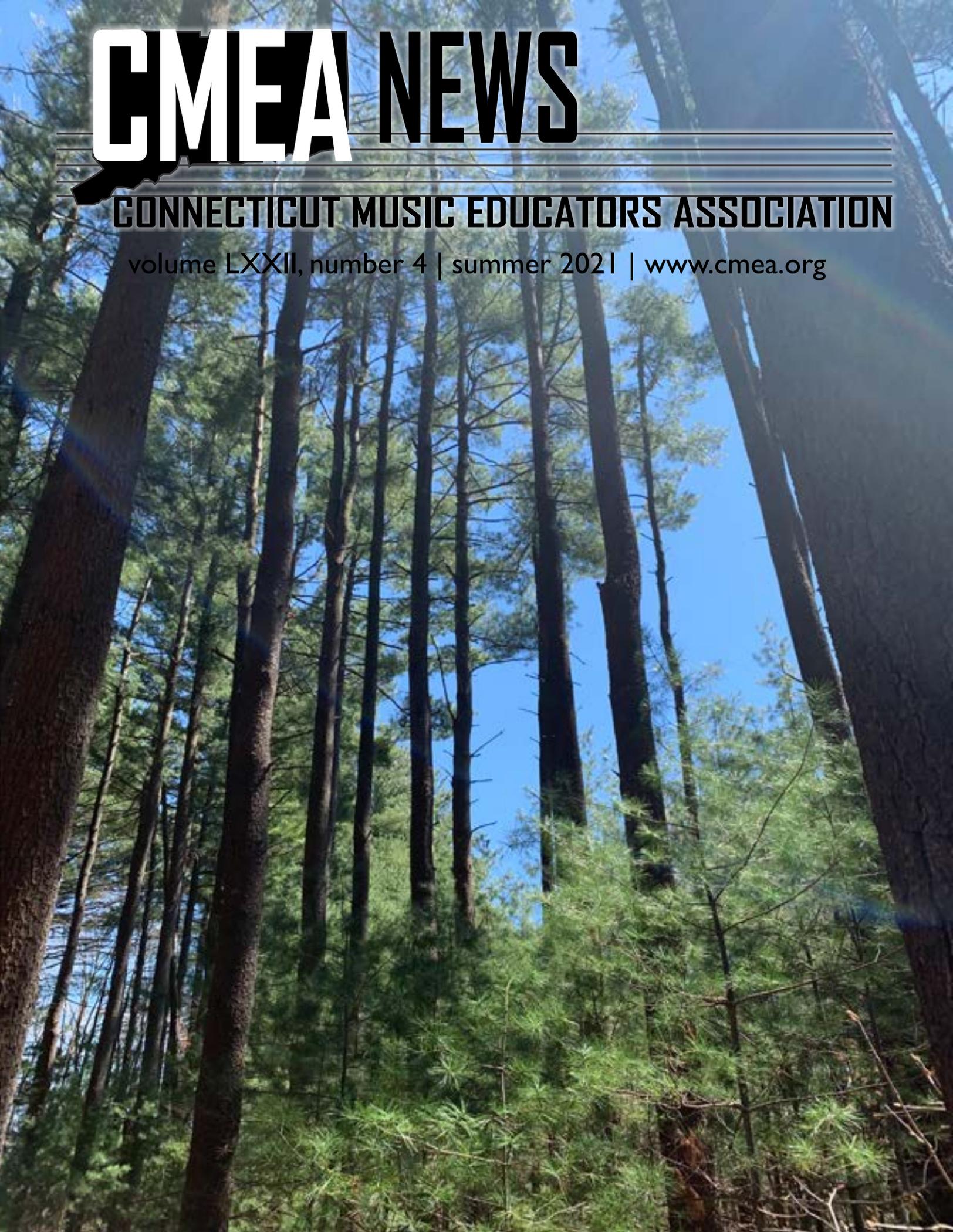


CMEA NEWS



CONNECTICUT MUSIC EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

volume LXXII, number 4 | summer 2021 | www.cmea.org

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CMEA is a 501C3 non-profit organization and is a federated state affiliate of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME). Membership is open to all music teachers and those involved in other music education related work.

The CMEA NEWS is published four times a year in September, December, March, and June. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not represent an official position of CMEA. A subscription to the NEWS is included in the annual membership fee.

2021-22 Publication Submission Deadlines are:

August 1, November 1, February 1, May 1

Manuscripts should be sent directly to the CMEA NEWS Editor at editor@cmea.org.

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Degrees:

Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Arts,
Master of Music, Master of Arts,
Artist's Diploma

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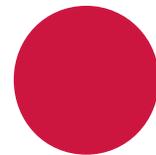
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to serve the community
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Where we are going always reflects where we came from

by Dr. Jason Bocuhard

IAs we approach the end of our school year I have always enjoyed looking ahead. The promise of next year, how to build on this year's success's, what success's will next year's students experience, what planning do I need to put in place for next year. It is a strange view to have this time of year as every event is meant to remind us of a year coming to a close, celebrating our students, and their accomplishments.

Ever since I started teaching I have enjoyed the duality of this approach. It has also grounded me in the idea that my position as a music educator is meant to continue the successes of the students in these music programs and schools. Schools that have existed for over 125 years will still be here for the next 125 years and my position as music director should be to create opportunities for my students to perform, create, and respond to music.

Whether it is an issue or problem I am trying to solve in my music program or in CMEA. I find understanding the context of the issue, the people, places, ideas, and the time's help frame and define the issue or problem. Understanding the context allows me to see a path forward that best serves everyone involved. CMEA has a rich history that is defined by the people who serve in any and all aspects of CMEA. From handing out programs at a concert to serving on the Executive Board,

CMEA is a volunteer organization that is defined by the idea of enhancing music education for all.

How long of a history does CMEA have? Well the organization was first started in 1932, CMEA celebrated its 89th birthday this year, with little fanfare. In fairness it was a year like no other, but CMEA did hold to its belief of music education for all and worked towards that mission with the help of all of its volunteers. Our All State festival has a history that is as long as well. Our first festival started in 1936 and we are celebrating our 85th all state festival, virtually, but we are still working toward the CMEA goal of promoting quality learning opportunities for all Connecticut students N-12.

Those are some big numbers and when looking at them I am struck by the history and people we all represent and the history and people we are still working towards. CMEA piloted and created a number of successful events this



year. Our survey's worked to inform and guide the mission of CMEA through member input. I hope at the reading of this you have participated in our Spring Survey. Your voice will guide our work over the summer and in the fall. CMEA created a brand new audition platform which allowed the organization to hold its first ever virtual auditions to great success. CMEA hosted virtual festivals, virtual professional developments, virtual open houses and town halls. CMEA has moved to the Microsoft 365 platform for our cloud storage and communication needs. This allows us to communicate more effectively with each other and allows our members a consistent way to contact CMEA volunteers for the next 89 years and continue

one of CMEA's goals to maintain a vital, effective, and efficient organization

CMEA's goal to promote and recognize effective music teaching was renewed this year with the relaunching of three music education awards. Please join me in congratulating our award winners for Outstanding Emerging Music Educator: Andrew Kohanski, Henry James Memorial, Outstanding Music Educator: Amanda Leon-Guerrero, Webster Hill Elementary, Outstanding Arts Administrator: Leslie Imse, Farmington Public Schools.

CMEA's Mission is to provide programs and activities for professional educators, students and future music educators striving to enhance the quality of music education for all children. This would not be possible without our volunteers on the Executive Board and Student Affairs Commission. While we do not have anyone leaving the Student Affairs Commission we do have some members of our Executive Board whose tenures are coming to an end. I would like to take a moment to thank them each for the time, service, and dedication to the music teachers and students of Connecticut. I would like to thank our Northern Region Co-Directors Sharon Vocke and Dawn Brys for their service to CMEA for the last two years. I would like to thank Dan Kinsman our Advocacy and Equity Chair for his service to CMEA and serving on both SAC and EB over his tenure with CMEA. I would like to thank Melanie Champion for her service as our Professional Development

Chair for the last four years. The depth and breadth of what CMEA has continued to become has been because of the service of these volunteers.

