

2021

Aggressive Educational Policy and MENC

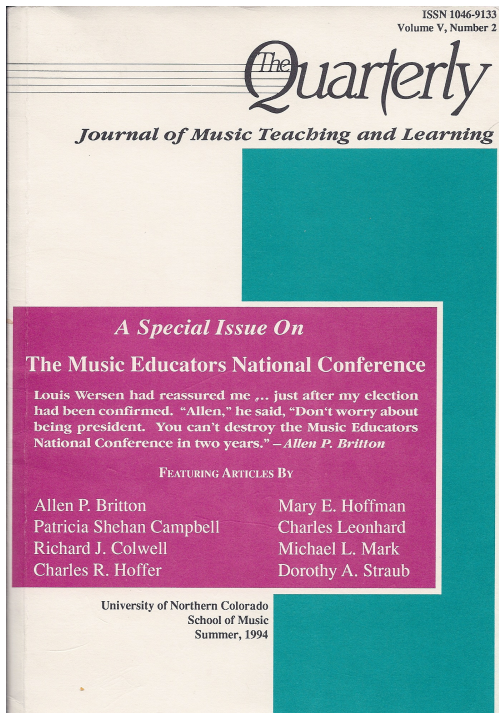
Richard J. Colwell
New England Conservatory

Follow this and additional works at: <https://opencommons.uconn.edu/vrme>

Recommended Citation

Colwell, Richard J. (2021) "Aggressive Educational Policy and MENC," *Visions of Research in Music Education*: Vol. 16 , Article 19.

Available at: <https://opencommons.uconn.edu/vrme/vol16/iss5/19>



Title: Aggressive Educational Policy and MENC

Author(s): Richard J. Colwell

Source: Colwell, R. J. (1994, Summer). Aggressive education policy and MENC. *The Quarterly*, 5(2), pp. 50-62. (Reprinted with permission in *Visions of Research in Music Education*, 16(5), Autumn, 2010). Retrieved from <http://www-usr.rider.edu/~vrme/>

It is with pleasure that we inaugurate the reprint of the entire seven volumes of The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning. The journal began in 1990 as The Quarterly. In 1992, with volume 3, the name changed to The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning and continued until 1997. The journal contained articles on issues that were timely when they appeared and are now important for their historical relevance. For many authors, it was their first major publication. Visions of Research in Music Education will publish facsimiles of each issue as it originally appeared. Each article will be a separate pdf file. Jason D. Vodicka has accepted my invitation to serve as guest editor for the reprint project and will compose a new editorial to introduce each volume. Chad Keilman is the production manager. I express deepest thanks to Richard Colwell for granting VRME permission to re-publish The Quarterly in online format. He has graciously prepared an introduction to the reprint series.

Aggressive Educational Policy And MENC

By Richard J. Colwell

New England Conservatory

The task of reflecting and commenting on the Music Educators National Conference (MENC) and educational policy has proven to be a slippery one. Thus, the arguments made in this article are likely to be somewhat slippery as well.

MENC has been, and remains, a vibrant organization with a plethora of task forces busily at work on numerous worthwhile projects. Its purposeful moves into educational policy, however, have been rare, for reasons explained below. MENC is not devoid of policies; it has policies that govern its operation, internally and externally. The focus of this article is not on the organization, however, but on policy as it relates to broad educational questions. Educational policy influences working conditions, wages, teaching schedules, teacher qualifications, merit pay, and other factors relating to how instruction is delivered and who delivers it. There can be educational policies that affect goals: musical standards, priority of experiences, nonmusical objectives, and objectives within an integrated curriculum. Policy statements influence teacher training, the organization of schooling, programs and teachers for private schools, early-childhood music education, and community music programs. Guiding policy issues such as these has not been a priority for the conference.

MENC is an umbrella organization that provides an important structure for numerous associated organizations and probably (although I do not know) attempts to avoid du-

plicating the projects of other organizations. It helps and promotes many musical activities. In addition, MENC has and has had varying levels of involvement with not only other arts organizations but with private foundations and governmental agencies at many levels. Such projects that come immediately to mind are those with the Organization of American States, the American Red Cross, the Kennedy Center, the music publishing and recording industry, the American Association of School Administrators, and the Ford and Presser foundations. The fact that few readers can recall the results of these projects attests to the fact that cooperative or joint arrangements, no matter how admirable, are not an indicator that educational policy is involved.

MENC is a busy organization. The number of educational projects in which MENC has played a leading role is impressive. Not only have the elected leaders acted in the best interest of the profession, but executive secretaries including Clifford Buttleman, Vanett Lawler, and John Mahlmann have acted with care not only for individual members and their projects but for principles that extend beyond the immediate purview of the conference. Still, in those activities I find it difficult to identify ones that were initiated on the basis of a carefully articulated policy statement. Of course, "policy" itself is troublesome to define; there is stated policy, and there is implied policy and variations of each. Barresi and Olson (1992) in MENC's *Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning* adopted Mayer and Greenwood's characteristics of policy:

1. it involves an intended course of action;
2. it occurs at the highest or most inclusive level of decision making relative to the action to be taken; and

Richard J. Colwell is Chairman of Music Education at the New England Conservatory and founding editor of The Quarterly. His research interests include music teaching and learning as well as policy issues.

3. it incorporates consideration of complex implications anticipated from the proposed action (p. 760).

