Michigan Music Educator

v. 56, no. 2 spring 2019

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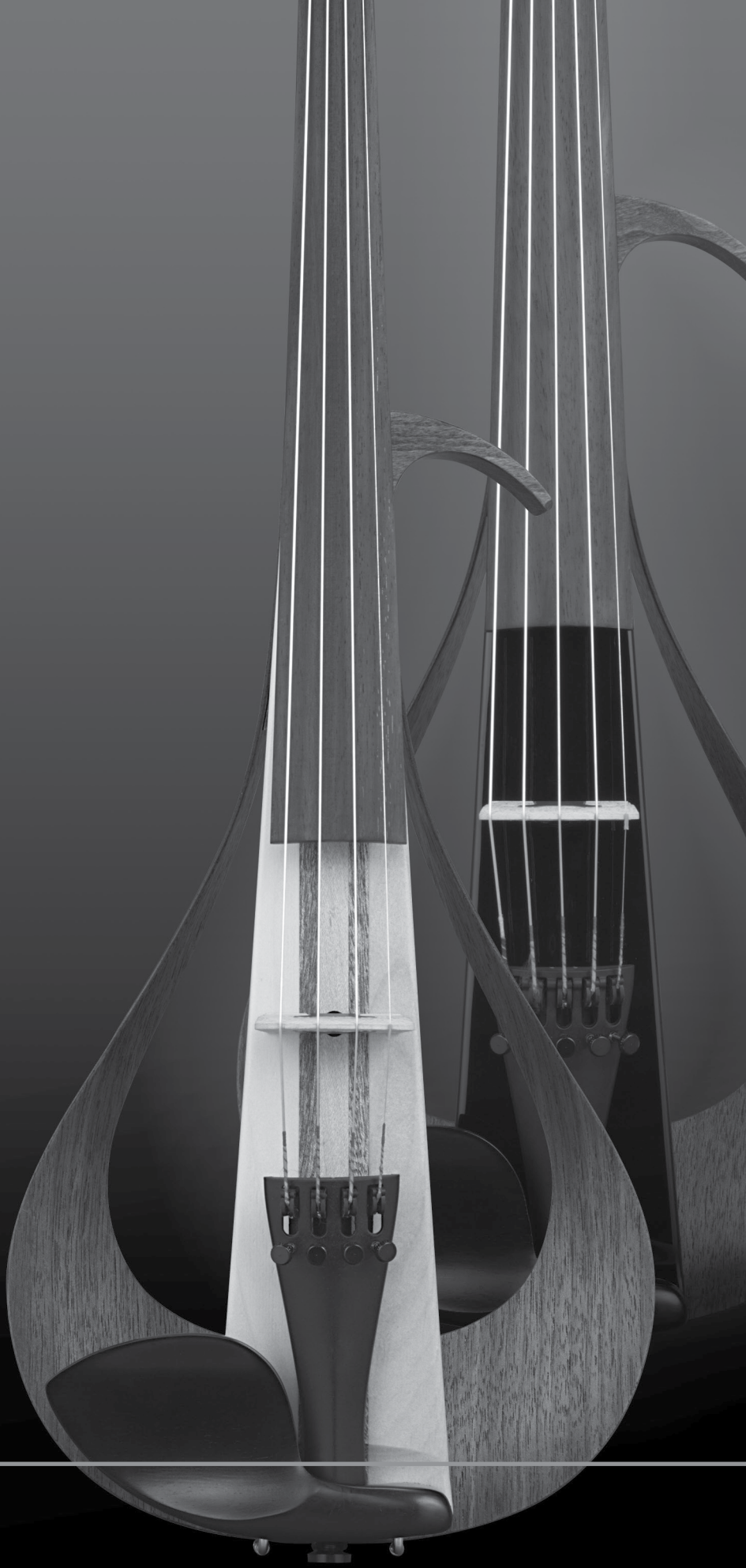

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Abby Butler

From the Editor

If you read Lisa Furman's president's message you will know that this will be my last issue as journal editor for the MME. After five years it's time to pass the reins to another colleague. I'm pleased that Christina Hornbach has agreed to take on the editorship. With her expertise, experience, and connections across the state, I am confident the journal will continue to grow and thrive.

Serving as editor has proved a rewarding and an educational experience. The satisfaction that comes with ushering in the publication of a journal issue or assisting an author through the revision process is payment enough for the time investment, and of course, the shared excitement over an author's first publication is priceless. I'm also grateful for the opportunities to develop professionally. Through the editing process I've improved my own writing and communication skills, but more importantly I've expanded my knowledge and understanding of music education across multiple topics.

Role of the State Journal

Perhaps the most important thing I've come to appreciate during my tenure as journal editor is the role of the state journal within the infrastructure of the NAfME state affiliated associations and its potential for supporting professional growth. Every state publishes a journal, which typically functions as a vehicle for communication regarding state MEA events. Additionally many journals also serve as a resource for professional development both in terms of access to scholarly articles while simultaneously promoting teacher authored publications. When I joined the executive board as journal editor in Fall 2014 I questioned the viability of the journal as a resource for MMEA members. Five years and fifteen issues later, I have come to truly value the journal's potential for supporting professional development amongst Michigan's music educators.

Journal Writing as Professional Development

What is professional development? A quick Internet search reveals multiple and varying definitions depending on the source and the profession in question. The Oxford dictionary describes it as the "development of competence or expertise in one's profession; the process of acquiring the skills necessary to improve performance in a job."[1] Similarly, CareerOneStop, an online employment resource sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, explains, "Professional development simply means keeping up to date on the trends, skills, technologies, and other characteristics of your field."[2]

While neither of the definitions presented in the previous paragraph specifically acknowledges authorship as a form of professional development, neither do they exclude it. I would argue that writing for a state journal sponsored by one's professional organization qualifies as a form of professional development. Here's why. Writing offers teachers a chance to share promising ideas, present new techniques, examine challenges, or question traditional practices. Through the process of writing: gathering and synthesizing information; organizing and prioritizing content; crafting and revising the written document for clarity, authors come to a deeper understanding of their topic. Personally, I have found writing to be invigorating, reinforcing, stimulating, even cathartic, and ultimately a highly rewarding experience.

Get Involved: Be a Team Player

You want *me* to write an article for the journal? Why not? The MME exists as a resource for *all* MMEA members. As such it reflects not just the face of the MMEA board, but more importantly, it reflects the face of music education throughout the state of Michigan. It is *our* journal. Collectively we can affect the journal's efficacy as a resource for professional development through individual contributions.

Our MME column editors are always looking for interesting and relevant articles. Anyone is welcome to submit articles for publication, simply follow the submission guidelines on page 33 of this issue or locate them on our website[3]. It is not necessary to be an experienced teacher. In fact, teachers at different stages in their careers are encouraged to contribute to the journal. You simply need to have something valuable to share and be able to articulate your ideas in writing.

But I'm Not a Writer…

Of course, you may encounter a few obstacles along the way, but they needn't be insurmountable. If you don't feel confident as a writer, begin by getting your ideas down on paper, then find a colleague or contact a column editor who will be willing to read your draft and offer feedback. You might also consider co-authoring an article if you're not comfortable writing on your own. Contact the MME editor for recommendations.

I Don't Know What to Write About…
Choose a topic or problem about which you are both passionate and knowledgeable. Your article doesn't need to reflect groundbreaking work. It can be as simple as sharing a particular strategy or technique you've found successful. If you presented a workshop at the MMC or other professional venue, write it up into an article. This is a great way to start since you'll have completed most of the legwork while preparing your session. Similarly, consider turning a research paper or class assignment into an article.

I Don't Have Time to Write…
The biggest obstacle is often simply finding time to write. With foresight and thoughtful planning you should be able to carve out time for doing so. It helps to know how you work best. If you prefer to work regularly for short periods of time, then setting aside a 30-minute block of time over the weekend might be an effective option. On the other hand if you need an uninterrupted period of time where the task can be completed in two or three sittings consider scheduling your writing projects during the summer.

In Closing

Over the past five years I have learned much about music education in the state of Michigan. First, in spite of numerous challenges there are many good things happening across the state. Second, these good things result from the hard work and persistent efforts of Michigan's skilled, knowledgeable, and talented music educators. We need you, so please, consider writing for the Michigan Music Educator.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank those individuals who have encouraged and supported me at various stages of this endeavor. Thanks to John Lychner and Betty Ann Younker for planting the seed. Without your prompting I might not have taken on the editorship. To past-presidents Kelli Graham and Karen Salvador, and current president, Lisa Furman, I am most grateful for your support. To all the column editors with whom I've had the pleasure of working, thank you for making my job a piece of cake. And finally, a huge huzzah for Cory Mays! Cory's assistance with the actual production of the journal coupled with his patience, optimism, and enthusiasm has been immeasurable.

Indeed, with strong leadership from so many capable music educators, Michigan's students, families, and communities have much to be thankful for. The future of music education is in capable hands.

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[1]*Oxford English Dictionary*, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/us/professionaldevelopment
[2]Career One Stop, http://www.careeronestop.org/credentials/TrainingOptions/professional-development.aspx
[3]*Michigan Music Educator:* Submission Guidelines, https://mmea-michigan.org/michigan-music-educator/submission-guidelines/

Editorial Board

The editorial board urges readers to submit articles of interest to our profession, and encourages this important professional development activity for all members. Articles may be authored or co-authored, address other relevant topics/areas (see columns, at right), 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 five to six months ahead of the publication date. See the published Guidelines for Contributors (on page 45 of this issue) for further information.

Please submit articles electronically to the Editor: hornbach@hope.edu

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Educator
v. 56, no. 2 spring 2019

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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 Editor, Abby Butler: abby.butler@wayne.edu

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Designed by: Cory L. Mays
Printed by: American Speedy Printing (Jackson, MI)

Subscription price is $25 annually for non-members. Single copy is $7.

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

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President's Message

Lisa Furman

Greetings all. It was great seeing so many of you at the 2019 Michigan Music Conference! The MMC is always such a great place to enrich and refresh our music teaching through fantastic professional development sessions, to enjoy reconnecting with old friends, and the opportunity to make new ones. We hope you were able to attend the conference and be a part of our lively first annual MMEA social hour! This event provided an exciting backdrop for our annual awards presentation. This year MMEA was proud to present awards to:

Amy Fenton, 2018 Music Educator of the Year

Michael Norman, 2018 Award of Merit

Denise Wilkinson, 2018 Award of Merit

Amy Sierzega, 2018 Hilda Humphrey Service Award

Paul Soma, 2018 Outstanding Administrator Award

Congratulations again, to these outstanding music educators and supporters!

If you were not able to attend this year's conference, we certainly hope you will make plans to attend next year's conference, which will mark the 15th anniversary of the MMC in Grand Rapids. In the meantime, we encourage you to take advantage of the numerous professional development and student events we still have planned for this year! Be sure to mark your calendars to attend one of the popular instrumental music clinics, or the thrilling Marching Music Academy (powered by DCI and featuring the Bluecoats) on June 20. This summer we will also host the technology workshop on June 26, at the University of Michigan, and teacher share sessions. Look for more information about these great events on our website, or social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest).

This spring the MMEA hosted our fourth annual Michigan Music Education Advocacy day, which took place Thursday, April 11, 2019 in Lansing. On advocacy day, teams of music representatives meet with legislators to advocate for music education. This important event also includes a lunchtime concert featuring student musicians in the Capitol Rotunda. In June, MMEA will also send representatives to Washington D.C to participate in the National Association for Music Education Capitol Hill day and National Assembly. This special event involves music educator representatives from across the country coming together in our nation's capital, to send a unified message to Congress about the importance of funding and support for music education for all students! MMEA is proud to represent our members at the state and national level, and to be the leading advocacy organization for music teachers and students in the state of Michigan!