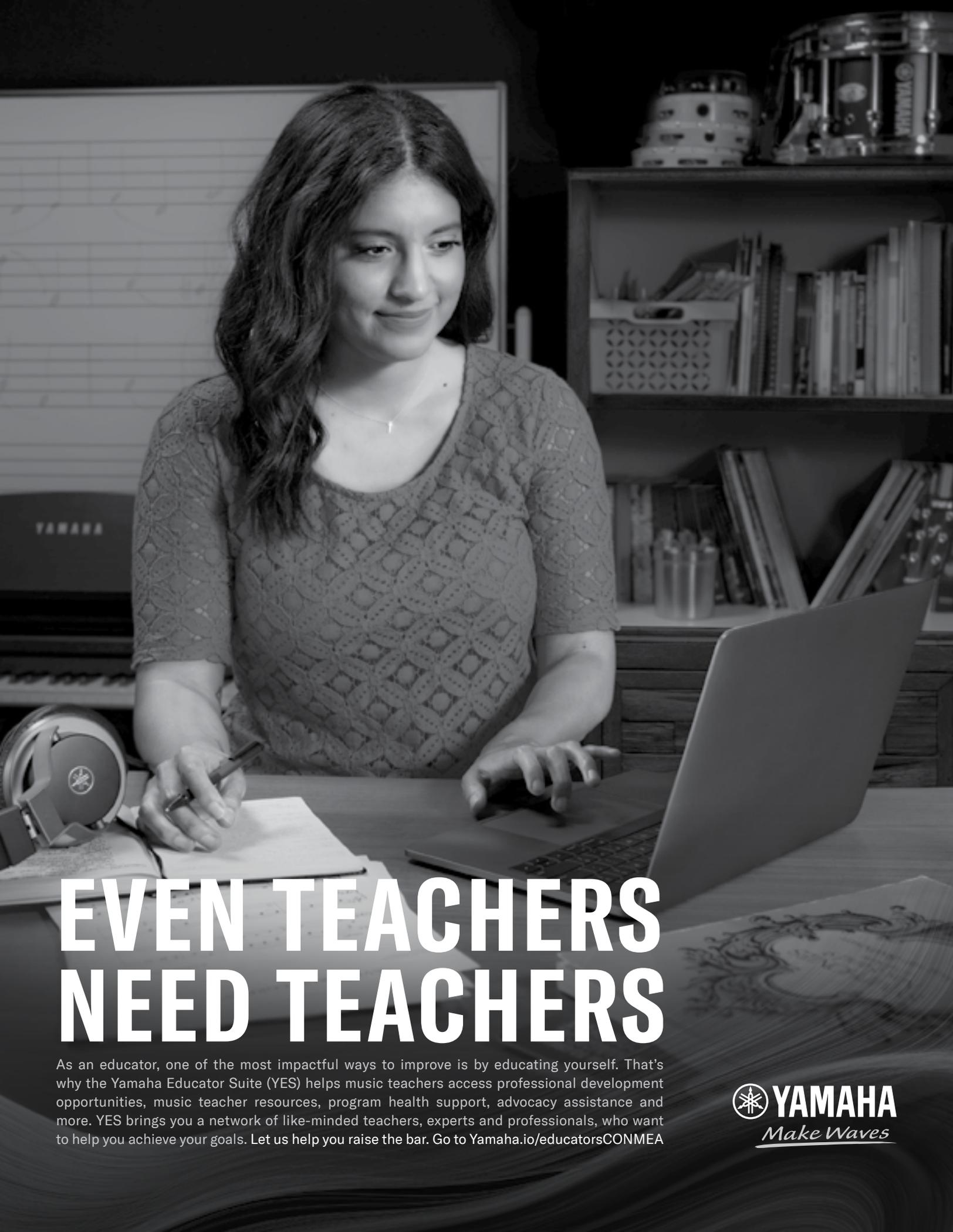
Our CMEA Immediate Past President Brian Hutton has served in many positions over the years for CMEA. I met Brian around 9 years ago on my second go around volunteering for CMEA in the newly created State Judge Chair positions. CMEA was hosting a training at the office for the new Executive Board and Student Affairs Commission. From that day forward I watched Brian lead CMEA through a number of issues, concerns, etc, all the time keeping CMEA moving forward. Brian is responsible for too many CMEA initiatives both big and small to list here. Brian had a vision for CMEA which at its core should guide CMEA through the next 90 years, it was simple, but profound, engage our members. Over the years I watched and learned as Brian laid a road map that would allow CMEA and its volunteers to do just that. I have watched Brian's leadership of CMEA and learned much which I hope to use during my presidency. As a CMEA president you sign up for 6 years, but to get to that position it starts much early and is really the end of usually a decade or so of volunteering in CMEA, Brian's time in CMEA is no different. Brian is a colleague and friend and I want to thank him for his service to CMEA and remind him, tongue and cheek of course, that as a past president you never really leave, but we will give you a couple of

days to relax before we ask you for anything.

I will have the honor of starting my tenure as president during CMEA's 90th birthday. I look forward to celebrating that milestone with all music teachers in the state of Connecticut next year and discussing what music education should look like for the next 90 years. CMEA as an organization is only as strong as its membership. Our membership has worked to ensure CMEA is an important part of music education in CT and is working towards what that looks like for all teachers and students in Connecticut. Beyond our 90th birthday celebration next year CMEA has a number of projects it will continue to work on for music teachers and music education in Connecticut. You can expect to see our professional development offerings expand, our open houses and town halls will continue, survey's and other new developments to come from the Executive Board all with the purpose of carrying out CMEA's Mission and Goals. In the fall I will introduce you to our new CMEA Executive Board.

I hope everyone has a restful summer reconnecting with family, friends, and your favorite things. If CMEA can be a resource for you please contact us through our e-mails, webpage, or social media. CMEA is here to support its membership and continue to work on behalf of all music teachers in the state.

Musically Yours;
Dr. Jason Bouchard
CMEA President



EVEN TEACHERS NEED TEACHERS

As an educator, one of the most impactful ways to improve is by educating yourself. That's why the Yamaha Educator Suite (YES) helps music teachers access professional development opportunities, music teacher resources, program health support, advocacy assistance and more. YES brings you a network of like-minded teachers, experts and professionals, who want to help you achieve your goals. Let us help you raise the bar. Go to Yamaha.io/educatorsCONMEA

 **YAMAHA**
Make Waves

FROM THE EDITOR

by Anne Halloran Tortora

Thanks to one of my former undergrads, I developed the habit of counting the number of “wake-ups” left as I get closer to the end of each school year. My thought is that each of us, regardless of when our spring semesters are slated to end, have been doing just that. As we finish the 2020-2021 journey with our students and colleagues, I hope you’ll find this issue of *CMEA News* a fruitful one.

Once again, we are able to feature contributions representing Connecticut educators. **Polina Mann’s** article on grant writing tips for the music educator is especially timely as we all work towards building/rebuilding our instructional inventories for the coming year and beyond. We are excited to be sharing **John Mastroianni’s** second of a two-part series on the art and science behind the developing of improvisation in our students. This installment of “Gimme 5” focuses upon transcriptions and includes an alto sax chart for “Caravan”. John, we hope this will become a regular feature!

Also in this issue:

- Self-care, anyone...everyone? I hope you’ll find **Paul K. Fox’s** article on diagnosing and remediating the physical, emotional, and professional challenges so many of us are likely experiencing these days

to be helpful as we start our summer breaks.

- If your students are like mine, they’ve been asking what next year is going to look like. While we are all hoping for the best and have no idea what we’ll be facing, the prospect of lags in our students’ progress is a real one. **Caroline Parker** describes how a 25-year veteran colleague dealt with challenges and restrictions brought about by the pandemic, especially within hybrid and synchronous settings.

We are pleased to recognize those colleagues who were named Teachers of the Year for their schools or districts. Also, we are honored to be able to recognize three exemplary colleagues for their work in music education with 2021 Membership Awards: Andrew Kohanski, Leslie Imse, and Amanda Leon-Guerrero.



Thank you to thee exemplars for representing our profession as well as they do.

After a particularly challenging rehearsal, one of my first years asked what my plans were for the summer. Without hesitation, I told him I just wanted to recover from this year. As I’m sure is the case for nearly all of you, I’m ready to catch my breath, clear my head, and refocus the lens I use to remain committed to this profession that I love so dearly. I came across a blogpost which included advise to graduating seniors majoring in performing arts that rang in as a good reminder:

“Seek joy where you can find it. Go to shows that will inspire you. Listen to music. Dream big dreams. Connect with why you’ve chosen to pursue this crazy career in the first place. Hopefully it will be

because you couldn't imagine doing anything else."

My wish for you as we close out this year is for you to remain safe, and healthy, and to find your own joy during a restful (and well-deserved) summer break!

Peace,
Anne

Anne Halloran Tortora is currently serving as the Director

of Music at Saint Bernard School, Uncasville. Anne earned the B.S. (Education) and B.A. (Music) at UConn, the M.M.Ed. at The Hartt School, and the Ed.D. in Interdisciplinary Leadership at Creighton University. Her research focuses on the pedagogy of leadership and how it relates to conductors at all stages in their professional development.

Anne lives in Uncasville with her husband, Michael, and Service Dog, Joy, and enjoys life as the mother of sons and nana of granddaughters. When she's not making, listening to, or talking about music, Anne can be found making visual art with her trusty Nikon D5300 and breathing in the beauty of Race Point Beach in Provincetown, MA.

STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMISSION

John Abucewicz, Student Affairs Commission Chair

Hello and greetings from the Student Affairs Commission of CMEA. In a most difficult year, I hope you were able to find some silver linings amongst all the clouds. With so many changes to programs and cancellations of performances, it's hard to see those. What keeps us going is the hope that we will be returning to "normal" sooner rather than later.

I know that most of you are wondering, "What is happening for next year?" At CMEA, we have been meeting virtually all year and we have been able to get some direction as to what we might be able to do. We are "planning" to have in person events at some point next year. The biggest question mark is the fall. Will field trips be allowed? Will schools be allowed to host auditions? We would like to say that everything will be back to normal, but the reality is we just

don't know. We are doing our best to check on host sites for high school regional auditions, but there are still many unknowns. Your region directors have been doing amazing work at trying to keep you all in the loop as to what *could* happen. At the time of this letter, the Student Affairs Commission has not made a final decision about fall auditions, but will in the coming weeks. You will know as soon as we have made a decision considering all of the factors.

