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The Official Journal of the Arkansas Music Educators Association
For scholarship and audition information, please visit

www.ualr.edu/music/ or call (501) 569-3294
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"Finding comfort or success in the uncomfortable." - April Shelby

"Trying something new." - Raquel Morris

"Getting different results or outcomes from new behaviors, attitudes, and or efforts." - Dr. Lindsay McCrary

“I believe it is an attempt to morph, be different, or adapt to be better (or worse).” - Cara Matthews

“Facing a fear that you know could cost you everything. Being honest about who you truly are.” - Preston Johnson

Change. To some, this word sends chills down your spine. For others, you embrace change, run with it, and see how far you go with it. Whether you feel one way or another doesn't matter, what matters is how you move forward with whatever change comes your way.

Change is never easy. We, as musicians, are innovative, creative beings. We are always ten steps ahead of the education game. We have given students the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge time and time again. So, why speak of change now? Aren't we the ones who are always at the front of the pack?

I was fortunate to attend the NAfME National Assembly this summer and was challenged and encouraged in ways I have never been before. There were several amazing presenters, but one that stuck with me the most was delivered by Dr. Connie McKoy. She spoke of change, the necessity of it, the recognition that we continue to talk about change; but questioned where are the actions taken to effect change.

Dr. McKoy’s words still resonate with me, as I'm getting my classroom, and lesson plans ready for the upcoming school year. I am making positive changes in my curriculum, my classroom environment, and a few other areas of my professional life. I’m making changes that are purposeful, planned, and looking toward the future for myself and my students.
This is going to be one of our greatest years ever for ArkMEA! I am so honored to lead this beautiful state of incredible music educators through some very positive changes.

If you haven't already noticed, our state magazine looks a little different. We have worked very hard as an ArkMEA board to bring you a brand new, fresh, and informative journal. We, as a board are extremely excited about this change, and are looking forward to bringing you great articles, great ideas, and communication throughout the year! The ArkMEA board is also looking at some other positive changes in our state. We will be working hard to continue to bring you top-notch professional development, state and national advocacy, and state-wide communication.

I'm thrilled to welcome Mrs. Katie Kuhn as the new ArkMEA Journal Editor. Katie is an exceptional writer, musician, artist, wife, and mother. She brings a fresh new outlook to the ArkMEA board, and we are very lucky to have her. Be sure to attend Katie's session at the fall conference- you could be our next published author!

Now, I leave you with this challenge, fellow music educators. Change something this year, but don't change something just to change it. Start small, perhaps a bulletin board that has been the exact same for more than 3 years. Maybe adjust a lesson plan that is a proven winner with an updated twist. Teach a song to your choir that is not currently in your library. Try a new process when you teach sight-reading. Immerse yourself in a new hobby. Whatever you decide to do, don't just dip your toes in the water. Jump head first into this upcoming school year. Let's work through change together. Remember, change is a process. Change is a personal choice. Change doesn't happen overnight. I'm asking you to take a chance.

**Be the change you want to see.**

I look forward to hearing and seeing your celebrations of change! Please share them with me and the ArkMEA board throughout this year. Have a great start to your fall semester. I'll see you all in Hot Springs in November!
As we all start a new school year, I am happy to report that ArkMEA is in good shape financially. We will continue to be able to bring high quality professional development to our state, and provide leadership, communication, and advocacy to the music educators of our state. If anyone is interested in the details, please feel free to contact me. It has been my experience that most of us are not really interested in all the numbers, but just want to know that the organization is financially solid.

Looking to the Fall Conference, I wanted to make a few points about registering, purchase orders, and payments. Teacher registration for the conference is handled by the Hot Springs Convention Center. There will be a link on the ArkMEA website to register online, or to print out the registration invoice and mail it in.

- The most important thing for every teacher to do is to keep a copy of your registration invoice! Many of you turn this in to a secretary or business office, but it is so crucial that you keep a copy for yourself. The registration is the invoice, so if there is a problem at the conference or with the payment, you have a copy to show.
- Student registration for the chorus and orchestras are handled through ArkMEA and ASTA-Arkansas. Please carefully read the instructions on the student registration to see where to mail those.
- If you pay your ArkMEA/NAfME dues at the same time as you register for the conference, it may be a while before that is posted to the national office. Especially if you pay by credit card or purchase order, those dues are not actually paid to NAfME until the money is received by ArkMEA. It could be as late as the end of December when that occurs.
- Purchase orders that are not paid before the conference need to be paid directly to me. I usually send out emails to those not paid by the end of the year with specific instructions. If they are mailed to the Convention Center in December or January, sometimes they get lost.

Any time that you have a financial question, please feel free to contact me. My email address is jareehall@arkmea.org and I will respond to you.

See you in November!
The One Thing Every New Music Teacher Should Know
(And a Few Other Considerations for First-Year Teachers)

NAfME Member Audrey Carballo

According to Wikipedia, *Tempus fugit* is a Latin phrase, usually translated into English as “time flies.” The expression comes from Virgil’s Georgics. The phrase is expressed as a proverb that means “time’s a-wasting.” *Tempus fugit*, however, is typically employed as an admonition against sloth and procrastination, much like *carpe diem*—Seize the Day!

**Pieces of the Puzzle**

As I was thinking of the one pearl of wisdom I could give a new music teacher, I couldn’t decide between time management and organizational priorities. Tied for the number one spot, they both go hand-in-hand and are equally critical as stand-alone components.

For a new music teacher, there is no downtime. You hit the ground running, and you don’t stop until the last box is packed away in June. In addition to your expected teaching duties, you are frequently asked to provide entertainment or shows, often with little to no notice. These “little” extras (which are above and beyond your teaching contract) can mount up to a whole lotta work over the course of a school year.

Many new teachers find out they are employed within just a few days of the school year starting. This is where your organizational skills come into focus. You must bring order to chaos. There is a real threat of burnout in the first year simply because there is just too much to do and not enough hours in the day to do it all. What you don’t realize is: Not everything has to be done all before Labor Day! Yes—there are a few key pieces which must be put into place by certain dates but other than that, relax. Take a deep breath. Calm down. It will all get done. Just like a recipe, you gather all your ingredients—one by one—and add them in their own sequence. Try to add them all at once, and the dish is a failure.

Take your time. In this case, patience is your best friend. No need to feel anxious because your bulletin boards aren’t done the first day of school. You have other priorities.

**Your Checklist**

Larger schools may have more than one music teacher. In smaller populations, you might be the king of your castle. In either case, as a newbie, seek out the most veteran teachers in the school. Seek out your music supervisor or music manager in your district. Ask them what the first things they do are. I’ll bet they will tell you to make sure these things are in place:
Make sure you have a schedule of classes that includes room numbers, telephone extensions, and grade levels for each teacher’s name. If it’s a work in progress, try to get administration to nail it down as soon as possible. You are responsible for lesson plans for the classes on your schedule. If you are on a cart, survey the area and do a quick inventory of what you think you’ll need for the first few weeks. CD/DVD player, portable keyboard, extension cords, a cart for upstairs and one for downstairs? How do you service those classes in portable classrooms? Are you going to travel between schools? Are you allowed to take materials from one school to another? Ask, Ask, ASK!! If you’re lucky enough to have a room, ask the office if you can have some supplies, i.e., class set of pencils, paper, dry erase markers, erasers, etc. See if the computer in your room works. If anything isn’t functioning, notify the office to put in a work order. Set up 2-3 weeks’ worth of plans for the first weeks of school. Getting to know you activities, basic music assessments, singing activities, band/chorus/orchestra auditions . . . I have a check-off lesson plan—makes my life so much simpler than having to write everything week after week. Many schools have a very early back-to-school night. Not to worry. Be there to answer questions the parents have. What their child needs for the school year—a music folder, a recorder, their band or orchestra instrument with them, any after-school rehearsals. Have your contact information readily available in case they need to get in touch with you. Consider making very cheap business cards.

**Organization and Time Management**

Now, you’re organized. But wait! Don't think that organization only happens once and never again. Organization is a marriage. It is a constant dance consisting of the necessary and the priorities. This is where time management comes into play.

One of the most important things I ever learned about time management was that time can be used, even in small increments. I used to think that if I had a large project to do, I needed to set aside a huge chunk of time to devote to it. WRONG! Every job can be broken down to smaller, more manageable pieces. I figured out I did not need three hours to do my lesson plans for the entire week. I needed 10-15 minutes here and there. I would do one grade level at a time, and before I knew it, they were done—in less time than I had thought they would take! Planning field trips, performances and such are extremely time-consuming and have so many different parts. Mobilize the parents who want to help. Figure out which planning parts they are able to help with. Delegate! There is no shame in allowing others to help us. We often manage in excess of 300, 400, and 500+ students. Why shouldn’t we allow ourselves the chance for some assistance?

Apps like Dropbox and other teacher-friendly cloud apps are invaluable. I can sit at a doctor’s appointment, waiting to be seen and be able to jot down my ideas for next week’s lessons. Hit save and BAM! Done! Instead of sitting there, reading a magazine from seven months ago, wasting my time—I could put that 20 minutes to good use. There are many other time management life-savers. Applications like Edmodo, TeacherWeb, or any other teacher sites that allow you to host your own materials are amazing.

You don’t have to keep reinventing the wheel. Don’t make more work for yourself. Try creating a check-off lesson plan for yourself. There are templates on the web as well. Start with one of those, and modify it to suit your needs. You will save yourself hours of writing. Host your project/homework assignments/rehearsal schedules on a teacher website.
*The One Thing You Should Know*

The last, and most important thing I want to tell new teachers (and some of us veteran teachers) is take time for yourself.

You are the driving force behind everything that happens in your classroom. Students, colleagues, parents, and administrators all look to you for your expertise and guidance. Most don’t have a clue as to how much work it takes to do what we do day after day, week after week and still find the time to produce superior bands, orchestras, choruses, and every class and other ensemble we create and nurture.

