

MMEA Annual Board Meeting, Saturday, March 14, 2026 AGENDA

Virtual Meeting

8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84597305892?pwd=0Prin2ld71NrCWRSbwKE7lQ>

[Meeting Recording](#)

[Meeting Agenda](#)

[Meeting Chat](#)

MISSION

The mission of MMEA is to develop, promote, and support equitable and comprehensive music learning and teaching in Minnesota.

VISION

MMEA believes that music is core to the human experience. We support Minnesota Communities by affirming and further developing aesthetic sensitivity, self-expression, and creativity of music learners. MMEA strives for equality and excellence in music education by honoring and preserving lived experiences through intentional and informed practices.

Minutes: taken by Jordan Bongaarts

TOPIC / TIME ALLOTTED / DOCUMENTS	FACILITATOR	ACTION
Board Member Attendance Tracker <i>Members Present:</i> <i>Members Absent:</i>		<i>Total number of board members:</i> Bylaws Rev. 2024

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8:00-8:20am - Call to Order, Roll Call, M/V Statement Reading, and Approval of Consent Agenda • Roll Call/Tuning • Shout Outs 😊 JN: My eldest progeny gets married next weekend! Woot! NT: Shout out to Gunnar and his group at the Totino Grace Show Choir Event GA: Shout out right back! • Consent Agenda ○ Minutes 01.10.26 Board Meeting ○ Minutes from the Confidential Meeting on 01.24.25 (accessible by MMEA accounts and is CONFIDENTIAL) ○ Acceptance of the resignation of Kelly Taylor following the close of the meeting. Exec Board appoints interested member Richard Thomas as replacement. ○ Acceptance of the resignation of John Pohland following the close of the meeting. The position will be vacant until a replacement can be appointed. ○ Review and Adoption of Policy Revisions: Document Destruction Policy ○ Program Updates: Newsletter Links: 2.3.26, 2.7.26, 2.19.26, 2.27.26 ○ New Class of VPs are elected in January Election: ■ Michael Bjork - Elementary Classroom VP-Elect (Term extension) ■ Jonathon Knutson - Band Co-VP (Term extension) ■ Becca Shuman Band Co-VP (3-year voting term) ■ Dr. Lara Moline - Choir Co-VP-Elect ■ Caleb Horn - Choir Co-VP-Elect ■ Joel Pohland - Jazz VP-Elect (Term extension) ■ Matthew Oyen - Orchestra VP (3-year voting term) ■ Jennifer Greupner - Region Representative - Twin Cities Central (Fill vacancy) ○ As a reminder - Vacancies Current ■ 2 Midwinter Convention VP-Elects ■ College Chapters VP-Elect ■ Region Representative - Southwest	Chris Rochester Jerri Neddermeyer	Decision: Motion to call to order EBerg motions ADeLuca seconds All in favor
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JN: I want to call attention to the document destruction policy, which has been redone to help us with moving forward and cleaning out the storage unit. Basically we draw a line for how things are treated pre and post 2021. We will be more inclusive about keeping digital records going forward and the old stuff (physical paperwork) is a 7 year hard time . It is a messy document, all changes in red. The policy that is approved will look cleaner. If there's no questions, it can remain in the consent agenda. Otherwise we have a whole new roster of incoming board members and some other vacancies.

CR: This is an update that we've needed for a long time - thanks for those updates!

8:20-9:20 Finance Overview

- [2025 MMEA Annual Report](#)
- [2025 EOY Financial Analysis](#)
- [2026 Budget Implications](#)
- **Storage Unit Moving Day is Saturday, March 28, 2026. Who can help?**

JN: We are going to move on to the budget stuff. I grouped all budget stuff here at the beginning while our brains are fresh. I don't want to spend a ton of time on last year because it feels super irrelevant at this point with the cancellation of MWC in the first quarter of this year. But there is one point on how we started this year and how we will proceed this year. Click into the Annual report . There's an overview of what we did. If you look at page 5, there will be a nice graph. Eventually I will drop off what we did 2017-2019, or what I call "the before years". 2020 was covid, 2021 was when I was hired. When trying to compare what we're doing to what we did when we were healthy - the last year that we were healthy was prior to 2017. 2017 to 2020 were tough times for this organization. Now we have what I'll qualify as raising expenses and generally raising balance and hovering around neutral balance. As we are reinstituting programs, expenses are going to go up. I put a summary at the bottom, which gives bullet points for folks to use to talk about budget. As people ask questions, please remember that I will talk with anyone about the budget. I'm happy to talk to members about the budget. Hopefully this gives you enough info to chat with people.

JN: Next is the EOY financial Analysis. I'm going to share my screen.
Generally speaking: Yellow is stuff to look at. Green is good or spending less

Call for
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seconds. All
in favor

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than we thought. Red marks problem areas. MWC last year was the spot we had overspending with union spaces. They lowered the bulk rent price, but not enough to counteract the 40k that got used in production. There wasn't really a way to predict that besides knowing ahead of time that the space was too expensive for us. We had these areas that were extremely red. We were budgeted to come out 4500 ahead in that category and came out 30k negative. We made some cuts across the board and came up at the end year at negative 15k instead of negative 30k. I'll consider that good, but it was still a negative outcome when we planned a positive outcome. At that time we had a reserve of 200k in liquid funds. We were expecting to draw down on it as part of our budgetary income in 2026. Any questions about end of year analysis?

