concepts. (I also hope teachers allow for students themselves to talk about their music making, as this can provide insight into the cognitive strategies underlying performance.) Offering feedback to students is just as important as these other teacher roles.

Last month I came across two good sources online that took up the topic of feedback. The first was a Freakonomics podcast titled “When Is a Negative a Positive?” (<http://freakonomics.com/2013/03/06/when-is-a-negative-a-positive-a-new-marketplace-podcast/>). In this short episode, journalist Stephen Dubner shares some research from the field of business management. Tackling the question of whether posi-

tive or negative feedback is more motivating, the podcast offers the answer: it depends...on the recipients' level of expertise. With people who are new to a particular endeavor, positive feedback seems essential to help them increase their dedication to it. But for those who are more expert in a field, negative feedback can be more efficient in producing growth.

This general idea has been found in music education also, as researchers have probed the value of positive versus negative feedback. For teachers who work with beginning musicians, one of the most important qualities they can have is a warmth dimension (Lehmann, Sloboda, & Woody, 2007, ch. 3). Most young students thrive under the tutelage of a teacher whose personality is friendly and encouraging, and who makes music learning a positive (even fun!) experience. This type of learning environment would necessarily include much positive reinforcement from teacher to students. However, as kids mature and increase in commitment to their music activities, they seem to be able to handle more critical feedback from teachers. In fact they may even welcome it, knowing that it can advance their skill level, which in turn makes music participation more rewarding. Research studies in high school band contexts have found that these older students are able to benefit from negative feedback and they seem to understand that taking criticism is a necessary step toward musical improvement (Duke & Henninger, 2002; Whitaker, 2011).

Another online source that recently took up the topic of feedback was author Annie Murphy Paul, who writes much about how people learn. She offered up a blog post on keys to giving good feedback (<http://anniemurphypaul.com/2013/03/from-the-brilliant-report-how-to-give-good-feedback/>). Drawing on the results of educational research, she points out that effective feedback goes beyond just praise or criti-

cism. It is informative and instructive to learning goals. Ideally feedback shows students how to monitor and evaluate their own performing, in effect making them less dependent on the teacher and more in control of their own learning. “The ultimate goal of feedback,” says Paul, “should be to teach learners how to give feedback to themselves.”

Of course these ideas also have much application to music education, especially to student musicians who have grown beyond the beginner stage. As teachers, we can be so focused on helping students *prepare the music* they're working on that we neglect our responsibility to *prepare them* as musicians. We do this best by empowering them with the musical knowledge and skills they need to be self-sufficient learners who are able to make musical decisions for themselves. This is one of the reasons that simply telling students “Good!” accomplishes little. Broad feedback like this does not give learners much to take with them into the future. In these “Good!” moments, students can too easily think, “Ah, my teacher is pleased” without understanding what they did to produce the musically pleasing result.

I think we should aspire to offer more specific feedback that's primarily directed at what our students *have done*, as opposed to *who they are*. Don't get me wrong...we should make sure our students know that we respect them as people, and we believe them to be capable musicians. But whether using praise to inspire greater investment in music, or criticism to produce performance improvement, the main object of the feedback should be students' music making. Telling students, “You guys are awesome,” or, “You're fantastic musicians,” may be well intentioned and seem important in building self-esteem and a musical identity. But the positive feeling students get from simple praise like this can be fleeting. Consider, however, specific feedback directed at students' performance, such as, “You used excellent breath support on that phrase,” or, “When you focus on rhythm there, your solo comes to life.” This feedback is informative and gives learners something they can take with them into the future. It can reinforce the physical skills and cognitive strategies that allow them to perform at their best. It's true that young people rely heavily on the appraisals of others in self-concept building, but they do so based on beliefs about what things they can do well. If you just tell a student she's a great musician, she may dismiss it as nice teacher flattery; even if she really receives the compliment, the emotional impact may soon fade. But if you tell her, for example, that her piano playing has improved since she started using more dynamic contrast, then you've given her knowledge that can be very useful going forward.

Giving feedback is something most music teachers do naturally, but a reminder now and then can be helpful. Perhaps we should strive to be more mindful and adaptable.

It seems the right amount of positive and negative feedback depends on where our students are in their individual musical development.

References

- Duke, R. A., & Henninger, J. C. (2002). Effects of verbal corrections on student attitude and performance. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 46, 482-495.
- Lehmann, A. C., Sloboda, J. A., & Woody, R. H. (2007). *Psychology for musicians: Understanding and acquiring the skills*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Whitaker, J. A. (2011). High school band students' and directors' perceptions of verbal and nonverbal teaching behaviors. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 59, 290-309.

Dr. Robert H. Woody is professor of music education at the Glenn Korff School of Music at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). Dr. Woody regularly posts articles to his website <http://www.BeingMusicalBeingHuman.com>.



Announcing the Inaugural MMEA Elementary HONORS CHOIR

The Michigan Music Education Association (MMEA) is proud to announce this first-ever event in Michigan! Elementary students grades 3-6 are invited to audition for a NEW Honors Choir geared specifically for young singers.

Audition recordings due in mid-November

Members announced in mid-December

*Rehearsal on Saturday, March 7th @ the
Community Music School (East Lansing)*

Performance on March 21st (East Lansing/Okemos)



For more information please visit our website:
www.mmeamichigan.org

Repertoire that Inspires: Three Favorites

Chuck Norris

I am happy to have been invited back to the *Michigan Music Educator* as the new choral columnist. My previous association with the *MME* found me serving as editor during the early 2000s—great times of growth for our state journal, growth that has continued into the present.

It's that time of year—when the GVSU Bookstore is sending reminders to those faculty who have not yet submitted book orders for the fall semester and yes, I am one of the “lucky” recipients. Since choral students at GVSU purchase their music each semester, our friendly bookstore reasonably requests that music lists be generated by late spring so that music can be ordered and compiled into packets... and each year, I am the last faculty member who submits! I suppose that my repeated tardiness may be attributed to some degree of pure procrastination but upon honest reflection I think that indecisiveness is the culprit. I certainly have programming ideas early in the year (and suggestions from my students) but for me, committing to music for an entire semester or year requires a great deal of thought and contemplation.

The greatest and most time consuming factor for selection of music centers around what might appeal to and stretch the musicianship of my singers; but what does that mean in the process of choosing repertoire? Because I am still a proponent of music education as aesthetic education (an absolute expressionist to the end!) I best serve my students' musical learning by considering what musical content (elements) in a choral composition stirs my insides. I enjoy listening to new and familiar music *without* access to a score. With my entire focus on sound my musical mind can focus on the how the music speaks to me. I gravitate toward those compositions that have one or two very strong characteristics, such as an unusual harmonic structure or a complex metric organization of rhythm. In the end, I choose pieces that have musical foci so varied that I can exercise both my and my students' musical thinking, repertoire that hopefully will

grow and expand our musical thinking throughout the semester. Beyond this aforementioned growth, I am especially concerned that the process of rehearsing and performing the music has somehow enhanced and enriched feeling in not only my life but also their lives.

