

SCMEA



South Carolina MUSICIAN

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No. 1

Onward!
Embracing the Change in
Music Education for All
By Patrick Casey

Engaging Students with
Social-Emotional Learning
through Songwriting
By Bryan Powell

Enjoying Retired Life
or is it COVID Life?
By Edna Grace

An Opportunity
By Anne Fennell





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President's Message

Michael Moore, SCMEA President

Someone once said, "It's difficult to make predictions, especially about the future." I'm writing this column in the middle of July – almost a month before you'll first hold this issue in your hands. And though a little prediction has long been a normal part of print magazine publishing, in these days of rapid change and uncertainty, a month seems more like a year.

But regardless of virtual, hybrid, or in-person return-to-school plans, aerosol emission research study results, infection rates, or gubernatorial decrees, here are two things of which I am certain.

Music educators are resilient, resourceful, and ready to lead.

We didn't exactly take Easy Street to get here. We've worked hard, from classroom to Capitol Hill, to achieve recognition for music education as an essential component of a well-rounded education. That's not going away any time soon, and neither are we. This was demonstrated in a powerful way as recently as this summer, when our SCMEA division leadership stepped up to deliver an influential 25-page guidance document for inclusion in the state superintendent's AccelerateED Task Force recommendations for the 2020-2021 school year. And now others are increasingly acknowledging what we've known for quite some time – that music educators will be in the vanguard of essential workers attending to the social and emotional health needs of South Carolina's students this fall.

SCMEA is here for you.

New challenges call for innovative approaches in professional development, and supporting the work of music educators has been at the heart of our mission since our founding in 1948. Though our conference will look very different this year, you can rest assured your executive board is actively working to continue delivering timely resources and training to address some of the most pressing issues at hand, including social and emotional health in the music classroom – both for students and teachers – and leveraging the latest digital resources and technologies for maximum effectiveness in virtual and hybrid learning environments.

Now that I think of it, it would be nice if we could turn a month into a year and just skip to the part where we've got a vaccine... If you figure out a way, let me know. In the meantime, we're in this together, and if our track record is any indication of the future, I'm predicting success.



Band Division

Chaz Paxton, *President*



Dear Colleagues,

It was my sincere hope that our world (band and otherwise) would be a little bit more “back to normal” by this time. Unfortunately, the situation we continue to find ourselves

in is anything but normal. Like many states and associations, we have suspended the 2020 SCBDA Marching Band Championships. This decision was difficult, but was necessary as we did not feel that we could provide a safe environment and mitigate risks for our students, staff and spectators. Our Event Chairs are currently hard at work to re-imagine our events for this year. We are committed to providing an experience for you and for your students. Those experiences may not be what we normally do, but we want to make sure that we are providing experiences that will help empower you to keep your program active and viable.

Our Annual Fall Meeting will be held in a virtual format on Saturday, September 12. At this meeting, we will discuss making some changes to our cal-

endar for 2020-2021 as well as modify the format of several of our events. More information about these changes in schedule and format will be coming out soon.

The end of the 2019-2020 school year presented many challenges and I believe that the 2020-2021 school year will present even more. In many ways, these challenges will be unlike any we have faced in our careers. Face to face, virtual, hybrid model, different daily schedules, safety protocols...the list goes on and on. I challenge each you, in the face of adversity and great challenge, to not focus on what we cannot do, but rather focus on what we CAN do. What we CAN do is continue to provide music education to our students in whatever format or platform may be forced upon us. What we CAN do is to continue to build relationships that will shape and change student's lives. What we CAN do is build an even bigger community of directors who support and empower each other. I have been so encouraged by the camaraderie that has been displayed across our state in the past four months. Directors sharing ideas, helping each other, and supporting one another. We CAN and WILL get through this together.

As always, if I can help you in any way, please feel free to reach out.



National Association
for Music Education

Coronavirus Information for Music Educators

Choral Division

Nikki Belch, *President*



Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year. Usually I would say, I hope you have had a restful summer.

This year, I am sure was different.

For many, the summer was filled with more stress than rest. There is a great deal of uncertainty leading into this year. Will we go back full time? Will we go back virtually? Will there be a hybrid model? Can we safely sing in our classrooms? These are questions being asked in choral classrooms throughout the country and the world. To this I do not have any peer reviewed articles to give you or studies that will make you feel better about the upcoming year. So how do we proceed?

We proceed in many ways as we always have. We innovate. We create lessons that meet the needs of our students that most likely won't involve singing in person. We interest students in creating music and composition. We show them the fascinating history of choral music in many cultures. We show them the amazing things that can result from improvisation. We find ways for our students to sing and create in new and different ways. We teach those often rarely used standards and open up the world even more for our students.

We build relationships. We meet and get to know entire families and keep them involved in our classrooms. We continue to build the communities that make choral classrooms homes to so many of our kids. We care for the emotional needs of our students because they are going to need even more this year.

