

2019 Music Roundtables

Michael Coderre – Annual order of events in your state and why in that order?

Justin Bills – How states handle the use of sacred vs secular music at state festivals, contests, and all-states

- Throughout history, any time a threat of litigation or actual litigation has been brought against a music teacher, a school, or a school district for the choice of sacred music, the courts have sided with the teacher, school, or district.
- The general philosophy behind permitting teachers to choose a variety of sacred and secular music is that a vast majority of the repertoire, especially in choral music, is sacred in nature. Further, the origins of music are deeply rooted in the sacred tradition. Therefore, removing sacred music from our toolbox, severely hamstrings teachers and the pedagogical process.
- Many states do not regulate repertoire selections, though those that do generally side with teachers and trust their judgment.
- When selecting any repertoire, particularly when it is sacred music, it is important that teachers consider what the pedagogical objectives are of that piece and whether or not its selection serves non-sacred needs.

Mark Palmer – Adjudicator training and consistency

- Most states have a training/certification process.
- Many states have reciprocal agreements with neighboring states.
- Most states require judges be certified, though many do not. In states that do not require certification, priority is given to certified judges.
- Many states require shadowing before judges are added to judging lists.
- NFHS certification class seems to be a good tool for standardization and consistency of judging certification.
- Ultimately, judges generally continue to be hired based upon the quality of work (reputation).

Hiroshi Fukuoka – Guidance for choral voicing and changing facilities for LGBTQ at state music events

-- (Choral Voicing) Majority of the states represented has already renamed their ensembles to be gender neutral names via voice parts.

-- (Changing Facilities) Local control for changing facilities. Directors/Schools are more aware of their policies. If requested, the site manager can make accommodations.

Steffen Parker - Arts advocacy on the state level

Question 1: Does your state government fund an Arts Advocacy person or office?

- In general, most state agencies of Education have someone in their office that has this title, but very few states actually see any true results from them.

- Most folks here were aware that there was a person but did not know their name or contact info, which is very telling as to how well they are doing their job.
- Kansas has a state advocacy person who has a budget of funds to distribute to schools to help move their arts education forward. What would school art programs be like if every state did the same?

Question 2: Is there a non-profit other than your MEA, CDA, BMA, etc. that advocates for arts in your state?

- Several states have (or had) an Alliance for Arts Education that brings representatives from various state organizations together to work on promoting all of the arts (and in some cases, just some of the arts).
- Wisconsin has the Wisconsin School Music Association and Iowa has the Iowa High School Music Association that either serve as an advocate or strongly participate with others in advocating for performance arts.
- Oregon has county-wide arts advocacy organizations that promote the arts in schools.
- Most states do not have such an organization or they did, but with a change of leadership the alliance ceased to function.

Question 3: Does your MEA or other state-wide affiliations have a person on their board who serves as an advocacy chair or point person?

- Many state associations have an advocacy person while others rely upon the Executive Director or other leadership position to serve in that role.
- The quality of this effort varies greatly from state to state.

Overall Impressions:

- Every state has at least one group, person or organization that is advocating for the arts, but few have more than one.
- How broadly that advocacy is depends upon the organization that is in the lead on advocacy. Often the focus is only on the performing arts, high school music, or the like because who is driving the advocacy.
- What is involved in advocacy varied as well from state-funded resources (Kansas) to paid lobbyists (several schools) to volunteer lobbyists or large group demonstrations for legislators to one volunteer on the board of one state-wide association.
- Because of the strength of some state associations / organization, advocacy is unnecessary by other groups and they often serve have representatives on their board (voting and non-voting) so that they have 'a seat at the table'.
- No one expressed that they were completely satisfied with the advocacy effort being made in their state.

Tim Leighton – Pros and Cons of releasing performance scores from music event to the public

- **Pros**

- Parents want them, although this was suggested as a con, as well.
- Students want them, to include on college applications.
- Helps promote the Fine Arts and bring visibility.
- Transparency
- Oklahoma posts everything and has not had a problem. Data has not been misused.
- If released to the press, emphasize the score isn't just about a number.
- Ability to spin results into a positive.
- If the results are high, that certainly is a positive.
- Texas releases all and reports that this is a positive.
- Groups or individuals have the opportunity to grow when given disappointing scores.
- Adds value to the process and integrity to the events.
- Results are out there anyway, via Social Media.
- Freedom of Information Act, some reps cited.
- Consideration of how groups perform and acknowledgement of the contests themselves.
- List achievements for their college resume
- If you feel like something needs to be published, consider Best in Site, and Honorable Mentions then CAREFULLY review patterns over the year and between years.
- Feedback is important for any student to improve. Students often "hear for the first time" when a clinician shares feedback that their teacher has been providing.
- Students learn best by a combination of self-reflection (what did we do well, what could we improve, what did I do well, what could I improve) and feedback from others.
- Sharing results is part of life.
- **Cons**
 - Ratings and scores are different.
 - Directors typically do not want them.
 - Festivals are non-competitive and should not release scores.
 - Parents hovering. "What do you mean by a .5 reduction?"
 - Releasing outside the pool of directors is an invitation for issues.
 - Directors compare the schools
 - Numbers and rankings put too much pressure on student participants.
 - Feeling demoralized, if scores or feedback aren't spun the right way.
 - Programs that may be small or growing or have a change in directors may consistently score low.
 - Releasing contest scores may dampen spirits of students/communities of these groups
 - Music is curricular (contest typically co-curricular). It's based in LEARNING & EDUCATION not in rankings.
 - Research shows that inter-rater reliability is flawed - or not a true measure if you wish. In other words, your score depends on the individual judge you have. You can't have the exact same judge for every contest across the state. Do you want to publish an inherently problematic score/number?

- Does a 10 at contest A and a 10 at contest B mean the same thing? Will directors compare to other sites? Will they then go to the contest where there are the most favorable judges? Or choose judges they believe will be more favorable?
- The rubrics assign a number to a series of musical elements. While this type of measure is part of our educational system and music contest, there are deep disagreements among educators about their value.
- We've received feedback from directors in schools with high poverty and/or majority students of colors that comments they current receive focus on appearance, getting better equipment, playing the "wrong" kind of music.
- Are we measuring the quality of the school's music program (instruction time, ratio of teachers to students, private lessons), the socio-economic status of schools, the district's equipment? Measures of musical performance, just like standardized tests, are just too tied to socio-economic status and other societal challenges/factors.

Kyle Mills – Creating a NFHS database on music adjudicators and national conductors

- People are split 50/50 on this topic
 - 50% NO
 - We already have our own list
 - We are comfortable with our adjudicators
 - We know the people in the surrounding states that we can call for references
 - This would be too hard to keep up
 - 50% YES.....BUT
 - We would want it to include:
 - Feedback
 - Ratings
 - Strongpoints/Weaknesses
 - References/Resume
 - Where they have worked previously
 - Ability to reach out to previous tournament directors who hired them
 - Location/How much would it cost to get them there?
 - Would this be a private elite list or a large group
 - If it was an elite list would people pay?
 - People would beg to be on the list....this could get political
 - If it was a large group/database then it would be outdated so quickly
 - Who would the onus be on to update/maintain this list?
 - Lots of feedback that we should put this on the individuals themselves
 - Several comments that datasets between Music Adjudicators and National Conductors would have to be designed very different.
 - Lots of comments that states use Out-of-state Adjudicators for All-State level events
 - A database would be helpful to find out of state adjudicators more efficiently for All-State events

- Some states have application processes to be certified adjudicators and some states rely on word of mouth while others have internal spreadsheets