

Missouri School Music

Intentional Programming

Volume 77, Number 4, summer issue 2023



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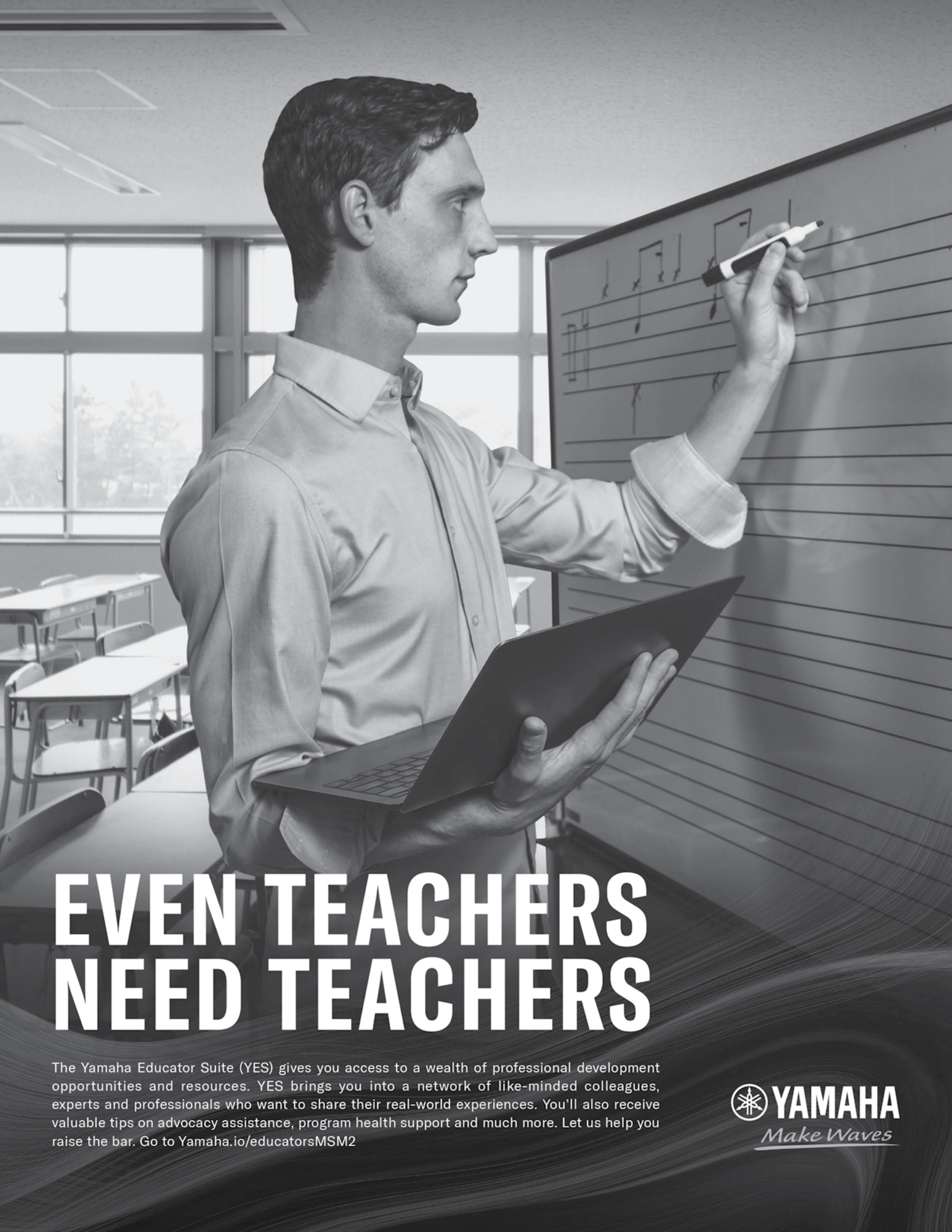
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Missouri School Music

Volume 77, Number 4, summer issue 2023

a quarterly publication of the Missouri Music Educators Association

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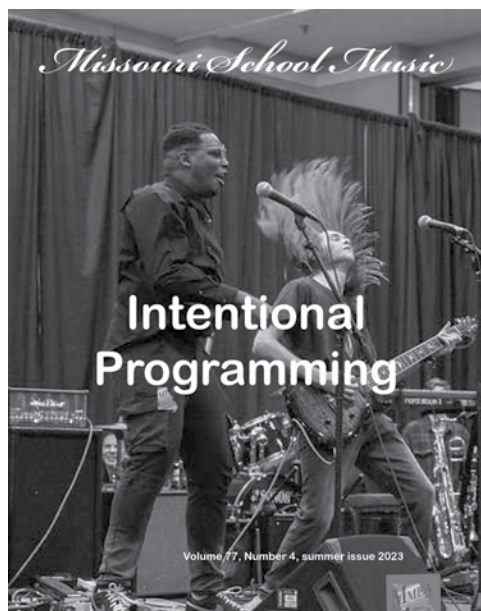
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Editor's Notes by Sally Hook

Here is the final edition of the *Missouri School Music* magazine for our school year 2022-2023. As schools are winding down the year with concerts, festivals, assessments, and dreams of things to come in the fall season, educators' thoughts turn to reflections of the past. Those reflections bring ideas of improvements for the future. The theme of this magazine is "Intentional Programming." Writers have interpreted this theme in many different ways. Read and ponder. We are all about helping our students.



