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ON THE UPBEAT

Hillsborough County Elementary Music Educators' Council

<http://www.sdhc.k12.fl.us>

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Young Songwriters' Symposium

The Young Songwriters' Symposium has been an enlightening experience for me. I discovered an unfound area of my teaching that I was unaware existed. The main concern I had being a part of this experience was my ability to help my students with the lyric production of their song, but the teacher training that took place before the student sessions proved to be very helpful. The art of being able to formulate a verse from a single thought and a song from a single verse is astonishing.

This experience was just as rewarding for my students as it was for me. At first they couldn't picture themselves not only creating their own song, but also recording their song in a studio, as well as performing it live. Many of the students that participated found it to be a difficult task but they quickly came around and took on the challenge with valor. Some could view this experience as a confidence booster. I know I definitely would. I was given the opportunity to play my trombone with the live band which consists of teachers that have participating students. What I really hope the students take away from this experience is knowing that they can do anything that they want to as long as they put their minds to it and to not be afraid of new challenges.

Being the "new guy" to the project I had a little reservation about what to expect. The good thing is that I had plenty of support from my veteran colleagues, Joey Willoughby, and Sean Motes. The entire project operated smoothly and I had complete confidence in helping my students compose their song. Not only did the students gain confidence in their abilities, but they also gained new friends. The students were very supportive of each other. I give much gratitude to all of my music colleagues on the Young Songwriters' project and look forward to working with them again in the future. I would highly encourage any elementary music teacher that has not participated with this project to do so. You will find it to be a fun-filled experience, not only for your students, but for you as well.

 Roy Mitchell, Mort Elementary



Drumming to Different Tunes!

World Drumming in the Elementary Music Classroom with Paul Corbiere

*On September 24th, HCEMEC brought Paul Corbiere to Hillsborough County to present a professional development workshop on World Music Drumming, Orff, and recorders. Paul has been a member of the World Music Drumming Teaching Staff since 1999, and is the co-founder of the Beat for Peace program—combining World Music Drumming and Resiliency Research for students with multiple risk factors. Paul has been a featured clinician at a number of Music Education Association Conferences and he is the author of *Skins, Sticks, and Bars*, a book of drum and xylophone ensembles and *Happy Jammin'*, a book of classroom ensemble music featuring the recorder.*

Below, and at the bottom of page three, are the perspectives of two Music Specialists from Sulphur Springs K-8, who attended the workshop; one an experienced teacher, and the other a first year in elementary school teacher.

I love drumming! I mean I really love it! I look forward to any and all opportunities to develop my skills and, in turn, be able to have my students learn about music through drumming. When this workshop was offered, I signed up immediately as did my teaching partner who was new to elementary, although not new to teaching.

As the day started we immediately started to engage in a variety of warm-up and beginning skills activities, which started with echo patterns, question and answers. There was a brief discussion of how these activities could lend itself to assessments that can be conducted by the teacher as well as the students (reflection).

We then moved to Ensemble 1 of World Music Drumming. This ensemble is always a beginning favorite for my students. They love returning to it even if they have done it a million times and, if I were to be honest, it's a favorite of mine as well due to the easy accessibility for all students.

The morning continued with a variety of activities that were sequenced and scaffolded for beginning to intermediate students from name games, number games, word and rhythm spellings and call and response among a plethora of activities.

Although it is hard to remember whether this activity came before or after lunch, Mr. Corbiere introduced one of his sound story activities with the book "The Snow Tree" where students are introduced to or review timbres of different instruments as well as musical characteristics for performance and vocabulary to create performances. I loved this because I have done this in the past with specific grade levels. This also brings cross-curricular connections with science, visual arts, math, language arts and social studies.

After lunch, Mr. Corbiere continued with even more complicated pieces and focusing on developing the individual musician, as well as group musicianship, starting with Ensemble 1 by using a known drum ensemble and introducing recorders as well as extensions for developing the students' skills. The participants continued the afternoon being guided through pieces and songs that showed us how to layer, sequence and scaffold for a variety of learners and to differentiate.

The last piece was "Shere Khan". To be honest, I had difficulty with the 5/4 piece. My brain does not like this odd time signature but, having said that, I did enjoy the struggle. The piece was invigorating, difficult and challenging, and was a cool piece to end this workshop.