You are amazing! Take a moment to celebrate all that you do. *Tempus fugit!*

Reprinted with permission from National Association for Music Education (NAfME). The original article published on May 25, 2017 can be found at [https://nafme.org/one-thing-every-new-music-teacher-know/](https://nafme.org/one-thing-every-new-music-teacher-know/)

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Audrey Carballo, a 35-year NAfME member, is in her 35th year as a music educator for the Miami-Dade County Public Schools system, the fourth largest school system in the country. Her teaching experiences include general music, exploratory music, and chorus to regular and exceptional students in elementary, middle school, high school, and exceptional student settings.

She has been an Assessor for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and currently serves on the National Education Association Member Advisory Board Panel and as the Union Steward and Chairperson of the Educational Excellence School Advisory Board Council at her school. Recently, Audrey was the Children’s Choir Director for the Miami Music Project, which is an El Sistema program spearheaded by the world renowned conductor, James Judd.

One of her most rewarding experiences has been with the Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired. In addition to teaching Broadcast Journalism classes, and giving private lessons in voice, composition, theory and piano, her duties included being the Vocal and Advanced Theory instructor for their Better Chance Music Production Program. Audrey was one of the co-authors of an article published in the Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness titled, “A New Synthesis of Sound and Tactile Music Code Instruction: Implementation Issues of a Pilot Online Braille Music Curriculum.”

Audrey collaborated with Jin Ho Choi (another instructor at the Lighthouse) for nine months, creating their Braille Music Distance Learning course.

Follow Audrey on Twitter @scarlettfeenix.
Wait! Wait!  

Trey Reely

I've put off finishing this article long enough. Here are a few things I have done during the two hours while this unfinished column languished on my computer desktop: Watched an episode of the Andy Griffith show, went to the kitchen three separate times to snack on pecans or cherry tomatoes, surfed Facebook, put all my freshly washed clothes in drawers or on hangers, jotted down some ideas for next years marching show, did some writing on other topics, and completed several other tasks. I did get lot done, just not what needed to be done the most.

Unfortunately, my tendency to procrastinate extends into other areas of my work-life. I know this may come as a shock to some, but I must be candid here. I sometimes have a hard sitting down and studying my scores for rehearsal. Even as I sit here typing this, I only have to look six inches in front of me to see the scores I must study before I return to school tomorrow. The marking pens and highlighters have been sitting on them the whole weekend, gathering a microscopic layer of dust.

It's comforting to know that I am not alone. In fact, I have some brilliant company. Mozart wrote the overture for Don Giovanni in a single night—the night before the opera's debut. Apparently Mozart could compose entire symphonies in his mind, often while playing billiards, and at times he didn't put pen to paper until he'd completed the entire piece in his head. At Don Giovanni's premiere, the ink on the overture's sheet music was still wet from its last-minute copying.

I'm not sure what to do about my tendency to procrastinate; I've considered doing something about it for a long time. Some say that Victor Hugo, the great French novelist of Les Miserables would strip naked in his study and give his clothes to his valet and tell him not to return until the appointed hour. That might work, but it gets awful cold here in Arkansas. In some ways, I'm not sure I need to do anything about it at all. In fact, there is good reason to embrace it. Some professions thrive on being procrastinators. General contractors and subcontractors have it down to an art form. We have a new fine arts facility being built right now, and if I structured my week like theirs, it would look like this:

Monday: Go to my office and lay out all of my work. Leave.
Tuesday: Go to my office and make sure nothing has moved. Maybe stick a little flag in pencil holder. Leave.
Wednesday: If it rains, I'm staying home.
Thursday: Rearrange papers on my desk. Leave.
Friday: Work a little. Leave early since it's Friday.
Now that I think about it, procrastinating can really have many advantages. For one thing, it can be a major time-saver. A couple of years ago, my assistant director and I were a part of a newly revised state mentoring program. We were asked to jump through dozens of convoluted and time-consuming educational hoops with a website harder to navigate than the Everglades. Since we were in the middle of marching season, we put it off. Good thing we did. Since there were so many complaints from other mentors and mentees across the state, the requirements were greatly reduced by the time we got around to doing it in April.

Procrastination can really come in handy when a new educational fad is implemented in your district. If you time it just right, the fad may be over before you do anything. Several years ago, portfolios were all the rage. Basically, we were expected to keep a folio on each of our students, a task I found ridiculous for a band program our size. I suspected the faculty member put in charge of accountability on this dreadful project was not one who could handle the task. However, my younger assistant very diligently tried to put something together for all of his students while I did nothing. As I suspected, the whole portfolio thing died without so much as a diminuendo sometime before the year was out. What would I have done if the portfolio rage had survived? I'm not sure; that was a bridge I never had to cross. As it was, I felt the thrill of being a wise rebel.

You can also learn from the mistakes of eager beavers. This works particularly good with technology. While others spend hours clicking and cursing while trying to figure out some new software program, I wait until all the problems have been solved before beginning my work. You're letting others more suited for the task accomplish it. They feel good. You feel good. Everybody wins.

Admittedly, procrastination can cause a lot of stress as a deadline nears, but look at the big picture. Procrastination crams all the unpleasantness of a task into a smaller time frame and allows you to enjoy a large chunk of your time. Putting things off allows your subconscious to work, allowing a better idea to be born and grow. The idea, coming at the last minute, is fresh. In today's fast-moving world, great ideas can be outdated almost as soon as they are presented; one might as well wait.

Procrastination can lead to peak performances from the realization that much is at stake and matters must be taken care of immediately. It forces you to keep things efficient and simple, but with the increased creativity required by the situation. It's like the thrill of a quarterback leading his team to victory in a precisely played two-minute drill with a trick play added for kicks. Procrastination adds a refreshing air of spontaneity to your life. Your significant other may even find this spontaneity romantic. (My wife loves spontaneity, but she's inconsistent. She's thrilled with a last-minute picnic, but not when I decide to mow foot-high grass in the dark.)

Despite the virtues of procrastination, there is a time when a task, no how disagreeable, must be done. Since I am a musician, maybe I can find a music play-list online that will get
me pumped up and ready to accomplish any task. I think I'll google some things and see what I can find--tomorrow.

2017 National In-Service Music Education Conference

As one of the world's largest arts education organizations, the National Association for Music Education is the only association that addresses all aspects of music education. NAfME advocates at every level while providing professional resources for teachers, parents, and administrators. The NAfME National Conference is the only music education conference where you can connect and collaborate with music educators from all over the world.

Join us as NAfME returns to Dallas to host the 5th annual National In-Service Music Education Conference filled with practical teaching methods, creative techniques, exciting events, and the ability to earn up to 17 hours of professional development recognition!

NAfME is excited to offer four micro-credentials at the 2017 National In-Service Conference, which you can use in your resume and annual review.
We have some exciting changes coming to ArkMEA's conference this year. In years past the fall conference occurred on the first Thursday and Friday of November. This year, the conference will be Friday and Saturday, November 3-4th. So, go right now and save the date, or better yet, go to www.arkmea.org and register to attend!

We have many new exciting additions coming to the conference year. Friday night will now not only host the Jam Session, but it will also play host to our new Exhibitor’s Night. Exhibitor’s Night gives participants the opportunity to fully experience the vendors without the fear of missing an outstanding session. This is the perfect time to browse, purchase, and talk to vendors!

Come prepared with your shopping list, curriculum questions and POs, that way you aren't furiously calling school to receive a PO Friday afternoon. The Exhibitor’s Night will conclude with our traditional Jam Session, which this year will be led by Michelle Quigg and James Mader. Michelle and James are both World Music Drumming faculty and are sure to bring a great dancing twist to this year’s jam session. Please check our website as we get closer to the conference date for further information of Exhibitor’s Night.

This year’s conference has some exciting featured presenters. President of NAfME, Denese Odegaard, will be giving a thought provoking keynote, “Reaching all Students” to open our conference Friday morning. Dr. Brandon Robinson of Wake Forest University will be giving the keynote address Saturday morning. We are also thrilled to have Emily Crocker, Michelle Quigg, and James Mader presenting their expertise at this year’s conference.

On behalf of the ArkMEA board, we hope to see you at this year’s MEA fall conference: Music-You Belong!
Welcome back all of you wonderful music specialist in our great state! I hope you are gearing up for another exciting year of changing lives through our profession. I hope you consider including these musical experiences this year for your students.

First off, I encourage you to participate and bring your best singers to this year’s ArkMEA Children’s Festival Chorus on November 4th. The chorus is specifically for outstanding singers in grades 4-5-6. I am pleased to announce that our director is Emily Crocker. Ms. Crocker is the founder and artistic director of the Milwaukee Children's Choir is recognized nationally as a leading expert in children's choirs. The Milwaukee Children's Choir has received acclaim for performances with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, the Milwaukee Chamber Orchestra, the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra, the American Choral Directors Association, the Chiba People's Festival in Japan and the Canterbury (England) International Children's Choir Festival.

As a composer, Ms. Crocker's works have been performed around the world and she has received ASCAP awards for concert music since 1986. She is well known for her work in developing choral instructional materials and is an author of Experiencing Choral Music, choral textbook series for grades 6-12, published by McGraw-Hill/Glencoe. As a guest conductor, she led the Midwinter Children's Choral Festival in Carnegie Hall in 1999 and 2001 and has conducted the Milwaukee Symphony Pops Orchestra and the Milwaukee Chamber Orchestra in performances with the Milwaukee Children's Choir. In 2002 she was awarded the Excellence in Youth Music award from the Civic Music Association of Milwaukee.

In 1989, after a 15 year teaching career in her native Texas, she joined the music publishing industry and is now Vice President of Choral Publications for Hal Leonard Corporation in Milwaukee.

**Here are the particulars of the schedule:**
- The choir begins rehearsals bright and early at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, November 4th, which will culminate in a spectacular performance at 4:30 p.m. that same afternoon. (They share the concert time with the youth orchestra, so it rounds out quite nicely!)
- Be sure to enlist a great chaperone so you'll be free to attend conference sessions.
- You'll enjoy the same lunch hour as your students
- Singers will be given time to change into concert attire.