Barresi and Olson (1992) point out that the schema for explicit or stated policy includes nine stages, beginning with the determination of goals in which the philosophical framework and values of the formulator are considered. Next, a needs assessment is made and specific objectives are derived. After a design of alternative courses of action and their consequences is completed, a course (or courses) of action is selected and implementation begun. When the implementation phases of the process are completed, evaluation of policy compliance is made, and feedback data are considered by the formulators.

Barresi and Olson suggest that MENC has a history of policy-making initiatives. They cite as their primary example MENC's encouragement of the use of music of diverse cultures, an encouragement that has continued since at least the 1967 Tanglewood Symposium and can almost certainly be traced much farther back than that. Vanett Lawler, who was active in the Pan American Union, continually advocated the involvement of MENC with the International Music Educators Conference and encouraged the use of the music of those cultures. The use of folk songs as teaching material, however, can be traced to some of the first published texts. It seems doubtful that MENC's advocacy of ethnic music can be considered a policy statement using the definition and process advocated by Barresi and Olson through Mayer and Greenwood. Barresi and Olson (1992) also cite MENC's GO Project, a follow-up to Tanglewood, as an example of policy, but it was, though noble, a project with almost no shelf life.

The approach I took in preparing this article was threefold. First, MENC is compared with other professional educational organizations

on issues that might carry policy ramifications. Second, publications of the conference are reviewed to identify policy statements. Third, and most slippery, is an examination of the author's own reactions based on close knowledge of MENC's work during the 40 years he has been a member.

Comparison of Organizations

Histories have been written about a few of MENC's associated professional organizations, and a review of these histories should reveal educational policies. Unfortunately, most his-

torical research in music education has focused on collecting facts — names and dates of individuals — and not on interpreting the meaning of the data gathered or assessing any initiatives, including policy initiatives, that the organization might have undertaken.

American Bandmasters Association

Alan Davis (1987) chronicled the American Bandmasters Association, founded in 1929. This organization was "begun by professional bandmasters for professional bandmasters to bring about changes and movement in new and uncharted directions within the band world." One

might expect policy to be a major function of this organization and, indeed, a primary objective of the organization is to unite in a concerted effort to influence the best composers to write for the wind band. The ABA was successful in that they immediately induced Respighi, Holst, and Ravel to compose for the wind band. Within three years of its founding, honorary membership in ABA had been extended to Grainger, Hadley, Holst, Respighi, and Sowerby. Major wind band publishers Chappell and Boosey and Hawkes had long told band leaders that standardized instrumentation was necessary before the publishing of band music could be feasible, and the American Bandmasters Association took this policy question seriously, working

What is the
purpose of
education in
American society?
What knowledge
is of most worth
and how essential
is music education
and in what ways
does it relate to
the larger social
and educational
questions?

on standard instrumentation for the band from its founding. The band transcription of Ravel's "Bolero" was an early project to encourage standardized instrumentation, and the transcription and its instrumentation were approved by Maurice Ravel himself. (Leopold Stokowski, along with other orchestra conductors who felt that a section of clarinets can never be a satisfactory substitute for a section of violins, recommended to the ABA the elimination of clarinets from the band and suggested that where clarinets were necessary, each director should write the part.) Stokowski much preferred high-pitched saxophones and trumpets as violin substitutes to the invariable lack of blend found in three sections of clarinets.

The ABA believed that another way to improve bands was to accept for membership only the most qualified bandmasters; accordingly, charter member Charles O'Neill constructed a four-part test to be passed before one could be considered for membership. The test was designed to assure that the candidate knew music history, musical form, the technique of musical composition, all rudiments of music and as well knew the capabilities of all band instruments in order to arrange for band. When William Santlemann, the conductor of the U.S. Marine Band, was admitted to the organization in 1941, he was the first member since 1933 who was not required to pass a formal examination for membership (Davis, 1987).

Clifford Buttleman, MENC's first full-time executive, became the ABA's first associate member in 1937 and was a recipient of the Goldman Award in 1963. The leadership of Buttleman demonstrated support for ABA and its policies, but there is no evidence that MENC shared these policies or had a major commitment to the promotion of bands.

College Band Directors National Association

The College Band Directors National Association was founded in 1941, but during World War II and the years immediately following, it was barely active. Lasko (1971), its historian, indicates that 1949 should be recognized as a date when the organization actually was activated. The college band directors as a group had been part of the MENC

until about 1938, at which time college-band issues became so interesting and challenging that the group began to meet both at MENC meetings and also at a separate site.

Houlihan (1961), in his history of MENC, states that a primary reason for the founding of the CBDNA was that MENC was not meeting the needs of the college band directors (p. 80). He states that MENC considered the band a minor part of the college music education curriculum. Apparently neither the MENC leadership nor the college band leadership saw a need to alert the MENC membership to the college band and its role in music education (p. 25).

Although there may have been an implicit internal policy for MENC to not become too involved with bands, that was not the personal philosophy of its executive secretary. Clifford Buttleman went out of his way to help CBDNA become established. CBDNA was one of the first organizations to associate with MENC. The expenses of the initial 1941 meeting were paid for by MENC, and at its second meeting, in 1946, MENC staff aided with registration and even hotel arrangements for members of the fledgling organization. There was apparently no feeling of animosity between the leaders of the two organizations; bands had their own missions, and those missions were separate from the primary function of MENC. MENC's role was avuncular.

