

# The Opus

Volume 51, No. 4

June 2020

## President's Message

### Hello Music colleagues and happy June!

The last three months have certainly placed us in uncharted waters. 2020 has been a year for the books and has thrown many challenges your way. I'd like to congratulate each and every one of you for your hard work over these last few months to ensure your students have continued to be engaged in meaningful music activities. There have been many questions over the last few weeks about just what school will look like in September. That is still an unknown for all of us, the district included at this point. I'm confident that whatever situation we are in come September you will handle it with the same commitment, creativity and positivity you have handled these last three months.

Please know that your MSIC executive has been working extremely hard over the last few months and will continue to do so over the summer and into the fall. We have been trying to quickly plan and offer as much PL as possible on topics relating to online learning and moving forward in

challenging times. Please keep a close eye on your email and our social media as there is more to come over the coming weeks. We are also in constant communication with other provincial and national organizations in discussions on moving forward, advocacy and strategies for online learning.



We have seen high levels of engagement in PL being offered and in discussions on our social media pages. I would encourage you to continue this! Sharing ideas and strategies is extremely beneficial and there is no need to be stressing yourself out reinventing the wheel. Please continue to reach out on these forums or email a member of the executive if you are not sure where to turn.

As we enter summer vacation please make sure to take time for you to rest and recharge after the challenges we have faced. As the expression goes... you can't pour from an empty cup. Thank you for all that you continue to do for your students and for music education.

## NLTA Music Special Interest Council 2018-2020

### Provincial Executive

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<b>Affiliate</b>	Vacant		
<b>Student</b>	Kristian Butt	Memorial University	kristianbutt@nlesd.ca

# Book Nook

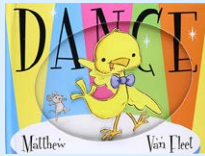
by Ashley Beresford

## Movement Exploration

Creative movement and exploration is an important part of music curriculum, especially in the primary grades. I try to have at least one get-up-and-get-moving activity in each class. Sometimes it is a folk dance or action song; other times it is mirroring or yoga. I love incorporating books in this area. There are lots of great ones to encourage movement, though this may not always be obvious. Some are based on songs and have actions or have characters doing specific moves and dances, while others are less obviously connected to movement exploration. They may have characters going on an adventure that the children can dramatize or they may simply have great adjectives to which students can physically react. I prefer to read the book all the way through once without movement so that students have an understanding of the story, and then on the second reading we add the movements. It is a good idea to have a little bell or instrument to play when it's time for them to freeze and listen to the next line of the story, as students can get a little excited once they begin moving.

### *Dance, Matthew Van Fleet*

This fun book by Matthew Van Fleet is about a little Chickie Baby who has just hatched. All of her friends are heading down to the dance hall, but Chickie Baby is afraid to go, saying she doesn't know how to dance. All of her friends have a turn showing her their dance moves and encouraging her to try. There is a great rhythm and rhyme scheme to this book, enabling it to be used over several classes.



The first day I read the book aloud. In class two, students can keep a steady beat on their lap or an instrument while the book is read. Then in the third class, as each animal shares their signature dance move, the class can join in and try the moves themselves. I often save this book for springtime since the main character is a baby chick, it ties in nicely to the season without any religious connotations. An extension with this book for older primary students is to have students pair up, pick an animal not mentioned in the book, and create and perform a short rhyme and dance for the particular animal using the rhythm and rhyme scheme of the book.

### *Dinosaur Roar, Paul & Henrietta Strickland*



Who doesn't love dinosaurs? Each year in Kindergarten I try to do a couple of dinosaur-themed lessons, which is why I originally purchased this book. However, I find it often creeps into my other primary grades as well. This fun book explores rhyming words and opposites. While it is a great book for movement, it also provides opportunities for vocal exploration and emotional expression. Each double page spread features two dinosaurs who are completely opposite – such as big and small, happy and sad.

After I read the book all the way through I invite the children to spread around the room to act out the movement, sounds and/or feelings of each dinosaur we meet. The activity can be extended to having students in pairs, showing the opposites, and they can create and act out their own opposite ideas too. I love that this book hits so many outcomes not only in music, but other curricular areas as well.