I would like to thank the Student Affairs Commission for all of their work and patience with me as I learn how to navigate this position and continue to learn. I would also like to thank all of you for the kind words that some have sent to me thanking me. It's been a steep learning curve, but with the current situation, it has been that much more difficult.

Looking ahead, the 4-year cycle of high school audition

music is up in 2024. I would like to put a committee of teachers together to revisit this list and see what is working and what needs to be changed. I know several have emailed me and mentioned concerns about some of the repertoire. I would like to get a head start on this, since it is quite an involved process. If you would like to be involved with the next set of audition repertoire, please email me. Work on this will begin this coming fall.

I hope you all find some time to relax as you "wind down" to the end of the school year. We have learned quite a bit over the last year and half, good and bad. I think I can speak for most of us in saying we are all looking forward to some time away from the screen more than ever. Be well, and I hope to see you all in person during the 2021-2022 school year!

SOUTHERN REGION

Jaminda Blackmon, Region Director

Congratulations as we have yet another successful year under our belt. For many of us this successful year happened despite having no performances, students in front of us, our classrooms moved to a cart, lack of funds, and in some cases lack of support. This success has happened despite the personal challenges that each of you has faced but yet put aside for the well-being of our students. This success has happened despite the everyday exhaustion, constant disrespect, or the overwhelming need to quit, give up, or in some cases want to find another career. Thank you for persevering. It is very evident to why our students are still interested in music, and it is because of you.

As a region we have survived teaching remotely, hybrid, or in person in the midst of a pandemic. We have adapted our

classroom to the rooms of our houses, measuring our classrooms with six-foot markers, and now three-foot markers, or minimized ourselves down to a cart, we have survived the changeover of a new CT Fest, and virtual auditions, and yet we still managed to build wonderful musicians. Our students have learned by watching you that the music, although very different, still plays on. They have learned how to adapt to changing times while in some cases still practicing their craft. They have learned how to work more independently and how that independence helps the greater whole. Let's not forget the technology component that many of our students, and ourselves, had to learn in order to be successful. Some students have been blessed to still have regular performances and in those cases, they have learned how to work as a team.

I personally want to say thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Your commitment to teaching music this year is incredible and has not gone unnoticed. Last year was extremely challenging as the pandemic happened mid-year, this year brought forth new challenges as we had to reinvent teaching many times. Some

of us started teaching remotely via zoom or google classrooms, and weeks or months later had to transition to hybrid teaching. Many of you did this while caring for sick family members or even recuperating yourselves, while never forgetting about our amazing students. Some of you went back to school day one keeping our students safe by voicing your safety concern to the powers that be all of this showing how resilient you are. Lastly, thank you for your continued patience and support for me as your Region Director. It is greatly appreciated.

As the school year comes to an end, and you start to reflect on this past year please spend more time looking at all of the glows, than the grows this year. If you need help finding the glows please take a look into the beautiful masked faces of your students. Through this pandemic I have heard stories of students wanting to come to school, whether online or in person, because of you. In some cases music class was the only class they attended. Please take time for yourself this summer and spend time with your loved ones as we are reminded everyday how precious life is. Thank you again for all that you do for our students, each other, and CMEA. We are a better organization because of teachers like you. Please stay safe, relax, and have a great summer!



NORTHERN REGION

Sharon Vocke & Dawn Brys, Co-Region Directors



Sharon Vocke



Dawn Brys

As we close out what has been the most unusual and challenging year for music education, please know how grateful we are to work among and with you. You've had every concert, festival, and performance event cancelled, yet you've kept going. You've dealt with invisible

and absent students, and you've kept going. You've encouraged your students to practice, to play, to sing, and to grow, and you've kept going. Every time your district had a new directive, asking you to go from virtual to in-person to hybrid and back again, you've kept going. You've nurtured and supported your students, your colleagues, and your families, through really tough times, and you've kept going.

Things are still going to be strange, no doubt. Even as we open up, things for music teachers will be challenging. They always have been. They always will be, because our standards are high.

We don't give up.

We keep going.

Thank you for all you've done, are doing, and will continue to do for your students, your communities, and for the world. You make those better with what you do. Keep going.

Our dates for next year are:

- High School Auditions: November 6, 2021, location TBA
- High School Festival: January 14 and 15, 2022, New Britain High School (Snow dates January 21 and 22, 2022)
- Middle School Auditions: January January 8, 2022, King Philip Middle School, West

Hartford (Snow date January 29, 2022)

- Middle School Festival: March 11 and 12, 2022, location TBD (Snow Dates March 18 and 19, 2022)
- All-State Auditions: February 5, 2022 (Snow Date February 12, 2022) Location TBA
- All-State Festival: details to be determined.

You've worked hard taking care of others. Enjoy your summer. Rest, relax, recharge. Make sure to take care of yourself. Did you catch that? Yes, YOU. Take really good care of yourself. You deserve it. Besides, you need to do this in order to

Keep Going.

Thank you for allowing us to serve as Northern Region Directors for the past two years.

It's been an enlightening experience for us, and we're grateful to have had the opportunity to be more involved in CMEA. We look forward to seeing you again at auditions, festivals, professional development events, and conferences. Be well.

CMEA ADVOCACY AND EQUITY REPORT AND TRANSITION

By Dan Kinsman, Advocacy and Equity Chair



Dear Colleagues,

First, I want to congratulate everyone for completing what was probably the most challenging school years that any of us have (or will) experience in our teaching careers. The challenges of Remote and Hybrid learning forced us to address Equitable Access to music education like never before. Thank you to those of you who drove house to house to deliver instruments. Thank you to those of you who overcame digital fears to learn new platforms and programs to connect with your students remotely. Thank you for ALL the

calls, texts, emails, carrier pigeon messages sent to get students signed in and participating in their music classes. This year of Quarantine has been a social and emotional struggle for students and teachers alike, and we know that getting back to Making Music is what will help us all to heal and get back to being our Amazing selves again.

I write this as my final report and CMEA News submission, as I step down from the Advocacy and Equity Executive Board Position and head for a new adventure teaching elementary general music at a dual language Arabic international school in the Middle East next school year. Teaching internationally has been something I have wanted to do for most of my career and now seems as good a time as any to go give it a try. I have never been shy about stepping out of my comfort zone to experience new and different cultures, and I encourage you to do the same when you can.

As I depart CT and CMEA, I hope to leave a legacy of increasing Diversity, Equity, Access and

Inclusion in music education across our state and being an advocate to strengthen the voice of City Music Teachers. I'm proud of the work we have done to make more CMEA programs and activities work for more teachers and students, and I am excited and optimistic for the work to continue by YOU! Please get involved, have a seat and voice at the table planning events and making decisions at your schools, in your communities and in CMEA. Getting involved is the way to take action and make a difference.

I'd like to thank the CMEA Presidents I have worked with and wish Jason Bouchard all the best as he leads CMEA into the next chapter for Advocacy and Equity work with Jon Garcia (Bridgeport HS Band Director) who will be stepping into the Advocacy and Equity Chair Executive Board Position. I'd like to thank Barbara at the CMEA office for her unending dedication to CMEA, the region directors, committee members, ensemble directors, audition judges, ticket takers and everyone I have worked with along the way to start and continue the momentum of the CMEA Equity Initiative. I can still be reached on facebook and at dnkinsman@gmail.com and hope to hear from my CT colleagues and friends next year.



CMEA ADVOCACY AND EQUITY REPORT AND TRANSITION CONTINUED



Greetings everyone, my name is Jon Garcia and I'm excited to step into the role as the new Advocacy and Equity Chair Executive Board member. I want to take this opportunity to thank our previous chair Dan Kinsman and our president-elect Dr. Jason Bouchard for having the confidence in me to continue this extremely important work in our state. My experience teaching in a number of diverse school districts around the state, as well

as traveling the world as a cruise musician, fuels my passion for this work. I am truly eager to share my global perspective with you all as we continue to implement the work that the Equity committee has done to highlight student Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB). I look forward to meeting you all and working hand-in-hand to ensure all our students are equally represented.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Melanie Champion, Professional Development Chair



Dear Colleagues,

It has been my honor to serve you over the past several years as

your Professional Development Chair. We have seen many changes in our profession, and I have worked to develop a PD Committee that is responsive to your needs and the many and various needs of our students as well. I will be stepping down at the end of this year and am so grateful to all of you for the wonderful opportunities and interactions I have had in this role. I have developed and implemented a new PD Committee and a few new programs, such as PD Outreach, Coffee with Colleagues, and this year with the pandemic, Webinars/Conversation with Colleagues as well as a few Virtual PD conferences (Election Day, Equity, and our annual Spring