Lasko (1971) provides few insights on any educational policy that may have been followed by the members of CBDNA. Its conferences focus on musical and administrative issues pertinent to the well-being of the college band.

American Choral Directors Association

The American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) was initially patterned after the ABA but quickly became more like the CBDNA than the ABA. Known as the American Choirmasters Association, it was first associated with the Music Teachers National Association.

The group initially met in Kansas City in 1959 but in 1960 held a joint meeting with MENC in Atlantic City, with the strong support of Vanett Lawler and Gene Morlan of the MENC staff. MENC's staff provided considerable stability to ACDA in its early days

of slow growth. It grew primarily through mergers — with the Texas Choral Directors in 1964, the Southern California Vocal Association in 1967, and the Ohio affiliated organization, also in 1967. Howard Swan organized a regional meeting of ACDA in 1966 completely independent of MENC, and it was this step that gave ACDA members a feeling of confidence and ownership and the courage to go it alone. Again, MENC's apparent implicit policy was that the specific concerns of performing organizations were not fundamental to MENC; MENC retained its original focus on public school general music programs.

National Art Education Association

A sister organization of the Music Educators National Conference is the National Art Education Association (NAEA). Although drawing as a subject predates music instruction in the public schools, the formation of the national art organization occurred 40 years after the founding of the Music Supervisors National Conference. These different organizational dates no doubt influence the character and purpose of the organizations and make comparisons difficult. The difference between the two organizations is not due entirely to the subject's function in the school. Drawing was supported for its practical function, such as teaching skills associated with mechanical drawing. Music's early acceptance was also due to its usefulness — singing was part of opening and closing school ceremonies as well as assembly programs, and music was also important to participation in church activities. The Boston school committee stressed useful goals; goals of health and happiness were more important than musical goals when music became a curricular subject in 1837.

Art education was at a disadvantage — drawing often did not lead to art. Art education also lacked the civic models that music had — local as well as professional bands, orchestras, and choruses. School assembly sings and later sing-alongs at the increasingly popular movies had no counterpart for art educators. Eastern and western regional art organizations, however, came into existence in the late 1880s, and when art educators finally formed a national professional organization in 1947 and acquired a national head-

quarters in 1958, art educators were quickly transformed into a coherent group.

In its early days, the membership of the NAEA had a predominantly scholarly bent which placed the organization in a particularly advantageous position when federal monies became available for curriculum work under Great Society programs. Fifteen of the 21 members of the executive board were college art educators. Membership was small; about 3,000 members at a time when MENC membership was 60,000. A conference held in 1969 entitled "Education through Art: Humanism in a Technological Age" attracted 1,000 attendees, and in the age of the Great Society, art educators were prominent in leadership positions in the office of education: Harlan Hoffa, Ralph Beckle, Stanley Madeja, and Martin Engleman to name a few.

CEMREL, the national arts education laboratory, numerous funded conferences and research projects, an international symposium in Belgrade, and the far reaching Project Impact all grew out of the ferment produced by the NAEA. (Music education benefited by submitting similar proposals to the office of education, initiating MENC's own world of funded conferences.)

The NAEA's creation in 1957 of an arts research journal, *Studies in Art Education* and the money for research attracted art education scholars to important positions within the organization. A critical mass of eminent arts educators was active in the association at a propitious time.

Since those early days, the association has increased the percentage of public school teachers in its membership and on its executive board and, although the scholarly influence is less, the visual artists' tradition of attention to philosophy, policy, and curriculum continues.

Art education may have profited from the fact that significant state and federal educational policy issues began to be debated about the time of the NAEA's founding; it had little historical baggage and an undistinguished record in the public schools, so policy issues may have held a relatively high priority within the organization. The absence of policy statements by an organization does not reflect negatively on the organization and

the presence of policy issues does not make it a better organization; what matters is whether policy is an objective of the organization.

National Education Association

Although most readers are familiar with the history of the Music Educators National Conference, it is worth reviewing a few noteworthy events. Music teachers organized early. Professional associations in education can be traced to the first teachers' meeting which occurred about 1799. Horace Mann's assumption of the presidency of the American Association for the Advancement of Education in 1849, an association that became the National Teachers Association in 1857 and the National Educational Association in 1870, marks the *relevant* beginning of such organizations. The Music Teachers National Association was formed in 1876 and immediately established a standing committee on "school music." NEA recognized a section for school music as early as 1884. The first resolution on behalf of school music was passed in 1892 when our own P. C. Hayden is recorded as stating: "This would seem to be the proper place, and this a propitious time, for giving form to a statement or course of study which shall explicitly state those elements which must be taught in order to reach that standard of results which is commended by the Music Section of the National Education Association" (NEA *Addresses and Proceedings*, 1892, p. 537). Voluntary national standards is seemingly a persistent idea.

Music Educators National Conference

Hayden began his *School Music Monthly* in 1900 in the hopes of raising standards and support for school music. An advocacy statement, if such it is, emerged from the first meeting of the Music Supervisors National Conference (MSNC), which Hayden called in 1907: "Disinterest must be combated and all city, districts etc. were to be encouraged to increase interest in choral music" (Kaufmann, 1942, p. 32). The first item of business at the Indianapolis meeting in 1909 was grammar-school requirements in music; although the members varied in their attitude toward such a document, the report on requirements was approved. (In 1905, the comparison of educational attainment was between American

and English schools, the opinion being that tone quality of students in this country was especially poor.)

