

Letter from the Assistant Editor

by Sierra Sargent

At every step in our time as educators or learners of education, we find ourselves pondering ways to further develop ourselves and our teaching. We wonder how we could be more inclusive to our students or how to continue nurturing that love for music within our students. We look for classroom resources in the ever changing technological world, and we are curious to find the perfect sequence of strategies that will help our students to grow. Students studying music education seek to find answers for managing their income and building the “perfect” resume for WECAN employers. Educators in our field aim to bring answers to these interests and more in the second issue of the Active & Integrative Music Education (AIME) Journal: Cultivating Curiosity.

Following our years in the COVID-19 Pandemic, our curiosities towards the technologies available to music education peaked. Josh Barker speaks on the way he has used technology to support his choral classroom even as things have returned to their in-person format; meanwhile Emily Scheidegger conducted research on the best digital resources for the virtual beginning orchestra. Anna Raber presents the major themes of her research on building student-teacher relationships while existing in a virtual teaching format. Working towards an increased awareness for the students in our classroom, Louella Derrico’s research leads a discussion on changes to make for inclusive concert attire. David Potter advocates for teachers to shift their love of teaching music to a love for the learners of music and to show vulnerability in our teaching to nurture our students’ growth. Becky O’Brien reinforces the concepts of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and the reasons we should be teaching through these ideas, and Laurie Woltman describes her experience in teaching her first class of students with diagnosed learning differences and the methods that have had a positive impact with those students. Laura Dunbar and Shelly Cooper consider the music transition skills that students should have to make a positive transition from elementary to middle school. Dan Fee lists his beliefs on how to “cross the river” of music education; his list contains both advice on being a good music educator and taking care of yourself as well, something we all too often put on the backburner of life.

Moving beyond the walls of higher education and into the active world, we find ourselves with even more questions and curiosities than we had during our time in school. Benjamin Heninger discloses what employers are looking for when they are searching for employees on WECAN and gives hints as to what might put your application to a job above the rest. Michelle Yaciuk presents a step-by-step process to managing self-employment income to give your mind a rest from financial stress. Matthew Markham lists his own top ten tips for maintaining vocal health beyond college, and Molly Roseman illustrates the best strategies to “fake it ‘til you make it” if your piano skills are feeling a little weak. Judy Bond shares details on the Active Alliance for Music Making (AAMM) organization, and encourages us to think about AAMM in a new way that will allow all music educators to move forward in a positive manner. Alex St. Louis conducted research on the general music curricula in Wisconsin and his findings show the similarities and differences found across the state. Dan Gilanyi addresses ways to approach repertoire at the high school band level so we can keep providing our students with repertoire that is valuable to their growth as musicians. Rachel Brashier and Patrick Lawrence provide a lesson plan format for the busy music educator, which by personal confirmation I can say has helped me in my own lesson planning.

Our curiosity as music educators will never be truly satisfied. As our world changes and grows, so will our learning and thinking in the music classroom. We might find ourselves with different opinions on approaches to teaching, and some of us might find that something we love to learn one year is not as helpful in years to come. Curiosity and change are not bad things, especially if it is for the good of our students and ourselves. I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to work with the amazing educators who contributed to this journal. Their work and knowledge has inspired my teaching and my own research to come, and it is my hope that their work will do the same for you.

Sierra Sargent, Assistant Editor