

Virginia Music Educators Association, Inc.



A Federated State Unit of
National Association for Music Education
Southern Division

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Greetings, VMEA Members~

I hope that you and your loved ones are healthy and safe as we continue to work through the challenges of this pandemic. I am honored to have assumed the role of VMEA President as of July 1st. I hope to lead our organization and support our members through these difficult and tenuous times. It is imperative that we support one another, collaborate to overcome challenges, and advocate fiercely for high-quality, sequential music education in the Commonwealth.

I wish to offer some updates, including our advocacy efforts and current projects below.

1. Please join me in welcoming Allen Hall as our new State Executive. His years of experience as a music educator and service to our great organization will be invaluable as he eagerly assumes this new role. Please note Allen's new email address effective immediately: vmeaoffice@gmail.com.
2. An [advocacy letter](#) was written by VMEA and emailed in July to all superintendents in the Commonwealth. Many of us are facing significant situations that will impact our programs beyond the 20-21 school year. Our VMEA Advocacy/Government Relations Committee is ready to help. Please let us know how VMEA can be of assistance. In these times we must stick together as a profession and an organization.
3. With advocacy in mind, I invite you to complete the [VMEA Music Education Climate Survey by Monday, August 17th](#). This is a collaboration between the leadership of our Advocacy/Government Relations Committee and Higher Ed sections. We would like to hear your challenges and learn how VMEA can continue to support our members in keeping music education alive and thriving.
4. Another prong to our advocacy efforts is our new Associate Membership, "[Friends of VMEA](#)." This opportunity is open to booster programs, parents, community members, music retailers, and individuals with a vested interest in music education in Virginia. Please direct interested parties to the [VMEA website](#) to learn about benefits & cost.
5. Mentorship is more important than ever. Let's be honest, I could use a mentor myself as I navigate the virtual teaching environment! The intent of the newly established VMEA Mentorship Project is to create professional relationships throughout Virginia that will be mutually beneficial to the mentor and mentee. Information on how to get involved (either as a mentor or to seek a mentor) is posted on our [website](#).
6. The important work of the VMEA Council for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is underway. We seek a diverse representation of members from VMEA sections, geographic regions, races, genders, disabilities, and more to join our efforts in creating an inclusive, equitable, and accessible music education community. Visit the [website](#) for more information!
7. Save the date for our first-ever Virtual Conference, November 19-21. Our amazing Conference Planning Committee, which includes section leaders and council chairs, has been working diligently to provide the same level of quality experience we have enjoyed in-person. We look forward to unveiling more information in the upcoming months!
8. A VMEA Town Hall Meeting has been scheduled for **Thursday, August 20th at 7:00 p.m.** The purpose of this Town Hall is to inform the membership on key issues, share advocacy strategies, and stay connected. Zoom meeting information will follow next week.

These are challenging times, yet I recognize the power of this collective group, with our voices and passion for music education. It is this passion that enables us to rise to the challenge, to reimagine the way we work, how our students create music, and how we support our communities through the power of music.

Be well. Stay healthy and positive.

Warmly,
Annamarie