Inspection of the minutes of succeeding meetings reveals that the primary concern of the conference has focused on the improvement of the profession. Criticism was almost exclusively on practices within the profession with no policy statements that were likely to disturb the rapidly emerging bureaucratic educational structure or alienate those who might support traditional practices in music. The conference has devoted its resources to strengthening itself, promoting the need for music specialists in the schools, and improving instruction in the schools. The organization began as a group of supervisors whose primary responsibility was to aid the classroom teacher and those few specialists who were responsible for instruction. At the first meeting, Hayden demonstrated his rhythm forms, thereby setting the pattern for in-service education at the conferences. How to teach class piano, the use of suitable materials for orchestras and bands, the boy's changing voice, teacher and supervisor preparation, and music appreciation became recurring topics at conferences.

Issues have been addressed that support or facilitate instruction. In 1910 there was concern to organize and accredit high school music and to standardize sight reading procedures. In 1912, Eleanor Smith criticized the quality of music in the schools, and C. F. Fullerton stressed the importance of emphasizing artistic results and sound educational procedures (Kaufmann, 1942).

In 1913, deficiencies in teacher education were noted. The arts in education, the nature and function of measurement, and the correlation of music with other subjects were topics prior to 1924. In 1920, President Hollis Dann stated that the conference was national in name only, not in vision or achievement (Kaufman, p. 145).

The best musical groups began to appear at conferences in the 1920s and demonstration ensembles were formed for the conventions. Eminent musicians attended — in 1928 for example Frederick Stock, Howard Hanson, Walter Damrosch, and also Percy Sholes of London. In 1930, over 5,000 mem-

bers attended the convention out of a membership of 7,505. One cannot argue that the organization was not meeting the needs of its members. In 1932, speakers were of the caliber of F. Melius Christiansen, Gustav Holst, and Eugene Goossens. During the 1920s, testing had become a major activity of the conference. Sigmund Spaeth administered tests in music appreciation to students in 1925, and by 1932 music discrimination tests were given at the convention to thousands of students with expense scholarships to music camps furnished for the winners by the National Broadcasting Corporation radio network. Present also in 1932 were a national orchestra of 400, a band of 500, and a chorus of 500 that met for a week and performed two or three times during that week. At the New York City meeting of 1936, evaluating music in the curriculum was discussed by William H. Kilpatrick, James Mursell, Thomas Briggs, Peter Dykema, Edward Thorndike, George Strayer, Norval Church, Harold Rugg, Goodwin Watson, and Florence Stratemeyer; the impressive list goes on.

The contest movement grew along with the health and vigor of the conference. The topics at the biannual meetings are a history of the work of the conference, and the meetings became celebrations of the accomplishments of the profession and the organization. Conference workshops were designed to improve school practices that enabled a better celebration to be held at succeeding conferences. Individuals and individual groups were celebrated. Members looked for examples and models, not policy statements. A national research council had been established by MSNC in 1918, and it gathered important data on topics such as school and community music, credits in college, salaries, standard courses, and music in the junior high school. Efforts to ascertain the status of the profession and make recommendations on what was possible resulted in a number of significant publications. When the organization grew and leading members could no longer give of their time to conduct these surveys, the value of the research council declined and with it the possibility of identifying problems, defining them, determining their seriousness, and recommending solutions.

Today, emphasis on providing supplementary instruction at the biennial meetings continues — indeed, some universities give graduate credit for conference attendance. Although the research group was revived under the leadership of Paul Lehman at the time of federal support for research in the 1960s and 1970s, it has once again declined in value to the conference. The council remains in existence, renamed the Society for Research in Music Education, with a primary function of disseminating results of research conducted by its members to other members. Research priorities are not established by any body of the conference and there is no coordinated research through the conference. Society members conduct research of interest to themselves, and some of this research may deal with policy issues. More emphasis seems to be placed on the research technique employed than on the significance of the problem or the results. If Barresi and Olson are correct that a major policy thrust of MENC in the last 25 years has been the use of ethnic musics, an implicit policy thrust in the first 50 years was on the quality of music studied and learned with secondary concern for the facilitation of the reading and performing of vocal music.

Association of Supervision and Curriculum Directors

A comparison of MENC to the NEA — with its 1,500,000 members — seems unrealistic; a better comparison to understand MENC's position on policy issues is one with the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Directors (ASCD). Like the NEA, ASCD was established during WW II when the Society for Curriculum Study merged with NEA's Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction. The feeling of curriculum directors was that the NEA was overly dominated by conservative school superintendents and that the profession needed a socially oriented organization that was more responsive to the needs of learners and more committed to democratic values. The founders of ASCD did consider the separate subject-matter organizations as important influences in matters of curriculum but found the agendas of the organization too specialized and seldom focused on curriculum issues. Improved edu-

cation required a broader view of schooling, for education is made up of more than excellence in the identified basic subjects.

In any merger, the new organization begins with a built-in history. Curriculum construction had been a major topic in the 1920s and several cities were exemplary in their work: Denver, Detroit, St. Louis, Seattle, New Orleans, and Columbus. There had been state efforts as well in an unlikely grouping of states: Arkansas, Alabama, Florida, and South Dakota. Harold Rugg (1927) edited a seminal yearbook on curriculum issues published by the National Society for the Study of Education. These curriculum efforts were in response to the establishment by an NEA committee of the seven cardinal principles of education: health, command of the fundamentals, worthy home membership, vocation, citizenship, leisure, and ethical behavior.

