



The Eighty-Second
New Mexico Music Educators Association

All-State Music Festival and In-Service Conference

January 14-17, 2026 - Hosted by University of New Mexico

Jazz All-State Music Festival

January 22-24, 2026 - Hosted by Eastern New Mexico University

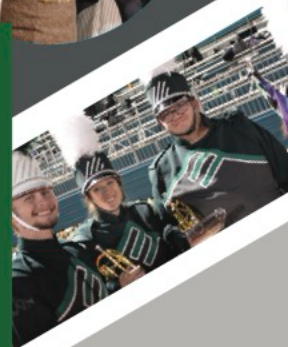
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Dear New Mexico Music Educators,

Welcome to the 2026 NMMEA All-State Music Festival and In-Service Conference! I am excited to serve as your president for this two year term. Please stop me and say hi and let me know how your year has been going.

The NMMEA Executive Committee has been hard at work to make this event a valuable educational experience for you and your students. As someone from a rural school where I am the music department, I especially look forward to the community and sense of connection I can only find with other music teachers. In addition to attending one of the many workshops presented by fellow educators or watching the All-State ensemble rehearsals, take a moment to grab a coffee with old and new friends and forge these connections.

As well, I am excited that talented groups of students and educators will be presenting their honor concerts, including the first ever alternate ensemble student group, the NMSA Percussion Ensemble under the direction of Jesse Parker. We know that high level music education opens doors for our students: let's support each other and our students' achievements by watching these performances and cheering on our colleagues.

I hope we can continue to work together to ensure the future of music education for all students here in New Mexico: keep an eye out for updates on participating in our first annual Roundhouse Day in Santa Fe during the legislative session, find out how to create your own chapter of the Tri-M Honor Society at your middle or high school, and look out for some new opportunities for elementary and general music educators. One of our goals at the state and national level is to inspire future generations to become music teachers—what we do to support our students now just might inspire them to pursue the career we love. Your Board of Directors is bringing in new ideas throughout the year to keep music education strong here in NM for many years to come.

I hope the conference starts your 2025 off right with friends and colleagues from across the state. It's time to celebrate our students' amazing accomplishments so far this year and push ourselves to be the best educators we can be.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura Eberhardt".

Laura Eberhardt
President, NMMEA

The Eighty-Second New Mexico Music Educators Association All-State Music Festival and In-Service Conference

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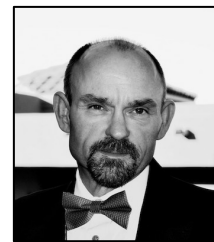
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2026 All-State Guest Conductors

Guitar Ensemble – Lynn McGrath, Conductor



Described as “a “tour-de-force of artistic multi-tasking...” (Richard M. Long, Soundboard Magazine), Lynn McGrath has forged her own musical career path building and blending myriad cross-disciplinary interests and skills. With expressive musicianship and a love of Spanish literature and acting, she has shared poetry and musical setting of “Platero y yo” (poetry of Nobel laureate Juan Ramón Jiménez and music by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco) on 4 continents in the simultaneous roles of guitarist and theatrical narrator. Her current solo project features a refreshing, curated compilation of music by historically neglected artists (Louisa María Anido, Ida Presti, Louise Walker, Liu Zhuang) paired with pieces written in dedication to these and other virtuosic women performers (works by Sergio Assad, Léo Brouwer, Francis Poulenc, Guido Santórsola, Frank Wallace).

Lynn McGrath is an avid collaborator. As a current member of the acclaimed Tantalus Guitar Quartet, and a former member of the Rio Grande Guitar Quartet and the trio Presti, she has toured and presented masterclasses through much of the U.S., performed on live radio, and premiered works. She was a soloist with the Orchestra of Northern New York, performed with the Albuquerque-based choir Quintessence, the Santa Fe Opera (Don Pasquale), and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra (Mahler) and collaborated with exceptional musicians in stand-alone concerts (Anthony Dean Griffy).

Outside of performing far and wide as a soloist and ensemble member, (New Zealand, Peru, Mexico, Canada, the U.K., and across much of the U.S.), she has conducted and directed youth and community guitar ensembles for events in California, Florida, New Mexico, New York, Nevada and Oklahoma; she has adjudicated for numerous national and international competitions including the James Stroud Youth Competition (U.S.-Cleveland, OH), Nikšić Festival (Montenegro), Fringe Competition (online), Silesian Guitar Autumn Festival (Poland), Marlow Guitar Competition, and for events held at universities including University of Louisville, Columbus, UC Boulder. She was the Artistic Director of the Guitar Foundation of America’s Youth Competitions for a decade, and for 7 years served as the Director of the ICAC Winner’s Tour, which was followed by the creation of her own musical management business that represented the highly acclaimed Italian based group, SoloDuo.

Lynn McGrath has a BA in Spanish Language and Literature, and Education, a BM in Guitar Performance (Crane School of Music, SUNY Potsdam) and a MM and DMA from the University of Southern California. She is a dedicated and successful pedagogue whose students have been accepted to some of the best undergraduate and graduate schools in the nation, who place in international and domestic competitions, and have been featured on NPR’s “From the Top.” After years of combining teaching positions at various colleges and preparatory programs in California, New Mexico, and Oklahoma, in 2017 she returned to her home state of New York as the Senior Guitar Instructor at Eastman Community Music School (Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester), where she works with a thriving studio that include young children, aspiring pre-collegiate guitarists, and adults.

Concert Orchestra – Heather Lofdahl, Conductor



Dr. Heather Lofdahl is Assistant Professor of Music Education at The Ohio State University, where she directs the string education program. In addition, she serves as Music Director of the Newark-Granville Youth Symphony and music education specialist for Play Us Forward, a community partnership aimed at increasing access to string instruction for underserved students. She has over a decade of experience teaching elementary through university orchestra students in Illinois, Georgia, North Carolina, and Ohio.

Dr. Lofdahl is published in the *String Research Journal* and *American String Teachers Journal*. She is an active member of the American String Teachers Association (ASTA) and the National Association for Music Education. Through these organizations as well as the Suzuki Association of the Americas and the International Society for Music Education, Dr. Lofdahl has presented research and pedagogy sessions at the Symposium for Music Teacher Education; International Society for Music Education Conference (Glasgow, Scotland and Helsinki, Finland); American String Teachers Association National Conference; and various state conferences. Her research is focused on equity and access in music education, best practices of outstanding string teachers, and practice behaviors of string players. In addition, Dr. Lofdahl serves on the ASTA Content Committee and is President-Elect of the Ohio String Teachers Association.

Dr. Lofdahl holds Bachelor of Arts degrees in Music Education and Viola Performance from Augustana College, Master of Music degrees in Music Education and Viola Performance from the University of North Carolina Greensboro, and a PhD in Music Education from the University of North Carolina Greensboro. She is an active guest conductor and clinician throughout the United States and abroad.

Symphony Orchestra – Christopher Kelts, Conductor



Christopher Kelts, DMA, is an active, energetic, engaging conductor and music educator. Dr. Kelts is the Director of Orchestras at the Conservatory of the University of Missouri-Kansas City. His work in the Conservatory includes leading both orchestras, conducting operas, and mentoring graduate conducting students for further study and meaningful placement in the profession.

Concurrently, Chris Kelts is the music director and conductor of the Kansas City Civic Orchestra, Saint Joseph Symphony, and the Kinnor Philharmonic. Other conducting engagements have included assistant conductor of the Kansas City Ballet, Chamber Orchestra of the Ozarks, Topeka Symphony Orchestra, and the Urban Cultural Project (Kansas City).

Most recently, Chris made his Carnegie Hall debut (2024) with the Missouri State Symphony and is a recurring guest conductor with the St. Louis Gateway Festival Orchestra and St. Louis Philharmonic. Other guest-conducting performances, orchestral clinics, and mentoring programs have taken Dr. Kelts as far as South America and Asia – as well as the national and regional United States. Chris Kelts continues to serve on the Hellam International Young Artist Competition adjudication panel.

Dr. Christopher Kelts enjoys a busy schedule and thrives on working with young musicians.

Small School Band – Sidney Shuler, Conductor



Dr. Sidney E. Shuler holds a Bachelor of Music in Education degree from Youngstown State University (OH) and Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts Degrees from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His major teachers include Ronald Romm and Dr. Michael Ewald (University of Illinois) and Dr. Christopher Krummel of Youngstown State.

As a performing artist, Dr. Shuler has served as principal trumpet of the Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra (IL) and guest principal trumpet of the Peoria Symphony Orchestra (IL). Shuler has also performed with additional orchestras including the Moscow State Radio, Illinois, and Green Bay Symphony Orchestras. As an orchestral and commercial musician, Shuler has performed with artists such as Rachel Barton Pine, Mark O'Connor, Lynn Harrell, Mannheim Steamroller, Art Farmer, Sean Jones, Byron Stripling, Roger Williams, and the Preservation Hall Jazz Band. Additionally, he has also performed under the baton of esteemed conductors David Zinman, James Conlon, and Michael Stern, as well as many others. Adding to his performance credits, Shuler has been heard in solo recital and chamber performances across the United States as well as abroad in Russia and in Spain.

Dr. Shuler's appointments at the University of Illinois and at Chadron State College (NE) have included responsibilities teaching trumpet while leading diverse instrumental ensembles. These ensembles have performed in venues such as AT&T Stadium (TX), Coors Field (CO), the University of Utah, and other venues across the United States.

Shuler's students have earned scholarships to attend summer music festivals and positions in international performing groups. Additionally, his students have earned scholarships to various colleges and universities.

Sidney's current position as assistant professor of trumpet and assistant director of bands is at Eastern New Mexico University in Portales, NM where he resides with his wife Pamela, daughters Eleanor and Beatrice, and their dogs, Campbell, Honus, and Fergie.

Concert Band - Danh Pham, Conductor



Danh Pham is a Conn-Selmer Educational Clinician, and the Music Director for both the Washington-Idaho Symphony Orchestra and the Coeur d'Alene Symphony Orchestra. He currently serves as Conductor of the WSU Symphony Orchestra, and Director of Bands at Washington State University.

Dr. Pham was recently named the 2025 Washington Governor's Arts Commission Educator of the Year, the 2024 Washington Music Educators Association (WMEA) College/University Teacher of the Year, and the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) Music Teacher of the Year. In Spring 2024, he was inducted into the prestigious American Bandmasters Association, where he made his conducting debut with the United States Army Band (Pershing's Own) in Washington D.C. Dr. Pham's WSU honors include the Sahlin Faculty Excellence Award for Outreach and Engagement, the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Award, the College of Arts and Sciences Mid-Career Award.

Dr. Pham maintains a busy conducting schedule that includes international appearances throughout Asia. He most recently returned from Malaysia as conductor of the Southbridge Music Festival, and South Korea where he conducted the renowned Seogwipo Philharmonic Wind Orchestra (Korea's only professional full-time wind ensemble).

in concert and served as conductor-in-residence at the Jeju International Wind Ensemble Festival. He is a conductor for JCLink Music Publications recordings and clinics that serves several cities in mainland China staffed by a team of artists and teachers from China, the United States, Japan, Canada, and Hong Kong. He has taught at Guangzhou University and conducted the Guangzhou Youth Cultural Palace Youth Symphony and Wind Ensemble, the Yucai Concert Band, the Foreign Language School Wind Band, and the Canton Military Band. Other guest appearances include positions with the Wuhan Conservatory of Music Wind Symphony, Huazhong Agricultural University Symphonic Band, the Ho Chi Minh Conservatory of Music, and the Vietnam National Academy of Music. Professionally, he has conducted the Guang Xi Symphony Orchestra (Nanning, China) in their Gala Concert for the All South East Asia Nations New Music Week Celebration, the Saigon Wind Ensemble (Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam), and the Vietnam National Opera and Ballet Orchestra (Hanoi, Vietnam).

At home, Dr. Pham has conducted professional and honor groups throughout the Pacific Northwest, New Mexico, Texas, South Carolina, and Hawaii. He has conducted All-State Bands in the States of Kansas and Washington and has appeared as a conductor with the Palouse Chamber Players, the Pan-Pacific Ensemble, and the Palouse Brass Company. His own groups have appeared at the Western International Band Clinic, the MENC Biennial Northwest Conference, the Oregon Music Educators Association State Conference, and the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) Southwest Convention. The WSU Symphonic Wind Ensemble was to tour South Korea prior to the pandemic.

Dr. Pham serves on the Collegiate Advisory Board for the Western International Band Clinic, where he has conducted their Intercollegiate Honor Band on five occasions. He serves as a contributing Research Associate for the Teaching Music Through Performance in Band series released by GIA Publications and has presented at the Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic, the National Association for Music Education (Northwest Division) Conference, and the Washington Music Educators State Conference. He current serves as the Northwest Division Chair for the National Band Association, after serving as Coordinator for the State of Washington, and the Northwest Chair for the Dr. William P. Foster Project, an organization devoted to celebrating musical excellence through diversity. He has also served as Producer and Editor for solo compact disc recordings that have been released by Albany and Emeritus Records. Dr. Pham is the Coordinator for the Washington (State) Ambassadors of Music European Tour program for band, choir, and orchestra.

Originally from Honolulu, Hawaii, Dr. Pham received his degrees from DePauw University, Indiana University, and the University of Oklahoma. His conducting mentors include Ray Cramer, Stephen Pratt, William Wakefield, Craig Pare', Orcenith Smith, and Harry Blake. Prior to his appointment at Washington State University, Dr. Pham held similar posts at McMurry University, Western Oregon University, Salem-Keizer Public Schools, and the Beaverton (OR) School District.

Symphonic Band – Trae Blanco, Conductor



Dr. Trae Blanco currently serves as Director of Bands in the School of Music at Butler University. His teaching responsibilities include conducting the Symphonic Wind Ensemble, teaching undergraduate and graduate conducting, and overseeing the band program. Previously, Dr. Blanco has served as the Director of Bands at Murray State University, and the University of Southern Maine; where he was the conductor of the Portland Youth Wind Ensemble, Casco Bay Wind Symphony, and cover conductor for the Portland (ME) Symphony.

A native New Mexican, Dr. Blanco received his undergraduate degree in music education from New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, NM, a Master of Music in conducting from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music where he studied with Professor Stephen Pratt, and Doctorate of Musical Arts in Conducting from The Herberger Institute at Arizona State University. Dr. Blanco also served as Director of Bands at Las Cruces High School, where both the jazz ensemble and wind ensemble were selected as Honor Bands for the New Mexico All-State Convention in 2010 and 2011, respectively.

As a clinician, Dr. Blanco has worked with bands and orchestras in Maine, New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois, as well as presented at state conferences in Maine, Kentucky, and West Virginia. Dr. Blanco

served as the conductor of the Philharmonia Orchestra for the annual Quad State String Day at Murray State, as well as the Paducah Symphony Summer Music Camp Orchestra in 2019. In summer of 2019, Dr. Blanco was an invited presenter to The Midwest International Clinic, and the World Association of Symphonic Bands and Ensembles in Bunol, Spain. He currently serves as a conductor for the Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp, directing the Symphony Band, and Festival Band for the Falcone International Tuba and Euphonium Festival. Dr. Blanco has served as a leadership clinician to marching bands throughout the country including Texas State University, Murray State University, University of the Incarnate Word, and Pearland High School. In 2023, Dr. Blanco has been invited to conduct the Maine All State Band.

A strong proponent for new music, Dr. Blanco has commissioned new music for winds from Jim (James) Bonney, Steven Bryant, Aaron Perrine, Roshanne Etezady, Onsby Rose, Steve Danyew, James Syler, Jim Stephenson, Brett Kroening, David Dzubay, and others. Dr. Blanco's research on BCM International has appeared in the National Band Association Journal and the WASBE Journal.

Dr. Blanco was the recipient of the New Mexico Music Educators New and Emerging Teacher Award for 2010. He is currently a member of the Kentucky Music Educators Association, College Band Directors Association, WASBE, NBA, and the Percussive Arts Society. He has continued conducting studies with workshops across the country and in July 2015, Dr. Blanco was a guest conductor with the United States Army "Pershing's Own" Concert Band in Washington, D.C. In both 2015 and 2016 Dr. Blanco was a finalist in the American Prize in Wind Conducting. Currently, Dr. Blanco resides in Indianapolis, IN with his wife, Kelsey, and their two children; Ophelia and Ellis.

Treble Choir – Jason Vodicka, Conductor



Jason Vodicka is Associate Dean in the Rider University College of Arts and Sciences and Associate Professor of Music Education at Westminster Choir College. In addition to his work with students in the School of Communication, Media, & Performing Arts and Westminster Choir College, he supervises the college's offices of Performance Management and Production Management which are responsible for more than 125 student and faculty performances annually.