**Membership is now available  
at our website: [www.nlmsic.com](http://www.nlmsic.com).**

**A reminder of the membership costs:**



**Full Member: 1 YEAR (\$50); 2 YEAR (\$100)**

Available to all members of the NLTA and supervisors or directors of music. **Includes** voting privileges, NLTA Music Council Publications, CMEA membership, journals and newsletters. \$25 CMEA, \$25 MSIC

**Associate Member: 1 YEAR (\$35); 2 YEAR (\$70)**

Available to all private music teachers or any person interested in music education. **Includes** voting privileges, NLTA Music Council Publications, CMEA membership, and newsletters only. \$12.<sup>50</sup> CMEA, \$22.<sup>50</sup> MSIC

**Student Member: 1 YEAR (\$22.<sup>50</sup>); 2 YEAR (\$45)**

Available only to full-time students. **Includes** all privileges of full membership, except voting privileges. \$12.<sup>50</sup> CMEA, \$8.<sup>00</sup> MSIC

**Further registration details will be available soon!**

# Music Monday

Congratulations to everyone who participated in this year's Music Monday – #MusicMondayAtHomeNL! We had over 100 participants from all over the province and saw a huge variety of instruments and genres! **Wow!**



# Town Hall on Singing Recap

by Adrien Doucet

The **Bruneau Centre for Excellence in Choral Music** (BCECM) along with **Choral NL** and the **Singing Network** held an open virtual townhall meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, June 2. In attendance were representatives of various choirs from across the province, university affiliates from MUN Music Education, public school and private music educators, members of the BCECM board, as well as many familiar and prominent figures of the NL choral community. 45+ participants were present for the heart-felt session that lasted approximately one hour. The purpose of the meeting was two-fold. Primarily, it served to stimulate conversation and to probe the needs and concerns around choral activity amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, this session was an opportunity for the choral community at large to learn more about the BCECM, its mandate, and its funding initiatives.

The BCECM was founded at Memorial University seven years ago through a generous donation by Drs. Jean and Angus Bruneau to promote choral activity in the province. The Centre's mission is to "promote research and community projects that seek to understand, encourage and enhance the powerful impact that choral singing can have on individuals and communities." Projects are funded that stem from the university and the wider choral community through an annual call for proposals.

Grants available range from small hundred-dollar projects up to a maximum amount of \$15,000. Four funding categories are available yearly: Research Grants, Community Project Grants, Small Grants, and Professional Development Grants. These are available to a wide range of applicants including to school choral programs and their directors. This spring, the Pivot Opportunity Grant was added to create projects allowing choirs to survive and thrive through the challenges faced through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tuesday's townhall meeting had the aim to assess how the BCECM can best serve its role in supporting choral singing at a time when community gatherings are forbidden due to public health emergency guidelines. BCECM board member Pamela MacFadgen, representing Choral NL, opened with a few brief words and a statement invoking a quote from Winston Churchill, "Never give up on something that you can't go a day without thinking about." David Buley,

representing the Singing Network, continued in speaking to the importance of choral singing for community building. Director of the BCECM, Amy Henderson, led the discussions centering on three stimulating questions: *What are the primary concerns for choral activity amid COVID-19? What are some best practices that are emerging from online interactions? And a more fundamental investigation, what is choir?*

Conversations were honest, respectful, and represented the gamut of choral music making in NL. Participants shared their unique perspectives from their diverse backgrounds and the individual roles they occupy in the community. Each expressed their concerns and needs through what was later commended as being one of the most positive and productive online meetings attended since social distancing began.

Four main themes emerged from the discussions with action committees being struck to investigate each of the following:

1. An advocacy group: investigating and sharing the importance of music education programs and the impact if these programs become lost due to social distancing.
2. A correspondence group: formally submitting a document to the Chief Medical Officer on regulations and guidelines around safe choral singing.
3. A practice group: looking to explore the ins/outs of choral connection via online platforms.
4. A follow-up group: seeking to meet again and discuss further planning strategies for choral activities and seasons going forward.