Enrollment is first come, first served, so don't delay! (Start buttering up your administration and parents now for their moral and financial support.) Each teacher may
bring up to 10 students, with the registration closing when the choir reaches 200 members. If we do not reach 200, those schools who have already registered may bring more students. Cost is $20 per student. Other costs may include mileage, hotel, and student meals, depending on your distance from Hot Springs. Be sure to consider your school's pace in processing leave requests, field trip requests, purchase orders, and writing checks.

Singers are expected to have their music memorized for the performance. *I can't stress enough* how important it is that you divide your singers evenly into two groups and teach them Part 1 and Part 2, which ensures that we have a balanced choir! Singers should bring their ORIGINAL music (no copies will be allowed) and a pencil in a binder or folder for rehearsals, as well as a water bottle. Music is available for purchase at J & B Music Sales by calling 479-890-6149, or you can visit their web site at www.jandbmusicsales.com. Practice recordings for learning parts will be available on the ArkMEA website by mid-September.

Concert attire should be comfortable dress clothes in black with sensible shoes.

Secondly, this year's Arkansas Music In Our School's Month Concerts are on March 14th and 15th. This is a wonderful experience for your school choir or instrumental ensemble. The music will be available for you to start right after Christmas break.

These are such fun, memorable events for singers, one that hopefully will be the first of many choir trips. If you've never taken students on a major field trip, these opportunities are great ones to start with!
2017 Children’s Festival Chorus  
Sponsored by Arkansas Music Educators Association (ArkMEA)  
Hot Springs Convention Center - Saturday, November 4, 2017

*Please print this form. Each school may bring up to 10 students (grades 4-6).*

Please teach half of your students voice part 1, and half of your students voice part 2, to ensure a balanced choir.

*Registration will be closed when the chorus reaches 200 students.*

*The students’ director must be a member of the National Association for Music Education.*

<table>
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*Character Recommendation: These students have demonstrated outstanding musical ability, and the focus and exemplary behavior needed to represent his/her school in the 2017 ArkMEA Festival Chorus.*

Teacher’s Signature________________________________________
Present this invoice to your school for pre-payment if you use a purchase order. A copy of the PO must accompany this registration.

**Do NOT send TEACHER registration with this invoice. A separate invoice is available online at ArkMEA.org.**

Name of School____________________________________

Director’s/Teacher’s Name __________________________ Mbr. # __________________

Home Address ______________________________________

Phone# ________________________Preferred Phone# ______________________

E-mail ____________________________

Please return this invoice and your check payable to ArkMEA to the address listed below:

Jaree Hall
249 Sullivan Rd.
Nashville, AR 71852

The DEADLINE for getting names on the program is OCTOBER 11, 2017.

For additional information contact Bart Dooley at: dooleyb@conwayschools.net

**PLEASE NOTE:** Student performance will be MEMORIZED. Students should bring their original music to rehearsals but will NOT be allowed to use it during the performance. Please prepare your students ahead of time to perform from memory. Concert attire is dress clothes in black with sensible shoes.
2018 ArkMEA Capitol Concerts
Wednesday, March 14 & Thursday, March 15, 2018

MIOSM Participation Application

Please type or print all information legibly. Application deadline is February 16, 2018.

Please send your application to: Bart Dooley
19 Deerwood Drive
Conway, AR 72034
dooleyb@conwayschools.net

Date________________

Director’s NAfME Member Number: _________

School name ___________________________ School address ___________________________
City________________________ Zip_________ Phone _______________ Fax_________________ 

Name of group(s) (for certificate):

____________________________________________ 

____________________________________________ 

Type of ensemble(s)

____________________________________________

(chorus, woodwinds, strings, Orff ensemble, etc.)

Grade Level(s) ___________ Number of performers _____

Director’s name ___________________________ Home address__________________________
City ___________________________ State _____ Zip ____________
(H) Phone ___________ (W) Phone ___________ (Cell) Phone ___________

Email ____________________________

Please circle which day you wish to attend: March 14th March 15th

Are you interested in your ensemble performing alone? Yes No

Has your school participated in the Capitol Concerts before? Yes No; When? __________

______________________________ ___________________________
Director’s signature Administrator’s signature

The following conditions apply:

The Director must be a member of NAfME/Arkansas Music Educators Association (ArkMEA). The selection of participating ensembles will be the responsibility of the MIOSM committee. Priority will be given to schools that have not previously participated. The repertoire will be selected from the 2018 The Concert for MIOSM music. Accompaniment for the mass chorus will be provided by the rehearsal CD. All travel expenses are the responsibility of the school. Student behavior and discipline must be exemplary. Due to volume restrictions by the Capitol staff, brass ensembles are discouraged. A piano and/or CD player will be provided for accompanying featured ensembles.
Digital Audio: What Happens When You Click Record or Play?

Carrie Martens- ArkMEA Technology Chair

As both a music consumer and a music educator, you most likely interact with digital audio in some capacity each day. Whether you are recording your students using a hand-held recorder, making recordings available for your students to download, listening to your personal music files while you exercise, streaming audio content through your smart TV as you prepare dinner, choosing your favorite ringtone and notification sounds, or even using voice recognition software like Siri® to get hands-free directions when you are driving to an out-of-state music conference, digital audio and its multiple applications are integral conveniences in our lives.

During the late twentieth century, digital audio slowly began to replace analog audio recording technologies (vinyl records, cassette tapes), and recorded sound became more efficient to capture, store, edit, and distribute (Bauer, 2014). As you will read below, even though analog recordings are no longer commonly used, analog signals are still involved in all processes of sound recording and sound amplification.

Since we all have convenient and affordable access to digital audio recording technology using our computer, phone, tablet, hand-held recorder, or more specialized recording tools, I thought this article could be a format for us to develop or refresh our understanding of the basic processes of capturing sound as digital audio and reproducing digital audio as sound.

Click Record: Capturing Sound as Digital Audio

To explore how sound is recorded and stored as digital audio, we start with the sound source or sound signal we want to capture. Whether you are recording a single vocalist or an entire concert band, the vibrations produced by your target sound source cause the air particles around it to be displaced in patterns we refer to as sound waves. Each of the numerous sound waves produced from your sound source’s vibrations has specific properties of frequency (pitch) and amplitude (strength or loudness) that, when heard in combination with the other sound waves, contribute to how we perceive the overall sound source with regard to pitch, volume, and timbre. To capture these sound waves and their unique properties, the waves must be picked up by a microphone.
A microphone's ability to capture sound waves and their nuanced properties is affected by the type of microphone, its specific pick-up pattern, its quality and build, its physical placement in relation to the sound source, as well as the recording environment. Whether you are using your phone's built-in microphone, an affordable USB microphone, or a more expensive high-quality microphone, once sound waves are picked up, the microphone serves a single purpose: to convert the acoustic sound signal into an analog electrical signal (Hosken, 2015). Following conversion, the signal is no longer sound waves (changes in air pressure) but is instead changes in electrical voltage that reflect the original sound source. The analog electrical signal that is then sent to other hardware via cables, is analogous or comparable to the original acoustic signal. This acoustic-to-electric signal conversion takes place any time you use a microphone.

Next, the analog electrical signal is typically amplified by going through a pre-amplifier which helps make the signal large enough to be easily converted to a digital signal (Hosken, 2015). Following amplification, the analog electrical signal is converted to a digital signal by an analog to digital converter, or ADC. The ADC, along with the pre-amplifier, are rarely stand-alone devices but rather are commonly built into other hardware. For example, if you are using a USB microphone, the ADC is built into the microphone itself. If you are using a high-quality microphone that does not use computer-compatible outputs, the ADC is built into a separate audio interface. The sound cards in your computer, phone, or tablet all have built-in ADCs to perform this signal conversion when using the internal microphones in these devices. I think of the analog-to-digital conversion process as happening “behind the curtain” because we rarely see or think about the hardware involved.

The ADC converts the analog electrical signal into bits or the binary characters of the computer language alphabet (1’s and 0’s). The conversion digitizes the analog electrical signal by generating a sequence of 1’s and 0’s that represent it. During the digital conversion, there are two components of the ADC that determine how the signal is converted: sampling rate and bit resolution. If the ADC were to digitize every nanosecond of the continuous analog electrical signal, the resultant digital audio file would be too large to store, edit, duplicate, and easily distribute. Instead, the ADC samples the analog electrical signal thousands of times per second. The standard CD-quality sampling rate is 44,100 samples per second (44.1kHz). For each sample the ADC measures from the analog electrical signal, the bit resolution (bit depth) refers to the number of binary characters generated to represent that sample. CD-quality bit resolution is 16 bits. Therefore, if you are recording digital audio using CD-quality settings (44.1 kHz sampling rate and 16-bit
resolution) the ADC would generate 705,600 binary characters to represent each individual second of the recording. A recording’s sampling rate and bit resolution determine the amount of digital data generated; therefore, both aspects impact the quality of the recording. While higher sampling rates and bit resolutions mean more data and, in theory, higher quality recordings, industry professionals continue to debate the justification for generating more data that may represent frequencies that are not within the range of human hearing (Hosken, 2015).

**Click Play: Reproducing Digital Audio as Sound**

Once the signal from captured sound is digitized, the data is stored as a digital audio file. Digital audio files can be conveniently stored in your device’s internal hard drive, an external hard drive, a USB drive, a CD-ROM, or your preferred cloud-based storage application. You have most likely encountered multiple digital audio file formats (WAV, AIFF, MP3, ACC, WMA, etc.). The differences between these file types as well as the advantages and disadvantages of each will be explored in my upcoming article in the May 2018 issue of *ArkMEA Journal*.