JN: Next is the 2026 budget implications. This has the program codes listed upon the top. I've redone this 5 times with different year to dates, so the codes aren't spelled out on this doc. If you have questions about the codes, please ask. Green are positive areas. Red is negative, and orange are the numbers that I changed from actual. I took everything that had happened up to March 5th 2026 and I took all the payroll and expenses from the first quarter and I added the liability for payroll and expenses for the entire year across the programs. There was a program refund that I took out. There is an 11k change in expenses we haven't paid yet, and that is reflected, and then the refunds for MWC. Those have been altered from regular. This reflected what we budgeted for 2026 without any changes. The big red things are the problematic areas that will be very hard for us. We paid 61k to the MCC and they forgave us 13k in facility rental that we were still obligated to pay. The other big block is the 115k with the Hilton. I spoke to our contract lawyer yesterday and he said the force majeure section in our contracts are different - the contract with the MCC is tight, but we may be able to apply some of our payments to future years with the Hilton, Fern and one other contractor. We might also be able to get somewhere with Orchestra Hall but they don't have a force majeure clause in their contract.

CR: Is it worth looking into other insurances for the organization?

JN: Yes, but our contract lawyer said that cancellation is always tricky, but that the insurance is maybe worth it because it covers snowstorms, which are likely in Feb/March. We have cancelled before for snow and they have paid out before for that. But this slushy zone for civic unrest or for covid are tough, but many contracts changed after covid to account for that. We will

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likely research and go with a new insurance company that insures us as poorly as this one has. Does that answer your question?

CR: Yep!

JN: Great! As I look at the bottom row here of the YTD. The yellow areas are programs that have not happened yet and will have fees that cover the negative implications of a year of payroll. So All-State will have money that comes in in those areas, so we will not have a negative balance against payroll in those areas. I added the yellow boxes together. The bottom line is negative 338k at the end of the year if all other programs remain neutral except for payroll. Then I added the 162k back in because there are fees associated with those programs that are in yellow, and then will compensate for the 162k in payroll that is there. The shortfall we have is 176k. Keep in mind also that the nonprofit provisional fund is 198k. We have already squirreled away this money but we have no margin for error. The next tab is a list of ramifications, which are some areas we can change. At the beginning of the year, I had planned on hiring Wanda full time. She asked if I might be interested in a part time position and then hiring someone at part time later in the year who would later slot in that position. I agreed, so we hired wanda at .75 even though I was authorized to hire her full time. The orange block that I changed reflects that 11k difference. We planned for a nurse at camp in 2026, which is a 6500 change we can make. We are unable to draw down on the nonprofit provisional fund when we are withdrawing funds, so we can't count on that 6k of income. If we are looking at reduction in overall staffing, we can talk about that. We just got to a point where we hired these people, so I would like to avoid doing that, but if we get to that point, we get to that point. I withdrew 100k from the provisional fund for the cash. Until we're paid for Auditions and All-State, there's a cash flow problem. So there's 98k left in the provisional funds Adding all of those things together, that gets us to 141500, which includes cuts in staffing across the board. We can look at reducing scholarships to an extent, depending on what we can pull off. But we're still looking at 141 instead of 176 but there's still a gap. David has a question?

DDavis: I'm wondering about future years? Do we need to increase certain revenue? If we survive this year, will it keep compounding?

JN: The budget this year should be self exclusive and should be buffered. Once we have one more normal MWC, we should be okay. But you're exactly right, if one more thing goes wrong in any category, we are at very high risk. That said, a year or two ago, we would not have survived this at

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all. The fact that we're having this discussion and have time to deal with it is good. The changes that I made in facilities for MWC 2027 with no ballroom. We may have to have conversations with ACDA. Scott?

SRabehl: Do your projections assume that we will stay stable with membership and MWC participation? We have disengaged folks now

JN: It's assuming stable, based on the last few years. I wouldn't say it's overly optimistic. It's looking at 40k in memberships which is low and has been low for a long time. It also assumes standard stable in MWC, which is very average. I try to play it safe when it comes to numbers. Any other questions?

JKnutson: What does the 10% reduction in staff mean? What are you looking at for that? Pay decreases, position elimination?

JN: There's a few things. The four of us have talked about it a good bit, which makes it challenging. The board is in charge of my position. I am in charge of what happens to the three staff members. There is some talk about a shift in what Lori wants to do for us or with us based on retirement or semi retirement, which we could potentially leverage. If I cut my position to .75 that would take care of it. But I would work only .75. I would not work full time and take 75% pay. There would maybe be negotiation about making it through this year and back paying later. We could cut a position or cut pay but I don't feel good about that because our staff isn't paid well to begin with. My salary being higher means my position being reduced has a higher effect.

Jknutson: that would lead us to financial stability?

JN: It's either making the staff cut or drawing on reserves. We can reduce in any way shape or form. We can revisit this in three months or at the last quarter, depending on what's needed. David?

DD: Do you know of any MEAs nationwide that are being really successful and raising a lot of income? If so, what are they doing?

JN: That depends on the definition of successful. There are All-State models that are less expensive and require less money, which is a marker of difference. There are MEAs that are more membership engaged than ours are. Most folks still have offices and such, which I would never do again for us.

CR: I'll also hop in, I've been doing research on what we can do better, and how to get engagement. I've been looking at a few other states, like Florida and Texas. They operate in a really different fashion, they don't do summer camps at all, they have big colleges engaged, have different relationships

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with NAFME etc. I'm planning to start reaching out and having conversations with them. We're talking about almost completely different nonprofits that have the MEA title. We're going to start looking into things that will help get engagement and give us the ability to be successful without going into our reserves.

DD: If we do that research and change some models and lean into what makes us unique, that could be a winning strategy.

NT: When do we have to make a decision on all of this?

JN: As it stands right now, the reserves will be spent because nothing is changing. Whenever we make this decision is when it will start to take effect. Some of these things are already happening (Withdrawing from reserve, hiring Wanda at .75, we can't draw down) but the nurse at camp and the staff reduction are things that can still be decided. There are other revenue ideas or program cuts that might come up as well. I put out a thing that I felt seemed easy, but if we cut staff, we are deciding what programs are taking a back seat.

