



CMEA BAY SECTION

Promoting the Advancement of Music Education

TEMPO

May 2025 | Volume 61



FALL CONFERENCE 2025

November 21st & 22nd, 2025
San Jose State University

Conference Reflections
Festival Season
Solo and Ensemble Festival

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2	LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT
4	IN REMEMBRANCE OF VINCE GOMEZ
6	I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING... RECRUITMENT FOR CHOIR
9	HIGHER ED
10	RELFECTIONS ON WINTER CONFERENCE
10	SOLO AND ENSEMBLE FESTIVALS
11	MULTICULTURAL: ON THE CONFERENCE
12	ELEMENTARY MUSIC: LOOKING FORWARD
14	JAZZ REFLECTIONS

A LETTER FROM CMEA BAY SECTION PRESIDENT



By Craig Bryant

Bay Section Colleagues,

I'm writing this from the airport as I board a flight home after a successful spring trip with my Albany High School Wind Ensemble. I've been seeing so many posts from fellow music educators across the Bay Area sharing similar experiences of spring trips and it got me thinking. Traveling with students is such a core part of our work—equal parts challenging and rewarding. Anyone who has ever taken students on a trip, whether near or far, knows how much effort it takes—and how much it pays off.



**Craig Bryant, CMEA
Bay Section President**

On this most recent trip, I had the chance to reconnect with two former students now living and working in NYC. Both expressed how impactful their time in our music program was. They felt seen, valued, and challenged—not necessarily by academic grades, but through leadership opportunities, high expectations, and the community we built together. That impact has stayed with them well beyond high school.

These experiences matter. At a time when students are constantly pushed to prioritize academics, music programs offer something else: a space focused on collaboration, growth, and belonging. For many students, it's where they truly thrive. For some, it's their first time away from home without family—and each time, I see them grow in confidence and independence.

And trips don't have to be major productions to be meaningful. A day trip via bus/BART to visit a neighboring school or perform for your feeder programs can have just as much impact. It's about nurturing your group's culture and embracing the joy of sharing music with others.

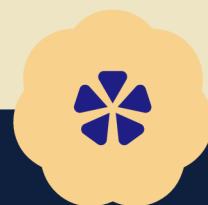
To those of you who have already taken a trip this year, are preparing for one, or are just considering it—here's your gentle nudge of encouragement. I'll leave you with my top three favorite things about music trips:

1. **Unlikely friendships** – It's always fun to see two students who rarely interact in class become bus buddies and best friends. (The pair sitting behind me is currently arguing over Neil Young's vocal mixes—classic.)
2. **Creating program lore** – These trips build stories that become part of your program's legacy and get younger students excited about what's ahead. At the same time, your current students start thinking about their role in the bigger picture.
3. **Seeing students in a new light** – You might know your lead trumpet's every musical instinct, but take a museum stroll with your third clarinet player, and you'll be amazed at what you learn.

P.S. You'll know you're doing it right when students tell the restaurant staff it's your birthday at the group dinner. Just go with it—and enjoy the ice cream!

Craig Bryant
President
CMEA Bay Section

2025 Fall Conference
San Jose State University, November 21st–22nd



In Loving Memory

of

Vince Gomez

February 2, 1935 - January 1, 2025



Vince Gomez, a beloved musician, music educator, devoted mentor, and lifelong advocate for the arts, passed away peacefully on January 1, 2025, following complications from a brief illness. Vince and his wife, Carol, had made their home in New Mexico after retirement, drawn by their love for the Southwest—a close second to Vince's cherished hometown of San Francisco.

Vince's journey began in modest beginnings, and it was those early experiences that fueled his lifelong mission to champion music education for every student. He believed deeply that music should be accessible to all, regardless of their circumstances, and he worked tirelessly to ensure opportunities for students who might not have had the means otherwise. Vince's dedication to equity in education was unwavering. His passion for making music accessible and enriching for every student was infectious.



A veteran music educator with a remarkable 50-year career, Vince left an indelible mark on the California music education community. He taught in K-12 settings in Los Angeles, Tracy, Berkeley, San Francisco, and San Carlos, nurturing countless young musicians and inspiring fellow educators. He also led two regional youth orchestras and later went on to teach at Cabrillo College in Aptos.

Vince's influence extended internationally through two Fulbright teaching fellowships, where he worked with music educators in Honduras and Ecuador. While on sabbatical from his position at Cabrillo College, he was the guest conductor for the Cebu Symphony Orchestra and various orchestras in Manila, Philippines.