We advocate. We advocate for our students and for choral music. We advocate for education. We support our colleagues and advocate for the well being of all of us involved in education.

So many things will be different this school year but please know the SCMEA Choral Division will continue to be here for you. Our plans for the year will continue to evolve with the data we are given and the state and district expectations. Currently, we are planning some professional development oppor-

tunities to help you through this year and to provide you with lessons that will excite you and your students. As you go through this year, please feel free to contact me or any of the SCMEA Choral Division Board and ask for assistance. We will figure out how to navigate this year together and as always do what is best for our students. I hope you have a great year.

Collegiate Division

Cigi Curry, *President*



Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year! Obviously, this school year is a mix of excitement and uncertainty. For many collegiate members, the opportunity to return to campus and in-person education provides a sense of comfort and stability that has been missing since mid-March, but it also carries a lot of confusion and fear regarding the new "normal". The Collegiate executive board is excited to have our first ever Music Advocacy chair this year, and he will help us do our part in dealing with these uncertainties. His primary focus will be pushing for fine arts inclusion in funding assistance and portraying the importance of supporting the fine arts, especially during this trying time.

I am looking forward to serving you as your president this year alongside Lillian Tague as Immediate Past President, Will Ellison as President-elect, Maria Boutin as Treasurer, Kendra Hamilton as Secretary, and Hayden Stellges as Advocacy Chair. We are currently planning on hosting an open session on Zoom for all Collegiate members on October 13. We will provide more information on our BAND page and with chapter presidents as we get closer to this date.

As a board we understand the importance of communication, and one of our goals this year is to stay better connected with all of our collegiate chapters and members. To help us do so, we invite you to join the SC Collegiate BAND page if you have not already (<https://band.us/@scnafme>). We also encourage our fellow collegiate members to take advantage of the professional development and advocacy materials that can be found on NAfME's website.

Please feel free to reach out at any time. I wish you the best during this new adventure of a year.

Elementary Division

Tamara Silva, *President*

Dear Elementary Division Colleagues,

Are you feeling overwhelmed? Discouraged? Fearful? Rightfully so. I am there with you. Completely overhauling the way you teach with barely any advance notice is exhausting and overwhelming. It is discouraging that we are still fighting COVID-19. It is terrifying that many of us may be exposed to over 600 children in a week as the infection rate continues to rise, and it is also terrifying to think that our jobs may be at stake.

Last year, I started Fall 2019 with a new instructional goal. During my previous year, my students had demonstrated poor cooperation and social skills. When students have poor rapport with one another, it is tempting to plan activities in order to avoid the bickering and power struggles that come with certain group dynamics, yet I challenged myself to include even more small group learning to meet those needs. If anything could bring them together, I knew music could. Before the pandemic, our students already needed more social interaction, and now, we must social distance even further. Maybe you are similar to me in that you previously limited online instruction because children already have too much screen time. Yet, many of us now have no other option. Maybe you are at high risk or like me, a caretaker of someone who is at high risk. How are we going to do this?

Please do not give up! The students NEED music - everyone needs an outlet for their anxiety, fear, and loneliness. We CAN find a way. We MUST find a way. We must further educate ourselves. Online music learning and music learning with social distancing protocol in place is not ideal, but it can be done. We must also advocate for our profession and remind others about the importance of music education. Please continue to be role models for your students. Keep a positive attitude; your students need reminding that life will go on and that this, too, shall pass. Let us collaborate with one another and stand together.



As we model collaboration and unity, I encourage you to include diverse and authentic sources in your music instruction. As music educators, we have a unique opportunity to promote awareness and appreciation of the variety of music from our country as well as other nations. With thoughtful research and preparation we can respectfully present a balanced array of languages, backgrounds, and traditions to our students.

I hope you have been encouraged by all of the recently offered free online resources. From live operas and benefit concerts to easily accessible online music curriculum, it seems the music community has come together to bring one another assistance, hope, inspiration, and joy. I hope SCMEA can be helpful to you as well. You should have received an email from our association president, Michael Moore, on behalf of SCMEA, containing a document with guidance and recommendations for prioritizing and promoting health and safety in school music instruction and performance settings. Please familiarize yourself with the document and use it as needed. You may view the document at www.scmea.net/covid19.

Please also take advantage of the professional development, online music communities, and virtual teaching and advocacy resources you receive as a member of SCMEA:

Nafme.org
Facebook Group- SCMEA Elementary Division
September 12, 2020- Fall Workshop with Eric Young
February 4-6, 2021- SCMEA Professional Development Conference

I wish I could provide you with concrete information regarding conference clinicians and the SC Honors Choir, but as you know, everything is constantly changing. Please know the board and I are working hard to meet your needs and help you through this challenging time.