While my explanation of decisiveness is somewhat simple, it remains complicated in practice. So here I remain still wading through numerous choral compositions for the upcoming year. In the meantime, I would like to share some of my favorite choral compositions of all time and how they musically tug on the musical “me”. (Please note that I revisited each of the following three pieces without a score so I could focus on the inherent musical sounds and beauty in each).

***Choose Something Like a Star* (from Frostiana), Randall Thompson (SATB)**

Because the message in the text is brilliantly written (Robert Frost) and the music to which it was set is of equal stature this remains a beloved chestnut. There is security and reassurance in the gentle but stalwart marking of the quarter notes in both the accompaniment and vocal parts—I'm not sure I know of any other composition that employs such a simple rhythmic figure in such a masterful manner. The soaring, unrelenting soprano line above parallel moving diminished chords in the lower three voices is quite haunting and of course perfectly matched to the rhythm. Towards the middle and into the end of this piece there are amazing harmonic shifts and sequences, all in lush 7th and 9th chords. The harmonic language enhances the meaning of the text in an indescribable manner. There are several renderings online but that of the New York Choral Society offers an understated version that seems to capture what must have been the original intent of Thompson: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LNDrmifZqLU>.

***Dance* (from Invocation and Dance), David Conte (SATB or TTBB)**

Dance is one of the most exciting and stimulat-

Choral

ing pieces of music I know. Although harmonically quite captivating, the real music is in the rhythmic and metric setting of the text. For those singers who have mastered common rhythmic patterns in simple (duple) and compound (triple) meters, the mixed and complex metric nature of this choral work serves as a textbook for more advanced rhythm study and certainly affords the performer and the listener a grasp of the nuances found in the lilting nature of the Walt Whitman text. The four-hand accompaniment creates interesting timbres at the piano but this work is most satisfying with the colors of the mallet percussion. Each time I have worked with this piece, I have certainly come away a stronger musician but perhaps more importantly I experience increased appreciation of how important the conducting is to the musical learning of the singers. The Michigan State Glee Club shares the unabated musical “dancing” that is this piece: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jng2_xRs6-o.

***Reconciliation*, Stephen Chatman (TTBB)**

Set to another Walt Whitman text, *Reconciliation* portrays a Union soldier contemplating his and his enemy’s mortality

at said enemy’s coffin. The musical nature of this work is found in how the composer contrasts parallel chord movement with very tight dissonances. The resulting textures, complimented by a taps-like flugelhorn line is haunting, to say the least. My students found great inspiration and reward in preparing this piece and particularly enjoyed performing to appreciative audiences. Having studied this particular composition brought about singer growth in chord tuning, phrase shaping and dynamic nuances. The Amabile Young Men’s ensemble conveys the mystery quite nicely: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DfOoq3qSUSU>.

As I was writing this brief column I ended up spending a great deal of time listening to these three pieces. Because there is a great deal of musical information in each, I can return to these fine choral works and enjoy rich, musical experiences, again and again. The wonderful thing about teaching and making fine music is that these experiences are always different and with greater understanding, always more satisfying. So, I must continue my search for music that is inspirational, challenging, stimulating and yes, fun.



MMEA ELEMENTARY CHORAL FESTIVALS

MMEA is pleased to announce some exciting changes for the 4th-annual Elementary Choral Festivals! Open to students in grades 4-6, the purpose of the MMEA Elementary Choral Festivals is to promote children’s joy of singing. Choir members will have an opportunity to perform high quality choral literature under the direction of expert master clinicians. Lead clinicians will be announced soon. These ½ day workshops will be held in the FALL this year, a schedule change we feel will allow more students to attend these great events! In addition, we are pleased to announce FIVE locations for the upcoming year:

NEW SITE: UPPER PENINSULA

October 18th, 2014
Sault Sainte Marie, MI

UPPER CENTRAL MICHIGAN

November 8th, 2014
St. John’s Middle School (St. John’s, MI)

LOWER CENTRAL MICHIGAN

November 8th, 2014
Michigan Center HS (Jackson, MI)

EAST MICHIGAN

November 22nd, 2014
Detroit Country Day Upper School (Beverly Hills, MI)

WEST MICHIGAN

February 22nd, 2015
Reeths-Puffer HS (Muskegon, MI)

Updated forms, literature information and site details are NOW available on our website:

www.mmeamichigan.org/events/elementary-choir-festival

MMEA is pleased to welcome Music Resources of Toledo, Ltd (TITLE SPONSOR) and JW Pepper & Son, Inc (MUSIC SPONSOR) as the sponsors for this year’s Elementary Choral Festivals. Please visit their respective websites for more information about these great companies who are committed to advancing the quality of music education in Michigan and beyond!



www.musical-resources.com



www.jwpepper.com



**2014-15
AUDITION DATES**

November 7, 2014
January 16, 2015
February 13, 2015
March 20, 2015

Undergraduate Degrees

Bachelor of Music Education- Vocal and Instrumental
Bachelor of Music Performance
Bachelor of Music Therapy
Bachelor of Arts/Science in Music
Bachelor of Arts/Science in Dance
Minors in Musical Theater, Music, and Dance

Graduate Degrees

Master of Music in Composition
Master of Music in Education
Master of Music in Performance
Master of Music in Piano Pedagogy

Post-baccalaureate Programs

Elementary and Secondary Teacher Certification
Music Therapy Equivalency Certificate

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC & DANCE

"Believe Your Own Music"

www.emich.edu/musicdance • emu.music@emich.edu • 734.487.4380

Room at the Table: 2014 Michigan Music Conference Re- search Symposium Keynote Address

Cynthia Crump Taggart

Introduction

In the mid- to late 1980s, I pursued my doctorate at Temple University. As a part of my coursework, I took a class in the design of research, another in the interpretation of research, and three semesters of a class called the reporting of research, during which the faculty and doctoral students provided one another feedback about the work that they were seeking to publish. In addition, I took two basic statistics courses in the Psychology department and a multivariate statistics course in the College of Education. That amounted to eight research-focused courses in my doctoral program. Unfortunately, but not surprisingly given the decade in which I did my study, qualitative research never once was mentioned in any of these courses.