NT: My follow up is that I want to note that we have given that information to membership that the reason we raised fees is to have that nurse at camp. I would love to make sure that we follow through with that but I don't want to say that's more important than staff time. It's just forward facing information.

JN: I agree that the fees are allocated to a specific purpose and we need to adhere to that purpose.

MG: I don't want to spend too much time admiring the problem instead of looking at solutions and I don't have any new specifics. But earlier with Scott's point, I think that we need to plan very conservatively for our budget as we may find reduced support or participation in the upcoming year as things blow over. We need to anticipate that as a possibility and be conservative in where we land.

JN: Yes, I would say that if we are considering staffing, we are adding no programs and considering rolling back on some programs.

CHorn: You talked about a few years ago that you wouldn't be able to survive this and you got the reserves - can you talk about how we got those reserves and how that would build back up?

JN: I think it will naturally build back up if we have no other issues pop up. We are scheduled to have our fees match up with our expenses. Whenever we have a year that has 10 or 15k above budget, we squirreled away little by

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little each year. We had a little savings account a while back and we had credit card debt which we don't have now.

SRabehl: I'll also jump in and say that the answer is that Jerri is a pro at knowing where the money is, how much is coming and how much we can spend. That was the big change for us. I think that's in a nutshell where that positive came from.

JN: Thanks. I believe we can do it again. Abigail?

AVK: I know this could be more of a long term solution - have we talked about if we get assistance from NAFME? Grants or initiatives for financial support for MEAs going through unique times?

JN: So far, national grants for relief funding are not provided. We (staff) looked at the Minneapolis Foundation for relief funding but don't count for any of those as a nonprofit. We are looking at one arts grant, but there's not anything in the way of relief funding. There may be some relief funding that comes down the pike, but the city of Minneapolis seems to be more concerned with larger business implications and don't have the ability to fund all of the things so the nonprofit sector will take a hit. That said, it is somewhat leverage to say to the people that hold our contracts that they have access to relief funds and we don't, so they can help it trickle down. Or at least let us use the funds for next year.

CR: I've been exploring philanthropic support - it falls under a different timeline and I'm not comfortable planning on that until we get money into accounts. But I do think there are a few individuals that could pull this organization out of a hole enough that there was never a hole to begin with. Hopefully in a few months I can come back with good news... if ya'll are praying people, say some prayers.

EB: I'm wondering do we have any numbers from the NAFME Go Fund Me?

JN: we have 3600 in that fund

EB: How can we let people know that we're a good cause to donate to?

JN: That's a tricky thing. The GFM has a couple of different impacts. I was approached by Deb Confredo to ask if they could start this for us, which was great. There are folks outside of Minnesota that are willing to help, but the response within the state is complicated. We cancelled an event and now we're asking for people to donate. That's a hard look for the people who don't agree that we did the right thing. It doesn't matter now if people agree. We have information about an organization that people outside did not have, in addition to the social impact that was happening. It's tricky. When looking at how it's best to promote the go fund me, it feels to me that

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it needs to be promoted outside the state, and amplified within. But that's not how it's happening. I have promoted it within, and some people have promoted it on their fb pages but it's sat at 3600 for some time now and I think that's where it's going to sit. The environment and what it looked like here for a time has shifted, and the perception of the need will shift with it. There are long term ramifications that came with the decision we made and we knew that. We gotta do the tough part of figuring out how to do the lift.

JN: As it sits right now, we will go forth with hiring the nurse. We will cut in every place that we can. We will delay Modern Band by a year, condolences to Eric, and will look at the DMMHP for adjustments. We will also need to make sure that whatever staffing decreases are recommended also come with program cuts to match. Let's put it on notice to VPs if we can spend money on ____, the answer is no. We will do our best to get through this year. When people ask why we don't have the bells and whistles, we let them know because we are reacting to the budget we have. We will cut and offer what we can within our parameters. Any other questions?

JB: So I want to make sure from a notes perspective - there is no action at this time, there is no vote being taken - we're noodling and will check in next meeting?

JN: Yep, let it ride. The last thing I have is that as part of our budget cutting, we are cutting our storage unit. That's \$400 a month we don't need to pay. So we're going to get rid of our crap! It's going to be a uhaul, pack it up, throw it away, shred it, take it to the U, move it to Jerri's garage type of endeavor. Anyone who is interested in a storage unit moving party on Saturday March 28th, put your name on the agenda - we need some bodies and we need some muscles. We have pieces of furniture that need to be moved to my garage and I can get rid of them from there. It will be a great time! The Jerri Jordan Schlepp machine is a great time... If we don't have help, then I will hire help.

CR: Just doubling down, it will be a fun hang! There will be water... probably.

JN: I'll bring donuts too!

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Recording timestamp: 1:02:51

9:30-10:00 REGIONS

Region Rep Reporting ([Region Map](#))

- Review Role of the Region Reps (CR)
 - [Region Rep Resources/Info 2025](#)
- Northwest Report - Gunnar Aas (Outgoing RR), Chris Barnes (RR)

GA: This is my last meeting as region rep, and then I will move to the Advocacy position. I don't have a formal report - just seeing things happening in the region. Cuts happening everywhere. It's tough for rural schools. Hopefully will advocate more for them in coming years.

CBarnes: There's also lots of job openings! If you need a job, come look in our region.

