

WSMA Festivals Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 13, 2016

Present

Jeff Behrens, Steven Boyd, Scott Bruer, Jean Enyeart, Shelley Hooper (WSMA Program Director), Cynthia Kiepert, Kayla Koch, Jacob Kulba, Derek Machan, Kate MacRae, Molly Malone, Theresa McKinley (WSMA Director of Technology Services), Linda Meier (WSMA Program Associate), Anne Proescholdt (WSMA Program Associate – Member Services), Matthew Robisch, Tim Schaid (WSMA Executive Director), Dawn Spanton-Kranz, Steve Sveum, James Thaldorf, Chris Werner, Tim Wurgler (WSMA Program Director), Kirk Yudes

Absent

Micki Carlson, Richard Fellenz (WSMA Operations Manager), Kim Graff, Michelle Kaebisch, Kristina Stingle

Facilitator

Shelley Hooper

1. Welcome, introductions, and topics overview
 - a. New WSMA website now live
 - b. Meeting focus: WSMA concert/clinic festival participation requirement, issues, and review of relevant festival rules
 - c. Festivals Committee will share perspectives rather than make decisions
 - d. Problem: 1,116 WSMA member schools in 2014-2015; 393 (35%) on probation for failure to fulfill concert/clinic festival requirement
 - e. WSMA office staff theories
 - i. More convenient/affordable if multiple groups at same school participate together (may accept probation every other year)
 - ii. Consistent participation or lack thereof by individual departments at same school
 - iii. Failure to submit proper documentation
 - iv. Objection to requirement/associated costs
 - v. Gaps in requirement education
 - f. WSMA office staff follow-up attempts
 - i. Former WSMA Program Associate Rosalie Richardson identified approximately 35 schools in 2014-2015 on probation indicating intent to fulfill requirement and/or submit proper documentation and still had not in spring 2015
 - ii. Tim Schaid contacted these schools again in fall 2015 instead of mailing solo/ensemble festival ineligibility notice
 1. Most schools claimed compliance
 2. Tim Schaid identified 15-16 schools who required phone conversations; approximately 95% claimed failure to submit proper documentation

- g. Concert/clinic festival fees assessment
 - i. WSMA does not “get rich” on concert/clinic festival fees
 - ii. Fees exist to provide salaries and benefits for staff to process information
 - iii. 80% of concert festival fee returns to festival manager as subsidy
 - h. Festivals Committee theories
 - i. Any expenditure difficult
 - ii. Documentation another hurdle
 - iii. Concert festival locations inaccessible
 - iv. Administration reluctant to allow large number of students off campus; Saturday scheduling also difficult
 - v. Administration limits participation to every other year
 - vi. Perception of concert/clinic festival requirement inflexibility
 - i. Festivals Committee suggestion
 - i. Increase annual membership enrollment fee to cover all or most benefits and services up front, reducing error and allowing better budget planning for schools and lessening workload for WSMA office staff
2. Majority of schools (65%) in compliance; 13% (144 schools) on probation for past five years; WSMA has never barred solo/ensemble festival participation as threatened
 - a. Desire to maintain integrity of requirement philosophy and WSMA as organization
 - b. Compliance too time-consuming and difficult to track
 - c. Low post-follow-up success rate; hundreds of non-compliant schools dilute efficiency and personalization of message
 3. Potential drawbacks of concert/clinic festival requirement
 - a. Less concert festival participation due to “hurdle” mentality
 - b. Ratings misinterpreted/misused by administrators
 4. Potential benefits of concert/clinic festival requirement
 - a. Provides professional and budget leverage
 - b. Maintains level of academic rigor
 - c. Promotes educator effectiveness
 - d. Champions student self-assessment
 5. Festivals Committee desires to uphold concert/clinic festival requirement and recommends that WSMA:
 - a. Retract threat of solo/ensemble festival ineligibility
 - b. Emphasize philosophy behind requirement
 - c. Consider needs of as many schools as possible
 - d. Empower teachers to exercise flexibility and trust they know best, allowing them to excel beyond basic parameters
 - e. Broaden scope of “other group” and listening components

