

More Bridges, Fewer Walls: Building Connections with Communities in your Orchestra Program and Beyond!

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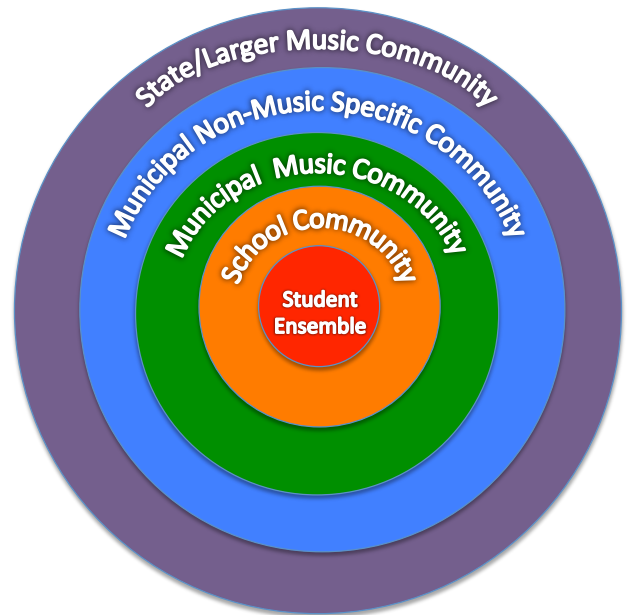
Why Do We Need to Build Connections in Our Communities

Many students participate in school music ensembles as a way to build social connections with friends in school. This desire to be a part of a community in school is linked to research surrounding adolescent development of self-identity within the music classroom (Abril, 2012). The identity transformation that adolescents achieve through experiences, like shared music, provides them with the strategies to develop healthy concepts of themselves and connections with others (Campbell, Connell & Beegle, 2007).

We know that these communities are unique and intersect in distinctive ways.

Examples and Definitions of Communities

- Student Ensemble (Class) Community
 - Team/Business models
 - Sense of Belonging Theory/Learner-Centered Activities/Student Leadership
 - Organization Activities Outside of Class
- School Community
 - Music and Non-music Teachers
 - Performances that School Community
 - Music Clubs that involve students not enrolled in music
 - School Recognition for Music Achievement
- Municipal Music Community
 - Private Studio Teachers
 - Public School Music Teachers
 - Local Ensembles (college/university, cultural)
 - Local Music Associations
 - Pre-school and Elementary School Music Programs
 - Community Music Schools
- Municipal Non-Music Specific Community
 - Key Club, Knights of Columbus, Chamber of Commerce, others
 - Churches
 - Colleges and Universities
 - Retirement Communities
 - Youth Communities
 - Foundations and endowments
- State/Larger Music Community
 - Camps/Workshops
 - State ASTA and other music chapters
 - State and National Conferences



Connecting Our Communities: Sample Activities/Suggestions

- Student Ensemble to Student Ensemble
 - Traditions and Pride
 - Mentor/Secret Pal
 - Fun Nights
- Student Ensemble to School Community
 - Special Event Performances
 - National Anthem/Parades
 - Summer Programs (HS/MS teacher assistants)
- Student Ensemble to Municipal Music Community
 - Side-by-side performances (youth, college, others)
 - Feature a local private teacher performance on concert
 - Attend local music performances (coffee house, university, cultural opportunities, others)
- Student Ensemble to Municipal Non-Music Specific Community
 - Adopt-A-Highway
 - Volunteer Opportunities (Soup Kitchen, Adopt-A-Family)
 - Performances in Retirement Communities/Pre-schools
- Student Ensemble to State/Larger Music Community
 - Submit recordings for performance at conferences
 - Submit presentations for conferences
 - HS student volunteers for camps



Working Around the Walls

- It's all about the students
- Keep the goal in mind
- Timing is everything
- Patience is a virtue
- Communication is key

Reflecting on Your Community Connections

- Student enrollment/engagement
- Lifelong Music Learning/Engagement/Support/Involvement
- Parent involvement
- Teacher work-life balance (community takes on some of the sustainability work)
- Does your community reflect your larger community?
 - Student population
 - Audience attendance
 - Performances outside of the school concert hall



It starts with YOU!

Inspire your students to keep the traditions alive by continuing to build future bridges.