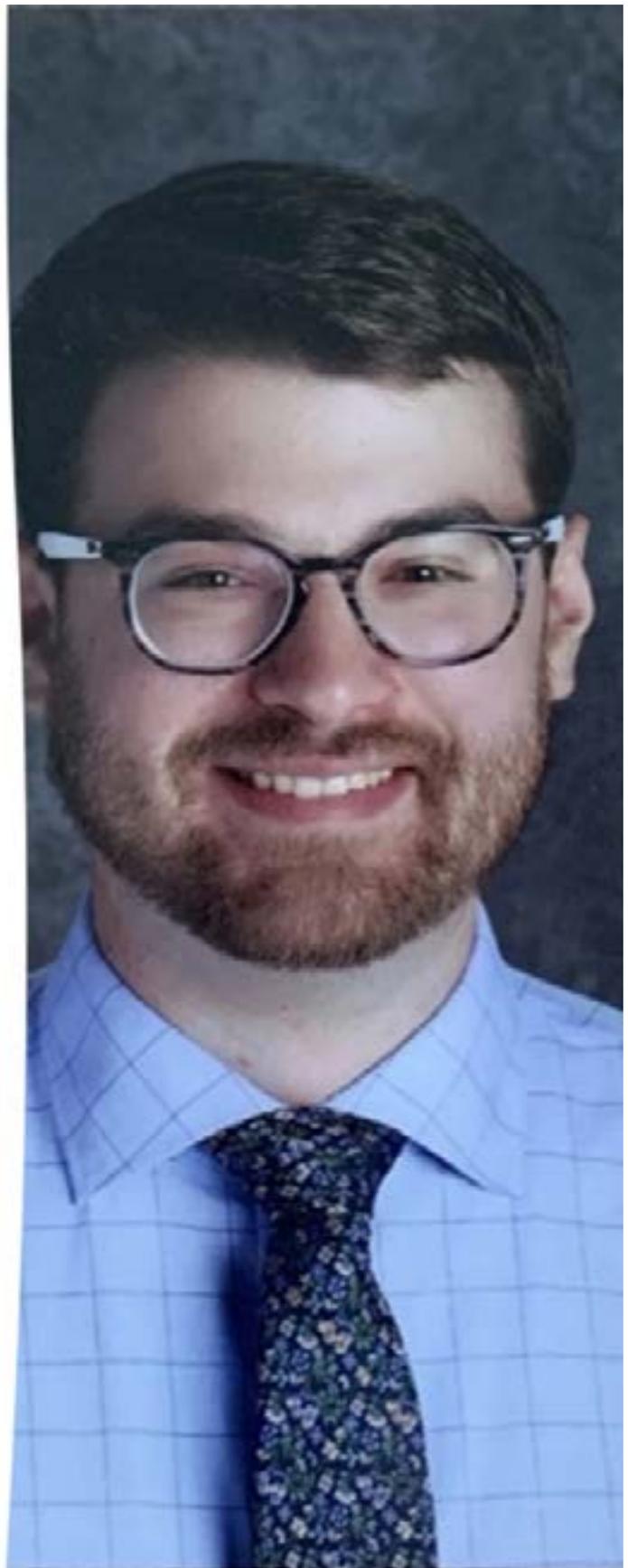
Conference). None of this is possible without the support of a great team, and I want to thank all the members of the PD Committee, the Executive Board and especially the behind-the-scenes office support from Barbara Skrebutenas.

Looking forward, you will have a new PD Chair to welcome and CMEA will continue to focus on tailoring our PD offerings to meet your needs. Please consider volunteering to help at an event or join the committee to have your voice heard and to give back to your profession. If you need to contact me in the future, I can be reached at melchamp4@gmail.com and I wish you all good luck in the coming school year.

**Outstanding Emerging
Music Educator**

**Andrew Kohanski:
Instrumental Music,
Simsbury Public Schools**

"When Andrew interviewed for his current position, he immediately set himself apart as a dedicated and knowledgeable teacher. In fact, the committee at first assumed he was much older and had many more years of experience based on his insightful responses and thoughtful approach. In working with Andrew as his mentor, I have witnessed his high level of self-evaluation and observed his willingness to try new strategies until he achieves success with his students. If Andrew is ever frustrated in the classroom, his students are not made aware. His calm and even demeanor is well suited to the middle school environment, even in the face of this challenging year."



**Outstanding
Music Educator**

**Amanda Leon—Guerrero:
Instrumental Music –
West Hartford Public Schools**

“Historically, music education and the performing arts, combine to form a signature piece of the unique brand of exceptional education West Hartford offers to children...How lucky for us that, for over a decade, the aspiring musicians in our district – the children – have been and continue to be the direct beneficiaries of her efforts.”



**Outstanding Arts
Administrator**

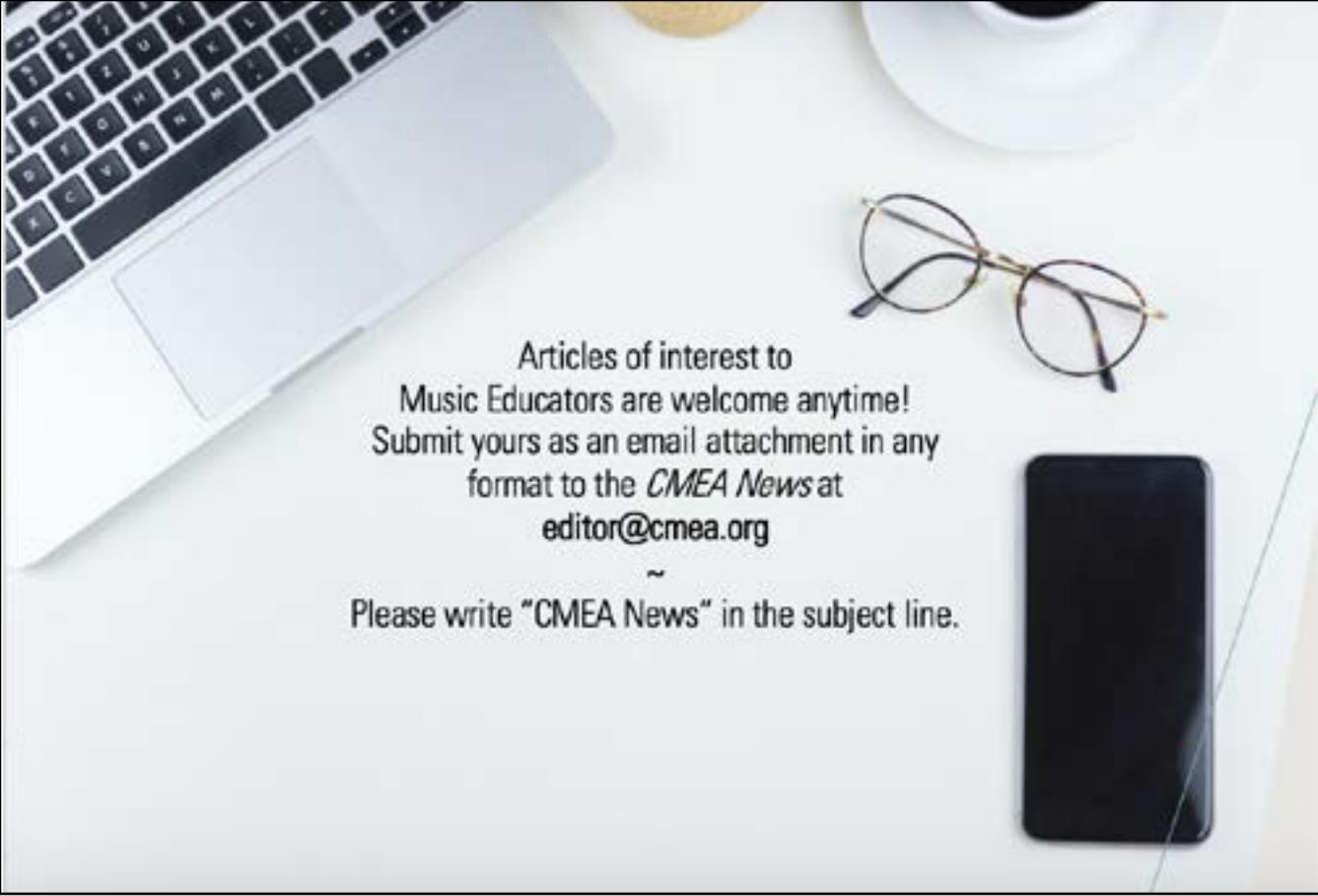
**Leslie Imse:
Music Department Chair –
Farmington Public Schools**

“One of the joys of being an artist is having the ability to reimagine existing music and make it new, or to break boundaries and create something completely new. As a creative artist and teacher, Leslie re-envision the role of artist and brings new music to life. These qualities transcend into her leadership role. As a music administrator in Farmington, she embodies the musical process and models ways in which music teachers might add new teaching strategies into the K-12 music classroom, from incorporating project-based learning and culturally relevant pedagogy into the high school ensemble setting, to carefully weaving in tenets of social emotional learning in middle school general music, to incorporating popular music pedagogies into the elementary classroom”.



"Excellence is not an accomplishment.
It is a spirit, a never-ending process."
– Lawrence M. Miller

Bravas go to
Hilary Brown (East Ridge Middle School, Ridgefield)
Amy Hannequin (Bethel Middle School, Bethel)
on being named
Teachers of the Year, 2020-2021!



Articles of interest to
Music Educators are welcome anytime!
Submit yours as an email attachment in any
format to the *CMEA News* at
editor@cmea.org

~
Please write "CMEA News" in the subject line.

GRANT HUNTING FOR MUSIC TEACHERS: TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL SEARCH

Polina Mann, St. Rita School, Hamden, CT

Have you ever wanted to get more instruments or supplies for your classroom but not sure how and don't have a budget? Maybe you have thought about applying for a grant but not sure where to look or how to apply for one? As teachers of a special area, we are often overlooked for funding, leaving us with few resources for our students. As someone who began her grant hunting journey last year and managed to win several grants, would like to tell you that the grant opportunities are out there. With a little digging and diligence you can find something, and apply for a grant in almost any teaching situation.