May you and your loved ones stay healthy and remember to make music together- it can lift up your spirit!

Guitar Division

Benjamin Broughton, *President*

I hope that you are well as you read this. We are all entering a very unsure time as we begin the process of starting a new year. As I am writing this there are still a great number of things that are still up in the air for re-opening.

As a division we have planned our 2020-21 season similar to previous years as far as events, performances, and conference sessions. But we have also prepared for shutdowns. We will have All State Guitar auditions on November 14th 2020. This year's audition will be done by video submission. Details about audition requirements will be posted to our website in September. The 2020-21 All State Guitar Ensemble is scheduled to be the headlining performance at Guitarfest in May 2021.

The Augustine String Company and the Augustine Foundation has generously offered to produce a video performance featuring this year's All State Ensemble. This is part of an effort to document and showcase All State Guitar Ensembles across the country and we are honored to be one of the states chosen to be part of this project. We were told that this could also be done in the case of shutdowns or cancellations.

As always any changes to our calendar will be updated through our website www.scmeaguitar.org.



There are several online resources dedicated to music education during the COVID-19 era. I know I have found myself inspired reading materials, and suggestions of what music teachers of all levels are doing across the country. I always tell my students that the best teachers are the ones that don't stop learning. We all have so much to learn. So continue learning, inspiring, sharing, and loving music, education, and music education. Stay well, and I look forward to our next gathering, virtually or in person.

Piano Division

Karen Buckland, *President*

I hope you are having a wonderful and restful summer. As you look forward to a new year of teaching music, I want to share news regarding the SCMEA Piano Division.

All activities are for teachers interested in piano and whether or not your specialty is teaching piano - everyone is welcome!

Piano Division plans for the 2020-2021 year are currently under discussion. We had a few Zoom meetings and many emails during the Spring and Summer. The division finished our By-Laws. We asked for and received very positive feedback.

Discussions about changing the format of the Piano Festival have been ongoing. Suggestions regarding the 2021 SCMEA Professional Development Conference are still being considered. I have received a lecture proposal from one of our members and possible events for the conference. Due to the current situation, we are looking at alternatives to the student events usually held at the conference.

On a personal note, I will be stepping down as President beginning August 1. This decision was not made in haste but one that cannot be avoided. I have asked, and received nominations for positions on the Board. If you are interested in a position, please contact me at kbuck@presby.edu.

It has been a pleasure to serve as president of this wonderful division for the past two-and-a-half years and wish all the best to the new president and members of the Board.

All the best for a new year of teaching. Stay healthy and safe!



Higher Education Division

Susana Lalama, *President*

Welcome back! I hope you have had an opportunity to step away from the computer and enjoy some much-needed relaxation time.

The challenges that we face during these times call for innovation, flexibility, humility, patience, and leadership. As we continue to prepare future music teachers for a career that will be different in many areas, we must continue to inspire and motivate our students to be their best. We know what a quality music education can do for children, families, and communities and we must continue to advocate the importance of music education, even on virtual platforms.



Orchestra Division

Ginger Greer, *President*

Greetings, fellow music educators,

“The best thing about the future is that it comes one day at a time.” (Abraham Lincoln). The summer of 2020 was spent wondering and worrying about many things, with the question of “What will we do in August?” at the forefront. We have participated in online learning classes aimed at improving upon the skills from our trial and error method of virtual teaching in the Spring and we approach the fall semester with dogged determination- the same determination that got us through 3 octave arpeggios, Counterpoint, and analyzing Arnold Schoenberg. We will persevere!

The 2020-2021 school year will no doubt be one that we will remember as a stand out in our education profession. Some of us will be teaching virtual music classes from home, some from school, some will be meeting with students occasionally, and others, if they are lucky, will see their students on a regular basis face to face. Some of us will battle the illness, all of us will comfort others that suffer. All of us will teach differently this year. No matter the format, we will value the time that we have sharing our love for the art of music with greater fervor than ever before.

We will collaborate with our peers better. We will explore new avenues of instruction. We will step far outside of our comfort zones. We will succeed sometimes; we will fail often. We will remember from our lessons to our students that it is through the failures that we learn stronger and better. We will take great risks and



through our experiences, become BETTER teachers despite the frustrations along the way.

“The best way to predict your future is to create it.” (also Abraham Lincoln). This school year is about building, rebuilding, and strengthening the community of musicians under your care. We can not do this alone. This is the time to work together, share information, and seek solutions from a diversity of sources. More than anything, we must foster a community of learning that nourishes the social and emotional needs of our young artists. This is the year for these important standards that perhaps fall to the background in our “normal” rehearsal cycles:

- Artistic Processes: Responding- I can respond to musical ideas as a performer and listener.
- Artistic Processes: Connecting- I can relate musical ideas to personal experiences, culture, history, and other disciplines.
- Artistic Processes: Creating- I can use the elements of music to communicate new musical ideas and works.