Your MMEA continues to work hard to provide new opportunities and unwavering support to music educators, students, parents and community members in the state of Michigan. We have experienced tremendous growth over the past five plus years, and the future of the organization looks bright! New events such as the MMEA social hour offers networking opportunities, and the new board and committee structure provides more openings for members to become actively involved in MMEA. If you are not currently participating in any of the broad-ranging MMEA events and activities, or would like to seek out additional levels of participation for you and your students, we encourage you to reach out to a MMEA representative. Let us know how you would like to be involved, or share your ideas about new events you would like to see MMEA add to our already exciting line-up.

The success of this great organization would not be possible without the incredible work of our executive director, Cory Mays, or the amazing board and committee members who generously share their time and talents to this organization in countless ways. Therefore, in closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank a very special board member who has elected to step away from her current demanding role with MMEA this spring. Please join me in thanking our Michigan Music Educator Journal Editor for the past 5 years, Abigail Butler. Abby, we appreciate your extraordinary efforts toward making the journal such a valuable resource for our members. You will be missed! On behalf of the MMEA board and members, thank you for your years of service to the Michigan Music Education Association.

All the best!

Lisa J. Furman, Ph.D.
President
Michigan Music Education Association

Website Advertising Information

Michigan Music Education Association

www.mmeamichigan.org

BASIC DETAILS

The Michigan Music Education Association is a professional organization that serves music educators, students, parents, and community members through leadership in the advancement of music teaching and learning. MMEA offers professional development workshops throughout the state and performance opportunities for elementary, middle & high school students. MMEA has a strong history of providing state and national advocacy/legislative support and outreach to pre-service, current and retired Michigan music educators of all experience levels. MMEA is a proud state-affiliate of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME).

WEBSITE ANALYTICS

• 175 visits per day, over 5,300 visits per month

• 2,100 unique visitors per month, representing active, retired, and pre-service (college/university student) music educators, parents, and supporters

• Configured to be mobile/tablet friendly

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Thanks so much for your interest in advertising with MMEA!

Music Education for Students from Migrant Families: Ten Years Later

John A. Lychner

Introduction

Recently, there has been a lot of discussion about immigration and migration in the United States. Regardless of one's point of view, the facts are that immigration is an important part of our history that has significantly shaped who we are as a nation today and that migrant populations have played a major role in agriculture in the United States. According to the Oxford Dictionary, the term immigrant indicates "a person who comes to live permanently in a foreign country" whereas the term migrant refers to "a person who moves from one place to another, especially in order to find work or better living conditions."[1] In addition, I have observed that migrant families in the United States often maintain their citizenship in another country and certainly maintain a strong connection to loved ones in their home country while traditionally moving from one part of the United States to another and back over the course of a year, following the planting and harvest seasons. However, there appears to be a change occurring in both the definition and experience of migrant people. In news stories, immigrant and migrant are often used interchangeably when the traditional definitions indicate that they are not interchangeable. So, common usage of these terms is somewhat problematic. In addition, there are strong indications that there is less movement by migrant people than in the past, thus changing the definition and also changing patterns of school attendance for children of migrant families. It is important for educators to note and understand this and related trends in order to best serve their students.

Previous Work

In the Spring of 2005, while I was a member of the faculty at Western Michigan University, I was granted a sabbatical with the primary goal to assist music educators in understanding the life experiences of the Hispanic students in their classes, particularly students from migrant families, in order to provide those students with ways to successfully participate in performance-based music classes. WMU Music Education graduates and other music educators in western Michigan were telling me about how they were working in schools where the students from migrant families would leave their schools in Michigan in late October attend schools in Southern states (most often Texas) during the winter, and return to their schools in Michigan in April. As a result of this untimely changing of schools and a lack of coordination between schools from different parts of the country, it was often very difficult for the students to maintain consistent growth in skill and knowledge. In addition, their teachers had to manage the uncertainty of their progress (and presence) as compared to those who were consistently at the school throughout the year. This made participation in performance-based music classes like band, orchestra, and choir, a challenge for both students and teachers. I wanted to assist these teachers and students because I believe that social justice includes the right of all students to experience the arts, especially music, as part of their education, so we must facilitate that in our work as teachers and administrators.

In preparation for my sabbatical semester, I studied demographic data for the United States from the Pew Research Center, among others, compiled a list of schools based on that data along with information that I compiled from contacts in western Michigan, Texas and California where there were a large number of migrant families, and sent out a survey to music supervisors and music teachers in those areas that asked for specific demographic information as well as information on how the coming and going of students from migrant families was impacting their programs and how they dealt with the situation. I distributed forty surveys, sixteen were returned, performed descriptive and comparative analyses, and followed up with telephone interviews and site visits during my sabbatical semester to acquire more in-depth information. In addition to my initial observations in Michigan, I traveled to

California, Texas, and Mexico to observe first-hand what was happening, interviewing nineteen educators and also collecting public domain data with the help of counselors and administrators. I was endeavoring to understand the educational experiences and the cultural backgrounds of students from migrant families, focusing on how their relocation during the school year affected their participation in music education experiences. The work culminated in two publications and several presentations. The first publication was titled "Students from Hispanic Migrant Families in Michigan Classrooms: Considerations for Instrumental Music Programs" and was published in the *Michigan Music Educator* in 2007,[2] then reprinted in the *Florida Music Director* in 2008.[3] The focus of that article was to disseminate the information gathered from my research to the Michigan music educators and WMU graduates whose experiences and desire to better serve their students from migrant families had inspired the sabbatical project. It described a variety of experiences basic to Hispanic culture and migrant families as well as ideas for engaging Hispanic students in music classes. The second, titled "Instrumental Music Experiences from Mexico," provided an overview of music in Mexican culture and was published in the *Music Educators Journal* in 2008,[4] which is a national refereed journal, disseminating information beyond the Michigan roots of the project. This article is a follow up of these publications, especially the former.

Context

One of the most important things that I have learned is that our ability to empathize grows as we learn about the lives of others and the history surrounding their families. Without empathy, teachers can become like vending machines, providing a product that the consumer (student) can take or leave (pass or fail). It is the desire to reach out and learn the students' stories and the stories of their families that sets good teachers apart and provides for the kind of connections that engage students in their schoolwork at a deeper level. How much do we know or understand about immigrants and migrants in the United States?

Immigrants have played an important role throughout the development of the United States. New immigrants have historically done and continue to do jobs that are labor intensive and often unpleasant due to difficult working conditions such as extremes of weather or manipulating heavy industrial equipment. Many industrial jobs have been automated but most agricultural jobs still require a human touch, especially for harvesting delicate produce. U.S. farmers depend on seasonal workers and migrant workers to keep their farms running, with migrant workers playing a primary role in this work force throughout the 20th century and beyond. Nearly all of these migrant workers are Mexican but, more recently, Hispanics from Central America have been included in this group.

As indicated by the Census Bureau, prior to 1970 Hispanic origin was determined indirectly by working with surnames or reports of language preference, and it is difficult to get a clear picture of population change. The 1970 census was the first to specifically include "Hispanic" as a descriptor of origin. As reported in my earlier work, data from the 2000 census show that between 1990 and 2000 the Hispanic population in the United States increased by 57.9 percent.[5] Data from the 2010 census indicate a subsequent growth in the Hispanic population in the United States of 43 percent, four times the overall 9.7 percent growth rate during that period (2000-2010). Approximately three-quarters of Hispanics in the United States indicated they were Mexican. Regionally, the South had a 57 percent increase in Hispanic population and there was also significant growth in the Midwest with a 49 percent increase in Hispanic population.[6] The data correspond to both logical points of entry from Mexico and traditional movement of migrant workers and their families from the primary states of California and Texas in the winter to Northern states like Oregon, Washington, and Michigan in the summer. More recently, a PEW Research Center study from 2016 indicates that the growth rate in the Hispanic population slowed significantly between 2007 and 2014 due to a drop-off in immigration from Latin America and a declining birth rate.[7] A 2015 story from Interlochen Public Radio corroborates the trend, stating that there is a decline in the migrant workforce in Northern Michigan and indicating that possible causes include stagnant pay rates, immigration concerns (i.e., traveling as undocumented workers), and people getting an education and moving on to a different career.[8]

In the mid-20th century, farm workers began to organize and leaders like Cesar Chavez helped to bring prominence to the plight of the migrant worker. The movement sparked a national awareness of the conditions experienced by farm workers and also the founding of numerous organizations and departments over the next twenty years including the Community Service Organization, the National Farm Workers Association (later called the United Farm Workers), the Binational Migrant Education Initiative (BMEI) of the U.S. Department of Education, and the National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education (NASDME), among numerous others at federal, state, and local levels. The union-style organizations endeavored to improve the working conditions for the workers while the education-based organizations endeavored to improve the educational experiences of the children of migrant workers.

The Binational Migrant Education Initiative (BMEI) has its roots in California where in 1976 a group of interest-

ed parties initiated efforts to work with Mexican officials to improve the education of students migrating between Mexico and California. Other border states quickly became involved and in 1998 an agreement was signed re-establishing the U.S. Department of Education's commitment to this program at the state and national levels.[9] The National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education (NASDME) established an internal database in 1971, expanded to nationwide distance learning programs in the 1990s, and currently offers online courses, mobile computer labs, and satellite feeds with some students receiving laptop computers so that they can stay connected with their home schools as they move with their families.[10]

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 emphasized equal access to education and, through amendments and revisions as it has been reauthorized every five years since it was enacted, has provided for improvements in the education of children of migrant families (Title I, Part C). Grants through Title I, Part C have provided considerable assistance, particularly through upgrades in technology in recent years for schools with large populations of students from migrant families. Also, as a result of monies available from the Federal Government, virtually every state in the union has a portion of its department of education website committed to Title I, Part C information and initiatives.

It is important to look beyond the students and the schools that serve those students and endeavor to understand the lives of the students and their families. Effective teaching involves developing relationships with students and, often, their families as well. If we do not understand what a student's life is like, it is possible that we will have a difficult time getting them to achieve the outcomes described in the curriculum. For example, most ensemble directors expect their students to practice at home. However, this may not be possible for students from migrant families because they have chores or family responsibilities that fill their time when they are not in school and they live in compact living quarters where playing a musical instrument or singing could easily disturb family members and neighbors. As a result, it is important to build in opportunities for practice during the school day or immediately before or after school if there is "free time" or the student has transportation available. Students do not always tell their teachers why they did not or cannot practice. It is the teacher's job to learn about the student's situation and seek out ways to help the student succeed. For teachers and administrators, understanding the difficulties that migrant families face, knowing what specific students are going through in their lives, and knowing what resources are available to assist them is extremely important.

Updates

Over the years since the original study, I have maintained contact with several of the people that I worked with during that study and I was recently encouraged by an administrator to revisit this topic and find out how the current situation compares to what I had found in the mid-2000s. I updated the survey that I had used previously, asking for specific demographic information as well as information on how the coming and going of students from migrant families was impacting music programs and how educators and administrators dealt with the situation. Then I attempted to contact those who were involved in the previous study but found that most had either retired or had changed positions which significantly changed the demographics of their situation. I collected information from school administrators or resource personnel from the schools that I had worked with previously (six responded) for consistency in comparison and interviewed music educators (five responded) currently teaching in those or similar/nearby schools during the Spring and Summer of 2018.[11] I also did a literature review and updated my census and demographic information from sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau and the Pew Research Center.[12] Based on what I learned, I did not feel that site visits were required at this time.

As previously noted, I initiated this project in the mid-2000s because music educators were indicating that they were not sure how best to serve their students who came from migrant families. During my data gathering for that earlier project, I was told by public school administrators that they were working to incorporate or improve tracking systems to make the educational experience for students from migrant families more cohesive by making records of classes taken and levels of achievement readily available to all of the schools that the students attended. My initial follow-up work indicated that this was having a positive impact on student success within two years after my sabbatical. Today, schools with significant migrant populations have a migrant resource teacher or someone on the administrative staff who tracks and provides support to migrant students and often their families as well. This is one of several things that has improved the situation for migrant families and students. Based on recent interviews that I have done with practitioners in the field, it appears that the teachers are provided more information about their students than they had received in the past while also receiving monetary and materials support via grants and local sources.