Here are some tips if you are interested in finding, applying and receiving grant money for your classroom:

1. *Do Your Research*-I would start with a general search for grants such as just "grants for teachers", "grants for music teachers", and/or do a grant search in your state and see what the search engine gives you. Oftentimes there is a long list of grants per click and I would advise you to go through as much of that as you can to see if you come across anything your school can qualify for.

2. *Check, Check, Check*-Once you find a grant of interest, check to see if the grant is still available as there are many websites still left over from years past for grants that no longer exist. If it is active, check the deadline as well as who can apply-public school teachers, private school teachers, teachers who work for a non-profit, etc.

3. *What Do You Need?*-Check the application requirements as

well as what you need to apply-an essay, a lesson plan, a video, a picture, etc. If you are part of a non-profit tax exempt organization, please ask your business office for the tax ID and tax exempt form so that you can submit this with your application. I would ask for other paperwork as necessary with this application such as proof of tax exempt status, proof of Title 1 funding, etc.

4. *Know What You "Want"*-research the items, prices, SKU numbers, vendor, etc. that you will need for your grant. Some grants may ask for only the items and the vendor but some get very specific. Knowing what items you want, how many, who they will benefit and how. The more specific the plan, the more you can advocate for your grant!

5. *Know Your Situation*-this may sound obvious but this isn't always the case. For example, a Catholic school is considered to be a private school which is

also parochial school. A charter school is considered to be a public school but operates independently of the public school system and usually has non-profit status. Knowing what type of school you are in as well as what status it has with the IRS can often qualify or disqualify you for a grant. Another important thing to check is Title 1 funding. While often given to public schools, charter schools and Catholic schools can also apply for this. If a school receives such funding, it qualifies as a Title 1 school which can also make it eligible for certain grants.

6. *Proofread and Spellcheck*-This one goes without saying. Make sure to proofread your work and run it by a friend or colleague before sending it in. Having an extra set of eyes look at this also doesn't hurt.

7. *Hold on to the Memories*-Grant committees like to see your passion for the classroom. Try to think of a time that you made a

difference in the classroom, students were successful in their lesson, you connected with a student/parent, etc. Use this experience to talk about the learning that happens in your classroom.

8. *Don't Forget a Title*-Many organizations love a creative, catchy title since they read so many applications. If the application asks for a title, make sure you spend some time crafting something original so that your request stands out.

9. *Keep a Record*-Keep a list of all grants you have applied for so that even if you do not win anything this year, you can always reapply. Also, print out the applications you send in, mark them

with the application date, and keep everything in a big folder. Trust me it will come in handy when you receive a congratulatory email and know which grant it is that you won.

10. *Thank You and Follow Up*-I always send a personalized thank you note to each sponsor who gave my school a grant. Some grants ask for a write up of how the funds were used which is also important to provide. Where possible, send pictures of your students using the equipment/software that you purchased to let the donors see their dollars at work first hand.

11. *Keep an Open Mind*-If the grant does not benefit your school music program, can it benefit someone else or some

other endeavor you are a part of? Perhaps an after school program, a summer camp, a youth program at your church? Never hurts to think outside the box!

I hope that this was helpful for you. For information on various grants, you can find my Instagram handle: grantsformusicteachers. I post a new grant opportunity every week so make sure to check often so that you do not miss potential new opportunities! Good luck!

This article is reprinted from TEMPO, the journal of the New Jersey Music Educators Association, with the permission of its author.



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MUSIC TEACHING AND LEARNING DURING COVID-19 AND BEYOND SEEKING PROFESSIONAL SATISFACTION AND CONTINUING TO TEACH

By NAFME Member Mara E. Culp and Rachel Roberts

The events of 2020 altered education around the world. Amidst turmoil, many re-examined values, priorities, and possibilities—including music educators. Although most music teachers may never have envisioned teaching in this educational landscape, we believe it is still possible to seek professional satisfaction, which can help ensure students have positive, meaningful experiences as well. Suggestions—guided by personal experiences, interactions with colleagues and students, and literature—are presented as a continuous cycle of 1) identifying personal values and priorities, 2) setting expectations and making plans, and 3) taking action.

Potential Influences on Music Teacher Satisfaction and Continuation

Prior to COVID-19, researchers and scholars indicated that music teachers' satisfaction and continuation could be related to students, schedules, materials, administration, parents, curriculum, autonomy, salary/income[1], paperwork and duties, work-life balance, and career advancement to varying degrees (Baker, 2011; Cutietta and Thompson, 2000; Gardner, 2010; Hancock, 2008; Miksza and Hime, 2015, 2016; Matthews and Koner, 2017; Siebert, 2008).

Identifying Personal Values and Priorities

Because factors lending to teacher satisfaction and continuation can differ among teachers, we suggest teachers develop a list of priorities.

Teachers can begin by reflecting on their personal philosophy and values, determining what it will take to feel successful and fulfilled, and examining ways their teaching responsibilities align with or provide opportunities to enact these values. We suggest making a list in light of current circumstances, and reevaluating as changes occur.

Setting Expectations and Making Plans

After identifying priorities, we recommend teachers set realistic expectations and make plans to act. Determining related benchmarks or norms from trustworthy sources may help inform expectations. Some items may require support from school community members and teachers may not feel able to advocate or negotiate for reasons such as lack of confidence or experience;

or fear of rejection, negative consequences, or retaliation. Thus, beginning with aspects within the teacher's control, informed by trusted resources, may help teachers feel more immediate success and build confidence.

After determining expectations, teachers can select action items, focusing on priorities and realistic possibilities. Finally, teachers can develop strategies and *practice* how they will go about enacting and advocating change, particularly when others are involved. Teachers can role-play the conversation, acting both as themselves and the other party, to prepare for these conversations. This can help teachers better understand and prepare responses for possible objections.

Taking Action

Here, we provide suggestions for consideration presented in

alphabetical order and informed by previously-mentioned sources as well as others noted throughout and noted below. Suggestions are meant to be broad—potentially applicable to a wide variety of music teaching scenarios—and examples are not exhaustive. Therefore, we encourage readers to consider individual circumstances as they take action. Discussing personally-beneficial practices may also help teachers continue to refine their ideas^[2], while potentially serving as a resource for others.

Administrative Support

To garner support, teachers could:

- review NAFME position statements (which may include COVID-19-specific addendums)
- invite administrators to learn about the music program (e.g., listen to student recordings)
- promote the program publicly
- share background of musical content and processes as part of performances
- seek and organize parental assistance in advocacy efforts (NAfME, d.a)
- review resources for advocating for music programs (see NAFME, d.g)
- articulate what matters for your music students and your own professional development
- determine a realistic amount of regular time that can be committed to advocacy efforts
- develop solid arguments and refine your persuasion skills (see Center for Creative Leadership, n.d.)

- discuss program goals and direction with colleagues and administrators, attempting to find common ground while advocating one’s vision supported by relevant guidance

Autonomy

Considering COVID-19 guidance, teachers may be able to make important, creative decisions related to:

- repertoire
- scope and sequence
- assessment strategies
- goals and outcomes
- other materials

Teachers without classrooms could:

- adapt a space (e.g., instrument storage becomes online teaching room^[3])
- decorate “traveling” materials in personal ways (e.g., pictures of loved ones, pets)

Career Advancement and Professional Growth

Conceptualizing advancement in terms of satisfaction and fulfillment through professional growth, involvement, impact, and/or visibility, teachers could:

- increase knowledge by reading journals (e.g., *Music Educators Journal*), listening to podcasts, or engaging in (online) experiences, such as webinars, conferences, classes, online learning platforms (e.g., NAFME Academy), or study groups (e.g., Music Education and Special Needs Study Group)
- pursue additional degrees, credentials, and certifications (e.g., National Board Certification)

- connect with other or more experienced professionals (e.g., seek mentorship, collaborate)
- become involved with state, national, or international organizations; affiliated groups (e.g., Decolonising and Indigenising Music Education Special Interest Group); or online communities (e.g., Music Educators Creating Online Learning)
- mentor other teachers or host preservice teachers (Snell et al., 2019^[4])
- share knowledge in school (districts), at conferences, or by publishing in professional journals
- assume leadership positions in/on a school, organization, or journal’s editorial board

Curriculum, Scheduling, and Course Offerings

Curricular decisions can positively affect students’ experience long-term, while helping teachers achieve professional satisfaction, such as:

- using technology—an important consideration beyond COVID-19 as well (Bauer, 2014, 2020)
- providing more depth using fewer musical selections (e.g., composer information, musical concepts, cultural context)
- offering non-performance-based opportunities (e.g., songwriting)
- capitalizing on opportunities to offer multiple small sections of a class/course (Culp and Clauhs, 2020)
- experimenting with and refining lessons taught multiple times

- researching and removing problematic literature (for ideas, see Gamza, 2020)
- thoughtfully incorporating repertoire/materials/perspectives from many cultures and genres, including historically underrepresented groups—for ideas, see NAFME webinars (e.g., Waller-Pace, Batislaong, and McCauley, 2020); Institute for Composer Diversity databases^[5]; and podcasts (e.g., Classically Black Podcast, HERstory)