Vince's colleagues remember him for his boundless energy and enthusiasm. He was equally skilled in guiding directors of orchestras, bands, choirs, and jazz ensembles, helping them to refine their craft. Through his guidance and encouragement, Vince touched the lives of countless students and teachers, leaving behind a legacy of excellence and inspiration.

Outside of his professional life, Vince had another great passion: the San Francisco Giants. A lifelong fan, he found joy in cheering on his team and being part of the Giants' community. Giants broadcasters Mike Krukow and Duane Kuiper affectionately referred to Vince during their broadcasts, celebrating him as a talented musician and one of their favorite "Ball Dudes" —a role he cherished.



Vince is survived by his wife, Carol; his daughter, Ronee, and step-daughters Christina and Rachael; his 9 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren. His family will forever cherish his love, encouragement, and enduring presence.

Vince Gomez's legacy is one of dedication, inspiration, and boundless passion. He brought harmony into the lives of his students, colleagues, and loved ones through his music, mentorship, and warmth. His spirit lives on in the countless lives he touched and in the music that he shared with others.

AN UNPOPULAR OPINION

(that nevertheless works for recruitment and retention)

By Jenni Gaderlund

Ah, Spring! **Deep Breath** The sun is shining, the daffodils are blooming, all the consistency and effort is paying off and your choirs are sounding the BEST they have all year long! Maybe you go to an adjudicated festival and WOW! They blow you away with their unified vowels and how in sync they are with each other and with you, their director.

But what is that dark cloud hanging over all this Springtime Choral JOY!?

Oh right...it's recruitment.

The only way this happens again next year is if...kids choose your class.

Sigh of Despair

The fate of your choral program each year appears to be at the whims of 11-17 year olds.

But, it doesn't have to be this way.

The biggest game changer for recruitment and retention that I've experienced in my 22 year career was this: If you want more kids in choir, just put them in. Tell whoever does your scheduling to put every kid who needs an elective into your choir class. To put it another way, tell them to back up a truck and....dump them in. That's right! Dump as many kids into choir as possible!



I know what you are thinking:

What if they don't want to be there?

Isn't that a classroom management nightmare?

What happens if they refuse to sing?

She's insane!

Here is how I make this work:

At Graham Middle School we have 3 levels of choir: Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced. The only periods of choir Counselors/Admin can schedule everyone into is Beginning Choir (y'all come sing, everyone is welcome). There are three periods of Beginning Choir, which gives them flexibility with the Master Schedule. They LOVE having a place where they can place any kid who needs an elective. Happy Admin=Happy Work Life

What if they don't want to be there? The reality is that our colleagues who teach other core subject areas like Math and ELA have a huge number of kids who don't want to be there, but have to be anyway. They work to make their content as engaging as possible, and the students have different levels of engagement. It's similar in my Beginning Choir class. You might want to be in choir, but you are here, so let's go! My class is as engaging as possible, and there are clear expectations and systems that set students up for success. There are always a few students in each class who do as little as they can get away with, but the vast majority of kids get with the program simply because of human nature: If you can't beat 'em, join 'em!

Classroom management can be challenging, but when something challenges you, what usually happens is that you get better at it as time goes on! If something isn't working in your classroom, it's ok to change it up and figure out what does work for your class.

The result: Most of the kids who join Beginning Choir really enjoy it and want to stay in the program the next year, and the next. These kids typically move up a level each year. Each level enjoys different privileges that makes them look forward to what is to come. Some kids like to hang out in Beginning Choir each year because they enjoy singing, and enjoy the class but don't want to do more. That's great too! The more the merrier!

How did I convince my administration to let me do this? With DATA. That's a big deal in your district too, right? I surveyed my students at the start of the year and asked them how they were feeling about being in choir with three options, Happy, Uncertain, or Unhappy. The first survey, a few were happy, most were uncertain, and a few were unhappy. Then I surveyed them again in December with the same question and same options. By then the majority were Happy, with only a few still uncertain, or unhappy. When I showed my principal the results of these surveys, she felt great about it since we had the data to back it up!

Of course, each Spring I still do some recruitment outside of my classes. I wouldn't want to leave out any kid who might want to sing! But the pressure of making sure my classes are full is no longer there. Just. Put. Them. In.