Known for his innovative work in the field of choral music pedagogy, Dr. Vodicka has presented at state, regional, and national conferences of the American Choral Directors Association and the National Association for Music Education. He has also presented at the Cultural Diversity in Music Education Conference, the International Conference on Music Learning Theory, the International Conference on the Concepts and Practices of Choral Singing, and the International Society for Music Education World Conference.

Dr. Vodicka's writing can be found in publications such as *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, *The Oxford Handbook of Choral Pedagogy*, *Visions of Research in Music Education*, and the *Inside the Choral Rehearsal* series. His work with the Palmer Research Group led to the creation of a grounded Framework for Culturally Relevant and Responsive Music Teaching that was studied through a research grant from the National Association for Music Education.

In addition to his work at Rider, Dr. Vodicka is artistic director of the New Jersey Master Chorale, a community ensemble based in Haddonfield, NJ. He is in frequent demand as a clinician and guest conductor and has conducted festival choirs in Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Mississippi, and will conduct the New Mexico treble all-state choir in 2026.

Dr. Vodicka's teaching career includes nine years in PreK-12 public schools and more than a decade in higher education. He holds both undergraduate and graduate degrees in music education from Westminster Choir College and a doctorate in conducting from the University of Georgia. In 2017, he was inducted into the Westminster Choir College Music Education Hall of Fame for his support of the college and his contributions to the field of music education.

Mixed Choir – Graeme Langager, Conductor



Graeme Langager is Director of Choral Activities at the University of British Columbia School of Music. A passionate and dynamic conductor, Dr. Langager is sought-after as a clinician, adjudicator, educator and guest conductor. He has performed throughout Europe and across North America, appearing in such venues as St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, Stefansdom in Vienna, Carnegie Hall in New York, St. Nicholas in Prague, St. Stephen's in Budapest, as well as in cathedrals and concert halls in Italy, Spain, and France. His choirs have also performed at numerous choral conferences, including: NCCO (National Collegiate Choral Organization), ACDA-AR (American Choral Directors Association Conference, Arkansas), IAJE (International Association of Jazz Educators), MENC/NAfME (National Association for Music Education), and the Montreux and North Sea Jazz Festivals.

Dr. Langager was born in Lethbridge, Alberta into a musical family, and has sung and played musical instruments since childhood. He has taught for more than 20 years in universities and colleges across the United States and Canada, including the University of Arkansas and Cuesta College in California. He is also active as a composer and arranger, and has been commissioned on a number of occasions. Langager received the doctoral degree in choral conducting from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and the master of music degree from California State University, Long Beach.

In 2015, both the UBC University Singers and the Phoenix Chamber Choir (under Langager's direction) placed first in the Choral Canada National Competition for Canadian Amateur Choirs in numerous categories: University Choirs (UBC), Chamber Choir (Phoenix), New Music (Phoenix 1st, UBC 2nd), and Best Performance of a Canadian Composition (*Gaudium Vestrum Sit Plenum* composed by Graeme Langager and performed by Phoenix Chamber Choir).

Jazz 1 – Daniel Jonas, Director



A trumpeter, composer, and educator, Dr. Daniel Jonas is currently Associate Professor of Music and Music Program Director at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah, where he directs the Jazz Ensemble, Jazz Combos, and teaches all jazz curriculum. His prior teaching experience includes Sacramento State University and Cosumnes River College.

A native of Albuquerque, New Mexico, Dr. Jonas received a D.M.A. in Jazz Studies from the University of Colorado in 2013, a Master's in Jazz Studies from DePaul University in 2005, and a Bachelor's in Trumpet Performance from the University of New Mexico in 2003. His teachers include Brad Goode, John Davis, Robert Lark, Thomas Matta, Jeffrey Piper, and Glenn Kostur.

In addition to his educational pedigree, Dr. Jonas performs often in and around the Salt Lake City area. He is lead trumpet and featured soloist for the Hot House West Swing Orchestra and performs freelance with many other groups. He has also performed with and accompanied Maria Schneider, Dave Liebman, Jon Faddis, Nnenna Freelon, Bobby Shew, Butch Miles, Phil Woods, Slide Hampton, Jim McNeely, Denis DiBlasio, Steve Wiest, James Moody, Marvin Stamm, Randy Hamm, Ernie Watts, Dave Pietro, Jeff Jarvis, John Fedchock, Chris Vadala, The New York Voices, Soph, Maynard Ferguson, Aretha Franklin and many others. He has performed at several festivals and conferences, including the Kinser Jazz Festival, the New Mexico Music Educator's Association All-State Conference, the Midwest Clinic, the Jazz Education Network Conference, the Telluride Jazz Festival, the Vail Jazz Festival, the Moab Music Festival, and the Guatemala Jazz Festival. His recording credits include his own releases *Folks Songs* and *The Spirituality Suite*, the albums *Patron Saint Django* and *Django in Orbit* by Hot House West, and many others."

Jazz 2 – Jacob Dalager, Director



Dr. Jacob Dalager is a crossover artist, award-winning composer, and Assistant Professor of Trumpet and Jazz at New Mexico State University. As director of jazz, Dalager brought the NMSU Jazz Ensemble to the 2022 Roswell Jazz Fest, where the band performed with legends Houston Person, Chuck Redd, and Dan Barrett. In 2024, the Jazz Ensemble won a prestigious Performance Award from the Dave Doug Davis Composition and Performance Endowment. Dalager has also initiated Studio Jazz Orchestra, Jazz Lab Band, Southwest Honor Jazz Band, and Southwest Essentially Ellington Festival while also expanding students' improvisational proficiency with Jazz Masterclasses and combos. In 2024, Dalager created the NMSU Desert Stompers, a Trad Jazz group that has performed in festivals across the country, including in Colorado and Monterey, California. Carrying on NMSU's Jazz Jumpstart Festival tradition, Dalager has brought in bands from throughout the region to work with renowned clinicians, including Bobby Shew, Owen

Broder, Terrell Stafford, Raffy Bushman, Steve Cardenas, Ben Allison, John Fedchock, and Jennifer Wharton. As a jazz musician, Dalager plays with the Border Jazz Orchestra and founded the NMSU Faculty Jazz Combo. He has shared the stage with jazz greats such as James Morrison, Wayne Bergeron, Alexa Tarantino, Charles Pillow, Chris Vadala, and Mike Nelson. Jacob headlined the 2022 FIMUS jazz festival in Brazil and has also performed at the Singapore International and World Youth Jazz Festivals.

Jazz 3 – Sam Nesbitt, Director



Sam Nesbitt is an active educator, clinician, adjudicator and performer. He has taught for 21 years in Albuquerque, Los Lunas, and Rio Rancho at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels. In his time at Eisenhower Middle School, the Symphonic Band was awarded the honor of Grand Champions of the NMAA State Concert Band Competition six times, the EMS Jazz Band was awarded first place at the Fort Lewis College Jazz Festival four times, and was selected as the New Mexico Music Educators Association's Honor Jazz Band in 2018. Mr. Nesbitt has also conducted with the Albuquerque Youth Symphony program and the New Mexico Jazz Workshop.

When he isn't teaching, Mr. Nesbitt stays busy arranging and performing in the local music scene. As a performer, he has shared the stage with The Four Tops, The Temptations, The O'Jays, Bernadette Peters, the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra, and the Santa Fe Symphony.

Vocal Jazz – Virginia Nickels-Hircock, Director



Virginia Nickels-Hircock has enjoyed a career as a music educator, clinician, adjudicator, and mentor in Farmington, New Mexico, for over 30 years. Under her direction, choirs have consistently received Superior ratings in district, state, and national music festivals and competitions. Nickels' ensembles have been selected three times as NMMEA All State Honor Choirs and received numerous NMAA State Choral Contest First Place awards.

Ms. Nickels was recognized as Farmington Municipal Schools Teacher of the Year in 2016, was named NMMEA's Music Educator of the Year and National Federation of High Schools Outstanding Music Educator in 2010, and was inducted into the NMMEA Music Educator Hall of Fame in 2019. Ms. Nickels also served as clinician and conductor for NMACDA's inaugural Youth All State Treble Choir in 2019. Ms. Nickels-Hircock has been an active member of the Four Corners arts community for decades. She served as music director for Farmington High School, San Juan College, and the City of Farmington in productions of *The 1940's Radio Hour*, *Once Upon a Mattress*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and *Little Shop of Horrors*. As co-founder and director of Caliente Community Chorus, Ms. Nickels has prepared choruses for collaborative performances with the Durango Choral Society, San Juan Symphony, and Music in the Mountains. In addition to these collaborations, she has led numerous domestic and European choral tours with Caliente Chorus. In recognition of her activism in community arts endeavors,

the Connie Gotsch Arts Foundation presented Nickels the Legacy Award in 2019. Ms. Nickels received her Bachelor of Music from the University of Arkansas and Masters of Music in Choral Conducting and Music Education from Westminster Choir College.

In addition to her musical and educational pursuits, Ms. Nickels enjoys outdoor adventures such as hiking, bicycling and paddle boarding, and global travel."

Mixed Choir Accompanist – Kayla Liechty



Kayla Liechty is in her twentieth year as Vocal Coach and Collaborative Pianist at Eastern New Mexico University, where she coaches voice students, teaches Music Appreciation, and collaborates in Stagecraft for Singers, operatic and musical theatre productions, and student, faculty and guest artist recitals. Prior to coming to New Mexico, she was a full-time collaborative pianist at the University of Oklahoma (2002-2005) and Director of Accompanying at Stetson University (1992-2002).

Ms. Liechty received a BME in piano from Stetson University (1990), an MM in Accompanying and an MME from The Florida State University (1992).

Ms. Liechty has collaborated with some of the finest musicians of our time, including Marilyn Horne, Sherrill Milnes, Jennifer Larmore, Martina Arroyo, Leona Mitchell, and Fred King. She has accompanied choirs for five performances in Carnegie Hall, China, Newfoundland, Norway, and throughout Europe, spending two seasons as pianist for the Santa Fe Desert Chorale. Kayla served a decade as a vocal coach and pianist for Sherrill Milnes summer opera workshop, VOICEexperience, and was National Auditions Pianist for Walt Disney World Entertainment.

In the area of scholarly and artistic endeavors, Ms. Liechty's contributions include Bach to Bix, a CD collaboration with tubist Ted Cox, The French Connection, a CD collaboration with hornist Eldon Matlick and an 80-accompaniment CD companion to Roberto Mancusi's textbook, Voice for Non-Majors. Academic presentations she has made include Professional Music Teachers of New Mexico Annual Conference, Rocky Mountain CMS Conference, National NAFME Conference, SWACDA Conference and National ACDA Conference. She has recently been named Music Editor for the soon-to-be-released voice anthology of the art songs of the esteemed Mexican composer, Manuel Ponce.

Treble Choir Accompanist – Paul Roth



Paul Roth, a native of New Mexico, received his musical education at the University of New Mexico, studying with George Robert, Dr William Seymour, and Evelyne Brancart. He has worked as a collaborative pianist with various choral groups, musical theater programs, as well accompanying classical & operatic repertoire.

He currently is pianist and educator with the Young Voices of Santa Fe Opera program, pianist for the Santa Fe Symphony Chorus, and is principal pianist for the Cathedral Basilica of St Francis of Assisi.

Vocal Jazz Accompanist – James Golden



A native New Mexican hailing from Portales, James Golden has spent the majority of his life surrounded by music both personally and professionally. He is presently the Assistant Choral Director at Clovis High School and the Choral Vice President for the New Mexico Music Educator Association. Mr. Golden has previously taught at Portales Junior High School, Yucca Middle School (Clovis), Portales High School, and Piedra Vista High School (Farmington). He attended ENMU and received a Bachelors degree in Communicative Disorders with a minor in Piano Performance (2012) as well as a Master's degree in Education (2019). In 2012 James took a position as choir director in Portales and has been teaching ever since. While under his direction, Mr.

Golden's choirs have soared with consistent Division 1 ratings at district and state events, multiple best in class placements, three runner-up placements, seven NMAA State Championship titles, community involvement, and fundraising opportunities for local non-profits. He started accompanying in the eighth grade for the Portales Schools and has continued in that capacity in a variety of locations since then. He also previously served as music director of First Presbyterian Church in Farmington and is currently the pianist/organist for First United Methodist Church in Portales. He is also the accompanist for the Clovis Community Chorus which he co-founded alongside Wayne Anderson and has accompanied and continues to play at ENMU for various musical events and is the newest member of the University Friends of Music board. Making music, performing, teaching, and instilling a love of music in the lives of his students is James' biggest passion. Seeing students light up on stage and in the classroom, as well as finding their place and their voice are among his greatest moments as a teacher. "Make music meaningful by making meaningful music."

General Music Headliner – Heather Nelson Shouldice



Heather Nelson Shouldice is Professor/Coordinator of Music Education at Eastern Michigan University (Ypsilanti, MI), where she teaches graduate and undergraduate courses, supervises student teachers, and directs the early childhood music program through EMU's Community Music Academy. Her research—which has been published in many of the top journals in the field—focuses on music teacher beliefs and their relationship to teaching practice, musical development and musical identity in young children, and issues of justice in music education. Dr. Shouldice is author of the book *Weaving It All Together: A Practical Guide to Applying Gordon's Music Learning Theory in the Elementary General Music Program* (GIA Publications), hosts/produces a podcast about Music Learning Theory called *Everyday Musicality* and is a professional development faculty member for the Gordon Institute for Music Learning.





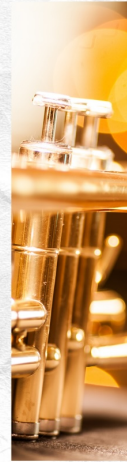
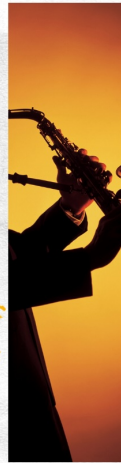
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**New Mexico Music Educators Association
All-State Music Festival Concerts
Popejoy Hall, University of New Mexico**

Saturday, January 17, 2026

9:00 am

Laura Eberhardt, NMMEA President – Presiding

Guitar Ensemble presented by Eduardo Trujillo, NMMEA Vice President, Guitar
Orchestras presented by Stephanie Wright, NMMEA Vice President, Orchestra

Program

New Mexico All-State Guitar Ensemble
Lynn McGrath, Guest Conductor

Star Spangled Banner	Key, arr. Arakal
A Midsummer Night's Suite	Kruisbrink
I. Hair Flowers	
II. Gardens of Light	
III. Rocking Cradle	
IV. Little Frogs	
V. Around the Maypole	
Carmen Suite	Bizet, arr. Sparks
I. Habanera	
II. Danse bohème	
III. Entr'acte	
Nebulae	Amelkina-Vera

New Mexico All-State Concert Orchestra
Heather Lofdahl, Guest Conductor

Estampas Mexicanas	Elizondo
I. Ferial	
Water Reflections	Nishimura
Farandole from L'Arlesienne Suite No. 2	Bizet
1812 Overture	Tchaikovsky

New Mexico All-State Symphony Orchestra
Christopher Kelts, Guest Conductor

Symphony No. 5	Tchaikovsky
II. Andante cantabile	
IV. Finale	

**New Mexico Music Educators Association
All-State Music Festival Concerts
Popejoy Hall, University of New Mexico**

Saturday, January 17, 2026

12:00 pm

Laura Eberhardt, NMMEA President – Presiding

Bands presented by Mel Rice, NMMEA Vice President, Band

Program

New Mexico All-State Small School Band
Sidney Shuler, Guest Conductor

Star Spangled Banner	Key, arr. Williams
Festival Prelude	Reed
Perthshire Majesty	Hazo
Cajun Folk Songs	Ticheli
Liberty Bell March	Sousa

New Mexico All-State Concert Band
Danh Pham, Guest Conductor

Stride	Day
Colorful Clouds Chasing the Moon	Guang, arr. Yuen Hing
A Movement for Rosa	Camphouse
Who's Who in Navy Blue	Sousa

New Mexico All-State Symphonic Band
Trae Blanco, Guest Conductor

Fanfare Poletia	Archer
Contre Qui, rose	Lauridsen, arr. Reynolds
Country Gardens	Grainger, arr. Sousa
American Hymnsong Suite	Milburn
Symphony No. 2	Ticheli
III. Apollo Unleashed	

**New Mexico Music Educators Association
All-State Music Festival Concerts
Popejoy Hall, University of New Mexico**

Saturday, January 17, 2026

3:00 pm

Laura Eberhardt, NMMEA President – Presiding

Choirs presented by James Golden, NMMEA Vice President, Choir

Program

New Mexico All-State Treble Choir
Jason Vodicka, Guest Conductor

Star Spangled Banner
Festive Alleluia
Come, Ye Makers of Song
Pueri Hebraeorum
Jerusalem Luminosa
She Lingers On
Joshua