- [Northeast Report](#) - Iris Kolodji

JN: Iris had travel issues that kept her from the meeting today. Her report is linked above. She's asking about some regional events and that there might be some options there and I agree. We did a whole bunch of stuff that I didn't think we could do as well as we did for Virtual MWC. The idea of meeting a regional group, online even though we're all tired of it. If it's relevant, then online is of use. We've been talking about guitar education and sessions and those always get overcompeted with headliners or etc. The other parts of education that many of us are asked to do is scooted under other things happening at MWC. Maybe there's an opportunity to take a small panel on tour for guitar ed or a small board contingent to meet with folks on a more informal basis. We have zero money to do it with, but there are some things in the report that I want you to read. There's a few interesting comments there.

- Central Report - Kelly Taylor

KTaylor: Good morning! This is my last meeting as a region rep, you may have seen my resignation letter in the consent agenda. I apologize for the redaction, but sometimes we have to protect our anonymity when it comes to school boards and things like that. I'm happy to share privately, just contact me to chat about it - it's nothing bad. All good and awesome opportunities. There are no reports from my region. I've had the pleasure of going out into my region and judging some large group contests. We're also in the middle of festival season. It's great to see music making and see what

Erin Berg
Jerri
Neddermeyer

Information/
Discussion

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other music programs are doing. I'd like to introduce Richard Thomas as my replacement. The member I've had the most interaction with as a region rep, and he's agreed to take on the rest of my term and the exec board agreed to those terms. He will proceed from today. I want to thank everyone for the educational opportunity for being on this board. I know tough times are ahead but with the people that are here, I think we can preserve and elevate the org to a new level.

- Southwest Report - John Pohland

JoelPohland: John can't be here today so I wanted to say something. This comes from being John's brother, knowing the impact that John has had on MN music education - he and his wife were presented with an amazing opportunity. He's not giving up on MN music ed but he's taking advantage of a great opportunity. He expressed to me that he feels like he won't be missed, but we all know that he's had a great impact. I'd like us to give it up to Johna and to encourage you to reach out to him. I just wanted to shout out what an amazing job he's done!

CR: Woot! And I just want to throw out that that's a current vacancy, so if you know anyone who would be willing to fill that seat, please reach out to them!

- Southeast Report - Melanie Sheridan

MS: I just sent out an email e to my region about Casey Clementson's request for the interval and having some highlights from my region! I've already seen some emails back from people that have some cool things going on in their region, so I'm excited to send that to Casey!

- TC Loop Report - Rachel Gorden Mercer (Outgoing RR),
Natalia (RR)

RGM: I'm the outgoing region rep. I don't have anything to report. I send emails and I don't get a lot of responses - we're working on that! Lots of honor bands going on currently.

JN: So just to clarify, Rachel is outgoing and Natalia will take over Twin Cities Loop. Rachel will move to the elect position for Eric Songer , and then Jennifer Greupner will take over TC Central Region rep. I did undergrad with Jen and Casey as well - I consider Jen a great friend and a kind conscientious human as well, so get to know Jen, I say!

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○ TC Central - Interim Natalia Romero Arbalaez (Outgoing RR), Jennifer Greupner (RR) JN: No Natalia today, so onward!		
Recording timestamp: 1:15:08 10:00-10:30 Advisory Chairs Reporting (Advocacy, Perpich, Interval, Retired, Community, MSHSL) ● Advocacy (Gunnar Aas) GA: I'm signed up to go to NAFME's day on Capitol Hill, I'm looking forward to that. David - I'd like to pick your brain about that. Jerri, is there a full contact list for membership I could use? JN: Yep, you should talk to Lori about it! She'll tell you how to best navigate that ● Perpich (Michael Buck) MB: Feel free to read all details in my report. Some of it was about what happened at MWC from Perpich's session. We had three relicensure sessions, and an additional session. Thanks to the MMEA board for promoting that. We had really great attendance. We had over 100 people in attendance for each one which was super awesome. We had some great feedback. Shout out to our clinicians who made it such a great experience. I want to put a shameless plug in for our summer workshops. There's been a lot of interest in what Eric Songer has done with the pop music medium, and music production things. There are music orgs that are really involved with that. We're partnering with one of them and have some great things to come. The org is Music Will, which runs a great summer event that helps you to figure out if you're interested in Modern Band. We'll be at All-State to support ACDA and hopefully MBDA. Following that we have another week of workshops in person at the Perpich Center. One of our presenters will be Beca Buck and Qorsho about the book they wrote together called the Rhythm of Somalia. We also have one on Music notation, we've got a person leading dorico, one on ukulele, adaptive music, and a college doing a movement and dance workshop - a great line up of events! ● Interval (Casey Clementson): https://mmea.org/interval/ CC: I submitted a report, shout out to Melanie for reaching out to the region. If region reps can reach out, that would be great! Highlights don't need to be super polished, you can send me bullet points. I would love to include things from the council of chairs, so anything that you want to submit, the deadline	Advisory Chairs	Information

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is April 15th for the Spring Issue. I also sent a request to the exec board for an MWC recap. We sent an invitation to all the presenters from MWC and have gotten 5 articles submitted, so the next issue will run for sure! We can always take more and we can keep things in the hopper for Fall as well. I have a great slate of people on board to help put the next issue together. If you have any questions or article ideas, let me know!

- Retired Members (Scott Rabehl) [Retiree Information Spreadsheet](#)

SR: I just want to say the thing that hasn't been said yet - we've been going through a really difficult time and it was an enormous pivot in Feb. There were people who moved heaven and earth to provide experiences and opportunities for students and their colleagues, and they probably have received arrows and angry emails for it. I just want to say thank you to everyone and that I'm so grateful to be a part of this organization. So - What do you do with the retirees?? How do you engage them and how do you know who they are? I am having a hard time figuring out where to get started in this position. Erin, Lori and I had a great conversation at MWC. Retired folks tend to retire and go away, or come back for the social part of convention but otherwise, disengage. The ideas I have: I envision retirees writing "all the things I learned" articles for the interval, having them get involved as mentors as young teachers, and getting them involved as judges. There's lots of opportunities but it's hard to find out who they are. I put in a spreadsheet for people to fill out with recent retirees so I can try to reach them before they fall off entirely. If you know someone who retired in the last 2-3 years, I want to know their names, what they taught, and if you have it, their contact info. I'd like to start reaching out!