HCEMEC Grants: Professional Development, Materials, and more!

Your HCEMEC dues at work! In addition to the MANY events that would not be possible without the members of HCEMEC, every year grants are awarded to Music Specialists for new materials, new instruments and Professional Development. Information about this years' grants will be coming soon!

Drummin Up The Challenges!

How can I teach my students to value, respect, and encourage each other are questions that I asked myself during my first two years of teaching at Just Elementary. I tried to find answers everywhere, but it was not until last summer, that I found those answers.

Thanks to a grant awarded by Hillsborough County Elementary Music Educators Association, I was able to join World Music Drumming Level 1 which opened the door to many exciting opportunities for my students and myself.

The vast majority of my students live in poverty. They lack strong, secure relationships at home. They also suffer from low self-esteem, anger problems and diverse behavior conflicts. These are just some of the challenges they face every day. World Music Drumming has been a wonderful approach to working with these types of kids and has led to significant social and emotional improvement for all my students involved.

Although I have a World Music drumming ensemble made of fourteen students that meets twice a week in the afternoons, I also use the curriculum with my regular classes. By trying to embed the different techniques of World Music Drumming into my lessons, students have improved with their social skills, their ability to concentrate, listen to each other and respect each other's ideas. The implementation of the World Music Drumming curriculum in my daily routine has also enabled me to teach my students teamwork and cooperation while making music and learning new concepts. My kids are learning to appreciate and place greater value to those from other cultures, communicate better with their classmates, and become positive leaders.

The positive impact that this cross-cultural curriculum has had in my teaching career, and with my student's achievement, is extraordinary. I am no longer asking myself how I can teach my students to respect and value each other. It's incredible to see the gradual improvement they are making. Now the questions are different and a bit more challenging, but I know the answers are waiting for me at World Music Drumming II next summer.

♪ Leticia PonsRiveron, Just Elementary

Drumming to Different Tunes!

Paul Corbiere's World drumming Workshop was a great professional development opportunity for me. It was an "eye-opener" to the many possibilities of world drumming in the music classroom. Paul took us through various drum activities for primary and intermediate grades. I was especially interested in the use of drums with younger students in primary grades. I was particularly a fan of games involving alphabet and numbers which not only helped to students to focus on producing high and low tones with a steady beat but also, reinforced literacy and math concepts in the music classroom. Paul was able to give a great demonstration of ideas and suggestions on utilizing drums with younger students including through "Sound Stories". Students can explore classroom instruments and various musical concepts while still reinforcing co-curricular concepts related to literacy. All activities were engaging and will help expand my perspective on world drumming and its many benefits in the elementary music classroom.

♪ Jay Singleton, Sulphur Springs K-8

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World Drumming!

World Drumming. To many of us those two words represent tubanos, congas, All-County rehearsals at Crestwood, performing at the Straz and the kids shuttling the drums up and down the facility, but after taking this certification, World Drumming means so much more.

I had the privilege, thanks to the Hillsborough County Elementary Music Educators Council, to attend World Drumming Level one held at USF this summer. As a percussionist, I was a little hesitant at first because I was worried about it being all about the "basics" and it would be a week long basics lesson. How wrong was I?! Completely wrong, and James Mader had me at ease on day one. While in level one you do go over the basics, there is such a rich history and culture to the 7 ensembles in the World Drumming Curriculum book. Furthermore, unlike many other trainings I have attended, there were high levels of differentiation. James would have people who were extremely comfortable leading ensembles, taking improvisation solos, or playing the Orff parts, etc. The caliber of teaching from the trainer alone is worth going just to watch a guru teach this curriculum.

In World Drumming Level one you cover such a variety of topics from each culture, you receive supplemental music/activities that are not included in the world drumming curriculum book, and you cover things beyond just the drums (accessory instruments, Orff, recorder, etc.). We also learned how the African and Latin ensembles match with different styles of music from the radio, which makes you hear different popular songs in a completely new way. One of my favorite activities from that workshop was on the last day when we performed every ensemble from the book and a few of the songs we learned that were from the supplemental materials. It was a great experience to hear where the group started and ended. You realize that the connections and playing development the group achieves is the same feeling and excitement that our students feel when they get to participate in an ensemble like this.