Key, arr. Paltrowitz
Williams
Purcell Adapted by Henderson
Thompson
Kempis, arr. Betinis
Robles
Caldwell and Ivory

New Mexico All-State Mixed Choir
Graeme Langager, Guest Conductor

Ambe
We Shall Walk Through the Valley in Peace
In the Middle
Dona Nobis Pacem
Shout Glory
I Will Lift My Eyes Unto the Hills

Campbell & Balfour
Traditional, arr. Moses Hogan
Trumbore
Bach
Smith
Langaer

**New Mexico Music Educators Association
All-State Music Festival Concerts
Buchanan Hall, Eastern New Mexico University**

Sunday, January 24, 2026

3:00 pm

Daniel Holmes, NMMEA Jazz Vice President - Presiding

Program

New Mexico All-State Vocal Jazz Ensemble
Virginia Nickels-Hircock, Guest Director

Blizzard of Lies	Frishberg arr. von Kampen
The Three Bears	Troup
Green Lights	Jarosz & Reynolds, arr. von Kampen
Open Your Eyes, You Can Fly	Chick Corea & Potter, arr. Singh

New Mexico All-State Jazz 3
Sam Nesbit, Guest Director

Point, Counterpoint	Rowe
Running of the Bulls	Beach & Shutack
Aim High	Sturm
Out of the Doghouse	Morales

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New Mexico All-State Jazz 2
Jacob Dalager, Guest Director

The Blues Machine
After You've Gone
El Gatote
Fundus

Nestico
Layton, arr. Taylor
Harris
Dalager

New Mexico All-State Jazz 1
Dan Jonas, Guest Director

Down By The Riverside
Green Piece
Jolly Beach
Sing, Sing, Sing

Traditional, arr. Nelson
Schneider
Booth
Prima, arr. McNeely

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2026 NMMEA All-State Small School Band

Flute

Claire DeFoy - Hope Christian
Tandi Foreman – Portales
Andre Acosta - Santa Teresa
Evelyn Montejano – Chaparral
Alondra Rosas – Lovington
Haylie Sparks – Goddard
Eleanor McArthur - Bosque School
Kylie Campbell – Portales
Carlo Johnson – Highland
Lilyana Naranjo - Kirtland Central
Orlando Herrera - Santa Teresa
Halle Harris - Artesia

Oboe

Diego Ramirez – Goddard

Clarinet 1

Chloe Frederiksen - Rehoboth Christ.
Jysel Nelson - Kirtland Central
Samantha Quiroga - Lovington
Bailey Klement – Silver

Clarinet 2

Joaquin Trujillo - Cobre
Samantha Clayton - Los Alamos
Desiree Lucadamo - Belen
Brennan Hicks- Goddard
Ariadna Hernandez - Santa Teresa

Clarinet 3

Aryahna Rivera - Lovington
Allison Christensen-Adajar - NMMI
Liv Payne - Lovington
Raelyn Orona - Goddard
Maygen Soto - Chaparral
Aubrey Gonzalez – Lovington

Bass Clarinet

Dalton Church - Portales
Chase Lynch - Rehoboth Christian
Anthony Viera – Portales

Alto Saxophone 1

Alex De La Cruz - Chaparral
Vanessa Gonzales - Lovington
Makyra Thomas - Kirtland Central

Alto Saxophone 2

Yajaira Rosas - Lovington
Reese Clayton - Lovington
Didymus Urius – Lovington

Tenor Saxophone

Nathan Blea - Grants
Nick Rodriguez – Chaparral

Bari Saxophone

Ynes Jaramillo - Highland
Paul Brown - St. Pius

Trumpet 1

Kadence Morrison - Portales
Ethan Stock - Artesia High School
Adrian Salmon – Goddard

Trumpet 2

Oliver Mejia-Perez - Goddard
Gabe Cleveland - Home School
Joey Uresti - Cobre
Xavier Wilson – Capitan

Trumpet 3

Cristopher Bolaina - Lovington
Carmelita Saiz - Portales
Sylvia Aguirre - Santa Teresa
Anais Castillo - Lovington
Violet Delu - Bosque School

Horn 1

Stephen Rath - Capitan
Sebastian Quevedo - Valencia

Horn 2

Molly Arsenault - Rehoboth Christian
Zoey Fowler - Portales

Horn 3

Briana Lopez - Highland
Maximos Spencer - Lovington

Horn 4

Jesse Sedillo - Belen
Garrett Baldwin - Artesia

Trombone 1

Cameron Wilson - Capitan
Maria Polanco-Herrera - Portales
Ryker Scott – Clayton

Trombone 2

Ramiro Flores - Portales
Kevin Bear Angeles - Santa Teresa
Ava Heywood – Goddard

Bass Trombone

Andes Rios - Santa Teresa
Jourdin Miller - Kirtland Central
Ryan Saavedra – Valencia

Euphonium

Charles Curry - Belen
David Polanco - Portales
Noe Contreras - Lovington
Brennen Brashear – Capitan

Tuba

Giovanni Garcia - Lovington
Maxwell Johnson - Silver
Lance Andrei Garcia - Grants
Jude Cavanaugh - Rehoboth Christian
Ben Ruiz - Goddard
Ireland Shorty – Shiprock

Percussion

Zachary Jeffries - Goddard
Mateo Salcido - Cobre
Ronald Padilla - Valencia
Brock Connors - Highland
Rowan Henderson - Goddard
Isaiah Chavez - Bosque

2026 NMMEA All-State Concert Band

Flute 1

Antonio Collazo - Gadsden
Jennifer Smith - Sandia
Nandana Nair - ABQ Academy
Marisol Portillo-Carrera - Clovis
Alfonso Talavera - Valencia
Logan Kish - NMSA

Flute 2

Brooke Masoner - Rio Rancho
Cate Douglas - Volcano Vista
Adriann Anaya - Piedra Vista
Elizabeth Cousins - Cleveland
Juliet Zimmerman - Gadsden
Wyatt Estes - Rio Rancho
Kaitlyn Garmong - Centennial
Mai Nguy - Clovis

Oboe 1

Heidi Silva - Clovis
Corbin Langlinais - Eldorado

Oboe 2

Mia Sanchez - Los Lunas
Daria Abbott - Eldorado

Bassoon 1

Lucas Hind - Eldorado
Brennan Houchens - La Cueva

Bassoon 2

Wyatt Willard - Farmington
Eduardo Villalobos - Atrisco Heritage

Clarinet 1

Aiden Jaramillo - Cleveland
Irina Maiorov - Los Alamos
Rene Galicia - Deming
Valeria Cardenas - Clovis
Nolan Crespín - La Cueva
Liv Niklasson - Los Alamos
Tayden Begay - Farmington

Clarinet 2

Cooper Peterson - Organ Mountain
Rogelio Ramirez - Gadsden
Inler Lu - La Cueva
Isabel Beatty - La Cueva
Matthew Kass - Mayfield
Magnus Boman - Eldorado
Chelsea Baca - Los Lunas
Zachary Johnson - Organ Mountain

Clarinet 3

Luciano Valdez - Volcano Vista
Diana Fleitas-Leon - Eldorado
Cayden Gatewood - Hobbs
Meliya Cordova - Clovis
Angel Torres - Deming
Patrick Alonzo - ABQ Academy
Hailey Saiz - La Cueva
Luke Hollister - Eldorado
Ashlyn Hughes - Las Cruces

Bass Clarinet

Lilian Brooks - Rio Rancho
Andrew Shaw - Eldorado
Sophia Trappett - Cleveland
Allister Jones - La Cueva

Alto Saxophone 1

Samson Jeansonne - Albuquerque
Lily Zarate - Cleveland

Alto Saxophone 2

Diego Gonzales - Organ Mountain
Andru Esquerria - Atrisco Heritage

Tenor Saxophone

Brody Boyle - Centennial
Derek Kulpa - Las Cruces

Bari Saxophone

Xavier Huff - Carlsbad
Evan Vender - Eldorado

Trumpet 1

Connor Van Note - Eldorado
Sophie Kiefer - Eldorado
William Sahlstrom - Eldorado

Trumpet 2

Ethan Xia - ABQ Academy
Justin Padilla - Cleveland
Isaiah Ortega - Roswell
Silas Buchanan - Centennial

Trumpet 3

Jalen Lucero - Volcano Vista
Colin Jones - Rio Rancho
Navaeh Chavez - Santa Fe
Allison VanGoethem - Eldorado
Dylan Thompson - Clovis
Azarias Minner - Eldorado

Horn 1

Sophia Hafer - Hobbs
Leiam Snow - Clovis
Kiara Dean - La Cueva

Horn 2

Leandro Narvaez - Mandela
Colin Forsberg - Santa Fe
Augustus Casarez - Rio Rancho

Horn 3

Krisanne Hernandez - Rio Rancho
Simon Alvarado - Mayfield
Jack Ortiz - Los Lunas

Horn 4

Maya Diego - Las Cruces
Dannika Escapita - Centennial
Eli Antone - Clovis

Trombone 1

Ryan Bogue - Volcano Vista
Michael Puccio - Hobbs
Amber Johanson - Farmington

Trombone 2

Gabriel Herrera - Centennial
Nicole Thompson - Rio Rancho
Axel Matter - ABQ Academy

Trombone 3

Caleb Olson - Farmington
David Gonzales - Piedra Vista
Joshua Yong - Santa Fe

Euphonium

Azael Chairez - Organ Mountain
Ryan Nguyen - Rio Rancho
Johann Largo - La Cueva
Csaon Wilson - Hobbs
Prudence Salinas - Roswell

Tuba

Derek Rodriguez - Organ Mountain
Joseph Ortiz - Centennial
Mark Pujalla-Portilla - Eldorado
Abraham Alejos - Albuquerque
Eammon Flaherty - Eldorado
Isaiah Duran - Eldorado

Percussion

Anna Shulenburger - Eldorado
Kaeleigh Kychik - Rio Rancho
Sawyer Garnaas - NMSA
Matthew Chavez - West Mesa
Rylan Pangle - Carlsbad
Santi Montanez - Las Cruces
Erika Easterbrooks - NMSA

Piano

Asa Cleveland - Homeschool

2026 NMMEA All-State Symphonic Band

Piccolo

Amare Plessner - Las Cruces

Flute 1

Lila Lindeen - Santa Fe
Annie Lee - Centennial
Cassandra Sinsay - Organ Mountain
Nyna Preston - ABQ Academy
Lillian Yardman - La Cueva

Flute 2

Milianah Silva - Organ Mountain
Colton Esparza - Centennial
Marissa Trujillo - Cleveland
Anna Largo - La Cueva
Andrew Bojorquez - Atrisco Heritage
Sarah Allman - Rio Rancho
Elizamarie Adams – Eldorado

Oboe 1

Saif Siraj - Albuquerque
Kaidan Montes - Rio Rancho

Oboe 2

Anna Cook - Eldorado
Lila Vonderheide - Santa Fe

Bassoon 1

Weston Berenberg - Eldorado
Patrick McKigney – Albuquerque

Bassoon 2

Ari Harris - Santa Fe
Aiden Blackwell – Cleveland

Clarinet 1

Jack Fredine - Albuquerque
Jordan Pritchard - Cleveland
Yaritza Alvarez-Torres - Valencia
Macyn Steeves - Eldorado
Jasmine Smith - Sandia
Bella Stuckey - Santa Fe

Clarinet 2

Sophia Buchan - Santa Fe
Ivan Martinez - Clovis
Addison Smith - Santa Fe
Sophie Noren - La Cueva
Ruby Lucero - Eldorado
Finn Chamblin - La Cueva
Trinity Peterson - Rio Rancho

Clarinet 3

Jose Salazar - NMSA
Sol Romero - Los Lunas
Rachel Cox - Alamogordo
Eden Phillips - Eldorado
Andrew Bigbie - Volcano Vista
Irisa Anaya - Volcano Vista
Zachary McGee - Rio Rancho
Justin Ebueng - Organ Mountain
Kate Rogers - Volcano Vista

Bass Clarinet

Tony Jaurigue - Los Alamos
Sara Khan - Los Alamos
Alivia Farnsworth - Los Lunas
Isabella Richmond – Cleveland

Alto Saxophone 1

Isaiah Galindo - Carlsbad
Samuel Stafford - Rio Rancho

Alto Saxophone 2

Alan Nguyen - Rio Rancho
Jayden Chruchill - Piedra Vista

Tenor Saxophone

Jackson Agee - Albuquerque
Makaylah Priddy - Rio Rancho

Bari Saxophone

Nevaeh Lueras - Valencia
Elias Montebancho – Portales

Trumpet 1

Tyler Kuzio - La Cueva
Alex Thurgood - Cleveland
Emily Christopher - PAPA

Trumpet 2

Abel Salgado - Cleveland
Duncan Bohannon - Home School
Alex Magno - Cleveland
Chris Teague - Los Alamos
Wyatt Litz - Volcano Vista

Trumpet 3

Jiniu Lee – ABQ Academy
Evan Meza - Los Lunas
Ben Abernathy - Eldorado
Jove Stutsman - PAPA
Zachary Dencklau – Eldorado

Horn 1

Devan Acosta - Organ Mountain
Roxana Allamehzadeh – Portales

Horn 2

Ian Wald - Santa Fe
Ryan Spinner – Farmington

Horn 3

Sean Lo - Los Alamos
Catelynn Romero - Los Alamos

Horn 4

Lily Lybarger - Manzano
Preston Evans – Hobbs

Trombone 1

Roman Amador - Santa Fe
Juan-Antonio Romero - ABQ Academy
Lucas Montoya - Organ Mountain

Trombone 2

Nathaniel Pennington - Cleveland
Jack Tager - Santa Fe
Daniel Soneru - La Cueva

Bass Trombone

Hudson Bathrick-Price - Los Alamos
Dylan Harker - Rio Rancho
Darey Guzman – Eldorado

Euphonium

Jerimya Landin - Clovis
Connor Scruggs - Cibola
Joseph Morgan - Cleveland
Matthew Medved - La Cueva

Tuba

Julius Cooper - Highland
Jordan Thompson - Los Lunas
William Leiting - Volcano Vista
Gavin Estrandon - Organ Mountain
Harley Ford - Clovis
Napayshni LaBombard - Santa Fe

Percussion

Ella LaPointe - Rio Rancho
Braylon Mosley - Rio Rancho
Caleb Hubbard - Eldorado
Daniel Bwana - Clovis
Evin Trentham - Goddard
Jaymes Torres - Los Lunas
Trevor Okelberry – Cleveland

Harp

Eden Justice - Volcano Vista

2026 NMMEA All-State Guitar Ensemble

Guitar 1

Andreas Hofer - ABQ Academy, Concert Master
Elise Hays - La Cueva
Paul Kotze - La Cueva
Thaddeus Littlefield - PAPA
Altai Prechtal - NMSA
Daniel Chavez-Williamson - NM Connections
Bailey Heras - Cibola
Logan Vigil - Sandia Prep
Savannah Martinez - PAPA
Alejandro Veleta - NMSA
Francine Byers - PAPA
Kenneth Rodriguez - Capital
Ella Knaus - La Cueva
John Wingenbach - Belen
Nizhoni Rivera - Rio Rancho
Harold West - Santa Fe
Angel Rascon - Capital
Alyssa Rojas - PAPA

Guitar 2

Henry Eaton - Sandia Prep*
Eliana Whetten - Home School
Cassius Martinez - Belen
Hunter Bohannon - Home School
Lincoln Sorphapmixay - Cottonwood Classical
Vijay Russell - ABQ Academy
Orion Swallows - PAPA
Aden Lim - ABQ Academy
Lizette Lavin - ABQ Academy
Aidan Eaves - ABQ Academy
Lukas Boulom - PAPA
Raven Santos - NMSA
Adam Lee - Piedra Vista
Evan Saavedra - Sandia Prep
Zoey Ludington - ABQ Academy
Daniel Johnson - Cibola
Jude Wodrich - Taos Academy
Gavin Cronin - Belen

Guitar 3

Bryana Solis Gutierrez – Highland*
Colette Myers - Cottonwood Classical
Carlton Littlefield - PAPA
Luke Wyatt - Home School
Uriah Cuellar - PAPA
Micaela Guevera - La Cueva
Marcelo Tohen - ABQ Academy
Avery Sims - Sandia Prep
Liath Judy - PAPA
Alan Rodriguez Ruiz - Albuquerque
Christian Dominguez - Cibola
Caiden Rogahn-Rush - PAPA
Diego Soto - Albuquerque
Madeline Griego - ABQ Academy
Owen Chavez Liberman - Sandia Prep
Isaiah Trujillo - Home School
Garrett Prentiss - Aztec
Celia Marquez - Cibola