Regardless of its file format, a digital audio file consists of sequences of binary data that represent sounds that were previously created and recorded. In order for digital audio to be reproduced as physical sound waves, the digital signal must progress through conversion processes that are similar to the steps involved in recording digital audio. When you open a digital audio file and click play, its binary sequences are sent through a *digital to analog converter*, or a DAC. As with the analog to digital converter, (ADC) the DAC is built into the sound card of any device with playback capabilities (phone, tablet, computer, CD player). The DAC converts the binary sequences of the digital audio file back into an analog electrical signal. Next the analog electrical signal is sent to speakers or earbuds where its changes in voltage cause the magnets and diaphragms within the speakers to vibrate. These specific vibrations create physical sound waves by displacing the air particles around the speaker. Once the sound waves reach the listener’s ears, the digital audio recording and playback processes have come full circle.
Click Pause: Understanding Every-Day Technology Tools

Knowledge of the technology and basic processes involved in creating, storing, editing, and reproducing digital audio is not required for you to use digital audio to enhance your music instruction and make your life more efficient and enjoyable. In fact, our every-day lives are fully integrated with technological devices, programs, and processes which we often have little to no understanding of how they function thanks to consumer-driven and user-friendly designs. However, I believe that each of us can benefit from expanding our knowledge of the technologies that are integral to the music industry and music education. Each year, I encourage you to select one technology tool related to your music instruction to research and explore with the goal of developing a more thorough understanding of how it functions. The time you invest in gaining this knowledge will be reciprocated with not only your ability to problem solve if and when errors occur, but also with your ability to integrate the technology in the most efficient and beneficial format for your individual students and classroom instruction.


Including Students with Autism in Secondary Performance-Based Classes: Benefits and Strategies

Marie Erickson

Autism Spectrum Disorder – or ASD – is a spectrum disorder that affects the way a person is able to communicate and interact with others, characterized by challenges with social interaction, communication, and repetitive behaviors. The level of severity of the disorder varies because it is a spectrum, so no two people with autism are the same. Over the last ten years, identification has increased from 1 in every 150 children to 1 in 68. Because of its increasing prevalence, it is important that all teachers consider options for including students with ASD in their classes. This includes performance-based, secondary music classes, such as band, choir, and orchestra. While students with ASD are typically able to participate in general or elementary music classes, by the time they reach secondary school, they (or their parents) are often not encouraged to participate with more advanced music classes. Even if they are allowed into the ensemble, their participation is oftentimes less meaningful than it should be. Teachers need to be educated on how to instruct students with ASD in their ensembles so they feel more comfortable having those students in class and helping them participate and learn in a meaningful way. The purpose of this article is to equip music teachers with several strategies for including students with ASD in their ensembles, as well as to provide a sample lesson plan that demonstrates how those strategies may be applied in a typical classroom.

Benefits of Inclusion

It is important to offer music classes to all students because learning to play an instrument (or sing) and creating music in an ensemble is a unique human experience that every student should have. For students with ASD, performance-based classes can be even more beneficial. According to numerous studies, it was found that students with ASD who participate in music ensembles often develop better social skills and communication skills, two domains in which those with ASD often struggle.

People with ASD may also experience difficulties with eye contact, difficulty with joint attention, and difficulty with peer relationships and friendships. Music ensembles provide a perfect opportunity to address these challenges. Responding to eye contact can be very difficult for students with ASD, but it is also one of the primary methods for communication within an ensemble. By encouraging students with ASD to participate in performing ensembles, they will eventually begin to become more comfortable responding to eye contact, understanding that it is an important part of their success in the ensemble. Joint attention is the ability to pay attention to more than one event at a time. Students with ASD typically do not show interest in what is happening around them
in their classes. Music classes are an excellent place for students with ASD to begin developing their joint attention because many music related skills, such as playing an instrument and watching the director, require both joint attention and collaboration. Furthermore, social skills and peer friendships can be developed in performance-based settings. Often, students in these groups are together for many more hours than required for a typical class, due to after school practices, competitions, and concerts. This leads to a unique social culture in which even students with ASD, who normally struggle with social skills, can participate.

**Strategies for Successful Inclusion**

One of the most significant concerns of teachers preparing to include students with ASD in their classes is that they do not feel entirely prepared to teach those students. Many undergraduate music education programs, for example, only require a single class on teaching students with special needs. Such a class is often very broad in focus, covering students with cognitive and physical disabilities, students from poverty, students who are gifted, and more. There is a lot of material to cover in a single class and little time is spent on any single topic. Additionally, these courses usually focus on general education, rather than music, specifically, which leaves music teachers without recommendations tailored to music classes.

The strategies listed in this article have been gathered through research and a survey of Arkansas public school music teachers. The most effective strategies listed were:

1) **Small group or partner work,**

2) **Using written instructions in addition to verbal**

3) **Frequent communication with a parent or guardian**

4) **Following adaptation plans** (described below)

5) **Finding what students enjoy and incorporating it into the lesson,**

6) **Teaching by rote,**

7) **Using separate materials (oversized, color coded, etc.).**

8) **Providing opportunities for peer interaction or group work** was the most frequently stated and successful strategy. Allowing students to work in small groups, or with stand partners, is a good start for persuading the student with ASD to begin interacting with others.

Adaptations are techniques to change or enhance a lesson such that all students can complete the objective of the lesson. Adaptations should ideally be used in each lesson.
The four primary categories of adaptations are color, size, pacing, and modality. Color adaptations use color to help the student. This could be color coding finger charts or notes or printing music on colored paper. Size adaptations include enlarging music, or using a projector. Pacing adaptations allow students to work at their own pace and include modifications, such as rewriting parts to match a student’s ability level. Modality adaptations can be aural, visual or kinesthetic. These adaptations are useful not only for students with ASD, but for all students, as they present the material in different ways and allow students multiple ways to demonstrate knowledge or skill.

**Sample Lesson Plan**

This is an example lesson plan focused on teaching dotted quarter notes for a beginning flute class. It could, however, be modified for any similar beginning instrument or vocal class. This plan includes adaptations for a hypothetical student with ASD who is higher functioning and verbal, but struggles with communication and social skills.

Modality adaptations are marked with A (aural), V (visual), or K (kinesthetic), Pacing adaptations are marked with a P, Color adaptations are marked with a C, Size adaptations are marked with an S, and any social or communication interactions a student with ASD may struggle with are marked with an asterisk (*) and are described at the end of the lesson plan.

A list of strategies used in this lesson are available at the end of the plan. Following IEP or 504 plans and communicating with parents or guardians will not be mentioned at the end of individual lesson plans because these are strategies that should always be used in general.

**Concepts:** Dotted Quarter Notes

**Objectives:** 1. Students will play dotted quarter note rhythms on known pitches 2. Students will play dotted quarter note rhythms in exercises from the book

**Materials:** Accent on Achievement instructor book and student books; class set of flutes (or student personal instruments); music stands for every two students (minimum); metronome; dry erase/chalkboard; projector and screen

**Procedure:**

1. Students will enter class quietly and take a seat in the chairs, and place their instruments in cases on the floor in front of them.

2. Warm Ups (10 minutes):

   a. All warm ups should be projected onto the board (S, V) and provided as copied sheets on colored paper (if needed) (C, S)
b. Long Tones
c. Articulation Exercise
d. Scale(s) – Bb, F Major
e. Exercise 86 “Tone Builder”

3. Dotted Quarter Notes (20 minutes)
   a. Teacher will begin by playing on the flute a dotted quarter note rhythm and having students echo (A) and tap toes (K)
      i. This will happen multiple times with many variations
   b. Next, a staff with a dotted quarter note rhythm, and four eighth notes will be projected or drawn onto the board, color coded to show where the eighth notes are (red dotted eighth note and a blue eighth compared to three red eighth notes and a blue eighth note) (S, C, V)
   c. Teacher will explain to students, that is what we just played
      i. A dotted quarter note has three eighth notes
   d. Describe how to count a dotted quarter note and eighth note rhythm (A)
      i. Receives one and a half beats
         ii. When tapping toes – 3 taps and the quarter note is on the fourth “up” or the “and” of 2 (V, K)
   e. Counting and clapping exercise (K)
      i. Four-beat dotted quarter rhythms will be projected or drawn onto the board (S, V)
         ii. Ask students for volunteers* to count and clap (A, K, P)
         iii. After volunteer, entire class will clap and count the rhythm (K)
         iv. Repeat with more, and check for individuals (P)
         v. Repeat exercises using flutes
   f. Exercise 92 – “Dotted Quarters”
      i. First ask student volunteer* to count and clap the exercise for the class
      ii. Entire class then will count and clap and tap toes (A, K)
      iii. Students will now play the exercise with metronome, while still tapping toes (K)
         1. If struggling, break down to two measure chunks and gradually build up to entire exercise.
4. Free Practice* (10 minutes) a. In pre-assigned groups or individually, students will practice exercise 92 “Dotted Quarter Notes” or exercise 94 “Alouette” (P)
   i. As students work, teacher will go around to each group and coach and correct as needed
5. Performance Opportunity (5 minutes if time):
   a. Students will come back to their seats and have the opportunity to perform for the class in small groups or individually* (P)
      i. Students not playing should listen and demonstrate audience etiquette

Assessment:
1. Teacher will listen to students individually play dotted quarter note rhythms.
2. Teacher will observe students playing dotted quarter note rhythms in small groups and full group.

Adaptations Used:

- **Size:** Schedule should be written on the board, project or write all exercises onto the board for large size, enlarge music when needed for individual students.
- **Color:** Color coded finger charts and matching pitches on the staff highlighting specific exercises in student books, printing exercises onto colored paper.
- **Pacing:** In this lesson, students are given the option to practice an exercise that has been worked on with the entire class that they already know, or start looking at a new piece on their own. Students who are more advanced are able to move on to more of a challenge, but students who need extra help can work on what they are more comfortable with and with teacher assistance.
- **Aural:** Teacher will describe how to do everything and demonstrate so students can hear how it will go. Metronome will be used to help students keep the beat while playing.
- **Visual:** Schedule will be written on the board for students to read, could also be a picture schedule. Teacher will demonstrate all exercises and how to create embouchure and hand position. All exercises will be projected or written on the board for students to see.
- **Kinesthetic:** Using the metronome helps students feel the beat and tap their toes correctly. Patting to keep the beat or fingering along while others are playing.