About the Cover

The Collective was a new initiative featured on MMEA's 2023 January Conference/Clinics. The energetic photo on the cover is of Jordan Brown and Chase Mortensen. The photographer is Belinda Johnson www.bjohnsonphotography.com. See more information and photographs about The Collective on pages 48-49.

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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



Intentional Programming

This edition of the MSM is meant to invoke thought, processing, and understanding of what intentional programming means to each of us as individual educators but also in relationship to our jobs and our profession.

As an individual educator, my intentions of what I intend to accomplish in my career has changed throughout the years. I've written about this during my time on the MMEA board, but I still find it interesting to reflect upon from time to time. Earlier in my career, I was consumed with making sure the program that I was directing was on par (or at least moving in the direction of being on par) with the schools around me and throughout our state. I wanted the biggest and the best high school choral program and I wanted people to recognize it as such. Update: I never got there and never will. I now believe it to be a completely misplaced and asinine endeavor. I chalk it up to being young and uninformed. I was trying to serve myself and not my students even

though I tried to convince myself that my intentions were pure. My priorities were misaligned and I am so thankful that I had people in my life and experiences that properly defined my reality. Since, I have had the pleasure of reassessing what my intentions are as an educator. What I try to create now is a safe space for kids to fail so that they might have the environment to learn how to self-correct without fear of ridicule, bullying, and anxiety. With the help of both my building and district-level administration, we try to surround ourselves with people who hold the same philosophy. This intention has helped to build not only my self-confidence as an educator but serves to direct every decision that is made in the trajectory of my career. I've also learned that I cannot do this job by myself. I don't think it matters what kind of situation in which we are teaching; we all need help. The sooner we admit this and begin to look at our strengths and weaknesses and the available resources around us to complete

our team, the more competent and efficient educators we become.

Intentional programming in relationship to our jobs encompasses a vast array of ideas, whether it is actual music we are programming, or the 6-, 9-, or 12-month plans we devise to guide our students' learning. We have to be thinking about tomorrow, next month and the next concert session or unit to be truly successful. Blending our curriculum with our students' needs must be intentional. If not, what are we really doing? The job of a music educator is tough. There is no off season, just the next season. I try to consider how each season feeds the next and how those seasons together help to strengthen and promote the growth of the program. Ever present in the last third of my career is how can I make the program sustainable for the people who follow me to ensure

See HARTMAN, pg. 6

the long-term success of the students, teachers and musical community. I don't intend to work as a music educator in any other school for the rest of my career. Therefore, it is important to me to be intentional about making this job attractive to the highest quality educators when I decide to hang up the baton. It starts with the smallest decisions like how do the students enter the room and what kind of mood will they be met with each day. It extends to the larger decision such as how do we structure the courses so that students have a defined path to encourage musical growth. The decisions we make today have ripple effects informing generations of students who will pack our classrooms long after we are gone. We must be intentional for the continued success of our students!

This leads to the intentional programming in regards to the music education profession. This is what we are about . . . it is literally the name of our association. We are lucky in Missouri that most of our school districts value what we do. Of course, there are outliers and we never get the benefit of total support for everything we need and want, but for the most part, people understand music education is an integral part of a student's well-rounded education. Intentionally creating healthy relationships with the decision makers in our school districts and utilizing the resources we have through MMEA and other organizations is imperative for the long-term sustainability of the quality music programs we have in our state. We must foster the aspiring music educators in both the high school and collegiate ranks with affirming and positive conversations that illuminate the greatness of our profession while coming to grips with the challenges that face us. We must think about the importance of being a mentor to the new educators in our districts to build them up and let them know they are not alone. We must get back to the idea that we are in this together for the greater good and not to compete with one another. With this idea in mind, we have to start doing a better job of supporting the music educators in our buildings and districts in other disciplines. I've had the pleasure of working with some amazing music educators in the schools in which I have taught. As a colleague, there is no greater satisfaction than seeing the students in other disciplines succeed under the direction of my friends and colleagues and then receiving the same support in return. I'm not saying you have to hang out at each other's houses, but we do have to be intentional about fighting for each other's programs for us ALL to be successful for the generations to come. If there is a clear vision and buy-in from every educator for the entire department, there is a better chance for success program-wide.

Being intentional in all aspects of what we do is an essential skill for music educators. Thinking, processing and understanding where we are as individuals, in our jobs, and our profession as a whole, is one of the most healthy and best guiding principles. Putting ourselves into a position to evaluate our perspectives and intentionally chart a course forward make the final outcomes so much more rewarding. As we wrap up another school year, it is my hope that you will make time to intentionally program all aspects of what you do. I am certain it will help to guide you into the summer and next school year. 🎵



Chris Sacco



President-Elect



Intentional DEprogramming

I posed a challenge to everyone in my last article . . . The Third Quarter Challenge. In an effort to combat the woes of burnout and student complacency, coupled with the stresses of concert and contest preparation, I challenged you to take your students on a performance tour; to get out in the community and let your students show off their incredible talents. I hope that you were able to work something out or that you put it into your plan for next year. Once again, President Hartman has hit the nail on the head with the theme for this quarter's issue of the magazine, Intentional Programming. By the time you receive this issue many of you, more than likely, will be in the midst of spring concerts and end-of-the-year festivities. Soon enough we'll be taking time to relax, unwind, and enjoy time with family and friends. It's also a great time to think back on the school year while it's still fresh in our minds.

