

Volume 7, Number 2

# ON THE UPBEAT

Hillsborough County Elementary Music Educators' Council

<http://music.mysdhc.org/elem-music>

### HCEMEC Executive Board

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Good News from the HCEMEC

Hillsborough County Public Schools

901 E. Kennedy Blvd.  
PO Box 3408  
Tampa, FL 33601-3408  
School Mail Route #7



## Young Songwriters' Symposium

On November 20<sup>th</sup> after meeting only 7 times, 21 students performed their original songs with a live band in front of an audience. An amazing feat for the most courageous of adults let alone 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders! Over three months of meeting every other Wednesday, students were tasked with creating an original song. They were in charge of lyrics and melody and the teachers were in charge of charting the chord structure and keeping the students on track. To accomplish this task, we were required to meet with our students several times to help with the process. From recording their musical thoughts to deciphering the accompaniment we were involved in every step of the process. At the very end of this journey, the students were left with a professional recording of them singing their song and the knowledge of how to do it all again!



Luckily, we have teachers like Sean Moats and Joey Willoughby who not only have experience, but also the patience to help teachers and students alike with the songwriting adventure. They broke the entire process down into digestible segments so that we the teachers could actually help our students progress without fear. If you ever wondered how to teach songwriting to your students, this would be the perfect project for you. I gained authentic techniques to use in my own classroom with my own students that otherwise I would not have had.

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# Young Songwriters' Symposium

## Young Songwriters' Symposium Participants

This event could not have been possible without the dedication and enthusiasm of these participating schools and teachers:

### BT Washington Elementary

Sonia Miller

### BT Washington Elementary

Jabril Williams

### Kingswood Elementary

Sean Moats

### Kingswood Elementary

Sharon Martin

### Maniscalco Elementary

Anita Travaglino

### Mort Elementary

Matt Stone

### Philip Shore Elementary

Rebecca Traenkner

### Philip Shore Elementary

Melissa Grady

### Riverview Elementary

Joey Willoughby

### Tampa Bay Blvd. Elementary

Dann Shea

### Wilson Elementary

Chelsea Given

⊕ Continued from page 1 ⊕

The experience gained from participating in the Young Songwriters Symposium is completely priceless. I can see the positive impression it has made on my students as well as myself. When I asked my students what their favorite part was, all of them said the same thing - "Making the song!" When I asked them to give advice to next year's students, I was truly impressed with their answers. Trinity Herald said, "Don't stress over making the perfect song. Just make it how you feel like it should be." Whereas Alexandro Lobaina said, "Believe in yourself and don't think about the bad things. Think about the good things." Truly sage advice all gained from this experience. If you have considered applying for the Young Songwriters Symposium, my advice to you would be - Just do it! I promise you will be glad you did!

♪ *Rebecca Traenkner, Philip Shore Elementary Magnet School of the Arts*



*Jim Morris of Morrisound Recording speaks to the Young Songwriters about the recording process.*



*Some of the Young Songwriters prepare to take the stage!*



*Dann Shea fills in on drums at the Young Songwriters' Concert*



*Juan Rios, Sean Moats, and a Young Songwriter perform at the HCPS Joy on the Riverwalk*

# Music Council Grants

## Improving Sound with New Strings, Headphones, and Sound Systems...



Students of Northwest Elementary enjoy playing Ukuleles in tune and with good tone thanks to new strings from an HCEMEC grant!

### What a Difference a Sound System Makes!

Thanks to HCEMEC and the grant, my students can now hear musical examples in crystal clear quality! With the Bluetooth option, this sound system in particular has also given me more flexibility and control of my classroom. Switching between different songs, pausing the music, or adjusting the volume has never been so easy! I can be marching around the room, displaying steady beat and stop the music just like that without having to be next to the sound system. What a wonderful thing! This is also helpful for our students that need some proximity control to help keep them on the right path. Instead of leaving my "post" by the boom box, I can work with that particular student and still adjust the music at the same time. Next, I plan on using the sound system as the students are playing instruments. As we are making an ostinato on the Orff instruments, I will play a loop from garage band and give that lesson a little rock to go with that roll! Having this sound system has opened up so many opportunities for teaching now. I cannot wait to see how it helps impact the rest of the school year!