During this time, I had the opportunity to work closely with Edwin Gordon, whom I consider to be one of the great minds in music education of the 20th century. He is an expert in the measurement of music potential and music learning, and he has sustained a lifelong program of quantitative research around those topics, most of which is published in refereed journals. His published aptitude and achievement tests manuals have some of the richest validity information and supporting research of any in music education. However, he also engaged in on-going, less well-known, qualitative inquiry throughout his career. These qualitative pursuits resulted in some of his most important work that has changed the practice of music educators all around the world -- the development of his music learning theories. Every week he sat on the floor with children, working and playing with them musically and observing what happened and how they learned. He sustained this exploration for decades. He analyzed those observations, incorporating his

own insights into what they meant and exploring his “hunches” further in the classroom as they emerged.

Edwin Gordon would never call himself a qualitative researcher, nor did his qualitative explorations always meet the standards for trustworthiness that would be required in today’s publishing enterprise. Yet, these qualitative investigations informed an important core of his contributions to music education. Unfortunately, because of the orientation of music education publishing at the time, he never even considered framing these investigations as research, nor would he label them as such. As a result, important work leading to some of his theories remains unpublished outside of the publication of the theories themselves. In retrospect, I profoundly wish that the insights from his inquiry process had been explicated to a greater degree in our professional publications. The fact is that, even if he had pursued publication, he probably would not have been successful, given the nearly total dominance of quantitative research in all of the publication venues at the time. Yet, he never would have been able to develop his theories without gathering qualitative data and analyzing it on an ongoing basis. Fortunately for our profession, since that time the publication tide has turned, at least in some of our professional journals, and qualitative research has found a voice that is more widely valued and accepted as a means of inquiry within music education.

This paper is not designed to argue for one research paradigm over another. No matter which paradigm we pursue, no overarching research question is answered by a single study. Rather a single study only can gather evidence in a specific context, with a specific person or group of persons, viewed through the lens and

methodological choices of the researcher or researchers, at a given point in time, regardless of the research paradigm that was used for the study. Answering larger research questions meaningfully requires researchers to examine them through a variety of lenses and in more than one context with more than one set of participants or subjects.

Rather, my goal is to help us understand the need for looking at problems through many lenses and preparing ourselves to be flexible, fluid researchers with the skills to work in either the qualitative or quantitative worlds. Perhaps a less ambitious goal is to encourage us at the very least not to be dismissive of work in the paradigms with which we are less familiar. No paradigm is without limitations, and all paradigms have strengths; the types and ramifications of the limitations and strengths, however, differ. I believe that there is room for all types of researchers at the table.

Recognizing the Need for Multiples Lenses

We, as music education students and teachers, need to be interested in the answers to all kinds of questions. For example, we need to know what kinds of instructional strategies work for most students, as that is a good starting place for us in making instructional decisions. As teachers, we make decisions every day that guide our instruction in group settings, and we need as much information as we can get to inform those decisions.

These kinds of questions -- what seems to work best for most students -- are answered best and most quickly through quantitative research. But, we also need to care about and attend to the needs of the students for whom those instructional decisions do not work and for whom the assumptions underpinning those decisions do not hold true, and quantitative researchers must be ready to acknowledge and be sensitive to the fact that there are some of those students in every classroom. We have the responsibility to meet the needs of all of our students to the greatest extent possible, and students in a single classroom differ radically from one to another. No study has “perfect” results or is without error, and those errors are a natural and acknowledged part of the quantitative research paradigm.

Quantitative research gives us a sense of what is true for most, and it even gives us a sense of how confident we should be about our conclusions, but, if we approach it honestly, it also reminds us that we should never be entirely confident of any conclusion, and we should not assume generalizability across all settings unless we have controlled successfully for every confounding variable, which almost never is the case. Consequently, it can provide us with information that is a good starting place as teachers, but that knowledge cannot be the ending place. Other-

wise we will be missing some of the differences that exist between our students, of which there are many, and we will not be attending to the individual needs of all the students in our classrooms.

To delve more deeply into the needs of individuals in context, we need to explore things more deeply and in a less limited, more context-laden way through qualitative research. We also need qualitative research to help us uncover many of the starting places for quantitative research, for it is possible that the things that we discover in one context may, indeed, hold true across at least some other contexts and that the things that we discover qualitatively with one group of participants may be the case for other individuals across contexts and settings. These are questions that must be answered quantitatively. Often, qualitative research can help us discover what are our quantitative answers are missing and the ways in which they are shallow or incomplete. Qualitative research lets us explore things that are not easily explored through quantitative research, which by its nature is much more targeted, controlled, and bounded.

In quantitative research, researchers try to control for context and interacting variables. Yet, these variables and contexts are important. They are the realities of working with human beings in a context-driven educational enterprise. Qualitative research takes context into consideration and even celebrates that context. Yet, just like quantitative research, it has its limitations. Qualitative research does not seek to nor can it answer whether its discoveries hold true outside of a specific context or the extent to which its results are generalizable to other settings and groups of people, so implications of the results outside of the specific research context are less clear.

Indeed, we need a healthy dialogue between researchers engaged in one, the other, and both of the research paradigms, with all researchers aware of and acknowledging the limitations of each of the paradigms and building on their strengths. We need to draw from the paradigm that is most useful in answering each specific question rather than letting our allegiance to a single paradigm drive our research agenda. We need to create diverse communities of scholars gathering around the most pressing issues in music education, and these communities need to be using every tool in our music education research toolboxes to move the profession forward. We need to approach these issues through a variety of lenses, in a variety of contexts, and with a variety of participants to illuminate them more clearly, richly, thoroughly, and deeply.

I fear that all too often research in music education is an example of the “old blind men and parts of the elephant” story that is a part of Jain, Buddhist, Sufi and Hindu lore. In

one version of that tale, a group of blind men touch an elephant to learn what it is like. Each feels a different part of the elephant, like a tusk or a trunk. In discussing what they are feeling and in trying to describe the elephant, they get into a great disagreement about the elephant and its nature.

Looking at little parts of things quantitatively can lead to these kinds of disagreements. We miss the context -- how the parts relate to the whole of the elephant and its surroundings. Obviously, knowing a lot about a tusk is not going to do much good if elephants are extinct as a result of hunting or habitat loss. By exploring the tusk in detail, we may have won the research battle in the context of answering the limited question, "What is a tusk like?" But we have lost the war if what we are seeking is greater understanding of elephants so that we can better care for and serve them.

However, qualitative researchers who have looked at the whole elephant in its surroundings may miss things too. They may miss the details of the parts of the elephant, some of which may be essential in caring for that and other elephants. Because they are looking more broadly at the elephant as a whole, they may not recognize that specific elephants share certain things and not others with other elephants, or even with species other than elephants, and this information may provide a key to critical information that can be used to support species survival.

