

VMEA Northwest District 1  
Meeting Minutes  
January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2006 (during HS festival)

**In attendance:** Eric Bushey, Armand Messier, Anna Roy, Gisele McRae, Mary Bauer, Andy Frappier, Brooke Ostrander, Joanne Scott, Randy Wheeler, Jeremy Sanborn, Jessica Larocque, Betzi Irwin, Donna Costes, Peter Matthews, Caleb Pillsbury, Bruce McRae

- Eric presiding. Call to Order 7:15.
- Minutes from last time accepted.

### **Middle School Festival**

#### Lists/Scores:

- 8<sup>th</sup> grade Band – Fleur Barnes from Brattleboro Middle School conducting. Betzi reported that she is picking a program after looking at numbers and ability from the list of kids we get. In the past scores were brought to the meeting for teachers to look at. Betzi can send out copies if teachers are interested once the program is picked. She will see Fleur next weekend and can get scores or pieces then of any that are not borrowed from the library.
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade band: Some lists were given to Jess. Any other lists should be emailed to Jess ASAP at [jessylarocque@yahoo.com](mailto:jessylarocque@yahoo.com)
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade Band: Gisele collected lists to pass along to Phil. Any other lists should be sent ASAP to Phil. Gisele says there is a new email for Phil and the Milton school district: [pmeares@mtsd-vt.org](mailto:pmeares@mtsd-vt.org) or call him at 893-3215.
- **We need a MS choral manager and conductor.** The info in the handbook seems to be from last year (Marilyn Sink). Kim Tokarz is a possibility.

#### Other MS fest:

- Andy: what is the policy on 6<sup>th</sup> graders in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Band? -Exceptional 6<sup>th</sup> graders are allowed. Reasoning is both to give elementary band programs a chance to participate and to let exceptional 6<sup>th</sup> grade players participate.
- Brooke: everything's all set for MS fest at MVU as long as it doesn't rain and gym classes can go outside.
- Was food issue resolved in Sept? Donna: we spend too much on hospitality – there should be a budget for that and everything else. Anna: \$200 was spent at one festival. Gisele: more conservative at this HS fest. \$125 was agreed on as a budget for food at a festival, not including conductor's meals.

### **Jazz Festival**

#### Dates/Times:

- March 31<sup>st</sup>/April 1<sup>st</sup> at Enosburg HS. Friday 6-8 PM rehearsal of select group. Sat. select group rehearsal 10 – 12 and 1 – 3 (12 – 1 lunch) . Other participating schools do soundchecks at 3:00. 4:00 Concert.

#### Director, payment, purchase of music:

- Andy: George Voland all set to guest conduct select group. Wants a list of kids first then will pick program.

- Andy: Will District pay for music George picks out? Agreed that hopefully most of the pieces could be found in District library or schools' libraries, and only order if we have to. Andy, Gisele, Eric, and Mary offered to order a piece for their own library if needed.
- What to pay George? From other minutes/handbook: \$350 plus travel expenses, lodging, and 25cents/mile. People thought that was too much for a stipend. Donna: before fees from this festival we had \$400 in account. - It was agreed to change the stipend for Jazz conductor to \$300. Handbook should be changed to reflect this.

#### Procedures: door fee, student fee:

- Door fee - Gisele: donation isn't enough. - People agreed it should be a set fee, same as HS and MS fest, and just let people know. It's a good festival and people shouldn't have a problem with a small fee. It was agreed to make it the same door fees as HS and MS festivals.
- Student fee - none last time. Also should be the same as other festivals. Agreed to make it \$5.00 for each student in select group. No fee for other schools' groups participating in festival.

#### Other Jazz fest:

##### Fri PM supervision:

- Gisele: what is the expectation for directors bringing students to the select group on Fri PM – just drop off, or stay with them?
- Andy: just a rehearsal, don't need all directors to stay. He will be the chaperone.
- Actually would need a couple people to run sectionals. This happened last year, but maybe that was just Steve Blair's style.
- Don't know if George will want to run sectionals. Andy will check with George and will email people to arrange who will stay. It is only a 2 hour rehearsal.
- Mary: If she's bringing students she feels she should stay with them for legality issues.

##### Other:

- Eric: it's a great festival in a beautiful auditorium.
- Andy wants to sit down with teachers and hammer out personnel for the select group. Will meet to do this 1/13 (2<sup>nd</sup> day of HS fest) at 10:30.
- Andy will call/email teachers to find out who is bringing their group to the festival.