Mindset

Drawing on Dweck’s (2007) work on mindsets, we recognize an individual’s beliefs about themselves can impact their lives and exploring a growth mindset may be beneficial for teachers, who could:

- identify and let go of what is out of their control
- focus on what is in their control
- determine ways to set goals within their control that will allow personally-meaningful growth
- strive for incremental positive change over time
- reframe their own outlook on difficult situations

Students, Families, and Communities

To restore, maintain, and/or build relationships, music teachers could consider:

- eliciting ideas from students, families, and community members using online platforms/surveys
- collaborating with school personnel and colleagues
- inviting community members (e.g., children’s household members, local musicians,

school personnel) to share musical experiences

- making positive phone/video calls or sending positive emails/messages home
- having students complete play-along videos, assignments (e.g., a family and friends musical tree), and tasks (e.g., musical scavenger hunts) with household members
- practicing gratitude for the positive relationships that are present or growing (e.g., sending thank you notes)
- creating and sharing class “newsletters” and updates and gathering “musical updates” from families
- asking students and families to submit information (e.g., journal entries) about favorite school musical memories/moments and the impacts on their lives
- offering additional ways of performing and sharing (e.g., playlist of student performances/compositions/work accessible online during a timeframe) (Culp and Clauhs, 2020; Culp and Salvador, 2017; Reese and Culp, 2019)

Supplies and Materials

Considering eligibility requirements, teachers could seek to acquire materials using avenues such as:

- DonorsChoose
- Fund for Teachers
- Grants for Teachers
- Guitar Center Music Foundation
- Little Kids Rock
- The Mr. Holland’s Opus Foundation
- National Education Association

For additional organizations, see Culp and Clauhs (2020, p. 48).

Work-Life Balance and Self-Care

To work toward achieving a personally-fulfilling work-life balance and self-care practices, teachers could:

- assess current self-care, identify options, and develop an action plan toward sustainable self-care (Kuebel, 2019)
- say “no” more to activities/requests that are not necessary, periphery, or otherwise unfulfilling/draining
- draw clear boundaries around home and work and stick to them
- review resources geared toward music teachers (e.g., Jones, 2020; Moffat, Varona, and Kuebel, 2020)

Concluding Thoughts

Teaching music can feel overwhelming and seeking professional satisfaction can help teachers find joy in challenging times. By identifying their particular needs and consulting trusted sources to help set reasonable expectations, we hope music teachers can find fulfillment and better assist their learners for years to come.

Notes

1. Negotiating salary may not be possible for all music education professionals, particularly during times of economic hardship or in settings with salary schedules (see Gray et al., 2013; NCES, n.d.). Those who can negotiate may find the American Association of University Women (AAUW)’s (2020) guidance (i.e., knowing one’s

value, understanding current comparatives, developing a strategy, and practicing) and materials (e.g., WorkSmart and StartSmart workshops) to teach salary negotiation skills to working women and college students beneficial.

2. We thank our colleagues in music teaching who provided feedback on this post, which allowed us the opportunity to continue to develop our ideas about seeking professional satisfaction as well (in alphabetical order): Matthew Clauhs, PhD (Ithaca College, Assistant Professor of Music Education, Instrumental), Rachel Dobbs, MA (Rochester City School District, K–8 General Music Teacher), Ashley Moss Fox, MM (Rochester City School District, PreK Music and Movement Specialist) Jing Tian Ngiaw, BM (Buffalo United Charter School, K–8 General Music Teacher).
3. An idea modeled by UPK–5 General Music Teacher Adam Foley, PhD in the Gates-Chili Central School District.
4. Hosting a student teacher could provide music teachers with additional assistance, as well as help music teachers increase knowledge, reflect on personal practice, and stave off professional isolation—which may be particularly valuable for teachers who feel isolated, want to learn new skills, or need to develop new material. Working with preservice teachers during other coursework they complete could serve similar ends as well, while helping build relationships with university

faculty with positive outcomes for all involved. See Snell et al. (2019) for a discussion.

5. At the time this post was written, the databases were temporarily muted and anticipated to return in early 2021.

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BURNED OUT OR BUMMED OUT? TEACHER SELF-CARE: DIAGNOSIS AND REMEDIATION

By NAFME Member Paul K. Fox

This article first appeared on Paul Fox's blog [here](#).

This is part six in a series of articles on educator health and wellness, following "[Stressed Out!](#)" and "[Teacher Self-Care during the Pandemic](#)."

Do you recognize these **signs of burnout** experienced by yourself, a coworker, neighbor, or someone you love?

- **Physical:**tired, lowered immunity, illnesses, aches and pains, loss of appetite or sleep
- **Emotional:**sense of self-doubt, failure, helplessness, loneliness, cynicism, loss of satisfaction/motivation
- **Behavioral:**withdrawal, isolation, skipping work, procrastination, frustration, overuse of food, drugs, alcohol

By the time it gets to that third bullet, probably everyone would be aware of the trouble.

You may be on the road to burnout if:

- Every day is a bad day.
- Caring about your work or home life seems like a total waste of energy.
- You're exhausted all the time.
- The majority of your day is spent on tasks you find either mind-numbingly dull or overwhelming.
- You feel like nothing you do makes a difference or is appreciated.

— [Burnout Prevention and Recovery by Melinda Smith, M.A., Jeanne Segal, Ph.D., and Lawrence Robinson](#)

Gregory S. Perkins and **Angela M. Guerriero**, licensed music therapists from the [Tempo! Music Therapy Services](#), provided much more

detailed definitions of self-care in a session at the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) 2020 Virtual Summer Conference. You should know and be on the lookout for these terms:

*The United Nations defines **self-care** as the actions that individuals take in order to develop, protect, maintain, and improve their own health and well-being. Self-care involves a personal investment in maintaining physical, psychological, and spiritual health, and pursuing a fulfilling, well-rounded life.*

Brownout: "A practitioner essentially gives up or performs in a perfunctory manner when confronted with too much stress and too little gratification." [Guy, J. & Norcross, J. \(2007\). Leaving it at the office: a guide to psychotherapist self-care. New York, NY: Guilford Publications, Inc.](#)

Burnout: "A syndrome of physical exhaustion including a negative self-concept, negative job attitude, and loss of concern and feelings." [Keidel, G. \(2002\). Burnout and compassion fatigue among hospice caregivers. American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Care, 19\(3\), 200-205](#)

— [Recognizing the Need: Self-Care for Music Educators by Gregory S. Perkins, MT-BC, and Angela M. Guerriero, PhD, MT-BC](#)

The Mayo Clinic offers numerous symptoms of "burnout." How many of these have you "felt" too or noticed in someone else's demeanor or behavior?

1. Disillusionment over the job
2. Cynicism at work
3. Impatience with co-workers, administrators, and students

4. Lack of satisfaction in accomplishments
5. Dragging yourself to work and trouble getting started once you're there
6. Lack of energy
7. Unexplained aches/pains
8. Self-medicating with food, drugs, or alcohol
9. Changes in sleep/eating patterns

Education Week adds many more **danger signs**. Are any of these striking close to home?

Exhaustion. *This is a fatigue so deep that there's no way to "turn it off," no matter how badly you want to. It's deep in your bones. The kind of tired where you just want to ooze into your bed and disconnect from life.*

Extreme graveness. *Realizing you go hours without smiling or laughing, or days without a belly laugh.*

Anxiety. *The constant, nagging feeling that you can and should do more, while simultaneously realizing you need to unplug and spend more time with your family. But there are so many things to do.*

Being overwhelmed. *Questioning how they can possibly add one more task, expectation, or mandate to your plate. Compromising your values of excellence just so you can check-off 15 more boxes to stay in compliance. All the while knowing it still won't be enough.*

Seeking. *Losing your creativity, imagination, patience, and enthusiasm for daily challenges. Craving reflection time and productive collaboration rather than group complaining.*

Isolation. *Wanting to head for the deepest, darkest cave where no one will see your vulnerability. A place where your limits are unseen and unquestioned and all is quiet.*

— [Six Signs of and Solutions for Teacher Burnout by Wendi Pillars](#)

What about the **causes** of burnout or brownout? Where should we place the blame?

According to Paul Murphy in his book, *Exhausted—Why Teachers Are So Tired and What They Can Do About It*, the stress of a few problems may stand out as leading culprits at your place of employment:

1. Lack of autonomy
2. Dysfunctional work environment
3. Inadequate social support
4. Extremes of activity
5. Poor work/life balance

But, you have no one else but yourself to blame! You must take responsibility for your own health and welfare. Most of the sources in this blogpost (including a few mentioned in past articles from this “care” category) suggest solutions to better self-care, many of which offer answers to address the issue and **CAN BE DONE RIGHT NOW**.

Here are a few more self-care tips from *PsychCentral*:

- Create a “no” list, with things you know you don't like or you no longer want to do. Examples might include: Not checking emails at night, not attending gatherings you don't like, not answering your phone during lunch/dinner.
- Promote a nutritious, healthy diet.
- Get enough sleep. Adults usually need 7-8 hours of sleep each night.
- In contrast to what many people think, exercise is as good for our emotional health as it is for our physical health. It increases serotonin levels, leading to improved mood and energy. In line with the self-care conditions, what's important is that you choose a form of exercise that you like!
- Follow-up with medical care. It is not unusual to put off checkups or visits to the doctor.
- Use relaxation exercises and/or practice meditation. You can do these exercises at any time of the day.