The Orchestra Division is committed to supporting our membership with professional development resources and providing activities and events that enrich the orchestra programs in our state to the best of our abilities while also following guidelines that put the safety of students and teachers first. We will navigate this 2020-2021 school year with guarded optimism, make plans for events, and make alterations along the way as needed. As always, please know that the Executive Board wishes to work together with you to offer the best experiences for orchestra students in our schools. Let us know how we can help.

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STRING REVIEW

The String Review are orchestra pieces that were reviewed by members of the SCMEA Orchestra Division. Thank you Susan Wines for setting up the review!

Blue Rhythmico by Kirt Mosier

This piece gives every section a chance to shine. The doubling between sections builds confidence. The way all of the instruments have the opening melody at the end gives a teacher an opportunity to help the entire orchestra get excited about this piece. In introducing this piece, I would begin with the last 6 measures and encourage the jazzy style. There is some viola independence in the middle which is perfect for an orchestra that has a really good viola section. The glissandos in the melodies can give the orchestra a reason to practice glissandi in shifting strengthening the shifting technique of the whole orchestra. The continuous down bows are great for talking about bow placement and bow holds that allow for playing at the frog with ease. The offbeat accents are another way to teach ensemble. There are many opportunities for fun and meaningful music-making in this piece.

Review by Katy Martin

Cold Fusion by Peter Terry

Gr. 2.5, string orchestra, opt. piano, Carl Fischer, 2019, \$50.

Cold Fusion is an excellent second-year selection as it opens with an energetic syncopation that is evenly distributed in all voices. In this modern 3/4 meter piece in C Major, students will be challenged to develop a variety of rhythmic units ranging from sixteenth notes to tied dotted half notes without shifting. As the opening syncopated rhythm transitions to a heroic lyrical theme, students will be able to work on refining their expressive bowing techniques, in particular the violas who are performing melodic material on their C string. The cello and bass have the opportunity to take the lead as they are given a unison melodic line that includes accents, slurs, ties, and only to notes within first the position. Presenting numerous opportunities to advance right and left-hand techniques for all members of your orchestra, as well as basic music theory concepts such as dissonance, this high-energy piece is an ideal selection for a music festival or spring concert!

Review by Susan Wines

Three Divertimenti for Violins, Viola, and Violoncello (and Double Bass) by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

No. 1 in D major, Köchel 136

No. 2 in D major, Köchel 137

No. 3 in D major, Köchel 138

Partiture (Luck's Music Library)

Readily available and easily purchased, approachable by levels of players intermediate through expert, emanating from the pulsating heart of string technique and sung in the rhetorical language of Western tonal music, Mozart's Divertimenti K.136-138 should be both destinations and points of departure in your string player's journey. Riding the arcs of Mozart's phrase shapes, catalyzing the energies in late-18th century expressive devices (accented passing tones, suspensions, appoggiaturi, etc.); divining one's immediate role in a texture (accompaniment? featured voice?) or location in a form; applying with awareness the tools of the time (*détaché*, *martelé*, *collé*, *brush*, *spiccato*, *lancé*, etcetera), they are an enduring gift to your string players' developing artistry.

Review by Dr. Gary Auguste Robinson

An Opportunity

Where does music education go from here?

By Anne Fennell, NAFME Council for Innovations Chair

Reprinted with permission from National Association for Music Education (NAfME). The original article published on May 9, 2020 can be found here <https://www.annefennell.com/blog?fbclid=IwAR0HK4Nats4GlsVcjjEmPncSJWFRxDbYjincjUjxvOhCNrVLNIO2VCuRWA>. And link <https://nafme.org/an-opportunity-where-does-music-education-go-from-here/> to the original post on the NAFME site.

We have an opportunity. Right here, right now, to reimagine music education into what it can be and capitalize on the time given to us to learn, grow, and open ourselves to the next unknown. Tradition and history have repeatedly demonstrated that the norm in music education included large performance ensembles, and while we honor this and the past, we now have an opportunity to leap into our next unknown that is calling us to reimagine all that is possible.

How we have made music in public schools is important, but in the end, when all is said and done, how do those experiences support a trajectory toward lifelong music-making and incorporate how each individual learns? What if how we make music in public education takes the best from the past, grows with what they are learning now, and burgeons into something larger than anything we could imagine? I don't know what is next or all that is possible, just like I never knew an invisible virus could compress educational panic, change, and reform into a four-week crash course.

With this new moment and time we get to model learning and growing and support students to become lifelong musicians while we empower them to learn and create on their own. Our students are in the midst of new possibilities that could lead them, and all of us, into a new cultural expansion because we are

modeling the endless possibilities that are greater than any single teacher or any single ensemble experience. These are lifelong skills that no one can ever take away from a person, and they become an integral part of a person's humanity, cultural experience, and their creative, intellectual, and developmental growth.