The data that I collected from the literature review along with the insights and the information that administrators and those interviewed shared about their school districts and local area provide the basis for the following generalizations about the current state of affairs for Hispanic migrant

families and their students. I should also note that there was an extremely high rate of agreement among those I interviewed and the administrators who provided information about the following information.

When I asked how things are different from approximately ten years ago, the most notable difference is that far fewer families are migrating or moving long distances for work. Migrant workers now find a place to settle, a town in western Michigan for example, and then move around that area to work different crops as the seasons change rather than moving from Texas to Michigan and back again. Melissa Anders corroborates this information in a 2013 mlive article noting, "There has been a shift to more seasonal workers since 2006 . . . some workers may have decided to settle in Michigan because they want a more stable environment."[13] The Michigan Migrant Resources website indicates, "There are also significant populations of former migrant workers who have 'settled out' in communities."[14] As a result, educators are not seeing as many students from migrant families leave their classrooms in October and return in April, so there is less need to be creative in recruiting and serving Hispanic migrant students in music classes because their attendance and experience more closely approximates the norm for the general population. It is also interesting to note that as migrant families settle into a community, they are acquiring traditional housing more and more often and not solely living in housing provided by farmers. Migrant families are even purchasing houses that have shrunk significantly in price as a result of the recent recession. The families of migrant workers actually often find buying a house more affordable than rent in some places but they almost always pay in cash, avoiding formal home loans.

I also asked for a working definition of "migrant." There was a consensus that, while "migrant" once meant "temporary worker" or "farm workers who travel great distances, following the crop cycles," it is now more reflective of either single people who do not have a family and are able to move virtually any distance for a job or, less often now, one parent or family member, usually the father, who moves around for work and sends money to the family. Respondents also indicated that, as time has passed and many migrant workers have moved with or started families, they have tried to find a place to settle. Migrant workers want stability for their families, just like everyone else. Finding stability was noted as important regardless of region—California, Texas, or Michigan. However, the thing most commonly shared was that migrant workers don't want to get into trouble. They want to do their job and not get noticed. In addition, respondents noted that in the past migrant workers were nearly always Mexican but now there is a growing number of people coming from Central America through Mexico to find work in the United States. It is a long, difficult, and often dangerous journey. That is why many of them will cross the border illegally, if they get that far and are not allowed to cross legally, rather than return to their home country where they face political and social instability.

Whether they are traditional migrants or "settled" migrants, family and religion are still primary aspects of life for Mexicans and Hispanics in general. While this is not new, there has been greater acknowledgement of the importance of these factors along with some attempts to work with them. Family comes first in Hispanic households and students will miss school and school events if there is a conflicting family event or need. Family need can include watching younger siblings, doing housework, etc. After school rehearsals may not be considered important. Families may not understand why such things are needed or they may not see enough value in it to make it a priority. This may be because their personal experiences or knowledge of what goes on in schools did not include these opportunities.

Family is what brings meaning to their lives. Taking care of each other's needs and celebrating holidays are important aspects of their family life. My California contacts indicated that they now have year-round school in many districts to allow for longer breaks when their Mexican students will travel with their families to Mexico for holidays such as Christmas and Easter, among others. At Christmas they are off from the end of the first week of December to the second week of January and a week or more at spring break, which is attached to the week before Easter and Easter Monday. This adjustment, based on previously observed attendance patterns, means that the teachers will see all of the students when school is in session, an outcome that is particularly important to music educators who are preparing performances.

The level of participation in music classes appears to have improved among migrant students. However, where this is happening, districts and music educators have made notable efforts on behalf of their students, especially in the areas of instrument availability and technology. Hispanic students, migrant or not, deserve the same music making opportunities afforded other students regardless of their socio-economic situation. In instances where students and their families simply cannot afford the instruments, supplies, sheet music, metronomes, tuners, etc. that many take for granted in our musical world, music teachers can help by applying for grants and seeking assistance from instrument manufacturers and others to supply the requisite equipment. Assistance from Federal and Foundation-based grants is another way to provide additional funding for such expenditures. Music teachers may also want to encourage community-based booster organizations as a way to support music education regardless of the community's socio-eco-

nomic background. There are many ways to offer support other than through traditional fund raising activities. With proper tools, instruction, and community support, students in Title I schools can be part of a thriving music education program. Directors that I interviewed indicated that they must seek out other funding sources like Federal and Foundation-based grants. Title I schools and non-Title I schools can be equally well equipped with the latest technology if the teachers and administration seek out this kind of funding, thus making it possible for all students to succeed.

Language also appears to be less of a barrier than in the past because more students speak English. It is difficult to say whether it is because of better or more intense language instruction, less movement from school to school and therefore more consistent language training, longer time spent in the United States surrounded by English speakers, or some other factors. Regardless, I heard far fewer comments about language as a concern or a barrier to participation in music experiences in schools than during my sabbatical study. Some students still need a friend to help with translation or help from the music educator if s/he is bilingual. Communication with parents can still be problematic and providing documents or information in Spanish is often still necessary. However, it was notable that either these experiences are less common or there are more structures in place that assist with management of these situations.

Conclusion

Life as a Hispanic migrant farmworker is difficult. However, it appears that some things have improved for these workers and their families, most notably in their travel and housing. Many are traveling less and settling into communities with improved housing and living conditions. The children of these workers appear to be having better school experiences with more options to participate in music as a result of the more settled lifestyle resulting from better living conditions and moving less. Teachers and administrators are also more aware of and seek out resources and grants available to Title I schools that help to provide updated technology, instruments, etc. that benefit students from migrant and struggling families. While these are notable improvements from the mid-2000s, there is more to do. It appears that, over time, migrant workers and their families are becoming "de facto immigrants" as they stay longer and longer in communities, moving less and even buying property. Life is still difficult for migrant families and most are concerned about losing the stability that they have worked hard to establish as a result of potential changes in government policies and economic shifts. As a result, immigration policy needs to be updated to appropriately deal with this reality. In addition, particularly when times are difficult, education should provide opportunities and a safe haven for growth in all aspects of our humanity, music and the arts included, to all children. We, as educators, can and must be advocates for this.

Notes

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[11]Personal interviews with the following individuals took place on site during the dates listed:
Ben Horton, Greenfield Union School District, Bakersfield, CA, May 2018; David Stankewicz, Pioneer School, Delano, CA, June 2018; Anna Carney, Peripatetic Clarinet Teacher, Georgetown, TX, May & July 2018; Sandy Kessler, La Banda Sinfonica Juvenil, Queretaro, Mexico, July 2018; Kevin Gabrielse, Godfrey-Lee High School, Grand Rapids, MI, September 2018.

[12]Additional data on migrant student populations was obtained for the following school districts: Bakersfield, CA, Area Schools; Chula Vista, CA, Area Schools; Grand Rapids, MI, Area Schools; Grand Haven, MI Area Schools; Austin, TX, Area Schools; Round Rock, TX, Area Schools.

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Evaluation and Assessment: Is There a Difference?

David Potter

Yesterday I sat in on our weekly student teacher seminar course at Michigan State University, when the name Charlotte Danielson entered the conversation. Danielson, a former economist, educator, and political consultant, is the author of the *Framework for Teaching*, one of the most commonly used models for defining quality teaching in the United States (The Danielson Group, 2017a). I started to cringe, as it brought back memories of terms like "teacher evaluation," "highly effective," and, worst of all, "high-stakes." I started to remember times during my teaching when, after an observation by my principal, I genuinely thought I would be fired because I failed to state an objective, or my students were perceived by an observer as too rambunctious. When I heard the name Charlotte Danielson, one word came to my mind: Fear.

I was therefore surprised when a veteran music teacher started to talk about the Danielson framework with the student teachers in a positive way. She talked about how, when she used the framework, her students began to use a common vocabulary, developed higher-order thinking skills, and focused on objectives without taking away from the musical flow of the lesson. In other words, her students were learning, and she was learning as a teacher. After listening to this veteran music teacher, a very different word came to my mind: Growth.

I started to wonder: Has my approach to music teacher evaluation and assessment been wrong this whole time? Come to think of it, what exactly are we talking about when we use the words *evaluation* and *assessment*? Can a tool be used for student/teacher growth and for evaluating teacher effectiveness?

Linda-Darling Hammond, education professor emeritus at Stanford University and former president of the American Educational Research Association, describes teacher evaluations as standards-based performances of teacher competency that function as part of broader accountability systems:

> Like businesses that use a dashboard of measures to provide a comprehensive picture of performance, we need to allow and enable accountability systems that create dashboards of indicators for all key decisions (student placement, promotion, graduation; teacher evaluation, tenure, dismissal; school recognition, intervention). (2014, p. 105)

Darling-Hammond also asserts, "Teacher evaluation processes are connected to teacher growth and development rather than punitive accountability" (2017, p. 16). Yet as I read through her books, while I find many references to student assessments, references to teacher assessment are rare.

Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* makes multiple references to the word "assessment" within the domains of planning, environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities. However, Danielson makes no references to the word "evaluation." (The Danielson Group, 2017b). Ironically, the description of the framework on the Danielson Group website makes multiple references to the word evaluation, but no references to assessment. In other words, the framework was created with the intention to focus on assessment, but it is marketed as a tool for evaluation.

Federal legislation concerning assessment and evaluation match up with what I read in works by Darling-Hammond and Danielson. Upon reading over federal education legislation including the *No Child Left Behind Act* (2002), the *Race to the Top* competitive funding program (2009), and the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (2015), three things became apparent:

1. The word "evaluation" almost always refers to teachers and school leaders, not students.
2. The word "assessment" almost always

refers to students and standardized tests.
3. When "assessment" refers to teachers, it is usually in the context of the word "teacher performance assessment."

Why is the word "evaluation" used so often for teachers? The answer may lie in how we conceptualize teacher growth and development.

As a music teacher in Tennessee, the word "evaluation" meant whether or not I would still have a job. During my first year of teaching in Memphis, the state had changed their legislation to link teacher evaluation scores to tenure, salary, and termination (Tennessee Department of Education, 2017).[1] As a "non-tested" teacher in 2011—meaning I did not teach in a grade/subject tested on the annual state exams—I learned that half of my evaluation would be based on the reading and math test scores of my students (Teacher Effectiveness Measure, 2015). In other words, if my students scored "below expectations" on their state tests in reading and math, then I would score "below expectations" on half of my evaluation. The other half of my evaluation consisted mostly of observations by my principal. I remember looking at a teacher observation rubric, similar to the Danielson framework that had over 100 indicators of things I needed to say, do, or facilitate to "meet expectations." As a first year teacher having just moved from New York to Memphis, this was overwhelming.

When my first observation came back with scores "below expectations," I asked my principal, "Am I going to be fired?" Tennessee legislation allows for (and in some cases, mandates) the removal of teachers who score below expectations. Even a tenured teacher can lose tenure if they consistently score below expectations (Tennessee Department of Education, 2014, 2015).

According to the Michigan Department of Education, "Beginning in 2018-2019, the law requires that 40 percent of half of teacher and administrator evaluations be based on "student growth and assessment data," up from 25 percent the previous school year (Michigan Department of Education, 2018b). As the emphasis on student growth increases, so does the accountability for music teachers to "measure student growth on the most essential standards and elements that define student success within the class" (Michigan Department of Education, 2018a).[2] Specifically, the law has changed to prioritize student assessments and student growth. While I believe that teacher evaluation (accountability) is important, I believe that teacher assessment (growth) has been neglected in schools. Furthermore, while music teachers may be able to find ways to use the Danielson framework to their advantage, no music teacher was involved in the development of the framework itself.