Guitar 4

Gabriel Lucero - Sandia Prep*
Amelia Selwyn - La Cueva
Josiah Chaudhuri - Rio Rancho
Elizabeth Burt - Home School
Orfeus Prassinis - NMSA
Kai Farrow - Cibola
Camron Aguilar - Highland
Aaron Lambert - La Cueva
Matti Hofer - ABQ Academy
Joshua Carrejo - Socorro
Christian Steele - Manzano
Louie Sotomayor - Albuquerque
Sarah Montes - Cibola
Jeremiah Noriega - NMSA
Laryssa Booth - Capital
Keanu McKee-Vanloon - NMSA
Elen Villezcas - Capital

* Section Leader

2026 NMMEA All-State Concert Orchestra

Violin 1

Aleena Rim - Los Alamos
Jose Robles - Volcano Vista
Vidya Gullapalli - La Cueva
Anna Simakov - Los Alamos
Semih Zeytun - Los Alamos
Linnaea Reedlunn - Eldorado
Cruz Gallegos - NMSA
Brian Mulligan - La Cueva
Anna Gattis - Los Alamos
Linus Plohr - Los Alamos
Devin Lew - La Cueva
William Hudlemeyer - Los Alamos
Elias Gurule - Rio Rancho
Eesha Gunukula - ABQ Academy
Coriandra Ladas - Masters Program
Anna Richardson - La Cueva
Hirota Mertes - Los Alamos
Giovanni DeFazio - Hope Christian

Violin 2

Maria Velazquez - Rio Rancho
Bryan Lee - Los Alamos
Greer Olmi-Sanchez - La Cueva
Sophie Grijalva - Cibola
Brooke Conley - La Cueva
Lindsey Caraveo - Capital
Joseph Snyder - Los Alamos
Lennox Jeneski - Sandia
Kendall Kunihiro - Imago Dei Ac.
Cash Wodrich - Taos Academy
Lauryn McKee - Cleveland
Cara Gattiker - Los Alamos
Rubaina Reza - La Cueva
Jonathan Clayton - Los Alamos
Maya Somasekharan - Los Alamos
Harlow Hovey - PAPA
William Christensen - Santa Fe
Abigail Seitz - Home School

Viola

William Nettleton - Los Alamos
Mia Luna - Centennial
Ciara Colgan - Los Alamos
Mataya Sand - St. Michaels
Noah Gutierrez - La Cueva
Payton Sutherland - Los Alamos
Rowan Farrow - Cibola
Dinuli Piyasena - La Cueva
Azalea Contreras - Santa Fe
Gavin Sherer - ABQ Academy
Shilo Bartram - Los Alamos

(Viola Cont.)

Elly Morgan - ABQ Academy
Audrey Maxwell - La Cueva
Aprameya Raghavan - La Cueva

Cello

Austin Sprunk - West Mesa
Maura Hayter - La Cueva
Florence Winchester - Bosque
Mathea Fung - Los Alamos
Stella Abeyta - La Cueva
Felix Montoya - St. Michaels
Daniel Choi - Bosque
Virginia Parris - La Cueva
Charles Austin - Los Alamos
Kevin Zou - Los Alamos
Tristan Witt - Albuquerque
Norah Yang - La Cueva
Eliron Tapia - Farmington
John Fung - Los Alamos

Bass

Antoine Howe - Farmington
Connor Cooper - Cleveland
Duke Derequito - La Cueva
Noah Schaub - Eldorado
Kody Caraveo - La Cueva
Zinnia Dumm - Valley
Adrian Fino - Las Cruces
Kylee Ballard - Las Cruces

Piccolo

Dakota Hayes - Hobbs

Flute 1

Carlos Anaya - Valley

Flute 2

Addison Siliceo - Clovis

Oboe 1

David Montoya - Carlsbad

Oboe 2

Darius Smith - Cleveland

Clarinet 1

Aleah Dostal - Sandia

Clarinet 2

Suvan Paudel - La Cueva

Bassoon 1

Adelle Matter - ABQ Academy

Bassoon 2

Andrew Leiting - Volcano Vista

Horn 1

Kailyn Rodriguez - Cleveland

Horn 2

Jeremiah Agrusa - Rio Rancho

Horn 3

Sydney Gariety - La Cueva

Horn 4

Luca Stuve - Centennial

Trumpet 1

Jayden Pacheco - Volcano Vista

Trumpet 2

Adilene Rodriguez - Lovington

Trumpet 3

Dylan Thiel-Hadjilambrinos - La Cueva

Trumpet 4

Joshua Ziegler - Rio Rancho

Trombone 1

Jose Llamas - Clovis

Trombone 2

Lucas Sarabia-Mendoza - Los Lunas

Trombone 3

Aiden Lee - Eldorado

Tuba

Kaleb Houston - Las Cruces

Percussion

Ethan Jones - La Cueva
Quinn Papendieck - La Cueva
Xavier Flores - Rio Rancho
Noelle Thurman - Rio Rancho
Holden Valles - Sandia

Harp

Celeste El-Darazi - Los Alamos

2026 NMMEA All-State Symphony Orchestra

Violin 1

Alicia Peng - La Cueva
Abigail Baker - Farmington
Joanna Chang - La Cueva
Reagan Devenport - La Cueva
Yuiko Yamaguchi - Los Alamos
Helena Welch - Los Alamos
Kathryn Nugent - Home School
Jane Bielejec - ABQ Academy
Lily Wyatt - Home School
Brock Erickson - Home School
Jackson Menicucci - Volcano Vista
Emi Lew - La Cueva
Xavier Pecastaing - PAPA
Ryan Li - La Cueva
Angel Meng - Los Alamos
Anna-Alice Patelli - ABQ Academy

Violin 2

Maia Warren - Los Alamos
Eddy Bielejec - ABQ Academy
Sophia Ray - La Cueva
Mason Gardner - Organ Mountain
Lily Spinner - Farmington
Valentina Martinez - Rio Rancho
Luke Rand - Santa Fe Prep
Xin Xiong - La Cueva
Emily Xu - Los Alamos
Cecelia Clark - Farmington
Zachory Mori - Rio Rancho
Julia Zou - Los Alamos
Julia Cram - Rio Rancho
Aspyn Kaskalla - Navajo Prep
Baylee Zundel - La Cueva
Cameron Jones - Ask Academy

Viola

Norbu Chionis - NMSA
Liam Guard - Oak Grove Classical
Andrew Laws - Albuquerque
Ming-Xiu Lo - Los Alamos
Emily Yao - La Cueva
Gavin Mitchell - ABQ Academy
Charlotte Belflower - Home School
Melia Brinegar - Santa Fe
Aditya Viswanathan - Los Alamos
Noelle Judd - Los Alamos
Zoe Bryant - Volcano Vista
Xander Kim - La Cueva

Cello

Emma Gilbert - Early College Ac.
Sydney Tasker - La Cueva
Sofia Langston - La Cueva
Jack Smucker - Santa Fe Prep
Larch Kingdon-Edwards - PAPA
Teigan Basso - Albuquerque
Jaden Rand - Santa Fe Prep
Alisa Goorley - Santa Fe Prep
Victor Vergara - Sandia
Olivia Aleckson - La Cueva
Caleb Sherman - Oak Grove Classical

Bass

Nathan Lupinetti - La Cueva
John McCabe - St. Michaels
Emmitt Tibbitts - Los Alamos
Jackson Scharff - Los Alamos
Leon Garcia Rivera - NMSA
Nikolai Shubsda - Bosque School
Jaden Barricklow - Eldorado
Lukas Montoya - Imago Dei

Piccolo

Daniel Lucero - Cleveland

Flute 1

Katherine Kim - NM Connections

Flute 2

Maya Harris - Santa Fe

Oboe 1

Alexa Tomkins - Santa Fe

Oboe 2

Thomas Varela - La Cueva

Clarinet 1

Dylan Dencklau - Eldorado

Clarinet 2

Dylan Lari - Rio Rancho

Bassoon 1

Carlos Martinez - Los Alamos

Bassoon 2

Norah Talbot - Organ Mountain

Horn 1

Ellen Zwiers - Rehoboth Christian

Horn 2

Zachary Stephenson - Clovis

Horn 3

Keith Huller - Highland

Horn 4

Stacey Bueno - Centennial

Trumpet 1

William McGlumphly - Eldorado

Trumpet 2

Lorenzo Romero - La Cueva

Trumpet 3

Mario Mejia - Clovis

Trombone 1

Travis Pohl - Valencia

Trombone 2

Landon Marquez - Hobbs

Trombone 3

Josue Ortega - Organ Mountain

Tuba

Braden Gonzales - Centennial

Timpani

Kaila Brown - La Cueva

2026 NMMEA All-State Treble Choir

Soprano 1

Janis Ollervides - Portales
Ellie Day - Hobbs
Abigail Flores - Mesilla Valley Christ
Kaytlann Davis - Santa Fe
Piper Gandy - Las Cruces
Ada Wagner - La Cueva
Eden Lines - La Cueva
Rhian Cuccio - Rio Rancho
Bailey Quick-Brady - Portales
Rey Clauschee - Rehoboth Christian
Eleanor Anderson - Cibola
Bella Peterson-Veeder - PAPA
Georgia Seirafe - NMSA
Ariana Escarzaga - Volcano Vista
Katherine Lucero - Roswell
Justina Tanabe - Home School
Brooklyn Moreno - NMSA
Arinna Ray - Eldorado
Naomi Grant - Volcano Vista
Ansley King - St. Michaels
Ana Alvidrez - Ruidoso
Daisey Olivas - Hobbs
Dagny Gellert - Cottonwood Classical
Lily Graham - Centennial
Layla Benssouda - Portales
Vitalina Siletsky - ABQ Academy
Annie Van Dusen - Piedra Vista
Elena Van Slyke - Cibola
Emmalee McEwen - Ruidoso
Raley McBroom - Organ Mountain
Sydney Nygren - Farmington
Yara Jaramillo - Piedra Vista
Charlize Madrid - Artesia
Cass Hyer - PAPA

Soprano 2

Aolani Garcia - Artesia
Madison Burton - Mayfield
Onavaya Sintas - Clovis
Jazlyn Portillos - Sandia
Leah Lopez - ABQ Academy
Mattea Clarkson - Los Alamos
Alexyss Johnson - Farmington
Seraphina Goldstein - La Cueva
Naomi Miller - Los Alamos
Kaitlyn Indarsingh - Hobbs
Bella Blea - Farmington
Shilah Campos - Centennial

Soprano 2 (Cont'd.)

Grace Babincsak - Sandia
Sara Munoz - Los Alamos
Nia Berteau - Centennial
Sophia Flores-Sanchez - Ruidoso
Lauren Mullen - Portales
Melody McBee - Carlsbad Early
Rachel Bulloch - Farmington
Corine Gasman - Lovington
Sophia Kreger - Clovis
Ryleigh Kutinac - Centennial
Serea Hawk - Cottonwood Classical
Jayden James - Carlsbad Early
Kayah Lucero - Rio Rancho
Sarah Stone - St. Pius
Micah Hodge - Hobbs
Haven Ellington - Valley
Abigail Johnson - Mesilla Valley Christian
Ruby De Los Santos - Lovington
Leilani Marin - Centennial
Isabelle Moores - St. Pius
Amelia Moore - Estancia Valley
Kylina Maldonado - Piedra Vista
Kambryn Callicoat - Carlsbad Early
Addison Jones - La Cueva

Alto 1

Kayla Bradford - Centennial
Carolina Lucero - PAPA
Andrea Hammond - Piedra Vista
Sam Sewall-Peelor - NMSA
Aurora Ribeiro - NMSA
Emma Rodriguez - Moriarty
Desirae Gallegos - Farmington
Teleha Goodrick - Farmington
Hailey Smith - Organ Mountain
Laina Riley - La Cueva
Petra Archuleta - Santa Fe
Phoebe McKnight - Hobbs
Penelope Alvarez - Sandia
Eleanor Lucas - Home School
Claire Anderson - Cibola
Puck Magnusson - PAPA
Leah Montoya - Santa Fe
Zoe Stallworth - Valley
Natalie Norby - La Cueva
Zoe Nunez - Piedra Vista
Erin Gosau - Cottonwood Classical
Jianna Johnson - Centennial
Angelique Hinojos - Farmington

Alto 1 (Cont'd.)

Amelia Padilla - NMSA
Sasha Foraker - Sandia
Jazmyn Jordan - Centennial
Shillah Sanchez - PAPA
Mikaela Carder - La Cueva
Layla Penny-Hart - Sandia
Darlene Lau - Cleveland
Annelese Angelley - NMSA
Bea Gomez - Carlsbad
Eva Riley - La Cueva
Sloan Pennington - Piedra Vista
Addison Marshall - Piedra Vista
Lily Martin - Lovington

Alto 2

Irelynn Delgado - Rehoboth Christian
Jaslene Ramirez - St. Michaels
Camden Shunk - Los Alamos
Stevi Vasquez - Carlsbad Early
Sasha Kraus - Estancia Valley
Jazlyn Pimentel - Mayfield
Evelyn Gladden - Piedra Vista
Lilyana Hernandez - Organ Mountain
Shyanne Dean - Lovington
Katalina Autry - Hobbs
Tiana Romero - Cleveland
Monet Stogden - Roswell
Serenity Nevarez - Organ Mountain
Lindsay Winfrey - Farmington
Abigail Gomez - Sandia
Gemma Cottrell - PAPA
Alea Kretz - Los Alamos
Destiny Doom - Artesia
Miles Jackman - PAPA
Jasper Goldberg - PAPA
Shaitana Hernandez-Garcia - Santa Fe
Johanna Sok - Roswell
Rachel Lantz - La Cueva
Melynda Martinez - Moriarty
Zhamyra Meza - Clovis
Laasya Tutiki - ABQ Academy
Aniyah Flores - Hobbs
Valerie Medina - Piedra Vista
Hayden Castillo - Sandia
Bailey Rivera Rangel - Hobbs
Sonja Johnson - PAPA
Arabela Castaneda - Farmington
Zoey Bramblett - Carlsbad
Danielle Davis - Goddard

2026 NMMEA All-State Mixed Choir

Soprano 1

Paige Celoria - Home School
Kelly Jones - Las Cruces
Laina Robinson - La Cueva
Izabella Cordova - Clovis
Alissa Magnuson - Carlsbad
Kathryn Allred - Mesilla Valley Christian
Ellie Layne - La Cueva
Kaia Dolan - Carlsbad
Maya Bradford - Centennial
Emma Stansbury - Farmington
Ash Newsome - La Cueva
Jade Zeno Neal - Bosque School
Mona Grossmann - Roswell
Leda Smith - Centennial
Samantha Lee - Clovis
Addison Archey - Clovis
Sky Marks - NMSA
Emma Martin - Capitan
Evangeline Augustine - Piedra Vista
Elizabeth Kelly - Clovis
Briana Sanchez - Roswell
Giana Spencer - Lovington
Caydie Melendez - Carlsbad Early
College
Gianna Clay - Cleveland
Natanya Manson - NMSA
Eliza Taylor - Organ Mountain
Emma Decker - Farmington
Cadence Smolenski - Estancia Valley
Alyssa Byers - Roswell
Emma Holt - Hobbs

Soprano 2

Juliana Garcia - Centennial
Claire Peterson - Home School
Brynlee Day - Hobbs
Juliette Paul - Cleveland
Iris Kaibel - Bosque School
Lila Sanchez - Mayfield
Alexandria Smith - Oak Grove Classical
Sophie Greene - Oak Grove Classical
Emmery Whiteaker - Sandia
Crystal Marquez - Mayfield
Ruby Ortega - PAPA
Sovaida Gallegos - Mayfield
Shay Sorensen - Rio Rancho
Emily Gipson - Clovis
Inara Kreiner - La Cueva
Victoria Morgan - Cleveland
Abbie Connors - Oak Grove Classical
Alayna Hassanali - La Cueva
Sofia Parker - La Cueva
Morgan Beard - Carlsbad
Deborah Brug - Los Alamos
Rebecca McKenzie - Artesia
Sadie Trapnell - La Cueva
Alyssa Dial - Clovis
Gentry Rowse - Piedra Vista

Soprano 2 (Cont'd)

Lennox Radunsky - NMSA
Phoebe Green - Artesia
Julia Dotson - Piedra Vista
Maizy Hill - Piedra Vista

