

# *Missouri School Music*



## **Growth and Retention**

**Volume 77, Number 3, spring 2023**

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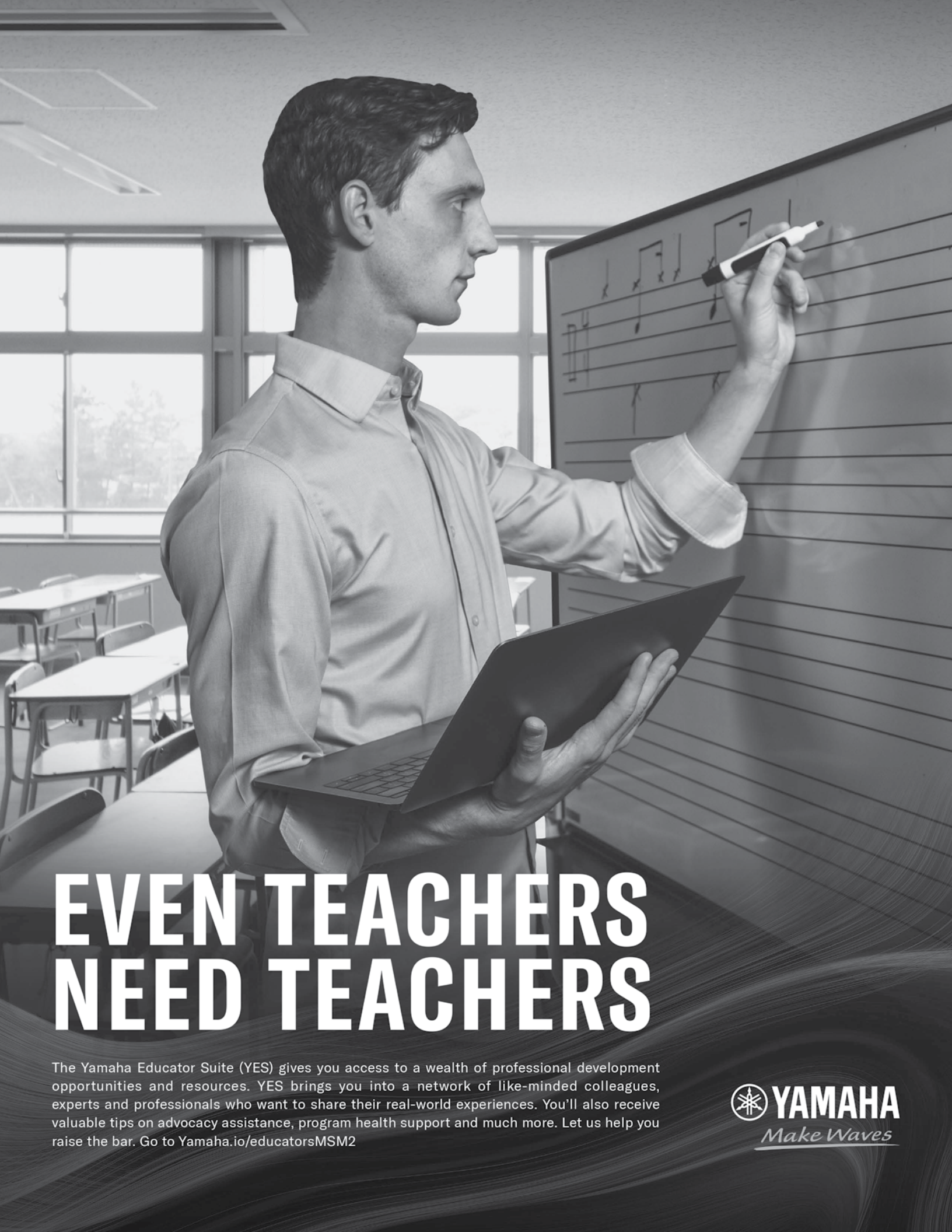
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# Missouri School Music

Volume 77, Number 3, spring issue 2023  
a quarterly publication of the Missouri Music Educators Association

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## Editor's Notes by Sally Hook

I was awakened early this morning with news of the unexpected and early birth of a granddaughter. What a blessing it is to welcome a new life into the world. She represents the promise of great things: hope renewed and assured. Music educators experience hope renewed every day as they are privileged to watch students grow and thrive. Hope for the success of all students is in their hearts.

This issue not only explores ideas for future growth and retention of students, it also celebrates the "coming together" of our organization members at our recent January Conference/Workshops/Clinics. In this issue, you will read about ideas shared at the conference. You will see members celebrated. You will see students participating in musical events. You will see organizations that surrounded us all with support and help. We thank those who planned and produced this great gathering. Hope is renewed and assured.



### About the Cover

**The spring issue of Missouri School Music magazine explores the subject of "Growth and Retention." Music educators strive to increase in knowledge and in students.**

**The image chosen and licensed for the cover is Adobe stock photo #198378305. It signifies a growing musical tree with a spherical retaining or "holding on" of musical symbols.**

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Contact the editor and/or website (mmea.net) for information regarding the submission of materials to the magazine.

# Brian Hartman



## President



### Growth and Retention

#### Growth and Retention

It is my hope that you attended the 85th annual MMEA In-service/workshop and conference and came away with a rejuvenated and uplifting outlook on the profession. Our theme, Grow MO: Telling Our Story and Influencing Our Future has larger implications now than it did before we started in January. Now we have the obligation to put into practice what we learned. Whether it is a new technique that you learned through one of the sessions that you attended or some new literature that you will enjoy teaching after hearing one of the performances, we can take what we learned and influence our students and our programs. My personal growth has undergone an incredible learning curve in this position. I have realized, again, how much I don't know and how much I have to learn both from the process of planning a conference and from the practitioners that we are able to experience in three short days of professional

development. So, my challenge now is to pour what I learned into my classroom and my students. I come away from the conference with the reaffirmation that great performances and experiences come from relationships built over time where students are made to feel welcomed and a culture is created where all are seen and heard. I can apply the concepts that I learned at the conference into my daily activities from meeting them at the door and greeting each student, to sight reading, literature selection and validation of individual and group achievement.

Following our conference every year, we enter the season of growth and retention. Most of us are in the middle of the festival season which means we are also in the middle of enrollment season. Both seem to arrive earlier each year. It is an extremely stressful, yet gratifying time of year, as we often see the greatest focus in our rehearsals and improvement of our ensembles in preparation

for festival performances. If you are like me, you are also having to audition your ensembles for next year before spring break. This causes us to think about the processes and procedures to encourage participation with the students we currently have and also reach out to students we do not yet have in our classrooms. I am excited each year to travel to the middle schools in our system to invigorate and excite the students to continue on in the program in high school. Following the pandemic, we are finding that students who were once enrolled in our program, who went another direction, are interested in coming back. As many of our programs suffered greatly during COVID, we are happy and encouraged to seek out these students and offer them the experience that they were denied. We are finding that this adds both to our growth AND retention. It

See HARTMAN, pg. 6



is contagious. The resurgence of the program has acted like a magnet to the students who fell off the “choir wagon,” and seems to be re-engaging some students who may have been disenfranchised by the altered state that we lived in for two years.

My philosophy of growth, recruitment and retention has changed over the years. I used to want to have every single student in our school to come through my classroom at least once a day. A lofty goal, for certain, but I was a dreamer. Now I think about the kids who need my class and what I can do to attract those students. The “die-hards” are going to be there regardless. You know them, the kids who are the backbone of your ensembles. What I seek now are the kids who don’t have a home. The ones that tried to be the star athlete and for whatever reason it didn’t work out. Those kids that hang out with the “die-hards” but aren’t involved. Why not? The students who are soon to be juniors and seniors whose schedule has opened up and they now have room to take another music class. I am constantly reminded that telling our story and influencing our future isn’t just about the teachers and students who are coming up behind us, but it is just as important for the ones who leave us to tell our story as well. A student who may have only been in an ensemble as a senior will leave and encourage another student. Or they may get out into the world and end up on a school board somewhere and become an advocate. Growth and retention present many means to achieve the end result and I encourage you to find those means and find those students.

Lastly, if I learned anything from the conference, it is to seek out the “non-traditional ensemble” participant. Those of you that were present to witness the very first “The Collective” will know what I mean. I can’t tell you how many people I spoke with after that concert who said to me, “I don’t understand it, and it isn’t in my wheelhouse, but I get it and I understand why it is important.” Providing an outlet for students to be seen and heard in an environment that allows them to be creative isn’t just in a choir, band or orchestra room any more. Some of the most creative and interesting musicians don’t feel comfortable or have a skill set yet to be successful in our traditional ensembles. I have to thank one of our school counselors, Neil Corrison, for starting a song writers club at my school. It not only helped me see some of my students in a different light but they were able to tell their stories and express themselves in a manner that was more comfortable to them than talking face to face with an old choir teacher. This experience over the last two years helped me to see the value and need for The Collective. As this ensemble begins to evolve and develop through the vision of Jocelyn Prendergast and Traci Bolton, it serves as a reminder that our story isn’t just what it has always been but also what it continues to become. 🎵



# Chris Sacco



## President-Elect



### The Third Quarter Challenge

What. A. Conference. The MMEA Board of Directors has done it again. They put together another incredible conference. They worked diligently to find out what the membership wanted to learn and sought out educators, performers, and all manners of music professionals to satiate the thirst for knowledge. They organized incredible listening panels to pour over the remarkable performance submissions in order to assemble the finest slate of ensembles the state has to offer. And they did all of this while maintaining their respective full-time positions. Needless to say, if you happen to see one of the amazing board members, please take a second to thank them for their tireless dedication to furthering our profession.

I have always said that sometimes you walk into a session hoping to learn something new. Other times, you go to a session hoping to find that what you are already doing is justified. While it is

always great to be able to glean new pedagogical techniques to implement in the classroom, sometimes the confirmation that you are on the right track or that others are also in the same situation can be just as impactful. The abstract phrase, “misery loves company,” comes to mind when thinking of this type of situation. Realizing that we are all in the same boat; experiencing the same situations with our students, parents, and administrators that even the most proficient educators encounter, is certainly a comforting feeling. Regardless of your situation or how you felt when you arrived at the lake, I hope that you found exactly what you needed at this year’s conference.

Given these outstanding offerings, I hope that you were able to return home with plenty of tools to increase the musical growth and retention within your programs. Whether you are a second-year teacher or a veteran with thirty-plus years under your

belt, you are immensely aware that we are now in what many would refer to as “the throes” of the school year. The third quarter slump is upon us. This is the most trying time of the year and, if we are not careful and intentional with our decisions, it is easy to find our retention declining in the coming weeks or at the end of the school year. Now is the time when everyone in education is feeling the strain and stress of preparation. From testing to travel and from contests to competitions, the spring semester is both exciting and daunting for all.

Now is the time to remember why the students chose to join your activity in the first place. The answer is because they thought it would be fun. They wanted to get out of their classrooms and dance, sing, or play an instrument with friends. That is what it boils down to. I challenge

**See C. SACCO, pg. 8**

### C. SACCO, from pg. 7

you to “kill two birds with one stone” and take your students on tour! Whether it’s taking your elementary music kiddos to the local nursing home to perform for the residents, having your choir or chamber group perform at a local business opening or during lunch time, or bringing your high school jazz group down to the elementary for a recruitment gig, all of these performances will yield their own benefits in community and financial support, program growth, and retention. Your students will have a blast being able to travel and perform and your program will continue to sustain and thrive during the most trying time of the school year!

I wish each and every one of you the best of luck with your respective season. If there is ever anything I can do to assist you, I certainly hope that you feel you can ask. 🎵


#### Moments at the MMEA 2023 Conference/Clinics



Conversation at the Board of Directors dinner



At the session: "Strategies for the Non-Flute Playing Band Director"



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# *Karey Fitzpatrick*



## *Choral Vice-President*

### **It's the Little Things**

It's the little things that can make a big impact. When considering how students connect to their choir program, traditions are oftentimes the foundation of retention. Ever tried replacing the long-standing Hallelujah Chorus concert tradition? The students, parents and community latch onto those familiar pieces. There is comfort, security, and nostalgia wrapped up in that shared experience. So, if you are thinking about starting a tradition, make sure you can live with it for a while. Additionally, established routines can positively affect the culture in the music classroom. A special chant that celebrates success, snapping fingers to recognize good effort, high fives for taking a risk, highlighting a student who is going beyond expectations, etc. These routines are almost a code that only the students in your room understand. Little routines done regularly can be the glue that holds the ideals of the program in place and makes the choir room a great place to be.

I invite you to think about how you spotlight students both in the classroom and within the school community. How do you make students feel seen and heard? Can your students name everyone in their choir? How are you providing opportunities for students to interact with each other? Many times, routines can be a fun, innovative way to reinforce the pillars of the choir experience, the main one being building relationships.

At this year's MMEA In-service Workshop & Conference, our choral session presenters provided some great examples of activities to engage students and encourage connection through interaction. Most of these activities are not centered around music but will result in more meaningful music-making because of the connections made amongst the students.

### **Non-Musical Strategies to Enhance the Music-Making Process**

**from Dr. Kristina MacMullen  
from University of North Texas**

#### **Traditions**

- Bluebook journals- each semester students respond to the same questions & keep completed journal at end of 4 years
- Big Brother/Sister - pair underclassmen with upperclassmen
- Awards Banquet or Picnic at the end of the year
- Decorate a corner of the room-each choir gets a corner to decorate (theme based?)
- Birthday Board-recognition for birthdays throughout the year (don't forget about summer birthdays)
- Alumni or senior songs

**See FITZPATRICK, pg. 12**

# Justin Doss



## Band Vice-President



### Reflection, Growth, and Interactive Collaboration

#### Reflection

I absolutely LOVE the annual MMEA In-Service Conference/ Workshop! It is one of my favorite events of the year, and has been for as long as I can remember. It was so wonderful to reconnect with so many of you, as well as to meet new friends and colleagues. I only wish we would have had more time to talk shop, catch up on life, and simply enjoy being around other passionate music educators.

A heartfelt thank you and congratulations to EVERYONE who helped plan the conference, ran the day-to-day operations, prepared students over several months for their brilliant performances, shared their wisdom through clinic sessions—truly, thank you to anyone who was involved in any capacity! Extra thanks to the MMEA Executive Council, Area Vice Presidents, District Presidents, Advisory Council, Administrative Personnel, Affiliate Organizations, and Margaritaville

Staff for their ‘behind the scenes’ work that makes this dream an annual reality. To everyone who attended, please know that your MMEA Board of Directors spends countless hours combing through the clinic applications and conference survey responses, working diligently to put together a varied slate of sessions in the hopes of appealing to a wide variety of audience members. We very much value your input and suggestions on topics, presenters, etc., so please share your ideas!

The topic of this current *Missouri School Music* magazine issue is “growth and retention.” I would like to look at this in two ways: 1) personal and professional growth, and 2) interactive collaboration in the spirit of increasing participation and retention within our school music programs.

#### Growth, Personal and Professional

Writing this in the days just after returning from our annual In-Service Workshop/Conference,

my head and heart are full of new ideas, teaching strategies, literature options, and more. I have already ordered several pieces I heard for the first time in January, have spent several hours reconsidering my philosophy of music selection/programming, and have been evaluating my approach to fostering a more positive culture within our band program. Further, I have taken time to celebrate new friendships and professional connections forged at MMEA.