Strategies Used:

- Working in small groups or with partners
- Using written and verbal instructions
- Teaching by rote
- Different materials (enlarged, color coded)
Communication and Social Skills Used:
Dotted quarter note rhythms are a challenging concept for most beginning music students. It is extremely important to provide the information in a variety of ways. Starting with rote dotted quarter note rhythms, like in this lesson, is a good way to get students playing the rhythm from the start, and when they finally do see the notation it should not be as confusing.

As with other lessons, students with ASD might struggle with working in groups, especially if the group includes students the student with ASD typically does not interact with. As a result, teachers should frequently assign students to different groups, not always placing the same students together. Students will also need to use joint attention to be able to repeat after the teacher with the new dotted quarter note rhythm, working on counting, and clapping the new rhythm.

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Arkansas Music Educators Association

Founded in 1954, The Arkansas Music Educators Association is a federated state association of the National Association for Music Education which represents more than 140,000 music educators and students worldwide. ArkMEA shall be the leading advocate for essential and quality music education in Arkansas.

The purpose of ArkMEA shall be the advancement of all music education in Arkansas.

Mission:
The mission of ArkMEA is to equip current and future generations of music educators through quality professional development opportunities and to encourage music making as a lifetime activity.

Goals:
Ensure that every student will have access to a sequential, balanced, and comprehensive program of music education taught by certified music educators
Recruit, retain, and revitalize music educators through quality professional development
Perpetuate a collaborative network of music and education organizations, corporations, and state agencies, creating greater awareness of the value of music education
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University Chorale
Opera and Musical Theatre Workshop
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Vision

"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."- Winston Churchill

"Don't wait; the time will never be “just right.” Start where you stand, and work with whatever tools you may have at your command, and better tools will be found as you go along."- Napoleon Hill

"Even if your on the right track, you’ll get run over if you just sit there!" –Will Rogers

Hello fellow music educators! As our new year approaches, I want to discuss something with you that has been on my mind! I've come to a place in my teaching where I have a choice- I can keep doing the same things year after year that I have deemed “good” or “comfortable,” or I can choose to have a vision for next year and next year’s students.

VISION... That word has not left my thoughts. It's brought to mind when I plan, when I rehearse, and anytime my 6th grade class walks in my room. You see, I feel guilt every time I say things like, “Open your music to page 2 and let's look at measure 29...” or “Let’s get started...” and the lesson begins. And that's a problem. Now let me say, I DO NOT have a problem with everyone starting in the same place, but, I do have a problem with the vision that phrases like these create.

Are you inspired by those phrases? Did it pump you up and get your creative juices flowing? Absolutely not. It's dull. It's what everyone does. And worse, it in no way creates vision. So why would you even need vision in a music class? Because vision is the start to everything. Vision ties what we are doing to WHY we are doing it, no matter how big or small.

We should be grateful to the wonderful directors in our lives (I had Mrs. Barrington, Mr. Loyd, Mr. Webb, Dr. Hall, and Mrs. Kesling) who helped and instilled a vision in me of what music is and what music should be! Many of us use a super effective approach to teaching problematic areas of music where we work backwards. You know where you start at the last measure of a difficult section and slowly work backwards, adding a measure or a few beats on each time? We have all done this before, because it's effective. But why is it effective? It's effective because it offers a whole new way of looking at a problematic area. We give ourselves and our student’s a vision for what is expected and what is needed to be better.
We are now looking at our problems with the END in mind, and the END is essentially the VISION. In short, it helps us to feel a developing sequence of patterns, how they relate to each other, and how to connect them. We as humans can’t just simply learn new concepts... everything is connected to something. We need something to hold and glue new thoughts and concepts into our brains! This is the main reason the “back it up” approach is so effective, because they have been able to connect the end to the beginning. So now, we have entered decision making, and that’s a serious game changer!

Where does this pattern of vision begin? It begins with belief. And every belief leads to potential. Now, you and I both know that every student who shows up in our room has unlimited potential, HOWEVER, we must realize that belief feeds potential! And potential feeds action! And action feeds results... and you wanna know what results feed? Belief!  

Here’s an example of our cycle of VISION:

VISION  → POTENTIAL  → ACTION

BELIEF  ↓  RESULTS

Check that out! If we truly focus on a student’s connections to the content, instead of attempting to forcibly stick it in their head, we can gift them a connection to life, history, love, family...whatever! Can you imagine the amount of action they would make for themselves?!

We as music educators MUST get into a mindset of absolute certainty! A place where we trust in the tiny, seemingly insignificant fundamentals of music and life that we know for CERTAIN makes us better. Better singers, better players, better readers... better musicians... better people. People who can truly tap into that unlimited potential, simply by believing that we can. Now, not all vision can be seen; as in, some see an example and repeat what the example did. Some vision must be created in our minds first. I’m sure most of you know the story of Roger Bannister, but incase you don’t, I just have to share it with you. Roger Bannister had a vision. He had not seen anyone run a 4 minute mile, so He didn’t have an example vision, he chose to create his vision. He trained with the end in mind and set out to change the world and on May 6th, 1954, he did! He ran a 4 minute mile. Never before had this been done in history! This was huge! And you know what? It created vision for others. This had never been accomplished in history and within 2 years, 37 people around the world were running a 4 minute mile.
Do you see how when you are CERTAIN you can do something, the MASSIVE amounts of belief you create? We have to be teaching our students to be delusionally optimistic when it comes to their potential! Roger Banister was! Delusional optimism leads to MASSIVE belief which leads to MASSIVE action! And, trust me, you get results with MASSIVE action! And those results will lead to a belief that “I can... and I will!” J A solid truth we all know—music is the only class where this type of personal insight is being taught and executed. Can you imagine how many people in Roger’s life probably said “You’re doing great anyway, just do the best you can” or “Dude, you’re already an Olympian, don’t you think that is enough?” I know even in my life I have constant offers that illuminate the easier road. That feeds into negative thinking and negative belief and small potential and menial action and zero results... and now look were we are! We have created a cycle that decreases and smothers itself every... single... time.

If you looked back on your career as a musician, would you have changed anything? Even the smallest of things? I know I would! I wish I would have taken more initiative in learning how to create vision for myself earlier on so that I could pass on the vision. A vision of “I can.” I hope the vision you and I are displaying as conductors (and seemingly, life coaches at times!) trickles down to our students, who are currently learning to create visions of their own.

Let's ban together this new school year to make a change! Let us no longer be stifled by expectations like every other; let's promise to constantly fight mediocrity and kick it in the butt! Why? So OUR cycle can continue! A cycle of unwavering expression and artistic abilities! And to think... all of that could start with YOU!!! Happy start to your school year, friends! I know, without a doubt, you will grow this year and you will create a new vision for yourself and your students, and this year will be the BEST year of your life.

Peace & Love-Jenny
ArkMEA Fall Conference at a Glance

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CHOIR

Recruit, Motivate, Inspire & Retain: A Complete Guide to Building a Successful Choral Program
Amber Holden and Amy Thomas
Audience: Choral
Building a successful choral program takes time and patience! If you’re a new teacher, equip yourself with the tools you need to build a “choral empire”. If you’re a seasoned teacher, learn a few new tricks to transfer to your already established students and get the motivation you need!

Keeping Their Interest (and Yours!)
Emily Crocker (headliner presenter)
Audience: Choral
Keep your young singers engaged and on task while you grow professionally as a choral director and musician. This session will feature techniques and repertoire for elementary, middle and community children's choirs and includes a complimentary selection of choral octavos.

You Think Sight-Reading, They Think FUN!
Emily Crocker (headliner presenter)
Audience: Choral
Follow a prescribed sequence and see the reading (and fun!) develop. This session includes techniques and materials to introduce and develop music reading skills in elementary and middle school choirs in all voicing combinations, unison/2-part treble, TB, SAB/3-Part Mixed and beginning SATB. A packet with handout and sample materials included.
Providing Appropriate Feedback to Increase Efficiency in the Band Rehearsal
Dr. Matthew Talbert
Audience: Band
The purpose of this session is to provide teachers with strategies to provide more appropriate and immediate feedback during rehearsals. Many times, teachers unintentionally provide feedback that is unclear to their students, resulting in confusion and less productive rehearsals. This session is designed to provide suggestions to teachers on how to improve their efficiency in the classroom by increasing the clarity of their language.

Heterogenous Beginning Band for a First Year Teacher
Alyssa Grey
Audience: band
Being a first-year teacher can be intimidating. Teaching a heterogenous beginning band class can be even scarier! Grey shares her own experiences as a first-year teacher in a mixed-instrumentation group as well as general insight into running a Band program alone. Grey shares the methods she used to build her music program from 35 students to 160 over four years. She also shares resources and suggestions to aid programs with only one Band instructor.

Utilizing Student Leadership in the Classroom
Brandon Robinson (headliner presenter)
Audience: All

Selecting the Correct Music for Your Ensemble
Brandon Robinson (headliner presenter)
Audience: All
The Minecraft and Music Connection: Creating Music One Block at a Time
Daniel Abrahams
Audience: Elementary/General, Technology
Minecraft is a fun and addicting video game that users can play alone or together with friends. For educators, it's a learning environment, design tool, and activity that fosters 21st century skills of critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity. This session will introduce CompositionCraft - a Minecraft modification (MOD). This MOD provides students with the tools to compose and create music within the actual game. At its core, Minecraft is about placing and mining blocks much like the way composers place and mine musical elements to create a new piece of music. Gamers gather material blocks and use them to form various constructions. In music, musicians gather musical elements and use them to form various constructions within music. Minecraft and music composition share similar artistic processes. Incorporating Minecraft into music classrooms provides students a unique learning environment that combines creating and composing music with their love of playing Minecraft.