♪ Rebecca Traenkner, Philip Shore Elementary Magnet School of the Arts

### Listening Closer with New Headphones!

Thank you for the music grant I received for 30 new headphones for my keyboard lab in the music suite at Sessums Elementary School. My students are so excited to play their keyboards with new headphones. The first week of school when the students came into the music suite the first thing they noticed was the new black cushy headphones for the keyboards. They could not wait to use them. The students can all hear great and the extra cushion on their ears make them smile even bigger. Again, thank you, my students and I are very grateful!

♪ Tracy Messina, Sessums Elementary

### Playing In Tune with Ukuleles!

Thank you so much for choosing us to receive one of the HCEMEC Grants!! We purchased enough ukulele strings to restring all of our baritone ukes! As soon as the school year ended, they arrived. I was able to talk my two sons into helping remove the old strings and put on the new! It takes a while to restring over 60 ukes! Then we tuned them...quite a few times. By now they are holding their pitch well.

Our students were very anxious to start playing this year. It was amazing the difference in the sound. When we played in unison, my students could tell we were all on the same note!!! We could also tell when one person wasn't on the correct note!

I can hardly wait for them to start strumming chords and making harmony. It will be the first time to have the same kind of strings making a timbre that is the same on all the ukes. It's fun to hear our students use our music vocabulary to describe the difference in the sound from the old strings to the new. No more rattles or students raising their hand to tell me that their strings are unraveling! Because the sound is so much nicer and "in tune" with everybody, the students are being much better listeners.

I'm really looking forward to hearing them play this year!

♪ Kim Kearney, Northwest Elementary



# Music Council Grants

## Engaging Students with New Instruments...

### "Wow, I Want to Play Those Drums!"

"They look colorful and I bet they sound great!" The bright orange Kente cloth Tubano drums were the first thing our students noticed when they came into the music room at Tampa Palms Elementary this year. Thanks to a grant from our Music Council, we were able to purchase 4 tunable tubano drums. We all know that World Drums are a hit with adults and children alike. However, the cost of incorporating them into your program is, often times, inhibitive. We ended last school year with a few mismatched bongo drums, an ancient congita and a hunger for a class set of Remo Tubano drums. The Music Council Grant provided our kids a healthy start to quench their drumming appetite.

The drums were instantly incorporated into our first day lessons as part of our name games. Our students from ESE to AGP, grades 1st to 5<sup>th</sup> are enthusiastically expressing themselves through these wonderful instruments. With the reductions in funding our schools are facing, we need grants like these to keep our programs healthy.

♪ *Tori Walsh, Tampa Palms Elementary*

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What a blessing it was for our school to be a recipient of the HCEMEC Grant! In the current situation at my school, we have a very high ESE population, and also a significant amount of times per week when students come to music in double classes. As I completed my first year of teaching at this particular school, I noticed...of course...that the level of student engagement and excitement increased whenever tubano drums were included in the lesson, *especially* for our students with autism. Thanks to the Music Council, we were able to purchase more drums to give a smaller student to drum ratio, allowing for more hands-on drumming, and better use of instructional time.

It is amazing to witness the difference that one instrument can have on a child's day! Also, because of the excitement of my students, Maniscalco now has a Drumming Ensemble...the Mustang Spirit Stampede! Two mornings a week, the hallways are filled with the exciting rhythmic sounds as the drumming ensemble rehearsals, generating joy for both students and staff!

Maniscalco was also blessed by the generosity of HCEMEC to purchase Volume 5 of the Interactive Now Series for SMARTboard. The Interactive Now series was designed very well, and includes several lessons and activities which are designed to teach the current content standards. Our students are delighted to and having great fun learning about Concert Etiquette, Music Genres, Dynamics, Tempo, Melodic Contour, and more! My students are absolutely benefiting from these hands-on and exciting visual lessons in order to help them RETAIN information that is being taught.

♪ *Anita Travaglino, Maniscalco Elementary*

### Changing the Tone Color of the Orff Instrumentation with Steel Drums

My school received funds from H.C.E.M.E.C. to purchase 4 Jumbie steel pans. The instruments are the perfect size for the elementary students. All the notes are clearly marked so the students can easily find them and play, just like the xylophones. I was surprised to learn that many of my students have never heard of a steel pan before. These instruments are going to give my students the opportunity to learn how different instruments produce different tone color, the music from different countries and the cultural influence of the steel pan in today's modern music. Steel pans were created on the Caribbean island of Trinidad in the 1930s and are used in many styles of music around the world.