We will learn the most about elephants by talking with one another about what each of us have learned in our investigations. By doing so, we can learn about the parts in detail and about how those parts relate to one another. We can learn about the contexts in which they reside. We can learn about whether other elephants have the same characteristics as the ones that we studied and how they differ. We can begin to see patterns across and distinctions between all of the information that has been gathered, and this broad gathering of information from a variety of perspectives presents a richer, more accurate picture of the whole that can be used to inform our actions and practice. While one's experience is true, it may not be the totality of truth and this story illustrates that point.

Professional Obstacles

Unfortunately, our professional realities often do not encourage this type of conversation. The research enterprise itself is situated in a context in which we vie for the same conference slots and spots in journals. We want our students to be successful and sometimes frame that in the competitive context of eminence and H factors. This can be discouraging to idealistic young scholars and researchers. Just because something is cited often does not necessarily make it important or meaningful. We become

focused on achieving success as defined in this limited way to the extent that we sometimes forget that we only will accomplish something meaningful in the long run if we are driven by intellectual curiosity and the desire to know, learn, and improve practice.

The promotion and tenure system, upon which many of our professional lives depends, often is so focused on quantity that its constituents forget that the ultimate goal is to move knowledge forward and improve the human condition. Some universities actually provide quantities of articles that are required for promotion, often specifying the journals in which these articles must appear. As a result, research must fit in the "box" of the review boards of those specific journals, some of which have a narrow definition of research.

O'Meara (2014) calling for the reform of the tenure and promotion process stated, "The assumption that we show a scholar's work is excellent if it has been recognized by a very narrow set of legitimacy markers, adds bias to the promotion and tenure process and works against recognition of newer forms of scholarship" (p. 2). Even scientists, who benefit the most from measures of academic performance like citation counts and journal impact factors, are banding together to argue against their use as a principle means of evaluation of faculty scholarship (American Society for Cell Biology, 2012).

This limited but high stakes valuing system within the context of our educational communities often results in research studies that are completed to survive rather than to learn, research that is expedient rather than useful, and studies that are "one off" rather than situated in an ongoing program of questioning that leads to a critical and useful body of knowledge. It is not a coincidence that more studies are conducted on college students than on any other population (Draves, et al, 2008). Is that because we are more interested in the learning of college students than any other group? I think and hope not. I suspect it is because college students are convenient, accessible, and allow for us to conduct studies that are expedient, regardless of whether they are central to the questions that drive us intellectually. With such a strong focus on "publish or perish," the motivations behind these choices are understandable but the result is unfortunate.

Moving Forward

So what does this mean for the practice of research in music education? First of all, I believe that it means that our research courses at the university level should be ecumenical, aimed at helping students learn to interpret and conduct all types of research. I worry when faculty members in higher education point their developing researchers down a single research path methodologically, even if that type

of research plays to the strengths of that particular student. If students do not have meaningful experiences with more than one research paradigm, they will be less able to provide a rich context for their own research. They also will be less likely to be part of an inclusive research community with members who are working together to explicate the most compelling concerns of the profession. Down the road, that student may become a faculty member who is directing the research of others. Not every one of their students will have the same strengths and proclivities, nor will they want to ask the same types of research questions. We need to prepare our students to answer all types of questions, keeping in mind that students are different from one another and are drawn in by different types of questions, rather than limiting their possibilities. Beyond this, we need to be careful not to model dismissing an entire paradigm because of weak work within it. Each has its place and has things to contribute to the larger discussion. So, at least at the doctoral level, every student should have a meaningful experience as both a quantitative and qualitative researcher during his or her degree program.

As a profession, we need to work toward more balance within the professional journals. Currently, we have journals that are focused more toward quantitative work and others that are known to be friendly to qualitative researchers. This is not surprising, given the ways in which many of the editorial boards are chosen -- either by appointment of the editor, who may value one paradigm over the other, or by elections voted on by the current editorial board members, who tend to self perpetuate. Editorial boards and editors should make a stand to balance the strengths and backgrounds of editorial board members as they move forward. If we segregate paradigm by journal, the conversations within our music education research community become less rich.

Finally, we need to explore and support new types of scholarship, redefining it to include newer forms of knowledge making, including creative and scholarly use of digital media to disseminate knowledge, the scholarship of engagement, and policy work. I am not arguing for a lowering of standards. Rather, I am arguing for more inclusivity. This work must be of high quality and must be able to demonstrate its impact. However, we need to look at the impact of work not only on the research community, but also on communities of practice and the world at large.

Music education must move forward by engaging in inclusive, open, conversations between scholars and scholarly communities, valuing one another's work and keeping in mind its limitations, as well as acknowledging the limitations of one's own work. None of us has all of the answers. With that in mind, there should always be room for all

types of thoughtful scholars at the table.

Citations

American Society for Cell Biology. (2012). San Francisco declaration on research assessment: Putting science into the assessment of research. Retrieved from <http://am.ascb.org/dora>

Draves, T. J., Cruse, C. S., Mills, M. M., & Sweet, B. M. (2008). Subjects in music education research: 1991-2005. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* (2008): 19-29. ProQuest. Web. 15 June 2014.

O'Meara, K. A. (2014). Essay calls for reform of tenure and promotion system. *Inside Higher Ed*. Retrieved from <http://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2014/01/13/essay-calls-reform-tenure-and-promotion-system?wid th=775&height=500&iframe=true>



Cynthia Crump Taggart, a Past-President of the College Music Society, is Professor of Music Education at Michigan State University. She was awarded the Undergraduate Teaching Excellence Award for the Humanities and Social Sciences at Case Western Reserve University. At MSU, she received the Teacher-Scholar and the Beal Outstanding Faculty Awards.





Call for Research Symposium Presentations (January 15, 2015) and Poster Session Participants (January 16, 2015)

MMEA Fifth Annual Research Symposium

11:00am – 2:00pm: Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015

Grand Rapids, MI – Amway Grand Hotel: Cascade Room

MMEA Research Poster Session - Meet the Authors

9:30am – 10:15am: Friday, Jan. 16, 2015

Grand Rapids, MI – Amway Grand Hotel: Ambassador Foyer (2nd Floor)

The MMEA is pleased to announce the Fifth Annual Research Symposium to be held as a pre-conference event in conjunction with the Michigan Music Conference (January 15-17, 2015). This symposium is designed as a forum for the dissemination and discussion of new scholarship relating to music teaching and learning. Individuals are invited to submit proposals for presentation in which they may share new, unpublished research in music education. Submissions are invited for paper presentation, poster presentation (held on Friday, January 16), or BOTH. Works in progress will be eligible “for discussion only” at the Open Roundtable session. Please direct inquiries about the Symposium to Phillip Hash, Symposium Chair, at pmh3@calvin.edu.