Thanks to our music council offering these professional development grants to help us grow our abilities as teachers and reflect on our practice, I cannot recommend this enough for anyone interested. Thanks to this certification, the feeling of excitement and anticipation to go to Wisconsin to take level two and three world drumming and be completely immersed in the curriculum in my upcoming summers is definitely in my future.

Justin Daniels, FishHawk Creek Elementary

New Mallets!

The students at Burney Elementary School in Plant City were very excited to receive new mallets this past spring with funds provided by the HCEMEC grant! Our old mallets were falling apart every time we used them and the look of disappointment on my students' face was more heart-wrenching than another pair of mallets biting the dust.

Thanks to the HCEMEC grant my students were able to enjoy our new mallets a time or two before the end of the school year and right off the bat this year. These new mallets allow my students to feel proud of what they are holding and they produce better sound! They work hard to follow expectations for instrument care and remind each other when a classmate forgets. For my larger classes, I am now able to double up a few students on the larger xylophones.

In summary, thanks to HCEMEC more students are playing, we are playing more often, and we sound great! Thank you!

Samantha Snow, Burney Elementary

HCEMEC Grants:

Professional Development, Materials, and more!

Modern Band Rock Fest!

Want a rockin' way to end the summer while preparing yourself to begin a new school year? Come join teachers from across the nation in Colorado for Little Kids Rock Modern Band RockFest!

This year's sessions featured many teachers from Hillsborough County presenting ideas ranging from songwriting to using LKR methods in the general music curriculum. One common theme throughout every session was, "Get the kids playing and making music". Each presenter stressed "approximation" as the key to getting the students playing the modern band instruments with success. This might mean changing a complex rhythm pattern to one that the students are able to perform. It could also mean using a chord substitution...if you are like me, that Bm chord on guitar can be a beast...try the D chord instead.

Not all of the sessions are geared towards guitar, drum set, and bass. I couldn't pass up "Rockin' pBone with LKR!" I attended this session with a skeptical ear but was put at ease with the techniques the presenter was using...she wasn't a bone player! Her games quickly lower the players effective filter- that thing that makes us nervous and shy - while teaching fundamental principles on the instrument. Also noted is the process in which she taught: 1. Sing the part, 2. Sing and "air play" the part, 3. Buzz while "air playing" the part and then 4. Play the part. Kind of reminds me of another process that we use in our class. After using this process, the participants were able to "approximate" a song on the pBone- even if they had never played one before. To my surprise, the song was recognizable and fun to play.

You won't regret spending time in Ft. Collins, Co for Modern Band RockFest! If you are not a Little Kids Rock trained teacher, please consider attending a training. It is a very sound and authentic way to incorporate modern band instruments into our curriculum.

♪ Joey Willoughby, Riverview Elementary

Our Voices Were Heard!

Words cannot express how thankful we are to have received a grant from HCEMEC in April to receive four new microphone sets. Before we received this grant we were not able to let our voices be heard as they should have been. Our winter musical and other programs were wonderful, but very hard to hear. The past few years we have been building up more and more steam in our music program adding ensembles and a chorus. Our students are delighted to perform and with the help of the microphones they were able to shine even brighter.

We received the microphones just in time for our Spring Talent Show. Our chorus really thrived with the help of the microphones. Everyone was clear, especially our soloists! Others performing songs in the program in duets and solos were also able to shine with clear, beautiful voices. Our last performance was a 5th grader who, as a student, was very quiet. She took the stage, sang so proudly into one of the new microphones and the crowd was moved to tears because of her beautiful voice! We are excited to move forward this year with plans of another musical, a couple programs and another talent show! We cannot wait to show off our beautiful voices. Thank you again for your generosity!

♪ Sarah Alsafeer, Oak Park Elementary



HCEMEC Grants:

Professional Development, Materials, and more!

New Tubanos!

Receiving new tubano drums at Doby Elementary has given every student I see in the music room more performance opportunities! Now, I can drum with my double classes, and I have just enough drums to start up an ensemble in the fall!

This is an excellent way for me to teach my students multicultural, diverse pieces. It also allows me to reach those students who are more inclined towards the rhythmic side of music! Students who are sometimes hesitant to sing have another way to perform solos and improvise.