The focus of the department of supervisors and directors of instruction, prior to the World War I, was on goal setting, coordination, control, and the personal characteristics of the ideal supervisor. The latter was defined as a stimulating individual who could facilitate tasks through successful communication and careful coordination.

Both groups forming the ASCD were influenced by John Dewey's championing of democratic values and his belief that it was the experiences of the student that changed behavior and not any accumulation of knowledge and skill. The Progressive Education Association might have met the needs of both original groups, but as an association it was always factionalized. Dewey's ideas were stretched beyond recognition by groups within the association; it finally disbanded over fundamental disagreements as to whether education should be child-centered or socially centered, a fundamental dualism throughout the history of education and certainly a question of policy. Dewey's idea that both positions were extreme ends of the same continuum was never satisfactory to most members, as they found themselves having to choose between one view or the other in selecting experiences for students. Accommodation works better in theory than in practice.

Into this vacuum of viable professional organizations concerned with curricular matters scampered several educational leaders, among whom was Hollis Caswell, an educator influential with both the curriculum directors and the supervisors. Education was fortunate to have within the profession individuals who had seen the importance of leadership in accomplishing tasks during World War II and who believed that post-war education needed comparable leadership. These individuals believed that it was the schools' responsibility to foster and develop democratic leadership, that education must stress the development of positive personal characteristics and lead all students to think about the future, and to believe that their present efforts were not good enough; society could be even better. These ASCD founders recognized the tremendous progress made during the early 1940s in many areas of knowledge and worked to insure that this new knowledge and these newly developed skills be applied to education.

The name of ASCD's journal, *Educational Leadership*, was no accident, as individuals as diverse as Kurt Lewin, Ronald Lippitt, Kenneth Benne, Bernard Steiner, Hilda Taba, Stephen Corey, Arthur Foshay, Max Goodson, and Arthur Combs provided the leadership needed to accomplish the adoption of significant ideas and practices. Although many educational practices in America had been built around the concept of supervisors, their time was past. Supervisors were rich in resources; they had provided in-service education for the relatively uneducated classroom teacher. But by the 1950s all teachers were better educated, and many were well-versed in subject matter specialties; so the ASCD needed to reflect this change and be open to new ideas. It was time to institutionalize newly found American strengths and use them in improving a changed world.

Supervision never had been a coherent body of knowledge and supervisors never had shared a common agenda. Consequently, only about 12 percent of the articles in *Educational Leadership* have focused on supervision, and only one book on the topic

has been published by the organization. When in 1967 ASCD President J. Harlan Shores attempted to increase ASCD membership among supervisors by dedicating the 1969 convention to the supervisor's role, he obtained the opposite effect. Divisions within the organization were highlighted, and a confrontation arose during the convention, and the president resigned. Supervisory concerns within ASCD lost considerable status.

With its emphasis on leadership, ASCD adopted democratic leadership principles and promoted creative ideas arising from work groups. For example, at the first ASCD meeting in 1947, 20 committees were formed with 12 members each. These committees did not issue arcane reports that went unnoticed by most of the membership; rather, the next convention was organized around discussion groups from these committees.

The ASCD leadership recognized that to have an impact on American society, the ASCD must become involved in policy issues wherever education intersected with society. Thus, the first policy statement on human and civil rights was issued in 1947, followed by statements in 1948, 1950, 1952, and 1954. After 1954, policy statements on civil rights were combined with calls for desegregation. The organization championed federal aid to education first in 1948 and was very vocal during the presidencies of Kennedy and Johnson.

Throughout the 1950s, interest in international relations and international education was growing among ASCD's membership. In 1970, with a 12,000-member base, ASCD hosted a meeting designed to address worldwide problems of curriculum construction and the supervision of instruction. This was no ordinary conference of plenary sessions and poster presentations, but a ten-day working conference of 303 educators from 53 nations.

ASCD took a stand on the Equal Rights Amendment and endorsed it in 1972, 1973, and again in 1978. The first black president of the organization was elected in 1971-72, and to insure that a black *woman* would be an early president of the organization, all three candidates for the 1977-78 election were black women.

Policy issues have not been limited to those

principles of democratic behaviors and values prominent on the national scene. During the 1970s, ASCD promoted urban education, the development of computer-assisted instruction, and a discipline-based curriculum.

Continuing to presage the 1990s, ASCD issued policy statements against vouchers and tuition tax credits in 1981, formed a coalition against censorship in 1982, and in that year proposed a reaffirmation of democratic values. By 1983, the membership had increased to 70,000, a six-fold increase in 13 years. In 1984, ASCD took a stand against prayer in the public schools and embarked on programs of in-service education designed to assist educators in preparing youth in the area of human interrelationships.

ASCD has been careful about defining its mission. It has been very clear to its membership that ASCD is not a research organization but that it is supportive of educational research. To demonstrate that philosophy, the organization began publication in 1985 of a quarterly, the *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, devoted to reporting *original* research studies about curriculum. Its lack of focus on the research process contrasts with the research journals published by the American Educational Research Association (AERA).

ASCD has also turned over all advocacy efforts with state and federal agencies to the national school board association, indicating the need to focus its own efforts on policy issues that represent its own goals. ASCD's present focus is on young children, thinking skills, redefining the teaching profession, proficiency in mathematics and communication as tools for learning in a balanced curriculum, technology, and the emerging knowledge of effective leadership and supervisory behavior. Membership in the organization continues to grow, reaching 187,000 in 1993.