How can teacher evaluation become more focused on teacher growth? I am a proponent of focusing on artistic processes like creating, performing, responding, and connecting in organizing goals for student growth. I have found resources categorized around these processes, such as the Michigan Arts Education Instruction and Assessment (MAEIA) project, to provide specific information designed to guide music teachers toward demonstrating student growth (MAEIA, 2018). As Robinson explains (2015), "many music teachers do not have the time or the measurement expertise to develop their own assessments" (p. 15). The MAEIA assessments, designed by Michigan arts educators, provide a head start in this sense. But just finding quality assessments is not enough to ensure a meaningful process for the teacher, as I found when turning in a portfolio as part of my annual evaluations. Over time, I found that portfolio scoring guides became more and more generic to the point that the purpose of the scoring guide became the ability to generate a score, not the ability to interpret what that score meant in terms of student growth.

While my school district had outstanding educators who helped to make a variety of rubrics, I struggled to find any resources focused on teacher growth instead of accountability. Even the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) has workbooks for building and evaluating effective music education designed to "offer teachers, peer evaluators, and administrators…examples of professional evaluations of music teachers" (NAfME, 2013). Where then, can music teachers go to find sources of professional growth that are not rooted in accountability measures?

For one example, I return to the MAEIA project. With a deeper look, one sees that the MAEIA project emphasizes its namesake: it promotes growth in both instruction and assessment practices. Terminology is important here, as MAEIA focuses on "assessment" and makes few mentions of the word "evaluation" on their website. Furthermore, MAEIA served as a grassroots effort: "Since 2012 over 1,000 Michigan arts educators have contributed to the MAEIA project" (MAEIA, 2018).

I believe that grassroots efforts in music education to reshape evaluation, like MAEIA, are important steps in reshaping the definition of accountability for music teachers. Likewise, I believe that such projects are important in reshaping the definition of growth in music. Therefore, while not definitive, I submit the following ideas for consideration:

1. Assessment and evaluation are *not* the same, and we must be intentional about developing a common discourse that separates the two. Assessment is about growth—for students and teachers—and evaluation too often means a score-based, punitive process.

2. Music teachers who are struggling with demonstrating student growth should consider exploring the assessments found in the MAEIA project.
3. Music teachers who are struggling with teacher accountability or are being unfairly evaluated by measures such as math or reading test scores should consider using MAEIA resources as a conversation starter. This could help to change the narrative with administrators from counterproductive accountability to relevant growth.

In a time of political uncertainty and instability in education, music educators may be in a unique position to speak to building administrators and state leaders about evaluation and assessment. Through the work of projects such as MAEIA, we have models of assessment. Furthermore, by knowing the difference, we as music educators can work together to push the pendulum away from accountability-driven education and back to growth-based education. I invite music educators across the state to consider participating in these collaborative efforts by exploring MAEIA resources and changing the way we talk about assessment and evaluation within our professional learning communities.

[1]Tennessee Code § 49-1-302 (2016).
[2]2018 House Bill 5707 would return the percentage to 25. The bill passed in the State House on December 13, 2018, and it awaits approval from the State Senate.

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MMEA Honors Outstanding Educators

Karen Salvador

Each year, the Michigan Music Education Association recognizes exemplary achievements in music education by soliciting nominations and selecting recipients for awards. These awards are intended to acknowledge the myriad ways that teachers, administrators, and others advance music education in our state. We are proud to share the following brief sketches of the 2018 awardees, who make Michigan musical every day.

Amy Fenton, Music Educator of the Year

Based on her outstanding contributions to music education, Haslett teacher Amy Fenton was selected as "Music Educator of the Year." To recognize outstanding merit in music teaching, MMEA grants this award annually to one individual who has served their students, communities and profession in an exemplary manner.

A native of Arizona, Mrs. Fenton (pictured with her husband Todd Fenton, Ph.D.), began her career teaching elementary music in Tucson before she moved to Michigan. She taught one year in Stockbridge before relocating to Haslett Public Schools, where she has remained since 1999. Mrs. Fenton is a nationally recognized expert on Orff Schulwerk. In addition to presenting and teaching around the US, Mrs. Fenton has hosted professional development workshops for music educators through the Mid-Michigan Orff Schulwerk Association (MMOSA). She has served as president of MMOSA, treasurer for the American Orff Schulwerk Association, and on the MMEA Fall General Music Workshop committee. Perhaps most importantly, over her 23-year career as a music educator, she has touched the lives of thousands of children who made music with her at school.

Upon receiving notification of the award, Fenton wrote, "I am truly humbled and feel very honored to be recognized by this amazing organization… Thank you for your work on behalf of all Michigan music educators and their students." We at MMEA are grateful for this opportunity to recognize Amy Fenton's tremendous positive influence on music education in Michigan and around the country.

Amy Sierzega, Hilda E. Humphreys Service Award

The Hilda E. Humphrey Service Award recognizes recognize early career teachers who have become involved in the work of the MMEA. Ann Arbor teacher Amy Sierzega (pictured with Principal Edward LaTour) has taught at Lakewood Elementary for all of her 5-year career as a music educator. She is an alumna of Michigan State University (MSU) and is currently enrolled in MSU's summer master's degree program.

Ms. Sierzega serves MMEA on both the New Directions and General Music committees, and is current president of the Michigan chapter of the Gordon Institute for Music Learning, which is a professional development organization for music educators. MMEA immediate past president Karen Salvador said, "Not only is Amy an amazing music educator, it is unusual to see someone who is already in these positions of leadership and service so early in her career. Amy is an asset to our profession."

Mike Norman and Denise Wilkinson, Awards of Merit

MMEA's Award of Merit acknowledges individuals who have given exemplary service to the MMEA and music education in Michigan. Long-time DeWitt band director Mike Norman certainly fits those criteria. Mr. Norman's colleagues must have agreed, as many of them joined us to celebrate his accomplishment (First row from left to right: Chris Pike, Caitlin McDougall, Mike Norman, Brooke Broughton; Second row left to right: Leslie Nielsen, Meghan Eldred: Third row left to right: Greg Wells, Jody McKean, Sean Wade). MMEA President-Elect Bill Vliek, who nominated Mr. Norman, wrote, "Mike has been a champion of music education for as long as I've known him. As my mentor during my student teaching, his tutelage always centered around what was best for students and how to create lifelong musicians… While he never asks for recognition, his tireless work for MMEA and music education in the state should be recognized."

Grand Ledge elementary music teacher Denise Wilkinson also received an Award of Merit. Mrs. Wilkinson (pictured with Grand Ledge colleague Cathy Fox, right and MMEA General Music Coordinator Holly Olzewski, left) currently serves as MMEA's Coordinator of Professional Development. MMEA's General Music Coordinator Holly Olszewski wrote, "Denise has been an integral part of MMEA's online presence. Her pinterest boards are extremely popular." Mrs. Wilkinson frequently writes articles and features for MMEA social media and the Michigan Music Educator. She also mentors music educators outside of the MMEA, particularly through leadership within the Mid-Michigan Orff Schulwerk Association, teaching in Olivet College's Master of Arts in Teaching program, and workshops at local and state professional development conferences. MMEA accomplishes the work of our mission, advancing music education in Michigan, only with the help of dedicated individuals like Mike Norman and Denise Wilkinson.

Paul Soma, Outstanding Administrator

The Outstanding Administrator Award is meant to recognize administrative support for music education, specifically seeking to acknowledge individuals who have demonstrated active, on-going support for balanced music programs. This year, this award went to Traverse City Area Public Schools (TCAPS) superintendent Paul Soma. Mr. Soma (pictured with TCAPS colleagues Holly Olszewski, Todd Vipond, Dave Hester, Chad Mielens, Peter Deneen, Doug Downer, and Flournoy Humphreys) will retire this year after 17 years as a school administrator, including six years as TCAPS superintendent.

"To say I am humbled by this honor is an understatement," Soma said in a TCAPS press release announcing the award. "The reality is I am fortunate to work for a school system that places a high value on music instruction, has incredibly talented staff, and intentionally works to vertically align the curriculum K-12. As a result, our students are recognized as the best of the best. It is easy to be a champion for that."

At the award reception, Mr. Soma spoke about the importance of music in education, and about the administrator's role in ensuring that all students can access music instruction at school. Mr. Soma said he led both in what he did—ensuring that music educators had the resources to do their important work, and also in what he did not do—obstruct music teaching and learning by micromanaging. Paul Soma's work as an administrator who understands the value of music education had a positive impact on teachers and students and should leave a lasting legacy for Traverse City's children and communities. The MMEA is proud to recognize such excellence.

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Multicultural Musical Role Models: Inspiring Diverse Students through Engaged Listening

Adam N. Epstein

Whether we teach general music or performing ensembles, elementary or secondary school, vocal or instrumental music, music listening is an important part of our curricula. Music listening has many clear benefits, such as hearing musical concepts in action, developing aural acuity, emotionally connecting with great music, and building aspirations for future music making. It is this last aspect that has interested me most in planning my listening selections. The more my students find personal connections with high-quality, professional-level music, the more excited they are about making music themselves. In this way, the musicians who perform the listening selections in my classroom act as musical role models for my students. This has been true at every level at which I have taught, from pre-K through grade 12.

Among Kodály educators, we often hear about presenting "masterworks" and "art music"—those pieces that we lift up as the very best, or music at its finest. However, I have some concerns about the way we represent music at its best. Specifically, I have noticed a pervasive Euro-centrism, elitism, and patriarchy in much of our "masterworks" repertoire. In researching this phenomenon, I did a survey of some popular listening curricula that are designed for general classroom use and compared the representation of cultures and genders to the demographics of my student body, shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Percentage of Races and Genders Represented

Race	E Somerville Community School Students[1]	Somerville Public Schools Students[2]	Massachusetts Public School Students[3]	U.S. Residents[4]	Composers of Music Listening Selections from Surveyed Curricula (averaged)[5]
African American	4.4	9.9	8.9	13.3	4.0
Asian	3.2	7.4	6.7	5.7	0.3
Hispanic [Latino/a]	71.3	43.0	19.4	17.8	0.9
Native American	0.0	0.0	0.2	1.3	0.0
White [European origin]	18.6	36.5	61.3	61.3	94.8
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	2.3	3.2	3.4	2.6	N/A
Gender					
Male	51.6	53.7	51.3	49.2	99.1
Female	48.4	46.3	48.7	50.8	0.9

The listening curricula surveyed clearly demonstrate a strong bias toward European classical music composed by men. There are, of course, exceptions to this in the form of specialized listening curricula that focus on other musical styles or in commercial textbook series that represent a diversity of cultures. Notwithstanding, the above data show that these listening curricula are strikingly out of step with the demographics of our schools and of our nation. While American general music educators would seem to excel at incorporating multicultural folk music material for performance repertoire, our listening repertoire sometimes feels stuck in mid-20th century Europe. The bottom line is this: I cannot in good faith lift up my own ancestral music as masterwork to the exclusion of virtually all others when there is so much high quality music of different origin that has great relevance to my student body.

This brings me to some general principles that guide my thinking about my listening curriculum:

1. Just like the folk music repertoire we choose for our student body, there should be some connection between the cultures of our students and the cultures represented in our music listening selections. Students need to see themselves in our curricula in some way.
2. In our multicultural country and global community, it is our moral imperative to teach about music from many different styles with respect for their cultures of origin and those cultures' particular standards of artistry.
3. There should be equal gender representation.
4. "If Europe had not existed between the years 1600 and 1900, there would still be music in this world" (Anonymous).