Now, as we coach and cheer through a computer screen and tell each student that we believe in them, we are modeling that every student counts. I'm writing this again: When we tell each student that we believe in them, we are also modeling that every student counts. We've never had so much time to support, see, and listen to individuals, but now every student has the opportunity to be seen and heard.

The collective whole of large ensembles created beautiful outcomes with lifelong memories, and were/are culturally significant and important. However, if we choose to focus only on what was and continue to mourn how music was created, we will lose this opportunity and moment in time to focus on student-centered work. So let's not hold student learning hostage.

What if music education isn't about the largest ensemble, the next competition, or the marching band? What if music education is about the individual student—an independent learner who can reflect with guidance, while creating and responding to music and making connections that we previously didn't take time to teach? What if music education is a continual growth that contributes to the culture and well-being of individuals, and to our nation, through a lifelong process that expands as every human ages and grows on a continuum of learning?

Let me be perfectly clear when I say that an individual's growth can only be beneficial to music education programs and ensembles. I have never heard of an ensemble weaken because its members were independent and confident learners. In fact, I can only imagine exponential growth with this.



Right now, we get to take advantage of the circumstances to truly transform music to all that it can be. Let us demonstrate that music creates transformative value as we activate students to create an uplifting change for individuals and our collective society. And in every action and word, may we demonstrate to our students that how they create music is valid and what music they create is AS important as any other music.

For years, the larger and progressive institutions of education have begged to make learning relevant and to reach beyond school walls. Well, here we are—literally—outside of the school walls. Now we must run with it! Don't let a computer screen determine the amount of growth or the potential of what each human can create and learn. Let's support learners to explore their relevant and vast world as they explore their interests and how they choose to learn and make music. Students will see themselves as we frame them, so let that frame and guidance be student-centered so they can see their brilliance.

This is a time to demonstrate resilience and nimbleness to improve and adapt the how of teaching and expand the what of music education so that students can experience all that is possible. This is a time to model to our learners that we believe in them to go beyond the closed doors of the traditional walls. The survival of education is crucial to our country's success and the development of our collective culture. But survival, predicated on "how we used to do things" is living in a past that breeds comfort and misses the possibility of growth. Let's take our knowledge and expand.

Let's rise above the average person lamenting and demonstrate to everyone what music education

is and can be. We must do more than what we have done in the past to arrive at our new destination. We must approach it differently because the lens through which we see and hear music is changing.

So when the moment arrives, and you can finally reunite with your students, know that you were the contributing factor to these creative musicians and new learners who think independently and who have ideas to share. Know that you supported each person to rise with resilience, with empathy and self-reflection, and that you encouraged each person to connect and interact to the world of making music in all the ways possible. Know that you as a music educator ennobled and empowered all to grow, and in turn created a cultural explosion of learning and music that contributed to the expansion of our collective culture. Know that you helped create a whole musician, who has a deep understanding, ownership, and application of all facets and connections of and to music, defining a new human and learner. Know that you were, and are, the foundation to a new music education.

The success of the ensembles, students, and music education programs will be determined by the nimbleness and expanding mindset of the music educator. So, believe passionately in the student, the opportunity, and our next unknown, and resolve to say:

YES to all students as independent learners
 YES to small ensembles and chamber music
 YES to large ensembles reimaged
 YES to student choice and questioning
 YES to composition and creating music
 YES to reading, writing, and speaking about music
 YES to music connections beyond the school walls
 YES to discovery of past, current, and future music and composers
 YES to connecting to the true and relevant WORLD of music
 YES to students discovering new music, groups, and possibilities
 Yes, and YES, and YES!



About the author:

Anne Fennell is the K–12 Music Program Manager for San Diego Unified School District in San Diego, California. Her experiences include 32 years of teaching Kindergarten through Grade 12 music education, integrated arts and music, leading performance ensembles in civic and professional organizations and national conferences.

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The Individual Breathing
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- Leaders in band and vocal performance have found amazing success with their students, both K-12 and at the university level.
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Onward!

Embracing Change towards Music Education for All

By Patrick F. Casey, Ph.D.

Onward! This was the signature proclamation of Dr. Eric Hammer of Lodi, California, a dear personal friend who unexpectedly passed away in late January 2019. Rooming together at the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago the previous month, I remember being struck again with Eric's persistently youthful optimism and motivation as a career-long music educator. With his retirement semester upcoming--after twenty rewarding years as a public-school educator, and in the midst of his twenty-fifth year as Director of Bands at the University of the Pacific (Stockton)--Eric Hammer continued to exude an endless curiosity and enthusiasm for his work. Patricia, his widow, later mentioned to me that Eric had significantly renovated all of his course syllabi over that previous holiday break, and had been excited about the new teaching challenges to come in his swan-song semester. He was indeed a person whose growth mindset inspired generations of students and colleagues.