As a funding agency, the BCECM has not formally taken on the task of managing these committees. These are now independent grassroots working groups exploring each their respective issue. Stay tuned, as your valuable input may likely be solicited by your colleagues who have put their names forward. For further information about the Bruneau Centre for Excellence in Choral Music and for grant applications, check out [www.mun.ca/choralcentre](http://www.mun.ca/choralcentre).

# Jamie Wilkinson Memorial Award



Jamie Wilkinson was a passionate, dedicated teacher and a long-standing member of the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association. As a music educator he was loved by his students and teaching colleagues.

Throughout his career Jamie demonstrated his passion for teaching young musicians by inspiring them to reach their fullest potential. Unfortunately, Jamie passed away in May of 2017. A strong advocate for the teaching profession, Jamie is best known for his quiet demeanour, passion for music education and commitment to providing his students with the best musical experiences imaginable.

In Jamie's memory, the NLTA Music Special Interest Council is pleased to announce an award which will be presented to a music teacher within the province of Newfoundland and Labrador who best exemplifies the qualities of Jamie Wilkinson, namely:

- a) who exhibits a passion for music;
- b) who demonstrates perseverance and musically inspires her/his music students;
- c) who takes great pride in her/his school music program and endeavors to encourage young musicians to enjoy all that music offers.

The NLTA Music Special Interest Council invites the submission of nominations for this award. Nominators may be students, colleagues, parents, or community members. The award recipient will be determined by a committee comprised of MSIC board members and other members of the teaching and music communities. A plaque and a \$500 Award will be presented to the successful recipient at the MSIC Annual Conference. The financial component of the award is to be used at the discretion of the recipient to support the music program(s) under her/his jurisdiction.

## **Nomination Deadline: September 30, 2020**

Supporting documents can be emailed to Ashley  
[ashleyberesford@nlesd.ca](mailto:ashleyberesford@nlesd.ca)

Jamie Wilkinson Memorial Award Form  
(<https://forms.gle/hY3w5d7vC2dgnV4S6w>)

# Heather Macdonald Memorial Scholarship

The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association Music Special Interest Council is inviting applications to its annual Heather Macdonald Memorial Scholarship for music education interns, a tribute to music educator and former Music Council Provincial President, Heather Macdonald. The intent of this scholarship is to recognize the future of music education in Newfoundland and Labrador by offering financial assistance to an outstanding music education intern.

The scholarship has a cash value of \$500. With this financial assistance, music interns will have the financial support to begin building their own music resources and also defray a portion of the costs incurred during their final semesters at university.

When applying for this scholarship, the following items must be included:

- fully completed application form
- a curriculum vitae/resume
- a copy of the most current transcript from Memorial University (and any other university transcript pertaining to the degrees of Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Music Education)
- two written references from different sources: one academic, one character/personal
- essay — "Why I want to be a music educator" (250–300 words)

All applicants must be registered for the internship program in 2020. The Selections Committee will be comprised of members from the Executive and Full Board of the NLTA Music Special Interest Council. Candidates will be chosen based on their academic performance, written references and educational leadership potential.

Only fully completed submissions will be considered for the scholarship. Submitted documents will not be returned. Thank you in advance to all students who will be applying for the scholarship.

The completed application form (available at <https://forms.gle/eki8QpBMkv2QZzxQ9>) with all supporting documentation must be received at the following email or mailing address by **September 30**: Ashley Beresford, 5 Roscommon Place, St. John's, NL A1A 3C7; [ashleyberesford@nlesd.ca](mailto:ashleyberesford@nlesd.ca)

**If you require any further information:  
Please contact**

**[ashleyberesford@nlesd.ca](mailto:ashleyberesford@nlesd.ca) or  
[rebeccamcdonald1@nlesd.ca](mailto:rebeccamcdonald1@nlesd.ca).**



# "Practical Lessons and Activities for a Post-COVID Music Class": A Webinar Review

by Brenda Hunt

In helping myself prepare for the Fall, I took part in the first of a series of Wednesday Webinars with Denise Gagne of MusicPlay, "Practical Lessons and Activities for a Post-COVID Music Class". We are all familiar with Denise and the work she does through her company – Theme & Variations. I have also had the pleasure of attending a few of her workshops (and will be doing the 3-day Odyssey this summer), as well as teaching in a school which annually subscribes to her fabulous website. Whether or not you subscribe to her website, the practical ideas she presents and will continue to present on a bi-weekly basis, should prove useful.