With these principles in mind, my Somerville Public Schools (SPS) colleagues and I, under the supervision of SPS Music Director Rick Saunders, have developed an alternative model for music listening, dubbed "The Musician of the Month." Since implementing this strategy, I can confidently say that it has become one of the most popular and successful elements of my curriculum, among both students, other staff, and families. The basic features of this model are as follows:

- Each month, a different composer, performer, or ensemble is featured.
- Throughout the year, different styles that exist in the American musical tapestry are explored.
- Musical styles often repeat from year to year, though the featured musicians change.
- There is an equal balance of genders, races, and cultures represented.
- There is a balance between living and deceased musicians presented.
- Special consideration is given to musicians who reach across cultural boundaries and/or who have overcome significant challenges.
- The whole school or district studies the same musician at the same time, with different listening activities modified by grade level.
- Students and families are provided with some means of engaging with the Musician of the Month at home (such as through a website or playlist).
- Students review the "Musicians of the Month" at the end of the school year and vote on their favorites.
- Music both in and out of the teacher's comfort zone is taught.

In Somerville, every student in every school, district-wide, studies the same musician at the same time. This builds a culture and excitement around that musician. Siblings, cousins, and friends connect about the musician outside of school. To plan the year of featured musicians, all the general music teachers coordinate via a Google doc, working to balance styles, genders, and cultures represented. Each of us takes charge of one month to choose a musician, develop materials, and suggest classroom listening activities for different grade levels. This allows each of us to share our expertise, and it also spreads the workload across the whole team. Table 2 shows one possible formula for a sequence of styles and a sample year of featured musicians.

Table 2: A working formula and a sample year of featured musicians

Month	Style or category	Musician (sample)
September	Latinx	Celia Cruz
October	Folk	The Chieftains
November	European classical	Yo-Yo Ma
December	Civil rights/protest music	Sweet Honey in the Rock
January	Pop	Pentatonix
February	Blues/R&B	B.B. King
March	Wildcard (based on student or teacher interest)	The Wailin' Jennys
April	Jazz	Trombone Shorty
May	Musician with special needs	Evelyn Glennie
June	Review	Vote for "Musician of the Year"

I maintain a website (tinyurl.com/escsmusic) where I include some links to music clips featured in class. I hear all the time that our students are listening at home, and some classroom teachers even play the music for the students during choice time or other appropriate moments. This independent enjoyment of this great music is the biggest indicator to me that the program is working. One parent, a professor at Harvard, wrote to me: "Every month, my son informs us who the latest 'Musician of the month' is and we've been astounded at the diversity of musicians this includes: German classical composers, African-American jazz artists, Latin singers, current a cappella groups, etc." Another parent spoke at a school committee meeting, remarking, "A few months ago, [my son] came home and told us that he had listened to the most beautiful music that made his body want to dance. He said that the music was performed by 'The Queen of Salsa' Celia Cruz. He said his ears had fallen in love that day. So we listened to Celia Cruz day in and day out. A month later, he came home and said that his ears had fallen in love yet again and this time it was with Yo-Yo Ma. He was so moved by the beauty of the cello that he spent the following month begging for cello lessons. With Mr. Epstein's guidance, we rented a cello for [my son] and enrolled him in cello lessons."

I would argue that the purpose of music education in public schools is to inspire all students to become life-long, independent music-makers. The "Musician of the Month" model is an essential component of this mission because it presents diverse music to feed the souls of students who come from many different cultures, and it provides musical role models with whom students can identify.

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[1]Data for 2016-2017 school year from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (http://profiles.doe.mass.edu, accessed 12/30/17).
[2]Ibid.
[3]Ibid.
[4]Estimates as of July 2017 from the U.S. Census Bureau (https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045217, accessed 12/30/17).
[5]General music listening curricula surveyed included: Althouse, Jay and Judy O'Reilly. *Accent on Composers.* Alfred, 2001. Burton, Leon, et al. *Adventures in Music Listening.* Alfred, 1996. Eisen, Ann, and Lamar Robertson. From *Folk Song to Masterworks.* Sneaky Snake, 2010. Gagne, Denise. *Listening Resource Kit.* Themes and Variations, 2001. Kennedy, Rosemary. Bach to Rock. Rosemary Corp, 2002.

Adam Epstein's article is reprinted with permission from the *Massachusetts Music Educators Journal*, Vol. 66, No. 3 Spring 2018.

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2018-2019
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION
DCI Event	June 21, 2018	Detroit (Ford Field)
Technology Workshop	July 31, 2018	Ann Arbor (U of M)
NAfME National Assembly	June 26-30, 2018	Tysons Corner, VA
MMEA Fall Board Meeting	September 14-15, 2018	Jackson, MI
NAfME North Central Division Meeting	September 22-23, 2018	Indianapolis, IN
General Music Fall Workshop	October 12-13, 2018	East Lansing (MSU)
Upper Peninsula Music Ed. Workshop	October 19, 2018	Marquette (NMU)
Young Singers Choral Workshops (5)		
1. Upper Central MI	November 17, 2018	East Lansing
2. West MI	November 3, 2018	Grandville
3. Upper Peninsula	November 2, 2018	Sault Sainte Marie
4. East MI	TBA	TBD
NAfME National In-Service Conf.	November 11-14, 2018	Grapevine, TX
All-National Honor Ensembles Concert	November 28, 2018	Orlando, FL
Michigan Music Conference (MMC)	January 24-26, 2019	Grand Rapids
MMEA Winter Board Meeting	January 24, 2019	Grand Rapids
Collegiate Reception	January 25, 2019	Grand Rapids
MMEA Member Social Hour	January 25, 2019	Grand Rapids
Honors Composition Concert	January 26, 2019	Grand Rapids
Collegiate Conference	February 23, 2019	Detroit (Wayne State)
Instrumental Clinics		
1. Mona Shores (Jay Boyden, host)	February 21, 2019	Mona Shores HS
2. Fowlerville (Bill Vliek, host)	March 1-2, 2019	Fowlerville HS
3. Belleville (N. Taylor & M. Campbell, hosts)	March 14-15, 2019	Belleville HS
4. Hartland (Brad Laibly, host)	March 15, 2019	Hartland HS
Elementary Honors Choir Rehearsal	March 2, 2019	TBA
Elementary Honors Choir Concert	March 16, 2019	TBA
Music Education Advocacy Day	March 27, 2019	State Capitol, Lansing
Michigan Youth Arts Festival	May 9-11, 2019	Kalamazoo (WMU)
MMEA Spring Board Meetings	May 31-June 1, 2019	Jackson, MI
NAfME National Assembly	June 17-24, 2019	Washington, D.C.
DCI Band Directors Workshops	June 20, 2019	Detroit (Ford Field)
Technology Workshop	June 26, 2019	Ann Arbor (U of M)
General Music Fall Workshop	October 18-19, 2019	Holland (Hope College)

Tips and Tricks for Beginning to Intermediate Oboe Students

Heather Winters

OBOE - the other four letter word. One that sends dread and fear down the spine of many band directors! Many music educators might have had one or two semesters of woodwind or double reed method classes in college and that was it. For such a specialized group of instruments, the double reeds need more time and attention than what most of us receive in our education training. Many times when I meet other music educators and they find out I'm an oboe player, the majority of teachers say a lot of the same thing - that they can't teach the oboe, or don't know how to teach it. As an oboe teacher for over twenty years, I see a lot of the same playing issues and bad habits that students pick up when they don't have an oboe teacher to help them get started. In this article, I would like to address some of those common issues and give some tips and tricks that have helped my students and other directors' students.

The first hurdle to becoming a successful oboe player is using the correct embouchure. Having a good embouchure can cover up a lot of other instrument or reed weaknesses, and will set the student up to be able to have a dark, characteristic sound from the beginning. I always describe the oboe embouchure as an "inverted pucker". The visual that I like to give students is a drawstring bag - something that many of them use daily and can easily visualize. I first tell students to make an "oooooh" shape with their mouth so that their lips are puckered out, with the corners coming in tightly. I then place the tip of the reed on their bottom lip, and have them roll their lips over their teeth, bringing the reed into their mouth. It is very important to keep their teeth far apart with the lips sealing around the reed, not biting down and closing off the reed. Students should also keep their chin and mouth flat and equal where one lip is not sticking out farther than the other, with the jaw "dropped" and open as much as possible. The reed should be placed so that only the tip is in the mouth with the lips on the heart, never down near the back or the threads. Another thing to note is that the reed should always be pushed in as far as it will go into the instrument, no matter what intonation issues exist. If the reed isn't pushed in all the way, the cork and metal staple of the reed will not connect to the body of the instrument and the air will not be as focused, causing intonation and sound issues. If a student is playing sharp, they can adjust their embouchure, reed, or try a different reed strength or brand. If a player loosens their embouchure, opens their jaw, and pulls the reed out of their mouth more that should bring the pitch down significantly.

Finding good quality reeds that don't break the bank is always a struggle for all double reed players. Handmade reeds are going to be significantly better in quality, sound, intonation and will last longer. Machine made reeds are inconsistent, can be unbalanced or the scraping not centered. Also the tips are usually not thin enough because they will break easier, but that will negatively affect the sound production. Good quality reeds will have three clearly defined sections: the tip, heart, and back. The heart is going to be the thickest section and where the lips should be placed. The heart is the most important section because it is going to be what determines the sound - too thin of a heart and the reed will be nasal, and can be sharp in pitch. Too thick and it will be too hard to blow and the pitch can be flat. The tip is the thinnest section, (which is why it breaks so easily) and is going to vibrate the most. The back contains two sides called windows. To help keep the tip open and to give it a darker sound, reeds should have some bark of the cane left on the sides and a slightly thicker section in the middle called a spine.

Knowing what to look for can help you select higher quality reeds that will play better and won't break as easily. Characteristics to look for in good quality reeds:

- Does the reed have three distinct and balanced sections? Can you see that the tip is the thinnest section, the heart is thicker, and that the back is slightly thinner than the heart?
- Check that there are no leaks on the sides. Are the sides open or uneven (the blades of the reed are slipped)?
- Can you see any cracks or splits? I have had many students that have bought reeds with a crack right down the middle because they didn't take the reed out of the case and check it. You can also use a light to see if there's a crack or weak spot that might cause a crack after a few uses.
- Check that the sides and different sections are not uneven. Having one side thicker or thinner than the other can cause instability, affect response, and intonation.

There are relatively easy fixes for common reed issues if you are willing to put in some time to learn how to use a reed knife and invest in a few tools. A basic student model reed knife is all that you need and only costs about $40. Add in a plaque to place between the reed blades for around $2 and that will get you started. Extremely flat reeds can be clipped at the tip, but be very careful! You can't put it back, so only clip a tiny, little sliver at a time. I prefer to use scissors instead of a cutting block to clip reeds, because I think it is easier to have control over the scissors. I got a pair of scrapbooking scissors at a craft store many years ago that have been a great investment, and they have a cover for the scissor blades. Sharp reeds are much harder to fix. You can try thinning the tip more, or lengthening the tip or back. Doing that will compromise the sound quality and give it a more nasal, thinner sound. Reeds with a small opening or not responsive can be clipped slightly or have the back thinned. Leaks can be fixed with fish skin, wax, or plumber's silicone tape. I personally use plumber's tape because it's very cheap, easy to find at any hardware store, and is very easy to use.

Another issue that many beginning students struggle with are the F-natural fingerings, and knowing which fingering is appropriate for the playing situation. Forked F is the fingering that method books teach first, but it is taught too soon and used too often. Forked F should only be used as an alternate fingering for D-natural, D-flat, E-flat, and low C-natural passages. Forked F also should not use the E-flat right pinky key, even though that is what is taught in many method books, because it makes the note very sharp. The regular F-natural fingering should always be the default F fingering. It is more stable and in tune than Forked F and has a clearer sound.