- Spend enough time with your loved ones.
 - Do at least one relaxing activity every day, whether it's taking a walk or spending 30 minutes unwinding.
 - Do at least one pleasurable activity every day; from going to the cinema, to cooking or meeting with friends.
 - Look for opportunities to laugh!
- [*What Self-Care Is and What It Isn't* by Raphailia Michael, MA](#)

We should also review “[Five Tips for Avoiding Teacher Burnout](#)” by Mary Beth Hertz, an *Edutopia* blog (read the entire article for greater depth and clarity):

1. Maintain your “other” life.
2. Be a stakeholder when changes are made.
3. Find lessons and opportunities in everything.
4. Nurture peer connections.
5. Keep it light.

Edutopia, from the George Lucas Educational Foundation, is a wonderful resource. Most recently, three valuable “streams” of articles have been released on coping with the preparations and stress in the reopening of schools for the 2020-2021 year:

- [“Teachers Around the World Tell Us Reopening Is Tough, but Joyful”](#)
- [“Teaching Through the Pandemic: A Mindset for This Moment”](#)
- [“Seven Takeaways from Our Experiences with Distance Learning”](#)

I also recommend [this blog-post of the Regional Education Laboratory Program](#) which describes “teacher well being” as “the reaction to the individual and collective physical, environmental, and social events that shape how educators respond to their students and colleagues.” They discuss how three prominent human behavior frameworks—Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, the Five Stages of Grief and Loss, and the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM)—can be used to address the challenges that

teachers face when adapting to change and identify approaches to support teacher well being.

In addition, the following perspectives come from a variety of self-proclaimed practitioners:

“One of Leonardo da Vinci’s seven essential elements of genius is known as *Sfumato*, Italian for ‘smoked,’ or ‘going up in smoke.’ This principle is the ability to embrace uncertainty, the unknown, and the unknowable. In my interpretation, it’s also an ability to ‘let go’ of everything that’s left undone when you know you’ve done your best. Embrace *Sfumato*.”—[Wendy Pillars](#)

“Self-care needs to be something you actively plan, rather than something that just happens. It is an active choice, and you must treat it as such.”—[Raphailia Michael](#)

“Remember that example about putting on your own oxygen mask before helping others? This is where that analogy really comes in to play. It’s time for you to take a good hard look at your self-care versus your care for others and decide if you are in a place where you have a good balance or if you need to make this a priority . . . Why is self-care . . . such a critical component of your physical and mental health? Because in order for you to function at your peak, you need to meet the needs your body and mind have for rejuvenation, relaxation, and rebirth. If you are constantly putting out efforts toward other people and events but never taking time to refuel yourself, then you will run out of steam and it will manifest in your body as an illness, weight gain, acne, joint pain—you know the drill—again.”—[Lesley Moffat](#) in *I Love My Job But It’s Killing Me*

“It’s estimated that teachers make about 1,500 decisions every school day. When you combine those decisions with all the necessary self-regulation involved with teaching kids, it’s no wonder our willpower is gone by five o’clock. We are exhausted.”—[Paul Murphy](#)

The term “unprecedented times” has become a hallmark for describing the context in which leaders must respond to changing needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Effective responses in education are dependent upon teachers as the front-line workers in

classrooms, so it's essential that administrators take care of teachers. When they do so, they also take care of students.

When teachers don't have the resources they need, and especially when sustained job demands are high, teachers experience chronic stress—and eventually burnout.

Teachers who are burned out are less effective as teachers, have less supportive relationships with students and, in turn, the students they teach have lower academic and social outcomes.

—*How to Prevent Teacher Burnout during the Coronavirus Pandemic* by Laura Sokal, Jeff Babb, and Leslie Eblie Trudel

We should all read the blog-post linked above from *The Conversation*, which offers these conclusions based on a national Canadian education survey conducted in May 2020:

1. Teachers' concern for vulnerable students is one of the most stressful aspects of their jobs right now.
2. Teachers are seeing magnified inequities.
3. When giving teachers initial resources, less is more.
4. Perceived support matters to teachers' resiliency.
5. Teachers are concerned about effectively engaging students through remote learning, and professional collaboration can help.

Finally, we'll end this epistle on "things to do to avoid burnout" with a timely and practical article from Carlee Adams found on the *We Are Teachers* site: [15 Smart Ways to Prevent Teacher Burnout That Really Work](#). Repeating many of the suggestions above, these "find these" remedies resonated with me:

- "Find someone you can be vulnerable with . . ."
- "When you feel hopeless, find perspective . . ."
- "Find your own voice and allow it to change over time . . ."

- "Find your people; they get you!"

The bottom line? If you "feel" consistent periods of *burnout*, *brownout*, or *being bummed out* in your career as negative influences to your calling as a teacher, you cannot sit back and let things continue "as is!" Most professionals cannot self-diagnose this problem (but, perhaps a family member may clue you in!). If you notice that you are continually having trouble sleeping, difficulty with relationships or communicating your thoughts to others, or find yourself feeling significantly depressed or lethargic, it may be time to **visit your health care professional**.

About the author:



Paul K. Fox, a NAFME Retired Member, is Chair of the PMEA State Council for Teacher Training, Recruitment, and Retention. He invites you to [peruse his website](#).

HIGH AND LOW NOTES: HOW ONE BAND DIRECTOR ADAPTED MUSIC EDUCATION DURING COVID-19

by Caroline Parker

Nearly every course in school had to change this year, but band may have been one of the most drastic in terms of daily operation. Vevlyn Lowe is a 25-year music educator and has been the band director at **Sampson Middle School** for 22 of those years. Prior to COVID-19, she would expect to have anywhere from 80 to 100 sixth graders beginning their first band class. This school year, she had 41 sign up in total. Last year, she had 56 in one class period alone.



Sixth grade student at Sampson Middle School. Caroline Parker/EducationNC

Lowe can understand the hesitation by parents during the pandemic.

“I believe they were scared because when we play a band instrument, you have to use air. You know, play a brass instrument or a woodwind, and we know how COVID-19 spreads — I understand their fear,” she said.

So, what does band class look like during a pandemic? For any instrument that needs air to make sound, it starts with a special mask. The mask has an opening in the

middle for a mouth piece, so a brass player doesn’t have to move their mask to play, for example. Trumpets, trombones, and tubas have bell covers, which act as masks for instruments. For flute players, a face shield with a special cutout allows the student to hold the instrument at the proper angle.



Flute player at Sampson Middle School for in-person instruction. Caroline Parker/EducationNC

How much of a difference does music education make in the life of a student? A lot, said Sampson Middle School principal Robert Turlington. He has seen how a

student’s trajectory can change after joining Lowe’s band program and the impact it has on their progress in other classes.

Lowe is worried, like many other art educators, that because their classes are electives, they are not thought of as necessary curriculum. And in a year where students may be falling behind, it’s electives that could get dropped when students need to retake core classes in order to graduate.

During her more than two decades at the school, Lowe has opened the door to music for her students, Turlington said.

“A lot of people want their children to be involved with Mrs. Lowe because they see their child change,” he said.

He also said her success is consistent — year after year students thrive in her band classes.

“She knows how invaluable it is to have that expression. To be able to express music and to unlock what

could be potential for that right side of the brain to flourish.”

Robert Turlington, principal at Sampson Middle School



Vevlyn Lowe, band director at Sampson Middle School. Caroline Parker/EducationNC

The making of a notable band director

Lowe grew up in Chowan County in northeastern North Carolina. She traveled 22 miles to get to **John A. Holmes High School** in Edenton, where her love for music thrived. She believes she was fortunate to have a band director who identified her knack for music. Outside of school, she took piano lessons from a pastor at a local church.

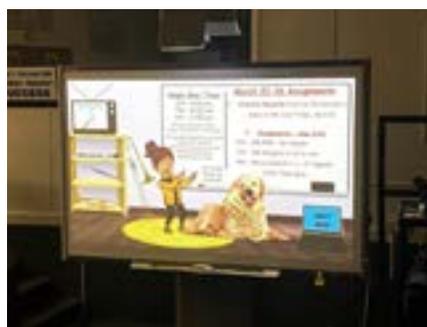
“I knew when I graduated from high school I wanted to do something with music. There was never any question about that, I was going to major in music.”

Vevlyn Lowe, band director at Sampson Middle School

Lowe went to East Carolina University and majored in music education. She then went on to receive her master’s degree from Florida State University. Her husband, who is also a band director, was part of the **North Carolina Teaching Fellows** program and found a

teaching position in Sampson County. After she finished her master’s program, she headed to the area. They have been working there since.

When we visited Lowe’s sixth grade band class in March, she had six students for in-person instruction and many others joining virtually. She and her student teacher, Kaitlyn Havican, had the schedule projected onto the board, with **SmartMusic** assignments and Google Meet times. Every week, Havican adds an animal with an instrument to the slide, getting students to guess what the new combination might be.



Slide from Vevlyn Lowe’s sixth grade band class. Caroline Parker/EducationNC

During our visit, it is a golden retriever with a baritone. Havican says it’s a fun way to start class, and it introduces instruments students may not see otherwise. Students call out guesses and say what has been their favorite in the past. There was an octopus with a piccolo and even Mario — from the famed Nintendo video game — with a tuba.