EB: I want to add that the biggest hurdle is their contact info - we lose their school email. I'd expand that range to the last 5-6 years - help us reach them!

- Community - vacancy
- [MSHSL](#) (Mark Gitch)

MG: Scott I'll add to your list of things - advocacy would be a great thing for retirees, whether it's helping current teachers advocate for themselves or also at the state legislative level. I've got a short report posted. A few highlights: some of the things in the HSL's plate right now are that sections are assigned on a faster timeline now. It used to be that they were done on

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state data but after a lot of research, they found if they use a three year average, you can assign those a lot faster. It may impact a school in terms of what section their school might participate in at a contest - if region reps want to let folks know to keep an eye out for section changes that might be good. So we're working with region secretaries around that. We are also looking at growth areas like modern bands. How do we look now vs ten years ago vs ten years from now. There are three areas that are growing - girls flag football, e sports, girls wrestling. We're navigating those growth areas but see them being a thing in the next few years. From the music advisory standpoint, we've made a lot of changes in the past few years and are just trying to maintain those changes. We are looking at judging scoring sheets for small and large group contests. It probably won't make this year's timeline but it will move to being different forms instead of a one size fits all form. So having different forms for Woodwinds/Brass, Strings, Vocal, large group, small group, solo, etc. We're also trying to imagine how it aligns to see a form that directs their learning better than the current forms. The forms are "of an era". We're looking at other state's models to try to create some guides. Before that goes out, we would send it out for feedback, so it won't be a surprise. Questions?

SR: There was work done in this area in the late 2010/teens. Do you have access to that?

MG: No! I have not seen anything done from MN. Do you have that?

SR: Ward Miller has that. I will connect you. Do you need more worker bees on that project?

MG: Not at this point, but I will keep you posted! Dale Gunderson is tackling band, Stephanie Trump is on vocal and I'm on strings.

- Equity Action Team (David Davis) - "Changemakers in MN Music Education"

DD: I don't have any EAT updates but I have a few statewide equity adjacent things that I can give some updates on. I've been able to start a new project, called the MN Changemakers in Music Education. We put together a panel of innovative change minded student centered music teachers from across the state. We were able to present at MWC and have a few other presentations coming up, trying to encourage systemic change minded thinking. We believe it's better for teachers and for students, and it will also hopefully promote a healthier music education field. If any of you are interested, please reach out. We have a kodaly specialist, a digitalmusic

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specialist, a native american specialist, a band teacher who gets 100% participation at their school, a university person, and we also have a person who works in admin that's teaching music and doing some awesome stuff. I was also on a committee with PELSB and I know that the group is moving forward with 1 k-12 license with specialties. Michael Buck can speak more on that. IT will probably be a 7 year process before we see the effects of it. That change will hopefully make it more inclusive, equitable and will reduce some of the barriers that have historically kept people out of the field. There's also some fears around the change but that always comes with change. MB: Just wanted to share that there will be more coming about the licensure stuff. It's a big complicated process. As I have information, I will share more. I will say that MDAE, Perpich, and Pelsb are working closely together to help move that process along and more updates to come!		
Recording timestamp: 1:46:00 10:30-11:00 Task Force Reports MWC 2026 Task Force Meeting Report (NThietje) ○ 2026 MWC Review ○ 2026 MWC Summary ○ 2026 MWC Comparison: In progress LINK (restricted access) NT: Thank you Scott for your words about the MWC, I'm going to echo that to the team who has to pivot, specifically the staff was amazing. I also want to do some shout outs and get that into the notes: Zach Carlson Giving at Buffalo, Joe Osowski at STMA, Andy DeLuca at Monticello, Andrew Towsey Grishaw at CSBSJ, Past Orchestra VPs and Matt Oyen, Jacob Kempenich. Really grateful for all of you! Jerri has some docs for us. A summary of attendees and other data. Anything specific you want to address Jerri? JN: Wanda put together a summary for us, and then we also have a comparison linked. It shows what we've been charging for registration, the number of registrations, how many sessions/perfs/infs are offered, booths at the exhibit hall, staple costs etc. There is one comparison sheet that shows you across the years, so you can see registration across the years. We had 384 people registered this year, and while that seems low compared to past years, it was still 384 people that received a service they were seeking. Looking at the bottom of 2026, You can see the guesstimate of the volunteer hours. We want to acknowledge there was still a lot of volunteer energy that went into the Virtual MWC	TF Leads	Information Discussion

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JKemp: I can attest to some more involvement for the open forums, I had 10 people in the open forum which was busier than usual. It brings up the question of some sessions being hybrid in order to capitalize on that.

NT: Thinking of 2027, we are a week later than usual. We know that there's a chance we'll have a dip in attendance and on top of that, the ACDA national conference will be in Minneapolis a few weeks later, so that might affect choral group applications and attendance. The MWC task force might need to do some recruiting. I just have that in my brain

SR: Also for membership attendance - for folks that only have so many days off, they might choose to attend the ACDA event instead. In that survey, a few folks say there's not enough events. From my perspective, it's pretty even across the board. Do we have data for sessions in each track? That might be helpful.