Once the students played a little with the steel pans, they began to recognize it's sound and remember where they have heard it before, specially in movies, commercials and TV shows. My students and I are looking forward to using these instruments this year and finding many different ways to apply them to our music curriculum, which includes Orff instruction and Modern band.

♪ *Juan Rios, Cannella Elementary*





# Music Council Grants

## And Improving Instruction with Professional Development!

### Orff-Schulwerk Level 1

I felt extremely grateful to have been awarded the chance to attend Orff-Schulwerk Level 1 this summer. As the date of the workshop approached, I was encouraged by many of my musical peers; each advised me that this workshop would change my life and the way that I teach. As I walked into the class on the first day, I had no idea how right they were - This workshop did change me, but not in the way I expected.

Over a two week span, I danced, sang, played recorder and Orff instruments. I gained new techniques and ideas to use in my classroom, but most of all, I was reinvigorated about my teaching. By attending this course, I once again realized how fortunate I am to work in Hillsborough County, and this was perhaps the biggest part of the "life changing experience" I had.

Throughout the workshop, I was reintroduced to concepts and ideas that have been shared through many trainings that I have attended provided by our county for music over my 8 years of teaching publicly. While participating in Orff, I was able to tie together my past trainings with the new ideas and information. My experiences made me realize that I am not only grateful for the opportunity that I received this summer, but also how well Hillsborough County supports its music teachers, for which I am exceedingly appreciative.

*♪ Rose Lathers, Pizzo Elementary*

### Modern Band RockFest 2015

Modern Band RockFest 2015 was an incredible, thought-provoking, high energy professional development conference held at Colorado State University in Ft. Collins, Colorado. I had the privilege of traveling to the beautiful landscape of Colorado with funds provided through The Hillsborough County Elementary Music Educators Council, and thanks to them I was able to be a part of four rock-filled days of seminars, workshops, and jam sessions.

The variety of sessions available to teachers attending the conference went from veteran teachers describing how to implement successful modern band programs to seminars from world class professional musicians like Victor Wooten (arguably the most elite Bass player in the world) and Liberty Devitto (drummer for Billy Joel).

Tampa was very heavily represented throughout the week by both attendees and presenters. I wasn't able to make it to all the sessions but I need to give recognition to Lindsay Blanc, David Hendricks, Kim Roberts, and Nelson Parada who presented sessions!

One of my personal highlights outside of the sessions was the fact that everyone was given a guitar to play during Rock Fest when we checked in. Throughout the Conference people were jamming in the hallways and making music together, even though we did not know each other. Every night the basement of the dorms at CSU filled up with teachers of all skill levels rocking out together; and yes we even had a drum set down there. It didn't matter how much of an advanced or beginner guitar player you were, there was always someone willing to rock out with you.

Thanks to the Bohemian Foundation for sponsoring the conference as well as a Reception and Jam session where each city was represented on the stage. All the teachers from that particular city chose a song and got up on the stage and performed throughout the night. Tampa rocked the house with our version of Got My Mojo Workin' (Muddy Waters).

The week was packed full of inspiring ideas, and I left the conference excited to take my Modern Band program to the next level. Needless to say the whole week was well worth the trip to Colorado. Those of you interested in Little Kids Rock and the Modern Band Movement, I highly suggest you try and make it out to Colorado every summer.

*♪ Jonathan Hunt, Seminole Elementary*

# Who's Who in Music Education Advocacy

## *Inovative Thinkers & Influential Musicians*

If you want to be truly inspired, captivated and moved to shout from the rooftops the benefits of music and music education, spend a few minutes with any one of these phenomenal speakers and music education advocates featured on TED Talks. What you may not know is that Hillsborough County music teachers have had the extraordinary opportunity to connect with at least two of these advocates through Little Kids Rock, a program available to Hillsborough County students. It's founder, Dave Wish, a TED Talk participant, invited Victor Wooten and other advocates to the 2015 "RockFest" conference held in Colorado for Little Kids Rock teachers from Hillsborough and other districts around the country. If you would like to find more of this type information in one place, take a look at American Band Parents – AMParents.org. Although an organization primarily supporting middle and high school bands, there is much for all levels of music education. Here are samples of what these advocates say:

**Victor Wooten** innovator, composer, arranger, producer, vocalist, and multi-instrumentalist, has been called the greatest bass player in the world. He is a skilled naturalist and teacher, a published author, a magician, husband and father of four, and a five-time Grammy award winner. In his TED Talk *Music as a Language*, he makes the case for learning music in the same way we learned language, in a natural, non-competitive immersed environment. Mr. Wooten suggests we encourage young children to "jam" with music just as we do with our native tongue, as a powerful communication tool, embracing mistakes and playing as much as possible.