Alto 1

Emilie McConnell - Mayfield
Ida Shelton - ABQ Academy
Anahita Santhanam - Cottonwood
Classical
Brenna Van Soest - Carlsbad
Allison Martin - La Cueva
Katelyn Heusser - Moriarty
Emma Nicole Fernandez - Santa Teresa
MyKaila Garcia - Artesia
Kaylin Ortiz - Centennial
McKenzi Mortensen - Piedra Vista
Genesis Wiggins - Clovis
Amaya Thomas - Clovis
Arundhati Satpathi - ABQ Academy
Jaycee Reiss - Farmington
Skyla Graves - Clovis
Sophia Peffer - Bosque School
Amelia Florez - Aztec
Eden Van Dusen - Piedra Vista
Emma Breinholt - La Cueva
Elsa Dhonau-Egan - La Cueva
Emma Deifel - La Cueva
Tara Monroe - Organ Mountain
Cat Younis - PAPA
Abigail Beukelman - Estancia Valley
Amelie Kalina - St. Pius
Avigail Hall - Sandia
Juliana Mendiola - Roswell
Cheyanne Kuhn - Hobbs
Brooklynn Martinez - Bosque School
Coraline Salgado Quiroz - Clovis
Brooklyn Henley - Farmington

Alto 2

Lily Cavanaugh - Rehoboth Christian
Amy Spangler - La Cueva
Melanie Bean - Cleveland
Mirannda Martin-Ramirez - Clovis
Iphigenia Rogers - ABQ Academy
Niomi Herndon - Centennial
London Rivera - Lovington
Cabrie Lethgo - Roswell
Nylah Dash - Clovis
Ella Davidson - Piedra Vista
Karli Lendrum - Farmington
Aiko Rosales - Carlsbad Early College
Katelynn Jordan - Cibola
Emily Mc Connell - Centennial
Ximena Prieto - Carlsbad Early College
Caris Quinonez - Sandia
Katherine Mortensen - Piedra Vista
Danika Perkins - PAPA

Alto 2 (Cont'd)

Taylor Juarros - Organ Mountain
Aven Murray - La Cueva
Peyton Daley - La Cueva
Allison Hill - Farmington
Grace Gabaldon - Farmington
Kaydence May - Rio Rancho
Maya Thomas - Rehoboth Christian
Ashlynn Evans - Farmington
Victoria Prado - Carlsbad Early College
Paisley Wood - Roswell
Mariana Garcia - Hobbs
Olivia Long - Carlsbad

Tenor 1

Michael Hagele - ATC
Isaias Cano - Clovis
Ryan Case - Clovis
Landen Kessler - Santa Fe
Bridger Heaton - Piedra Vista
Amelia Peterson - Bosque School
Leo Sansom - Portales
Spencer Eames - La Cueva
Jordan McKaney - La Cueva
Brandon Opie - Cleveland
Joshua McKnight - La Cueva
Benjamin Williams - Organ Mountain
Ayrton Arias - Piedra Vista
Ivan Muruato - Lovington
Logan Herndon - Piedra Vista
Charlie Ortiz - St. Michaels
Nikolai Searcy - Rio Rancho
Christian Thomas - Clovis
Rhece Johnson - Piedra Vista
Michael Stepkowski - Sandia
Oliver Floyd - Rio Rancho
Luther Elliss - Organ Mountain
Isai Silva - Bosque School
Steven Gomez - Las Cruces
Evan Browning - Cleveland
Makai Yorgesen - Carlsbad
AerolMar Pantallano - Carlsbad
Gyasi Atta-Fynn - Los Alamos
Joseph Stetcher - Organ Mountain

Tenor 2

Andrew Lopez - Clovis
Joaquin Wheeler - Clovis
Ian Gladden - Piedra Vista
Tristan Mayo - Bosque School
Zachary Brown - ABQ Academy
Hayden Gariety - La Cueva
Rico Trapnell - La Cueva
Thomas Brekke - Organ Mountain
Branigon Alba - Hobbs
Marcos Sewell - Valley
Neeko Bara - Portales
Collin Bare-Williamson - Portales
Teagan Rasmussen - Piedra Vista

Tenor 2 (Cont'd)

Connor Smith - Artesia
Bradly Daily - Moriarty
Ethan Aubert - Piedra Vista
Samuel Fuentes - Centennial
Weston Vidal - Portales
Mateo Mortensen - Piedra Vista
Travis Rossi - Hobbs
Codan Mortensen - Piedra Vista
Dallin Green - Farmington
Ryan Bullard - Sandia
Hartley Greenwood - Artesia

Bass 1

William Landahl - ABQ Academy
Ewan Hertenstein - La Cueva
Nate Chang - NMSA
Jake Beairsto - Mayfield
Khyber Caldwell - Farmington
Manny Harrison - Cibola
Ty Andrews - ABQ Academy
Gideon Carver Landau - Bosque School
Jovanni Mendoza - Sandia
Ethan LaCoursiere - Clovis
Santiago Garzon - Centennial
Jayden Turner - Farmington
Owen Edwards - Hobbs
Alejandro Quinlan - La Cueva
Braden Herrera - Farmington
Caleb Clemmons - Artesia
Geron Groves - Piedra Vista
Zane Begay - Del Norte
Isaiah Barela - St. Pius
Dominic Rosner-Salazar - ABQ Academy
Jaxsen Cordova - Moriarty
Jackson DeLuisa - La Cueva
Xavier Arellano - NMSA
Peyton Bass - Clovis
Kelby Williams - Clovis
Tyler Sanchez - La Cueva
Arturo Regalado Jr. - Mayfield
Mario Salgado Quiroz - Clovis
Heath Riviers - Clovis

Bass 2

Sumner Tholen - Los Alamos
Julio Castillo - Hobbs
Caleb Williams - Organ Mountain
Rafael Aragon - La Cueva
Ethan Mabe - Manzano
Landon Watts - Rehoboth Christian
Carson Mayo - Bosque School
Shawn Chacon - La Cueva
Sebastian Zamora - Rio Rancho
Jackson Poche - La Cueva
Christopher Armstrong - Rehoboth
Christian
Griffin Wells - St. Pius
DeMarcus Williams - Clovis
Alexandre Cornejo - Hobbs
Thomas Dolce - Moriarty
Logan Smith - Piedra Vista
Tristian Payen - Lovington
Jeremy Kirkes - Carlsbad
Shane Magnusson - PAPA
Diesl Penrose - Piedra Vista
Ryan Ortiz - Piedra Vista
Aidan Llopis - Centennial
Ryan Ruybal - Organ Mountain
Russel Payne - Moriarty
Chapman Otanm - Piedra Vista
Eric Brown - Los Alamos
Noah Probst - NMSA
Aikens Barney - Cottonwood Classical
Isaiah Smith - Carlsbad Early College

2026 NMMEA All-State Vocal Jazz Ensemble

Soprano

Samantha Lee - Clovis
Kelly Jones - Las Cruces
McKenzi Mortensen - Piedra Vista
Elizabeth Williamson - Carlsbad Early College
Eliza Taylor - Organ Mountain
Izabella Cordova - Clovis

Alto

Ida Shelton - ABQ Academy
Roxana Allamehzadeh - Portales
Lily Cavanaugh - Rehoboth Christian
Jazmyn Jordan - Centennial
Kaylin Ortiz - Centennial
Arundhati Satpathi - ABQ Academy

Tenor

Ivan Muruato - Lovington
Dominic Rosner-Salazar - ABQ Academy
Thomas Brekke - Organ Mountain
Elijah Moses - Rehoboth Christian
Ian Gladden - Piedra Vista
Pablo Florez - Carlsbad Early College

Bass

William Landahl - ABQ Academy
Santiago Garzon - Centennial
Chris Armstrong - Rehoboth Christian
Braden Herrera - Farmington
Sebastian Zamora - Rio Rancho
Landon Watts - Rehoboth Christian

2026 NMMEA All-State Jazz III

Alto

Samuel Stafford - Rio Rancho
Alan Nguyen - Rio Rancho

Tenor

Makaylah Priddy - Rio Rancho
Kaya Jarrell – Eldorado

Bari

Matthew Salguero - Eldorado

Trumpet

Matthew Medved - La Cueva
Jove Stutsman - PAPA
Ben Abernathy - Eldorado
Ethan Xia - ABQ Academy
Azarias Minner – Eldorado

Trombone

Rylan Garcia - Rio Rancho
Daniel Soneru - La Cueva
Bentley Mauldin - Eldorado
Aiden Lee – Eldorado

Piano

Ella LaPointe - Rio Rancho

Guitar

Caesar Montoya - Organ Mountain

Bass

Lucas Hind – Eldorado

Drums

Samuel Henserling – NMSA

Vibes

Alex Conrad - Eldorado

2026 NMMEA All-State Jazz II

Alto

Andru Esquerra - Atrisco Heritage
Lily Muller – Eldorado

Tenor

Joseph Buckner - Rio Rancho
Darius Smith – Cleveland

Bari

Cassandra Sinsay - Organ Mountain

Trumpet

Emily Christopher - PAPA
Jayden Pacheco - Volcano Vista
Mario Mejia - Clovis
Jeremiah Agrusa - Rio Rancho
Evan Meza - Los Lunas

Trombone

Michael Puccio - Hobbs
Brom Stewart - Eldorado
Lucas Montoya - Organ Mountain
Hudson Bathrick-Price - Los Alamos

Piano

Caleb Hubbarb – Eldorado

Guitar

Jeconiah Avila – NMSA

Bass

Harrison Richardson - ABQ Academy

Drums

DeMario Medrano - Organ Mountain

Vibes

Erika Easterbrooks – NMSA

2026 NMMEA All-State Jazz I

Alto

Samuel Crozier - La Cueva
Dylan Dencklau - Eldorado

Tenor

Tony Jaurigue - Los Alamos
Evan Vender – Eldorado

Bari

Norah Talbot - Organ Mountain

Trumpet

Tyler Kuzio - La Cueva
Carson Stauffer - Los Alamos
Zachary Dencklau - Eldorado
Alex Thurgood - Cleveland
Lorenzo Romero - La Cueva

Trombone

Lucas Sarabia-Mendoza - Los Lunas
Jerimya Landon - Clovis
Juan Antonio-Romero - ABQ Academy
Josue Ortega - Organ Mountain

Piano

Connor Van Note - Eldorado

Guitar

Kellan Tomany - Explore Academy

Bass

Darey Guzman – Eldorado

Drums

Ethan Jones - La Cueva

Vibes

Austen Weeks - Volcano Vista

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Without you, it couldn't happen.

Kathy Espinoza – Site Coordinator
Lauren Espinoza – Assistant Site Coordinator
Anthony Baca, Percussion Coordinator
University of New Mexico – Host
White's Music Box – Instrument Repair
J Sharp Music – Instrument Repair
UNM, NMSU, ENMU, UTEP Music – Audition Team
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Brad Dubbs - Luncheon Music
Aaron Lovato – Luncheon Music
Ian Davis – Luncheon Music

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**NATIONAL
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of Cultural Affairs, and by the National Endowment for the Arts.**

2026 NMMEA Award Recipients

Daniel Holmes, Educator of the Year



Daniel Holmes is the Director of Bands at V. Sue Cleveland High School in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. Now in his ninth year at CHS and seventeenth year of teaching, Mr. Holmes directs the CHS Storm Regiment Marching Band, Wind Symphony, Jazz I, and co-directs the Concert Band.

Under his leadership, the CHS Wind Symphony won the New Mexico Activities Association 5A State Concert Band Championship in 2024 and 2022, and was named the 2023 NMMEA High School Honor Band. The concert ensembles at Cleveland consistently earn Superior Ratings at the District VI Music Performance Assessment. The Storm Regiment Marching Band has won the Pageant of Bands 5A Championship in 2023, 2021, and 2018, and has been a perennial finalist at the Zia Marching Fiesta and Tournament of Bands, as well as a 2024 finalist at the BOA West Texas Regional.

Before joining CHS, Mr. Holmes served as the Associate Director of Bands at Coronado High School in El Paso, Texas. During his time there, the CHS Symphonic Band earned consecutive UIL Sweepstakes Awards from 2012–2017, and Jazz II was a two-time Non-Varsity Division Champion at the Hanks Jazz Festival. As a co-director of the Thunderbird Marching Band, he helped lead the group to three consecutive UIL State Marching Contest appearances, a UIL Area A Championship, and a 2013 Tournament of Bands Grand Championship.

Mr. Holmes began his teaching career at Albuquerque High School, where he guided the band to its first-ever Zia Marching Fiesta Finals appearances in 2009 and 2011, and a 1st Place finish in 4A at the 2009 Pageant of Bands. In 2012, the AHS Jazz Band was named the New Mexico Jazz Educators Honor Jazz Band and performed at the NMMEA All-State Conference.

He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from New Mexico State University (2008) and a Master's Degree in Music Education from Adams State University (2022), graduating Summa Cum Laude. Outside of the band hall, Mr. Holmes enjoys spending time at the lake with his wife Daniella and their three children—Davien, Dulcinea, and Dayani—and is proud to call Rio Rancho home.

Cat Woo, John Batcheller Award for Elementary Education



Cat Woo teaches K-5 elementary music at Inez Science and Technology Magnet Elementary School in Albuquerque, NM. Cat has a Bachelors in Music Education degree from New Mexico State University, a Masters in Music from the University of New Mexico, and is currently pursuing her PhD in Music Education from Texas Tech University. Cat is certified in Orff-Schulwerk, Kodaly, World Music Drumming, First Steps in Music, and Conversational Solfege. Cat has studied at the Orff Institute in Salzburg, Austria, and is a Teacher Educator for the American Orff Schulwerk Association.

She has served as the General Music Vice-President of the New Mexico Music Educators Association and is currently the General Music Vice-President for NMMEA District VII. She was a member of the Connected Arts Network through the National Association for Music Education from 2023 to 2025. Cat has been a board member for the New Mexico chapter of AOSA, serving as Vice-President, President, Past President, and as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisor. For the American Orff-Schulwerk Association, she has served as the Local Conference Co-Chair for the 2023 AOSA National Conference in Albuquerque, Course Director for New Mexico Orff Levels, and is a member of the AOSA Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access Incident Response Team. She is an Apple Certified Teacher, a Nearpod Certified Teacher, and a Google for Education Certified Trainer. In addition to teaching, Cat is a professional bass clarinetist in the Southwest and an active international presenter and clinician for elementary music education and technology.

Evan Aguilar, New & Emerging Teacher of the Year



Evan Aguilar is a passionate performer, educator, and collaborator based in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Hailed as one of “Albuquerque’s brightest musical lights” (DSCrafts.net), “Exzellente” (Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger), and “engaging” (BroadwayWorld), he has been active as a performer and educator locally and abroad.

He currently teaches at Cibola High School with Albuquerque Public Schools and serves as music director at Immanuel Presbyterian Church. A 2025 Yamaha 40-under-40 music educator honoree, Evan is recognized for his dynamic leadership in the classroom. Under his direction, Cibola’s music theater productions have garnered ten student nominations for Best Actor/Actress at the New Mexico Enchantment Awards, with the school earning the 2024 award for Best Production. His ensembles consistently earn superior ratings and qualify for state competitions.

As a performer, Evan has appeared both locally and internationally as a piano soloist, collaborator, and musical theater actor. He has performed in Europe, receiving acclaim for his classical piano performances, and held lead roles in *Godspell* and *Cabaret* with the Tri-M Music Makers in Santa Fe. As a vocalist, Evan garnered second place in the combined division at the 2019 Panhandle and Rio Grande NATS—and frequently collaborates with choral ensembles, including the University of New Mexico Concert Choir and Quintessence: A Community of Singers. In 2025, Evan was the featured soloist with the Albuquerque Philharmonic Orchestra in a performance of Mozart's Piano Concerto in A Major, K. 488.

Beyond the classroom and stage, Evan is an active clinician and accompanist, having worked with choirs and students across Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Moriarty, and Santa Fe. He is deeply committed to the growth and vitality of New Mexico's music community and hopes to help shape it into the musical capital of the Southwest.

Evan also believes in music's civic impact. He has organized and performed in benefit concerts, including fundraising efforts for Tri-M and victims of the Hermit's Peak–Calf Canyon wildfire. Whether teaching, directing, performing, or serving the community, Evan remains inspired daily by his students, colleagues, and the mentors who helped shape his musical journey.

Bruce Dalby, Emeritus Teacher of the Year



Bruce Dalby is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Music at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. For 27 years as a full time tenure-track faculty member at UNM he taught undergraduate and graduate courses in music education, improvisation, jazz band, aural skills, and conducting. From 1989 to 1995 he led the UNM jazz program, including directorship of Jazz Band 1. Since his retirement from UNM in 2016 he has continued in the status of working retiree, teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in aural skills and jazz Combo.

Dr. Dalby has ten years experience as a band director in the public schools of Idaho and New Mexico, including five years (1982-87) as band director at Manzano High School in Albuquerque. Honors earned by Manzano groups under his leadership include: Honor Band, NMMEA 1985 All-State Convention; Honor Jazz Band, 1985 Mountain States Music Festival (Arizona State University); Grand Champion, 1985 Zia Marching Band Fiesta.