When I think of Intentional Programming, I think of reflection. Reflection has, by far, become one of my most valued endeavors. These days, I truly enjoy taking time to ask myself what worked and what did not, how students responded to both the "tried and true" and the "new and improved" lessons, and what changes need to be made in order to keep up with any innovations while still maintaining quality in the classroom. I have learned that being equally cognizant of both my strengths and weaknesses as an educator is an imperative part of the reflective process. It is how we keep ourselves from becoming complacent and helps us stay lifelong learners. With the knowledge that we gain from our deliberations, we can work to develop a plan for the next school year. We can be intentional when we are writing our lesson plans, setting up our classrooms, selecting performance literature, and all other tasks necessary to

prepare for a new year. With that said, reflection hasn't always been an act that I was keen on . . .

As a younger educator, I never wanted to admit my downfalls. It was a constant struggle trying to figure out ways to improve and be the best educator for my students. I never wanted to have another educator in my classroom for fear of them and my students learning of all my weaknesses. I felt that if I kept my head down, closed my doors, and contained my classroom, eventually something miraculous would happen and I would become a confident and skilled educator and everything would work out perfectly. Wow, was I wrong. I desperately needed some "Intentional DEprogramming." I needed to retrain my brain and tell myself

See C. SACCO, pg. 8

C. SACCO from pg. 7

that it was perfectly acceptable to have faults and weaknesses. Luckily, I had a student who was an incredibly gifted young musician and I knew that it wouldn't be long before I would either need to invite someone to work with him or hinder his progress by continuing with my obstinance. Realizing that I had taken him as far as I could, I reached out to the professionals and asked them to lend an ear, offer advice, or provide lessons. Once I crossed that proverbial bridge, it didn't take long for me to realize that I was doing my students a disservice by being so guarded. Because of my own insecurities, I was denying my students and myself the opportunity to gain new perspectives, expand our knowledge base, and elevate our performances. From then on, I have strived to be extremely self-aware, welcoming of visitors, and offer my students every educational opportunity that I can . . . Even at my own expense!

I encourage all of you to lift your heads up, open your doors, and invite others into your classroom! The sooner you do, the more your students will grow and come to appreciate the extraordinary gift they have in you as their teacher. Should you find that you are in a similar situation as my younger self and feel you might need some "intentional deprogramming," I certainly hope that you will find the will to reach out and ask. In the meantime, I wish each and every one of you the best of luck with the rest of your school year. 🎵



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Karey Fitzpatrick



Choral Vice-President

Programming for Intentional Outcomes

The Choir experience looks different from one program to another. Each director has their own unique way to guide their students to discover music and the human connection. It all starts with asking, what do we want our students to know and be able to do? I think most of us approach our planning with the backwards design. Start with the intended outcome of the concert and work backward breaking down the smaller chunks that create the building blocks to a successful performance. We must be intentional about how we present concepts to students so that they can make those connections apply to prior learning. So, it would stand to reason that we would want to consider sequencing to aid students in building their skills to present their concert music.

The Planning

It starts with what we want our students to know and be able to do. Dr. Marzano outlines the art of creating learning goals that are easily identified. These goals

should be based on the type of knowledge needed for the lesson each day. Pair this with the National Music Standards to create their daily learning goal. For example, I want my students to be able to recognize whole and half step intervals in their music so I post this learning objective.

National Standard-MU:Pr4.2.E.5a
Students know: How to identify a half step on the piano keyboard
Students understand: The half step is the smallest interval on the piano. Putting 2 half steps together will make a whole step.
Students will be able to: Identify half and whole steps when they occur in your rehearsal music to sing correct pitches the first time.

By posting a learning goal for students to see and referencing it at the beginning of class, students can easily identify what they will be learning that day. It encourages their focus from the time they walk in the door and gives a structure to their rehearsal time.

Next, consider how you will build on that day's learning for the next class. One idea is to have the students create a major scale utilizing only half and whole steps. The next day could be recognizing the music you are learning is based on the major scale. By intentionally sequencing this learning, the students will have more confidence and ownership with the music they are learning.

Analyze What Students Need

For many of us, our students are involved in the choir program for several years. This is good news because there is no way to become a comprehensive musician in one year. Depending on what the students have been taught prior to coming to your music classroom, you will need to determine what they know and what they still need to learn. The music selected for studying in class should intentionally address those areas of improvement, but

See FITZPATRICK, pg. 20

Justin Doss



Band Vice-President



Considering the "Why" of Literature Selection

Hello, colleagues and friends! I hope this issue of the *Missouri School Music* magazine finds you well, eagerly anticipating some time to take care of YOU this summer. Whether this will be your first summer break as a teacher, the start of a VERY LONG summer break (A.K.A., retirement!), or if you find yourself somewhere in the middle of your career, I trust that you will allow yourself the freedom to RELAX and recover from the grind of the school year.

Perhaps one of the most critically important professional responsibilities we have involves the thought and care we put into selecting music for our students to learn and perform. I regularly ask myself questions such as: How and why do I select one piece over another? Am I sharing the very best options available with the students? Do I value student input in the selection process? What percentage of the music we learn should be representative of any given style, time period, and/or composer? Is the music a good "fit" for the strengths and

weaknesses of this particular group of students? Have they played these pieces before in middle school, All-District Band, community band, or in some other honor group? Will it push every child to grow as a musician? How varied are the meters, key signatures, tempo markings, articulations, and so on?