Band class before COVID-19

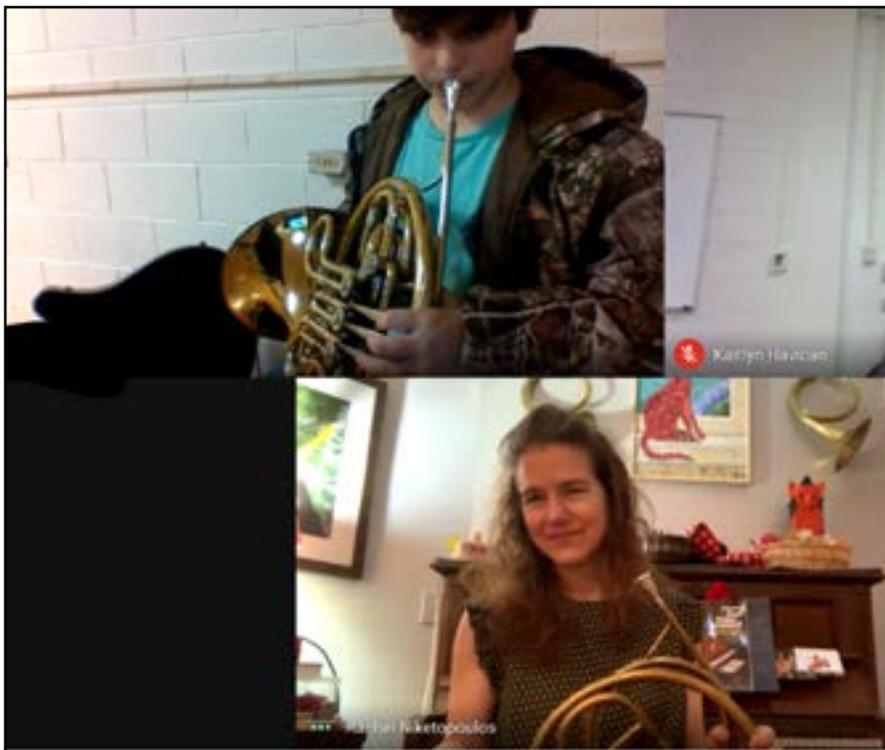
In the mornings before March 2020, Lowe’s main task was monitoring band room flow before the start of school.

With six different band classes marching in to store instruments and use computers to complete SmartMusic assignments, controlling student traffic was a big job. Students would drop off money they had collected for the many fundraisers Lowe orchestrated throughout the year. But the early morning hustle and bustle has changed dramatically for the band director.

Lowe was used to seeing her band students five days a week. This year the school is working on a hybrid schedule, so she sees anywhere from four to 15 students for each of her classes twice a week. For sixth grade students who are picking up an instrument for the first time, virtual instruction can be challenging.

In a typical year, beginning band students see a lot of modeling and demonstrating from Lowe. Embouchure — the forming of the mouth around a mouth piece — is one of the building blocks for brass and wind instruments. Masks make this instruction challenging. And for those students who are fully virtual, it is difficult for Lowe to troubleshoot with them.

Another huge part of Lowe’s program is early recruitment. In typical years, she heads to the elementary school in April with some of her eighth grade band players, and they show the incoming sixth graders what their next year could look like if they choose to join band. The older students play and answer questions from the younger students. The idea, Turlington said, is to “let them hear what they can become.” This year, Turlington hired a



substitute teacher for band class for a day so that Lowe can still go to the elementary school to drum up excitement.

Band class during COVID-19

One tradition Lowe worked to keep in place this year was the winter band concert. She presented a plan to school administration on how she could do it safely, and they approved. The sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students played with their respective grades in the gym, 6 feet apart. The concert was livestreamed for parents and families who sat in the parking lot or at home, and only band players and administration helping with tech were allowed in the gym. It was the first time her sixth grade students played all together with their peers.

Lowe also began participating in the North Carolina Symphony's **Adopt-a-School** program, where a musician works directly with

students to help in different ways, virtually, in the classroom. Lowe's school has partnered with **Rachel Niketopoulos**, who plays the French horn with the North Carolina Symphony. So far, they have had a virtual question-and-answer session, a lesson on "buzzing" with student brass players, an introduction to the French horn for one student, and Niketopoulos helped an eighth grade student with their **One State One Score** submission.

Virtual French horn lesson with North Carolina Symphony's Rachel Niketopoulos and a Sampson Middle School student. Caroline Parker/EducationNC

Where other people wouldn't engage, Lowe figured out a way to work within the new confines of school, said Turlington. In a virtual environment, she still had students qualify for the **All-State Honors Band**.

"It's just incredible that you can do these types of things, in an

environment where you don't have half of your students with you, or more so," he said.

What is another hurdle Lowe helps her students clear? The potential financial burden of purchasing their instrument. If a student can't afford one, Lowe finds a way to make it happen — she has the community help fund it or she seeks out used instruments that are sitting in past band students' closets.

Lowe is also in the early stages of starting a program called the Dark Horse Fellows, a teacher preparatory program for rising high school juniors and seniors intended to help create a teacher pipeline for Clinton City Schools. The goal is to recruit students who know they are interested in becoming educators and invest in them as they return back to the community.

Lowe sees the value in growing up in a rural place and making her home in one after going away to college. She is an example for everyone at Sampson Middle School, Turlington said, and everyone thinks highly of her and her program.

"She's always concerned about the music program at our school. Very laser-focused on making sure that this is at the pinnacle that it can be, and that everybody who has the possibility to play an instrument gets an instrument in their hand."

Robert Turlington, principal of Sampson Middle School

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GIMME 5! JAZZ TRANSCRIPTION SERIES; PART 2

by John Mastroianni

Welcome to part two of my Jazz Transcription Series, *Gimme 5!* If you missed part one, please see the 2021 Spring Edition of the CMEA News.

Transcribing is an essential tool that undoubtedly advances improvisational skills. Transcribing helps build your ear, your vocabulary of licks, and your technique. It also affords you the opportunity to delve into how artists think about chord changes. Jazz musicians historically learned by *imitating* the jazz masters, *assimilating* what they played into their own jazz vocabulary, and many eventually become *innovators*.

During my teaching career, I have found that for most students, merely regurgitating the solos is simply not adequate. They need guidance as to how to assimilate the vocabulary from the solos into their playing. My goal is to publish a book of these solos as an educational resource for students and teachers.

With that in mind, at the end of each solo is a section that I call, *Gimme 5!* There are 5 notable aspects about each solo that will help the student navigate an understanding of the vocabulary being used. The student should ask a teacher for help with the chord/scale terminology that is unfamiliar to them. This will be covered in detail in the book.

The next solo in this 2-part series is the amazing

Lou Donaldson's solo on *Caravan*, from his recording, *Say it Loud!* Play it along with the recording and imitate it as best you can. Remember that it is nearly impossible to accurately notate every little nuance of a jazz solo. Strive to sound and think like Lou Donaldson! Internalize some vocabulary that you can play in your solos. Have fun. Go *imitate*, *assimilate*, and *innovate!*

A special shout out to Michael Baril, a B.S./M.A. Music Education major and B.A. in Jazz student in my saxophone studio at UConn. We have transcribed the same solo on occasion and compared notes. A cool exercise!

My sincerest thanks to CMEA for agreeing to publish this series. Please contact me with suggestions for future topics in jazz.

John is currently an Assistant Professor in Residence of Jazz Studies at the University of Connecticut, a life-long CT music educator, and a free-lance jazz saxophonist, composer/arranger, and woodwind doubler. John is the 2014 CT Teacher of the Year!

Comments and suggestions are always welcome. Please feel free to email me at john.mastroianni@uconn.edu.

"Arts education nurtures the creation of a welcoming school environment where students can express themselves in a safe and positive way."

From "Arts Education is Essential," a unified statement from national arts organizations across the United States



ALTO SAXOPHONE

CARAVAN

LOU DONALDSON; FROM "SAY IT LOUD!"

JUAN TIZOL

SWING ♩=208

TRANSCRIBED BY JOHN MASTROIANNI

1 **A** A7

6

11 **D-7**

16 **A7**

21

26 **D-7**

31 **D-7**

36 **G7**

41 **F#7**

46)

51)

56)

61)

GIMME 5! HERE ARE 5 THINGS TO NOTE IN THIS SOLO:

- 1) NOTICE HOW BEAUTIFULLY LOU DEVELOPS A 3 NOTE THEME IN MEASURES 1-4.
- 2) THE ASCENDING MUSICAL SEQUENCE IN MEASURES 13-15.
- 3) THE REPEATED MELODIC MOTIVE IN MEASURES 23-25 THAT CREATES A HEMIOLA EFFECT. HE USES A SIMILAR EFFECT IN MEASURES 41-45.
- 4) HE CHOOSES TO BE ECONOMICAL BY PLAYING ONLY ONE NOTE IN MEASURES 48-50 AND TWO NOTES BEGINNING ON BEAT 4 OF MEASURE 58 THROUGH BEAT 1 OF MEASURE 60.
- 5) NOTICE HOW HE ENCAPSULATES THE "E" OF THE E MINOR TRIAD BY USING THE NOTE BELOW AND THE NOTE ABOVE. CHECK OUT MEASURES 10-11, 26-27, AND 52-53. A VARIATION OF THIS TECHNIQUE HAPPENS ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS.