



October 5, 2020

The start of the 2020-21 school year has brought numerous challenges that affect all music educators across Tennessee. In our current reality, the COVID-19 virus requires everyone to take the necessary safety precautions for our students. We all face the same road of tough decisions during these unprecedented times.

In the wake of this pandemic comes a most difficult decision concerning the TMEA Professional Development Conference and the Collegiate, All-State, Treble Honor Ensembles, and the TMEA State Concert Festival. With a heavy heart, the Tennessee Music Education Association Board of Directors formally announces the cancellation of all TMEA sanctioned in-person events for the 2020-2021 school year.

To help support our member music educators, who teach in public and private schools, and span all levels from pre-K-12 to college and university, TMEA will continue its acclaimed online professional development series, *Keeping the Beat*. Produced in conjunction with support from the CMA Foundation and the Department of Music at the University of Tennessee at Martin, TMEA's *Keeping the Beat* will offer music educators high-quality and engaging professional development during after-school hours. The upcoming schedule, which is still in pre-production, will afford music educators the opportunity to satisfy their professional development requirements for the 2020-21 school year.

For our high school students, TMEA, working in conjunction with our regional association partners, will still recognize the hard work and achievements of students who seek to become members of the Tennessee All-State Ensembles. Following their prescribed audition processes, our regional vocal and instrumental association partners will submit a list of students selected for the Tennessee All-State Ensembles. Students who qualify for the Tennessee All-State Ensembles will be given distinction status for graduation, as recognized by the Tennessee Department of Education. The TMEA Board of Directors is currently exploring additional virtual opportunities for the Tennessee All-State Ensemble students.

While we regret that we will not be able to convene in Nashville for the conference in 2021, the TMEA Board of Directors will plan for an even bigger conference in 2022. While the planning is still preliminary, TMEA seeks to expand its current professional development offerings. The TMEA Board of Directors will explore new and potential ensemble offerings for elementary, middle schools, and performance opportunities for non-traditional ensembles. Information about the 2022 conference will be shared as information becomes available.

In these uncertain times, we call upon all members of TMEA and our regional association partners to stay safe, stay vigilant, and stay informed. We all look forward to a safe return to the conference for our members and the students we serve.

Sincerely,

Alexis Yatuzis-Derryberry  
38th President  
Tennessee Music Education Association