The World is Your Oyster! Building Cross-Curricular Connections through Folk Music and Movement
Valerie Diaz Leroy (Quaver Music)
Audience: Elementary/Middle/General, Collegiate
Music is truly a universal language; one that can take students on a tour of the globe from the comfort of your music classroom. In this session, we'll explore folk songs from cultures around the world, using movement, instruments, improvisation, and technology to extract solid cross-curricular connections in geography, history, and language - all while meeting your general music objectives. Participants will walk away with activities they can implement right away to create lessons that connect every corner of the school campus, and beyond!

Project-Based Learning and Technology in K-8 General Music
Dr. Erica Krapensky
Audience: elementary/general, technology
Bring your Smart phone, tablet, or other electronic device! Come experience a session that will change the way you think about teaching general music. Project-based learning blended with technology tools encourages students to think creatively, as well as
music instruction that authentically strengthens key musical knowledge, understandings, and skills in a challenging, cross-curricular, and inquiry-driven environment.

**Music Centers- Cooperative Learning Through Music Workstations**

Kaitie Spencer

Teachers will experience planning, setup, and transitions of music centers in the classroom. Teachers will get hands-on experience in different types of centers and will be given a list of resources to help support the implementation of centers in their classrooms.

**Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Boomwhackers**

Ellen Foncannon Stephenson sponsored by Hal Leonard

Who invented Boomwhackers? Why isn’t there a true blue in my set? How can I make a B tube sound like a B-flat? This is a hands-on HOW-TO Boomwhacker session for:

- Rhythm Card Games
- Improvisation and Composition Techniques
- Folk and Circle Dances
- Sword Fighting Intervals
- And much more... All this and door prizes, too!

**Arkansas, You Run Deep in Me  (Choral Two-part, SAB, SATB)**

First time ever for the brand new choral arrangements of our state song! Now your students can sing Wayland Holyfield’s tribute to the natural state with beautiful piano accompaniment. (two-part and SATB available.) Also, introduce your students to the music of Bach, Handel, Mozart and Haydn with humorous, memorable (and, yes) even educational lyrics. Featuring Cold and Fugue Season, this reading-session format will take a look at the stories behind the songs and the people who wrote them. (Two-part, three-part and SATB.)

**Your Elementary Choral Toolkit: Technique, Technology, and Transformation!**

Valeria Diaz (Quaver Music)

Audience: elementary/middle/general, choral

Discover exciting new techniques for developing vocal independence in your students through a combination of solid pedagogy and the integration of engaging technology. Who says you can’t teach an old song with new tricks? Participants will unpack a variety of folk songs, partner songs, canons and more as they learn to target the variety of skill levels in an elementary choir and walk away with a printed Octavo and sample access to adaptable rehearsal tools they can use in their classroom right away from the engaging and
educational world of QuaverMusic.com. Quaver Choral Resources equip Elementary Music Specialists to cover a vast breadth of musical concepts, vocal techniques, and transferable skills to take their singers into middle school and beyond!

**Movement for Musicianship**

Wendy Valerio (headliner presenter - GIA sponsored)

Experience a sequential approach inspired by Gordon's Music Learning Theory and Orff Schulwerk to guiding your students, PreK-Grade 5 in movement skill development that facilitates independent musicianship. By focusing on listening, breathing, continuous fluid movement, and coordination, we may guide students in sequential music development that allows them first to coordinate themselves with themselves as they learn to coordinate and cooperate with others. Learning plans and assessment strategies provided.

**Lower Elementary Music Fluency for Literacy (K- Grade 2)**

Wendy Valerio (headliner presenter - GIA sponsored)

When combined with music fluency, the pathway to music literacy includes exploring, creating, and improvising with moving, speaking, singing. Experience a K-Grade 2 sequential process for music fluency inspired by Gordon's Music Learning Theory and Orff Schulwerk by exploring, creating, and improvising using tonic and dominant harmonies. Transfer that fluency into music reading, writing, and composition. Learning plans and assessment strategies provided.

**Upper Elementary Music Fluency for Literacy (Grades 3-5 )**

Wendy Valerio (headliner presenter - GIA sponsored)

When combined with music fluency, the pathway to music literacy includes exploring, creating, and improvising with moving, speaking, singing. Experience a Grade 3-Grade 5 sequential process for music fluency inspired by Gordon's Music Learning Theory and Orff Schulwerk by exploring, creating, and improvising using tonic, dominant, and subdominant harmonies. Transfer that fluency into music reading, writing, and composition. Learning plans and assessment strategies provided.

**Michelle Quigg & James Mader (headliner presenters - sponsored by World Music Drumming)**

Michelle will be bring her amazing dances and world music drumming practices to our wonderful audience of ArkMEA attendees! She is the gem and the ONLY instructor of dance for Will Schmid's World Music Drumming faculty. Michelle will focus on the
importance of movement in the classroom and how movement can affect every aspect of life. This session will also offer incredible LIVE drumming for the dances, as she will be accompanied by James Mader.

**Jack of All Trades...Master of the Creative Classroom**

Jenny Hainen

Audience: Elementary

Come join the fun as Jenny Hainen brings a hodge podge of different 5 to 30 minute lessons to add to your elementary teaching arsenal! BOOM! This session will be filled with easy, simple, and most importantly, FUN ways to get your kiddos into a creative state of mind!

**COLLEGIATE**

**BAND/CHOIR/ORCHESTRA**

**Teaching Music Theory: Aural Skills Strategies**

Casey Buck

Audience: all

For teachers of music theory classes, especially AP Music Theory. Sight-singing, melodic dictation, and harmonic dictation are the greatest challenges for most music theory students. How do we get them to “hear it with the eyes” and “see it with the ears?” Teaching aural skills as another facet of the whole, rather than a separate and discrete unit of study, strengthens the student's grasp of music theory concepts and their applications. This session will offer practical strategies to help teachers develop their students’ aural skills, including creative approaches on how to interweave sightsinging and melodic dictation into the many other components of the music theory course. This session will also offer several AP exam test-taking strategies. Ensemble directors may find some useful ideas here, though the session is focused on the classroom study of music theory.
Teaching to Change Lives; Seven Proven Ways to Make Your Teaching Come Alive

Doug Blevins

Audience: all

This session will explore why we do what we do and the potential impact we have on the students who enter the classroom. Discussion topics will include differentiated instruction, “what makes kids tick”, as well as what it takes to educate each child in the classroom and the process of teaching the whole child. During our time together, there will be many “take aways” of practical philosophy and pedagogy to be used in the music classroom immediately. This session would be appropriate for any music teacher at any grade level.

CHARMS

Doug Blevins

Audience: All

The Charms Office Assistant was launched in 2001, and since has become the unquestioned leader in cloud-based organization, management, and communication for successful organizations. It is an all-encompassing office assistant, ready to go to work when you are. Charms keeps track of all your student, member, and adult information such as email addresses, phone numbers, what group they are in, their grade, and lots more. Charms can organize and make sense of your library, and keep track of your inventory, equipment, props and uniforms. Charms knows who turned in their form, who missed practice, where they stand or sit, how much they owe on their trip, and who still hasn’t turned in their uniforms. Today, Charms is used by over 7000 organizations worldwide.
Health and Wellness for Music Students and Teachers
Christa Kuebel
Audience: all
Depression, anxiety, stress, and burnout are common conditions for both undergraduate music students and practicing music educators. The college years are a time in which mental health concerns arise for many individuals; teachers may leave the field if they become overwhelmed with the responsibilities of their work. While these symptoms may need the attention of a mental health professional, others can be prevented or managed using techniques of self-care. The presenter will share information regarding mental health for preservice and active music educators. Participants will gain an understanding of the importance of self-care and begin to develop their own plan for personal, physical, spiritual, and mental wellbeing.

But I'm Not a Writer! Writing Basics for the ArkMEA Journal
Katie Kuhn
Audience: All
New ArkMEA Journal Editor, Katie Kuhn, walks you step-by-step through the process of topic selection, authoring and submitting material for the ArkMEA Journal.
The Every Student Succeeds Act: Opportunities for Music Educator Action

NAfME Member Lynn Tuttle

As we approach the first year of full implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), what should music educators monitor regarding their school, district and state ESSA work, and what opportunities can they act on within their school, their district, and their state? As with any new law, there are many possibilities and opportunities, but, as is always the case, the devil is in the details. Where to start?

State-Level Implementation

With a new leader for federal education now in place, U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, we know more about how states will engage with ESSA implementation. And what we know is that the states can choose what they do and how they do it. Given the increased responsibility and flexibility handed to the states regarding ESSA, here are some tips on for what is going on at the state level, and some ideas about how you can get involved.

Know what’s possible. Thirteen states sent their state plans to the U.S. Department of Education for approval by the April deadline. If you are in one of those states (see the table below), review the plan and see what your state has already included for music and arts education in your state plan. If you reside in Arizona, North Dakota, or Oregon, you may be aware that those states have also submitted as of the May deadline, and NAfME is reviewing those plans currently for information on where music education is supported in those plans. Contact lynnt@nafme.org for more information.

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* Delaware is given an asterisk, for while music and arts education is not directly mentioned in the state ESSA plan, the Delaware Department of Education acknowledged the need to address issues raised by the music and arts education community and has committed to working with advocates on guidance or other support materials in the future.
As you can see by this table, many states have included music and arts education within their plans, particularly in the areas of accountability and funding under Title IV, Part A (see below for more information on Title IV). Share this information with your district, and thank your state education leaders for including music and arts education. If the information isn’t clear, or you have questions, don’t hesitate to contact your state education department to learn more about how they will support music and arts education via ESSA. You can find your state’s ESSA page and its plan here: https://nafme.org/advocacy/ESSA/

Stay in touch with your MEA’s state advocacy leadership and NAfME policy staff. Working with our Advocacy Leadership Force members in the states and sharing information between the states, the NAfME policy staff are always happy to help connect you into state level advocacy and help you share your expertise and advocacy ideas and suggestions. You can find your state advocacy leaders here: https://nafme.org/advocacy/essa/nafme-advocacy-leadership-force/. We suggest that you connect with your MEA leadership and learn how to get involved with the creation, revision and updates to your state’s ESSA plan. And you can reach the NAfME policy staff here: https://nafme.org/about/staff/advocacy-policy/

Ask your state to support music education via its ESSA plan! If you reside in a state not listed above, find out where your state is in the process of creating its plan for September submission to the U.S. Department of Education. You can begin by sharing the above table with your state education leaders, or with your state MEA leadership working to advocate for music education. Are there states listed here that your state attempts to emulate? Is there example language that you’d like to share? You can find quotes in support of music and arts education from the submitted state plans in the NAfME public policy bulletin here: https://nafme.org/music-arts-essa-state-plans-2017/.

