
KODÁLY EDUCATORS OF IOWA

January/February 2016



From the President-Amy Schoene

Greetings KEI! I hope you had a wonderful winter break and are ready to hit the ground running this week!

Most of us have come up with our own personal New Year's resolutions; have you developed a professional resolution as well? I encourage you to take a look at all of the amazing professional development opportunities in the area and attend as many as possible! I challenge you to utilize at least one activity from each workshop in your classroom. In the past when I have attended workshops, I got excited about using what I learned but forgot about the material by the time it was applicable to my students. I now go home and find at least one activity from a workshop to plug into my yearly plan. It might get shifted around a bit, but having the activity on my yearly plan is a great reminder to use it!

My challenge for you, KEI, is to attend at least one workshop this spring and actually utilize the material within your classroom. There are so many amazing professional development opportunities in the area; I hope to see you there!

Be sure to mark your calendars for Kodály-owa October 28-30, 2016! This is the first time the Iowa chapter has hosted the Midwest Kodály Music Educators of America conference, and we are excited to offer you a wealth of opportunities right here in Johnston, Iowa!



Winter Chapter Sharing

Mark your calendars for our annual chapter sharing to be held on January 30 from 9am-3pm at Grand Avenue Baptist Church in Ames. (Snow makeup date February 6.) The cost is \$10 for all teachers and \$5 for college students, and lunch is included. The morning session is entitled ***What Makes a Kodály Classroom? The Three Ps and Other Marks of a Kodály-Inspired Classroom.*** In the afternoon, we will feature ***The Student-CENTERED-Classroom: Using Centers in the Music Room.*** All who attend are encouraged to bring an idea or two for each topic to share with the group. Get out of the cold, grab some new ideas to warm up your classroom and shake off those winter blues. RSVP at <http://kodalyeducatorsiowa.weebly.com/winter-sharing-rsvp.html>, hope to see you there!

Upcoming Events!

- 1/16/16 - **Amidons**, Simpson
- 1/30/16 - **KEI sharing**, Ames
- 3/10-13 - **OAKE**, Long Beach, CA
- 4/2/16 - **Jane Emery-Becker**,
GDSMO, folk dancing
- 4/19/16 - **Sarah Fairfield**, FIO
- 4/23/16 - **Dr. Kathy Thomsen**,
Cedar Falls
- 10/28-30/16 - **MKMEA**, DSM

Kudos

Amy Schoene, Patty Haman, Kelly Jansen and Mary Schmelzer presented for KEI at IMEA.

Alan Tierney played in the Ames Tuba Christmas concert.

Heartland Youth Choir presented WinterSongs. Congrats to Barb & Tom Sletto, Sandy Miller, Ruth Dorr and all involved.

Jill Wilson will present *Promoting Creativity and Critical Thinking in the Choral Classroom* at NCACDA in February.

Lauren Fladland had 3 students accepted to the OAKE National Honor Choir in CA!

Did You Know...

Edwin Gordon died on December 4, 2015. His PhD was from the University of Iowa.

MKMEA was held at ISU in 1980. Featured speakers/presenters included Sr Lorne Zemke, Lois Choksy and Phyllis Weikart.



Dalcroze Workshop

Join music educators on April 23 for a Dalcroze workshop with Dr. Kathy Thomsen, certified Dalcroze specialist. Dr. Thomsen is a professor at Hamline University in St. Paul and teaches summer courses at the University of St. Thomas, also in St. Paul. This event is cosponsored by KEI, ICDA and IMEA and will be held at Lincoln Elementary in Cedar Falls from 9am-3pm. Cost is \$15 for KEI/ICDA/IMEA members, \$25 for non-members, \$5 for students. Also, please bring a food item to contribute to the lunch.

MKMEA 2016 in DSM!

The countdown to MKMEA is here - mark your calendars for October 28-30, 2016 as KEI and MKMEA host the annual fall convention, ***Kodály-owa, Fields of Opportunity!*** The conference will be held at the Stoney Creek Hotel and Conference Center in Johnston. Keynote address will be given by Kris VerSteege, IMEA president and founding KEI president. Barbara Sletto will conduct the Conference Honor Choir. As an added bonus, OAKE members receive a registration discount, and they also have the opportunity to bring students to participate in the honor choir. No audition is required, teachers/choral directors submit names of singers with unchanged voices who are in grades 5-8 and have strong musical skills, including in-tune singing. Spread the word to friends, colleagues and children's choir directors so that they can join the ranks of KEI/OAKE and receive these wonderful membership benefits. Come and enjoy a bountiful feast of session topics, including music literacy, movement, choral literature, singing games and Kodály basics. Plan now to join KEI and MKMEA as we gather together right here in the heartland to take part in a joyous musical harvest.



MKMEA Honor Choir Q & A

Now is the time to consider submitting names of students with unchanged voices and strong musicianship skills for the MKMEA 5-8th grade honor choir. To help answer questions, Julia Weisshaar-Mulin, Carly Scheiffer, Leann Houlette and Lauren Fladland have shared helpful information about their experience with MKMEA/OAKE honor choirs. (Note: MKMEA does not have an audition process, but a submission of names. OAKE has an audition process.) Submissions for MKMEA will be due early April, and only OAKE members can send students.

How many students did you send?

JW: MN one, **CS:** Chicago five, MN five **LH:** two, **LF:** MN six, CA will send three

Is the submission process difficult?

JW: (Speaking of OAKE) Same as Iowa Opus, not difficult if you follow the directions.

CS: MKMEA the teacher nominated singers, so there was no audition process. I enjoyed selecting from my own singers. OAKE required a formal audition along with \$25 application fee. 12 students applied with parents paying for the fee.

LH: No.

LF: (Speaking of OAKE) No, it was a very simple process, very well explained and laid out. I appreciate how the audition process measures musicality, part singing and range versus the ability to memorize a song.

How did you teach your student(s) the music?

JW: At home (student is my daughter), and she also studied it on her own with practice recordings provided by OAKE.

CS: Practice tracks were shared with the singers which was VERY helpful. In addition, I rehearsed once per week with each vocal part two months ahead of the concert. Near the end we combined both parts, which the students really enjoyed!

LH: I gave private lessons to the selected students to work on the music.

LF: I rehearsed with all students together for 45 minutes each week from January until the honor choir in March. Students are expected to practice at home with the practice tracks provided by OAKE.

Did the honor choir performance meet your expectations?

JW: About a B+. I felt like there were some kids in there that had no business being there. I differed in the interpretation of a couple of the selections, but that's just my opinion, HA :)

CS: Absolutely, the students have already been talking about how they want to sing in it again!

LH: Yes. My students had the opportunity to learn under fantastic directors. They also got to meet other students who were just as passionate about singing as they are.

LF: YES!! The music is at a level that is challenging to the students in the Youth Choir while still being developmentally appropriate for middle school voices.

Briefly describe your student's overall response/opinion about the event.

JW: She liked Minneapolis OAKE better than Iowa OPUS. Liked the repertoire much more because it was more difficult and it was very fun. Loved the warmups. Said the director was great and learned a lot. Enjoyed the hotel stay too. Said there were a couple of kids who came unprepared, one or two who were goofing off, were disrespectful and didn't deserve to be there.

CS: It has been fun seeing how all different types of students have been able to participate: the "brainy" ones, the "jocks," and the natural "divas." They all go on to great musical opportunities-- many make it into Opus, take private music lessons, or audition for community theater groups.

LH: They had a fantastic experience and have been asking to do it again.

LF: LOVE the experience, they enjoy the fact that they get to meet students from all over the US. Almost all of the girls that went to OAKE are still in contact with honor choir friends.

What did you learn from the experience that you have applied in your classroom?

JW: Warm ups and phrasing. I learn a LOT from every director I observe.

CS: Some of the octavos I have used in my 4th/5th grade choirs. Also, directors are free to observe rehearsals, and I've used some of the director's warm-up/activities in my own choir.

LH: I have used some of the warm up techniques and have used some of the literature again.

LF: I am always introduced to new literature through the honor choirs. Often the experience pushes my students who participate to a new level and pushes them to be leaders in choir, they realize the potential that I saw in them when I asked them to audition.

Would you send students again?

All: Yes!

Is there anything you would do differently next time?

CS: In the future I will try to remind students that even though it is a lot of preparation initially, the musical opportunity is incredibly rewarding.

LH: I'd send more students.

LF: I will continue to prepare my students in the same way, they were well prepared for Minneapolis and I am sure will be in the same position for CA.

Would you encourage others to participate in an MKMEA/OAKE honor choir?

All: Yes!

CS: Know that sometimes administrators are not as keen to support an event that is far away, but MKMEA in Iowa is about as close as you can get! :)

*Amy Schoene, President *Patty Haman, President-Elect*LeAnn Houlette, Vice- President*Molly Loftin, Secretary*Sonia Johnson, Treasurer* Kelly Janson, Sara McCue, Members at Large*Carly Scheiffer,Past President*

KEI is an affiliate of the Organization of American Kodály Educators

oake.org kodalyeducatorsiowa.weebly.com

Look for us on Facebook at Kodály Educators of Iowa and MKMEA Conference