Reach out if you want to grab coffee and chat more about this!
jgaderlu@mvwsd.org

Higher Education

By Vu Nguyen

As we prepare to close out another school year, I am thankful to be part of a community of educators who continue to support and inspire each other. This year brought a significant change, with our Bay Section Winter Conference moving to November for the first time after many years of gatherings in January. Even with this shift, the sense of connection and enthusiasm was as strong as ever. Attendance at the conference was terrific, and the interactions during



sessions were engaging and thought-provoking. It was a true reminder that no matter the time of year, the power of coming together to share ideas and experiences remains essential. I am especially grateful to our Higher Education presenters — Dr. Sofia Fojas, Dr. Cara Bernard, and Erik Ohlson — for offering sessions that addressed real needs in our field, from implementing Proposition 28 to fostering greater student engagement and access. A special shout-out to Dr. Bernard, whose session on student engagement had to be cut short due to an unexpected fire alarm! Even in the shortened time, her ideas and strategies sparked important conversations.

Another highlight was our annual Pizza with the Presidents lunch. I want to thank the CMEA Bay Section Past Presidents who participated. Their reflections on the teaching profession and the importance and benefits of service offered our collegiate members invaluable insights, encouragement, and inspiration for their future careers. Moments like these strengthen the bonds within our community and remind us of the enduring impact of mentorship.

As we move into summer, I encourage you to pause and celebrate the small and large victories of this past year — the lessons taught, the students encouraged, and the lives impacted through music. Whether this year exceeded your expectations or challenged you in unexpected ways, know that your work matters deeply. If you have ideas for topics or presenters you would like to see represented at next year's conference, please don't hesitate to reach out. Your voice helps shape the future of our professional development. Thank you for all you do, and wishing you a summer filled with rest, reflection, and renewal!

Reflections on Winter Conference

The fall conference was such an enriching experience! As this was my first year in the role of Band Rep, I learned a lot and hope to provide an even more differentiated offering of sessions this fall. The conducting symposium was such a hit this year - I will make sure that returns!

– Brittany Shankle, Band Representative

The CMEA Bay Section Fall Conference brought together 200 passionate singers, representing 44 Bay Area schools and after-school programs, for the Junior High Honor Choirs. Under the excellent direction of Shelley Durbin and Kent Jue, they performed four diverse and challenging pieces with exceptional skill, highlighting the remarkable depth of choral talent in our region and providing an invaluable opportunity for these young musicians.

– Kate Huizinga, Choir Representative

Solo & Ensemble Festival

This year we had two sites for our second installment of Solo/Ensemble festivals here in Bay Section. Two sites; one at San Jose State University and another at Cal State East Bay were both well attended and while they were not at the same numbers as our pre-pandemic solo/ensemble festivals they serve as strong indicators that school programs are now ready to return to this Bay Section event.

Why send your students to Solo and Ensemble? There are many reasons but I will list them in my order of preference. The first is the opportunity for our student musicians to get feedback in real time from their performance. Having an immediate response from an adjudicator provides valuable feedback and the opportunity for the performer to take in information and then synthesize their understanding is invaluable.

It is also a great chance for younger musician to practice playing in front of an adjudicator along with an audience. While performing can sometimes be nerve wracking for some musicians the chance to play and have immediate concrete comments can make the whole experience less scary. Other positive benefits is being able to listen to others performing in your same event and qualifying to play a command performance in the designated concert hall (if the venue has this option).

– Sandra Lewis, Past-President

On the Fall Conference

Emelynn Montoya



I really appreciated the timing of our Fall Conference. The CMEA Bay Section Conference being moved to November was very helpful. I found that I could use the strategies I learned a lot sooner. I also had a blast presiding over sessions for Dr. José Torres, Gemma Arguelles, David Saldaña, and Dr. Corie Brown. If there are any folx interested in presenting sessions for Multicultural Music, please let me know! I am already looking forward to planning the next conference's sessions.

This school year has already been so full of events and activities! Just this past month, I got back from our annual festival / Disneyland Trip, took the beginning ensembles to Circlesongs with Bobby McFerrin & MOTION in Berkeley, performed in an Easter gig, helped with Easter egg hunts, and drove up to help clinic my friend's choirs at Ponderosa High School.

I am also preparing for the end of the school year as well as next year. The calendar meeting where we choose concert dates will be soon (so that we can share our calendar with athletics before the school year starts). We are also putting together our class lists and budget for next year.

I hope you're all doing well wherever you are. Take time to take care of yourselves.

– Emelynn

Elementary Music: Looking Forward

Keith Hunter



Dear Bay Section Colleagues,

I'm already buzzing with excitement for November's CMEA Winter Conference! I wanted to create an enhanced offering for general music teachers this year.

In the works is a new format that will provide six general music sessions and three beginning instrumental sessions during the conference! I am also working on a few other ideas to make the conference worthwhile for the elementary teachers to attend this incredible conference.