- f. Require festival music list and documentation submission components to ensure basic standard met
 - g. Simplify documentation submission to highlight key components and trust teachers to follow through independently
 - h. Focus on positive message and rewards; avoid punitive language and actions
 - i. Collect data to determine why teachers do not participate or follow through
 - j. Evaluate concert festival accessibility and examine potential for more college-based festivals
 - k. Edit festivals rules for clarity
 - l. Educate membership about requirements in advance with intention (e.g. better advertise critique-only options)
 - m. Provide probationary status notice year in advance to assist with budgeting
 - n. Deemphasize fees and money language
 - o. Tie concert/clinic festival requirement to accreditation model: member schools able to earn official title from WSMA for meeting/exceeding certain criteria
 - i. Teachers and administrators can market reputation
 - ii. Inspires accountability proactively and positively
 - iii. Empowers schools to self-monitor basic standards
 - p. Consider requiring each performing ensemble from each school to fulfill concert/clinic festival requirement
 - i. Pros
 - 1. Levels playing field
 - 2. Affirms teachers who already fulfill it
 - 3. Allows easier tracking
 - 4. Serves advocacy function by asserting more positive pressure
 - 5. Benefits all student
 - 6. Provides WSMA more school environment info to better serve membership
 - ii. Cons
 - 1. Increases costs
 - 2. Invites resistance
 - 3. Necessitates heftier revision of WSMA record-keeping procedures and processes
6. Possible merger of clinic performance assessment and alternative clinic performance assessment
- a. Reasons
 - i. Technology advancements have blurred lines
 - ii. Distinction is confusing
 - iii. Friendlier option for new teachers
 - b. New clinic festival requirement components
 - i. Description of listening component
 - ii. Literature performed (explain if not from festival music list)
 - iii. Clinician or qualified individual to provide performance feedback
 - iv. Assume good intent and no longer require submission of results

7. Accreditation model brainstorm
 - a. Minimum requirements for accreditation
 - i. Annual membership
 - ii. Annual fulfillment of concert/clinic festival requirement
 - iii. Annual solo/ensemble festival participation
 - b. No need to publicize consequences of failure to fulfill requirement; handle on a personalized, case-by-case basis
8. WSMA staff will refine requirement revision details internally and prepare proposal before next Festivals Committee meeting
 - a. Earliest test period in 2016-2017
 - b. Earliest implementation in 2017-2018
9. Festivals Committee suggestions
 - a. Remain sensitive to paradigm shift
 - b. Bring more members into compliance before increasing rigor or introduce requirement revision with some version of “clean slate”
 - c. Stay clear and succinct
 - d. Focus on affirmation versus punishment
 - e. Consider smaller-scale test group(s)
 - f. Weigh awarding accreditation to qualified members versus giving notice
 - g. Collect potential accreditation data from membership enrollment form
10. WSMA membership help guide(s) suggestions
 - a. Newer teachers may tend to expect digital formatting
 - b. Include both general and personalized information
 - c. Disseminate to each teacher or ensemble
 - d. Post general requirements of membership, guidelines, and timeline via Membership link on WSMA website
 - e. Post personalized info on MyCenter (needs reformatting) or similar place
 - f. Consider new teacher mentorship (e.g. new teacher info link on WSMA homepage vs. school directory)
11. Terms of Festivals Committee members
 - a. Three-year term limit not enforced; while not problematic now, desire to
 - i. Keep membership voluntary
 - ii. Add fresh and diverse voices
 - iii. Remain welcoming
 - b. Members able to serve consecutive terms
 - c. Shelley will ask those whose terms have expired whether to resign or renew
 - d. Consider recruitment via website at conclusion/beginning of school year
12. Next meeting is Monday, June 13, 2016

Submitted by Anne Proescholdt