Denise Gagne began her webinar with a brief overview of some of the challenges we may face as music educators. She reviewed hybrid teaching, sanitizing of instruments, traveling to classrooms versus teaching in our own music room lessons, the possibility of not being able to include singing (currently Alberta has placed strict restrictions that will make it virtually impossible to sing in class), and physical distancing. In true Denise fashion, she provided a few little tunes about germs and hand washing.

Next was Felicity Bryson from Australia, where the idea of Individual Instrument Kits was the main focus of this webinar. She shared her music room layout and her Individual Instrument Kits (per student). I found this concept to be quite daunting. While the idea seemed practical, the thought of asking for enough rhythm sticks, hand drums and egg shakers for every child in K-6 in my school did not seem financially possible. However, Denise showed some easy inexpensive ways we could accomplish this, which in turn, had me come up with some potentially cheaper ways.

These "kits" are created using large baggies. They are filled with something you are able to strike, something to shake, and something to scrape. Instead of purchasing rhythm sticks for all, Denise suggested chopsticks or dowels. (I went cheaper and thought, two pencils from the supplies they bring in – I also like the idea of pencils for bucket drumming as the erasers are more pleasing to my ears than wood on plastic!). An egg shaker, which can

be cheaply made from plastic Easter eggs filled with popcorn kernels and taped. She suggested perhaps real music egg shakers for younger children to avoid the tape being picked off. For scrapers, the suggestion was to use pool noodles. Using an exacto knife, one would cut them in pieces approximately 4 inches long and then cut these sections in half. Hold the rounded sides and scrape the flat sides. Voila, students would now have three instruments.

Depending on the availability of items such as bean bags, scarves, cups, etc. that we typically use in our music classes, these items may not be able to be shared. Some schools have an abundance of these items from a workshop many years ago on movement for the school – remember? Schools were given about twenty large red mesh bags with large dice, scarves, balls, bean bags, and rubber chickens!). My staff is also collecting large butter tubs, 500ml yogurt tubs and ice cream tubs for me over the summer. I hope for each student to have their own Bucket Drum to go along with their individual music kit.

With these ideas in mind, each child in K-6 will have their own set of musical instruments. If we are in a situation where music teachers have to travel to individual classes, these kits can be kept in their "drum" by their desk. If students come to the music classroom, they can be stored in crates according to class. Both educators presenting the webinar also suggested putting one "real" instrument (tambourine, triangle, bells, etc.) in a bag and swapping them over time once disinfected.

Denise went on to show us many activities for implementing these individual music kits into our teaching. She also suggested that while we do not know our Fall scenarios yet, if a hybrid system is in place, the easiest approach may be setting up a camera in your room to record your lesson so you can then post the same lesson for the at home learners. Her approach to performance is rhythm instrument-based and she suggests a flipped classroom approach for the singing components where the activities related to the song are taught in class and the singing is done at home. If recorder playing is allowed, this would also be a method of instruction in the classroom.



A quick overview of some of the activities suggested in the Webinar:

- #6 PK Let's Play Instruments
- #7 PK Play the Instruments Chant
- #8 PK Play and Stop Song
- #9 PK Play with Bach

I liked the Pre-K activities because they really set the kids up for success with their new kits. As well, they are great for having to teach their homerooms as they teach STOP and QUIET.

Denise continued on into the older grades with more play alongs and she discussed activities such as composition and ostinatos using composition picture cards. This would be made possible with another change – rather than sharing and group work; each child would need their own cards. Bucket drumming, humming and recorder playing were also included. She also mentioned that her website has added an Orff Directory and her website can be searched by activity, i.e. “play along”. Remember, her website is currently free for everyone until June 30, 2020. This is a great opportunity for us to explore as she has many activities, printables, lesson plan ideas, and videos for all of her music. As well, her website will have the recordings and slides from each webinar.

