

PARTNERSHIPS IN MUSIC TEACHER EDUCATION

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Slide 2. At its September 2005 meeting, members of the Society for Music Teacher Education identified 12 Areas of Strategic Planning and Action (ASPAs). At this meeting small groups gathered to develop plans of action for approaching the ASPAs under the leadership members of the SMTE Executive Board. This report is an outcome of the small group meeting on ASPA 6, School/University Partnerships.

Slide 3. The School/University partnership group determined that the first step in approaching this ASPA was to gather information on the types of school/university partnerships that currently exist. Our plan of action was based on three guiding principles:

- (a) the Society would benefit from obtaining a broad knowledge of the types of partnerships that faculty in higher education institutions develop in order to improve or facilitate music teacher education
- (b) Partnerships exist in many forms
- (c) We need to collect data on the types of partnerships that exist and their roles and functions in music teacher education.

Slide 4. A brief survey to gather information about current school/university partnerships. Participants provided information about their institution, and then responded to the following questions:

Slide 5:

1. Do you or others at your institution engage in partnerships with other organizations to facilitate music teacher education? Yes No
If yes, please continue. If no, you are finished with the survey. Thank you for responding.
2. Please provide the name(s) of the organization(s) with whom you partner.
3. Please tell us the type of organization(s) with whom you partner.
 - Local Public Schools
 - Schools outside your immediate location
 - Community or State Arts Organization
 - Another postsecondary institution
 - Music Educator Association
 - Other
4. How long have you partnered with this organization?
5. Briefly describe how you developed your partnership(s).
6. Please list the benefits of your partnership for your students.
7. Please list the benefits of your partnership for you and your faculty.
8. Please briefly describe the challenges of your partnership.
9. Please provide any other information or comments about your partnership(s) here.

Slide 6. The survey was posted online and a request for participation was emailed to all individuals on the SMTE email list as of March 2006 ($N= 4,723$). This email list consists of MENC members that identify themselves as music teacher educators. We were unable to determine how many of these individuals are based in a university setting, and therefore could not specifically target the university-based members of the SMTE list. We received 463 returned emails and 314 responses. The overall return rate was 7.4%.

Slide 7. Of the 314 respondents, 81% (255) reported partnerships and 19% (59) did not. Of the 255 respondents reporting partnerships, 4 data sets were not usable, so 251 responses were analyzed.

Slide 8. The respondents affiliations were: 149 (59%) affiliated with a college or university; 92 (36%) affiliated with a public school or school system; 1 (1%) was affiliated with a state department of education; and 9 (4%) were classified as “other” affiliations, primarily businesses.

Slide 9. Respondents listed up to 3 partnerships. This table presents the number of partnerships listed by affiliation. 88 of the 149 college/university respondents listed three partnerships, and 54 of the school/school district respondents listed 3 partnerships.

Slide 10. This table shows the types of partnerships reported by colleges and universities. The most common partnerships for these respondents are those with schools and school districts, schools outside the immediate location of the university (most often outside the local school district or county), music education associations, and community and state arts organizations.

Slide 11. This table shows the types of partnerships reported by schools and school districts. The most common partnerships reported are with colleges and universities, community or state arts organizations, and music education associations.

Slide 12. There was only one respondent who was affiliated with a state department of education. This reported partnership was with an individual teacher.

Slide 13. This table shows the types of partnerships reported by respondents classified as “other” – these included music education associations, businesses, and arts organizations. These respondents reported partnerships with music education associations, colleges and universities, arts organizations, and other groups.

Slide 14. This table shows the results of the reported length of the partnerships by the order in which the partnerships were reported. The first partnership listed averaged 9 years; the second partnership averaged 6.7 years, and the third partnership averaged 4.4 years. Respondents listed their longest running partnerships first, and their newest one last. The partnerships ranged from very new – 3 months – to over 50 years.

Slide 15. All of the respondents (100%) reported that the primary benefit of the partnerships for students was an improved learning experience. The college and university teachers specified the benefits as: (a) real world teaching experiences for their students, (b) the opportunity to put theory into practice, and (c) student connection with practitioners.

Slide 16. The primary benefits of the partnerships for respondents are disaggregated by affiliation in this table. College and university teachers report that the primary benefits for them are (a) the increased effectiveness of their program, (b) collegiality with local teachers, and (c) the professional development that going into schools provides – expressed most often as being able to ‘keep current’ with what is going on in the classroom. School and School District respondents report similar increased effectiveness and professional development benefits.

Slide 17. The primary challenges of the partnerships for respondents are disaggregated by affiliation in this table. College and university respondents report that their biggest challenge is scheduling, followed by time and communication difficulties. The biggest challenge for school and school district respondents is time.

Slide 18. This slide summarizes the major findings. These are:

1. Benefits to Students: Improved Learning Experiences
2. Benefits to Respondents: Increased Program Effectiveness (34%), Professional Development (26%), and Collegiality (19%)
3. Challenges for Respondents: Scheduling (23%), Time (18%), and Communication (10%)

Slide 19. The review of the respondent’s comments revealed additional findings that are stated here. Partnerships are viewed by most respondents as being between individuals, not institutions or schools – many cited working with particular teachers or professors as their partnership. Partnerships are also considered to be personal, an important perception to keep in mind as we move forward with this ASPA’s work. Another theme was that partnerships are a lot of work, and depend almost entirely on one individual “making it happen” – partnership building and maintenance is a major commitment. Overall, respondents overwhelmingly report that the benefits of partnerships outweigh the challenges.

Slide 20. Here I list some questions to guide our future work in this area. The questions are:

1. How do we define a *successful* partnership?
2. What makes a partnership successful?
3. Are there strategies that can be shared that facilitate partnership building?
4. What are the steps involved in creating a successful partnership?
5. Why do some develop partnerships and others do not?
6. This survey was sent to one group of stakeholders – what do others have to say about partnerships?

One possible outcome of this research is that SMTE members can develop and offer Partnership Building sessions at MENC conferences.