Dr. Dalby received his undergraduate education from Utah State University and did his graduate work at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His research and teaching interests include Music Learning Theory, improvisation, intonation and rhythm training, and applications of technology in music teaching and learning.

His scholarly and creative activities have included authorship of software programs for

musicianship development, including “legacy” programs Audiation Assistant and Tune Assistant, both published by GIA Publications, and Tonal Assistant.

Dr. Dalby’s interest and involvement in music education in New Mexico has continued into his retirement years. He served as President of the New Mexico Jazz Educators from 2017 to its dissolution in 2018, and was instrumental in the 2018 establishment of the NMMEA Jazz section, which he served as Vice President from 2018 to 2021.

As an active freelance trumpet player in the Albuquerque area, Dr. Dalby has performed regularly with various classical, jazz, and salsa organizations, and is a 43-year founding member of the Albuquerque Jazz Orchestra.

Daniel Fear, Hall of Fame



Daniel Fear earned his Bachelor of Music Education from New Mexico State University in 1999, where he studied tuba with Dr. Jim Shearer and conducting with Dr. William Clark. During his time at NMSU, he performed in a variety of ensembles led by Dr. Ken Van Winkle and Dr. Greg Fant, experiences that deeply shaped his musicianship and teaching philosophy. He later completed his Master’s Degree in Educational Administration from Eastern New Mexico University in 2015.

Since beginning his teaching career in the fall of 1999, Mr. Fear has served in a variety of instrumental music positions—all within Farmington Municipal Schools in Farmington, New Mexico. His roles have included high school assistant band director and middle school band and orchestra director. In April 2016, he was appointed Fine Arts Coordinator for the district. Under his leadership, Farmington Municipal Schools has been recognized as a NAMM Best Community for Music Education for nine consecutive years and has received the NMMEA District of Distinction honor three times.

In addition to his administrative role, Mr. Fear currently serves as the orchestra director at Piedra Vista High School, where he continues to foster student growth through meaningful performance experiences and ensemble instruction. Balancing both administrative and instructional responsibilities, he remains committed to keeping student learning at the center of his work. Mr. Fear has served as president of the Northwest New Mexico Music Educators Association and holds active memberships with the National Association for Music Education, New Mexico Music Educators Association, and the New Mexico chapter of Phi Beta Mu. His commitment to arts advocacy extends through service on the boards of the Southwest Civic Winds, the Connie Gotsch Arts Foundation, and the New Mexico Advisory Council on Arts Education. An active performer, Mr. Fear plays tuba with the Celebration Brass of First Presbyterian Church—Farmington, the Southwest Civic Winds, the Kissmah Brass Band, and the San Juan College Concert Band. He is also a frequent clinician and adjudicator throughout New Mexico and Southwest Colorado.

Outside of his professional life, Mr. Fear enjoys spending time with his wife and two children. Together, they enjoy movies, bike rides, and exploring the outdoors.

Donna Schmidt, Hall of Fame



A native of Beltsville, Maryland, Donna Schmidt earned her Bachelor of Music Education from James Madison University in 1991 and her Master of Music from the University of New Mexico in 1995. She recently completed her fourth year as band director at Rio Rancho Middle School. Prior to her time in Rio Rancho, Ms. Schmidt spent 28 years teaching middle school band in Arlington, Virginia, and Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Throughout her career, Ms. Schmidt has been recognized for her outstanding contributions to music education. Her honors include the New Mexico Music Educators Association Music Educator of the Year award (2016), the Golden Apple Award (2018), and the NMMEA Rollie Heltman Service Award. She was also named New Mexico's representative in School Band and Orchestra magazine's "50 Directors Who Make a Difference" and was most recently honored as the 2025 Staff Member of the Year at Rio Rancho Middle School.

Passionate about fostering the next generation of music educators, Ms. Schmidt has mentored more than 20 student teachers over the course of her career. She is committed to collaboration across disciplines, often organizing special events for students and the school community that connect music with broader academic and cultural themes. Most recently, Ms. Schmidt collaborated with her music colleagues at Rio Rancho Middle School to form the Phoenix Philharmonic, a combined band, orchestra, and choir. The ensemble was honored as the 2025 NMMEA Honor Orchestra and performed at Popejoy Hall during the All-State Conference.

An active clinician and adjudicator, Ms. Schmidt frequently conducts honor bands and judges festivals throughout New Mexico. She has presented numerous sessions at the NMMEA All-State Conference and, in 2018, led a clinic at the renowned Carnegie Hall in New York City. Outside the classroom, Ms. Schmidt enjoys spending time with her husband, Dr. Kurt Schmidt, and their two children, Oskar and Elisabeth.

Dustin Seifert, Hall of Fame



Dustin D. Seifert, a native of Lancaster, Ohio, is Director of Bands and Associate Professor of Music at Eastern New Mexico University (ENMU). He served as Chair of the Department of Music for 18 years (2007-2025). Professor Seifert received the B.M.Ed., summa cum laude, from The University of Akron and the M.M.Ed. with an emphasis in instrumental conducting from the University of Illinois where he was the recipient of the Guy M. Duker Award. His mentors include Richard L. Cass, Michael R. Golemo, Robert D. Jorgensen, Tucker R. Jolly, James F. Keene, Gary E. Smith, Mark E. Moore, and Deborah A. Confredo.

Professor Seifert is responsible for the operation and organization of a comprehensive undergraduate instrumental program. Dustin conducts the Wind Symphony, Symphonic Band, and Greyhound Sound Marching Band, and teaches applied euphonium and tuba. Professor Seifert leads courses in low brass teaching techniques, techniques of marching band, band and wind ensemble history and repertoire, secondary instrumental methods, and beginning and advanced conducting. The ENMU Bands offer several important outreach events annually including the Green and Silver Classic Marching Band Festival, Hound For A Day marching band immersion event for high school students, and the ENMU Band Director Workshop - "The New Mexico Thing". In 2023, the GSMB was selected by the rock band Metallica as the Division II/III winner of the For Whom the Band Tolls marching band competition.

Widely honored as a Music Educator and conductor, Professor Seifert was elected to membership in the prestigious American Bandmasters Association in 2022. He received the "Spirit of Eastern Award" in 2004 acknowledging outstanding contributions, dedication and loyalty to ENMU over a sustained period. He was the 2005 recipient of ENMU's Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching. Dustin has been recognized as a Distinguished Alumnus in Music Education by The University of Akron School of Music and as Music Educator of the Year by the New Mexico Music Educators Association.

Prior to his appointment at ENMU, Professor Seifert served as Assistant Director of Bands at Iowa State University (ISU). At ISU, he conducted the University Band and Musical Pit Orchestra, designed drill for and rehearsed the Sudler Trophy winning ISU Cyclone Football Varsity Marching Band, taught low brass methods, applied low brass, and courses in music education.

Dustin is a member of the New Mexico Music Educators Association, National Band Association, National Association for Music Education, College Band Directors National Association, Texas Music Educators Association, Kappa Delta Pi Education Honorary, and Pi Kappa Lambda Music Honorary. He is an honorary member of national honorary band fraternities Kappa Kappa Psi and Tau Beta Sigma, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, and Phi Beta Mu International Bandmasters Fraternity.

Professor Seifert was appointed to the New Mexico Music Commission in August of 2020 by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham. He currently serves as Southwest Division Chair for the

National Band Association, Executive Secretary for the Southeast New Mexico Music Educators Association, and served as Music Director of the Clovis (NM) Community Band for eight seasons. He is a Past President of New Mexico Music Educators Association.

Dustin is an active clinician, guest conductor, and adjudicator throughout the region, state, and nation. He has conducted honor bands in Alabama, Alaska, Iowa, Mississippi, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Texas. When not musicing, Dustin and his family are very involved in numerous community service projects. Professor Seifert is not above taking a pie in the face to benefit an ENMU student organization or the United Way of Eastern New Mexico. He resides in Portales, New Mexico with his wife, Meredith, son, Stratton (a music education and performance major at ENMU), and daughter, Sawyer Jean.

Brian Luck, Administrator of the Year



With more than two decades of educational leadership, Brian Luck serves as Superintendent of Roswell Independent School District (RISD), one of New Mexico's largest P-12 systems, encompassing 21 schools and approximately 9,800 students. Since assuming the superintendency, Brian has built upon RISD's longstanding motto—"Excellence in Education, Success in Society"—with an innovative yet values-rooted vision designed to uplift every student's potential.

Before stepping into the superintendent role, Brian held key leadership positions within the district, including assistant principal and principal across multiple campuses, navigating complex student- and community-focused challenges—from everyday administrative duties to crisis leadership. Notably, his early-career decisiveness and calm under pressure set a firm foundation for his system-wide administrative approach .

As superintendent, Brian has prioritized safe, inclusive, and engaging learning environments. He has championed modernizing campus security protocols, notably advocating for the district's first armed security liaison program to ensure rapid, responsible response capabilities—a move underscoring his commitment to staff and student welfare.

In close partnership with educators—especially arts and music faculty—Brian recognizes the lasting impact of comprehensive education. He has actively supported curricular expansion across disciplines, viewing music education not as optional enrichment but as central to student development. Under his leadership, RISD has strengthened its music program infrastructure: improving access to instruments and facilities, boosting teacher recruitment efforts in the performing arts, and integrating music into district-wide professional development for instructional excellence.

Brian is an advocate for innovative instructional models. He champions blended learning and technology-supported differentiation, empowering music teachers to leverage digital tools to

personalize instruction and expand students' creative expression. He also prioritizes equitable access, ensuring that rural and economically disadvantaged schools within the district receive quality instruments, ensemble opportunities, and performance space.

In addition to programmatic support, Brian dedicates time to teacher recognition. He established the "RISD Teaching Excellence" series, featuring music educators whose creative, high impact work transforms student learning. His leadership style—characterized by active listening, thoughtful encouragement, and collaborative decision-making—resonates strongly with school-based administrators and district staff alike.

Brian's influence extends beyond Roswell. He regularly engages with statewide educational networks and national music-education organizations, advocating for arts funding, sharing best practices, and collaboratively developing performance-based assessments aligned to NM and national standards. His ability to bridge district-level administration with educator-level implementation makes him a trusted partner to music educators striving to advance their craft and results.

A gifted communicator, Brian maintains transparency and community trust via regular video messages, public forums, and direct conversations with students, parents, staff, and civic leaders. His emphasis on clear, empathetic dialogue has strengthened stakeholder engagement around budget decisions, curriculum revisions, teacher recruitment, and arts programming.

Under his leadership, the RISD music program has witnessed measurable gains: expanded band and choir participation, improved performance ratings in statewide festivals, and heightened presence in community-focused events—from veterans ceremonies to local arts showcases. His holistic vision honors music educators not just as teachers, but as vital architects of student confidence, creativity, and civic connection.

Administering one of New Mexico's largest systems presents complex challenges—from balancing academic rigor and arts integration to managing resources equitably across diverse school settings. Brian meets these with clarity of purpose, fiscal responsibility, and a steadfast belief that music—in all its forms—is a vehicle for student empowerment and success.

In summary, Brian Luck exemplifies the ideal music educator administrator: a leader who combines instructional integrity with operational savvy, champions music education as essential to comprehensive learning, and fosters environments where educators and students thrive. His tenure continues to strengthen RISD's musical and academic profile, making him an outstanding nominee for Administrator of the Year.

Albuquerque Public Schools, Award of Distinction



Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) is home New Mexico's largest and most diverse public school music programs, serving over 80,000 students across the district. APS provides comprehensive music instruction from elementary through high school, with a focus on equity, access, and cultural relevance.

At the elementary level, APS ensures that every student receives year-long general music instruction, taught by certified educators in every school. This program, which currently reaches over 32,000 students, has doubled in size over the last eight years through intentional district-level investment in music education.

Middle and high schools across APS offer a wide range of music opportunities, including concert band, choir, orchestra, and guitar at every campus. Many schools also offer culturally relevant and contemporary programs such as mariachi, steel pan, jazz, world drumming, and modern music ensembles. These offerings reflect the diversity of Albuquerque and allow students to engage in music that is both personally meaningful and academically rigorous.

APS ensembles regularly perform at regional and national festivals, with several having appeared at prestigious events including the Midwest Clinic. Students from APS consistently earn placement in district honor ensembles and All-State groups, reflecting the district's strong instructional foundation and commitment to excellence.

To support its programs, APS maintains a district-run instrument repair shop and receives over \$3.6 million annually through a community-supported Fine Arts Mill Levy. These funds are used to purchase instruments, maintain equipment, and support the infrastructure of music programs district-wide.

APS also invests in educator growth, hosting regular professional development opportunities for music teachers featuring national clinicians and specialists.

Through consistent funding, diverse offerings, and a commitment to excellence, APS continues to serve as a leader in K–12 music education across New Mexico.

Rio Rancho Public Schools, Certificate of Recognition



Rio Rancho Public Schools, founded in 1994, maintains vibrant music offerings across 11 elementary schools, four middle schools, and two comprehensive high schools. For its entire 30-year history, RRPS has offered music instruction to every K–5 student every year, with each school having its own dedicated music teacher and music classroom. Two of our elementary schools even have two music teachers due to their size. RRPS also offers elementary band, choir, and orchestra to every fifth grader in the district. At the middle school level, our schools offer band, choir, and orchestra, guitar, and general music. Our four middle schools also have dedicated “cadet” bands and

orchestras for the students who participated in our elementary band and orchestra programs so that these students do not need to repeat beginning levels of instruction. Our high schools boast strong band, choir, guitar, and orchestra programs as well as classes in AP Music Theory, music appreciation, piano, and musical theatre.

Our music programs have achieved many distinctions in the district’s history: National Association of Music Merchants “Best Communities for Music Education” Award, NMMEA Honor Ensembles in Band, Jazz Band, Choir, and Orchestra, NMMEA Student All-State Representation in Band, Jazz Band, Choir, Jazz Choir, Guitar, and Orchestra, NMAA State Contest Winners in Band, Choir, and Orchestra, NMAA State Marching Band Winner, Bands of America Finalist Marching Bands.

New Mexico Activities Association, Rollie Heltman Exemplary Service Award



We at the New Mexico Activities Association (NMAA) are honored to support students and schools across New Mexico through our work in interscholastic activities. Established in 1921, our organization provides governance, structure, and equitable opportunities for more than 150 member high schools—and their middle-level programs—in both athletic and non-athletic arenas.

While athletics are a familiar part of our mission, we take equal pride in championing the fine arts. Our partnership with New Mexico Music Educators has strengthened statewide opportunities for student musicians, including the State Concert Band Contest, and the State Choir Contest. In 2024, we expanded our support of music education by establishing the State Marching Band Championship, ensuring that marching ensembles receive consistent statewide recognition and a competitive platform that matches their high level of artistry and discipline.

Across all programs, our focus remains student growth, school community, and statewide consistency. We work to ensure that every student—regardless of geography, district size, or

available resources—has access to meaningful, well-supported activities that enrich their educational experience. We are proud to stand alongside educators, administrators, and community partners who believe that music and the arts are essential to developing confident, creative, and well-rounded young people.