The 1955 platform of ASCD was sufficiently broad to remain current for policy for the next 40 years. Adopted in 1956, the platform read in part:

- the public schools are our chief and most effective means of developing free men capable of solving problems and governing themselves successfully;
- in a democracy, society has an obligation to provide free and equal education opportunities for all children and youth, and

the learner, according to his ability, has an obligation to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered;

- the main purpose of the American schools is to provide for the fullest possible development of each learner for living morally, creatively, and productively in a democratic society;
- the curriculum, consisting of all the experiences of the learner under the guidance of the school, is effective in achieving the purpose of education when it is based on the needs of the learner and the demands of the society in which he lives;
- because of individual differences, social change, and the nature of the educative process, continuous planning, development, and appraisal of the curriculum are essential; and
- growth in realization of democratic values requires that learners have freedom to learn and the teachers have freedom to teach.

The effectiveness of ASCD in achieving its policy goals through action plans is unknown. Its stand on important issues, however, *appears* to be recognized as a thoughtful approach to education, and the organization seems to be influencing at least *educational* policy leaders. ASCD has been supportive of music programs, but these statements of support have not resulted in action or action plans. ASCD statements may have slowed the decline of the priority of music among school leaders, but it appears that present school leaders are more influenced by local demands than by any philosophy of education. The promotion of a coherent curriculum that includes music might smack too much of a national curriculum, even for ASCD leaders.

Other Educational Associations

Policy statements are easier to discern in professional educational associations that actively promote policy; their policy statements are intended as blueprints for action. MENC's relationship with the National Educational Association changed due to both organizations' decisions about relative emphasis on policy. MENC elected to remain structured as a learned society rather than as a trade union; in contrast, the NEA became a union committed to advocating policy and to using its resources to attain the goals implied

by that policy. Teacher preparation periods that are required as a part of teacher contracts are due to NEA policy, as is the hiring of more teachers at the expense of reducing the number of positions of supervisors and policy makers in central offices. Due to this learned society's decision, the music education profession no longer has the benefit of the powerful voice of city music supervisors, who once held authority and responsibility.

The NEA and AFT have a policy impact, although less than they would like, upon teacher training requirements and teacher training curricula; scholarly organizations have a much more muted voice.

Results

Obviously, professional organizations can focus on policy issues within education and those issues that affect education. Organizations differ. Policy has been more important to art educators than to music educators. The lack of attention to policy issues in most of the arts has been a concern of educators as diverse as Ralph Smith of the *Journal of Aesthetic Education* and Sam Hope of the National Association of Schools of Music. The journal *Arts Education Policy Review* exists without any association sponsorship and is making a valiant effort to at least remind arts educators that there are policy questions.

MENC Publications

Inspecting the publication output of the MENC does not reveal any policy thrust of the conference. Some publications were issued because they were believed to be important to the profession; the publications of the research council in its formative years are excellent examples of an effort to satisfy this need. They contained information believed important to the profession's leadership in making decisions for MENC's own programs and in speaking for the profession on a national level. (The work of the conference was not unfamiliar to school superintendents during the 1930s and 1940s and perhaps was known earlier.)

The three source books are another example of publications issued because of their perceived importance to all members of the conference; these were used as texts for teachers in training during the 1950s and later. Lilla Belle Pitts gives credit to President

Luther Richman (1946-48) and to the executive committee for financing the publication of the first resource book which as she says, was “by no means a small venture.” This source book was a compendium of data, opinions, and recommendations compiled by MENC curriculum committees during the period of 1942-46. “The input has not only a national focus but includes the work of regional committees from each of the six divisions working on the same topic” (Buttleman, 1947). In this source book we find the statement adopted by the conference in 1940, a slightly revised version of the 1930 statement and belief. Highlights from the statement include:

- The responsibility of offering every child a rich and varied experience in music rests upon the music teacher. It becomes his duty to see that music contributes its significant part in leading mankind to a higher plane of existence.
- The role of MENC is in championing progressive thought and practice which includes
 1. Provision in all the schools of our country, both urban and rural, for musical experience and training for all children, in accordance with their interests and capacities.
 2. Continued effort to improve music teaching and to provide adequate equipment.
 3. Carry-over of school music training into the musical, social, and home life of the community, as a vital part of its cultural, recreational, and leisure-time activities.
 4. Increased opportunities for adult education in music.
 5. Improvement of choir and congregational singing in the churches and Sunday schools; increased use of instrumental ensemble playing in connection with church activities.
 6. Encouragement and support of all worthwhile musical enterprises as desirable factors in making our country a better place in which to live.

In the second source book, published eight years later, the constitutional purpose of MENC to advance music education is further interpreted:

- insure a useful and broad program of music education in the schools;
- serve music educators through a perma-

nent organization with professional publications and business headquarters;

- correlate and provide a clearinghouse for all school music activities and interests;
- give prestige and influence to the music education profession as an important segment of the general education profession;
- serve as the official public relations medium for the music education profession; and
- correlate school music activities of the U.S. and other parts of the world.

This second handbook, also edited by Hazel Morgan, was the work of commissions between 1951 and 1954. These commissions were charged with the following topics: basic concepts, standards of music literature and performance, music in general school administration, music in preschool-elementary school; music in junior high school, music in senior high school, music in higher education, music in the community, music in the media of mass communication; and accreditation and certification. These topics represent a definite move away from issues with policy implications.