An alternate fingering for Forked F is the Left Hand F key, which is located above the left pinky keys. Unfortunately, the Left Hand F is not always included on most student level instruments. For D-flat to E-flat or low C-natural passages, students should use the left hand E-flat key, not slide their right pinky. For low C-natural to E-flat, you can also use the alternate low C "banana key" fingering, next to the right hand ring finger key. This key is also unfortunately not always included on basic student level instruments.

With these tips and tricks, you can help your students be more successful oboists. The best resource to turn to if you have additional questions would be your local oboe teacher. The reality is that if you teach in a rural area you might not have any oboe teachers in your area. Try to reach out to any colleges or universities near you, or get an oboe specialist to come to your school or district for a masterclass or clinic. Teaching our students good habits from the beginning will set the foundation for them to be strong oboe players for years to come!

Heather Winters is a professional oboe, English Horn, and flute player, and performs all over the Chicago area in bands, orchestras, churches, and musicals in addition to adjudicating for solos, large, and small ensembles. Mrs. Winters has taught private oboe and bassoon lessons and masterclasses for over 21 years and taught K-8 general music in the Chicago suburbs for over 15 years. Mrs. Winters received her Master's degree in Oboe Performance from Illinois State University and her Bachelor's degree in Music Education from Tennessee Technological University.

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Choral

Teaching Rhythm with Intention

Charles Norris

Music is comprised of—but not entirely limited to—two essential elements: rhythm and pitch. As music educators we are challenged to balance instruction of these key elements while bringing to fruition technical, musical and artistic performances. Choral music classrooms are often replete with attractive signage that reflects pitch learning tools, such as solfege, scale degree numbers and/or hand signs. Indeed, we teach pitch skills with great intention but to what degree do we consciously impart rhythm skills to our choristers? Robert Shaw noted the need for, but lack of attention to rhythm in the rehearsal of choral music (Phillips, 2015). Further, Shaw suggested that 50% of intonation problems are likely caused by issues in rhythmic accuracy and precision. Shaw maintained that elements such as blend and intonation are greatly affected by the intention with which the placement of vowels, diphthongs and consonants are rhythmically/metrically placed.

That such a revered musician and educator exalted the importance of rhythm in the preparation of choral music provides inspiration for considering what instructional factors might facilitate a keen awareness and understanding of rhythm in a choral setting—factors which may enhance not only rhythmic independence, but also increased awareness of ensemble in choral singing. From the outset, it is important to state that the choral music educator must facilitate the development of rhythmic understanding with great intention. To this end, this short essay will consider rhythmic instruction that includes 1) intentional employment of a sequential hierarchy of rhythm patterns, 2) intentional implementation of an effective counting system, 3) intentional selection of repertoire that embodies common rhythmic patterns and 4) intentional application of rhythmic understanding to enhance blend, intonation and general artistry.

Intentional choice of hierarchical sequence of rhythmic patterns

In contemplation of teaching rhythm with intention it seems appropriate to first define the rhythm content to be taught. The most commonly used music education approaches (e.g., Kodaly and Music Learning Theory) employ hierarchies of rhythm patterns that are common in all types of music. Said hierarchies, each increasingly complex, can become the rhythmic vocabulary for the learners and the content around which a choral instructor designs rehearsal plans. While the sequence of patterns in the more common methodologies are helpful, the sequence of rhythm patterns used throughout Ottman's (1967) sight singing text seem to best reflect the rhythmic content encountered of music of all genres. In all, there are 8 one-beat duple (simple) patterns and their partner "rest" patterns and 16 one-beat triple (compound) patterns and their partner "rest" patterns. Figure 1 depicts the rhythm patterns commonly found in choral literature. A quick glance reveals increasing levels of complexity as one moves across and down the page. Regardless of the choice in hierarchical rhythm content, singers should be engaged with both duple and triple patterns, starting with the simplest patterns, moving towards the more complex over time.

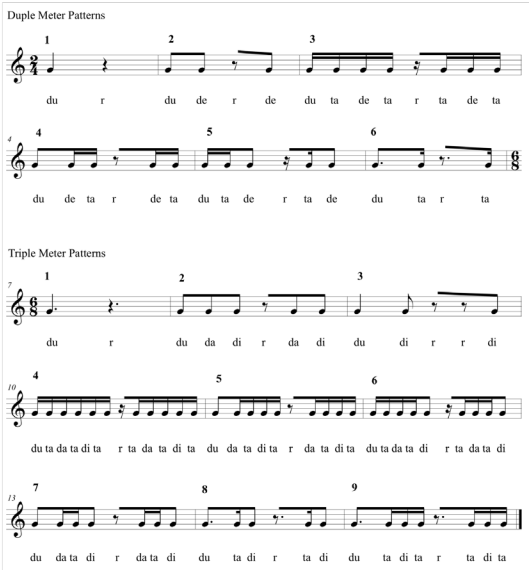

Figure 1. Sampling of hierarchy of duple (simple) and triple (compound) rhythm patterns, with verbal associations. Adapted from Ottman (1967).

Intentional use of a viable syllable (verbal association) system for counting

In order for developing musicians to independently perceive, decode and read the aforementioned rhythm patterns, it is crucial to provide the tool of verbal association. There are a variety of syllable systems to consider, but two important considerations are essential in choosing the most viable system. First of all, are there separate and distinct syllables for the primary subdivisions of duple and triple rhythm patterns? To be clear, duple patterns are those for which the macrobeats are divisible by two (such as a quarter note divided into two eighth notes) and triple patterns are those for which the macrobeats are divisible by three (a dotted quarter note divided into three eighth notes). In Figure 1 these primary subdivisions are evident in the duple patterns numbered "1" and "2" and the triple patterns numbered "1", "2" and "3". Systems that use different vowel sounds to distinguish duple vs triple patterns are quite helpful. For example, in the Music Learning Theory approach, the basic duple pattern of two eighth notes (subdividing a quarter note) is verbally associated with "du-de" while the triple pattern of three eighth notes (subdividing a dotted quarter note) is "du-da-di". Regardless of how the beat is subdivided (duple or triple) the beginning of every beat starts with "du".

A second consideration is whether the system of verbal association utilizes a consistent use of syllables for patterns that move beyond the aforementioned basic duple and triple subdivisions. Such "second-order" patterns and their syllables are contained in Figure 1, duple patterns numbered "3" through "8" and triple patterns numbered "4" through "9". While primary subdivisions should be associated with different syllables (to distinguish duple from triple), more complex second order subdivisions of the macro-beat should use the same syllables, whether duple or triple. For example, four sixteenth notes (duple pattern "3") would be read as "du ta de ta" while six sixteenth notes (triple pattern "4") would read as "du ta da ta di ta". Note that the syllable "ta" is used to represent subdivision beyond the initial duple or triple verbal patterns and their associations (quick note: "ta" is more commonly pronounced with the schwa or uh). Although beyond the scope of most choral music, an illustration of additional subdivision (8 thirty-second notes for a duple quarter note and 12 thirty second notes for a triple dotted quarter note) would be "du ka ta ka de ka ta ka" and "du ka ta ka da ka ta ka di ka ta ka", respectively. Note that the syllables in bold reflect the first consideration that duple and triple patterns have distinct/different vowel sounds. The other syllables reflect the second consideration in choosing verbal associations that afford the same syllables for further subdivision, regardless of "dupleness" or "tripleness".

Intentional selection of repertoire based on rhythm content

A rewarding aspect of teaching choral music is identifying, analyzing and preparing repertoire with themes that embody and consistently employ any one or more of the above rhythm patterns. Ideally, one focus of each school year could be sequential building of the singers' aural and visual rhythm vocabularies. For an entire three-concert cycle year, a seventh grade choir's triple meter focus could be basic subdivision and the related verbal associations for the first three triple meter patterns in Figure 1. For the first concert cycle the focus might be dotted quarter, three eighths patterns; for the middle concert cycle pattern "3" would be added as well, including eighth rest/two eighth notes (rest pattern "2"); and the final concert cycle would focus on all three patterns and their partner rest patterns (again, see Figure 1; triple patterns "1", "2" and "3").

Repertoire is of utmost importance in ensuring that students' rhythmic vocabularies grow. As an example, an excellent piece for the second concert cycle of the year is The Tiger (Porterfield, 1991; Figure 2), which aptly employs the first three patterns on the triple meter hierarchy in a regular lilting manner. Repertoire must be rehearsed using rhythmic verbal associations frequently, with special focus on new patterns. Repertoire selected with the intention of sequentially building musical vocabulary (aural and visual, rhythm and pitch) is an essential element of curricular planning. Each concert cycle might feature three foci: duple meter, triple meter and pitch.

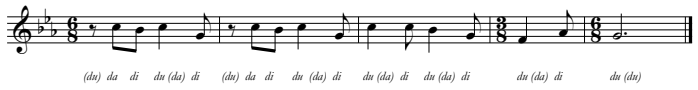

Figure 2. Principal theme from The Tiger (Porterfield, 1991).

At a more advanced level, an understanding of how the length of the beat may vary can be gleaned in The Feller from Fortune (Somers, 1978; Figure 3). This composition invokes uneven, but regular, triple-duple-duple groupings within 7-8 time (three eighth notes—quarter note—quarter note) in an opening theme that recurs throughout, albeit with some metric variation and increased subdivision of the beat). This piece offers a wealth of contexts with regards to changing length of beat (duple vs. triple) and subdivisions therein. To truly be able to audiate the rhythm of this composition, a firm grasp of triple and duple meters and their rhythm patterns is necessary as prior knowledge. A three concert cycle year with a choir of advanced understanding could focus on beat and metric irregularities in three units: 1) rhythm patterns regular complex meters (such as 5-8, 7-8), 2) irregular groupings within common meters (4-4—

triple pattern, triple pattern, duple pattern) and 3) borrowed patterns (duplets within a triple meter, for example).

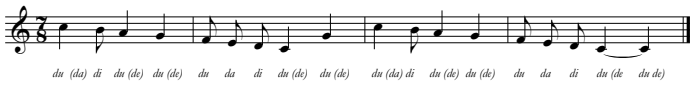

Figure 3. Principal theme from The Feller from Fortune (Somers, 1978)

Repertoire used as described above can be invaluable in developing independent rhythm skills. In tandem with studying carefully chosen pieces, students should engage in teacher generated aural exercises which require them to audiate the focus rhythm patterns (and those that come before in the chosen hierarchy) and associate them with both verbal associations and notation. Creative activities, such as short composition exercises, are also helpful in reinforcing acquisition of the rhythm vocabulary. Intentional teaching of rhythm will help singers audiate more completely with increasing skills in deciphering notation, making rehearsals move faster. Beyond the aforementioned goals of music literacy, choral singers can apply rhythmic precision to aid in establishing good choral sound.

Intentional use of rhythm to improve intonation and blend

Increasing rhythmic acuity will facilitate an ensemble's ability to execute musical nuances (and of course, execution of musical nuance can reinforce rhythmic acuity). Rhythmic audiation allows singers to not only place consonants in very specific places, but also makes tricky phrase endings tidy and completely together, all courtesy of rhythm syllables. Rhythmic counting also assists all singers to move through diphthongs together, moving from one vowel sound to the next at exactly the same time. Figure 4 illustrates how rhythmic verbal associations can be used to execute diphthongs as an ensemble. Students who can consistently audiate four sixteenth notes, can place vowels at precisely determined points to ensure optimal tuning, blend and of course, intonation. Students and conductor will also find rhythmic counting via syllables useful in placing consonants in any number of situations, such as when a phrase must be stretched to take a breath. All of these are intentional (and simple) techniques that enhance rhythmic understanding while giving singers the ability to refine intonation, blend and ensemble.