Particularly now, as we all are confronting the challenges of teaching in this new, pre-vaccine world, there are many emerging examples of "boldly going where" we might simply not have headed so quickly prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. For sure, the qualities of curiosity and enthusiasm (i.e., determination), appear to be evermore important going forward.

One recent example comes from veteran educator David Waybright, distinguished Director of Bands at the University of Florida, Gainesville. David's testimony, shared in late June with the Facebook world, is abbreviated here:

"... Maybe we have an opportunity to hit the reset button in public school and higher education. Perhaps instead of worrying about our next concert performance or marching band performance and competition, we can think about an alternative plan that focuses on student development, creativity, composition, improvisation, and predominantly the joy that each of us experienced in our youth playing our instruments. [...] I'm not telling you

what you should do. I'm asking you to consider the possibilities and rework your wind band curriculum with passion, musicality, and concern for what your students need. This is a great opportunity for us to grow as teachers and rethink our priorities. This opportunity may not come about for another 100 years."¹

Significantly, our NAFME leadership has been sounding a "Reimagining" call within the profession for a number of years, well before this crazy COVID pandemic time. With NAFME's motto of "Music Education for All", it remains crucial that we collectively acknowledge and address the fact that our enterprise falls way short of that aspirational, all-inclusive goal, both here in South Carolina and across the nation, as students progress into their secondary-education years.² Similarly, it is our collective responsibility to address the inequities observable in music-participation access, particularly so in our high school instrumental offerings as reflected in the disproportionately low participation levels of African-American and Latino students.³ That persistent reality should be a clarion call for all of us, in our local situations, and throughout the state, to grapple ever more fervently with the key questions of access and engagement within our music education enterprise. In what ways can we individually and collectively foster more participation from underprivileged, or underserved students, most especially in South Carolina's high school and collegiate settings? How can we engage an ever-greater portion of each school's entire student body?

National leaders in our profession are putting forward this opportunity-challenge in very articulate, and I believe, effective terms. In an excellent May 2020 article reprinted in this current issue of the SC Musician (see "An Opportunity: Where Does Music Education Go from Here", pp. 12-13), Dr. Anne Fennell poses many challenging questions and innovative charges:

“...This is a time to model to our learners that we believe in them to go beyond the closed doors of the traditional walls ... [S]urvival, predicated on ‘how we used to do things’ is living in a past that breeds comfort and misses the possibility of growth. Let’s take our knowledge and expand...”⁴

Her full article gives us many specific details on how to focus on student-centered work, using powerful “YES, and” statements. I highly recommend it for your full reading or re-reading!

Our newly-inducted NafME national President, Dr. Mackie V. Spradley, puts forward the challenge in this way: “For a moment, I’d like you to think back to when you first fell in love with music,” she said at the time of her election. “The contributions of others lifted us; and we consciously chose to work in the field of music education because we love it. My vision is that we follow the legacy of those that have come before us. But the question is – how do we build our capacity to follow the legacy and reach every student? How do we build our capacity to be flexible, and learn to teach different kinds of music, with the intent of giving more students access? What will this require of us as leaders? I believe all of us play a role and have a responsibility to affect change.”⁵ Indeed, that capacity-building charge is resounded throughout a recent “NAfME National Rally for Music Education” virtual meeting this past June 25th, the archive recording of

which remains on the NafME website.⁶

Colleagues, here’s to hoping for us all the best in our individual and collective efforts during these unaccustomed times. May we take every opportunity to share ideas, reaffirm the essential values and outcomes of our work, courageously attempt new approaches, and continue to pursue our aspirational mission “Music Education for All” with ever greater resolve. --Gratefully borrowing the enthusiastic mantra of a dear departed friend: Onward!

Endnotes

¹ Waybright, David. Facebook testimonial, June 22, 2020

² Abril and Elpus, “Who Enrolls in High School Music? A New National Profile”, in *Teaching Music*, April 2020, vol. 27, No. 4

³ *ibid.*

⁴ <https://nafme.org/an-opportunity-where-does-music-education-go-from-here/>

⁵ <https://nafme.org/mackie-v-spradley-begins-term-as-nafme-national-president-2020-2022/>

⁶ Archive recording: <https://nafme.org/nafme-national-rally-for-music-education-june-25-1100-am-et-1000-am-ct/>



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Music Education Advocacy Resource Kit for Fall 2020



Engaging Students with Social-Emotional Learning through Songwriting

By Bryan Powell, sponsored by [Little Kids Rock](#)



Reprinted with permission from National Association for Music Education (NAfME). The original article published on June 30, 2020 can be found here <https://nafme.org/engaging-students-social-emotional-learning-through-songwriting/> to the original post on the NAfME site.