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SCAN FOR **FREE** STUDENT RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

Collegiate Section
Wednesday, Jan 14 – Thursday, Jan 15, 2026
Collegiate Section

Wednesday January 14, 2026	
10:30 - 12:00	Registration – SUB Ballroom Lobby Area
12:00 - 1:15	Welcome / Introduction / Business & Organization FAC Keller Hall
1:25 - 2:25	<p>Creating A Positive Culture / Classroom Management / Q & A FAC Keller Hall (1:25pm - 2:15pm)</p> <p>Group Introductions & Instructions for Mock Interview Breakouts FAC Keller Hall (2:15pm - 2:25pm)</p>
2:35 - 3:20	<p>Mock Interview / Kurt Schmidt FAC Keller Hall</p> <p>Mock Interview / Renee Saucedo FAC 1108</p> <p>Mock Interview / Joseph Flores FAC 1111</p> <p>Mock Interview / Daniel Fear FAC B015</p>
3:30 - 4:05	Q & A with Mock Interview Panel FAC Keller Hall
4:15 - 6:00	Collegiate Mixer SUB Navajo Lounge
Thursday, January 15, 2026	
8:30 pm	Collegiate Roundtable Sheraton Baldwin Ballroom



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Music Educator Schedule – Wednesday, Jan 14, 2026

Wednesday January 14	Band	Orchestra	Choir	GM	Guitar/Jazz
2:15 - 4:15	SSB: Badges, Sectionals, Co-Chair Meeting SUB Ballroom A				
2:00 – 8:00	Registration & Directors Pickup Student Pre-Registration Packets - Ballroom Foyer Student Union				
2:45-3:15	Co-Chair (CB, SB) Meeting FAC B117	Co-Chair Meeting FAC B117	Co-Chair Meeting FAC B117		GUITAR Co-Chair Meeting FAC B117
3:30 – 4:15	1 st meeting & Badges – (C Band – FAC B117), (S Band – FAC B120), (C Orch. – SUB Lobo A&B), (S Orch. – Rodey Theatre), (M Choir – WW), (T Choir – Northrop 122), (Guitar – Rodey XTheatre)				
4:30 – 5:30	Required Meeting of all All-State Students & Directors Honor Jazz: Los Alamos High School Jazz I / Alternative Ens: NMSA Percussion Ensemble Popejoy Hall				
5:15 – 9:00		Warmup Meeting 5:15-5:45 / Warmup 5:45-9:00 FAC Keller Hall	Warmup Meeting 5:15-5:45 / Warmup 5:45-9:00 WW		
5:45 - 6:15	ENMU Music Ensembles Performance FAC Keller Lobby				
5:45 – 6:20 (see section for actual time)	Sectional Team Meeting (6:00-6:20) FAC 1108	Meetings: Sectional Team (5:45-6:00) Audition Team (6:00-6:20) FAC 1111	Audition Team Meeting (6:00-6:20) FAC Basement		GUITAR Sectional Team Meeting (6:00-6:20) SUB Trail/Spirit
6:30 – 8:30	Sectionals CB – 6:30 see signs SB – 7:30 see signs Perc – 6:30-8:30	CO & SO Sectionals: Room # posted in Keller Hall Auditions: Gather in Keller Hall for Room # and time	TC & MC Auditions: Gather in Woodward Hall by County		GUITAR Sectionals: I – SUB Acoma II – SUB Fiesta III – SUB Mirage IV – SUB Trail/Sp
7:00 – 8:30	SSB Rehearsal SUB Ballroom A				



Good luck to all performers!

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Music Educator Schedule - Thursday, Jan 15, 2026

Thursday January 15	Band	Orchestra	Choir	GM	Guitar / Jazz/ All
8:00 – 5:00	Registration – SUB Ballroom Lobby Area				
8:15 – 9:30	Keynote: Off the Page, Into Their Lives: The Transformational Role of Music Educators - Josh Fiege SUB Ballroom C				
9:45 – 10:45	Me, the Music, & the Money: Fundraising, Grants, & 501(c)(3) Made Simple FAC Keller Hall The Fix: Looking Beyond the Embouchure in Your Saxophone Section FAC 1108	Orchestra Repertoire Every Director Should Have in Their Music Library! FAC 1111	Choral Warm-Ups with Muscores FAC 2100 NMAA Advisory Council Meeting / Choral FAC 1018	Creative Music Tech in the Elementary Classroom FAC 2018 Where the Rubber Meets the Road: Center Activities for Practicing in the Kodaly Inspired Classroom SUB Santa Ana From Covers to Creation on the Ukulele SUB Acoma	GUITAR Flamenco Palos Workshop Rodey B409 ALL Help Me Help You: Surviving, Thriving, & Getting Admin On Your Side SUB Ballroom C
11:00 – 12:00 pm	MPA Repertoire Selection: Are We Just “Teaching to the Test?” FAC Keller Hall NMAA Advisory Council Meeting / Band FAC 1018	Differentiation Tools for Your Orchestra Tool Box FAC 1111	Audiation & Solfege Literacy in the Secondary Classroom FAC 1108 Middle School Choir Music Reading Session FAC 2100	Popular Music Education & Modern Band SUB Acoma Unmute the Grumps SUB Santa Ana Section Meeting FAC 2018	GUITAR Blues Guitar for the Classroom Rodey B409 JAZZ Overcoming Hangups about Teaching & Playing Jazz FAC 1020
12:15 – 1:30	Phi Beta Mu Meeting (bring own lunch) SUB Mirage/T-Bird	Luncheon: ASTA Meet the Directors SUB - TBD	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
2:15 – 3:15	Adjudication Tips & Tricks: A Panel Discussion FAC Keller Hall	Music Reading Session FAC 1111	Piano Skills for Non-Pianists in Rehearsal FAC 2100 Contemporary Vocal Technique: Jazz & Improvisation Workshop FAC 1108	Teaching Music in a Multilingual World SUB Acoma Reading Through Orff Resources SUB Santa Ana General Music Read Through FAC 2018	GUITAR Guitar Ensemble Reading Session Rodey B409 JAZZ Beyond the Beat: Developing a Comprehensive Percussion Section FAC B015
3:30 – 4:45	Honor Orchestra: Centennial High School Orchestra - Performance (3:30 - 4:00) Honor Choir: Centennial High School Chamber Choir - Performance (4:15 - 4:45) Popejoy - Attendance required of all students for Performances				
5:00 – 6:15	Section Meeting FAC Keller Hall	Section Meeting FAC 1111	Section Meeting FAC 2018	Game Songs & Dances Every Teacher Should Know SUB Santa Ana Elementary Choral Repertoire FAC 2100	GUITAR Section Meeting Rodey B409
6:15	Dinner & End of Sessions for Day				

6:30 - 7:00	UNM Music Ensembles Performance FAC Keller Lobby
8:30 pm	Roundtable Discussion for Collegiate members – Sheraton Baldwin Ballroom

Music Educator Schedule - Friday, Jan 16, 2026

Friday January 16	Band	Orchestra	Choir	GM	Guitar / Jazz/ All
8:00 – 10:00	Registration – FAC Keller Lobby				
8:15 – 9:15	Being Present - Developing Foundation Skills for Wind Players at All Levels FAC 2018 Horn Fiesta! FAC 1108	Intro to Composition in the Classroom FAC 1111	Music Literacy: Tips & Tricks for Successfully Prepping Choir for the New Sight- Reading Process FAC Keller Hall	(8:15 – 9:45) General Music Headliner: Fostering Vocal Creativity & Improvisation in Elementary Music SUB Ballroom C	GUITAR Sight Reading Preparation for Guitar MPA Rodey B409
9:30 – 10:30	Music Classroom Assessment: Where to Start & Where to Go FAC 2018 Bassoon Strategies for the Instrumental Music Educator FAC 1108	Mastery Through Movement I: Rolland Action Studies for Your String Students FAC 1111	Demonstration of the New MPA Sight-Reading Procedure with Q&A FAC Keller Hall	(10:00 – 11:30) General Music Headliner: More Bang for Your Buck: Extending Lessons & Making Connections in Elementary General Music SUB Ballroom C	JAZZ The Jazz Ladder: Structuring Success from Ensemble to Ensemble FAC 1020 GUITAR Memory & Guitar Performance Rodey B409
10:45 – 11:45	Percussion Methods Refresher: A Crash Course! FAC Keller Hall	Mastery Through Movement II: Vibrato FAC 1111	First Things First - Where to Begin Your Choir's Music Literacy Journey FAC 2100		GUITAR Beginning Jazz Guitar Rodey B409 JAZZ Section Meeting FAC 1020

11:45 – 1:30	Awards/Business Luncheon - SUB Ballroom B				
2:15 – 3:15	Adjudication Tips & Tricks: Practical Application FAC Keller Hall	Cultura y Conexion FAC 1108 Alexander Technique FAC 1111	Skills-Based Learning in the Choral Classroom FAC 2018 Engaging Your Choir Students: Fun Warm-Ups, Games, & Activities FAC 2100	(2:00 – 3:15) General Music Headliner: Teaching Harmony Step-By-Step: A Sequential Approach to Developing Harmonic Audiation SUB Ballroom C	GUITAR Twelve Ways to Improve Your Guitar Class FAC B015
3:30 – 4:45	Honor General Music: Lovington Elementary Honor Choir - Performance (3:30 - 4:00) Honor Band: Highland Middle School Symphonic Band - Performance (4:15 - 4:45) Popejoy – Attendance required of all students for Performances				
5:00 – 6:15	But Where Is My Itinerary?! FAC 2018	Developing Musical Autonomy - Effective Practice Strategies FAC 1111	High School Music Reading Session FAC 2100	Folk Dancing! FAC Keller Hall	
6:15	Dinner & End of Sessions				
8:30	Educator Mixer Sheraton Baldwin Ballroom				

Music Educator Schedule - Saturday, Jan 17, 2026

Saturday January 17	Band	Orchestra	Choir	GM	Guitar
9:00 AM	All-State Concert – Guitar Ensemble Popejoy Tickets available at the entrance to Keller Hall (Badge Required)				
9:45 AM	All-State Concert – Concert Orchestra Popejoy Tickets available at the entrance to Keller Hall (Badge Required)				
10:30 AM	All-State Concert – Symphony Orchestra Popejoy Tickets available at the entrance to Keller Hall (Badge Required)				
11:00 AM	UNM Alumni and Friends Reception SUB: Draft & Table				
12:00 PM	All-State Concert – Small School Band Popejoy Tickets available at the entrance to Keller Hall (Badge Required)				
12:45 PM	All-State Concert – Concert Band Popejoy Tickets available at the entrance to Keller Hall (Badge Required)				
1:30 PM	All-State Concert – Symphonic Band Popejoy Tickets available at the entrance to Keller Hall (Badge Required)				
3:00 PM	All-State Concert – Treble Choir Popejoy Tickets available at the entrance to Keller Hall (Badge Required)				
3:45 PM	All-State Concert – Mixed Choir Popejoy Tickets available at the entrance to Keller Hall (Badge Required)				

Tickets for the Saturday Performances are \$19.00 for adults (19yrs and up) and \$9.00 for students (6yrs – 18yrs).



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Academy For Technology & Classics	Los Alamos
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Ask Academy	Manzano
Atrisco Heritage	Masters Program
Aztec	Mayfield
Belen	Mesilla Valley Christian School
Bosque	Moriarty
Capital	NM Military Institute
Capitan	Navajo Preparatory School
Carlsbad	New Mexico Connections
Carlsbad Early College	New Mexico School For The Arts
Centennial	Oak Grove Classical Academy
Chaparral	Organ Mountain
Cibola	Piedra Vista
Clayton	Portales
Cleveland	Public Academy For Performing Arts
Clovis	Rehoboth Christian
Cobre	Rio Rancho
Cottonwood Classical Prep	Roswell
Del Norte	Ruidoso
Deming	Sandia
Early College Academy	Sandia Prep
Eldorado	Santa Fe
Estancia Valley Classical	Santa Fe Prep
Explore Academy	Santa Teresa
Farmington	Shiprock
Gadsden	Silver
Goddard	Socorro
Grants	St. Michaels
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 Our programs strive to develop the complete musician - through immersive community experiences, world-renowned faculty, and exceptional educational opportunities among the vast number of disciplines we offer.
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Center for the Collaborative Arts & Technology
 Scheduled to open in 2027, CCAT will enhance UNM Music's existing spaces as a catalyst for creativity, innovation, and collaboration among students, faculty, and the wider Albuquerque arts community.
Scan for more information about CCAT.

STRING FACULTY

 Dr. Christoph Wagner Cello christophwagner@unm.edu	 Professor Al Laszlo Double bass alaszlo@unm.edu
 Dr. Carmelo de los Santos Violin carmelo@unm.edu	 Professor Travis Maril Viola tmaril@unm.edu
 Dr. Karin Hendrickson Director of the UNM Symphony Orchestra karinhendrickson@unm.edu	

To learn more about the Department of Music at UNM, visit music.unm.edu, text "music" to (505) 418-4306, or email musicscholarships@unm.edu

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The New Mexico Music Educators Association Awards of Excellence in Music Education

MUSIC EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

Recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the field of music education in New Mexico.

1984	Gregg Randall, Las Cruces	1999	Bob Myers, Cloudcroft	2014	Bernie Chavez, Deming
1985	K. Lloyd Higgins, Albuquerque	2000	Charles Faulkner, Clovis	2015	Dustin Seifert, Portales
1986	Floren Thompson, Portales	2001	Tony Montano, Las Cruces	2016	Donna Schmidt, Albuquerque
1987	Harold Van Winkle, Albuquerque	2002	Diane Schutz, Las Cruces	2017	Joseph Flores, Las Cruces
1988	Norvil Howell, Clovis	2003	Ken Van Winkle, Las Cruces	2018	Deanna Amend, Albuquerque
1989	Dale Kempter, Albuquerque	2004	John Sanks, Albuquerque	2019	Marilyn Barnes, Santa Fe
1990	William Clark, Las Cruces	2005	Virginia Morrison, Clovis	2020	Ryan Finn, Los Alamos
1991	Ben Canfield, Hobbs	2006	Henry Estrada, Los Lunas	2021	Tyler North, Albuquerque
1992	Art Sheinberg, Albuquerque	2007	Brian Uerhling, Clovis	2022	Jadira Flamm, Rio Rancho
1993	No Recipient	2008	Kathleen Dollahon, Las Cruces	2023	Laura Eberhardt, Cimarron
1994	Wayne Anderson, Clovis	2009	Aaron Fleming, Albuquerque	2024	Jason Paulk, Portales
1995	Gordon Hart, Clovis	2010	Arnell David Arellanes, Las Vegas	2025	Jennifer Rogers, Las Cruces
1996	John Schutz, Las Cruces	2011	Virginia Nickels, Farmington	2026	Daniel Holmes, Rio Rancho
1997	Ed White, Silver City	2012	Pam Towry Church, Red River		
1998	Nikki Shed, Hobbs	2013	Chuck Gerheart, Tyrone		

JOHN BATCHELLER AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING MUSIC IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Recognizes individuals who have made a significant contribution to the field of music education in the elementary schools.

1985	Darlene Van Winkle, Albuquerque	1999	Louise Loomis, Albuquerque	2014	No Submissions
1986	Mildred Greeson, Albuquerque	2000	Kathleen Anderson, Albuquerque	2015	Todd Hansen, Santa Fe
1987	Diane Bonnell, Albuquerque	2001	Melissa Martinez, Albuquerque	2016	Christine Strickland, Albuquerque
1988	Harriet Heltman, Santa Fe	2002	Misti Miller, Albuquerque	2017	Sarah S. Silva, Las Cruces
1989	Jim Elyce Wade, Clovis	2003	Holly Gilster, Albuquerque	2018	Caroline Glass, Farmington
1990	Connie Hill, Clovis	2004	Catherine Estrada, Los Lunas	2019	Kim Letellier, Los Alamos
1990	Juanita Poff, Farmington	2005	Rick Wild, Albuquerque	2020	Alexander Flores, Los Lunas
1991	Janet Barnard, Clovis	2006	Sharon Williams, Albuquerque	2021	Kelly Yost, Farmington
1992	Donna Moore, Albuquerque	2007	Nicole Glass, Las Cruces	2022	Ana Marie Dark, Rio Rancho
1993	Judy Hart, Clovis	2008	Bambi Hays, Clovis	2023	Jamie Atkinson, Alamogordo
1994	Marie Esquibel, Albuquerque	2009	Jayme Berry, Alamogordo	2024	Virginia Weaver, Farmington
1995	Eleanor McKinney, Clovis	2010	Amy Anderson, Rio Rancho	2025	Julie Rombach-Kendall, Alb.
1996	Paul Hallsted, Las Cruces	2011	Linda Parker, Aztec	2026	Cat Woo, Albuquerque
1997	Laurie Norman, Las Cruces	2012	Mika Proctor, Rio Rancho		
1998	Amy Beegle, Los Alamos	2013	Sara Hennessy, Clovis		

HALL OF FAME

Recognizes the invaluable service given by members of the profession in bringing the best in music education to young people