However, the BIGGEST growth and takeaway for me from this year involves an apology— To all of my colleagues in smaller schools, I am sorry. I have attended very few of the small school performances at MMEA in recent years. After hearing the bands from North Harrison, Pierce City, and Fayette, I now understand exactly what I have

See DOSS, pg. 17



### **Family time**

- Build trust through student voice
- Emotional vulnerability & availability
- Discuss interpersonal issues
- Establish the code for the classroom/level of commitment needed by all members

### **Encouragement**

- Student Spotlight - a student sits in front of room and others give genuine compliments
- Paper on Back - students write words of affirmation on fellow choir members' papers
- Letters to Seniors - Each underclassmen selects a senior and writes a letter sharing their impact
- Paper Plate Awards - Seniors create awards for underclassmen

We also had the pleasure of hearing from Dr. Julie Yu-Oppenheim from Kansas State University. She discussed how building relationships is the key to engaging students. For example, using student names and expressing a desire to get to know them on a personal level will solicit more focus from the students. One activity during her session on Friday morning divided teachers into small groups of 5 while we played The Name Game. In this game, you put an action in front of your first name that is able to be acted out. For example, Karate Karey. She emphasized requiring maximum energy and participation from everyone. This game uses the kinesthetic approach to affecting memory and helps students remember the names of others in the class.

Furthermore, Dr. Yu explained that vulnerability is a requirement for deep connection. When students feel connected to each other and their director, a safe space is created. This is where meaningful connections occur naturally because students feel they can be themselves in the safe space of the choir room. To take this a step further, allow students to get to know the real you. Only when you model being vulnerable and honest on a professional level, will they feel safe to do so themselves.

These little things done regularly and intentionally will add up to a BIG impact! When students are invited to take part in building the culture in the choir room, the music you are teaching them will have so much more meaning to everyone in the room, including the director.

"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." -Maya Angelou 🎵



**Julie Yu presents "Culture Club" session and keynote speech at the first general session:  
MMEA 2023 Conference/Clinics**



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# Twinda Murry

## Orchestra Vice-President

### Grow Your Program

Wouldn't it be nice to be able to grow your orchestra program like you would grow a seed in a garden? You select a seed, put it in the ground and voila a beautiful plant appears ready to grow and multiply!

Those of you who are gardeners like me may already see the similarity. A quick review of the research literature will illuminate a few important elements of building strong programs. Bob Phillips in his article in the *ASTA Journal*, August 2016, Vol 66, No. 3 lists strong recruiting practices, high quality music instruction and strong communication as the three pillars of a strong orchestra program. Other studies also include teacher commitment and the relationship between the students and the teachers. Think of these various elements like the elements a seed needs to grow: sunlight, water and fertilizers. You may be able to grow a plant without having all the elements optimized, but the plant will not thrive in the long term.

#### Seed Selection

Every gardener knows you must select the seed that matches your climate and growing conditions in order to produce the best harvest possible. Seed meant for a long growing season will not work in a short season environment. Seed meant for a cool climate will not work in a hot one.

Take a close look at the "growing" conditions you have in your program. Are you working in a program that is in a community with a strong band presence, but not a strong orchestra history? Try to connect with that familiarity. Take a small step into the band world. Talk with your band director and your athletic director to see if there is a sporting event (indoor of course) where you could send a student to play the national anthem. This is what an Illinois orchestra program has been doing with great success for many years. Chances are there is some sporting event where the crowd would enjoy something

a little different. Want to get two crops from that same seed? Assign a couple of your outliers, you know the ones who have been playing 10 times as long as everyone else, the project of arranging the national anthem as a duet, trio or quartet. Let them work it independently while you spend some time with more basic techniques with your other students.

Sometimes we need to connect a little better with where the students are: the soil and the climate. We are all familiar by now with the idea of backing tracks for beginning strings pieces. Maybe you cringe a bit at the concept of playing "Hot Cross Buns" over a Latin beat, a Hip Hop groove, or a rock band back up for a one octave D major scale, but remember you might need to start with your "native soil" to get that seed growing. If your students don't experience traditional symphonic music on

**See MURRY, pg. 16**



# Aaron Lehde



## Jazz Vice-President



### Growth and Retention

Writing about the topic of “Growth and Retention” is a challenging task. As I write, Covid has taken its toll on our program numbers. When we went to virtual learning during the pandemic, many students missed out on the social connections made when our bands were running at full steam. For a while, the thought of sitting in a room of people *BLOWING AIR(!)* into instruments was a pretty scary idea. Those kids left the program, and...here we are. I suspect some of you may be in a similar position. Although it’s getting better, our numbers are not what they once were and that weighs heavily on my mind.

So, with all that being said, I offer up my ideas about “Growth and Retention.” The most important thing is to make a connection with the people in your program. We feel connected with each other through music. If we are to be successful as music educators, we have to create a space for our students to feel that relationship with each other and

with the music. This extends to every part of our music making community. Make connections with band parents. Don’t miss an opportunity to reach out and spend time with the families in your community. Parents talk to each other and a good relationship with one family can translate to better relationships to others in your community. In an earlier issue, I described our Band Buddy program, implemented by my colleagues Betsy Cytron and Katie Solomon. I can think of no better way of keeping kids connected to the band program. We pair up our high school students with our beginning band students for a weekly private lesson. They arrange the time and location (with parent’s permission, of course) and meet throughout the year. Beginners reap the benefits of extra accountability to their Buddy Teacher, and the High School kids enjoy feeling that they had something valuable to contribute. And while there are many benefits for the individuals involved, there

is a great sense of community that gets created. Over time those Beginners become the High School students, ready to be Buddy Teachers themselves, which continues the strength of the community.

I know that kids want to be a part of a successful program. Some kids want to take over the world through “Band,” so ensembles that play well and sound good will go a long way towards keeping them engaged. Other kids are here for the social reasons — they just want to hang with their friends. It will be good to remember that in your planning. We have a home for everybody here.

In a small church in rural Illinois, there is a memorial to the late pastor Gretchen Sterrett with the inscription “Come with me. I have a job for you.” Such a simple phrase that I must have heard Gretchen say to me and many

**See LEHDE, pg. 17**

a regular basis, you may grow stronger roots for your program by starting with the familiar. And, really, wouldn't you be more encouraged to practice scales if it could sound cool?

Don't have time to produce your own backing tracks to match your existing elementary or middle school curriculum? Reach out to students and colleagues in your high school. The technology for creating high quality tracks is readily accessible. Chances are there are several students who already have the skills to complete a project customized for your program.

### **Companion Planting and Cross Pollination**

In gardening the idea of companion planting is the concept of planting various crops next to each other for the mutual benefit of both. Perhaps you have a strong choral program in your district. For many years the choral director at my school, Mr. Thomas Lowery has programmed a piece for his choir that includes some solo string parts. Perhaps approach your choir with the idea of including a piece like this. Here are a few suggestions Tom has so graciously shared.

2 part	If I Knew You	Cynthia Gray	Piano, Violin
SATB	The Journey	Joseph Martin	Piano Violin
SATB	Hatikva	John Leavitt	Piano, violin, clarinet, cello, string bass (instrumental scores available)
SATB	Ose Shalom	John Leavitt	Piano, optional B flat clarinet, violin, cello, contrabass
SATB	O My Luve's Like a Red, Red Rose	René Clausen	Piano, violin, cello (instrumental scores available)
SATB	Five Hebrew Folk Songs	Eric Whitacre	Piano, violin
SATB	I Carry Your Heart With Me	Z. Randall Stroope	Piano, Violin
SSA	Tatkovina	G Jasperse	Piano, Violin
SSA	I Am Not Yours	Victor Johnson	Piano, Violin
TTB	The Girl I Left Behind Me	Patti Drennann	Piano, Violin
TTBB	Tell My Father	Andrea Ramsey	Piano, Violin

We have started the idea of featuring various levels on our concerts. For instance, we will invite our middle school honors orchestra to perform at our high school concert or a high school group to perform at the 5th grade strings concert. This practice has been very well received. Students and parents at the lower levels get a view of the high school program and the older students have a chance to showcase their talents. If you feel like your concert is too long, invite students to play a "pre-show" concert in the lobby as people are gathering.

One of the most successful programs we have had is our mentoring program we adapted from what our band friends are doing. High school students give private lessons to our middle school students. This is a great opportunity for our middle school students to get some one-on-one help even if they are not ready to commit to lessons with our professional teachers. The high schoolers are given volunteer hours for participating, and even more importantly, they are more able to examine their own play and thus progress.

**See MURRY, pg. 18**

others countless times. The message was unspoken, but clear as day: "You are important. I can depend on you. You are needed and I'm glad that you are a part of our community." Don't overlook the power of giving your students something to help with. Show them that they are needed and are important members of the program.

I was fortunate to know the late Bob Spiegelman, Director of Bands at Lindbergh High School. I know many of you knew him as well. While I didn't get to spend much time with him, his wisdom and leadership shine on through those that did. I'm still inspired by his example that lives on in those who knew him best. Brian Wyss once shared wisdom from Bob: "Kids don't sign up for Band. They sign up for YOU." Truer words have never been spoken. 🎵

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### DOSS, from pg. 11

been missing! WOW!!! Certainly not to take anything away from the rest of the performing ensembles, but I legitimately was shocked and 'blown away' by these small school bands, in particular! To Mr. Keck, Ms. Capps, Ms. Adams, Mr. Walker, Ms. Betts, and Ms. Dobbs, THANK YOU for opening my eyes, ears, and soul to the absolutely life-changing work happening in your classrooms and programs. I vow to do better in the future. Thanks to you and your students for enlightening me and helping me grow, both personally and professionally!

### Interactive Collaboration

Every time I attend a conference like MMEA, Midwest, etc., I am reminded of just how many brilliant people we have in our profession and how much I still have to learn. It is at times discouraging, yet highly exciting to discover that any "new" idea I have has already been tried and refined by someone else. That said, I would love to know what YOU have to offer in terms of innovative and effective recruitment and retention strategies.

A few years ago, I was inspired by my orchestra colleagues during a session they presented at MMEA about "unlocking the vault" of recruiting, retention, and getting kids hooked on the idea of playing an instrument. At the end of the clinic, all attendees were granted access to a Google Doc where people could share their innovative ideas on these very topics. To this end, please consider visiting [tinyurl.com/GrowthAndRetention](https://tinyurl.com/GrowthAndRetention) and sharing what YOU have found to be successful in getting and keeping kids involved in music, building a positive culture, and engaging with your community. Perhaps you discovered a new approach to recruiting beginners during the pandemic, heard an awesome tip from a colleague at MMEA, or recently reimagined a strategy you already had in place that seems to have improved retention within your program. Please share! (And, no, this is not supposed to be only for the band folks...let's ALL collaborate and share our best ideas to get more students involved in MUSIC!)

I appreciate all of you more than I can possibly articulate. Thank you for being a part of my network of support and for constantly providing me with inspiration and motivation. Keep "fighting the good fight," and as always, please let me know how I may be of service to you and/or your students. 🎵

### **The Gardener's Shadow**

There is an adage in the gardening world that says the best fertilizer is the gardener's shadow. Of course, what this means is a gardener who is present in their garden, observing and making constant adjustments, will be highly successful. This is very true in an orchestra program. We cannot assume what worked 10 years ago or five years ago or even last year will still work.

Try surveying your students. Using Google forms makes this incredibly easy. Ask what excites them most about your program. It may be you have very different ideas. Survey the parents. Find out what they feel their child is getting out of the program. Ask for suggestions. You will undoubtedly find suggestions that are not feasible, but you may find some really good ideas.

### **Take Your Product to Market**

One of the things I struggle with the most is promoting and publicizing our program. With so many choices vying for their time, students and their parents need to know they are part of a program that has deep benefits for both the short term and the long term.

Take the time to publicize the accomplishments of your students including music activities outside of school. School newsletters are happy to showcase these accomplishments. Write an article for your school newsletter highlighting all the effects of studying music has on the brain and social/emotional development.

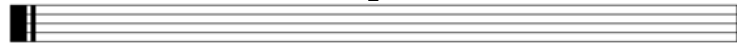
Keep track of your graduates. Invite the ones who have gone on to study music to come back and perform with your group. Solicit quotes from graduates about how music has impacted their lives post high school. Include these quotes in your concert program. One former student who has moved around a lot said one of the first things she does is find the local community orchestra. She said she finds an instant group of friends of all ages and walks of life.

Have courage that, even post COVID, you can grow your program. It may take a little adjustment in how you plant the seeds and fertilize the plants, but you can do it! Music is such a central component of the human experience, we simply have to create the right set of conditions to grow healthy programs. 🎵





# Deborah Bryson



## *Early Childhood/Elementary Vice-president*



### **Musical Success for All**

As an elementary teacher, I don't experience the same struggles that secondary teachers do with growth and retention. My numbers are supplied for me by serving the entire school population, regardless of student interest. Retention, however, is a word that is often on my mind when it comes to the knowledge my students will retain, and, maybe more importantly, the strong memory associations we create together that last a lifetime.

Sometime in grad school, thanks to some very open-minded professors, I underwent a major paradigm shift from focusing solely on preparing my kids for secondary band, choir, and orchestra, to preparing them for a lifetime of "musicking." Though I revel in comments from middle school teachers that my kids know their stuff, what makes me even happier is when kids tell me about the musicking they do on their own or with their family. As they grow, I see them going to concerts, taking guitar lessons,

auditioning for local musical theater, forming a band, posting videos of them covering songs, and so many other musical life connections.

Empowering students is what drives our work every day. When we empower students, we essentially work ourselves out of a job—in a good way. We empower them to make musical choices through composition and movement activities, improvisation, etc. We empower them by teaching the vocabulary to articulate what they hear. We empower them by providing opportunities to grow their personal taste while staying open-minded about other people's personal taste.

By the time my kids are 5th graders, they get to make their first big choice about the musical enrichment path they will take. I hope that if they choose band, choir, or orchestra, that they are empowered to succeed there by being able to keep a

steady beat, matching pitch, fine motor skills, the ability to read rhythms, knowing note names, etc. Statistically speaking though, as they reach high school, about 70-80% of them will not be participating in those traditional ensembles. So as an elementary general music teacher, I feel a great responsibility to all of my students to empower them by setting them up for musical success. My long-term mission is for students to see themselves as musically successful people, and not turn into the adults whose musical identity is wrapped up in shying away and saying, "I can't carry a tune."

We all do thoughtful tasks every day that remove hindrances to musical success. Here are a couple of things that have helped in my classroom. I'll focus on ukulele, since that's one of the most authentic, real-world things that happen in my room.

**See BRYSON, pg. 22**



*Traci Bolton*



*General Music Vice-President*

## **Musings of a Recovering Pathian**

Middle and high school general music isn't typically an area where students come back again and again. That being said, let's redefine what we want retention to be. We want students to retain a love and understanding of music. We want students to be critical listeners and positive supporters. All people should remain creators and participants in music, not just spectators.

Perhaps my greatest takeaway from the 2023 Conference/Workshop was laughter. It happened in several of the clinic sessions I attended where presenters had us be a part of the creative process. I observed it during the many rehearsals of The Collective. It is almost an involuntary response to laugh when we are a part of a creative moment even when it wasn't perfect. It is a part of human nature to create and there is a joy there that has to escape. Somehow, we start to lose that as we get older and more self-aware. How do we preserve that in our

students as they move forward in life?

The first step is paring away at the massive mound of music knowledge and opportunity available and finding the core. What is essential to music? Melody, harmony, rhythm and structure.

Rhythm is the driving force behind all genres of music. It shows itself in different ways but it is always there. Even when the whole point is for it not to be there. You don't have to teach "1, 2, 3, 4" to have rhythm. You don't need an instrument. All you need is a body. Body percussion is an excellent way to build both rhythm skill and coordination. Mimic a drum set. Give each limb a different part. Don't want to use the body, find interesting sounds in your surroundings. Chairs, desks, books all have sound. Experiment again like you did when you were little. Kids explore, adults follow paths. Which one do you think is more fun? Which one

brings laughter? Play along with recordings of music they love regardless of genre. Bringing this to the forefront of young people's minds will make them more likely to recognize it when they hear it in other songs.

Melody and harmony are next. This can vary based on what you have available. Harmonic instruments like guitar, ukulele and piano can be a great start. Digital Audition Workstations (DAW) can also be an answer. Many of these programs are free or very inexpensive and come with loops available. Students can start by creating a sequence of these loops for their first idea. With more time and a VERY small bit of keyboard knowledge, they can use a piano roll option to create chord progressions.

Melody can be a bit more challenging but not impossible. If you have established chords,

**See BOLTON, pg. 22**

# Jocelyn Prendergast

*College/University Vice-President*



## It's NOT NOT for the Money

We know we have some challenges to address in public education. If we didn't know this prior to the pandemic, we certainly know it now. And, while we have learned many lessons about education, including the critical and varied functions school provides to our society and the vital role teachers serve in the lives of our nation's youth, we have unfortunately yet to turn those important lessons into structural supports and actions that will improve the circumstances in which teachers do their important work. Instead, as a society we have asked teachers to do more with less, to do it with a smile, to find more time, more resources, more ideas, reach more kids. More, more, more, with less, less, less. We're teachers, so we know these realities all too well. As a teacher in higher education, I have been shielded from some of the challenges my PK-12 colleagues have experienced, but I see and hear about them regularly.

We're entering the time of year when I receive phone calls and emails weekly from administrators desperately looking for just a single applicant to fill a music position in their district. Every time I scroll through my TikTok feed I invariably find myself presented with another #teacherquittok video. And not only are the teachers leaving, but their students have been watching and declining numbers of them are choosing to enroll in teacher education programs (AACTE, 2022). It's in this environment that we're asking ourselves how we can grow and retain teachers, and it's a tall order.

Yet, it's where we are. And given the stakes it's important that we do ask ourselves how we can encourage students to enroll in teacher education programs, how we can mentor early-career teachers through those challenging first few years, and how we can retain experienced educators. While

there are many factors that contribute to a teacher's decision to leave the field, a pre-pandemic meta-analysis of these factors indicate that student disciplinary problems, administrative support, and professional development are the strongest influences on a teacher's decision to remain in the profession or not (Nguyen, et al., 2019). I know that these three factors continue to be topics of discussion I have with in-service teachers about the challenges they face and they have only grown more pertinent in the post-pandemic/endemic reality. If we work on addressing these three areas, we may be more likely to successfully grow and retain teachers.

However, while I am tempted to continue writing about strategies to address these three areas, because they are valid and can help, the reality is that improvement in these areas

**See PRENDERGAST, pg. 28**

## **BOLTON, from pg. 20**

the first step could be a simple melody based on the chord tones. Make the shape of a chord on a piano, guitar or ukulele and bounce between notes with varying rhythms until you find something that you like. Once that is established, experiment with adding what we would call passing notes. If you are using a DAW, once again use the piano roll where you first created the chord for the harmonic structure to do the same thing.

How many sections does my song need? Will there be similarity or differences? Try listening to other songs and finding their structure. Ask the questions of does this sound complete. Are there things you would add or take away? Songs with words can get by with less variation on harmonic and rhythmic structure because the words are there to provide that interest. There are thousands of songs out there that function on two chords. It is the story of the words that carry it forward.

Need words? Start with the people around you. Do a group exercise to create lyrics. One person adding a line at a time. You can also partner with an English teacher and start lyrics as poetry. The trick is to not overthink it. If you choose an instrumental, the challenge will be to create interest by varying rhythm and melody. Once again, work with the group to find variations in the sound of the instruments being used. Layers are your best friend. They function like a system. Each individual part is not challenging but when used together, they create a great complexity of texture.

As a teacher, your biggest goal is to let go. You are not the keeper of the knowledge; you are the facilitator. I guarantee you that the students will start to find options that you did not think about. I was in a clinic in January where a member of the audience suggested another layering option to the expert. Not only was he open to it, the group tried it on the spot and ended with laughter at yet another variation his mind had not conceived.

Once you've written a song or been part of the experience, listening to music becomes a different experience. You recognize drum beats you have played. You start to hear melodies differently. Ultimately, you have created a person who can take a deeper dive into what musical elements come together to create the final product.

The idea is to plant the seeds of creativity, knowledge and laughter. When students leave you, they will retain those skills. They may continue to build upon them. We have retained them into our musical legacy. 🎵

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## **BRYSON, from pg. 20**

1. **Ukulele stickers.** I swear by them. I create a lot of my own resources for ukulele and they are all color-coded. I find it's helpful to not only put the color-coded chord label above the words, but to also color-code the text so that they know the exact timing of the chord changes. Sometimes it's in the middle of a word, and that can be really confusing.
2. **Starting with chords, not**

**melodies.** Many method books begin by learning melodies like "Mary Had a Little Lamb." There's nothing wrong with this; I just find that my students are not as engaged and get frustrated easily. Even the successful ones quickly start asking, "When are we going to play a real song?" There is so much quick success that can happen with the three one-finger chords of C, a minor, and F9.

### **3. Individualized work time instead of whole-group.**

My primary teaching tool for ukulele is the lessons from musicwill.org (formerly Little Kids Rock). Each new chord lesson includes jam tracks and kids can work their way through the playlist at their own speed. While they're working, I'm free to help individuals who need it. For what it's worth, when I started this method instead of whole-group, we took a vote of which way they preferred, and they unanimously said individual work time was so much better.

My husband and I recently debated over this issue of removing as many obstacles as possible. Our oldest daughter is in 6th grade and has been playing upright bass for 2 years now. She will not be continuing in orchestra next year, but talks all the time about wanting to play electric guitar like her dad. My husband insists on her learning acoustic guitar first so that when she picks up the electric, she'll soar. I insist that early fun and success will

**See BRYSON, pg. 28**



# Ben Silvermintz



## Multicultural Chair



### Playing the Long Game

Melynda Lamb is in her 18th year of teaching vocal music at Pattonville High School in suburban St. Louis. We were chatting a couple of weeks ago and she mentioned an intentional focus on programming more repertoire in the languages spoken in the homes of her students (other than English). Examples from the 2021-2022 school year included both Czech as well as the variety of French spoken in some African countries. This year, she and Tracy Baker, her co-director at Pattonville for the last four years, have programmed music in the Spanish often spoken in Colombia. When rehearsing a piece in Swahili, Melynda reported that her students disagreed with instructions in the provided pronunciation guide and even amongst themselves regarding the use of a specific word; that they worked together to arrive at an agreed upon solution. What Melynda decidedly *did not say* is that her students no longer sing music by German or American composers. After

all, it's not a question of simply replacing Bach with music from Bangladesh, checking a box, and never again performing masterworks of the Western canon. It's about thoughtful planning, programming, and considering how helping students find themselves in our various curriculums is one crucial element to growth and retention.

When we treat our music programs as multi-year experiences, we instantly create an expectation of retention and we shouldn't feel obligated to cram three or four or seven years of literature into just one concert; we can thoughtfully and carefully program music that is both pedagogically and contextually sound. Students in our beginning bands, choirs, and orchestras are given foundational instruction in how to use their respective instruments with the understanding that they will continue to learn more nuanced and complex skills as they matriculate through their

scholastic careers. Similarly, we can begin the long-term process of incorporating music that is representative of our school communities right away and not at the expense of other high-quality repertoire when we think long-term. There is, of course, no rule that says we have to wait until a specific concert or month of the year to teach selections from various cultures. I know dedicated music teachers who arrange pop tunes and Christmas music for their novice, like-instrument ensembles; I have no doubt they are just as capable of creating simple exercises that represent the unique heritages of their students in a way that is also pedagogically additive to the instructional process. If all of this sounds nice in theory, but you teach in a school that is truly homogenous, consider this an opportunity to bring something new and wonderful into your community.

**See SILVERMINTZ, pg. 29**

# Missouri Music Educators Association Hall of Fame Award

*Congratulations*

**LINDA HUCK**

Linda Huck taught instrumental music in the Farmington R-7 School District for over 30 years, retiring in 2015. She served as assistant director of bands from 1983 – 2012, where her primary teaching responsibility was at the middle school level. Huck was director of bands from 2012 – 2015, where she directed the Black Knight Marching Band, Symphonic Band, two jazz bands, and steel drum orchestra. Huck is a graduate of Southeast Missouri State University, earning undergraduate degrees in music performance and music education, and a master's degree in music education.



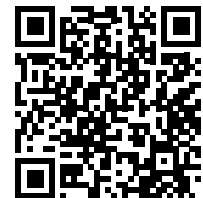
Huck served four years as president of the Missouri Bandmasters Association. She also served the Missouri Music Educators Association in the offices of State Band vice president and president of East Central District #7. Other affiliations include National Association for Music Education, Phi Beta Mu, and the National Education Association. Huck was the recipient of the Outstanding Music Educator Award in the MMEA East Central District #7 and was a recipient of the Charles Emmons Outstanding Band Director Award by the Lambda Chapter of Phi Beta Mu.

Instrumental ensembles under her direction consistently earned superior ratings at the Missouri State Evaluative Festival. She has presented clinic sessions in Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, and the Midwest Clinic. Huck maintains an active schedule as a conductor/clinician and is a certified adjudicator with the Missouri State High School Activities Association. She performs as the principal bassoonist with the St. Louis Wind Symphony and is the music coordinator for the Lindbergh School District in St. Louis, Missouri.

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**Department of Music**

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# Sarah Sacco



## Tri-M Chair



### Make It Valuable

I wanted to start by thanking Ron and Catie Sikes for presenting at the 2023 MMEA Conference! It was fun and very insightful! I came away from the succession with multiple nuggets of information I can't wait to share with the Tri-M members. One moment in the session really stood out to me. It was asked how to get kids to want to participate. If we all had the answer to that question for any of our programs, we would know the secret to life. How do you get kids to want to participate? How do you get kids to add one more thing to their plate? How do you add one more thing to **your** plate? I think this is a problem we face every day inside and outside of our classrooms.

At a faculty meeting a few weeks ago we were discussing how to get parents to come to parent teacher conferences. Thanks to technology, parents can see their student's grades online and can reach out very easily to every teacher at any time. So, when administration is asking

for teachers to try to get 100% attendance from their advisory parents, we are left scratching our heads trying to figure out how. Teachers were tossing out ideas like giving extra credit, feeding them, or changing the location to make it easier. I spoke up and said none of those things are the problem. The real problem is **WHY** they need to come to parent teacher conferences. It is no longer "come so you can see your child's grades" or "come so you can approve their schedule for next year," because both of those things they could see online.

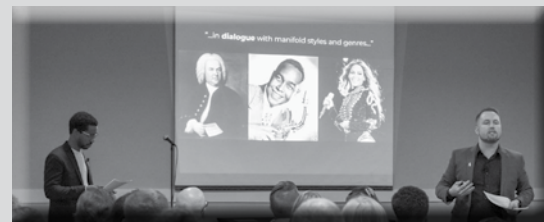
So, why are we discussing how we can trick them into coming instead of figuring out how to make it **valuable** for them to come to conferences? Isn't that the reality with everything we do. Without value why do we need to do it. You have to start by making sure your conferences, your classes, your bands, your choirs, or you Tri-M chapters have value in order to get people want to come. You have to have a valuable **WHY** or why would they bother.

So, let's start with finding **YOUR** why. Why do you want to have a Tri-M chapter? What would the value of it be at your school? This is likely very different depending on where you teach. During the session Ron and Catie spoke about, in the beginning Tri-M is used to bridge the gap between the band and choir programs at their school. At my school Tri-M is used primarily for advocacy. At your school, Tri-M could be completely service-focused. You decide what would add value to your school and plan Tri-M around that need.

Once you find your **why** you use that why to get members. Ron and Catie approached students who might not have felt as appreciated, and got them involved with Tri-M to help bring recognition to those students. They made being invited a BIG deal where underrepresented kids felt seen.

See S. SACCO, pg. 29

## Moments to Remember from the MMEA 2023 Conference/Clinics





## Moments to Remember from the MMEA 2023 Conference/Clinics



## **BRYSON, from p. 22**

hook her and create a lifetime of love and commitment to the instrument, which will make her want to try acoustic later for a different sound. Round and round we go. Who knows what the right answer is?

When I was a kid, I was so desperate to learn guitar that I picked up my mom's very old, very tough 12-string Ovation, got a book, played through the blisters, and begged and begged for an electric or at least a normal 6-string acoustic. Did that experience make me want to give up? Sometimes. Did it make me a better player today? Maybe, but it's been years since I've picked up a guitar. One of my older brothers had the same desperation as a teenager, learned on that old 12-string, and is an amazing player to this day. We both complain and laugh about how terrible that old guitar was.

A few years ago, I would have scoffed at all this effort to remove obstacles, considering it lazy and taking shortcuts. But the Me of today is noticing a big increase in kids asking for recommendations for private lesson teachers. Coincidence? Maybe. But I think these simple acts of providing early success are going to cause retention of knowledge and an ownership of their musical identity that will stay with them regardless of the academic musical path they take. 🎵

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## **PRENDERGAST, from pg. 21**

alone isn't enough to address the systemic challenges that have persisted and been exacerbated in recent years. Instead, what we need is civic engagement. We need to remember that the elected officials, some of whom are clearly committed to dismantling the public education system under the guise of "choice," are supposed to represent our interests. If the only voices they hear are the loudest and most extreme, and they are elected and re-elected on platforms that are fundamentally at odds with supporting public education, then it's no wonder we find ourselves in the circumstances we do today.

The 2022 NEA Rankings and Estimates Report indicates that, adjusted for inflation, teachers make less today than they did 10 years ago and teacher pay in Missouri dropped from 45th in the nation in 2019-2020 to 47th in 2020-2021. While teacher pay alone will also not fix these challenges, it would certainly help retention efforts if the hard work a teacher does each day is reasonably compensated. One of the bills under consideration in the Missouri House at the time I am writing this article is HB189, which seeks to establish a minimum teacher salary. The bill includes raising the minimum to \$38,000 by 2026-2027 and raising the minimum salary for teachers with a master's degree and 10 years of experience to \$46,000 by 2026-2027. I urge you to read the language of the bill for yourself, determine what you think about it, and then contact your representative to let them know too.

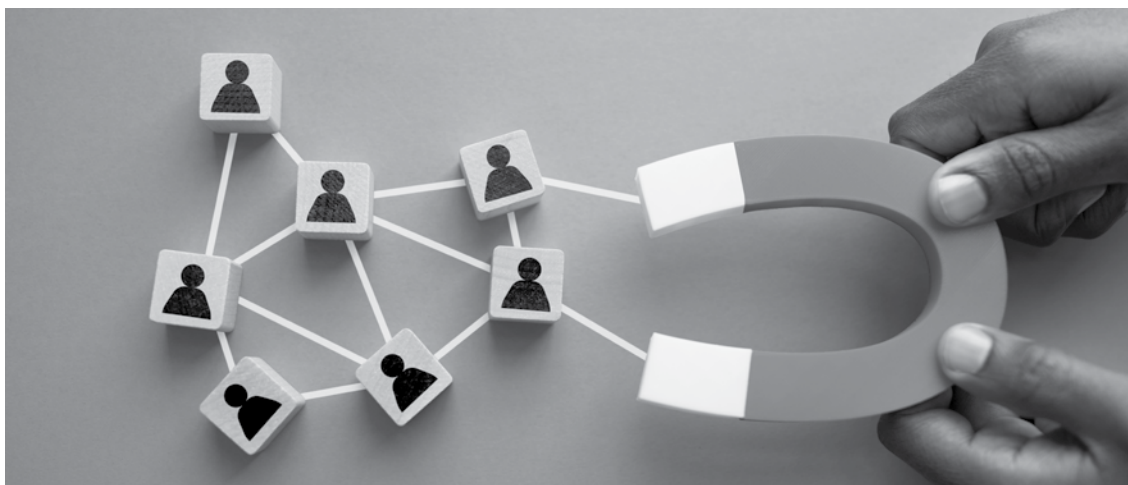
If we want to meaningfully grow and retain teachers then we need to think about how we can systemically address the myriad challenges facing our public education system. We all know that people don't go into teaching for the money, but it's also not **not** for the money either. So yes, let's help teachers at all career stages by providing them with classroom management strategies that work, encouraging them to develop good relationships with their administration, and providing professional development opportunities that are relevant and enriching. But let's also be active in addressing the aspects of the education system that don't work as they should.

**See PRENDERGAST, pg. 31**

## SILVERMINTZ, from pg. 23

For those of us programming music that originates with a culture other than our own, consideration can be given to performance practice, context, and authenticity. While no group is monolithic, we can avoid stumbling into cringey stereotypes if we are curious and willing to ask questions. For instance, if asked, I would encourage fellow choir directors to avoid programming pieces in Hebrew during December, a move that would squash the tokenization of such music in the midst of an otherwise lovely Christmas or holiday concert. I took my son to hear one of the finest vocal ensembles in the United States this winter and was disappointed to hear an awkward preamble about “all of the holidays” in December before a piece in Hebrew, that had nothing to do with Chanukah, was performed. It would have been perfectly appropriate in the early spring along with a discussion of the holiday *Tu B'Shevat* but simply did not belong in an otherwise beautiful sequence of Christmas pieces.

At our conference this January, Allison Davis and Faith Hall eloquently shared a similar message in their session *Ditching Polly Wolly Doodle: Addressing the History of Common Band Music and Strategies for Selecting Repertoire*. They showed us that while music with a historically racist past should be removed from our students' folders and stands, there is ample room for music that is meaningful, connective, and representative of the students in our classrooms and our wider, world community. As we continue to find ways to foster growth and retention in our programs, we should consider how “All of Us” (to borrow the titular phrase from Craig Hella Johnson's piece that was programmed and performed beautifully multiple times at our conference) have a responsibility to both bring the world to our students and to prepare our students to meet the world — both the one in which they currently reside and the one they will inhabit and inherit long after they leave our classrooms. 🎵



## S. SACCO, from pg. 25

In my school, we focus a lot on advocacy. Students want to join so they can participate in the fun activities we do such as going to the Tri-M Summit or advocacy day at the Capitol. You often have to start by dangling the carrot, but once it is there most students will join the race and love it.

Tri-M can add value to your programs, but first you have to decide your needs. Don't forget this very important step. Invite your top students to be a part of the process. What would they value? Ask your fellow music teachers how Tri-M could support them. What would they value? Together you can find the perfect way to get kids to want to participate. We have the best kids in the school — we just need to give them something of value in which to participate. 🎵





*Roy Maxwell*



*Government Relations Chair*

## Legislative Happenings

Congratulations to all those involved with this year's MMEA Conference. The Board did a great job of putting together wonderful clinics that provided great information. It was great to hear the first performance of the "Music Collective." Congratulations to all that were involved in the creation of this event and to those that gave their time to help make it successful for the students.

There are hundreds of bills that are introduced each year. Many do not receive a hearing in committee, and of those that do only a small percentage make it out of committee and on to the floor for a vote. At the writing of this article there are a few bills we are following on their journey through the legislative process. The MMEA Board will evaluate the bills as to their impact on our profession and decide if they require any action from our membership. You, as a private citizen, are encouraged to make your views known to your representative. You can read the full text of the bills at <https://>

[house.mo.gov/LegislationSP.aspx](https://house.mo.gov/LegislationSP.aspx) for the House of Representatives or <https://www.senate.mo.gov/legislation/> for the Senate.

### **HB 189 -- MINIMUM TEACHER SALARY**

Sponsor: Lewis

Currently, the minimum salary for teachers is \$25,000 and for those teachers with a master's degree and 10 years of experience the minimum is \$33,000. This bill raises the minimum in the 2024-25 school year to \$34,000 and continues to increase the salary until it hits \$38,000 in the 2026-27 school year. For a teacher with a master's degree and 10 years of experience these minimums are raised to \$42,000 in the 2024-25 school year and eventually to \$46,000 in the 2026-27 school year.

### **HB 190 -- DIFFERENTIATED TEACHER PAY**

Sponsor: Lewis

This bill removes the requirement that salary schedules adopted by a district's board of education

apply to all teachers in the district and allows school boards to include differentiated placement of teachers on the salary schedule for hard-to-staff subject areas and hard-to-staff schools. "Hard-to-staff subject areas," which according the law, are content areas for which positions were left vacant or were filled with a teacher not fully qualified in the prior academic year as reported to the department of elementary and secondary education. Districts may annually review and modify hard-to-staff subject areas and schools, as defined in the bill, and are prohibited from placement of any teacher on a schedule that would result in a salary demotion.

### **HB 241 -- HOME SCHOOL STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

SPONSOR: Hurlbert

This bill provides that a school district shall not be a member of, or remit any funds to, any statewide activities association

**See MAXWELL, pg. 32**



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**PRENDERGAST, from pg. 28**

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## **MAXWELL, from pg. 30**

that prohibits a home school student from trying out or auditioning for a team or club membership in any event or activity offered by the school district for any reason relating to such student's home school instruction. Nor shall a school district prohibit a home-schooled student from trying out or auditioning for a team or club membership in any event or activity. A home school student may be required to participate in one class per day for sixth through eighth grade and one-half unit of credit for ninth through 12th grade per semester. This bill further provides that school discipline policies will apply to home school students and records created pertaining to a home school student will be made confidential.

## **HB 253—STUDENT TRANSFERS**

SPONSOR: Pollitt

The bill creates a public-school open enrollment program with the design to improve quality instruction and increase parental involvement, provide access to programs and classes, and offer opportunity to align parental curriculum options to personal beliefs. If students transfer, they would not be able to participate in sports for 365 days.

## **HB 257—TEACHER RETIREMENT SYSTEM**

SPONSOR: Pollitt

Currently, a retired teacher or a retired noncertificated employee who is receiving a retirement benefit from the Public-School Retirement System of Missouri is allowed to work full time for up to two years for a school district covered by such retirement

system if the system has a shortage of certified teachers or noncertificated employees. This bill allows these employees to work full-time for up to four years for such districts.

## **SB 004—PARENT BILL OF RIGHTS**

Sponsor: Koenig

This is an extensive bill that includes several items including the creation of the "MISSOURI EDUCATION TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY PORTAL." This would direct the Missouri Commissioner of Education to develop this "portal" to provide citizens with access to every school district's curriculum, textbooks, source materials, and syllabi. The portal shall include the cost associated with speakers and guests used by a school in their professional development activities. The portal shall include names of presenters and distributed materials from all administrators, teacher, and staff professional development and instructional programs offered to public schools, and shall be fully transparent and available to parents of students enrolled at such schools. The portal shall include information about school board members and their terms of office. The portal shall also include an easy-to-search database of certain public school financial transactions. Finally, for programs offered to schools by third-party contractors, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall maintain data on such programs as described in the act.

## **How to advocate for music education**

When we think about advocacy, we often think that it is only working with the legislature to

get bills passed to help education. Advocacy is something that we do every day in our classes and community. Take the time to share the great things that are going on in your classes. Invite your administration into class if your students are doing something special or have achieved a difficult assignment. If your district allows, share the activities in your class on your district's social media account.

Invite your administration and local politicians to your concerts, and then thank them during the concert for their attendance. Perhaps you are doing a piece with narration or some other way to involve members of the community in your performance. They may seem like little things, but these are just a few ways to build positive thoughts about your program. These are connections that can pay benefits for your program. It is an excellent chance to build the self-esteem of your students. When they see that you care enough about what they are doing to share with the community, it gives them a sense of pride in the program and gives them even more ownership in the class. 🎵



*Cooper Smith*  
*NAfME-C President*



*Dorothy Glick Maglione*  
*NAfME-C Advisor*



## **Building a Stronger College or University NAfME-C Chapter**

Students work hard and are resilient, but there are so many things that can get in the way of them participating in their NAFME-C Chapters. Music education is a demanding major that stretches an individual's musicianship, artistry, and time management skills. How are students expected to attend quality concerts, give moving performances themselves, score study, read and complete homework for class all while carving out time to practice, conduct fieldwork, attend class and rehearsals, and perhaps work a job on the side? It is also important to counterbalance the hard work of college with personal time developing relationships, having fun, and enjoying life. Instead of offering answers, we would like to offer some options and considerations for making NAFME-C a regular part of an enriching music education curriculum.

We would first like to thank the presidents who attended and

brought their executive boards to the NAFME-C Executive Meeting at the MMEA In-Service: Makenzie Sisney, Central Methodist; Laurel Hill, Evangel; Angelina Pirolo, Jefferson; Alyssa Harry, Lindenwood; Maxwell Brower, Missouri State; Kirsten Davies, Missouri Baptist; Abbi Surbrugg, Missouri Southern State; Ruta Dobson, Missouri Western State; Josh Westover, Northwest Missouri State; Katie Linke, Southeast Missouri State; Catherine Dean, Truman State; Joylyn Carter, University of Central Missouri; Shannon Martin, University of Missouri-Columbia; Whitney Schweiger, UMKC; and Chandler Pavel, William Jewell. At the Executive Meeting, there were several chapters who voiced concerns about growth and retention in the chapters at their institution. Many of the suggestions below stem from a conversation about this topic among chapter presidents.

**Frequency, Length, Location**  
The best way to increase

attendance is to meet at a time that is most convenient for the largest number of students. You likely will not find a time that works for absolutely everyone but strive to find an option that works for band, choir, and orchestra students both who live on and off campus. What time of the day is the most open? What day of the week fits best? If weeknights are filled with rehearsals, perhaps a Sunday evening would work. While some chapters meet monthly, others meet twice a month, or weekly. Find what works best for students at your institution. One chapter shared that they hold a monthly business meeting with a speaker and another session for fun or more social activities. A different chapter meets to destress during finals, has movie nights, and offers special snacks to incentivize attendance.

**See SMITH/GLICK MAGLIONE,  
pg. 39**



*Steve Litwiller*

*Mentoring Chair*

## **Hustle, Bustle, and Musical Tussles— A Music Educator's Guide to Spring**

The month of March is when common sense exits the left ear of all music educators, lights a big cigar, boards a cruise ship bound for Crazytown Cove, never to be seen again until the spring concert is over or the festival ratings are posted. Yes, common sense frequently takes a vacation this time of year.

Music educators find themselves drawn into a frenzied fracas during concert/contest season because of performance demands, scheduling, transportation plans, and students who become ill, have schedule conflicts, or lost their music the day of performance while serving as equipment manager for the Chess Club. It all takes energy and time that could otherwise be focused on teaching.

As trained musicians we concentrate on solid fundamentals so our groups present the best possible musical result. No music educator wants to be associated with a subpar performance, regardless of the grade level. All of us want success

for our students, plus we want our audiences to see and hear that we are competent.

But if our sole concern is only success in the musical realm, we have lost connection with the most important part of doing our jobs. The students. A stellar rating or a standing ovation will not benefit your program if parents and students are ready to put you on an International War Crimes list for your teaching methods during rehearsals. The journey to reach that good performance is as important as the performance itself. When common sense takes a vacation under this type of stress there is potential for problems afterward, no matter how good the musical product was.

We all should consider balance—and not just the musical kind. This kind of balance is the music educator assuming responsibility for the leadership role in the classroom or ensemble. What is your personality type during the preparations this time of year? Would you like your own children to be a part of your organization?

Even more importantly, would you like to be spoken to or treated the way you are interacting with your students? The carpenter's rule is the hardest to remember, but extremely effective: You can measure as many times as needed, but you can only cut once. Don't let frenetic frustration dictate your words and actions. Make good musical memories while you are prepping for performances.

Speaking of musical memories, your students don't necessarily have to be 'contest ready' to put them up in front of an appropriate audience. We all want them to be perfect, but what if you had a soloist, or small ensemble, or a few students who were competent enough to get through their band/choir/orchestra music at a visit to an elementary music class? They could play a bit, talk about their instruments or what they are singing and how they will work to improve their performances in the coming days. Younger

**See LITWILLER, pg. 39**



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# Meyer *Moments*

*"As a band parent, you spend years listening to your kid practice. You drive miles and miles to practice and competitions. You sit hours waiting for performances. You celebrate or console after competitions. You watch the improvement with amazement from year to year. You freeze during football games just to catch the half-time performance. But, nothing prepares you for the moment senior year when your child walks on the football field for the last time and leaves their band shoes behind."*

*-A band mom*



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# *In the* Orchestra Pit

That list of moments—the ones so profound and memorable, they remind you why you love being an orchestra director, especially on those tough days. There is the excitement of the new kiddos walking into the music room, nervous and excited to learn to play their instruments. There's the sense of accomplishment when your orchestra nails a piece one month in the making. And, of course, those students you know will earn first chair.

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**SMITH/GLICK MAGLIONE,  
from pg. 33**

**Presentations**

Plan interesting topics that people *want* to learn more about. We have all been in a meeting or training where we are already familiar with the content. Make NAFME-C meetings engaging! Perhaps you have an excellent professor or outside guest or clinician who would share content. Invite a local music teacher to talk about advocacy, recruiting for their high school choir, technology in the middle school general music room, or how to run a sound system. Plan topics that are not solely for music education majors like setting up a recording session, reviewing microphones currently on the market, or how to start a private teaching studio. Do a session over zoom so you can hear someone outside of your town! Mock interviews or sessions geared to resumé writing are always a hit and extremely beneficial.

**Attendance**

There are numerous ways to go about fostering attendance at meetings. Incentives like dinner or snacks are always appreciated by college students but meetings must be supported by faculty members. One school requires students attend the chapter meetings in order to stay in the institution housing provided at MMEA. Another school grades attendance. Many advisors support their chapters by talking up the meetings, sending out information about them with adequate advance notice, and attending the meetings themselves. Several chapters open meetings up to all education majors and enjoyers

of music. If the meetings include teaching strategies, classroom management techniques, and other important education tools, those topics are beneficial not only to music education majors. Topics that are interesting are more likely to increase attendance.

**Belonging**

If students feel like they belong and are a part of the organization, they will be more likely to prioritize attending meetings. Ask students when and how much they want to meet. Allow students to be part of planning presenters and topics. Create a culture of belonging and make meetings engaging. After all, preservice teachers want to be successful and attending conferences like the MMEA In-Service and their NAFME-C Chapter meetings should be positive moments to foster future educators! Please reach out to Dr. Dorothy Glick Maglione at [maglione@william.jewell.edu](mailto:maglione@william.jewell.edu) or Cooper Smith at [cps7kh@mail.umkc.edu](mailto:cps7kh@mail.umkc.edu) if we can help you in any way. Finally, our MO NAFME-C VP of Membership position is geared towards recruiting and retaining members. Together, we can build a great organization both at the chapter, state, and national level. 🎵



**LITWILLER, from pg. 34**

students will be interested, and it could be a good recruiting tool for future musicians, if you choose the right personalities to participate. If this goes well, you might consider taking them to a Senior Center, where you can explain the process of what you are doing with your classes and how they rehearse. Preface the appearance with an explanation of what the students are preparing for, and let them explain how they will improve. It's a good motivational tool to get your students to practice and a good vehicle to teach what goes on in music classes. The students get a low-pressure performance experience while spreading the word about music education in your community.

It is not too early for young music educators to be applying for grants to attend the Missouri Bandmasters Association Convention, June 18-21 at the TanTarA Conference Center. You can find the applications online at [Missouribands.org/forms](https://Missouribands.org/forms). The Missouri Choir Directors Association Summer Conference will be July 18-21 at the University Plaza Hotel and Convention Center, in Springfield. Check out their website at <https://www.moacda.org/2023-conference> for special discounts for teachers in the first three years of their career. Start applying for grants now for great opportunities to learn and grow this summer! 🎵





# Marvin Manning

## Historian

### And the Rest Is . . . Music History

To be perfectly honest, I did extend my tenure at Stockton for one more year as much for me as for the kids. Seeing colleagues who missed out on a full finish to their teaching careers during the pandemic months of 2020 was hard enough. Then, enduring the endless string of event cancellations during the fall, and holding virtual festivals in 2021 made me more determined to ensure that the students were going to enjoy a year filled with the traditions and activities that made the program . . . well, a family.

For the last twelve years I taught, I worked with 5-12 instrumental and 9-12 choral each day, the last seven in a four-day school week. Students generally knew what they were getting into. I didn't try to overwhelm them during recruiting, but I made the overall experience a part of the introduction for the fourth graders who were ready to try out instruments and head for fifth grade in the fall. I also made it a part of every grade level, describing the activities that the kids on the next level were

experiencing and relating their current learning to that big day when they would move up and do the same thing. Gradually they began to feel less like one kid in a seat and more like a section, a team, and, well . . . a family.

Retention in a successful program relies heavily on creating a sense of belonging as much as providing meaningful activities, communication and transparency, and a variety of quality literature. A language arts colleague and I would advise our new teachers in the district to concentrate on HOW to have class (rehearsal) as much as on the content of the class—maybe more in the first quarter—in order to foster student independence and self-reliance. Upperclassman leadership quickly became the norm during our best years and students were eager both to learn and to lead as they progressed through the program. My colleague and I would progress through the school year and students would follow procedures faithfully. They took care of the small things that allowed all of us to concentrate on the big things

. . . sort of the way a family should work.

I had the good fortune to see my students all the way through the instrumental program grades 5-12, but could also see the immediate contrast in the choral program, where I didn't have the opportunity to develop middle school singers during their crucial years in the changing voice. Retention includes constant assessment of the effectiveness of your teaching assignments and changes that will accommodate as many students as possible.

For less-experienced teachers who are still finding their way in a new teaching position, don't hesitate to include students in assessing performances, rehearsals, literature choices, and other activities. You are still the leader of the program, but ownership creates retention and builds a stronger team. Ask mentors about their classroom/ensemble procedures for tips on how to reduce the administrative

**See MANRING, pg. 42**

# Wendy Sims



## Research Chair



### Research to Practice

#### **It Starts with the Teacher: Creating a Gender-Inclusive Environment by Emily Edgington Andrews—University of Missouri Columbia**

Fostering an environment that is safe and affirming for all learners is the goal for music educators, regardless of grade level or area of music taught. We are called to understand and embrace each student as an individual, with unique life experiences, identities, and diverse learning styles. Fundamental to teaching is our ability to attract and retain students by drawing each in, developing rapport and weaving connections, and creating community. This is a huge undertaking, considering the diverse range of students in our classrooms. It is unsurprising then that, despite the best of intentions, many teachers might unconsciously reinforce stereotypes, heteronormativity, and various kinds of racism, bigotry, or discrimination as a result of their upbringing, background, and experiences.

As a white, heterosexual female, I acknowledge that my own privilege and implicit bias influence my teaching every day. I endeavor to empower my students who don't identify in the same way as I do through

careful reflection on the decisions I make and the way I teach. Two years ago, I was tasked with spearheading a name change at my university from "Women's Choir" to a more inclusive title. This spurred my own research and reflection into how, for our LGBTQ+ students, language, policy, and traditions used in educational settings have the potential to create barriers to learning and inclusion. Cisgender heterosexual teachers don't always have the necessary framework for facilitating safe and inclusive spaces for these students. The four research studies I will present here provide a unique perspective and set of tools for educators desiring to better meet the needs of their LGBTQ+ students, as well as their colleagues.

Teachers' words and actions, or lack thereof, can be powerful weapons of either support or opposition for LGBTQ+ students. Regardless of one's personal beliefs, every educator should strive to better understand each student's lived experiences in order to provide meaningful and

rich connections to instruction. Palkki and Caldwell (2018) surveyed over one-thousand LGBTQ+ college students who reflected on their own middle and high school choral experiences. Based upon the quantitative data collected and responses from the open-ended questions, the authors provide helpful advice for teaching practice and policy. Because words carry important meaning and can make a tremendous impact in the classroom culture, adjusting the language used is critical in making students feel comfortable. Students reported feeling left out from classroom discussions when they did not see themselves represented, like in the starkly heteronormative texts of some of the choral music.

The choice between the open acknowledgment of or silence surrounding LGBTQ+ issues in the choral classroom was a topic of many responses to Palkki and Caldwell's survey. To the respondents, silence signaled

**See ANDREWS, pg. 42**



## MANRING, from pg. 40

clutter and delegate the smaller responsibilities to students. It's a big part of the retention process when your ensemble members can feel a sense of ownership rather than just inserting themselves into a rehearsal each day. Best wishes and a standing offer of advice from your MMEA family as you develop your program.

The 2023 History Room at the annual conference received a lot of visitors during Thursday and Friday's sessions. In the spirit of this issue's column, please offer suggestions on what you'd like to see in upcoming editions of the *MSM* and also in coming years at the display.

Congratulations to 25-year Service Award Recipients Laura Smith and Ed Lammers. If you are coming up on 25 years of music education, please submit your name for recognition at the Friday evening General Session. 🎵



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## ANDREWS, from pg. 41

a lack of support. Teachers can facilitate a safe and inclusive environment through open discussion of their support of LGBTQ+ individuals and the inclusion of LGBTQ+ composers and topics in the repertoire. Additionally, according to the authors, gendered ensemble titles, like "Women's Choir," or "Men's Glee," and certain rehearsal language can isolate members from feeling fully part of the

community, as shared in one of the responses:

A trope that has become standard choral parlance of referring to TB voices as 'men' and SA voices as 'women' is EXTREMELY CISSEXIST IN NATURE and [makes] me as a trans person singing in a choir feel very awkward and uncomfortable. (Palkki & Caldwell, 2018, p. 40)

While simple adjustments to semantics can make a world

of difference to students, the actions teachers take can make a difference, too, according to Palkki and Caldwell. Having detailed non-discrimination policies in place that offer protection for a variety of groups (not just LGBTQ+) from bullying and even the simple posting of a safe space sticker can impact students' feelings of security and support, according to the authors. Many transgender

**See ANDREWS, pg. 44**

# Daniel Hellman



***SMT*** (*Society for Music Teacher Education*) ***Chair***



## Teacher Recruitment and Retention: What Can We Do Together?

"I noticed how much that you really work to relate with and help other students. Have you ever thought about being a music teacher? You could be doing this every day. It is really a great life to teach music to young people."

"I hadn't really thought about that before. Do you think I really could do it?"

"It sounds fun, but I don't really know that I could live on a teacher's salary. No offense. I really, really appreciate everything that you give to us. But it just doesn't seem like that you earn a fair salary and respect for all that you do."

"Making music is fun and all, but working in a school is not for me. I love music, but I just can't see myself being a teacher. What other types of jobs could I pursue with a music degree?"

Who will teach the next generation of music teachers? This is a question that has been in the forefront of our minds given the pressures that have been growing in schools and the increasing positions that have gone unfilled or are currently filled by less than fully certified teachers. This is an issue that has long been discussed, researched and debated among music educators (Garner, 2010; Robison et al, 2019). Notably, the shortage of teachers has become much more recognized as an important issue by policy makers and the general public (Blue Ribbon Commission, 2022).

The future of music education rests on music learning being a valued experience in schools taught by knowledgeable and compassionate teachers. It is a shared responsibility. While it is a responsibility we have whether we teach at elementary schools, middle schools, high schools or universities, it is also a responsibility shared by everyone in society. The status, remuneration, respect and support experienced by teachers is a frequent theme that is voiced as to why some colleagues are considering not entering or leaving the profession (Robison et al, 2019). This is a concern that we share with our teaching colleagues across K-12 schools.

**See HELLMAN, pg. 50**

respondents in the study reported the quandary of 'gendered' choir uniforms (e.g., dresses and tuxedos). For some subsets of the LGBTQ+ community, these guidelines can be problematic and uncomfortable. Language, uniforms, and policies that reinforce gender stereotypes should be avoided so that every member feels comfortable being their authentic self. As one participant stated, "Just having an authority figure who accepted all people was life changing. It's part of the reason I'm going into music education. I want to be that person for somebody because of who my choir teacher was for me" (Palkki & Caldwell, 2018, p. 36). And, while some students reported not disclosing their identity in the context of the school choral program, many expressed gratitude for knowing they were safe regardless.

For many music educators desiring to create gender-inclusive classrooms, it is less about "the why" and more about "the how." According to Garrett & Spano (2017), music teachers are well poised to have a positive impact on their students. In their study of three hundred secondary music teacher participants—87% of whom reported as heterosexual male or female—most indicated a strong level of comfortability supporting LGBTQ+ individuals in the classroom. Any discomfort stemmed largely from not knowing how to incorporate related topics and issues into the course curriculum, citing a lack of resources and training. Among the most important finding from this research is the suggestion that professional development

training related to LGBTQ+ issues may increase the number and types of inclusion strategies used.

Much like Garrett & Spano (2017) suggested, Taylor (2021) also recommends the critical importance of teacher training and open dialogue for educators and preservice teachers. Taylor's case study offers a unique perspective from the lens of four openly gay white male music teachers in separate school districts across the United States. The participants had full administrative support without the need to hide their orientation, although the author acknowledged this is a privilege not always afforded to others; "... mentors would be remiss to assume everyone lives in a world free of anti-gay prejudice. Those who have witnessed homophobia may be especially concerned for preservice teachers' professional and personal safety" (p. 443). With this in mind, forging new teacher identities is particularly challenging for those members of the LGBTQ+ community who must decide if they will live openly or in secret. Data from this study showed that when teachers were open about their sexuality, under the right circumstances, students and teachers felt empowered. One open teacher participant said he felt his ability to be open strengthened "his empathy and connection to students" (p. 442). Each individual's coming out journey is unique and worthy of respect, which is critical for heterosexual teachers to acknowledge and support. Not only should educators strive to support their students, but it is important they have empathy and understanding for the experiences of their colleagues, too. A strong collegial

atmosphere benefits the entire school, influencing, among other areas, school quality and student performance.

Music educators desiring to support their LGBTQ+ school populations must make great efforts to fully educate themselves on the terminology and differences between the individual subsets as each group represents diverse experiences, challenges, and concerns. This should be an ongoing endeavor so that as society's understanding, recognition, and inclusion of diverse identities and expressions continues to evolve, so must our comprehension and proficiency with them. Nichols (2013) warned that the combining of LGBTQ+ persons into essentially one large undifferentiated group can be problematic. Not only does this obscure the concerns of the individual groups, but it can have dangerous repercussions on a student's physical, emotional and mental state. For singers, there are vocal considerations concerning physical changes, changes to the voice, and vocal identity. Nichols's research is a narrative account of Ryan (referred to interchangeably as Rie), a highly expressive, gender-variant student, and his experiences in public school and school music. Honoring Rie's voice and expertise through emancipatory storysharing, the author highlighted the importance of music for self-expression and community-seeking in the lives of transgender students. In speaking of her experiences with significant bullying and lack of support from multiple constituents, Rie shared:

**See ANDREWS, pg. 46**

# Aaron Wacker



## *Advancing Music Education Chair*



### **Advocating for Growth and Promoting Change**

As the “Grow MO” theme suggested, growth was a reoccurring concept at this year’s MMEA conference. On Wednesday night of the conference, I observed evident growth as I watched the new All-State group “The Collective.” I have introduced contemporary music techniques similar to The Collective’s concept to students in the music education principles course I teach at Southeast Missouri State (SEMO). I witnessed on the stage what I see in my classroom, where young musicians collaborate to compose music and create not only harmony and rhythm but also a sense of excitement when they perform and a sense of community and support when their friends perform. Indeed, this is the power of music education!

I was struck by the many beautiful performing ensembles that occurred the days following; moreover, I was impressed by the MMEA executive board’s efforts to bring in groups to showcase what smaller programs can offer. Recently, in an *Update: Application*

*of Research in Music Education* article, “Does Music Education Have a Poverty Problem?” Beveridge (2022) reported that students in poverty participate in music at a lower rate than students from higher-income backgrounds. Moreover, we are entering the most significant U.S. music teacher shortage (Hash, 2021). Consequently, our profession urgently needs to not only consider ways to honor what we have, but also reimagine new curricula.

Recent literature outlines areas on which to focus to increase participation in secondary music ensembles: structural, logistical concerns, interpersonal and intrapersonal factors, teacher attitudes, and educational policy (Beveridge, 2022; Pendergast, 2020). In this limited space, I focus on areas in which we can most quickly effect change: a) interpersonal and intrapersonal factors, b) logistical concerns and structural reasons, and c) teacher attitudes.

#### **Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Factors**

Interpersonal skills enable teachers and students to work well with others, while intrapersonal skills help us recognize our capabilities. For example, teachers with well-developed interpersonal skills can communicate effectively and work collaboratively with students and build stronger and more meaningful relationships with them to promote the students’ creativity, productivity, and learning. Furthermore, culturally responsive practices may help align music classes with student values, aptitudes, and identities (Pendergast, 2020). Consequently, higher education should consider past music experiences and reach out to inner city, urban, and rural schools to recruit students and add alternative music ensembles like “The Collective” to recruit diverse teachers.

**See WACKER, pg. 46**

## ANDREWS, from pg. 44

It was a nightmare. I wished I was dead every day because I didn't want to go. The only thing that kept me going was knowing that I would be able to go and play [in band] and I would be able to go and sing [in choir], because that was the one thing that no one could take away from me was my music. I could express myself the most freely through music. So that, to me, was my safe zone because it was my out. (p. 267)

For Ryan, the band and choir rooms were his sanctuaries, as it is for the many other "Ryans" and "Ries" in the world. And while this is in itself an important takeaway, the author offered an even more compelling closing message for educators:

Rie viewed this project as an opportunity to be heard. I viewed the project as one answer among an infinity of responses to the rhetorical question, "Who do we teach?" Scholars have critiqued the relevancy of the current practices of music education and called for change. I posit that meaningful change will happen as we listen to the voices of our students, engage their lives in all of their complexity and daily approximations, and become open to what may be learned in the process. (Nichols, 2013, p. 276)

As educators, we should be committed to the highest levels of ethical and professional practice. Regardless of personal beliefs, it is our responsibility

to advocate and provide educational opportunities for all students, making connections to students' cultures, languages, and life experiences. As society's understanding of diverse sexual identities and gender expressions has grown more inclusive, it is our role as educators to practice cultural competency by staying informed and reflective about our own curriculum and instruction so that we are truly cultivating an environment that is safe, inviting, and open to all.

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## WACKER, from pg. 45

### Logistical and Structural Concerns

Although mainly hidden, many structural and logistical barriers impede the ability of students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds to enroll in music courses. For example, students may drop music if they are required, but cannot afford to purchase an instrument (Costa-Giomi & Chappell, 2007). Moreover, contemporary music is associated with lower costs than Western classical ensembles. Therefore, schools should lessen family's financial contribution so more students can join music classes, such as by limiting evening commitments so students can join other activities, find work, or move toward a chamber music model. In fact, in rural schools, jazz ensembles may be more successful because they require fewer students than traditional large ensembles.

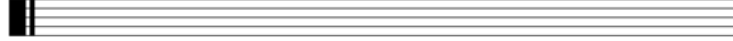
### Teacher Attitudes

Teachers who care about students and are passionate about music may have the most powerful influence on music classrooms. However, students may be more passionate about different music than we are, considering teachers and students generally represent different backgrounds. Therefore, students may find our music irrelevant or, worse, representative of oppressive cultures; as a result, students may fail to enroll or drop music courses (Aróstegui & Louro, 2009). Moreover, while poverty is not exclusive to the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color)

See WACKER, pg. 48



# Jeff Melsha



*Retired Members Chair*



## **Growth and Retention for Retirees**

Do you remember the steps you took in recruiting your next class of musicians? How hard you worked to ignite that musical spark in a class of willing (or not so willing) participants? Recruiting, growing, and retaining musicians is an ongoing activity. In 2023, young educators in the classroom are teaching like their hair is on fire! While blending content with humor, context with empathy, and high standards with grace, young teachers in the profession often struggle to grow and retain their musicians. Retired music educators can offer extra eyes, ears, and hands to classroom teachers as they work to build their music programs. MMEA values mentorship and has deemed it vital for individual success. But WHO experiences success? I contend that both the mentor and the mentee learn from each other, providing thorough engagement. Here are several ways a retired music educator can assist in growth and retention.

Anyone with piano skills is an asset to any musical ensemble. Consider serving a music program as an accompanist. Undoubtedly, there is a young musician near you needing an accompanist. Not only are you providing help to the music teacher, but your help with a student could very well be the incentive for a student to continue their study of music.

If you still have the desire to work with a musical group, volunteer to listen to and coach small or large ensembles. Share your tips and techniques with the students and the teacher. This is your chance to offer your valuable skills to others, but even more important, to show young people how to “give back” to the school and community.

Offer to teach private lessons. Extra individual attention may be what it takes to encourage and inspire a young musician to continue their work in music. Share your student notes and approach with the teacher, offering advice on how to make progress and what methods you prescribe. You, the student, and the teacher will grow!

If you want to be available for observation and listening to the concerns of a young educator, your experience will serve as a valuable resource. Listen carefully and offer thoughts on the approach a young educator may take. A second great activity for mentoring is to offer to drive a young educator to a neighboring school's concert or to a professional development opportunity. You will have the opportunity for vibrant conversation on the way there and back.

**See MELSHA, pg. 54**

community, students of color are disproportionately more likely to live in poverty (Lorah et al., 2014). These conditions emphasize the need for teachers to employ their interpersonal skills (to open communication with students to learn about their music interests) and culturally relevant pedagogy (to address students' different cultural backgrounds) so music programs in every school can succeed.

Also affecting teacher attitude is the lower pay and resources offered in urban and rural schools, as opposed to suburban schools. Music majors tend to want to return to a community like the one from their childhood. When helping SEMO (Southeast Missouri State University) students apply for jobs, I have noticed that some of our students often disregard vacancies in rural southeast Missouri and apply for jobs in schools that resemble their high school experience. Furthermore, evidence shows that when teachers accept positions in lower-paying school districts, they will likely abandon programs for a higher-income area (Abramo, 2015), where they encounter music ensembles closer to the types they studied. Therefore, teachers in all areas must encourage students to enroll in music education programs, and, more importantly, music schools must recruit students from all areas (inner city, urban, suburban, and rural) and offer more unique music experiences that match the current population of students' interests.

### **Conclusion**

I always ask my music education students, "Who should be allowed to study music?" After some confusion, I hear a unanimous "everyone"! Then I respond, "Wonderful! So why do certain demographics not participate in music?" This opens a more extensive discussion of barriers, pay-to-play issues, relevant programming, and a more well-rounded ensemble offering. I challenge Missouri music teachers to engage in these discussions with an open mind. Are we preparing future teachers to meet the needs of students who do not look, act, or believe like us? What are our curricular priorities? Do our choices reflect an unspoken power structure? How can I affect positive change within my classroom? Direct actions, like participating in MMEA's Advocacy Day or NAFME's Hill Day in DC, should remain a priority. Nonetheless, smaller actions in our classrooms also can affect the future and ensure every Missouri student has access to relevant music courses taught by qualified educators.

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**See WACKER, pg. 52**

# Jennifer Patterson



## MIOSM Chair



### Music Is All of Us

I'd like to begin with a word of thanks to all of the vice presidents, advisory board members, and everyone who worked diligently to put on the 85th annual MMEA In-Service Workshop/Conference, as well as words of congratulations to all the performing ensembles! I came back refreshed and ready to take on the rest of the school year.

When I saw the theme for this *Missouri School Music Magazine* was "Growth and Retention," I struggled for a little while on the topic. As an elementary general music teacher, I have all 600 students at my school in my program, so "growth and retention" means something different to elementary teachers than it does to secondary music teachers whose students may select music as electives. Whether your students are in your program by choice or by default, growth and retention can apply to so many of our goals for students!

When students are engaged and enjoy the instruction, their musical knowledge grows. A past clinician at the MMEA annual In-service Workshop/Conference is Artie Almeida. If you are unfamiliar with her, she is the author of *Mallet Madness* (Heritage Music Press, ISBN 9780893284442) and a slew of other great publications for elementary general music. Almeida uses the phrase "heavy academics delivered joyfully." She is building on the research that long-term knowledge retention will need many more repetitions if the activity is stale and uninteresting, compared to many fewer repetitions needed if the activity is presented in a fun, engaging way. We have each experienced this in our own academic and teaching journeys: when learning in a fun, enjoyable environment, students learn new content faster than when the learning is dull and monotonous. As you look forward to the spring and plan your lessons and rehearsals, think of new ways you can infuse "heavy academics delivered joyfully!"



"Growth and retention" fits right in with the annual NAFME Music in Our Schools Month theme! This year's theme is: Music is All of Us. There are several resources available on the national website: <https://nafme.org/programs/miosm/> Some of the items there are still the 2022 resources, but they can be easily adapted to this year if needed. Resources include: advocacy resources, a printable program handout to add to your printed performance programs, changing your profile picture for Twitter and Facebook to the logo for MIOSM during March, and several items for sale in the NAFME store featuring the MIOSM logo. I'd like to thank Phyllis Pasley, Executive Director of the Missouri Alliance for Arts Education, for working with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. DESE will recognize March as Music in our Schools Month at the state level and bring more awareness to the amazing music education happening all across Missouri! As you share out on social media, please include the hashtag #MIOSMMO23. It's great to see the wonderful things you are doing in your programs! 🎵

Music educators have been concerned about the future of the teaching force for decades. The factors that influence high school students to become music teachers has been a widely studied topic by music education researchers (Robison et al, 2019). The results of this research have revealed that music teachers do have a large influence on the decision to pursue music as a major, but it is also more complicated. Music teachers are quite influential when it comes to the decision to pursue music study as a college major, however, music teachers have less influence over the decision to pursue music education. What researchers have found is that the decision to pursue teaching is a more individualized decision and largely subject to what individuals believe about their life choices and own well-being.

Recruiting future teachers is a complex activity. It involves getting to know peoples' motivation, sharing positive reasons while also recognizing that it is a life choice. Music education researchers have found that participating in activities that provides an opportunity to try out teaching can be influential on the decision to enter teaching (Robison et al, 2019). This does not mean that every student who experiences being a teaching assistance or volunteering as a A+ tutor in a music classroom will go into teaching. However, it certainly can be very meaningful in motivating their desire to teach music. Providing these kinds of opportunities can help students understand what teaching is all about and develop a deeper understanding of teaching. Students who come to the university with these types of experiences often have a deep, insightful and sustained motivations for music teaching.

As a profession, we are also keenly aware that expanding the diversity of the music teachers is needed. The challenges of diversifying the music teaching profession have frequently been discussed in music education (Robison et al, 2019; McKoy & Lind, 2016; Payne & Ward, 2019; Royston & Springer, 2014). Entrance requirements, auditions, a highly sequenced series of courses that allow for little flexibility—these are all issues that have been recognized as barriers for entering music teaching. Perhaps, this is one reason that most preservice music teachers decide to pursue music as a major by the sophomore year of high school and to become a music teacher by the junior year (Robison et al, 2019). In a world in which the typical college student changes their major three times, perhaps it is not surprising that many choose to not pursue music teaching.

What does motivate preservice teachers is the desire to teach others to love and enjoy music. There are also barriers that preservice teachers experience who want to be music teachers. In some schools, students may not have access to lessons or a variety of music classes. Without the opportunity for lessons and instructional resources, some students are at a disadvantage for getting admitted to, staying in, entering, and remaining in music teaching. There are success stories of those who become music teachers, and stories of those who become music teachers but never feel fully accepted (Talbot, 2018). Shortages among teachers are not only due to the availability and supply of music teachers (Gardner, 2010; Hancock, 2008). For years, it has been acknowledged that teacher retention is a significant issue in the teaching profession. These are important issues that we should be concerned with as a profession.

The factors that impact teacher recruitment and retention are complex, but there are things that can be done to remedy the situation. We can promote the value of public education and help all students and families who participate in music programs to recognize that how they talk about teaching and education matter. We can work to align K-12 and university curricula and learn from one another. We can work to provide the instructional materials, and private lessons that students need at earlier age. We can work to encourage the increase of grants and college assistance for any students considering teaching. We can work to increase the styles and diversity of music included in K-12 and university curricula. We can recognize the importance of future teachers seeing people like themselves in the teaching profession. These are not things that we can do alone but as a profession, community and society, we can work to improve things for the future.

**See HELLMAN, pg. 52**





*Shawn Harrel*

*Technology Chair*

## **Creating a Student Made Video for Growth and Retention**

When thinking about the theme of this issue, “growth and retention”—a recent project completed by students in my audio/video technology class came to mind. I’m in a unique role as a music educator focusing on audio technology, but I also teach students about video production techniques. These things combine beautifully to help music teachers recruit and expand their programs and retain the students they already have the pleasure of teaching.

When this school year started, students enrolled in Digital Media Technology at Summit Technology Academy wanted to work on a project to help recruit students to middle school band and retain students as they move into high school band. As I write this, a different group of students is working on creating a video for our district’s orchestra program, and another team is forming to start work on a choir video as well. The excitement of these projects is infectious, and the benefits will snowball throughout the music programs in the district.

How could you create a recruitment and promo video for your program? I suggest you connect with your high school broadcasting students, a career and technical education (CTE) film/media/marketing class, or even a local college program or former student. What follows is some advice on the process of a student-led project based on our experience creating a band promotional video for the Lee’s Summit R7 School District.

The project starts with a vision or concept. This can come from you or you can begin the brainstorming process with your student leadership and the video production students. What kind of video are you looking for, and what visuals can you imagine? The early stages should begin by solidifying the style/tone, the key message, and the call to action. In our video, the call to action was “Join a family. Join band.”

The next phase of preproduction is typically scriptwriting. A two-column script works well for this. One column contains the

script, and the other contains visual ideas that align with the script. At this phase, the script might include themes, interview questions, important bullet points, music advocacy, and highlights of the program’s success. It depends on the vision you have in mind from the concept meeting. The visuals can be pretty broad, but you might consider using existing live performance footage and highlighting all aspects of the program. Planning interview dates and locations are also important steps early in the process.

Select and “cast” a diverse group of student musicians who you know have a great story to tell. You can help your video team find the best location for filming, considering factors such as available lighting, noise levels, and how easy it will be for them to load in and out. Based on feedback from our band directors,

**See HARREL, pg. 56**

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**WACKER, from pg. 48**

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# Affiliate Reports

## Missouri Choral Directors Association Amy Krinke, President

Connection = Retention. This concept seems so simple in theory, but in practice takes an incredible amount of forethought and intentionality. Put plainly, retention cannot occur unless we make substantial efforts to connect to one another in sincere and authentic ways. Post-pandemic, the need for this connection is front and center. This has caused me to re-evaluate time and time again how I foster connectedness in the various spheres where I work and live.

**Time is of the essence:** In the past, I could bet on the idea that once someone was hooked, people would stick it out for at least a year. Now, as “quiet-quitting” and “cancel culture” are more acceptable, the time we have to plug in, connect, and build relationships is shorter. People give new endeavors a couple of chances and if it isn’t fulfilling or worthwhile, they move on to the next thing.

**Connection and Community:** This is all about getting the basics right. Building connections through community means ensuring people feel a tie to the work we are doing together. People desire to be challenged, to contribute meaningfully to the goals of the group, and to develop a sense of belonging. For people to feel valued, they need to feel these connections immediately. As a leader of a group, it takes a lot of thought and perceptiveness to find the nuances in the group dynamics that reveal how each individual is functioning musically and socially.

**Retaining people is harder than attracting them:** What gets someone in the door, is not going to keep them. The most obvious example I can think of comes from my own teaching career. The reasons I was initially attracted to teaching are absolutely not the reasons I have decided to stay. I think in most group settings, people stay for different reasons than what they initially expected.

**Show them their future:** Connectedness goes above and beyond the here and now. As leaders, we can help our people see what lies ahead for them in the future. When people can picture themselves growing and belonging to something for the long haul, they will be more motivated to stay when the going gets tough.

If I have learned anything from these past few years, it is that people, ALL people, regardless of where we interact with them, are looking for experiences that are satisfying and inspiring. In short, people are looking for meaning. We have to think about this proactively and throughout the entire year. Recruiting and retaining isn’t a once-a-year thought. It is a continuously moving target that we need to keep our sights on and consistently address.

MCDA is always looking for new ways to connect with our membership. Here are a few shoutouts and ways to connect:

- The MCDA Longevity Project recognizes MCDA members by documenting and celebrating years of membership. Longevity lists can be found at <https://www.moacda.org/mcda-longevity>. Kathy Bhat is the curator of the longevity lists, if you have any questions or corrections, please contact [kathybhat@gmail.com](mailto:kathybhat@gmail.com).
- If you have a colleague you would like to celebrate, consider a nomination for one of our state-level awards: Prelude, Newcomer, Podium, Opus, Luther T. Spade, and Outstanding District Director. Check the MCDA website for more information and descriptions.

**See KRINKE, pg. 55**

There are many music companies that hire consultants to prep instrument orders, serve as rental consultants, and work with directors in recruiting and mouthpiece fittings. If you have ability and availability, reach out and offer your time to a music vendor.

Retired music teachers have many opportunities to assist, advise, and mentor younger educators who can likely use the help. Young music educators have many questions and problems to solve. Together, mentoring can help both the experienced and the inexperienced educator, but the real benefactors are the students we hope to retain in our growing programs. 🎵



**Retired Members Breakfast attendees - 2023 MMEA Conference/Clinics**



**Past-Presidents' Dinner**



**Past-Presidents Spouses' Dinner**



**Slate of MMEA Officer Candidates  
for 2024-2026 term**



# Affiliate Reports

## Missouri Bandmasters Association Kenny Hansen, President

Hello Missouri Band Directors! First order of business is to say congratulations and thank you to Brad Hudson for his efforts organizing the All-State Band. Brad printed audition slips, organized the auditions, adjusted the first rehearsals due to weather, and everything in between! The All-State Band was a success due to his hard work and efforts over the past few months! Sarah Sacco, our incoming All-State Band Coordinator, also assisted Brad. A big thanks to both!

Second order of business is to congratulate the Missouri band directors for preparing the amazing students who performed in the All-State Band. The students were phenomenal in all the rehearsals. This is direct reflection of the leadership and daily efforts of all our Missouri band directors. Dr. Jamie Nix was an incredible conductor for the ensemble, and he led the band with great enthusiasm and musicianship. The students had a wonderful time preparing the program and played beautifully. Congratulations to everyone once again!

Third order of business is to gear up for the Summer MBA Convention. The convention is from June 18-21. It is 3 days of band exclusive Professional Development. This year's convention will feature great clinicians like: Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser, Col. Schofield (US Air Force Band), Chris Sprague (MMEA Past President), Ted Keck (North Harrison MMEA honor band), Clarence Smith, and Brenda Kueck (jazz clinicians). The purpose of the summer convention is to continue learning a well-rounded approach to being a band director. The convention will feature clinics about many topics and will help schools of all sizes. If you are an experienced teacher, we need your mentorship for our younger directors at the convention. Our motto is "Building Better Bands" and that only happens with veterans coming to the convention and sharing with our younger directors. For our younger directors, there are several "Young Band Director Grants" for teachers who have finished student teaching through teaching 3 years. Look at [www.missouribandmasters.org](http://www.missouribandmasters.org) to find forms for the "Young Band Directors Grant." If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to any member of the board. 🎵

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### KRINKE, from pg. 53

- Jackson Thomas, our Youth and Student Resource Chair started a GroupMe at the MMEA conference to connect with our college students. These folks are the future leaders in our profession and growing our student membership is a top priority. If you are a college student who hopes to connect, please email [jthomas@ucmo.edu](mailto:jthomas@ucmo.edu)
- You won't want to miss the summer conference, July 18-21, 2023 in Springfield. MCDA: Woven is certain to offer incredible opportunities for professional development and networking. Our lineup of headliners is phenomenal. Registration is already open and information about submitting students for our honor choirs is also available on the [www.moacda.org](http://www.moacda.org) website.

My hope for this spring is that we all find ways to stay connected through the various parts of our work making music. If you are struggling or feeling a need to connect, know that MCDA is here for you! I hope to see many of you this summer—Be well, friends! 🎵

our crew could have done a better job preparing the interview subjects for the interviews. This could be done through a virtual pre-interview or even an online form.

Schedule the filming sessions and assume that everything will take about two or three times longer than you think it will! Our students filmed over multiple days at multiple locations. Planning for extra time and days will make the process feel less stressful.

One of our band directors shared the following advice:

Prepare for the filming days by telling the classroom students what to expect, and how to manage when there is a camera in the room. It may not be a surprise that 6th graders act a little differently when they know a camera is there!

Get a TON of footage and ensure it feels like ALL demographics are being covered. Students need to know that other students who look like them can play an instrument and pursue music. But in the end, keep it short . . . attention spans don't last long anymore.

The first edit of our video was over eight minutes long. With my help, the students got the video down to about 3.5 minutes. We learned a lot through the process (the video is not perfect), and the students have already discussed other projects they can do to continue supporting growth and retention in music.

Follow the QR code to see the video created by Lee's Summit West High School/Summit Technology Academy students Jacob Loesch, Lily Page, Matthew Hilger, Miles Thurmond, Parker Bradford, and Taylor Cook. 🎵



**Electronic Composition Award Winners**  
**First place: Chase Mortensen; Second place: Zachary Pupillo; Third place: Zach Summers**  
**Shawn Harrel, sponsor**

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# District Reports

**Northwest District #1**  
**Jeff Clymore, President,**

## **Ideas for Recruitment**

The year is half over; elementary schools are celebrating the 100th day. Middle School students are asking if they have to perform every day, and high school students look as if they haven't slept in days. You just got back from your yearly pilgrimage to the MMEA conference and you are looking ahead to upcoming events. You suddenly realize you have to recruit new students for next year. Last year you just let anyone sign up and this year you are unhappy with whom you have in class as beginners. You vow to do something about it this year. Where should you start? What should you do? Allow me to offer some suggestions that have worked well in the past. The most important things are to communicate, plan and follow up.

### **Communicate**

The first and most important way to get students in your music class is to communicate. You need to communicate with parents, students, and administrators early and often about your program. Students want something to look forward to, parents want to plan for expenses, and administrators need to make sure everything is planned out in the school schedule.

I send home a letter with students in late March that outlines what my class will look like next year. The letter has my contact information and important dates for parents. It has pictures and quotes, and looks pleasing to catch students' attention. This letter goes home in emails to students and parents. I meet with administrators to discuss what days will work in their schedule to visit the 5th grade and perform for the whole class.

### **Plan an Event**

I always do a performance for the incoming 5th grade students. I try to use my 6th grade students when possible, to show what can be learned in one year. Some years I have been able to have a petting zoo for the 5th grade where they could see instruments up close and ask questions about each instrument. Whatever your event may be, make it fun and inviting for all students. Audience participation is always a good idea.

### **Follow Up**

After the event, I like to follow up with another email reminding students and parents about the class selection process our school uses. I let them know how to get registered for my class and let them know when everything must be completed. I have them ask any questions now so I don't miss any signups.

I also like to meet with the 5th grade music teacher to see who her most musical students were. I check the lists of students who have preregistered to make sure all of these students are in my class. If any are missing, I make a personal phone call to see why students did not register for the class. I often find that parents haven't talked with their students and don't realize they have to be preregistered to get into my class. This step, more than any other, has made a big difference with recruiting the best music students.

**See CLYMORE, pg. 59**





# District Reports

## **CLYMORE, from pg. 58**

As always, you are the expert for your program. Don't be afraid to try new things. If they don't get the results you hoped for, then change them for next year. Make recruitment an important part of your overall picture for your program. Without it, you may find that fewer and fewer students participate. 🎵

### ***Northeast District #2 Josh Yancey, President***

The Northeast Missouri Music Educators Association has been actively focusing on obtaining their 501c3 status, mentoring in the district, as well as facilitating discussions about the possible redistricting of MMEA. For several years the NE district has been working towards having a viable mentoring program. This year we feel as though we have been able to make more progress than previous years. Mentoring chair Lisa Dobbs (Fayette) has been working diligently with mentors and mentees, laying groundwork for continued growth in this area. District 2 hopes to obtain their 501c3 status this spring. The fall semester was spent communicating with the board and making sure that finances were transparent before moving forward. Redistricting has been an interesting topic of discussion thus far. Responses have been positive and teachers in our district are curious as to how this will play out.

### **Growth and Retention- From the Ground Up! -**

Growth and retention are topics that we all address every day within our secondary performance programs. But to really address growth and retention we need to make sure the elementary/intermediate music educators and our communities surrounding our school are involved as well! It takes all stakeholders to grow and sustain programs.

"From the ground up" means that students in their first school musical experiences at the early elementary level are provided the building blocks for igniting curiosity and love of music. Such building blocks include learning to sing together in groups, learning rhythms with body movement, rhythm sticks or guiros. Learning instrumental fundamentals could be on recorders, ukuleles and other hands-on experiential learning in order to give students the foundation to develop their love of music.

"From the ground up" means that parental/guardian support at home is essential for both growth and retention. Keeping the students' support system at home informed so they know what is expected of them, and how they can help their students be successful is not an option, but a requirement. Nurturing this system in particular can have its challenges, but with some effort and attention it can also be very rewarding.

"From the ground up" means that your school's community is a partner in your school's music programs and what they have to offer. It's amazing how much connection and appreciation can come from having a presence in your community. A choir or instrumental group at the Christmas tree lighting, your jazz band or show choir performing on the square for the town festival, your 3rd graders singing the National Anthem at the tractor pull at the fair—these performances pay dividends in the short and long term!

**See YANCEY, pg. 60**



# District Reports

**YANCEY, from pg. 59**

"From the ground up" means that those of us fortunate enough to have colleagues who teach the various disciplines of vocal and instrumental music at the middle school and high school levels are supportive of each other and work with their colleagues at the elementary levels as well. We should be working together to make the entire music program at their schools successful. When we all work together, goals are more attainable than when we work against one another. For those of us who are "THE" band/choir/k-12 music teacher for your district, remember that while it can be lonely at times, we have our neighbors and colleagues that are an email or phone call away. Just having someone to bounce ideas off, someone with different experiences, someone with an outside perspective can really be helpful for any size school or teaching situation.

Growth and retention are not things that just happen. We must work at it every day. We must ensure that all stakeholders are involved and cared for. We must make sure that we take care of each other: Colleagues within our own school districts and our colleagues from other school districts as well. Together we can build it and retain it "from the ground up!"

## Officers:

President	Josh Yancey (Mexico)	jyancey@mexico.k12.mo.us
Past President	Bill Schaffer (Wright City)	
President-Elect	Erick Blankenship (Troy Buchanan)	blankene@troy.k12.mo.us
Secretary	Erin Johnson (Westran)	ejohnson@westran.k12.mo.us
Treasurer	Debbie Higbee-Roberts (Hannibal)	dhigbee@hannibal60.com
Band VP	Chris Barchesky (Troy-Buchanan)	BARCHESC@troy.k12.mo.us
Jazz VP	Michael Fuller (Hannibal)	mfuller@hannibal60.com
JH Band VP	Nick Welker (Moberly)	nicholaswelker@moberlyspartans.org
HS Choir VP	Sara Kurz and Kate Fuller (Hannibal)	kfuller@hannibal60.com
		skurz@hannibal60.com
JH Choir	Christine Elsea (Columbia)	celsea@cpsk12.org
Elem Choir VP	Kimberly Guilford (Macon)	kguilford@macon.k12.mo.us
MIOSM	Brian Parks (Fr. Tolton High School)	bparks@toltoncatholic.org
Mentor Chair	Lisa Dobbs (Fayette)	ldobbs@fayetteschool.org
University Chair	Curran Prendergast (Truman State University)	cprend@truman.edu
Webmaster	Kevin Fearn (Harrisburg)	FearnK@harrisburg.k12.mo.us 🎵

## Kansas City Metro District #3 Joseph Hill, President

We would like to congratulate MMEA and the board of directors for a wonderful convention this year! We would also like to congratulate these groups from the KC Metro for their outstanding performances!

Liberty North High School Wind Symphony, directed by Shane Fuller  
 Pleasant Lea Middle School Black and Gold Concert Choir, directed by Courtney Williams.  
 Staley High School Chamber Choir, directed by Tracy Tesseguie  
 Liberty North High School Chamber Orchestra, directed by Alysse Trusty  
 University of Missouri - Kansas City Conservatory Singers, directed by Jennaya Robison 🎵



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# District Reports

## KC Metro District #3 Officers

President	Joseph Hill	Joseph.hill@raytownschools.org
President Elect	Justin Doss	justin.doss@lps53.org
Treasurer	Brady Finch	brady.finch@lsr7.net
Band VP	Carrie Epperson	carrie.epperson@nkcschools.org
Band VP Elect	Andrew Gillespie	gillespiea@parkhill.k12.mo.us
MS Band VP	Michael Dragen	michael.dragen@lps53.org
Jazz VP	Dylan Noble	dnoble@bsd124.org
Orchestra VP	Alysse Trusty	alysse.trusty@lps53.org
MS Orchestra VP	Selene Hernandez	selene_hernandez@isdschools.org
Choir VP	Jacob Lowry	jacob.lowry@lsr7.net

## **West Central District #4** **Sara Summers, President**

As we dive into the second half of the school year, we cannot lose sight of two important goals for our music programs: growth and retention. For me there is no better day on the calendar than the day I get to travel across town with my high school band students to perform for the fifth-grade class in hopes of recruiting as many of them as possible to join the band program. The joy and excitement that emanates from their bright eyes and the pride that the high school students take in preparing for and performing on this day is a feeling that motivates me to draw those kids into my program and give them such an amazing experience that they never want to leave!

One can feel the energy and enthusiasm start to build as the drumline plays a cadence. As students enter the room, kids in the audience connect with the high school students. The older students come to the front to share why they chose to join band and why they have not quit. Curiosity is sparked when each instrument is proudly shown, described and performed, and when the fact that “you can be in band and do everything else you want to do too!” is stated, the collective cheers from the audience are epic!

Of course, the next step to furthering the mission of growth is ensuring that quality recruiting materials are printed and sent home. These do not have to be fancy brochures that may cost your program an exorbitant amount of money, but quality in this instance should mean that information is accurate and the product should look like the person “selling it” cares to make it look professional. Proofread your materials, have a fellow teacher or two proofread as well, and have a seasoned parent proofread for you. A lot of times a seasoned parent who is conditioned to look for pertinent information will help you fill in information you may have forgotten to include. Cross all of your t’s and dot your i’s to make sure you have adequately communicated how awesome being in your program can be and outline everything they need to know in order for both parents and child(ren) to have a successful experience.

**See SUMMERS, pg. 63**





# District Reports

## **SUMMERS, from pg. 62**

Building relationships with a myriad of individuals will play a tremendous role in the growth and retention of any music program. It is so important to foster and cultivate strong relationships with your administration, fellow teachers, counselors, band students, band parents, and community members. It can be a struggle at times, but if a strong working relationship is fostered between you and the previously mentioned individuals, you stand a strong chance of gaining insight into things that could help or hinder your program, such as scheduling. Also, if you teach in a district that serves a widely diverse population, the E.L. teacher(s) in your district can become a tremendous asset to the growth of your program. Utilizing their skills to ensure that information is accurately communicated to non-English speaking parents/guardians is a great way to make sure opportunities are not lost for their children.

An E.L. teacher is a great resource to recruit for your program's growth and retention. In order to guarantee that every student at your school has the opportunity and appropriate information to participate, it has become standard practice in our music programs that all of the parent communication that is disseminated is written, then copied and pasted into one of the largest search engine's translation feature. At that point, the communication is forwarded on to our E.L. teacher, or sometimes a student who is fluent in their native language, to verify that the information was translated correctly and will provide those families with the information that they need for their child's success. The E. L. teacher can also help with translating (or finding a translator) at meetings, and checking in to make sure their students are understanding once they have started classes. This relationship can be invaluable, and can help provide some excellent additions to your program, if you communicate and maintain an alliance. It truly can be a win-win-win situation if managed effectively!

Growth and retention are two never-ending missions of music educators. Growth is a continuous mindset; one is never done growing as a music educator or a person. One must always be planning, forming and maintaining strong relationships, and adapting to accomplish these two goals. Additional things you can do daily are remaining positive, striving to show up to do the best you can for your students, constantly working to get better, listening and learning from your students (they'll teach you more than you think), and creating a culture of belonging. If you consistently do these things, it will reflect on your students and your program over time. In the famous words of Dory: "Just keep swimming, just keep swimming, just keep swimming..." 🎵

**St. Louis Suburban District #5**  
**Brad Balog, President**

## **Connecting Through Music**

Music teachers have wonderful opportunities to impact kids in so many ways. On a daily basis, we create music together, teach life skills, and build an understanding of how to lead, but one of my favorite aspects of teaching music is that we create an atmosphere of belonging for all students. It is this culture that is key to student growth and retention in all of our programs.

We have overcome some ridiculous challenges in education over the past couple of years, but the future is bright for our teachers and our students because the foundation of education is built upon positive

**See BALOG, pg. 64**



# District Reports

## **BALOG, from pg. 63**

relationships with students, colleagues, and families. Kindness, caring, and compassion are the centerpieces to every classroom where kids feel they belong, and the music classroom is an amazing place to create a culture of belonging for all of our students. When students know you care about them, they will do amazing things for each other both inside and outside of the classroom. When we give our energy towards taking care of our students and each other, there is no stopping what we can all collectively do.

We are ready to quickly forget virtual school and everything that went with it in 2020, but I firmly believe that there was a silver lining through that experience. While so many music teachers across the state struggled to find a way to keep kids playing and singing virtually, it became clear that the culture of the music classroom could and would persevere through the challenges. Our music program focused on building and maintaining relationships with our students virtually because our kids valued belonging in our classroom. While we continued to find ways to keep the kids performing, everything we did focused on making connections with each and every student in our programs. Because of this, our kids came back to our programs connected to us and each other. This became very apparent when we started our normal schedule as kids came together and worked for and supported each other. It was amazing to see the joy the kids had for being back together again—back where they belonged.

I hope you are having a wonderful year with your students and everything they bring to your program and school. Please update any changes to your information through our “Directory Form” at [www.slsmea.com](http://www.slsmea.com). We use the directory to share up-to-date information regarding honor ensembles, festivals, and events for students and teachers throughout the school year. If you have any questions or would like additional assistance or resources, please email [balogbrad@rsdmo.org](mailto:balogbrad@rsdmo.org).

## **2022-2024 Executive Board**

President	Brad Balog	Rockwood
Past President	Chelsea Silvermintz	Lindbergh
President-Elect	Steve Patton	Rockwood
HS Band VP	Rebecca Friesen	Kirkwood
HS Jazz VP	Dennis McFarland	Pattonville
MS Band VP	Jared Brockmeyer	Rockwood
MS Jazz VP	Lucas Alberts	Ladue
HS Orchestra VP	Tara Kizer	Lindbergh
MS Orchestra VP	Kyle Alexander	Rockwood
6th Orchestra VP	Clay McKinney	Parkway
MS Choir Co-VP	Graeme Allen	Parkway
MS Choir Co-VP	Karen Kaibel	Parkway
5-6 Vocal VP	Katy Moehlman	Orchard Farm
Mentoring Chair	Kathy Bhat	Orchard Farm

## **Administrative Personnel**

Middle School Festival Director      David Meador

**See BALOG, pg. 65**



# District Reports

## BALOG, from pg. 64

Secretary/Treasurer  
SLSMCDA High School Coordinator  
SLSMEA Website: [www.slsmea.com](http://www.slsmea.com)  
Facebook group: SLSMEA 🎵

Jim Waechter  
Todd Oberlin

### **Central District #6** **Jeff Kile, President**

#### **2023-24 CDMMEA Officers**

President:	Jeff Kile, School of the Osage -	<a href="mailto:kilej@osageschools.org">kilej@osageschools.org</a>
Past-President:	Amy Yoder, School of the Osage -	<a href="mailto:yodera@osageschools.org">yodera@osageschools.org</a>
President-Elect:	Lisa Martin, St. James -	<a href="mailto:lmartin@stjschools.org">lmartin@stjschools.org</a>
Secretary/Treasurer:	Eric Veile, Callaway Hills Elementary -	<a href="mailto:ericveile@gmail.com">ericveile@gmail.com</a> or <a href="mailto:eric.veile@jcschools.us">eric.veile@jcschools.us</a>
High School Band VP:	Mike Goldschmidt, Rolla High School-	<a href="mailto:mgoldschmidt@rolla31.org">mgoldschmidt@rolla31.org</a>
High School Choir VP:	Dutin Felan, St. James -	<a href="mailto:dfelan@stjschools.org">dfelan@stjschools.org</a>
High School Jazz Band VP:	Kevin Blair, Capital City -	<a href="mailto:kevin.blair@jcschools.us">kevin.blair@jcschools.us</a>
JH Band VP:	Jenna Lechner, JC High School -	<a href="mailto:jenna.lechner@jcschools.us">jenna.lechner@jcschools.us</a>
JH Choir VP:	Cydnee Gilmore, Waynesville -	<a href="mailto:cygilmore@waynesville.k12.mo.us">cygilmore@waynesville.k12.mo.us</a>
Elementary Choir VP:	Casey Clark, Dixon,	<a href="mailto:cclark@dixonr1.com">cclark@dixonr1.com</a>
Mentor Chair:	Ken Tucker, Owensville,	<a href="mailto:ktucker@dutchmen.us">ktucker@dutchmen.us</a>

#### **Important CDMMEA Dates 23-24**

March 4, 2023	CDMMEA All District Elementary Choir Performance
June 12, 2023	CDMMEA Executive Board Meeting @ Osage High School 12pm
August 14, 2023	CDMMEA August Business Meeting (Executive Board@5:15/Members@6:00-Rolla HS)
September 16, 2023	CDMMEA HS District Choir Audition @ School of the Osage
October 10, 2023	CDMMEA HS District Band/Jazz Auditions 4:00pm @ Rolla
November 4, 2023	CDMMEA District Band Clinic/Concert @ Waynesville HS
November 7, 2023	CDMMEA District Choir Rehearsal/All State Aud. @ Rolla HS
November 11, 2023	CDMMEA All District Choir Performance @ Waynesville HS
January 6, 2024	CDMMEA All District Jazz Bands and MS Bands @ JC High School
January 27, 2024	CDMMEA Meeting at MMEA
February 3, 2024	CDMMEA All District Middle School Choir Performance @ Waynesville High School
TBA	CDMMEA All District Elementary Choir Performance @ Dixon 🎵



# District Reports

**East Central District #7**  
**Catherine Sikes, President**

## **Growth and Retention**

My best tool for growth and retention is TALKING to kids! Do you see something your student is doing well? Compliment them. Even the smallest conversation can have meaning to your students. Make your students feel seen. So many times, students will show up, quietly do the work and leave. I often will go out of my way to find something to chat about with those students in particular. As we all know, connection is key. Sometimes a silly conversation starter will do the job. One of my personal favorites is "What do you like to do when you are not at school?" This can spark a shared commonality that will help you to create connections with your kids. Let them know they make a difference in your ensemble and that their presence is important!

## **News from the EC7!**

Our All-District Events have been quite successful so far this school year!

All-District HS Choir hosted by Fox High School with guest clinician Dr. Jeffrey Murdock

All-District MS Band hosted at Sullivan High School with guest clinician Dr. Jocelyn Pendergrast

All-District HS Band hosted at Sullivan High School with guest clinician Dr. Joseph Parisi

All-District MS Jazz Band hosted at Jefferson College with guest clinician Mr. Andy Ament

All-District HS Jazz 1 Band hosted at Jefferson College with guest clinician Mr. Randy Hamm

All-District HS Jazz 2 Band hosted at Jefferson College with guest clinician Dr. Bennett Wood

We hosted our All-District Middle School Choir on February 4, 2023 with guest clinician Mr. Danny Guitierrez at Jefferson R7 Performing Arts Center. The All-District Elementary Choir will be held April Saturday, April 22, 2023 at CJB Auditorium-Washington High School with Sandy Knudson, Artistic Director of Oklahoma Youth Sing! (formerly Norman Children's Chorus) as our guest clinician.

The official count at our morning meeting at MMEA was 61! It is exciting to have so many of our teachers attend our state conference and feel it important enough to come together with colleagues and friends and hear about the workings in our district.

Congratulations to our East Central District 7 2023 'Educator of the Year' Matt Sokeland who is the band director at Pacific High School in the Meramec Valley School District.

In addition, we offer congratulations to long-time music educators Deb Row (Antonia Middle School) and Matt Sokeland (Pacific High School). Both of these fine music educators plan to retire at the end of this school year! Cheers to you both! We wish you all the best and blessings for your future!

If you need anything please contact any of our officers - we are here to serve! 🎵

**See SIKES, pg. 67**





# District Reports

**SIKES, from pg. 66**

## **Officers:**

President	Catie Sikes	sikesc@jr7.k12.mo.us
President Elect	Darrell Boyer	boyer.darrell@desoto.k12.mo.us
Past President	Natalie Moore	Mooren@sullivan eagles.org
HS Band VP	Jacob Bubb	jbubb@windsor.k12.mo.us
HS Choir VP	Bethanie Ward	bward@ncsd.k12.mo.us
HS Jazz VP	Tommy Perry	perryt@foxc6.org
MS Band VP	Ryan Staines	rstaines@windsor.k12.mo.us
MS Choir VP	Kelly Pippin	pippink@foxc6.org
MS Jazz VP	Curtis Schroyer	schroyerj@foxc6.org
Elementary Music VP	Jon Logan	Jon.logan@sdownmo.org
College Representative	Aaron Bounds	aaron.bounds@eastcentral.edu
Mentoring	Sheila Baer	baers@unionrxi.org
Secretary	Samantha Boyer	boyer.samantha@desoto.k12.mo.us
Treasurer	Marilyn Motley	marilyn.motley@unionrxi.org
Webmaster	Darrell Boyer	boyer.darrell@desoto.k12.mo.us

## **St. Louis Metro District #8** **Chris Miller, President**

I just want to take a moment to say thank you to the Board members of MMEA for this year's conference. It was a great conference with many great concerts and clinics. I had a great time meeting up with so many of you and getting to meet many new people and also many new people in our own district. It really was wonderful being able to see so many of you again. I truly hope that we can get everyone back to full strength as we are fighting the good battle!

That said, we were also able to meet for our annual conference breakfast and business meeting, where we were finally able to present Jeff Pottinger with his Outstanding Educator plaque from last year's conference; we again recognized Rob Duss as our Hall of Fame honoree, and even though they were from last year, we still wanted to make sure that we gave them their due! This year we were thrilled to be able to recognize the many contributions of the Arianna String Quartet and their tireless efforts with the vast number of students they have worked with all over the St. Louis area, but most importantly in the Metro 8 district. Joanna Mendoza was able to be in attendance to receive the plaque. We were also thrilled to honor Katheryn Fenske

**See MILLER, pg. 68**



# District Reports

## **MILLER from pg. 67**

with our Outstanding Teacher of the Year award. Anyone who knows Kathy knows she deserves this award and was a perfect selection. We are honored to have her serving in our district.

This is also the year that we will start to compile a list of candidates for the next slate of officers. If you have ever had a thought of serving or wanting to serve, now is the time. Paul Ahlemeyer, our current President-elect, will be working to create this slate. He will be the person to contact and if you want to nominate yourself or someone else, please reach out to Paul at [presidentelect@metro8.org](mailto:presidentelect@metro8.org) to let him know. Now is the time to get involved. We need you! Don't forget to reach out to your officers if you need anything.

### **Officers:**

President-	Chris Miller
President Elect-	Paul Ahlemeyer
Past President-	Katheryn Fenske
High School Band-	Johnathan Daniels
Middle School Band-	Shannon Crepps
High School Jazz Band-	Paul Shanker
Middle School Jazz Band-	Drew Steck
High School Choir-	Jenn Oncken/Lauren Hoffman
Middle School Choir-	Kathleen Cheshire
Elementary-	Shelly Ragan
High School Orchestra-	Daniel Mieloch
Middle School Orchestra-	Jocelyn Hoyt
Multi-Cultural-	Marquita Reef
College/University Chair-	Becky Thorn
Mentoring-	Sr. Gail Buckman
Treasurer-	Rick Padgett
Secretary-	John Hahn 🎵

***South Central District #9***  
***Sarah Sacco, President***

### **Make Musical Memories**

The best way to get kids to stay involved is to give them memories that they want to experience over and over again. My fondest memories from high school and college are the experiences I had because of music enrollment, not specifically because of the music we played. Exposing your students to opportunities such as district honor groups, state honor groups, performing ensembles at MMEA, trips to Disney World, or even a trip to your local amusement park make lasting impacts on our students.

Don't be afraid to use extrinsic motivation to get kids involved! Every four years our band program takes a trip to Orlando. I know we are not the only ones that use that activity to recruit and retain students in their

**See S. SACCO, pg. 69**



# District Reports

## S. SACCO, from pg. 68

programs. The trip has been fun and memorable, but one thing that shocked me after our first trip was when we asked our students what was their favorite part of the trip. The majority of them answered that the workshop at Disney was their favorite memory. Wow! It wasn't the rides, the food, the beach. No, it was making musical memories in a new place with their friends. Our students feel the same about district band, state band auditions, and MSHSAA solo and small ensemble performances. They make memories! Never be afraid to encourage your kids to experience those moments. We have had kids who had just as much fun at MSHSAA State Solo and Small Ensemble festival whether that got a bronze rating or a gold rating. It didn't matter how they did, but instead that they got to be there making music with their friends. Don't hold them back because they may not do as well, or not make the ensemble. It is about making memories! They are going to learn more about music along the way. In my mind, the secret to growth and retention is making musical memories! MMEA, MBA, MCDA, MoASTA, MOAJE and many more organizations provide so many opportunities to make musical memories . . . take advantage of them! I hope everyone has a safe, fun, and musical 2nd semester! 🎵

### ***Southeast District District #10 Michael Harrer, President***

Wow! What a great 2023 MMEA Conference! It was INCREDIBLE seeing so many familiar and NEW faces and, as always, the conference is a wonderful reminder of all the great music education going on in Missouri. I am humbled by the extraordinary teaching going on in Southeast Missouri and excited for what this semester has in store!

Special thanks to the new members of our District #10 Executive Board (denoted with \*) and all of our current members who diligently serve our teachers and students.

*President-Elect:	Taylor Davis, Perryville
Past-President:	Tyson Wunderlich (retired)
Secretary/Treasurer:	Kim Whitehead, Sikeston
HS Band VP:	Alex Martin, Chaffee
JH Band VP:	Adam Carter, Scott City
*Jazz VP:	Darren Steelman, Sikeston
HS Choir VP:	Beth St. John, Jackson
JH Choir VP:	Arika Winborne, Jackson
Orchestra VP:	Andrew Hacay, Cape Girardeau
Elementary VP:	Becca Sides, Jackson
College VP:	Buddy White, Three Rivers College
College VP:	Dr. Aaron Wacker, Southeast Missouri State University
*Mentoring Co-Chair:	Sara Harrer, Cape Girardeau
*Mentoring Co-Chair:	Melissa Cooper, Meadow Heights
*Mentoring Co-Chair:	Jerry Lintner, St. Vincent

A HUGE thank you to all of our outgoing District #10 Vice-Presidents for everything you have done to help our music educators and students succeed. 🎵



# District Reports

## ***Southwest District #11*** ***Trey Wadell, President***

The Southwest District would like to congratulate Bobbie Adams and the Pierce City High School Band for their successful performance at the MMEA Conference! We would also like to congratulate Jennifer Sager who is a candidate for MMEA Jazz VP and Autumn Shurley who is a candidate for MMEA General Music VP in the upcoming election!

The Southwest District has purchased an annual venue insurance plan for all events put on by the district. Prior to this purchase, the district officers looked at our finances to make sure we could cover the cost with audition fees. It was determined that all fees would increase by one dollar to cover the cost of the venue insurance.

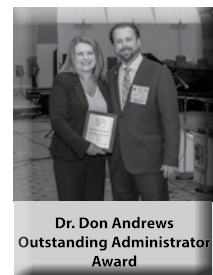
### **Officers:**

President -	Trey Wadell -	southwest11@mmea.net
President-elect -	Melanie Soule -	soulemelanie@neoshosd.org
Past President -	Brad Heckman -	heckmanbrad@mtvernon.k12.mo.us
Treasurers -	Bethany Laster,	blaster@diamondwildcats.org,
	Jennifer Sager -	sagerj@carthagetigers.org
Secretary -	Erica Gorman -	gormanerica@neoshosd.org
HS Band Coordinator -	Butch Owens -	bowens@wcr7.org
Conference Band Coordinator -	Tyler Jones -	tjones@senecar7.com
8th Grade Band Coordinator -	Sal Prado -	prados@carthagetigers.org
7th Grade Band Coordinator -	Jordan White -	jwhite@monettschools.org
JH Choir Coordinator -	Anna Strong -	astrong@lamar.k12.mo.us
HS Choir Coordinator -	Katie Crigger -	criggerk@carthagetigers.org
Elementary Coordinators -	Lori Lindsey, -	lorilindsey@joplingschools.org,
	Autumn Shurley -	autumnshurley@joplingschools.org
Jazz Band Coordinator -	John Evans -	jevans@wcr7.org
Orchestra Coordinator -	Kylee VanHorn -	kyleevanhorn@joplingschools.org
College/University Chair -	Jackie Lordo -	jlordo@cottey.edu
Mentoring Chair -	Scott Schneider -	sschneider@cjr1.org
Webmaster Chair -	Trey Wadell -	twadell@cjr1.org 🎵

## The Pride of Missouri: 2023 All-State Ensembles



## Awards





## Awards and Legacy Scholarships



**Robert Dooley  
Wynne J. Harrell  
Outstanding Music Educator Award**



**Hailee Kaestner  
David B. Goodwin Outstanding Young  
Music Educator Award**



**Marvin Manring  
MSHSAA Distinguished Service Award**



**Valerie Bell  
NFHS Outstanding Educator Award**



**C. Edwin Lammers  
25-Year Service Award**



**Jaylen Davis  
Hartman Family  
Legacy Scholarship Award**



**Caroline Williams & Hannah Fischer  
Buddy Hannaford  
Legacy Scholarship Award**



**Carter Hintz and Emily German  
Larry Hiltbidle  
Legacy Scholarship Award**



**Amy Knost  
Jim & Carla Oliver  
Legacy Scholarship Award**



**Madison White  
Robert Gifford  
Legacy Scholarship Award**



**Jacob White  
William G. Mack  
Legacy Scholarship Award**



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**2023**

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- Friday, April 21
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