

Kodály Educators of Iowa

May 2008

Notes from the President

Stay Tuned!

As we all wrap up the school year, take time to tune into the things you did that went well this year. If you're anything like me, you should write them down so you don't forget! Also as ideas pop into your head about what you'd like to do differently in the next school year, jot them down. You'll appreciate it at the start of the next academic year.

There are some great summer opportunities to tune into! There is a nice selection to choose from that will improve our teaching, allow us to meet other people, and let our hair down so we can have some fun! I love getting to be a student again and can't wait to take my Orff Level II class at Drake this summer. There is a great workshop at The University of Iowa with Connie VanEngen and Mary Cohen, there is the CMP project and Orff levels being offered at Drake, there are people taking advantage of the amazing offerings at St. Thomas, and there's the fantastic workshop happening this weekend in Des Moines featuring Kris Versteegt and Artie Almeida. Do a little hunting and dig up something to help spice up your teaching. You'll never regret it!

Stay tuned to <http://www.kodalyiowa.org> this summer. We are in the midst of finalizing our workshops for the year and will be posting that information as soon as it is available. We are always open to comments to improve and help reach out to our colleagues. Please let us know how we can help you!

Have a great summer!

Shelley Droe

Congratulations to...

The first Celebrate Singing Choral Festival, co-sponsored by the Ames Children's Choirs, Ames Community Schools and the Ames Council on the Arts, was held April 11 at Ames Middle School. Ames area elementary school choirs performed, along with the ACC Chorale and Ragazzi of the Nebraska Children's Choirs. The mass choir performed a commissioned piece written and conducted by Sylvia Munsen, an arrangement of *How Can I Keep From Singing?*

The ACC Concert Choir, along with the Ames Chamber Artists, premiered *Spring*, a commissioned work by New York composer William Hawley. The piece was performed at the Chamber Artists' 20th anniversary spring concert.



Artie Almedia Workshop

On May 10, Artie Almedia, author of *Mallet Madness*, will present *Fun with Fundamentals* at Meredith Middle School in Des Moines. This event is sponsored by IMEA, Des Moines Schools and West Music. On Friday evening May 9, Kris VerSteege, will present *Making Connections*, and the cost for both sessions is \$15. For those who attend both days, graduate credit and continuing education credit are available for an additional cost, and you can sign up for credit on-site. Contact Dianne Aboud at daboud@algona.k12.ia.us if you need registration materials. Come take advantage of this great workshop!

Tips for a Successful Student-Teaching Experience, Part 1

So, you have a student teacher. Now what? As close to the first day as possible, have a sit down with him or her and tell them what your expectations are. Tell him/her in no uncertain terms, what it will take for you to recommend an "A" for the final grade. Explain to your student teacher that part of the job is grunt work, and that although s/he is not there to do YOUR job, they are there to DO THE JOB. Making copies, cutting lamination, setting up the instruments is part of it. "Get used to it. No one will do any of that for you." Give homework, with specifics, every night due the next day.

Once fade-in begins, provide your student teacher with specific feedback about their teaching as soon as possible after each class. That might be at day's end, or even the next day. Take notes about their teaching as much as you can, especially when you have no/limited breaks between classes. DO NOT leave your student teacher alone for more than 10 minutes at a time until s/he is full-time teaching. Even the best student teachers have very little classroom management skill. Taking notes for a 4th grade lesson, then leaving him or her alone for 10 minutes of the next 4th grade lesson makes more sense. DO leave your student teacher alone for at least one whole lesson each day once the full-time teaching phase has begun. There is NO WAY to tell if s/he can handle it without letting them handle it. Continue to take notes, interject logical next steps, etc. while in the room. Make your student teacher type their lessons, with all baby steps, until you are sure s/he is really thinking through all those steps. BUT, encourage him/her to work from a more realistic lesson plan whenever possible.

Lastly, have a sit down conference with your student teacher at least once a week. Make copies of the midterm form and use that for the first 4 weeks, the final form for the next four. Highlight the progress and areas you are still concerned about.

Most importantly, remember that we "special teachers" have a great likelihood of teaching 1000s of students during our careers. The COOP teacher will ultimately reach 1000s more through generations of student teachers. This isn't about you-- or even the student teacher. It is totally about the students who will have you to thank, or to blame, for their experiences in music. *(submitted by Kris VerSteege)*



Conduct Yourself Accordingly!

One of the activities that is sometimes left out of the general music classroom is conducting. Conducting is a great way to reinforce the concepts of beat and meter, tempo and expression. No conducting batons? Try unsharpened pencils or drinking straws. After students have learned the basic conducting patterns, try conducting while listening to recordings or while singing.

Supplement the theme with stories about famous conductors or live-action video of concerts. For fun, try the book *Arturo's Baton* by Syd Hoff. When the orchestra conductor's baton is missing, he learns that there is more to being a good conductor than a little stick. In the video *Curious George Beats the Band*, George is the lucky winner of a chance to conduct the orchestra at a family concert.

KEI DVD Lending Library

Summer is a great time to gather new ideas for the upcoming fall or to remind yourself of tried and true materials that you may have forgotten about or not had time to get to during the year. Take advantage of the KEI lending library featuring these workshop sessions: *The Pint-Sized Musician* and *Motivating Materials for the Older Beginner* with Leigh Ann Mock-Garner, *A Multi-Sensory Approach to Teaching Music* with Brent Gault, *Choral Rehearsal Strategies and Demonstration* with Sylvia Munsen and *Orff and Kodály: The Perfect Blend with Mary Price*. Each workshop consists of three dvds with approximately five hours of viewing material. To request a session, e-mail Sonia Johnson with the title and your mailing address. View the dvd within two weeks of receiving it. Then return it with a check for \$2.00 to cover postage. Make checks out to KEI. Please, no cash, for record-keeping purposes. Happy viewing!

Free Summer Concerts

The Belin Quartet will play a series of free noontime concerts on summer Fridays in downtown Des Moines beginning May 23 at 12:15. Visit www.civicmusic.org for more details.

KEI is an affiliate of the Organization of American Kodály Educators

www.oake.org

www.kodalyiowa.org

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