JN: We have the schedules from past years - we haven't been doing tracks in the last few years. We decided to keep the same theme for next year, and to invite the performing groups from last year to return. We may not have many open spots for people to apply for. In two weeks, we will have a schedule so we can see the holes. We will have a robust amount of performances. We won't have as many sessions next year because we won't be as large. We need to be very careful about how compelling the sessions are and how they're targeted to draw folks in. There's always folks who say they wish there was something in each area, but the reality is that people can only attend one thing at a time. So we just need to make sure there's something killer in each area.

EB: I was just reading through those comments. We had three weeks to put that together - we did the best we could. We can look at things in the future. We just need to keep in mind that the virtual MWC was successful.

MG: Certainly echoing those kudos. Regarding next year, the notion that the MWC will be smaller in some capacity - is the convention center too big for what we need next year? Can we imagine using the MCC less? That's an interesting notion. Maybe that's something to look into? Does our facility match our needs?

JN: Contractually, we have signed a contract for this upcoming year. We can narrow the scope. We can look at using the Ballroom less - we get a lot of feedback that it feels like playing to an empty audience. ACDA is really the only group whose audience fills the Ballroom. So we can look at 100A-J with the audience space of 800 to be the main performance space for almost everyone else. We have enough rooms to have a headliner in each category,

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and more rooms just take away from that attendance. There are space considerations that make it harder to move to a different place, with warmup spaces. We could accept less groups and have them warm up in the performance space. We could move some things to the Hilton but in the past the consideration has been othering certain sections of our programming by taking them out and putting them in another spot. I will put it point blank that I am angry at the Hilton, and the amount of contractual money that was spent there this year. I would advocate for doing less business with them generally. The MCC cost us 68K in losses where the Hilton cost is 115k, and we don't host any sessions over there, it's just All-State rehearsals. If we were to cut anything, I'd cut that hotel block in a heartbeat, but we've already signed it for next year so it doesn't matter.

Recording timestamp: 2:06:20

All State Task Force Report

- [Sample Violin Rep from Mark Gitch](#)

MG: This is a conversation we've had in past meetings and is coming from me as an MMEA board member and a string educator. For our new members: the All-State Auditions have four different categories that contain different audition components. For the Strings category, there are solos and there used to be lists of recommended repertoire for those solos. At some point that was removed, and in conversation with colleagues, I requested that it be reincluded. I learned it had been an intentional decision because the rep that was listed was considered restrictive with a certain genre of composers (classical/romantic era). I brought a proposal to return that which was rejected because the previous list was not up to standard. I took that direction from the board and am returning with a new proposal. I started by listing the traits/characteristics of what we're looking for in the auditions and on the website currently, that is connected to the list of past All-State rep. As a beginner teacher, I relied heavily on that list for instruments outside of my area to help guide my students towards good choices. I'd like to see this list go back up. I kept some of the composers that are considered standard rep, and also have added some additional composers that fall outside the typical white male composer names, as well as a resource they can go to to find that information. I've done this only for violin so far, and would do it for more instruments if this is the direction we want to go. I want to open for questions or conversation, and then maybe the next step is to look for a motion?

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JN: Can I ask if this conversation was agreed upon with the All-State Task Force, that it's something that's needed, or is this your directive?

MG: We have discussed this in the Task Force and I believe they are supportive of this. I look to them to correct the record if that's not the case

MO: I've had conversations with Mark about this and also with Jordan. I can say that as an instrumental music teacher that wears many hats that I would echo the sentiment that it's appreciated guidance. Something that Jordan and I talked about with educating the judges that the list is not a requirement, that any genre, style of audition, that they need to receive positive constructive feedback no matter what.

MG: I will add that as a judge, I do not need to see a list of pieces. The list is for the educators and students to have a jumping off point. For adjudication it's about criteria not titles.

SR: I think this is great. It's a project I've been working hard on with my own teaching. Until we change what we do, we're going to keep doing what we do. I think having a list is important and also having more than just the standards as jumping off places is important. Wording matters. There's something that feels funny about the wording of "the standard being these, but also consider lesser pieces" feels like a way it could be read. That wording is important and is maybe worth being considered.

JKnutson: I'm a firm believer of staying in folks staying in their own lane and giving agency to the folks this will effect. So I support whatever the Strings VP chooses and just want to offer counsel. Band benefits from having a set etude. Perhaps also it helps equity in some ways so there's no decision making involved there and it's available for everyone. What advantages do you see of having a set excerpt?

MG: I was on the board when that first set of etudes was commissioned a long time ago, when the band moved towards that composed etude area. That has had mixed reactions. There would be some advantages, there would be some advantages to comparing apples to apples. It solves the problems you've talked about. We would have to use existing excerpts from the public domain, since we don't have the funds to commission anything. Historically, the practice of having solos is how we've always done it. It doesn't mean that's how it always has to be. In my world view, I haven't heard any conversation about changing that. It would be an interesting conversation to open up in string world. In my experience, we use a mix of apples to apples and to also have the students show us what they can't

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demonstrate in the excerpt. I see it as an advantage but also an added layer of complexity.

DD: I believe this is a much larger conversation. I want to add that this type of topic is something the Equity Action Team was made for. I'd love to collaborate on this more in further conversations.

CR: Part of me thinks that the judging rubrics should be crafted alongside this. The other thing is that I also have a PhD in Music Composition and we could maybe make something work there. Lets figure out what things you want to see demonstrated in students.

MG: Right now we use scales, orchestral excerpts on a three year rotation, and then the solo component for the string auditions. Right now there hasn't been a thirst for etudes. If we did decide we wanted that, I would not ask you to volunteer your time for that, it would be work that would need to be compensated for that work. I think it's challenging to compose those etudes but there's upsides too. My request for now would be to ask that we provide something to teachers for this list, and then we would build this out, and then we can add to that. It would probably fall to Matt in the VP role - I'd be happy to participate. The only reason I'm leaning on this is because if it's not approved at this board meeting, it can't be included in the next round of All-State materials. Also Chris to your point, the rubrics were edited concurrently as this project was getting started.