Know how your state is going to manage their Title IV, Part A funds. For this first year of ESSA implementation, Congress did not fully fund the new federal block grant, which can support a well-rounded education, including music. The amount funded is small enough that Congress, for this year only, is allowing states to run competitive grants for Title IV funds instead of granting those funds out directly to districts. A state, for example, could focus the funds for certain areas of a well-rounded education or certain areas of educational technology, and then create a competitive grant application process where districts would have to compete against each other to receive the limited funds. In other words—the funds just won’t flow down to your district; your district might need to compete for the funds. You need to know what your state is planning to do and how it will handle these funds, as it will influence your work at the local level. You can reach out to your SEADAE member – the arts education consultant for your state—to find out more. A list of state arts education consultants can be found at seadae.org.
**District-Level Implementation**

**Be prepared for Title IV opportunities for music education within your district.** ESSA includes a new funding opportunity for music education in Title IV-A, or chapter 4—21st Century Schools. This section of the law is greatly revised from prior versions, and includes a block grant, or direct funding to school districts, for supporting a well-rounded education. Because music is listed in the definition of a well-rounded education, music education can be supported by these block grant funds, with two caveats: one, music education needs have been identified through a district-wide needs assessment and two, these local, identified needs are not currently met with state and local funding, so would benefit from supplemental, federal funding. I encourage you to get involved in the Title IV needs assessment for your school district. And NAfME has a built-in tool to help you do that – the 2015 Opportunity-to-Learn Standards (OTLs). The OTLs list what resources are needed to carry out a quality music education program—everything from technology to facilities and instruments to student:teacher ratios. You can find the OTLs for your use with your district's needs assessment for music/Title IV at https://nafme.org/my-classroom/standards/.

**And understand if the Title IV opportunity will be a block grant to your district—or something you for which you will have to apply.** As noted above, states will have the option this year to compete out the Title IV funds instead of just giving them to your school district. Therefore, you will need to know how your state is handling the funds and if you can and should respond with a grant application to the state in order to receive supplemental funds from ESSA for music education (and other well-rounded subject areas) for your district. The competitive grants will most likely be available starting in the fall, so contact your SEADAE member (seadae.org) to learn more about what your state plans to do.

**Ask for professional development support, which can be funded for music educators under ESSA.** Funds from Titles I, II, and IV of ESSA can support professional development for educators, administrators and other school personnel. With the inclusion of music within the well-rounded education definition in the law, music educators are able to have professional development funded by these dollars now, too. As is the case with the Title IV funding, professional development funds will be prioritized for areas identified as having needs based on a district-wide needs assessment. So get engaged, and ask to be part of your district's professional development needs assessment team for ESSA.

**School-Level Implementation**

**Understand how music education can now be supported under Title I of ESSA if you teach at a Title I School.** The language for Title I schools has changed in ESSA to reflect the importance of a well-rounded education. Title I schools come in two
varieties—schoolwide Title I schools and targeted assistance Title I schools. For the first time under ESSA, schoolwide Title I schools are encouraged to include information on how they provide well-rounded educational opportunities, including music education, to their students in their written Title I schoolwide plan. While this doesn't necessarily mean Title I funds will support those well-rounded educational opportunities, it's the first time that schools have been encouraged to include a wider range of curricular offerings beyond the tested subject areas within their Title I schoolwide plans. Also for the first time under ESSA, targeted-assistance Title I schools can use their supplemental federal Title I dollars to support well-rounded educational opportunities, including music, for their identified students. At targeted-assistance Title I schools, students receiving support through a Title I program are identified as the most academically at-risk students in their school based on academic achievement indicators, usually the tested subject areas. Traditionally, Title I funds in targeted-assistance schools have funded supplemental interventions in the tested subject areas. Under ESSA, well-rounded educational opportunities may also be funded for these identified students.

If you teach at a Title I schoolwide school, ask how music will be included in the 2017–2018 schoolwide plan as part of a well-rounded education. You can even offer to write that section of the plan if that's okay—so that music gets listed and recognized as part of what your school does to support a quality education for all its students. [NOTE: your administrator may not even know that this is supposed to happen under the new law, so be ready to educate as well as ask!]

If you teach at a Title I targeted-assistance school, consider how supplemental music education could support the students identified as academically at risk. How else could you support them? How would these supports help them with the tested subject areas? Sharing this kind of information with your principal may help you access these dollars, and, more important, provide quality supplemental services to these students as they work to thrive in all aspects of their education.

And don't be shy about reminding your administrator at your Title I school that ESSA provides protection from students missing music to receive remediation. Like No Child Left Behind (NCLB), ESSA retains language in Title I that discourages schools from providing interventions or remediation for students by pulling them out of “the regular classroom.”

Share with your school leadership how music helps parents be engaged with your school. A large part of what schools are asked to do that receive ESSA funding is to make certain parents are engaged with the school. Music education is a place where this occurs through our performances, our parent volunteers and our parent boosters. You can help your school meet its parental engagement goal simply by sharing how many parents you reach—or by offering to help the school share information with parents during assemblies, concerts and performances. NAfME has a concert-flyer resource for your use to help your parents better understand ESSA, too. You can find the flyer at
Conclusion—and Thank You!

While the above list might look daunting, we wouldn’t be able to share this variety of opportunities with you about the new federal education law if you hadn’t done your part with your fellow music education advocates and convinced Congress to include music in ESSA. The opportunities listed here are because of the work you undertook over the last decade to speak out about the importance of music education. To make those opportunities become a reality, work now needs to occur at the state, district, and school levels. You don’t have to do all of this—pick a place to focus and start there. And thank you again for making these opportunities possible. We look forward to learning what you do with them during this school year!

Reprinted with permission from National Association for Music Education (NAfME). The original article published on May 24, 2017 can be found at https://nafme.org/essa-implementation-opportunities-2017/
13 Top Tips for Directors New to Arkansas

Terry Hogard and Trey Reely

1. Get into your band room as soon as possible.

2. Meet and greet! Meet the secretaries, custodians and counselors--they run the school. Meet the coaches, JROTC commanders, choir directors, and drama teachers. Work hard to make a good impression of cooperation, especially if you are at a small school, because you will most likely share students. At some point early on, meet your lower grade music teachers, especially those of the students who feed directly into your program.

3. Get in touch with Julia Reynolds (Executive Secretary) or Joseph Gearhardt (administrative assistant) from the ASBOA office to find out who your region chairman is. Region chairmen will be glad to help you and maybe even assign you a mentor. If they don't, ask for one.

4. You must join the Arkansas School Band and Orchestra Association (ASBOA) if you want to participate in region and state events. Visit www.asboa.org as soon as you can. The registration deadline for ASBOA is September 30. (The absolute last day is October 15), so get this done soon. Here are four things you must complete:

   E-REGISTRATION: This is just general registration of yourself and your contact information. You can find information and a link on the ASBOA website.

   CLASSIFICATION FORM (This is mailed to state office and region chairman.): This form is to register and classify your band. There is one for each level of band: senior high, junior high, and middle school. It can get confusing. For instance, your high school band may be 8-12, but the classification is 10-12. You middle school may be 5-8, but you might register as junior high. Call or e-mail your region chair or mentor if you have questions about this. Julia Reynolds or Joseph Gerhardt can help you as well.

   REGISTRATION FORM (This is mailed with payment to the ASBOA office.): You must register each band from which you wish to register students for region and state events such as contests, assessments or auditions. There is a charge per group, including beginning band, junior band, senior band and jazz band.
ELIGIBILITY (This is mailed to your region chairman twice a year): Get your student eligibility done as soon as you can. They are due September 30 in the fall and again on January 31 of the spring. Do not be late with this. You will likely need help from the school secretaries or counselors for this. Here are the guidelines:

- A student promoted from 6th to 7th grade is automatically eligible.
- A student promoted from 7th grade to 8th grade is automatically eligible for the first semester.
- The second semester 8th grade student and the first semester 9th grade student must pass four academic courses.
- First semester 9th grade students must pass four academic classes to be eligible for the second semester of the ninth grade. 9th grade students must meet senior high academic eligibility by the end of the second semester in order to participate in their 10th grade year.
- Grades 9-12: Same as above with the added stipulation of a 2.0 GPA.

Some schools have a Supplemental Instruction Program where students who attend for 100 minutes per week can participate. See your principal about this for specifics.

STUDENTS MAY STAY IN BAND IF THEY ARE INELIGIBLE unless your school has a policy regarding this, but they may not participate in any Arkansas Activity Association (AAA) sanctioned events, including contests or auditions. They can still participate events like concerts and halftime shows that are not an ASBOA assessment or competition.

5. If your band is AAA or smaller, consider joining Arkansas Small Band Association (arkansassmallbandassociation.webs.com). This allows additional opportunities for your students including the ASBA All-Star Honor Band, the ASBA Music Scholarship, and the Young Musicians Workshop. You must be a member of ASBOA to join ASBA. Your band must be class A, AA, or AAA by ASBOA classification, not sports classification (Arkansas Activities Association) that can be different. For example, your football team may be 4-A while the band is 3-A. The deadline for registration is the same as for ASBOA. Eligibility guidelines apply.

6. Develop a band handbook. The former director may already have had one. If so, adapt it to fit your expectations. If not, find a veteran director to help you out. Here are some things your handbook should include:

   a. Grading policies
   b. Attendance policies
   c. Discipline policies
   d. Purchase expectations and fees
e. A calendar of band events for the year.