Meanwhile, back at school, I'm wrapping up the year with our end of year concerts. It's a whirlwind of rehearsals and I am reminded each day why I love this profession and teaching with my colleagues.

As the school year closes, I'm already dreaming of a long summer recharge: lazy mornings with the family. Whatever your plans—whether you're traveling, gardening, or simply catching up on sleep—I hope you find moments of rest and inspiration. I can't wait to reconnect in the Fall, recharged and ready to learn, share, and grow together!

Sincerely,
Keith Hunter
Elementary Music Rep, CMEA



JAZZ REFLECTIONS

By David Gregoric

As the school year draws to a close, it's a time for reflecting on the challenges we've faced and the achievements we've celebrated. This period of reflection is crucial for identifying areas for improvement and setting new goals for the future. It's an opportunity to listen, research, and refine our lesson plans to ensure that each student's potential is fully realized.

This year, I've been focusing on developing warm-up and pre-rehearsal tuning materials that not only enhance individual workout ethics but also strengthen students' ear training skills. This process aims to build a strong foundation for musical development, encouraging students to engage deeply with the material and improve their listening abilities.

Additionally, researching new repertoire is a priority. Each piece must challenge and inform students while telling an authentic and engaging story. The selection process involves careful vetting to ensure that the repertoire resonates with students and enhances their learning experience.

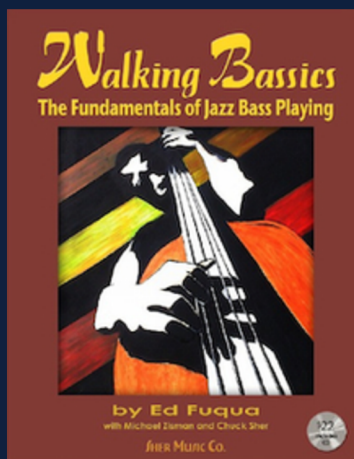
Looking forward, I am eager to develop a curriculum that supports a rigorous approach to improvisation and stylistic development. This includes creating workouts and background materials that nurture creativity and encourage students to explore diverse musical styles. I believe this process will foster an environment where students can confidently express themselves and develop their unique musical voices.



As we plan for the future, the commitment to continuous improvement and innovation remains at the heart of our mission. By embracing new challenges and opportunities, we can create a dynamic and enriching educational experience that empowers students to reach their full potential.

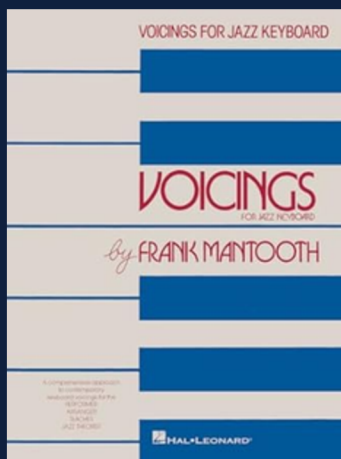
I thought it would be cool to list some books I am reading and re-reading this summer.

"Walking Bassics" by Ed Fuqua and Chuck Sher



Learning walking bass lines is a valuable skill

"Voicings for Jazz Keyboard" by Frank Mantooth



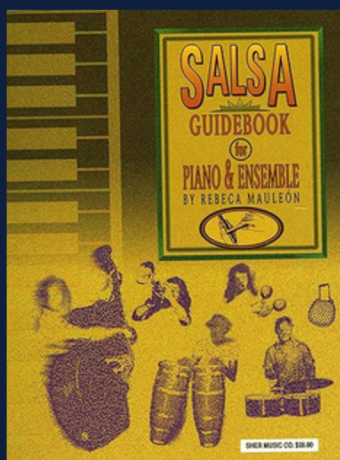
Enriches our arrangements with sophisticated harmonies.

"Elements of the Jazz Language for the Developing Improvisor" by Jerry Coker



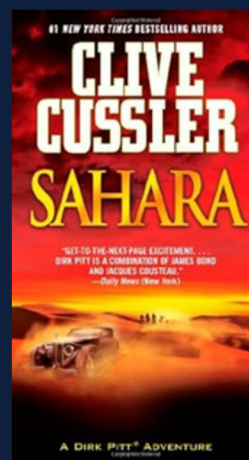
Interesting and compelling organization for developing curriculum.

"Salsa Guidebook: for Piano and Ensemble" by Rebecca Mauleon



Equips us to incorporate Latin jazz elements with authenticity.

"Sahara: A Dirk Pitt Adventure" by Clive Cussler



Because everyone needs a NUMA thriller to take our minds off the tuning problems of concert C