As music teachers we may not be able to do everything and use all our tools as per usual when school reopens in the Fall. However, these bi-weekly Wednesday Webinars are giving us options – options which will still allow us to create, contextualize, respond, reflect, and perform while using rhythm and metre, melody/pitch, harmony, form, expression and contexts. Personally, I found her Webinar very informative and I look forward to June 10, 2020 when she focuses on movement. I hope this overview will help you feel less intimidated by the challenges that we may face moving into the next school year. Feel free (literally) to join in Denise's Wednesday Webinars!

*Brenda Hunt is a Music and French Teacher at Holy Redeemer School where she has worked since 1995. She holds a B.A.(French), B.Music from Mount Allison University, a B.Ed. from UNB, and a M.Ed.(CTL-Music) from MUN. Brenda has worked very hard over the years to put instruments in the hands of all her students. She currently teaches Recorder, Concert Band, Traditional Band, Choir and Ukulele Ensemble. Brenda can be reached at [brendahunt@nlesd.ca](mailto:brendahunt@nlesd.ca).*

# Reinventing the Music Educators Professional Learning Plan During Covid-19

by Michelle Collins

As music educators, we are committed to lifelong learning and we continuously strive to plan and prepare creative and engaging lessons in order to meet the needs of our students. We intuitively know how important music is in developing the whole child. For some students who struggle academically, the music classroom is a safe haven to explore, move, create and have fun. When schools were closed due to Covid-19, our concern for our students was at the forefront of our minds. Many of us found ways to reach our students and connect with them over the past three months while thinking ahead to the many changes that we may face in September. As we move into the 2020-21 academic year and the unknown situations we face, especially how and where we deliver curriculum, we may need to adjust our mindset. We have questions and concerns about how we will meet our instructional mandate to deliver the curriculum, how we can differentiate our instruction for our diverse learners as well as how our assessment practices may change. While many of us have been cognizant to always include technology in our professional learning goals, Covid-19 has left us with technology being the sole source of connection between ourselves and our students.

On May 27, 2020, in collaboration with the Music Special Interest Council Executive, I had the opportunity to host a Professional Learning Plan discussion and planning session via Google Meet. The purpose of this session was to connect with music educators province wide and examine how we may align our goals to create a broader learning community as we move into the 2020-21 school year. Several main themes for 2020-21 emerged: Social Emotional Learning, Student Engagement and Creativity as well as Assessment Practices for online learning.

## **SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING**

A suggested goal that was discussed in the Google Meet session is: Implement Social Emotional Learning into the framework of my teaching practice by continuing to create a positive learning environment that aligns SEL with student achievement and academic outcomes to ensure that learning outcomes are met with socially, culturally and linguistically appropriate methods.

Supporting our students' social emotional development is a critical responsibility for all educators. The very nature of music education specifically contributes to the social and emotional development of the whole child. Children who often struggle with "core subjects" find a place to express themselves in the music classroom as music is a chance for them to excel and thrive in a safe and nurturing environment. Casel (2020) recognizes that competencies such as self regulation, relationship skills, social awareness, self awareness and decision making are skills that must be fostered in our ever-changing world. As music educators, it is important to keep a perspective that arts education has the ability to impact the life of a child in significant developmental ways. Oftentimes, the competencies associated with social emotional learning are already present in the manners in which we teach and create music with our students. However, it is always important to hone one's skills with effective strategies and activities that are 'tried and true' relationship builders. It is also vital that our professional learning plans reflect the significant importance of embedding social emotional learning into the framework of our practice. As our learning environments may change, the relationships we build and the competencies we cultivate will prepare our students for the many challenges that lie ahead in our ever-changing world.

## **STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND CREATIVITY**

A suggested goal that emerged from the PLP session on May 27th is as follows: Increase student engagement and enhance student interest and authentic music creating, performing and listening opportunities in a variety of learning environments including both in school and online/at home.