After you have completed your handbook, make sure it is approved by your principal—it would be embarrassing for him/her to over-rule you later on.

7. Find the band council members and meet with them, especially the drum major. They are the core of your band program. Ask out about current band traditions. Keep as many traditions as you can, unless they would constitute hazing. Use this core group to help you get as many before-school tasks completed as possible.

8. Find and meet with your band booster officers if they have not found you first. If there is no booster organization, get addresses and phone numbers and meet with the parents of your students as soon as possible.

9. Inventory every school instrument and piece of equipment in your band room. Scour the school for music stands as people have a tendency to borrow these. Make sure every instrument that can be labeled is labeled. Students may have some school instruments at home. Hopefully, your predecessor left a list.

10. Determine who your music store service provider is. There are several across the state, including AMRO (eastern and northeastern parts of state, as well as parts of Tennessee, Mississippi, and Kentucky), Shivelbine (out of southeast, Missouri, some northeast schools use this store), Arkansas School Band Services (most of central and southern Arkansas) and SAIED (out of Oklahoma, mostly along the western side of the state and a store in Little Rock). Contact them immediately for a meeting. These folks will be your best friends.

11. As for budgetary concerns, there are several funding sources you might deal with:
   a. Band Booster Budget: This budget is usually separate from the school and run by booster officers. Many times you will need to clear all purchase from this budget through the booster association. While it is a good idea to be a signatory on this account, do not make yourself the sole signatory and do not put yourself as the main person on the account.
   b. Activity Account: This account's main purpose is to provide supplies for the students such as reeds, entry fees, etc. When students purchase items, the money for those purchases will go into this account. Also, when you fundraise, in most cases, this is the account that the fundraiser will be for.
   c. Operating or District Account: This is usually a budget provided by the district to cover major capital expenses for organization registration, travel, instruments and music.
d. Textbook Account: Because Arkansas recognizes music under the literacy umbrella, some schools recognize music as a textbook expense and set aside a small amount for the purchase of new music.

e. Other accounts: You can set-up other accounts like a uniform account, where money is raised specifically for uniforms. You might also have a flag account, a school instrument rental account, a “big trip” account or a band camp account.

13. If there is not a band website, build one as soon as possible. Most schools will have a page set aside for you, but you may have more flexibility with an outside source. Feel free to ask other schools what they use. Many bands have a Facebook page.

Your first job may seem daunting, but remember that there are many of us who have been in the shoes you now wear and would be more than happy to help you learn from our mistakes and successes.

Terry Hogard is the Director of Bands at Brookland High School and is a graduate of Arkansas State University. He is currently vice-president of the Arkansas Small Band Association.

Trey Reely is director of Bands at Riverview High School and graduated from Harding University. He is currently president of the Arkansas Small Band Association.
Do you ever wonder what might be the best way to prepare your students for an audition? Whether it's for All-State, a Musical, a school honor choir, or a college scholarship audition, you want your students to prepare in the best way possible. However, sometimes it’s hard to know what each judge or university music faculty is looking for and what the best approach is for the students to be adequately prepared. Below are some practical suggestions and requirements that will help your students know what to expect and how to prepare for their auditions. Let's start with perhaps the greatest wild card: The college entrance and scholarship audition. Sometimes these are one in the same and sometimes they happen at different times. Each college or university will tell you what they require in the audition. They may require you to prepare two contrasting pieces, have you bring a performance resume and head shot, and will interview you as to what music degree you will be seeking. While the requirements are set forth by each university, you may wonder how best to help your high school student prepare to represent their ability to help the student receive the highest amount of talent scholarship possible. Here are a few pointers that will help you and your students in their collegiate audition journey:

1. Memorize each selection. This will help your student feel confident in their performance and will also allow them to give their best performance. This also speaks volumes to a music faculty who may be hearing several singers in one day. Make sure your students stand out and they are prepared.

2. Have your student practice introducing themselves, where they are from, and what degree they anticipate pursuing in their college career.

3. Students may be nervous, but you can help them by giving them coping mechanisms that will help them feel at ease. Deep breathing, being well hydrated, and being prepared will help alleviate stress and nervousness.

4. If your student is singing a foreign language piece, make sure they understand what they are singing and that they are pronouncing the language correctly. Even if the song is in English, it needs to be well enunciated and understood. (This reaches back to the vocal diction class you had to take in college!)

5. Choose contrasting pieces for the student's audition. If they are singing one up tempo piece, perhaps the second piece should be a ballad. If they are singing one piece in a foreign language, the second piece needs to be in English, etc.

6. Sing appropriate literature for the degree you anticipate pursuing. If you are auditioning for a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance, Worship Arts, or Music
7. Music Education you will need to sing classical repertoire. If you are auditioning for a BFA in Musical Theater, you will need to sing selections from the Musical Theater Repertoire.

8. As always, phrasing, dynamics, breath control, and tone quality are important in performance and will show the music faculty the student's musicality and capabilities. It is always better to sing something well, than to sing something hard. Put your best foot forward!

If you are auditioning for the top auditioned choir in a university setting the following skills will be necessary for your students:

1. Sight reading, either on Solfège or numbers – reading a single melodic line by themselves.
2. Rhythm reading – being able to read a rhythm correctly on rhythm syllables, such as Ta, Ti, Da, Di, Tika-Tika, or Tiri-Tiri, etc.
3. Tonal Memory – singing back a tune on “la” that is played only once.
4. Singing a prepared piece, or a simple well-known piece such as, My Country ’Tis of Thee, or Happy Birthday.
5. Knowing your voice part and being able to vocalize within the range of the voice part.

If you are teaching in an elementary school and you want to start an honor choir, or you have one and you want to make sure the students you choose are your best singers, you may want to think about having your students do the following:

1. Your best singers in any given grade need to be able to match pitch with great accuracy. Test this with simple sight reading and simple tonal memory.
2. Children should be singing in head voice in the elementary grades to protect their voices. Make sure your students can access head voice and know how to negotiate their range within the head voice.
3. Choose music that is in the appropriate range for children. Many times children's music is pitched too low and will cause frustration for the children and the director when the students cannot sing the melody well.
4. Honor Choir students should also be good classroom students as they are chosen to be in a select choir and will need to be able to hold their own academically while spending extra time in rehearsal. If you are going to have an auditioned choir, 3rd-5th grades are great ages with which to start. Grades Kindergarten through 2nd grade are grades where the voice should be given a chance to grow and the students are still learning important musical concepts. Music exploration is important in the younger grades as their voices and learning capacities are still being developed. Think about honor choirs in younger grades being non-auditioned honor choirs since these students are just learning how to sing. **This is only a suggestion. Each elementary school is different and each tradition is
different. I understand completely working within the parameters given by your principal and the building in which you are working. You may be program driven and there is nothing wrong with that! Do everything in the most excellent way possible!

As you audition your own choirs for the top spots in your program you will be listening for voice quality, intonation, sight reading ability, commitment to the program, and other things as you choose the best group possible. Just remember, you are the director and you need to have the sound you want already in your mind, then you work toward that desired sound!

As a university professor I have seen an overall decline in students who are taking piano lessons and learning musical concepts through private lessons in general. If you can, encourage your high school students who want to major in music to take private piano and voice lessons. This will set them on a path to success when they enter the University music program. Also, if you have an AP Theory course in your high school, encourage the students to take advantage of this important opportunity. Again, it will help them immensely and will give them an advantage as they begin their music degree.

I hear wonderful singers who come through our audition process each year and we are excited about what the Arkansas Choral Directors are doing for their students! I applaud you and I am so grateful for you! As your school year progresses, please let me know how we can best support and help your programs. We are eager to be a part of the great things happening in the schools in Arkansas!

Becky L. Morrison, DMA  
Assistant Professor of Voice  
Chair, Music Education  
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My "go-to" phrase for a while has been "Check it before you wreck it." It's not in reference to checking car brakes like the '70s slogan by Nationwide Safti-Brakes, nor is it homage to Ice Cube's '93 hit. In my house and school, it has a different meaning. Much like almost everything else I teach in my home to my child or in my classroom, it has to apply to me first. "If I don't check my attitude, I'm going to wreck my day." "If I don't check the nutrition facts, I'm going to wreck today's meal plan." "If I don't check their progress and understanding, I'm going to wreck our learning pathway and group goals." "If I don't check their sight-reading process, concert assessment will wreck itself."

All too often, I find myself "checking" things without adjusting them. Last week, for example, my husband had already left on his 50 mile commute when I walked out with my toddler to a flat tire. Changing the tire changed my mood for the worst and I recognized it, but I didn't adjust. My 50 member intermediate chorus came in to my contagiously foul attitude and before 9 am, they had caught the sour-faced plague. How different would so many kids' days have started if I had greeted them with our normal morning routine instead of a gruff, uncaffeinated "Put your stuff down and get in your spot. Don't talk."

So I changed my phrase to "check and adjust it before you wreck it." While maybe not quite as catchy, everyone from the toddler on up noticed the difference. "Mrs. K...you just said to check and adjust it? Like my actions just now? Hey, I can do that!" And just like that, it spread like wildfire. From beginners up, they will self-correct and police each other's posture first thing. "Check and adjust " is whispered by section chiefs throughout rehearsals. I've applied it to my personal habits as well. I can check and adjust my attitude because it was just a bad moment, not a bad day. I can check and adjust my practice habits because I have to be a musician before I can be a music educator.

The ArkMEA Executive Board, under the leadership of Amber, has checked some things and we are adjusting, too, so be on the lookout for new things in the Journal and at the Fall Conference.

I am excited that one of my new adjustments is becoming editor of the ArkMEA Journal. As we continue to check and adjust as a board, I invite you to send your ideas my way and would love for you to attend my session on writing for the Journal at our Fall Conference in November.

Until then, what can you find personally and professionally to apply the "check and adjust it before you wreck it" mentality?

Musically,
Katie Kuhn
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