Jordan: There's also time to revise the rubrics as needed if this is chosen.

All-State material needs to be finalized in August as it's released publicly for September 1.

SR: Beware about going too far down the composed etudes path. You get everyone doing the same thing, and that's what students practice also in the solo and ensemble. Is that what you want kids grinding on in Jan and Feb? I think that's a danger of putting complex etudes on the agenda.

JN:I was asked about the timeline. While it's hard for us to think about this more than a year out, I think it would be beneficial to explore the option without the commitment of it being included in next year's cycle. I will go twofold on this 1. Lists are exclusionary 2. Someone needs to have a place to start. So the question is, can we take this list for a year and send it out and tell people that we are looking for a list that is not eurocentric. Help us. If we have a list in a year that is not eurocentric with some women sprinkled in for diversity, then we can add it in. This list of standard rep could be passed from orch director to orch director without the MMEA stamp. If we

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want the MMEA stamp, then it needs to mark the diversity we are talking about.

MG: I hear your point and your passion about that. The resource I leaned on the hardest was the national string teachers org list of repertoire. That rep isn't on there. I'm hoping those are the best and brightest minds around this. A lot of those pieces weren't on there in the last edition but they're on the latest edition. The rep you're describing is not yet a robust part of the string rep. Is that an awesome thing? No. but the reality is the diversity in string repertoire that addresses the criteria from the All-State repertoire doesn't exist. There are other genres of string playing that also don't address the type of music that gets performed by the All-State Orch. Our job as the org is to share info that helps students to connect to that particular experience. That shouldn't be the end all be all there are other places for us to explore greater diversity, in our education, practice and classrooms but as the all state experience is currently imagined, we need rep that shows students will be successful in that environment

DD: Mark just brought up a good point about that the system keeps feeding the system. This might be a place to throw a wrench to break out of this cycle? I think that Mark, you know I'm anti list. This feels like a good wrench, and encourages the teachers to have their students pick something that's really cool, and adjust the judging criteria to that. Maybe the honors ensembles shouldn't be the one that's always been. Maybe an ensemble that learns by ear, or a fiddle group?

NT: It feels like maybe it's a task force thing with the discussion that's happening here . I'm sorry Mark, I know that doesn't give you an answer today

Jknutson: I understand what Mark is saying about important traditions for the ensemble and there's value there.

MOyen: Can we circle back to this tomorrow in our Task Force Meeting? Also I'm wondering if, how do we balance the list being a starting point and exclusionary. I think there's a balance that can be achieved.

MG:I appreciate the feedback. Feel free to email me with more thoughts. I will also say that it's been two or three years of expressing this now, and I'm also pretty frustrated that the conversation doesn't move even though I'm trying to meet the new requests. I keep hearing no lists, and I think that does a disservice in our world. I think I speak with both experience and intelligence around this - it is a different world, and it's not one that should

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be static, but it isn't going to evolve immediately in the way that some people might wish it would. I think there's value in the way we do it now, as well as value in looking at other Without a motion, we'll continue this conversation in the Task Force and bring it back to the board at the next opportunity.

NT: Thanks for all your work Mark. If you want to join the task force please reach out to Jordan

- Middle/Secondary Classroom: Aaron Lohmeyer
- Middle/Secondary Ensemble+: Eric Songer
 - [Honors Popular Music Ensemble Overview](#)
 - [Honors Popular Music Ensemble Audition Requirements](#)
 - [Copy of Draft Budget/Schedule HPM Ensemble](#)

ES: I'm going to talk a little bit about the State Honor Popular Music Ensemble, which has now been tabled. It started in 2019. We waited a few years after Covid to try again, and now we're in a position to table it again, which I understand but is still very sad. I just want to give some updates on where we're at. We are not the first state to do this. We've looked at all the details. We have a great team and we've been talking a lot with Music Will. We had an extensive time table and Anoka Ramsey Community college is on board for hosting rehearsals as an in-kind donation. Music Will would provide the band coach for free for the first year which is awesome. The person we had in line to do it this year was Brian Powell. The team has been amazing, special thanks to Sam Bergstrom, Aaron Lohmeyer, Aaron Hammerman, Leslie Earles, Ben Bussey, all of them who have really helped make this happen. We're excited to put it together for the future. I'm happy to take questions about what it looks like, just reach out.

JN: So while the All-State Honor Band doesn't start this year, we are looking at this program as a thing we are rolling out this year for next year. The question is do we feel like we can do that or not? It would run a similar timeline to All-State, with auditions and judging through opus, the ensemble would be drafted as the other All-States but the event would take place in the following Jan/Feb instead of the summer. It allows us to roll it out in a non budgetary commitment sort of way - if we don't have enough auditions, then we don't run it. If we get 160 auditions and can make it an ensemble of 30 students then we do that. It helps us figure out - when people audition, we will promote it as a "show us that you want it" If we

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don't get enough auditions, we can't run it, or if we do get enough auditions, it's a budgetary plus. It's still rolling out, just not as fast and it's a whole year out for budgetary implications. That gives us a whole year of it in the works before it hits budget. Now can things get canceled before then? Yes. Can All-State Jazz, Band, Choir, Orch, MWC get cancelled between now and then also? Yes. It's not prioritizing it in a different way, it's just rolling it out for 2028.

NT: Would it be possible between now and then to create a task force for this because it's new?