As the school year ends and music educators transition to summer, there is a lot that is unknown about the coming school year. While some school districts have announced a combination of in-person, hybrid, and online models, other school districts are still waiting to see how the COVID-19 virus continues to develop before deciding what instruction will look like in the fall. While there is still a lot that is unknown, one thing that is certain is that the coming school year will look different than previous years, and students who have been dealing with this level of uncertainty are likely to have experienced social and emotional challenges as a result of not attending school.

Music teachers have long known the importance of addressing social and emotional learning in the classroom. With the events of the past few months, both in terms of remote learning as well as the prevalence of racist structures that disproportionately impact students of color, it is now more important than ever to think about addressing aspects of social and emotional learning through remote learning platforms. In May of 2020, music teachers from Santa Ana Unified School District (SAUSD) in California participated in a four-week professional learning series led by the non-profit organization Little Kids Rock. This PL series addressed elements of social and emotional learning through collaborative songwriting. The teachers used a cloud-based Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) to arrange cover songs and create new songs.

In this blog, I will discuss elements of social and emotional learning and briefly outline some of the activities that the SAUSD teachers did with their students during the spring semester quarantine. Some of these activities may give you ideas of how to incorporate songwriting into your own classroom.

About Social and Emotional Learning

The [Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning](#) (CASEL) identifies five core competencies that are an integral part of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). They include the process through which children and adults:

1. Acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions,
2. set and achieve positive goals,
3. feel and show empathy for others,
4. establish and maintain positive relationships, and
5. make responsible decisions.

With these core competencies in mind, let's now think about how the process of songwriting can address each of these elements of SEL. When students engage in songwriting, it provides them a vehicle through which to express their emotions. Some students might even be able to say things through song lyrics or a rap that they wouldn't be able to express normally. Before students are able to adequately manage their emotions, it is useful for them to explore and understand these emotions. Songwriting provides one opportunity for students to explore their thoughts, feelings, and emotions to express ideas that are important to them. Songwriting allows students to also set and achieve positive goals. Whether the goal is simply to write a song to express something that is on their mind, or to use their songs to advocate for a more compassionate and peaceful society, students, teachers, and parents can work together to establish positive goals that are in response to the desires of the students.

Using cloud-based DAWs like Soundtrap, Bandlab, or Soundation also allows students to engage in collaborative songwriting projects with other students during remote learning. The collaborative nature of the group songwriting process allows students to address the SEL competencies of showing empathy for others, establishing and maintaining positive relationships, and making responsible decisions.

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Sample Projects for Cloud-Based Songwriting

MIDI is an acronym that stands for Musical Instrument Digital Interface. It is basically a communications protocol that allows people to share musical information across different platforms and devices. There are MIDI files available to download that will provide the multi-track info for many songs. You can download free MIDI files from a number of websites including bitmidi.com and midiworld.com. Once you (or your students) choose and download a MIDI file, you can drag it into the DAW, and you will immediately have each instrument part on a separate track. Once you have the MIDI parts in each track, students can create remixes of the song by changing the instrumentation, key, or other musical elements.

Students can also record the vocal parts to a track to create a cover song or write their own lyrics to create a parody or version of the song. Using the existing melody and rhythms of a song while writing your own lyrics is a great way to get started with songwriting. New lyrics are usually easier for students to create since they aren't changing the chords of the song or having to come up with new melodic ideas. All they need to do is create new lyrics aligned with the melody, and these lyrics can connect to any topic that is important to them.

Once students feel comfortable with how a cloud-based DAW works, they can incorporate existing loops from the DAW to connect their compositions to genres that they listen to outside of class. These are great hands-on tools to assist students to understand various song forms, instrumentation, and arrangements in a specific genre. For teachers interested in collaborative songwriting through cloud-based DAWs, there are number of great resources available to help you get started. Little Kids Rock's Jam Zone and YouTube Channel have free video lessons for teachers and students covering tips and technologies for songwriting, writing raps, and cloud-based DAWs. Many of the cloud-based DAWs also offer free online training and certifications, and there are hundreds of "getting started" videos on YouTube that can explain everything you need to know. Once you understand the options for each music creation platform, you can choose the one that works best for your students based on features and price. Through leveraging the cultural capital of students and valuing their musical identities, teachers can address aspects of SEL through individual and collaborative cloud-based songwriting.



Addressing Student Trauma in Songwriting

While it may seem like a good idea to have your students write original songs about their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, educators must also be aware that many students might have experienced trauma during the time of the pandemic. Many students know friends or family members who lost jobs or even their lives during this time. And many students of color, especially Black students, may have experienced even more trauma due to structural violence against Black people. Music educators must be careful not to "re-traumatize" students by assigning them specific topics that they must write a song about. Regardless of the intention of these assignments, such activities can be more hurtful than helpful for some students and may end up re-traumatizing these students.