The third source book (Kowall, 1966), published 11 years later, does not represent the work of the conference and any mention of the purpose of MENC is absent. Rather, 91 articles were reprinted in this handbook as representative of the profession’s status.

Publications during the last 30 years have consisted of papers from conferences jointly sponsored by MENC and other organizations. Such titles include the *Tanglewood Report*, *Ann Arbor Symposium*, *The Young Child and Music*, *Toward Aesthetic Education*, and *Becoming Human through Music*. Other publications represent the work of special commissions whose reports were considered to be financially viable — *Program Description and Standards*, *Growing Up Complete*, and the “how to” publications ranging from *What Works*, *Promising Practices*, *TIPS*, and several courses of study (Burton, 1991; Mercer, 1991; Kvet, 1991). Few of these publications represent educational policy. The well-known conceptual approach for elementary schools published by MENC was the work of a group of Southern California music educators (Gary, 1967). The publications, like the biennial meetings, reflect the in-service classroom ap-

proach that was the hallmark of the earliest meetings of the conference.

The first source book published 47 years ago, remains the most definitive policy publication of the conference, containing definite recommendations that actually are unintended policy statements and blueprints for action. Without the other steps necessary for policy recommended by Mayer and Greenwood, including alternative courses of action, evaluation, and feedback, even the recommendations in this first source book cannot be considered explicit policy statements.

Random Remarks

Music educators faced with serious policy decisions have no national voice that can be compared to those of the ASCD, the NEA, and similar organizations for which the formulation of educational policy is a prime responsibility and that also have the resources of the “bully pulpit” to support their policy decisions. In 1994, one gets the impression that some of the leaders of MENC would like the conference to become more involved in policy but are hampered by long tradition and a conference membership sufficiently disparate as to preclude consensus on matters of policy. The intensity of the work on national standards and the cooperation with other arts organizations is one indicator of change, especially when this work comes on the heels of an impressive advocacy drive waged in cooperation with music industry and a number of arts organizations. The national standards project however, has few of the characteristics of explicit music education policy.

The interests of the college band director, the choral director and the string teacher continue to be better articulated by the associated organizations of CBDNA, ACDA, and ASTA, and the national standards are not an indication of their priorities. Because of the lack of consensus, individual members increasingly rely on philosophical positions they learned in college as the basis for answers to policy questions. Even the model curricula furnished by elementary music texts that were a source of support to classroom teachers have largely disappeared. With only two publishing companies remaining in the music text book field, teachers have evidently sought guidance and teaching materi-

als elsewhere — perhaps in specialized programs in movement, MIE (music in education), Orff, Kodály, or commercial programs such as Music Words Opera. Many school districts rely on visiting artists for their curricular offerings and *ad hoc* introductions to specific genres and styles provided by local musicians. When a music teacher interacts with students only once a week, teaching to any standard in a sequential manner is virtually impossible. These teachers are forced to seek out modest, acceptable objectives do little more than expose their students to music as a field of study, or attempt to preserve a positive attitude toward exact and other noncommercial musics.

These comments do not indicate a failure of the conference; they are descriptive. The conference has diligently backed every advocacy program that supported the inclusion of music in the school program. Such defensive measures in the name of advocacy required a tremendous effort and alliances with strange bedfellows.

More than successful advocacy, however, is needed to answer important questions. One such question is the role of music in the middle school. No middle-school leader has suggested eliminating music — the prevailing philosophy is to have it all — but to the leaders of the middle-school movement, exploratory experiences in music are more important than students’ continuous experience in band, chorus, or general music throughout the middle-school years. Nancy Doda (1993) has suggested that music should follow the scheduling pattern established for visual art in the Denver schools: Each nine weeks a different experience is offered — sculpture, water color, photography, weaving, and so on. She reluctantly permits the possibility of students enrolling in two consecutive nine-week programs in music during the entire three-year, middle-school experience but even then the student must be advised what he or she is missing by giving up an exploratory. Marshall Simonds Middle School in Burlington, MA, is often cited as an example of the best in middle schools; at Simonds, band is one of 170 activity block offerings! Seventy of these block offerings are offered during each five-week period.

The middle-school question is only one example among the many major changes being suggested as a part of the reform of the schools where policy for music education matters. Outcomes-based education, another plan within the reform movement, will be troublesome for those music teachers who emphasize process — and the list of issues goes on. Efforts to avoid any semblance of tracking in schools make scheduling band and chorus difficult and the scheduling of small-ensemble experiences prohibitive during the school day. Authentic assessment, coupled with guaranteed success, means that slow students will be given longer to complete courses — as much as an extra semester or year — making the scheduling problem of scheduling ensembles into a six- or seven-period day even more difficult. The abolition of equal time periods within the school day further complicates scheduling, especially when a music teacher is shared by two schools or has responsibilities at more than one school level. Site-based management, another program within the reform movement, might dictate that a school needs only .7 music teacher. Without the support of a central administrative staff person responsible for coordinating the music instruction needs of the entire system, schools' reliance on part-time music teachers could become the norm. The opportunities for music education policy martyrs abound.

The advocacy movement has given rise to new rationales intended to erect another bulwark against threats to the music program. Multiple intelligences, multicultural education, infusion, arts education, music as a cognitive exercise, reflective thinking, and a suggestion to incorporate writing into the music program — these are some of the suggestions that have yet to find policy homes.