JN:Yep

SR: I was looking through the links for this - the event would happen in January and they would still perform at Convention. Can a student still be in All-State Band and this ensemble?

ES: yes

- Elementary - Michael Bjork
 - New date for Elementary All-Star Choir is April 11
 - [Report Form](#) and [Meeting Minutes](#)

MB: I don't have too many things to share but the big thing is the elementary All-Star choir is rescheduled. We have Tartan High School booked currently, but we're looking for a larger space. We're also looking for volunteers, so please reach out to me with either of those!

NT: If we can't fill in for volunteers, can we ask membership?

JN: For volunteers we need them to be background checked. I'd love for us to fill those spots with people who already are background checked. Jordan and Jerri will be there!

NT: STMA is unfortunately a no go, since they're hosting a 7-8 honor choir.

- Fundraising Report - No report, no capacity to meet JGN
- [Task Force Fall 2025.pdf](#)

NT: If everyone can sign up for the task forces they want to be involved in by the end of the week, that would be great!

CR: Historically it's been a polite kind ask to sign up for task forces

JB: For the all-state task force, we request the Band Jazz Choir Orch VPs take part in that.

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CR: Before we move to new business, I do want to thank Eric and Mark for their work. Mark in particular, I want people to know that's a marathon, not a sprint. We want to make change, we need to start making progress. In the most polite way: the string world is stubborn so the work Mark has been doing is much more difficult than some might think. Mark, we'll connect outside of this meeting to see what can be done. I also want to throw out that I'm working on some philanthropic angles, so there's hopefully a world Eric where we can get your program off the ground. I just want to say thank you and sorry for all the frustration - please don't let it deter you because it's needed.

Recording timestamp: 2:50:03

11:00 New Business

- Disciplinary Statement re: Jerri Neddermeyer and Executive Board
 - [Letter for reference](#)
 - Policies in progress

CR: this relates to a situation that occurred this past summer. In response to that, a letter from Jerri has been linked in the board materials. This letter has also been shared with affected parties. That letter acknowledges the circumstances of a student's experience at camp and outlines steps of accountability that have already been taken. Just to say as a board that we take the safety and security of our students extremely seriously. Situations like this involve careful reflection and commitment to improvement and we are engaging in that now. We have been working on new policy and procedural changes to strengthen the work we are doing, transparency, clarity about communication and expectations. Ensuring advocacy and safe guards for students for moving forward. These revisions are still in development and we will review them as they are finalized. Nicole do you have anything to share?

NT: Myself and the All-State Task Force looked at it late in the fall. For new members, we received a letter from the sponsoring teacher so I've incorporated some of those changes as well. I would like to present that to the task force meeting tomorrow before we present it to the full board and then feedback can be provided for the next board meeting.

JN: Is the timeline then that it would be sent out via email between now and the May board meeting to the board to be approved in the final format the May board meeting?

NT: Yes, that's the plan

Chris Rochester

Decision

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JN: Is there an opportunity for me to speak here Chris, or no?

CR: Yes there is.

JN: I want to say that my letter is here for reference, and for those who were not involved, there were a number of people who were in the room when this incident occurred. I want to say that I'm sorry for my part in the leadership that I provided and I want you to know that I will do my best to be more thoughtful and student centered going forward. I feel badly for the timeframe and communication that has taken place. I felt largely beholden to a time frame that was not mine, as we all do. And we were stuck in a situation that was slow and intentional. It's not very satisfying because it feels like we're in limbo. It feels like we don't have enough information, like we're not included in the process. It's all of those and none of those. The conversations and work have been happening constantly. We are doing the best we can with what we have. The slow progress is hard. I'm sorry for my part in it. My letter is there at the request of the teacher that was involved. It's part of the permanent record and I'm open to any questions, we can discuss it more offline.

Recording timestamp: 2:56:42

CR: Before we close, I want to create a space where everyone introduces yourself and your role, and how you got into your role.

Recording timestamp: 3:18:12

CR: Anything else anyone wants to bring up?

CR: Thank you to everyone for the work you've done in recent weeks. The past weeks have been extremely challenging for our community, for Minnesota. I know these moments are not easy, but these decisions come from a place of responsibility and care for the people we serve. What really has stood out during all of this is, whether or not we've always agreed, the mission centers all decision making, and supporting music educators and students across MN who depend on the opportunities we help create. I've seen people step up, people weather animosity that they did not deserve and continued during that work even when it was not easy. This kind of leadership matters, you all matter. Thank you all for your time, your resilience and your commitment to music education. We'll trip a little bit but the hundreds of years we have in music education between all of us - let's

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weaponize that for good. Thank you for all the work you've done, are doing, and will continue to do moving forward.		
12:00 ADJOURNMENT	Chris Rochester	Decision Can I get a motion to adjourn? EB Motions MG seconds All in Favor

2026 Board Meeting Calendar

January 10, 2026

February 12-14, 2026 (Midwinter Convention)

March 14, 2026 – Install New Board members and Annual Membership Meeting

May 16, 2026

September 12, 2026

2027 Board Meeting Calendar

January 9, 2027

February 18-20, 2027 (Midwinter Convention)

March 13, 2027 - Install New Board members and Annual Membership Meeting

May 15, 2027

September 11, 2027

Resources

[Board Contact Information](#)

[Conflict of Interest](#)

[Board of Directors Handbook](#)

Tabled Business from Previous Meetings

1. Break out Groups: [Worksheet](#)
 - a. Develop, Promote, Support
 - i. Develop (related to our direct student programming)
 - ii. Support (related to our professional development programming)
 - iii. Promote (related to our advocacy)
 - b. Equitable and Comprehensive
 - c. Learning and Teaching
2. NEXT MEETING for Task Forces: Working Strategies - Walking the Walk