**Jose Antonio Abreu**, the founder of the widely replicated model *El Sistema*, suggests to achieve social change through music education, "In its essence, the orchestra and the choir are much more than artistic structures. They are examples and schools of social life, because to sing and to play together means to intimately coexist toward perfection and excellence...This is why music is immensely important in the awakening of sensibility, in the forging of values and in the training of youngsters to teach other kids."

**Dave Wish** is the Founder and Executive Director of Little Kids Rock, a nonprofit organization that funds and runs one of the largest, free instrumental music programs in the U.S. public schools. Little Kids Rock is also a leading provider of free instruments and curriculum. Mr. Wish has initiated and managed the launch of campaigns to restore and revitalize music education for over 150,000 low-income children in eleven states. A number of national and local media outlets including CNN Headline News, Time Magazine, MTV, A&E, The Dr. Phil Show and National Public Radio have highlighted his work. Wish promotes music as a second language (MSL) stating that we should be allowed to acquire music similar to language acquisition.

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# Who's Who in Music Education Advocacy

## *Inovative Thinkers & Influential Musicians*

*Marching Beyond Halftime* is a documentary feature film being created to show the benefits of music education, in particular band, in our schools. It is the nation's first wide release documentary on this subject and the project of L. Scott McCormick, founder of AMP and producer of the documentary. The movie will showcase outstanding high school band programs in the US and feature alumni of those bands who tell stories of how band has benefited their lives, "beyond half-time". McCormick says, "We think this is the key in showing how important music education is in our schools." The extraordinary Lake Brantley High School Band program in Altamonte Springs, FL is featured in the production.

Hillsborough County Elementary Music, consistently awarded the "Best Communities for Music Education" is a forward thinking group of teachers, students, parents, administrators and programs providing extraordinary music education to its students. Yes, **we** are the Innovative Thinkers, Influential Musicians and passionate advocates who believe that music is essential to a child's education and an essential lifelong creative endeavor. To discover more about our advocacy take a look below. Music is our language; don't stop talking!

*On YouTube search:  
"Music Education TED Talks you need to watch"  
for an AMP National Association for Music Parents playlist of TED Talks.*

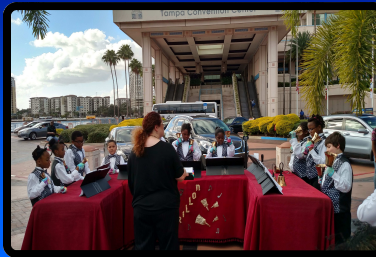
\*\*Information sources from NAFME.org, TED Talks and TEDx, and NAMM.org

*♪ Lorri Naylor, Lowry Elementary & Rebecca Stillo, Lomax Elementary, Advocacy Committee Chairs*

# HCPS Joy on the RiverWalk



*Young Songwriters'*



*Shore Handbells*



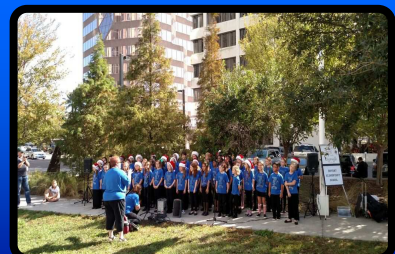
*Crestwood Guitars*



*Lanier Drums*



*Cannella Rock Band*



*Bryant Chorus*



# Seffner BellFest 2015



Limona Roaring Ringers



Handbells performing together



Lopez Ringtones

## Save-The-Date

March 28th–April 1st

Beef o' Brady's Spirit Week  
to benefit LKR in Tampa

April 15th

Elementary Music Banquet

April 30th

Music Mayhem on the RiverWalk

May 12th

Fine Arts Festival



Hillsborough County  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Excellence in Education*

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