Those who wish to submit a report for consideration should comply with the following:

FOR PAPER PRESENTATION

Research submitted for paper presentation *must not have been presented at any other conference or forum, regardless of size or type of audience*. The paper may have been submitted for publication, but must not have appeared in print prior to the Symposium. Research that is simply a review of literature will NOT be considered for presentation.

FOR POSTER PRESENTATION

Research submitted for poster presentation may have been submitted for publication but must not have appeared in print prior to the Symposium. Papers presented at other conferences will be considered for poster presentation if the audience was substantially different. A statement specifying particulars of presentation must be included with the submission. Submit an abstract that does not exceed 500 words in length. All posters accepted for presentation will be displayed on tables and must be free-standing. A review of literature WILL be considered for poster presentation.

FOR ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

Research must be in progress. Topics may include reviews of literature. Participants must request to take part in the roundtable, and submit a copy of the research proposal.

FOR ALL PRESENTATIONS

1. The research may be of any type as long as it relates to music education. Manuscript style of articles representing descriptive or experimental studies must conform to the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. Authors of other types of studies may submit manuscripts that conform to the most recent editions of either *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Turabian) or *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

2. Only *electronic* submissions will be considered. For PAPER PRESENTATION, submit one file containing the full copy of your report. For POSTER SUBMISSION, submit one file containing an abstract not to exceed 500 words. If you wish to submit for *either* presentation or poster, submit *two* files: one containing the full copy of your report, the other containing an abstract not to exceed 500 words. For all files, indicate only the title on each. No files should contain clues as to author identity or institutional affiliation. For ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION, send only a copy of the research proposal describing the study (maximum 700 words). Send the file as an *attachment* in Word Document (.doc) or Portable Document (.pdf) format.

In the body of the e-mail, please include the following information: (a) name(s) of author(s), (b) current position(s) and institutional affiliation(s), (c) mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address (submitter only), (d) the report's title, (e) and any specifications of prior presentation. Specify whether you want your submission to be considered for PRESENTATION ONLY, POSTER SESSION ONLY, EITHER PRESENTATION OR POSTER SESSION, or ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION.

3. All correspondence will occur only to the submitter through email.

4. Send submissions to Phillip Hash at pmh3@calvin.edu. Subject line: MMC Research Symposium. Please use this e-mail address for all correspondence. Hard-copy submissions will not be accepted.

5. *The submission deadline is Friday, November 7, 2014.* Extensions will not be granted. If you have not received confirmation of your manuscript by November 11, please notify Phillip Hash at the above e-mail address.

6. A panel of qualified reviewers will screen all submissions.

7. Submitters will be notified of the reviewers' decision no later than November 30, 2014.

8. All presenters and attendees must be members of NAME/State Affiliate or one of the MMC sponsoring organizations and register for the conference. Out of state submissions are welcomed! Symposium participants must register for the Pre-conference Symposium in addition to the full conference on the registration form. Information about registration can be found at www.michigammusicconference.org.

9. All Symposium participants are expected to attend all Symposium sessions on January 15. Poster presenters must attend the “meet the authors” session on January 16.

A copy of this call, and the Symposium sessions, can be viewed on the MMEA webpage, <http://www.mmeamichigm.org/research>.

Report on the Partnership for Music Education Policy Development’s Summit Meeting: June 14, 2014



Ryan Shaw

The Michigan Partnership for Music Education Policy Development (PMEPD) recently held a policy summit on June 14, 2014. The event occurred at Michigan State University and featured Michigan lawmakers such as Senator Rebekah Warren, Representative Adam Zemke, State Board of Education members John Austin and Eileen Weiser, and other educational stakeholders such as Royal Oak Public Schools Superintendent Shawn Lewis-Lakin, Dan Quinn of the Great Lakes Center for Education Research and Practice, and bassist from the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Larry Hutchinson. In addition to these invited speakers, the event attracted over 40 music teachers from around the state to discuss music education policy.

The PMEPD formed in 2012 under the leadership of Chelsea band teacher Rick Catherman and has been putting together an agenda aimed at affecting policy since its’ founding. So far, the group has presented to the Michigan State Board of Education and the Michigan Council for Educator Effectiveness. The two central issues being addressed at the summit included an elementary music mandate and guidance on music teacher evaluation. In this article, I give a brief overview of what was discussed at the event.

An Opening Address by State Board President John Austin

The opening speaker for the event was John Austin, President of the Michigan State Board of Education. He opened by acknowledging the important and unique contributions of the arts—and music in particular—enabled students to develop life skills such as determination and persistence that would benefit them no matter their life trajectory. Austin also noted that his own children considered music to be where they “found their voice.” He shared a story of his son Murphy, a student at Swarthmore College, who recently produced a musical video tribute for his mother’s 50th birthday. Austin also stressed

that music and the other arts provided students with a different way of thinking and expressing themselves. He noted the policy challenges going forward that needed attention, including effective teacher evaluation for music educators, and the funding structure for public education in the state. In stressing the many positive impacts of music education on students, President Austin’s opening remarks set a tone for many of the other invited speakers’ comments.

Featured Remarks from Senator Rebekah Warren

Senator Rebekah Warren spoke specifically about how the PMEPD and those in attendance at the summit could effect desired change. She mentioned that she is asked in her job to be a “jack of all trades.” In a single week, she will likely review legislation on water quality, taxation, education, road repair, and health care. Because state lawmakers must deal with so many issues, she encouraged the music education community to simply schedule meetings with their representatives and senators. Warren suggested that unless the music education community makes its priorities known, lawmakers would be blind to music specific issues. At the end of her remarks, she joked that when coming to such an event, she realizes that there are many in the room who know substantially more about the discussion topic than she. Because of this knowledge gap, she reiterated the importance of advocating face-to-face with lawmakers.

An Elementary Music Mandate

Throughout the summit, three moderated panel discussions offered a chance for audience members to ask questions of the state politicians. The first panel addressed a possible elementary music mandate, the second discussed teacher evaluation policy, and the final panel was a sort of “catch-all” for debating emerging issues in education.

Michigan is one of only five states that do not have any official language mandating music

education experience for K-5 students (Arts Education Partnership, 2014). Of the 45 states with mandated K-5 music, requirements vary with some states requiring minimum instructional minutes per week (Missouri), others requiring twice-weekly “programs” (Vermont), and still others “strongly recommending” elementary music. The PMEPD has created a proposal for a K-5 music mandate that can be accessed at www.pmepd.weebly.com. When asked about the lack of a Michigan mandate, the panelists (Austin, Weiser, Zemke, Warren) admitted they were unaware of the issue. It was obvious from the panelists’ remarks that they did not actually know there was not an elementary music requirement, and they also did not know that generalist classroom teachers are certified to teach elementary music in place of having a highly qualified music teacher. Part of the problem, President Austin noted, is that Michigan is a “local control” state, and the legislature is given limited authority in public education matters. When asked how to get an elementary music law on the books, the panelists agreed that the State Board of Education should be the body making these kinds of decisions, but that the political climate of late signaled increasing efforts to have the legislature involved in all education decisions.