I hope to be able to showcase our students' drumming at concerts and other events such as orientation night! There isn't a better way to advocate for what music does than demonstrate through performance. I'm even planning on a drum circle where parents can jump in!

I look forward to adding more drums each year and to continuing to strengthen my hand drumming pedagogy.

Ben Vyborny, Doby Elementary

Guitar Racks Help us Rock!

Thank you HCEMEC for our guitar racks at Tinker K-8! We were able to purchase 5 guitar racks to help organize the multitude of guitars in our music room. Now we can really rock out in music class!

Every year our school is growing due to the expansion from an Elementary to a K-8 school. This year we have several double classes, and we are trying to come up with ways to provide each student with the instruments they need. It is truly amazing to see 44 students in one room each playing a guitar! Because of these new guitar racks, our set-up and break-down time has decreased significantly, and our instruments have less damage since they are being stored properly.

Our middle school students have begun to ask about the guitars now that they are out in the open, and we've even started some small group guitar lessons with them after school! Our goal is to have elementary students, middle students, and teachers all joining in the music program.

Thank you Music Council for all your hard work throughout the year and for your dedication to providing Hillsborough County music teachers with the training and equipment we need!

Sara Auger, Tinker K-8



Left, Music Specialists
with Paul Corbiere.

Right, recorders and
drums during the Corbiere
workshop





HCEMEC Grants:

Professional Development, Materials, and more!

More New Tubanos!

I would like to start by saying thank you to HCEMEC for awarding me a music grant for new instruments for my classroom. It has provided brand new tubanos for my students and has gotten me closer to starting an African drumming ensemble at my school. You've changed the lives of many children for years to come.

In retrospect, drums have also changed my life. It was 2013 and I was still teaching in Maine, and a grandmother of one of my students graciously donated her entire world drumming set to me and my school which included at least a dozen tubanos, talking drums, gankoguis, and more. Her advice to me when she delivered the last of the instruments was to take Will Schmid's drumming curriculum workshop. If I had not taken that training in Tampa, Florida, I wouldn't have met my now wife, Chelsea who lives in Florida, nor would I be teaching in Hillsborough County.

HCEMEC's gift to my school will provide my students with new hands-on opportunities to make music and experience sounds from Africa to the Caribbean. Exposure to such multicultural experiences will help them view the world in a more accepting and caring way by helping them appreciate cultures not of their own. But, most importantly, playing the new drums will be fun, exciting, and downright awesome. Thank you, HCEMEC, for what you have done for my students.

Andrew Young, Doby Elementary

Elementary Music PLCs

The purpose of PLC's is to give elementary music teachers, especially for those who may be the only music specialist at their school, to meet, collaborate, and empower each other. Music teachers will bring their data from selected standards and identify strengths and weakness' in their data to help increase achievement around the district. It also allows teachers access to resources bins that contain materials that can be used in a classroom setting or with their ensembles. Music specialists are highly encouraged to attend these PLC's to continue their professional collaboration and growth.

PLC Locations

Chelsea Given, Wilson Elementary -Plant City
Benjamin Vyborny, Doby Elementary- Southshore/Riverview area
Deborah Mann, Yates Elementary- Seffner/Brandon
James Rigby, Ciminio Elementary- Lithia/Brandon
Christine Jackson, Dunbar Elementary- South Tampa
Jennifer Moats, Claywell Elementary- Northdale/Lutz
Valerie Finch-Smith, Essrig Elementary- Carrollwood area
Kristin Ingram, LaVoy Exceptional Center- ESE PLC
Lorri Naylor, Lowry Elementary-Tampa off of Waters
Margie Neely, Sulphur Springs- ERT Recommended/Central Tampa
Altemese Simard, Heritage Elementary- New Tampa
Katie Valdez, Muller Elementary- Strings PLC
Kyla Bailey, Kimbell Elementary- Temple Terrace/USF Area



Students record their own song for the Young Songwriters' Symposium.



Dann Shea, Jonathan Hunt, and Ben Vyborny accompany students for the YSS.



Please follow us on Twitter!

HillsCoMusicEd @HCEMEC

The Music Council is now on board with Twitter! Please share our Twitter information with schools, colleagues, parents and community. This is now our outlet to share all of the wonderful things happening with Hillsborough County Elementary Music!

Some suggestions for sharing: Add Twitter information to parent communication or concert programs!



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