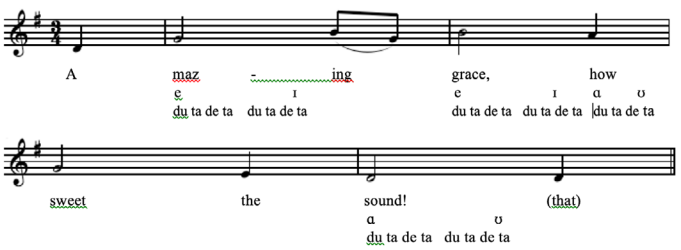

Figure 4.
Rhythmic precision in executing diphthongs (International Phonetic Alphabet) and verbal associations for rhythm).

Conclusion

Teaching rhythm with intention comes down to four things: content, method, context and application. A choral director can consciously organize instruction around music elements: in this case, a hierarchy of rhythm patterns. Simultaneously, the choral director can assign rhythm patterns their verbal associations, with which students will audiate and read music. Students will then experience select patterns in the study of exemplar pieces. Although specific instructional components may vary by conductor, two ends remain in sight—to give musical (rhythmic) independence to students and to apply said independence to artistic refinement. In the end, intentional teaching of rhythm can and should make teaching and learning more interesting, focused and enjoyable.

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School Quality Measures: Where Does Music Fit In?

Ryan Shaw

When my wife and I moved to a new city a few years ago, we considered a number of factors when figuring out where to buy a house. Like most people with kids, schools were on our mind. After speaking with people, we ended up looking at a few different neighborhoods that all had—according to some who knew the area—great elementary schools and were part of a quality school district. At one point, however, my wife stumbled upon a school ratings website and called me. She was a little bit worried, as the website said one neighborhood elementary school was a "7," while another was a "9." Should we even continue to consider the house near the "7" school, she asked.

School quality ratings are ubiquitous. Giving a school a report card rating or numerical value impacts real estate decisions, decisions about school sanctions and reconstitution, and directs the broader public's attention toward school quality in important ways. But do we really know how school quality ratings and rankings come to be? In this article, I briefly review the recent history of school ratings, discuss the myriad concerns associated with such ratings, and discuss how music is impacted. Finally, I turn an eye toward some alternative proposals for gauging school quality, and I discuss Michigan's current policies and possibilities.

Some History of School Ratings

Beginning under *No Child Left Behind* in 2001/2002, states were required to identify schools that made (or failed to make) adequate yearly progress (i.e., percent of students passing the proficiency threshold on state math and English language arts tests). In a related but distinct policy, states identified the bottom 5% of schools (termed the "Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools" or PLAS) based again on proficiency and improvement in state math and reading scores, as well as low graduation rates if applicable (Bukoski, Lewis, Carpenter, Berry, & Sanders, 2015). These schools were publicly announced as such and had to submit plans for reconstitution or turnaround.

States no longer identify PLA schools, but each state—as well as certain large school systems such as the one in New York City—has kept school ratings, often in the form of a "school report card." These report cards, especially under the law that replaced *No Child Left Behind*, known as the *Every Student Succeeds Act*, show considerable diversity of approach. Some include multiple measures of school efficacy including proficiency rates, amount of growth, gap closing (i.e., narrowing the achievement gap between racial subgroups), attendance, graduation rate, and more. Depending on the report card, there may be a summative letter grade, a certain number of "stars," or even a numerical score out of 100 possible points. Some of these systems, including Michigan's, are constantly in flux. For example, Michigan's accountability dashboard features a nuanced, multiple measures approach without a summative letter grade. But this dashboard, rolled out in early 2018, was recently replaced via new legislation at the end of 2018.

Questions and Challenges to School Ratings

There has been considerable concern about school ratings for various reasons. First, policy makers have expressed worry about what the ratings really mean: do they signal something "real" and important about school quality, or are they narrow and/or misleading? The crux of this debate centers around several factors. For one, school ratings systems are often primarily based on proficiency rates on state tests, which are highly correlated with the socio-economic status of the school population (Schneider, 2017). This casts doubt on what these ratings provide, except as a marker of wealth/poverty. Also, states set the cut points (i.e., the school ef-

fectiveness score markers) that separate an "A" school from a "B" school and so on. These calculations are essentially arbitrary and changing from year to year, making designations difficult to interpret. Finally, many of the things parents care about—social emotional school climate, richness of curriculum, access to rigorous coursework—are often excluded from school ratings, making these an arguably narrow indicator (Schneider, 2017).

Many have also questioned whether—and how—school quality ratings matter to the public, and whether schools can actually respond to low ratings. Interestingly, most parents consistently rate their own child's school highly, but are less enthusiastic about school quality in general. In a 2018 Gallup poll, 71% of respondents were completely or somewhat satisfied with their own child's school, but only 48% answered the same regarding American K-12 education in general (Brenan, 2018). This suggests that when exposed to the depth of a school's character and offerings (as a parent), people are more encouraged than they may be based on general perceptions of schooling, or on a school report card of a school they know less about (Schneider, 2017). A recent report also called into question the relevance of report cards, with 42% of parents saying they had not recently checked a school report card, and half of those respondents not knowing the report cards existed (Klein, 2018). Researchers have also looked at schools' responses to low ratings. Some research suggests that schools that are rated as very low (e.g., given an "F" grade or put on the PLA list) make slight improvements in the following year on some measures (Saw et al., 2017; Winters & Cowen, 2012). However, researchers have also found that being labeled as a failing school makes it hard to attract and retain teachers (Clotfelter, Ladd, Vigdor, & Diaz, 2004). Whatever the effect, meaningful change can be difficult, as improving test scores—the main indicator that belies most school ratings—requires increasing resources, capacity, ensuring trust among staff members, and much more (Bryk & Schneider, 2004).

The concerns abound as ratings move from state systems to private, real-estate focused sites, as illustrated in the opening paragraph. Sites like Zillow and Trulia have partnerships with GreatSchools.Org, which rates schools. Similarly, Niche.Com has a school rating formula and advertises that it provides "the best place to find your school, company, or neighborhood." But many scholars have noted that these sites make it increasingly likely to segregate schools and exacerbate inequality as those searching for homes scan for schools with certain quality ratings by using a "slider" to include or exclude schools with different numerical ratings. These ratings, of course, are based mostly on test score proficiency markers that are correlated with socio-economic status (Schneider, 2017). Put simply, "when users slide the rating bar up, toward higher scores, they often eliminate all but the wealthiest, and therefore whitest, neighborhoods and towns" (Strauss, 2017, n.p.).

What Does Music Have to Do with This?

Why should a music educator care about this? I think we can easily see several reasons for paying close attention to ratings systems. First, accountability systems since NCLB and school ratings have mostly ignored the arts, leading to a well-documented narrowing of the curriculum that squeezes time spent in music classrooms. Second, pressure to achieve school ratings (based on math/reading test scores) can combine with budget problems to mean a loss of elementary music across a district, as happened in Lansing in 2013 (see Shaw, 2018). Third, the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) has opened up opportunities for states to redesign accountability systems. Mainly, this means at least one additional indicator (besides the traditional test score proficiency/growth indicators). Thus far, 19 states have included the arts as part of their ESSA plans (Mullen & Wolff, 2018). This includes Michigan, which has included access to K-8 arts/physical education instruction as in indicator, to be measured by teacher/student ratios. And in the recent phase two rollout of the Michigan dashboard, the arts are reported on as a "point of pride" (Michigan Department of Education, 2019).

While encouraging, these inclusions of the arts in school ratings systems need to be monitored to ensure they are meaningful. For example, if a school only has music once every few weeks, taught by a classroom generalist instead of an endorsed music specialist, this may be reported as access to music, even though many music educators would likely be concerned with that designation. Similarly, districts reporting music as a "point of pride" have no specific standard for doing so, making it possible for such a report to (as in the aforementioned example) be misleading.

On a larger scale, it is important to consider alternative systems for gauging school quality. There are some compelling examples, such as the 7-district Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment (MCIEA) that started in 2014. This group's system for school quality includes multiple measures, but ones that are quite different than those used in school report card systems. The five categories include three inputs (teachers and the teaching environment, school culture, and resources) and two outcomes (academic learning, citizenship and well-being). Participation in the arts, as well as valuing of the arts, is included in this last measure. Besides the obvious difference in the scope of these measures, MCIEA aims to acknowledge that not all schools need to be the same, and that community members may want and need different things. Interestingly, when

community members were given a chance to rate unfamiliar schools using MCIEA's categories, they rated them in a much more nuanced and favorable light, suggesting that the holistic picture provided in this alternative school quality framework matters (Schneider, Jacobsen, White, & Gehlbach, 2017).

Music educators in Michigan should continue to monitor—and push for—a school quality rating system that considers and gives weight to more than just standardized test score-based measures. The state's recent ESSA plan and accountability dashboard are encouraging steps, but with the dashboard being effectively struck down in last year's lame duck session, there is work to be done. Music educators can be a leading voice in encouraging holistic, meaningful measures of school quality.

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NAfME Collegiate Updates

Grace Pawluszka

Michigan NAfME Collegiate has put in a lot of work this year to put on several successful events for NAfME Collegiate members. Our three sessions at the 2019 Michigan Music Conference were well-received and catered directly to the collegiate audience. The three sessions were titled "Student Teaching: The good, the bad, and the ugly," "Pit Orchestra 101," and "Embracing Diverse Settings." The collegiate reception was well attended Friday evening and offered an opportunity for networking with other collegiate chapters.

In March 2019, we held a Collegiate Conference at Wayne State University themed around administrative and organizational tasks of music educators. Sessions featured presentations on fundraising, copyright, library and inventories, curriculum planning, certification, and interview preparation. The conference was well attended with representation from seven of our Michigan Collegiate Chapters. In March 2019 we were proud to have three collegiate students present at Music Education Advocacy Day in Lansing, where we spoke and developed relationships with state legislators.

Elections were held at the NAfME Collegiate Reception at the 2019 Michigan Music Conference. Anthony Berardi from Wayne State University will take over as President. Lauren Hill from Western Michigan University will be President-Elect, which is a two-year position that becomes President in the second year. Amber Wyatt from Siena Heights University will be the Social Media Chair, a one-year position that facilitates the Michigan NAfME Collegiate Facebook page and other social media experiments that we choose to implement. Lastly, Peyton DeSchutter from Wayne State University will be the Membership Chair, a one-year position that handles recruitment and other membership-related tasks.

I would like to extend my gratitude to this year's collegiate board and our advisor Dr. Ashley Allen for all their hard work and dedication towards designing meaningful events for future music educators. We are looking forward to an exciting, event-filled year with the 2019-2020 NAfME collegiate board members!

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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.
2. Manuscripts should be concise, to-the-point, and well-structured. An average length for a feature article is around 2,500 words or 5 to 6 double spaced, typewritten pages in 11-point Times New Roman font. An average length for a column article is around 1,500 words, or from 4 to 5 double spaced, typewritten pages in 11-point Times New Roman font.
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 and 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. The *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 of the manuscript.
7. Include biographical information (approximately 50 words or fewer) and headshot (jpeg, gif, or tiff) for each author with the submitted manuscript.
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The *Michigan Music Educator* is published three times per year: Fall, Winter, and Spring

Research

Boys' Psychological Needs in Middle School Choral Classrooms: What Research Tells Us

Sean Grier

Introduction

Imagine the stereotypical middle school boy. You might be imagining a boy that is loud, physical, adhering to masculine norms, and detached from connection with their emotional and intellectual selves. For those of us who have taught middle school boys, we know that this description provides a narrow and superficial glimpse into what it means to be an adolescent male. In reality, middle school boys are richly complex and interesting human-beings. Many middle school boys outwardly carry themselves as robust, socially constructed versions of who they believe they should be. However, these same boys walk the halls of their schools and homes weighed down by layers of protective shells shielding them against vulnerability, insecurity, and fear. Schools, teachers, and family members are often not equipped to support middle school boys during this tumultuous time. These adults are not sure how to 'manage' boys as they grapple with the complicated nuances of who they are and who they want to become as young men. It is possible, however, to cut through the dense layers of those impervious shells and find meaningful ways to connect with and teach middle school boys. The choral music classroom might be the perfect place to do so. Middle school choral music teachers may be primed to support the cognitive, musical, emotional, and social needs of boys at the time that they need it most.