In the last panel discussion of the day, specifics of the elementary music mandate policy came up again, and Royal Oak Public Schools Superintendent Shawn Lewis-Lakin offered an administrator’s take on the PMEPD’s policy document. He said that putting too many specifics in place, such as requiring twice-weekly instruction of 45 minutes each, might make a superintendent uneasy and apt to balk at the policy. He suggested that designing “tiers” might motivate administrators to put policies in place. For example, if having certain mandates in place makes a district a “gold status” district, it may help superintendents adopt the policy. He said that superintendents pay attention to the programs that make their districts attractive and competitive with surrounding districts. While no mention was specifically made at the summit about the work of the Michigan Arts Education Instruction and Assessment program (MAEIA), Lewis-Lakin’s thinking mirrors the arts education blueprint/program review tool that the organization is developing. The blueprint describes a “gold standard” arts program and allows districts to assess their capacities based on an extensive questionnaire. More information is available at www.mi-arts.wikispaces.com.

Teacher Evaluation Policy

Representative Zemke discussed the evolving teacher evaluation policy changes in Michigan at length during the summit. Along with Representative Margaret O’Brien, Zemke is one of the co-sponsors of legislation formed in the wake of the Michigan Council for Educator Effectiveness (MCEE) recommendations from July 2013. In the most recent edition

of the Michigan Music Educator, I detailed specifics of the MCEE’s recommendations at length. Representative Zemke summarized the main points of the legislation and updated the audience on the status of the bills. Currently, the bills (HB 5223-24) have passed the House and were referred to the Senate for consideration. Zemke said he was extremely proud of the collaborative process used to write the legislation. He noted that the lawmakers met extensively over the course of eight months with teachers, teachers’ unions, statewide education associations, school attorneys, and others.

Senator Warren, however, did not share Zemke’s optimism for the future of state teacher evaluation policy. She noted that even though the process of drafting the legislation may have been sound, the educational climate surrounding it is uncertain and “broken.” Warren specifically brought up the uncertainty around curriculum and testing, briefly discussing the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the controversy over signing on to the related test under development by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. In June 2014, just before the summit, the state legislature ordered a halt to adopting the Smart Balanced test and asked the Department of Education to administer a new MEAP test in Spring 2015. Senator Warren said that until educators know on which test their students (and by extension, teachers themselves) will be assessed, making any lasting decisions about teacher evaluation policy is inappropriate.

Michigan State University Professor Dr. Mitchell Robinson and University of Michigan Professor Dr. Colleen Conway raised an interesting issue related to this uncertainty around teacher evaluation. The professors said that both colleges’ music education programs are having difficulty placing student teachers in certain Michigan school districts, because district officials are telling them that the evaluation situation is just too uncertain to ask co-operating teachers to invest in training student teachers. Representative Zemke in particular seemed frustrated by this and promised to follow-up with the professors.

Other Issues

Throughout the day of discussions, specifics of the PMEPD’s two policy initiatives often were forced to the side by the larger issues facing education in the state. It was easy to tell that these issues—including the aforementioned uncertainty around the Common Core and testing, and the controversy around charter schools and school funding—were “hot” topics among the audience. Several times, questions and points made by audience members drew passionate applause. For example, Royal Oak Superintendent Shawn Lewis-Lakin brought up that while Governor Snyder’s proposed school budget for 2014-2015 ensured a raise in funding for all districts (a minimum of \$50 per pupil allotment), this meant

that some charter schools and virtual schools would receive more funding increases than traditional districts like Royal Oak. He mentioned a for-profit charter school opening up in a strip mall storefront down the street that would receive a higher per-pupil increase than his school district, and tied the issue to the summit by discussing how districts like his invest in arts education while many charter schools do not.

Several other issues came up frequently among invited panelists and the audience members. PMEPPD founding member Ken Moore was one of several attendees who raised the issue of whether the value of arts education lies in its inherent benefits or its instrumental benefits—that is, its ability to teach life skills or to help with mathematics and reading achievement. Moore expressed his feeling that the arts may improve other outcomes but should always be advocated for on the basis of their inherent value. In contrast, several of the invited guests spoke passionately on the extra-musical benefits of music education. State Board Representative Ellen Weiser, a classically trained pianist, talked about how music can help students to understand fractions. State Board President Austin and Representative Zemke both talked about the economic power of the arts. Both spoke about how the design engineers at Chrysler had used their artistic ability to create vehicles that brought jobs and money to the state. An audience member brought up a Detroit Symphony Orchestra

concert—scheduled for the evening of the summit—that had sold out in less than 20 minutes, citing it as an example of the arts’ economic value.

Closing Remarks and Next Steps for the PMEPPD
PMEPPD President Rick Catherman offered closing remarks at the end of the summit, and praised the audience for giving up their Saturday to attend the event. He especially lauded the young teachers and few pre-service teachers who attended, suggesting their presence especially gave him hope. Catherman suggested that though the summit was only a first step in bringing together those concerned with music education policy, he was encouraged by the opportunity to petition directly the lawmakers and board members. Next steps for the group, Catherman noted, included monitoring the teacher evaluation legislation and putting together a presentation on the elementary music mandate, to be delivered at a Fall 2014 meeting of the State Board of Education. To learn more about the PMEPPD’s policy proposals and the policy summit, please visit the group’s website at www.pmeppd.weebly.com.

Ryan Shaw is currently a Ph.D. candidate in music education at Michigan State University. Before work at MSU, Ryan taught 6th-12th grade band in Berkley, Michigan and Cedar Springs, Michigan for 6 years.