Policy opportunities exist at the college level as well. Having recently initiated music for special learners as a required course in teacher training programs, music educators now find that this approach is incorrect: the teaching of special populations now is to be a part of all courses. To improve their undergraduate programs, colleges are looking to add a fifth year to teacher education programs and award a master's degree (or credit

towards it) for this improved but formerly undergraduate program. This change has major implications for the present master's degree in music education and will have an impact upon doctoral degree programs.


Policy does not originate from such issues and problems as these; indeed, these problems are symptomatic of a lack of policy. Policy emanates from the intellectual demands of the discipline or from problems of the society. Exploratory music courses, music infused with mathematics and science, and music that improves learning in other subjects may have little relationship to music as a discipline, and they are not directly related to a major social problem. Policy decisions require large resources and cannot be made by the timid.

With surprisingly rapidity, the Music Educators National Conference has moved from its traditional concern for assisting in the improvement of music instruction to a relationship with the activist Council for Basic Education and the adoption of the Getty Foundation's educational approach to visual arts education. These moves raise policy questions that the profession has never confronted. In relinquishing many responsibilities and accepting new ones, everything we do from early-childhood education in music through teacher training will be affected.

It is surely time to pause and confirm whether our philosophy is sufficient to respond to the basic questions: What is the purpose of education in American society? What knowledge is of most worth, how essential is music education, and in what ways does it relate to the larger social and educational questions? Thinking about educational policy has emerged as a prime responsibility. Is it, and can it be a responsibility of the Music Educators National Conference?

References

- Barresi, A. and Olson, G. (1992) In R. Colwell (Ed.) *Handbook of research on music teaching and learning*. Reston, VA: MENC.
- Boswell, J. (1985) *The young child in music: Contemporary principles in child development and music education*. Reston, VA: MENC.
- Burton, L. (1991) *Teaching choral music: A course of study*. Reston, VA: MENC.
- Buttleman, C. (1947) In H. Morgan (Ed.). *Music*

- education source book*. Chicago: MENC, p. v.
- Colwell, R. (Ed.) (1992) *Handbook of research on music teaching and learning*. New York: Schirmer Books.
- Davis, A. (1987) A history of the American Bandmasters Association. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Arizona State University.
- Doda, N. (1993) *Middle link*. Center for Education of the Young Adolescent, University of Wisconsin, Platteville, pp 12-13.
- Gary, C. (1967) *The study of music in the elementary school—A conceptual approach*. Washington DC: MENC.
- Hoffer, C. (1986) *The school music program: Description and standards* (2nd ed.). Reston, VA: MENC.
- Houlihan, J. E. (1961) The MENC in American education. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Boston University.
- Kauffman, H. (1942) A history of the Music Educators National Conference. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, George Peabody College for Teachers.
- Kowall, B. (1966) *Perspectives in music education, source book III*. Washington DC.: MENC.
- Kvet, E. (1991) *Teaching wind and percussion instruments: A course of study*. Reston, VA: MENC.
- Lasko, R. (1971) A history of the College Band Directors Association. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Cincinnati.
- Mason, J. (1981) *Documentary report of the Ann Arbor Symposium: Applications of Psychology to the Teaching and Learning of Music*. Reston, VA: MENC.
- MENC Interdisciplinary Committee. (1985) *Becoming human through music*. Reston, VA: MENC.
- Mercer, L. (1991) *Teaching general music: A course of study*. Reston, VA: MENC.
- Merrion, M. (1989) *What works: Instructional strategies for music education*. Reston, VA: MENC.
- National Commission on Music Education. (1991) *Growing up complete: The imperative for music education*. Reston, VA: MENC.
- National Education Association (1982) *Addresses and proceedings*. Vol. 26.
- Reimer, B. (1971) *Toward an aesthetic education*. Washington DC: MENC.
- Rossman, L. (Comp.) (1989) *Tips: Discipline in the music classroom*. Reston, VA: MENC.
- Witt, A. (1991) *Teaching string instruments: A course of study*. Reston, VA: MENC. 

Missouri Journal of Research in Music Education Volume 30, 1993

Articles

A Comparison of Musical Performance Accuracy Between Teacher-Taught and Peer-Taught Kindergarten and First Grade Students – *Carol A. Prickett and Marilyn Jones*

A Comparison of Knowledge of Children's Songs Among Older Adults, College Students and Children – *Janice N. Killian*

Instrumental Student Motivation: An Exploratory Study – *Man Lin Chang and Eugenia Costa-Giomi*

Toward a Black Aesthetic: The effect of Race on Preference and Perception of Selected Popular Music – *Steven J. Morrison*

Suitability of a Personal Heart Rate Monitor for Use in Music Research* – *Albert LeBlanc, Patricia Shehan Campbell, and Peggy Coddling*

*This research was supported by a grant from Yamaha Corporation of America, through the National Music Education Research Project.

The *Missouri Journal of Research in Music Education* is published annually by the Missouri Music Educators Association. Copies can be obtained by sending \$2.00 (cash, check, or money order, payable to Missouri Music Educators Association) to the editor: Randall G. Pembroke, *Missouri Journal of Research in Music Education*, 4949 Cherry, Conservatory of Music, University of Missouri-Kansas City, Kansas City, MO 64110-2229.