I taught middle school and high school choir for eight years at a 6-12 institution. Admittedly, during my first two years, I was driven by visions of what the high school program could be. Yet, by year three, I knew that my passion was with my middle school students, and specifically with my middle school boys. I had the fortune of teaching my seventh and eighth grade male students in single-sex ensembles separated by grade. It took me little time to realize that my investment in my middle school boys required a heightened level of planning, patience, and pedagogical experimentation. That investment also provided me with the privilege to immerse myself daily within the souls of those young men, standing alongside them as they navigated the sensitive, passionate, inquisitive, and humorous elements of their nature. Teaching toward each boy's unique individuality, while still honoring the needs of the ensemble as a whole, was both exhausting and exhilarating. I became increasingly interested in developing a better understanding of what nurtured, inspired, and motivated my male students so that I could embed those elements within my curriculum and classroom community. My goal was to understand them as individuals and as a group so that I could tailor repertoire choices, performance opportunities, and classroom management methods to meet their collective needs.

I recently turned to the literature examining middle school boys in choir to broaden my knowledge of a population and educational setting that is of monumental value. This article is designed to share relevant findings from the literature in an effort to support the work of middle school choral educators. The purpose of this literature review is to examine what motivates boys in middle school choral settings, with a focus on their psychological needs. I will examine boys' motivation through the lens of Self-Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan, 2000), which contextualizes motivation through the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs.

I will begin with an overview of Self-Determination Theory (SDT). I will then present emerging themes from the literature that (a) provide an analysis of SDT in educational settings; (b) reinforce successful middle school choral pedagogical practices; and (c) explore prevalent points of struggle and success for boys enrolled in middle school choral music. I will conclude with

suggestions for the profession. My hope is that these findings will assist middle school choral educators in reconceptualizing how they acknowledge boys' psychological needs when creating classroom spaces that empower a sense of belonging and success.

Self-Determination Theory

It is important to begin this literature review with a brief summary of Self-Determination Theory. SDT examines human motivation and personality by investigating the relationship between inherent growth tendencies, innate psychological needs, and a unified sense of self (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Evans, 2015). The propensity toward such growth and sense of self is supported through the fulfillment of three basic psychological needs: competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Evans, 2015). The need for competence relates to the desire to be effective in one's skills, abilities and interactions in the social environment (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Elliot, McGregor, & Thrash, 2004; Evans, 2015). The need for relatedness refers to the desire to connect with others in mutually beneficial ways that foster feelings of belongingness and acceptance (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Evans, 2015). The need for autonomy refers to the desire for volition and agency in the foundation of one's behavior (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Evans, 2015).

Self-Determination Theory in Classroom Settings

Research suggests that the perceived support of teachers and peers, the value of relatedness, is one of the leading motivating factors for students in classroom settings (Bourgeois & Boberg, 2016; McPherson & McCormick, 2000; Standage, et al., 2005; Wentzel, 1998). Student comfort and interest in learning is increased when the classroom environment is rooted in (a) strong elements of community, peer collaboration, and bonding; (b) effective instructional choices and delivery; and (c) the presence of a teacher who is deemed to have a positive teaching persona (Bourgeois & Boberg, 2016; McPherson & McCormick, 2000; Standage, et al., 2005; Wentzel, 1998).

Perception of individual skill and ability (competence) impacts student motivation in regard to (a) identity tied to instrument or voice part; (b) time spent studying or practicing; (c) how they approach high-stakes tests or performances; (d) levels of self-efficacy; and (e) how they emotionally and cognitively process successes and failures (Bourgeois & Boberg, 2016; McPherson & McCormick, 2000; Schatt, 2018). Teachers can help students navigate their perception of individual competence through conversations and activities focused on (a) the concept of ability; (b) the relationship between ability and practice; (c) how to study, rehearse, or practice; and (d) the management of self-efficacy within moments of success and failure (Bourgeois & Boberg, 2016; McPherson & McCormick, 2000; Schatt, 2018).

The empowerment of student agency (autonomy) in the classroom is suggested to be a leading intrinsic motivating factor for students. Student motivation is increased when students are provided the opportunity to (a) provide input; (b) make choices that impact their learning; and (c) engage in challenges that meet their individual level of development (Bourgeois & Boberg, 2016; McPherson & McCormick, 2000; Schatt, 2018; Standage, et al., 2005).

Middle School Choral Music

Research suggests that middle school choral students are best served through curriculum that is meaningful, scaffolded, and developmentally appropriate, both cognitively and physically (Freer, 2008; McClung, 2006). Students experience an increased level of comfort and success in classrooms where teachers are intentional with their use of scaffolding language in sequential units of instruction (Freer, 2008). Students function best in settings where teachers establish fair and consistent classroom management that support curricular and community goals (Freer, 2008; McClung, 2006; Parker, 2016). The cultivation and maintenance of safe and supportive learning environments is necessary to empower students to freely explore their musical, social, and emotional selves (McClung, 2006; Parker, 2016). Pedagogical choices, such as repertoire selections, voice part assignments, and decisions regarding single-sex vs. mixed-sex ensembles, should be learner-centered, as they significantly impact knowledge growth and ease within the learning environment (Freer, 2008; McClung, 2006; Parker, 2016). Generally, ensembles separated by sex are considered most beneficial for students, but the importance of assigning male singers to vocal lines appropriate to their development is critical (McClung, 2006).

Males in Middle School Choral Music

Research suggests that middle school choral educators develop an understanding of the physical and cognitive shifts that middle school boys experience due to puberty. During puberty, the lowering of testosterone impacts the voice and may influence anxiety, depression, and attention problems (Casey, Jones & Sommerville, 2010; Dahl & Peper, 2013; Freer, 2012; Van Camp, 1987). The act of singing, which at its core embodies a significant level of vulnerability and personal risk, may ignite further insecurities for boys and often manifests during voice change and repertoire exploration (Demorest, 2000; Dillworth, 2012; Leck, 2009). The uncertain and uniquely public experience of voice change, and boys' lack of control within that process, can be severe and traumatic (Adler, 2002; Leck, 2009). Boys may elect against placing themselves in situations where they face this vulnerability or are perceived as 'unmanly' due to a high or cracking voice (Leck, 2009). In terms of repertoire, much of the current middle school choral canon elicits physical strain on boys' voices as well as their disinterest or discomfort with song texts or themes (Demorest, 2000; Dillworth, 2012; Kennedy, 2002; Leck, 2009; Palkki, 2015; Ramsey, 2016). Teachers of male or male-identifying students should be vigilant in selecting repertoire and developing community practices that do not reinforce the gender binary, gender stereotypes, or narrow concepts of masculinity (Palkki, 2015).

When it comes to the reasons middle school boys love and remain in choral music, the findings are clear and concise: the main factors motivating boys in choral music center around the value of three core elements: (a) a love of singing; (b) the influence of the teacher; and (c) a sense of belonging among peers (Kennedy, 2002; Freer, 2012; Lucas, 2011; Ramsey, 2016; Sweet, 2010).

Research has suggested that successful middle school choral classrooms are built upon (a) meaningful and scaffolded curriculum; (b) fair and consistent classroom management; (c) learner-centered pedagogical choices; and (d) safe and supportive classroom environments. For middle school boys within these settings, research posits that elements such as (a) general vulnerability; (b) voice change; (c) social pressures and issues of masculinity; and (d) repertoire, pose elements of struggle. When examining elements of success for middle school boys in choir, research points to (a) a love of singing; (b) the influence of a teacher; and (c) a sense of belonging among peers within the choral community.

So, how do we frame our practice to encompass the principles of basic psychological needs in order to provide positive choral experiences for our middle school boys?

Suggestions for the Middle School Choral Music Teacher

It is likely that many of us are addressing boys' needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy in our current work. That said, my goal is to encourage us to be more intentional in how we cultivate relationships, encourage the healthy perception of skill and ability, and empower the independence of our boys within the curriculum we construct and the classroom communities we foster. I will share successful methods from my own teaching experience as well as offer additional approaches to consider.

The desire for connectivity and relatedness is perhaps the most powerful force of motivation for boys in middle school choral classrooms. The development of relationships and community was central to my own teaching practice. It was important that my boys knew they could trust me. It was important that they felt comfortable speaking with me before or after class about any aspect of their lives, knowing that I would listen and provide counsel or mentorship as best I could. In addition to the relationships I cultivated with my boys, it was important that I supported them in building authentic relationships with each other. This connectivity relied on the establishment of a classroom safe space that empowered vulnerability, risk-taking, understanding of self, and the support of others. I never shied away from putting our music aside to sit and have a 'check-in day' (as the boys called it). Full-group conversations provided me and the boys an opportunity to collectively exhale; to reflect on their experiences, each other, and the outside world. I tended to allow the boys to steer the direction of such conversations. At the beginning of the year, the boys' sharing would typically revolve around meaningful triumphs in their lives like a point scored at a sports game, a decent grade achieved on a test, or the blossoming of a new crush. However, as the year progressed and the community bonds strengthened, the boys would begin to share increasingly intuitive moments of personal struggle, sadness, achievement, and anxiety. Together, we cultivated a vulnerability-affirming safe space that produced new generations of 12, 13 and 14-year old boys who could express empathy and articulate emotion more effectively than many adults. Not surprisingly, this inward understanding and intimate connectivity with others translated to stronger musical bonds and heightened success as a choral ensemble.

Middle school choral educators can address issues related to competence with their boys in honest, productive, and sensitive ways. I attempted to provide my male students with varying opportunities to analyze and reflect upon their skills and abilities in choir. I strove to develop activities and engage boys in discussions that broadened their understanding of their own competencies and how those merged with others in the ensemble. I emphasized the idea that competence, talent, and effort were not interchangeable. I found that my boys often characterized their competence through narrow ideas of perceived ability or talent. I was diligent in deconstructing the notion that to be an effective and important member of the choral ensemble they had to be the standout vocalist or the most confident sight-reader. I strove to encourage and celebrate varying examples of my boys' competencies: from vocal and sight-reading leaders, to the boy who identifies ensemble errors, to the boy who stands in the front of the room when the class learns show choir choreography, to the boy who build-ups classmates when they are feeling down, or the boy who plans choral social gatherings. Building a classroom culture that acknowledges and honors a wide variety of boys' abilities and competencies reinforces the notion that all contributions are valued and necessary for the community to thrive.

Cultivating autonomy in a room of middle school boys is more challenging due to the ensemble-nature of our work. There are ways, however, that teachers can be creative in their efforts to provide student agency in middle school choral classrooms. The first, and perhaps most important element, is to establish a classroom climate that welcomes student input and opinion. Middle school boys know whether their feelings and opinions matter to their teacher. If teachers model genuine interest and authentic contemplation toward the curiosities, debates, and suggestions of boys, then they affirm the boys' inclination to think, speak and explore freely. I found success in creating ways to have boys rotate through autonomous activities that would provide the platform to think and make choices for themselves and the ensemble. Examples included allowing boys to: (a) lead a physical focus activity before warm-ups; (b) decide what order to sing the warm-up series; (c) listen at the front of the room and provide feedback to the ensemble; and (d) suggest repertoire for performance. These are just a few ideas to consider. Supporting autonomy and incorporating student agency into our curriculum does not require a

full turnover of creative decision-making or classroom management. Rather, we create moments of powerful learning and identity-shaping that allow our boys to execute personal choice, decision-making, and leadership.

We must honor the varied and complex spirits swirling underneath the protective shells of our middle school boy singers. They deserve our continued devotion, patience, and mentorship. We owe it to our boys to engage in thoughtful pedagogy, nuanced curriculum construction, and the creation of safe classroom environments that support their psychological needs and empower their innate individualities.

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