I believe that the crucial piece here is the authentic music experiences that we know is the goal we strive to achieve every single day we teach our students. Our fear as music educators is that these authentic and pertinent experiences will be lost in an online learning environment. I believe that it is important to remember how creative and inventive we as music educators can be. We are naturally adaptable to changing and challenging environments; whether it be larger student groups, ensembles, multi-grade classes etc.,



we always provide creative and genuine experiences for our students. At home learning over the past few months has given us many insights into harnessing creativity and using technology to our advantage. This will become increasingly important as we enter the new school year, especially with regards to performance opportunities. It may be necessary to explore several viable options for playing, singing, creating and performing. Furthermore, adding these ideas into our own Professional Learning Plans will be essential to gain the support of administrators and district personnel.

## ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

It is imperative that we explore a wide variety of assessment practices that may be outside our comfort zone and appear very different from the traditional assessment pre-Covid. A modified music setting will challenge us to think outside the box and reimagine our students' learning experiences as well as our own traditional assessment practices. The Google Classroom and Google Meet opportunities will be a very good place to start for most teachers and students. Google offers training to become more familiar with their various applications to use within the Google classroom. It may be necessary to explore some of the many professional learning opportunities that are available online and with reduced or exempt subscription fees in order to compile a wide variety of assessment tools that are available since learning in Canada and around the world has changed. In the event that a professional development opportunity, conference, webinar etc. has fees associated with them and they would be most beneficial for your specific learning environment (band, choir, ensemble, etc) it is critical that these be outlined in your professional learning plan for the 2020-21 academic year. This will allow administrators and NLESD to support you in your professional learning.

## CONCLUSION

As we move toward the 2020-21 school year, we are aware that the learning environment is uncertain. While this may be so, our experiences teaching and learning online since mid-March has helped us prepare for ambiguous circumstances. The goals that we set for ourselves as professionals and the pathways we use to reach these goals will help us to grow as educational professionals. Therefore, it is critical that we prepare and plan to engage our students in deep learning objectives to ensure that they will thrive and grow despite the restrictions that may be in place during the upcoming school year.

May 27, 2020 PLP planning session link:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vqaE-pler06y2xrfWY-2l0QENZOe5h-p9VyGN3E37Ks/edit?usp=sharing>

## RESOURCES:

- <https://casel.org/core-competencies/>
- <https://nafme.org/music-education-social-emotional-learning/>
- <https://musicplayonline.com/>
- <http://simplemusicteaching.com/2018/08/28/sel/>
- [www.billboard.com/articles/business/9354487/guide-remote-music-education-virtual-resources-coronavirus](http://www.billboard.com/articles/business/9354487/guide-remote-music-education-virtual-resources-coronavirus)

*Michelle Collins teaches primary, junior high, choral music as well as sensory needs music at Admiral's Academy in CBS, NL. She is currently the Vice President of the NLTA Music Special Interest Council.*

# CMEA Builder's Award Nomination

In co-operation with its Provincial and Territorial Affiliates, the Canadian Music Educators' Association seeks to recognize those who advance music education in any Canadian province, through building community or establishing significant collaborative efforts, with the CMEA/Acme Builders Award.

The CMEA/Acme Builders Award is presented annually to a music educator who brings honour to the profession by demonstrating one or more of the following:

- Building a more unified community of music educators
- Raising the profile of the value of music education in Canada
- Making a significant contribution to inter-provincial or national initiatives in music education

- Establishing sustainable collaborative initiatives in music education
- Developing mentorship initiatives for newer and/or pre-service music educators

For more information please visit <https://cmea.ca/professional-awards/> or contact Ashley Beresford ([ashleyberesford@nlesd.ca](mailto:ashleyberesford@nlesd.ca))

Nominations to our Provincial Executive are open until **September 1, 2020.**



[www.cmea.ca](http://www.cmea.ca)  
CANADIAN MUSIC EDUCATORS' ASSOCIATION  
L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES MUSICIENS EDUCATEURS



# RESONATE 2020



**RESONATE 2020** will move to an online conference taking part on **Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup>** and the conference will be **FREE** with an MSIC membership.