One key aspect of songwriting is student choice. Allowing students to decide the topics for these songwriting activities will allow those students who want to write about COVID-19, Black Lives Matter, or other societal events to do so without re-traumatizing other students who are not ready to process certain events in their life through songwriting. For music teachers who wish to learn more about trauma-informed pedagogies, there are a number of great resources online such as the [Educational Law Center's *Unlocking the Door to Learning: Trauma-Informed Classrooms & Transformational Schools*](#).



Bryan Powell, DMA is an Assistant Professor of Music Education and Music Technology at Montclair State University. Prior to joining MSU, Bryan served as the Director of Higher Education for Little Kids Rock, and the Director of Programs for Amp Up NYC, a partnership between Berklee College of Music and Little Kids Rock.



Enjoying Retired Life or is it COVID Life?

By Edna Grace

A Letter for My Colleagues

If you are anything like me, your thoughts when you graduated college/university were about beginning your career, where you would be, all the things you would do and how much better you could make things. The trepidation you kept to yourself, presenting instead to the world a bold and intrepid demeanor. We surged into the fray with an unstoppable energy – cannonballing into the pool of work and life making big waves (in our eyes) that we gradually learned were barely ripples in the big scheme of things. But we pressed on, finding that with our childish lenses replaced with those of the “adulting” world, that real life was different. We prospered, struggled, achieved, struggled again, maybe even crashed, but we kept getting up again; committed to our careers and what we could do for students. Then one day we got so tired or sick, or sick-and-tired, or stressed, or attacked, or something – it’s different for each of us. Maybe it was as in my case. People kept asking how long I had been teaching until one day I realized I was more than half way to 30 years! That may have been the day counting down started. Then you finally reached that pinnacle day. You retired! It took me thirty-six years to take the plunge.

Some of you have enjoyed many years of retirement while I have had three and was just starting to get the hang of it. My friends will tell you that I’m not really retired because I spend regular days in band rooms of two of those friends, as well as clinic sessions for other bands or honor bands in the state and neighboring states. I call it being retired and having

fun. I’ve been having the time of my life. I was just beginning to find out that I had put into my calendar the day I wanted to accomplish specific chores such as clean the bathrooms, grocery shop, pay the bills, or do a social activity to provide consistency for my retirement life. I was finally getting into a good groove the 2019-2020 school year. Then along came COVID-19.

Quarantine! No big deal for someone who lives alone and is okay with only her own presence for extended periods. (RIGHT!) I started tackling the big “TO DO” list that I’d been able to put aside with excuses of more pressing or interesting endeavors. No excuse now. There’s nowhere to go with my compromised system. My family and friends will only let me go to two homes apart from my own where they are distancing as well. Then there was a day when I realized I was struggling emotionally. I was sick of my favorite reruns of the various NCIS and Star Trek shows and couldn’t watch another home makeover to save my life! My iPad died and I didn’t care. I felt the loss of the random smile at the grocery store I would cruise a couple of times a week to help get my steps in for the day while I looked for something to titillate my appetite. I missed the hugs of friends, former students and band parents that I would encounter in the neighborhood or at stores. I almost didn’t recognize the feeling. It confounded me. Then I remembered. It was a feeling of sadness but with something more. This sadness was fueled by worry about an uncontrollable virus, frustration and anger over racial discord, and fear for the economy – not just your-

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self, state, and country, but the whole world! Am I safe? Are my family and friends safe? What is “safe” anymore? What will happen to teachers, other staff, and the children they serve? I feel sure these are your questions as well.

You may ask, “What’s the answer, Edna?” My answer is, “Beats me!” I will share with you a few of the things I am trying to do to give my retired, quarantined life focus and meaning. I encourage you to borrow, use, elaborate on, and share with others what works for you.

E.T.R. (Edna’s Tidbits for Retirees)

- Create your own “normal”. Life must go on so get up and get to it!
- Plan the things that must happen in your life and use a calendar to stay on track.
- Wake up and go to bed at regular hours being sure to get at least 8 hours of uninterrupted sleep.
- Do something special for yourself each day. It may be as simple as having a cup of coffee/tee on the porch or patio in the early morning.
- Talk to a friend or family member every day.
- Do something for someone else. I like to send a pretty notecard to friends/church members to which I may add a passage of scripture.
- Plan a virtual platform to continue to help students and colleagues while social distancing.
- Exercise at least 4-5 days. Walking and looking at nature always makes me feel renewed. Whatever you do – MOVE!
- Don’t forget your spiritual health. I spend time morning and night with a devotional. Choose what works for you.

Retired life? COVID life? It doesn’t really matter. Continue to relish life and be a positive contributor. Continue to be well!

Edna Grace is a retired band director and serves as the Retired Membership Chair for SCMEA.



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