I ask myself these questions every concert cycle, every year, for every class I teach . . . at times, it can be completely overwhelming, and ultimately, I usually end up wondering if I got it "right" for the students. In an effort to be transparent, vulnerable, and in the spirit of personal growth and reflection, please allow me to share with you some of the pieces I selected this year for one of the groups I get to teach, as well as share some of my notes that help uncover the "why" behind my choices:

- "Radetzky March" - Strauss, arr. Balent
Traditional, European
orchestral march;

Recognizable from the Vienna Philharmonic New Year's concerts; Discuss parallels between the wind band and symphony orchestra traditions (also programmed a different arrangement concurrently with a middle school symphony orchestra I conduct); Cut time; Build confidence in young trumpet section

- "As Summer Was Just Beginning" - Daehn
Connect various generations of audience members through their knowledge (or memories) of James Dean and his tragic death; Vulnerable conversations with students (e.g., "Who is your #1 celebrity icon or hero? How might you feel if they faced a similar tragedy tomorrow? How have you handled other losses in your life?"); Multiple key signatures; Melodic shaping/phrasing opportunities

See DOSS, pg. 20

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Twinda Murry



Orchestra Vice-President

We Use Our Pieces to Build

There is a slogan in the Suzuki pedagogy world that says, “We use our pieces to build our technique!” At the root of this idea is that our performance literature is not separate from our technique literature, but that we choose our performance literature to enhance and solidify technique.

Dr. Suzuki spent many years developing a repertoire for violin students that addresses, in a sequential manner, the foundational and advancing skills to move students toward mastery. Each piece in the Suzuki repertoire has specific technique points and each has elements that are built on and most often previewed in earlier pieces. The student’s training is then rounded out with more traditional etudes, scales and arpeggios, and other technique builders. My personal experience is that when technique building is approached in this way, students are more likely to remember what they have learned and transfer

that learning to the next musical challenge.

If the theory that students will learn their technique on a deeper level when it is presented within the context of their performance literature is correct, then the first challenge for the strings class and orchestra teacher is to find performance literature that has embedded the essential technique for that level. The second challenge is that the literature chosen is of high musical quality.

Most of us who have been teaching orchestra for any length of time probably program this way already to varying degrees. Perhaps we will program two or three pieces a year with the intent that they will help us to lay a strong technique foundation that connects with and illuminates what we are teaching from our method books.

Many of the method book writers and publishers have been helping

out with this this pursuit in recent years, publishing performance pieces that are coordinated with particular skills from their method books. I would like to encourage you to go beyond those and look for pieces, either original or arranged, that contain substantial emphasis on the skill that you are teaching and are pieces with well executed musical ideas.

Perhaps the first step to making a deeper connection between your method book and technical studies to your performance literature is to do an audit of your program. What skills are your students retaining and transferring from one piece of music to the next? What skills do you feel that you need to reteach every time they are presented in a piece of music? Are your students exposed through their performance literature to the key and time signatures that you think are important for their

See MURRY, pg. 24

Aaron Lehde



Jazz Vice-President



A Man Must Have a Code

Putting the big rocks in first.

Stephen Covey tells the tale of “the jar with the rocks.” A man shows his audience a large empty glass jar. He then places a number of fist-sized rocks into the jar until they topped it off, sticking out over the rim of the jar. He asks the audience “Is this jar full?” and they reply “Yes.” The presenter then produces a container of gravel, which he dumps into the jar of rocks. The gravel fills in the spaces between the large rocks, and again the presenter asked “Is this jar full?” “Not yet.” replies his now aware audience. He proceeds to pour a container of sand into the jar, which fills in any gaps before finally pouring a pitcher of water into the jar completely filling any remaining space. The man asks if his audience understands the point of this demonstration. A few take a guess: “you could always fit more things into your life if you really work at it.” “No,” the man replied. The point is, if you don’t put the big rocks in first, you’ll never get them in at all.”

This is a fine analogy that reminds us to start with the most important things or there won’t be room for them! So, then we ask ourselves—what are those things that are most important to our classrooms? A student that leaves after 4 years of my program should have experienced . . . what? What are the “big things” that should be included first? What are the things that I think are worth my students’ time?

“A man must have a code.” – Bunk

Before anything, you must have “a code”, a philosophy that serves as a compass to help guide your decisions. Your artistic taste plays an important role. A while ago, a fellow director was gently asking me what I thought about a well-known musician and jazz educator. The director understood that it was important to encourage his students to listen to jazz being played at the highest level, but he reluctantly admitted that he didn’t really care for this musician’s music. “What do

I say to students when this comes up?” He asked me. I replied “Tell them you don’t like his music.” Being a leader in the arts requires us to share our taste. Not to the exclusion of things we don’t like, but to demonstrate that the arts require us to make judgements. So, make them.

Back to my list of the “big ideas” that my students should get to experience:

The Blues

Every student of mine will study the blues. The blues—America’s music. Our national music. It must be taught front and center in every music curriculum in this country. Its ubiquitous nature makes it easy to overlook, and it makes my skin crawl when I hear “it’s just a blues chord progression.” I know many great music educators use that phrase so kids aren’t intimidated by improvising over a blues. “It’s just a blues” means “It’s a familiar

See LEHDE, pg. 25

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Some Thoughts on Successful Learning

Hopefully you are sitting on a lounge chair, having a nice cool beverage and reflecting on the past year you had. Was your year filled with joy, beautiful music, many smiles and excitement from students? As you reflect on your past year and begin the process of the year to come, perhaps you find yourself working on your plan for next year.

Here are several thoughts as I reflect on my past year and begin to plan for next year:

Pay attention to your lesson and program planning. What are some strategies that worked or didn't work for you and your students? Lessons that work make management and transitions so much better. How do successful lessons make you feel? They make me feel great. A sign of a successful lesson for me is when my students say "that was so fun" and "I don't want to leave." When I'm not paying attention to my lessons, transitions, and flow, the students don't connect as well

and I feel like I didn't accomplish my objective.

There are days when students are not having a good day and this affects how a lesson flows. This is when we may need to improvise the lesson in order to connect to our students. Oftentimes when a teacher improvises a lesson it's a win-win situation for all, because everyone gets more out of the lesson. Make sure when improving a lesson that your overall objective is still met. For some this is an easy task, but for others it takes time to feel comfortable making a change mid-lesson. Possibly your improvisation was better than your original plan.

Keep reminding yourself that it's important to keep things simple. We want to challenge our students with complex activities in our lessons, but starting with simple activities and building from there is crucial because not everyone learns the same way or at the same rate. This is an

example of programming with intention.

Remember it is good to change things up—Don't be a robot. It is good to change your routine so that students don't get bored with the same old routine and you don't become stagnant. I say this with caution because some students need routine and consistency in the class. When making significant changes, inform these students so that they are aware of the changes that will take place.

Effective lessons are the result of paying attention in planning, improvising when needed, starting with simple activities and building from there, and sometimes changing routine. This is why teaching can be difficult, but if we are intentional in these ways, we will have classes with good management that create music with joy. Here is your permission slip to teach with intention. 🎵



Guest Article - General Music



*Kacey Kennedy,
University of Missouri—Columbia*

Being Intentional about Building Community in Secondary General Music Courses

As the new school year begins, you stand at the door with a smile on your face and say to each student as they pass through the door, “Good morning and welcome to general music!” Some greet you with a smile, whereas others shift their gaze towards the floor and increase the volume on their wireless headphones. Little do they know, but they are entering a space that accepts them for who they are, as they are, and soon they will be building relationships and forming bonds with classmates while learning about music. As the first day begins, the warning bell rings, you follow the last student into the classroom, closing the door behind you, ready for the journey on which you and your students are about to embark.

If you have ever taught a general music course at the secondary level, you can relate to the previous vignette. You understand that not every student enters your classroom with excitement and enthusiasm, but this does

not mean that you cannot be intentional about fostering positive relationships and a strong sense of community. The first step in accomplishing this goal is understanding why students may have predetermined feelings about general music courses.

Because music is a required subject at the elementary level in the United States, many can recall their elementary music experiences. For most, it was a similar, prescribed experience where singing, playing music games, playing recorder, and learning to read and understand basic musical notation were standard. However, unless required by a state for graduation, many students do not choose to participate in music at the secondary level. Stauffer (2016) wrote that for many Americans, music education is synonymous with playing an instrument or singing in a choir, and therefore reserved for the musical elite. She wrote further that “core narratives are powerful and durable” and

“they cannot be untold, and they are tremendously difficult to reframe” (p. 72). This poses a problem for secondary general music teachers and programs across the nation. The purpose of music education should not be only to encourage and develop individuals who want to perform, but rather to reach anyone who is interested in any type of music endeavor. In my eight years of public-school teaching, I learned that by investing effort into the students who took general music courses, I could find what spoke to them musically and use that to change their minds about being in a music class. The most impactful factor seemed to be making each student feel seen and heard, so they felt safe enough to be vulnerable and to take risks that enabled them to *experience* music. How do we build this type of community in a general music class?

See KENNEDY, pg. 36

Guest Article - College/University

Curan Prendergast,

Truman University, Associate Professor of Music & Director of Bands



Intentional Ensemble Programming

I remember attending a conducting workshop as a young educator and the clinician was Dr. Mallory Thompson, Director of Bands at Northwestern University. She said, “when you select a piece of repertoire you do so to the exclusion of all others.” That line has stuck with me over the years because it highlights the importance of the repertoire we choose. Regardless of the age of the students, the type of ensemble, or the level of experience of the musicians we’re teaching, we can probably all agree that selecting the best repertoire to meet our intended musical and educational aims is a big part of being a music educator. The question we must ask ourselves is: what are the criteria we value when selecting repertoire? While we may rely on recommendations from our friends and colleagues, it is important for us to evaluate the repertoire ourselves according to our values and philosophy and in service of our unique teaching contexts.

One approach is using repertoire cycles, which is appropriate for those who value exposing students to songs or works you deem to be of particular value. At Truman, I ask our pre-service teachers to create repertoire cycles that outline four years of repertoire with two pieces each at grades II, III, and IV. After sifting through as much of the repertoire as possible, students choose works for their repertoire cycles that meet criteria ranging from including different styles, emotional content, time periods, and recognized cornerstone works of the band repertoire.

We must also account for the technical abilities of musicians we teach, the length of time we have to prepare a given concert, the length of the concert itself, and the musical and/or technical content we want to cover. While the technical considerations of your particular ensemble change from year to year, an intentional repertoire cycle can help anchor

your programs throughout the year with a diversity of repertoire.

Students can be inspired by the identities held by composers, particularly when they see themselves reflected in those identities, so programming with attention to the identity groups to which a composer belongs is another repertoire selection consideration. The broad support for underrepresented composers has led to increased prominence of works by composers of color, those from non-White cultural and ethnic backgrounds, individuals of various genders, and more. Fortunately, this increased interest has also led to resources that can help teachers locate such composers/works. Some examples of these resources include:
<https://www.composerdiversity.com>
<https://www.colourfullmusic.com/useful-links>

See C. Prendergast, pg. 53

FITZPATRICK from pg. 10

don't forget to showcase some things they already do well.

Additionally, consider the opportunity to reinforce overarching ideals and goals of the choir program as you are programming music. In choral music, we have a huge benefit of singing text. This opens up a multitude of connections for the human experience. Emphasize community connection, character connection, poetry and literature connection, etc. Thematic concerts are another way of emphasizing a learning outcome. Some examples include *Music Around the World* for multi-cultural connections, *Poetry & Music* for a deliberate focus on connecting music to text, *Evolution of Music* for studying various time periods. This is where the choir experience becomes personalized to the students and provides a way for them to connect intentionally to music that is meaningful to them.

Finding Literature

After you've determined what you need to focus on with your students for the upcoming concert, the final step is finding those gems. My go-tos are online music publishing websites, reading sessions at conferences, ACDA online repertoire lists and even the MSHSAA website lists of Large Group Festival Literature from each school. Don't forget to consider the purpose of the performance, the demographic of the audience, the performance space, accompaniment possibilities and possible limitations.

Finally, Brian Felder from SHABACH Christian Academy utilizes "The 5 C's of Intentional Music Programming:" Creativity, Collaboration, Community, Connection and Citizenship. I think we all hope to provide a comprehensive choral experience. I find that these 5 elements are the central focus of what I hope to create in the choir experience for my students. Consider how these elements can empower your students and how you could shape your instruction to emphasize each of these to encourage ownership and confidence during the learning process.

References:

Marzano

https://www.marzanoresources.com/resources/tips/dtngo_tips_archive/

Yamaha

<https://hub.yamaha.com/music-educators/learn-peers/case-studies/intentional-programming-shabach/>

National Standards

<https://nafme.org/my-classroom/standards/core-music-standards/>

ACDA Repertoire Lists

<https://acda.org/repertoire/senior-high-school-choirs-repertoire> 🎵

DOSS from pg. 11

- "Peacemaker March" - King/arr. Swearingen
Something I've programmed before that I know works well for this level; Some challenging woodwind ranges/tuning; Opportunity to feature strong low brass; 4 flats (Ab Major and F Minor)
- "Amen!" - Ticheli
Opportunity to explore an "upbeat, somewhat bluesy, gospel style" (according to Ticheli); Discussion with an Assistant Principal who grew up in a Southern church and shared his experiences with a typical 'preacher, congregation, call and response' service environment; Push students out of their musical comfort zones; New to me (had not previously programmed); Build confidence in a young, small clarinet section
- "Beyond the Light and Darkness" - Wada - Young Japanese composer; New to me (had not previously programmed), but have performed some of his other works in the past; Feature numerous sections in the band; Involved percussion parts
- "A Little Tango Music" Gorb - UK composer
Challenge to me as a conductor (more 'dance-like' gestures on the podium than I typically might show); New to me (had not previously programmed); Written in a

See DOSS, pg. 24

Ben Silvermintz



Multicultural Chair



... Comes Great Responsibility

Crowdsourcing repertoire on a Facebook group page is undoubtedly a method for selecting music, but it is not the best strategy if we seek to program with intention. Like many of you, I often answer the repertoire suggestion requests I see on social media in my head but refrain from chiming in with a typed response. And, perhaps as some of you do, I occasionally look for a recording of a recommended piece I'm not familiar with or simply shake my head when a certain song is offered in response. Admittedly, I probably do that last part more often than I should, particularly if a piece is recommended by its composer.

The lack of intentionality behind the Facebook query is problematic. We absolutely can and should respond to the needs of our ensembles in real time, and I am hardly suggesting that most of us have an entire year's worth of repertoire selected by August; but do we trust someone

who does not know our kids, our community, or the other music we have already performed this year or in prior years to solve the particulars of our curricular dilemma? Perhaps the culprit is simply our own isolation. Maybe the person asking for repertoire suggestions has no other music educator in their life who they can call and say, "Hey Brian/Kimberly, you know what's going on over here, you know what we can do, I need a piece that does..." In that case, shame on me for implying that any teacher would even consider abdicating our responsibility as the degreed professional in the room to some person we have never met who responds to a repertoire query with, "Well my singers absolutely loved..." But I would submit that this is the exception rather than the rule.

If you, like me, feel both excited, challenged, and occasionally nervous when choosing music to put in front of your singers and players, consider how blessed

we are with the opportunity to make changes in our curriculum on a frequent basis, something our core area colleagues simply cannot do. As Peter Parker learns in seemingly every iteration of *Spiderman*, "With great power comes great responsibility." A responsibility to select music that meets the pedagogical needs of our students, expands their cultural horizons, and inspires them to continue making music with their peers. A responsibility to share the works of historically significant composers, marginalized composers, and composers who just happen to write really well for the ensembles we have rather than those we see on Youtube or at conferences. There are zero people on Facebook who share in our accountability to the students we teach, and the music we pick for our ensembles reflects who we are as educators and leaders in our students' lives.

See SILVERMINTZ, pg. 25

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Sarah Sacco



Tri-M Chair



Some Days I'm Just Not the Best

Sometimes things just don't go how you planned. Some months everything you prepare for falls through the cracks. You plan and plan and get the ball rolling early because you know that things get busy and you have to get it done early or it won't get done. But sometimes it still all falls apart and you feel like you have failed. Truthfully, some days I am just not the best club advisor. We've all been there right? You know the feeling I'm talking about.