Guidelines for Submitting Articles

Writing for the *Michigan Music Educator*

The following guidelines should be of help to both prospective and established authors:

1. The Editor encourages the submission of manuscripts on all phases of music education at every instructional level. Please note the contributor’s deadlines listed below (step 12).
2. Manuscripts should be concise, to-the-point, and well-structured. An average length for a feature article is from 3 to 4 double spaced, typewritten pages, or around 2,500 words. An average length for a column article is from 1 to 2 double spaced, typewritten pages, or around 1,200 words.
3. Avoid generalities and complex constructions. The article will generally be more interesting, have more impact, and be more persuasive if you try to write in a straightforward & clear manner.
4. You may use any writing style as long as it is appropriate to the type of article you are submitting. Be sure to use the correct form in the References section. If you have questions pertaining to style, please do not hesitate to contact the Editor.
5. *Michigan Music Educator* is always pleased to receive photographs with a manuscript especially when those photographs enhance the information in the text. Digital photos are preferred in pdf, jpg or tiff formats. Please insure all subjects in photographs have provided permission to be included in a publication. Please contact the Editor for a sample media release form.
6. Music examples, diagrams, and footnotes should appear on separate pages at the end the manuscript.
7. Include biographical information on each author with the submitted manuscript.
8. Manuscripts should be submitted via email attachment, saved in a MS Word for Windows or Mac format. If this is not possible, please contact the Editor for alternatives.
9. In accordance with the “Code of Ethics,” submitting a manuscript indicates that it has not been published previously and is not currently submitted for publication elsewhere, either in its entirety or in part. Distribution on the Internet may be considered prior publication and may compromise the originality of the paper as a submission to the *MME*. Authors should describe in what form and how a manuscript has been previously disseminated. Authors are expected to comply with APA ethical standards and institutional and federal regulations in the treatment of human subjects (www.apa.org/ethics/code2002.html).
10. The *Michigan Music Educator* assumes copyright of all published articles.

SUBMISSIONS should be sent to: Cory Micheel-Mays, Executive Director, cmicheelmays@sbcglobal.net

Contributor’s deadlines:

Spring Issue:	January 15
Fall Issue:	May 15
Winter Issue:	September 15



2014–2015 MMEA Calendar

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION
Fall General Music Workshop	October 18, 2014	Ypsilanti (EMOI)
NAMM In-Service Conf. & Honor Event	October 24-28, 2014	Nashville, TN
JAME EVENTS:		
1. Jazz Improv. (Sharon Hildner)	November 8, 2014	U of M Flint
2. Chapter Show	March 7, 2014	General Music
3. African Music (Josh Polko)	May 2, 2014	U of M Flint
Elementary Choral Festivals (I):		
1. Upper Peninsula	October 18, 2014	South State Music
2. Upper Central MI	November 8, 2014	St. Johns (EJMS)
3. Lower Central MI	November 8, 2014	Jackson (MC HS)
4. East MI	November 22, 2014	Rosely Hills (DCD)
5. West MI	February 21, 2015	Michigan (EP HS)
Michigan Music Conference (MMC)	January 22-24, 2015	General Music
MMEA Breakfast Meeting	January 24, 2015	General Music
Honor Composition Concert	January 24, 2015	General Music
Instrumental Clinic	March 7, 2015	Freshville HS
Collegiate Conference	March 21, 2015	East Lansing (MSU)
Elementary Honor Choir Eastern	March 7, 2015	East Lansing
Elementary Honor Choir Performance	March 21, 2015	East Lansing/Oakman
Michigan Youth Arts Festival	May 7-9, 2015	Kalamazoo (WMU)
NAMM National Assembly	June 24-29, 2015	Tysons Center, VA

An Interview with Dr. Colleen Conway: Partnership for Music Education Policy Development Innaugural Summit



Colleen Conway



Andrea VanDeusen

Dr. Colleen Conway is a Professor of Music Education at The University of Michigan and a founding member of the Partnership for Music Education Policy Development (PMEPD). I interviewed Dr. Conway over the phone to discuss the recent policy summit held by PMEPD at Michigan State University on June 14, 2014. In this interview, Dr. Conway shares her thoughts from the summit, as well as advice on how teachers can affect positive change in their communities.

1. PMEPD defined two current goals for music education policy in the state of Michigan. The first speaks to the K-5 music requirement for schools and indicates that we are currently one of only 5 states without an elementary music mandate. What is the current requirement for elementary music in Michigan? Are there specifics included in the recommendation for a K-5 music requirement?

Currently, there is nothing from the state that mandates music instruction must happen at the elementary level. Many districts have district-level requirements, but these are not monitored by any state level policy. There is an applied arts mandate at the high-school level, but even this is not music-specific and can be fulfilled by computer courses or even industrial arts. Yet, at the elementary level, there are no mandates for music, art, or physical education.

Our current recommendation is that students receive elementary music twice a week for 45 minutes from a certified music teacher. This is what exists in other states, including Texas and New York. However, it was mentioned that while districts many not disagree with the mandate, they might have trouble implementing its details because of resources. So, how important are the details? Maybe it is more important for us to be sure we have a certified music teacher teaching music rather than adding details to the mandate on items like student

contact time. The larger problem for me was that the chair of the Board of Education was unaware that there wasn't a state mandate for elementary music.

PMEPD is working hard to figure out the best strategy to advocate a K-5 mandate. If the specific instruction time details we suggest will hinder progress, do they matter? We have to look at what we can win. Something is better than nothing.

2. The second goal speaks to teacher certification. Currently, there is a loophole that allows K-8 classroom certified teachers to teach music. How is this affecting public school music programs?

Highly qualified teaching includes musicianship. It's not listening to some instruments and talking about how it makes you feel; classroom teachers can do that. It's also music for music's sake and the only people who can teach that are musicians. It's not bad to use music as a teaching tool in the classroom, but when certified music teachers aren't teaching music, we lose focus on sequential instruction leading to musicianship. Certainly, economic issues come into play and school districts can create schedules so that someone is teaching music. Parents don't know this is happening and technically, music is still being offered, but we're missing out when certified music teachers aren't teaching music.

3. Senator Warren mentioned that as a state we are making educational policy changes without looking at the effects of what we've already implemented. From your perspective, what have been the effects of these changes?

We are talking about how to evaluate teaching the Common Core and we don't know what the objectives are. How do we evaluate that? We don't know. With respect to teacher evalu-

ations, it really is about the relationship between music teachers and administrators. There are many administrators saying, 'What should we do?' and asking music teachers to give input on the process so they aren't made to feel like something is being done to them. There are many districts that aren't wrapped up in teacher evaluations. They trust teachers to do what they do. It's hard for the administrators too, though. They're middle management and have to answer to both teachers and the state.

4. Some of the discussion about music education seemed to place the focus of music education as a means for improving skills in other subject areas and a means for driving the economy. What are your thoughts on this?

It's music for music's sake versus reasons of student outcomes and economical growth. I was recently at an arts education conference where a former governor of Pennsylvania said, 'I like arts education, but you can't stick to arts for arts' sake when the economy is the issue. I will support arts education if it helps learning in other content areas and the economy.' That was rough, but ultimately you have to strike a balance in your argument and grapple with where you are going to draw the line. Yes, music might make you smarter. It also changes lives. We do this with our festivals. We talk about our ratings and make it competitive because our communities want that. Festival competition is not who we are and yet we still have to find that advocacy piece. It's a weird balance.