#### VMEA Conference feedback

- Andy likes reading sessions for Band and missed them at this conference. Wants a comeback.
- Caleb: Orff stuff in afternoon was great – wants more of that.
- Wish attendance was better.
- Betzi is new Instrumental Coordinator for next year so give her ideas for the convention.
- Gary Corcoran offered as idea for instrumental guest, plus talk to him about what other ideas he would have. (discussion of Plymouth State College Masters of Instrumental Music - mostly online program, starting beginning of February, not to late to look into it)

**June meeting:** Monday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 at Donna's house. Meet then eat. Potluck – please bring something other than just chips and dip.

#### Other business:

##### Next year's festivals calendar etc:

- Eric: January seemed really early to get ready for.

- Armand: agreed, it's a week and a half after vacation, after people just finished holiday concerts.
- Mary: with a December meeting, music could be given out then.
- Eric: suggested we stay with this time of year but get pieces out in November. Have festival a little later?
- Gisele: might not be able to host at MHS if it's later in the year. Had an inservice Fri 1/13 and that's what made it easy this year.
- Eric and Armand are considering hosting at BFA St. A in gym. Have new grand piano, nice for scholarships. Have small cafeteria but large gym.
- Mount Mansfield also has the space and Caleb and Mary and their community would love to see it happen there sometime.
- Mary: in other Districts they rotate the hosting schools.
- BFA St.A, MMU, and MHS teachers will get together and look at space and dates to decide for next year.
- Date possibilities: Feb 3/4 or 10/11.
- Date and day of week issues will come up if we restructure the groups at each festival and mix up HS and MS.

#### Restructuring HS and MS groups at festivals:

- Caleb: not sold on this issue.
- Armand: we are still stuck on this issue and we are the only district to still do HS and MS festivals.
- Andy: could solve problem of choral parents getting up and leaving.
- Could put them in a different place in program but need bleachers for them to sit on. Band is a captive audience because they sit in place while chorus performs.
- Gisele: don't want to change to something we don't know is going to work.
- Armand: could do a choral fest and a band fest.
- Eric told what all the other districts do. Examples: Harwood area does a chorus and a wind ensemble, period, no concert band/wind ensemble. Chittenden county area does a HS choral fest, HS band fest, and a MS band/choral fest. Other districts mix up age groups and types of groups.
- Gives Band kids a chance to sing and vice versa. Makes choruses stronger. Caleb: chorus is already strong.
- But other districts audition their chorus.
- People don't want to reinvent wheel. Need to do the actual research
- But we've done three years of deciding to research and don't get all the info we need to make an informed decision
- Month of May is bad time for HS kids and teachers because of All-State.
- Betzi: Why does it have to be in May? Because it is a good time for MVU to host.
- Andy will put together info for everyone to look at about what other Districts do and how they like it. Gisele: everyone should see this info and have time to think about it before June meeting so they can come to the meeting with an opinion about what we should do and why.
- We will make a decision at the June meeting.
- Eric: If we had a just instrumental festival it could be at Milton on stage instead of in the gym, with such a nice stage. Or MVU – nice stage. One group rehearse in Band room, one on stage. Would like to be able to put kids on a better stage than BFA StA and could do that if we didn't have two set ups requiring a gym.
- Armand: we'd have a great festival if it were just a choral festival. There would be lots to do and we could do it in Nov.

### **Other Business:**

- Handbook should have schedule for HS festival.
- Armand: working with Aron on website, would like for us to have our own URL that kids could find easily. Suggestion was: vmeadistrict1.org

### **How this festival is going:**

- Cancellations: none in Wind Ensemble. 22 in chorus, big improvement. Have had as many as 50 in past.
- Concert Band: Gary Corcoran feels under the gun because they are not strong. Bruce: they are the same as they ever are and we are subjecting Gary to it.
- American Elegy was picked by both band conductors and had to be scrapped. Mostly because there was a rush to choose music.
- Chorus: good – attribute fewer cancellations to having brought it up as a problem and people being more cautious when submitting their list. Getting the numbers by Nov. auditions also helped. The later numbers can be sent the more accurate people can be. Some cancellations were last minute and couldn't be helped, i.e. Enosburg had first day of exams during festival and parents cancelled.
- Everyone should update email with Betzi/Aron

Adjourned 8:25

Respectfully submitted,  
Betzi Irwin