This year my Tri-M chapter had planned everything for Music in Our Schools Month during first semester and all we had to do was finalize it at the beginning of second semester . . . but it did not come together. So, what went wrong? How did we have all our ducks in a row, but nothing went as planned? We knew from previous years that come second semester we would be battling snow, field trips, solo and small ensemble practices, play practices, and so much more. We planned for these conflicts. Yet time still somehow got away from

us although we had all of this knowledge. And then came the last week of Music in Our Schools Month and we were unable to pull off any of our plans. We just didn't get it done . . . and we were all a little disappointed.

Our students need to see that it is ok to try and try hard and sometimes we still don't succeed. Sometimes we end up being a little disappointed. We spend so much time pushing our students to better themselves, to better our ensembles, or to better our organizations. We want them to try out for honor ensembles, we want them to be on our student leadership teams, we want them to enter festival solos and small ensembles, but do we ever teach them how to handle it when they don't succeed? When they try and they practice hard and even though they did they still don't reach that goal? What do they do then? That is a valuable lesson to learn. It is ok to do everything right and it still not work out as you planned it, because you still learned from it. You still became a

better musician, a better student, a better teacher, a better person because you tried. Even though we are disappointed we didn't pull off our Music in Our Schools Month celebrations, we still learned from it.

I think it is important to recognize and admit that sometimes things just don't go as planned. As teachers we have so much on our plates and we are juggling so many different plates it is shocking that more don't fall every single day. I mean seriously . . . how do we all do it . . . every single day? But we do, somehow, we pull it off. And sometimes . . . we don't. We shouldn't be afraid to share those failures just as much as we do the successes. We learn from them. We grow from them. We become better teachers from those failures. We shouldn't expect ourselves to be perfect. So, this is me telling you to remind yourself that it is ok. To remind your students that it is ok. And maybe me telling me that it is ok.

See S. SACCO, pg. 27

DOSS from pg. 20

challenging rhythmic meter/ notation (beginning in 2/4 time, counted in 4, with numerous 16th and 32nd note passages); Expand student musical literacy and exposure to various rhythmic groupings; Several solos to feature stronger players

- “A Slavic Farewell” - Agapkin/ arr. Bourgeois
Connection to real-world events/locations; (Somewhat of a follow-up to last year’s performance of “Kyiv, 2022” by Balmages); Challenging key signature (6 flats); Feature and challenge low brass; Stretch upper range in cornet/ trumpet parts and upper woodwinds
- “Off the Edge” -
Composer from New York who is willing to communicate with directors/ students via email/Zoom/ etc.; Uses an electronic soundscape recording and click-track, pushing me out of my comfort zone as a conductor; New to me (had not previously programmed); Very different feel and style from traditional concert band music

Were these the best, correct, most appropriate selections for this particular group of students this year? . . . Maybe? (I never feel confident with my answer to this question!) What I do know is that I tried to be intentional in my consideration of representing various composers, covering a wide variety of musical styles, and challenging individuals and sections within the ensemble. Working on this music led to

discussions about current and historical world events, grief/loss, human expression, electronic dance music, religious traditions different than our own, music history, and many others. The students performed in 6-8 different key signatures, at least 5-6 meters/time signatures, covered a variety of musical styles and articulations, and expanded their individual and group musicianship through collaborative decision-making.

Do you know of other pieces that would have filled similar needs and considerations? If so, then please share them with me! I am always looking for new ideas, composers, pieces, and ways to connect with the students through the literature we explore together. Best wishes as you finish your school year, and as always, please let me know how I may be of service to you and/or your students. 🎵

MURRY from pg. 14

development? Do you have ensembles that need multi-level technique within the same literature? Are the time periods, composers, styles and genres of music that you feel are important adequately represented in your performance literature for the year?

After you have made this list of skills that you want to connect to your performance literature, the next and most challenging step is to find the literature to fit the need. Most of us probably already have a set of “old standbys” that we use for just this purpose. I would encourage

you, however, to look at those pieces through the lens of both how can I use this to teach and what is the musical value of the piece. Perhaps consider looking for pieces that will allow your students to build more technique and while experiencing the joy of communicating through high quality music.

As you look through all the advertisements for new music that come to your inbox, or you are introduced to new pieces at concerts and reading sessions, make a note of pieces that address those skills that you want to focus on. I know that I get seduced by pieces that sound fun or interesting and I think the students would like, but don’t necessarily check many boxes on my list. This is not to say that we shouldn’t program some pieces that are just “fun.” The key is to make those fun pieces the cherry on top, not the bulk of our performance literature.

One great resource for uncovering technique building pieces is, of course, your colleagues. Talk to the other teachers in your district. One tip that I have learned for those of us who are veterans is to talk with younger teachers. Teachers fresh out of college may have learned quality pieces that represent music of a wider range of diverse cultures and composers.

My colleague, Sarah Heuermann, has introduced me to the Facebook Group called School Orchestra and String Teachers (SOST). This group maintains an extensive Google Drive that has many resources including repertoire lists by level that

See MURRY, pg. 25

MURRY from pg. 24

include some of the skills featured in each piece. You will need to request to join the group to access the materials.

These are all ideas that I try to remember as I am preparing for a new year. It is hard work to seek out music and prepare activities that help students connect the dots between their technique and the demands of their literature. At this time of year, when I am starting to wrap up the year and plan for next year, I try to really challenge myself to evaluate and plan next year's literature for maximum impact by starting with my check list. I invite you to join me in the challenge. 🎵

LEHDE, from pg. 15

form—no need to be concerned." That idea is certainly a good one, made all the better if our students are in fact familiar with a blues chord progression. In the worst sense, "it's just a blues" downplays the depth of emotion, harmony, lyrics, form, historical context, and cultural relevance that lives in our American music. The Blues.

Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn

The Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn team (hereafter referred to as 'Ellington') are undoubtedly the most influential composers of American music. Sadly, his music is not performed by student ensembles as frequently as it should be. I think there are several reasons for this, but the biggest one is that Ellington music is HARD to play. It is difficult in a technical sense, especially with clarinet doubling and

brass plunger mute techniques. However, it also requires such a personal interpretation to extrude the subtle complexities of his music. Duke didn't write for "a" band—he wrote for "his" band. Your students won't be learning a lead alto part—they'll have to learn Johnny Hodges' part and work hard to bring his authentic voice alive. It will be well worth the effort!

Avoid the 'rookie' mistake of finding other people's arrangements of his music. The magic of Ellington is found in the orchestration as much as it is the composition. Take a listen to his arrangement of *Rhapsody in Blue*, or *The Nutcracker Suite*. Neither is an original composition of his, but both are unmistakably Ellington!

The Essentially Ellington program has done a good job of making this music more easily accessible and I highly recommend seeking these charts out if you haven't already done so.

Count Basie

Count Basie is the other pillar of the big band world. Almost without trying, your students will encounter some of the Count's music. My students specifically get to experience tunes from the *Atomic Basie* album as well as the *Kansas City Suite*. The latter provides many opportunities to connect to the historical importance of the Kansas City jazz scene of the 1930's and beyond; pieces like *Jackson County Jubilee*, *Paseo Promenade*, and *Rompin' at the Reno* invite an exploration of these places at that time. The early Basie recordings like *One O'Clock Jump* and *Lester Leaps In* are a great place to start in learning to create your own

"head" arrangements that are improvised on the spot.

What is on your list? What are your "must do's?" They will no doubt be different, but let your compass point you in a direction. As my good friend Ed Jacobs likes to say, "Failing to Plan is Planning to Fail." So, make a plan. Have a code and live by it! Put the big rocks in first! 🎵

SILVERMINTZ, from pg. 21

For the better part of a year, every article featured in this section of the magazine has discussed the topic of intentional programming through a multicultural lens. Our conference session was a deep dive into repertoire and there were sessions under the purview of other areas that embraced this topic as well. In other words, if we aren't programming with intention, what are we even doing? Hopefully, if you're still reading this far, you are simply thinking to yourself, "Yes, this is obviously the most important thing we do in terms of our planning, rehearsals, performances, behavior management, etc. Intentional programming is the foundation of how we teach, how students learn, and how we grow together. It shows our community what and who we value. It represents what we think is most important in music education."

I happen to agree. Have a wonderful summer. 🎵



Roy Maxwell



Government Relations Chair

Jefferson City Happenings

I hope everyone has had a great school year. Now is your time to get some much-needed rest, and time to get to know your families again. This is also a good time for you to reflect on the many successes of the year.

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 that 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> for the House of Representatives or <https://www.senate.mo.gov/legislation/> for the Senate.

HB 253 & SB 5—STUDENT TRANSFERS

HB 523 Sponsor: Pollitt
SB 5 Sponsor: Koenig

These bills would create 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.

Students would not be able to participate in sports for 365 days.

There are slight differences in each of these bills. If the House approves its version and the Senate theirs, then representatives from each chamber would meet to finalize one bill that would face a vote in both chambers.

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. This bill would extend the time a retired teacher could work to four years without loss of benefits.

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

See MAXWELL, pg. 27

S. SACCO from pg. 23

Even though things didn't go as planned for Music in Our Schools Month we also know that it is never too late. We may not have gotten it done during the month we had wanted to, but that doesn't mean we can't still do it. We can celebrate music in our school any month. Just because a student didn't get an Exemplary rating on their solo doesn't mean they didn't become a better musician. Just because a student didn't get selected for their district band doesn't mean they shouldn't try out next year. Celebrate the wins you do have and know that our failures help lead us to our next success. It's going to be ok. Some days we aren't the best. Some days it just didn't work out. Some days I'm just not the best chapter advisor. But every day is a new day and another opportunity to grow! 🎵

MAXWELL from pg. 26

their professional development activities. The portal shall include names of presenters and distributed materials from all administrator, 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.

SCS/SBs 411 & 230—Home School Definition and Participation

Sponsor: Ben Brown

This bill will change the name from "home school" to "family connected school." This would include students who participate in virtual educational programs.

Another section of this bill would not allow a school district to prohibit a student from a family connected school or a full-time virtual school from participating in any event or activity offered by the school district. Students would not be required to take any class to participate in any activity or event. However, a school district will be allowed to establish an attendance policy for any rehearsals, practice sessions, and training sessions that are directly related to and required for participation.

Also, school districts would be prohibited from belonging to any state activities association that does not allow a member school to participate in an event with a school that is not a member of that association.

FUNDING FOR EDUCATION

The Governor has proposed an increase of \$117 million to fully fund the foundation formula along with fully funding the state's portion of school district transportation costs.

The House has proposed an increase to the Foundation

Formula. Currently there can only be a 5% increase in funding from State Revenue. This bill would allow the funding to increase to 9% of the State Revenue over the next 4 years. If this bill is passed it would go to the Senate for their consideration. This is would be the first adjustment to the Foundation Formula percentages since 2004.

When we think about advocacy, we often think that it is working only 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. 🎵

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.

Department of Music

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