5. Sometimes affecting change on a national and state level can seem an overwhelming task. On a local level, how can teachers, parents, and community members make an impact in their own school communities?

One of the things that I found inspiring from the policy summit was that I came away with a sense of responsibility. Our lawmakers said, 'Come talk to us. Tell us what needs to be done.' Now, sure, it's good politics to say that, but there's some truth to it too. I complain with my colleagues, but have I done my part to say, 'Hey, I'm worried about this?' Have I spoken to people at my local school board level, to my local politicians? We think our hands are tied because policy comes from above, but really on the local level, we can make change. Michigan is a local control state, meaning the most important policy work you can do is with your district, your school board, and your administration.

Every school district needs a music advocacy group. Someone from your music interest group needs to be attending every school board meeting, no matter how unrelated to music the agenda appears to be. Be on school planning committees and on union leadership. Be active in your

building and know your school board. Bring your students to perform at these meetings because it's meaningful and people remember you. Sometimes as music teachers, we try to be curricular and want to avoid being a dog and pony show, but by not being visible, we lose opportunity. It's simple, but huge. By being involved, we can be proactive instead of reactive.

6. Any final reflections from the PMEPD summit?

This is PMEPD's first effort to pull together a group to talk specifically about policy like this. I know there are a number of individuals who were unable to attend this summit, but are interested in being a part of the discussion in the future. PMEPD is planning two sessions at the Michigan Music Conference in January. We're also thinking about holding a policy summit annually. We were thrilled to see an audience filled with such a cross-section of educators - coordinators, school board members, administrators, veteran teachers, and so many new and pre-service teachers. There is momentum and we want to hit the ground running.

For more information about PMEPD, please visit www.pmepd.weebly.com.

Colleen Conway is Professor of Music Education at the University of Michigan and Editor in Chief of Arts Education Policy Review. She has published more than 70 articles and six books on beginning music teachers, instrumental music education, teaching music in higher education, and qualitative research.

Andrea VanDeusen is a PhD student in music education at Michigan State University. Previously, Andrea taught choral and general music in Michigan, New Jersey, and Switzerland. She received her Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from Western Michigan University.



MMEA wishes to thank **JW Pepper & Son, Inc.**, for their generous sponsorship of numerous MMEA events, including:

- Fall Elementary Music Workshop
- Collegiate Conference
- Elementary Choral Festivals
- Spring Board Meeting Luncheon

Please visit their website: www.jwpepper.com



2015 Honors Composition Concert

10th Annual Michigan Music Conference
An In-Service for Music Educators

2015 MMEA Honors Composition Concert Application can be found at:

<http://www.mmeamichigan.org>

<http://www.michiganmusicconference.org/>

Deadline: November 1st, 2014

What is the MMEA Honors Composition Concert?

The MMEA Honors Composition Concert is an outstanding event that provides an opportunity for students to compose and perform original music. It also provides a forum for the development of students as composers and performers. Composers, kindergarten through 12th grade, submit original compositions and selected compositions will be performed at the prestigious Honors Composition Concert at the Annual Michigan Music Conference.

How to apply:

Submit your student(s)' original music composition(s) for selection in the MMEA Honors Composition Concert on **Saturday, January 24, 2015** at 1:00 p.m.

Entry Must Include 6 items:

(1) The application form (2) 1 recording of piece emailed to mmeahonorscomposition@gmail.com with mp3 recording attached, (3) Notation in any form (required grades 7-12 optional kindergarten-6th), (4) MMEA Media Consent and Release Form. (for video and/or photography rights), (5) Short Biography about the composer (no more than 100 words) (6) a description of the piece. (no more than 100 words) (7) \$10 application fee made out to "Michigan Music Education Association". Applicants selected for the Michigan Honors Composition Concert will be notified by email on or before December 1, 2014. All email addresses listed on application will be contacted. Materials will not be returned.

Email all forms and recordings to

mmeahonorscomposition@gmail.com

Mail payment to:

Cory L. Micheel-Mays

Executive Director

Michigan Music Education Association

1006 W. Washington Avenue

Jackson, MI 49203

2015 MMEA Honors Composition Concert Application

Deadline: November 1st, 2014

Please print clearly

Title of Composition _____

Composer _____ Age _____ Grade _____

Instrumentation _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Additional information (please complete all that applies)

Private Music Instructor(s) _____

Email _____ Phone _____ Cell _____

Private Music Instructor Signature _____

School Music Instructor _____

Email _____ Phone _____ Cell _____

School _____

School Address _____

School Phone _____

School Music Instructor Signature _____

Private instructor's signature is acceptable if you do not have a school music instructor

I will perform my composition (circle your response) YES NO

Please list the names of the musician(s) or ensemble that will perform your composition:

If available, would you utilize a Yamaha Clavinova to perform your piece? _____ (Y / N)

For further information contact

mmeahonorscomposition@gmail.com



Media Consent & Release Form

I, _____, do hereby irrevocably grant the Michigan Music Education Association (hereafter referred to as "MMEA") and NAfME: The National Association for Music Education (hereafter referred to as "NAfME"), and their agents, the right to use any/all photographs, video and/or audio recordings, original compositions and/or artwork in print and/or recorded form, and any/all biographical information associated with my student, _____, for the purpose of display, exhibition and/or advertisement in any form of print, graphic, online, broadcast, webcast and/or print media of MMEA and/or NAfME. In granting these rights, I hereby agree that MMEA and/or NAfME may use all such media, now and in the future, and I waive all claims against MMEA and NAfME for any/all gains and/or liability that may arise in connection with such use. By signing below, I hereby attest that I have read this agreement, understand its terms, and agree to be legally bound by it.

Parent/Guardian Signature:	Date:
Student Signature:	Date:



Didaktika

Introducing Kaplan Video and Audio, didaktika's
dedicated to revolutionize the classroom of 21st-century
pedagogy. Here, we've revolutionized
playbook design, now down to the smallest
details, giving you greater control over your content.
This is a revolution of classroom media. Be a part of it.
With Kaplan, the classroom is yours.

KAPLAN





1006 W. Washington Avenue
Jackson, MI 49203



SPEND LESS TIME TUNING AND MORE TIME TEACHING.

Introduce your students to D'Addario's NS Micro Universal and Violin Tuners. Fast, sleek, and completely unobtrusive, these tuners allow players of every stringed instrument to play—and stay—perfectly tuned.



NS MICRO UNIVERSAL
56R" metal and clip-on mount for use on virtually any instrument.



NS MICRO VIOLIN
The first tuner designed specifically for violin and viola.

daddario.com

D'Addario
PLANET UNIVERSE