1988	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carl Jacobs, Las Cruces Virginia LaPine, Albuquerque Rollie Heltman, Santa Fe William Rhoads, Albuquerque Greg Randall, Las Cruces Bennett Schacklette, Roswell Marvin Wadley, Anthony Ted Rush, Albuquerque 	1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wallace Cleaveland, Albuquerque John Romero, El Rito Harold Van Winkle, Albuquerque J.D. Fry, Lovington 	2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dick Valenzuela, Albuquerque Pat Henry, Portales Scott Ramsey, Farmington Ron Thielman, Las Cruces Floren Thompson Jr., Portales Ed White, Silver City
1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carl Cramer, Albuquerque H. N. Bailey, Santa Fe Harry Taylor, Clovis William Kunkle, Albuquerque Harry Barton, Clovis Douglas Cornwall, Clayton Kenneth Bender, Alamogordo Gillian Buchanan, Portales Mary McFie Lackey, Santa Fe Jean Hook, Albuquerque Don Beene, Los Alamos Bob Lane, Hobbs 	1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Howard Chrisman, Farmington Bill Seymour, Albuquerque Vidal Gallegos, Las Vegas Louise Drlik, Las Vegas Lou Ann Hunt, Santa Fe Roy Showalter, Hobbs Bernie May, Albuquerque 	2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gordon Hart, Clovis Ron Lipka, Albuquerque Ellen McCullough-Brabson, Abq. Art Sheinberg, Albuquerque
1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> James Bonnell, Albuquerque Duane Bowen, Portales Win Christian, Albuquerque Kurt Fredrick, Albuquerque Ray Tross, Las Cruces 	1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ben Canfield, Hobbs Robert Felix, Espanola Don Gerheart, Los Alamos 	2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orin Bartholomew, Eunice Stuart Fessinger, Albuquerque Diane Schutz, Las Cruces
1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Litra Romero, Las Vegas Abramo Parotti, Silver City Diane Bonnell, Albuquerque James Whitlow, Albuquerque John Bealmear, Portales Champ Tyrone, Las Vegas 	1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Buhalts, Jr., Hobbs John Damgaard, Santa Fe Marcia Walrath, Santa Fe 	2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> K. L. Higgins, Albuquerque David Gerig, Clovis
1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irma Caldwell, Lovington Melvin Hill, Las Vegas Jackson Reynolds, Hobbs Ross Ramsey, Las Cruces Clarissa Webber, Raton Don Thorp, Alamogordo 	1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phil Pressler, Lordsburg Twyla Wade, Melrose Nancy Soltero, Santa Fe 	2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> William Clark, Las Cruces Diane Hahn, Albuquerque Patricia Jones, Albuquerque
		1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jim Young, Silver City 	2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Allen, Hobbs Robert Myers, Cloudcroft Jean Ornellas, Portales
		1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charles S. Siebenthal, Carlsbad 	2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul Hallsted, Las Cruces Jeff Jolly, Belen
		2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ron Teare, Albuquerque John Schutz, Las Cruces Diantha Swoboda, Albuquerque 	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doug Poff, Las Cruces Barbara Mahan, Farmington
		2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Thomas Dodson, Albuquerque Norvil Howell, Clovis Sylvia Alarcon, Alamogordo Richard Snider, Santa Fe 	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linda Servold, Carlsbad
		2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warner Hutchison, Las Cruces Nina Hobbs, Albuquerque Les Leach, Farmington Tom Martin, Albuquerque 	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Janet Isham, Kirtland
				2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> John Sanks, Albuquerque
				2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Henry Estada, Los Lunas Wayne Anderson, Clovis

2015	Kieth Jordan, Albuquerque Kurt Chrisman, Farmington Pam Towry Church, Cimarron	2019	Virginia Nickels, Farmington Bruce Dalby, Albuquerque John Clark, Albuquerque	2023	Deanna Amend, Albuquerque William Austell, Los Lunas Neil Swapp, Silver City
2016	Shelly Andes, Albuquerque	2020	Marianna Gabbi, Las Cruces Kathleen Hill, Las Cruces	2024	Joseph Flores, Las Cruces Marletta Newman, Farmington
2017	Luis Delgado, Albuquerque Arnell David Arellanes, Las Vegas Keith Rall, Hobbs	2021	Greg Fant, Las Cruces Monica Leaming, Farmington Dorothy Kincaid, Santa Fe	2025	Pancho Romero, Las Cruces Gloria Velasco, Albuquerque
2018	Chuck Gerheart, Tyrone Jane Gerheart, Los Alamos	2022	Brian Uerling, Clovis Debbie Fleming, Rio Rancho	2026	Daniel Fear, Farmington Donna Schmidt, Rio Rancho Dustin Seifert, Portales

ROLLIE V. HELTMAN EXEMPLARY SERVICE AWARD

Recognizes individuals or groups that have provided continuous support to NMMEA.

2003	Harriet Heltman, Santa Fe	2011	Luis Delgado, Albuquerque	2018	Neil Swapp, Las Cruces
2004	Elaine Howell, Clovis	2012	Diantha Swoboda, Abq. Larry Wheeler, Albuquerque	2019	Joseph Flores, Las Cruces
2005	Joe Keith, Albuquerque	2013	Jane Gerheart, Los Alamos Ron Lipka, Albuquerque	2020	Kathy Espinoza, Las Cruces
2006	Bill & Mary Krum, Abq.	2014	Charles Brandon, Clovis	2021	Donna Schmidt, Albuquerque
2007	Mike White, Las Cruces	2015	Diane Otts, Albuquerque	2022	Lauren Espinoza, Las Cruces
2008	Jimmy Olivas, El Paso	2016	Jean Ornellas, Portales	2023	Keith Jordan, Albuquerque
2009	UNM Music Department, Abq.	2017	Don Gerheart, Los Alamos	2024	Amy Williams, Albuquerque
2010	National Gd. 44th, Army Band			2025	Rio Rancho Fine Arts, RR
				2026	NM Activities Assoc, Abq.

ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR

Recognizes an outstanding school administrator who has demonstrated support for and commitment to a high-quality music education program in their school.

1991	Rick Purvis, Clovis	2003	Luis Delgado, Albuquerque	2015	Ricky Espinoza, Aztec
1992	Taylor Stephenson, Artesia	2004	Anna Perez, Bayard	2016	Troy Hughes, Albuquerque
1993	Timothy Whalen, Albuquerque	2005	Christine Sanchez-Cantrell, Gadsden	2017	Leanne DeVane, Santa Fe
1994	Del Hanson, Las Cruces	2006	Lonnie Leslie, Clovis	2018	Dana Lee, Albuquerque
1995	Robert Hennig, Albuquerque	2007	Kristin Rauch, Rio Rancho	2019	Jacob Lain, Santa Fe
1996	Jim McDaniel, Clovis	2008	Wayne Anderson, Clovis	2020	Dana Sanders, Los Lunas
1997	Marty Wilson, Albuquerque	2009	Daniel Davis, Las Cruces	2021	Virginia Sue Cleveland, Rio Rancho
1998	Robert Ogas, Las Cruces	2010	Gene Parson, Las Vegas	2022	Michelle Ronga, Las Cruces
1999	LaWayne Leonard, Kirtland	2011	Deborah Fleming, Rio Rancho	2023	Kurt Schmidt, Rio Rancho
2000	Mike Gladen, Ruidoso	2012	Marin Sandoval, Albuquerque	2024	Wendi Miller-Tomlinson, Las Cruces
2001	Lucille Getz, Las Cruces	2013	Joan Gilmore, Grants-Cibola	2025	Casey Kelly, Farmington
2002	Mark Hartshorne, Las Cruces	2014	Alan Dropps, Clovis	2026	Brian Luck, Roswell

New & Emerging Teacher of the Year

Recognizes those who are new to the profession and have demonstrated significant success in their early years of teaching.

2010 - Trae Blanco, Las Cruces	2016 - Jordan Sayre, Los Lunas	2022 - Joshua Dumais, Rio Rancho
2011 - Jadira Flamm, Rio Rancho	2017 - Laura Eberhardt, Santa Fe	2023 - Rebecca Kendall, Rio Rancho
2012 - Tony Schillaci, Santa Fe	2018 - Justin McMurdo, Moriarty	2024 – Gabriella Alvarez, Las Cruces
2013 - Sarah Rede, Las Cruces	2019 - Miguel Jaramillo, Rio Rancho	2025 – Audrianna Aragon, Moriarty
2014 - Janice Needham, Rio Rancho	2020 - Jonathan Robak, Rio Rancho	2026 - Evan Aguilar, Albuquerque
2015 - Nichols Prior, Albuquerque	2021 - Mason Yordy, Albuquerque	

Emeritus Teacher Award

Recognizes the contributions of retired music educators who continue to contribute to the New Mexico music education community through the Emeritus Teacher Award.

2008	Jim Young, Las Cruces	2014	John Schutz, Las Cruces	2021	Leslie Leach, Farmington
2009	Nina Hobbs, Albuquerque	2015	Diane Schutz, Las Cruces	2022	Pam Towry, Cimarron
2010	Don Gerheart, Los Alamos	2016	Bill Clark, Las Cruces	2022	John Sanks, Albuquerque
2011	Ron Lipka, Albuquerque	2017	Mike Lee, Roswell	2023	Cathy Estrada, Los Lunas
2012	Gregg Randall, Las Cruces	2018	Gloria Velasco, ABQ	2024	Roman Chip, Las Cruces
2012	Dave Kendrick, Silver City	2019	Henry Estrada, Los Lunas	2025	Beth Borchert, Las Cruces
2013	Kathy Dollahon, LC	2020	Neil Swapp, Silver City	2026	Bruce Dalby, Albuquerque

AWARD OF DISTINCTION

Recognizes a school district that has demonstrated support for and commitment to high-quality music education programs district wide.

2010	Farmington Municipal Schools	2019	Los Alamos Public Schools
2011	No Recipient	2020	Rio Rancho Public Schools
2012	Clovis Municipal Schools	2021	Farmington Municipal Schools
2013	Albuquerque Public Schools	2022	Las Cruces Public Schools
2014	Rio Rancho Public Schools	2023	Rio Rancho Public Schools
2015	Las Cruces Public Schools	2024	Los Alamos Public Schools
2016	No Recipient	2025	Las Cruces Public Schools
2017	No Recipient	2026	Albuquerque Public Schools
2018	Farmington Municipal Schools		

CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

Recognizes a school district that has demonstrated a high degree of support to high-quality music education programs district wide.

- 2022 Rio Rancho
- 2023 Farmington Municipal Schools
- 2024 Las Cruces Public Schools
- 2025 Artesia Public Schools
- 2026 Rio Rancho Public Schools

General Sessions

Keynote: *Off the Page, Into Their Lives: The Transformational Role of Music Educators* - Josh Fiege

As a music teacher, your work matters more than ever—the world needs you to keep showing up. Music educators have an extraordinary impact in shaping school culture, student identity, and lifelong confidence. With stories from the front lines of education and a heartfelt call to action, this session will remind you that your work goes far beyond the concert stage. You don't just teach music—you create belonging, model bravery, and lead movements. Come ready to reconnect with your purpose, reignite your fire, and walk away reminded of the power you already hold.

Help Me Help You: *Surviving, Thriving, and Getting Admin on Your Side* – Josh Fiege

Learn how to frame your program's value, communicate effectively with administrators, and advocate confidently for both your students and yourself. This strategy-rich session offers practical tools to build influence, strengthen relationships with leadership, and increase your program's visibility in ways that resonate with school priorities. We'll explore how to make smart, timely asks; how to get a seat at the decision-making table; and how to protect your energy while still advancing the arts.

Band Focused Sessions

The Fix: *Looking Beyond the Embouchure in your Saxophone Section* – Ashley Kelly

We will explore the internal embouchure and the ramifications of neglect in this area. Additionally, we will address the inherent issues presented by the saxophone itself and how directors can diagnose and aggress them at the earliest stages of performance.

MPA Repertoire Selection: *Are we just "teaching to the test?"* - Emily Moss

This presentation will give directors some ideas about how to construct an MPA concert set that shows off their program's strengths, supports the teaching you are already doing, and achieves artistry through performance.

Being Present - *Developing Foundation Skills with Wind Players at All Levels* - David Jennison

Being Present" challenges us to approach the fundamentals portion of each rehearsal with the same focus and attention to detail as when we open the score.

Music Classroom Assessment: *Where to Start and Where to Go* - Cameron Abeyta

The purpose of this presentation is to showcase ideas and methods that music educators can use to help them with planning, collecting, and organizing their own classroom's assessment data. Focusing primarily on objective, measurable characteristics and goals for a performance based classroom.

Percussion Methods Refresher: A Crash Course! - Christopher Wilson

This informative session will give music educators quick tips on the most commonly utilized percussion instruments.

Bassoon Strategies for the Instrumental Music Educator - Jacqueline Wilson

This presentation outlines the most common misunderstandings about the bassoon, followed by recommendations for future student success. Specific topics include reeds, fingerings, starting a bassoonist, and repertoire.

But where is my Itinerary?! – Steven Smyth and Kristen Silver

Strategies on encouraging self-reliance and decision-making skills for students.

Horn Fiesta! – Michael Walker

In this presentation, we will go into more depth on how to start students on horn, understanding how the overtone series impacts accuracy and pitch, and how to create beautiful sounds on the horn.

Me, the Music, and the Money: Fundraising, Grants & 501(c)(3) Made Simple - Marcos Gomez and Kevin Everitt

A Practical Guide to Powering Your Program Through Strategic Support and Sustainable Structure.

Adjudication Tips and Tricks: A Panel Discussion – Donna Schmidt, Dustin Seifert, Joseph Flores

A panel discussion about tips and tricks for a smooth adjudication process as an interested or up-and-coming adjudicator. Q&A opportunities will also happen.

Adjudication Tips and Tricks: A Panel Discussion (Part 2) - Practical Applications - Donna Schmidt, John Converse, Bill Austell

A panel discussion about tips and tricks for a smooth adjudication process as a director preparing bands for Concert and Sight-Reading Assessment. Q&A opportunities will also happen.

Choral Focused Sessions

Choral Warm-ups with Musescape – Siromani Leath

This clinic will require teachers to bring their laptop with the software program MuseScore downloaded on their laptop. I will teach the basics of MuseScore and how to create a vocal warm-up. I do this lesson with my middle school choir students. I have also composed several choral warm-ups using this software program, that I will share with the teachers that attend this workshop. I currently have 7 vocal warm-ups and my plan is to have 20 by the time I present. Teachers will receive a hard copy of all of the vocal warm-ups as well as

the steps to create a warm-up using Muscores. I will cover os natos and how to layer them to create fun and exciting warm-ups for their students

First Things First - Where to Begin Your Choir's Music Literacy Journey – David Edmonds

Music literacy is arguably the single most important skill we can teach to our students to help them become independent and life-long musicians. But where do we even begin on this path toward musical literacy? This session will present games, exercises and drills that can be used in any middle school or high school choral classroom, even if your students have no prior experience with reading music. By walking through specific examples, as well as covering novel approaches to your concert repertoire, you will come away with many ideas for how to start your choir's journey to stronger music literacy and greater musical independence.

Skills-based Learning in the Choral Classroom – David Edmonds

Whether you are a new teacher this year or a seasoned teaching veteran, each of struggles with getting stuck in a rut. It is much to easy to get lost in the weeds of fixing mistake after mistake in rehearsal after rehearsal only to find that, while our students have learned a lot of songs, they haven't really learned many skills. But this doesn't have to be the case! By taking a skills-first approach to teaching your repertoire your students will make noticeable progress week over week and year over year and build the skills necessary for becoming independent musicians (and potentially future music educators)!

Audiation and Solfege Literacy in the Secondary Choral Classroom - Elijah Estrada

The term "Audiation" is used all of the time in choral practice, education, and professional circles. You may be so used to hearing it at this point, that it has become arbitrary and perhaps somewhat meaningless. But what exactly is audiation? In this session, we will establish a firm definition that works within the context of the secondary choral classroom. We will also explore the research surrounding the validity of audiation. Additionally, we will explore specific exercises and warm-ups that can be used every day in the secondary choral rehearsal to practice and assess one's audiation capabilities. Lastly, we will put our audiation skills to the test with applied sight-reading examples. I will share my exact process for sight reading with audiation; the same process with which my choirs have been able to achieve multiple years of success in the MPA sight reading room.

High School Choir Music Reading Session - Jadira Flamm

Mrs. Flamm will be providing a reading session that will include some of her favorite pieces along with new and fun pieces that she has researched.

Music Literacy: Tips and Tricks for Successfully Preparing Choirs for the New Sight-Reading Process - Tami Martin

Now that our state has unified our Sight-Reading for District MPA's and has adopted utilization of the UIL Sight-Reading materials, this clinic will be given in order to equip teachers with the tips and tricks they will need to help be successful in teaching sight-reading year-round with the end goal of excellent music literacy. I, along with a small panel of teachers, will provide teachers with the ways in which we implement daily sight-reading practice into our programs. As a teacher with 29 years of experience with UIL sightreading in both Texas and Southeastern New Mexico, I have a plethora of knowledge to give in order to equip teachers new to the world of UIL with tools and practices for proficiency. A set of UIL examples across varying levels of difficulty will be given as a hard copy packet for teachers to take home and use with their own students. A small portion of the clinic will also be made available for a Q and A.

Demonstration of the New MPA Sight-Reading Procedure with Q & A - Tami Martin

In conjunction with the “Music Literacy: Tips and Tricks for Successfully Preparing Choirs for the New Sight-Reading Process” session, a live demonstration of the new MPA Sight-Reading procedure will be provided by a high school demonstration choir. This will be an opportunity for teachers to see the new unification procedures from start to finish in an effort to make sure all directors are familiar and ready to tackle this process with confidence. Following the demonstration will be a time of Q & A for teachers to voice questions and get clarification on any parts of the process they feel are necessary in order for them to feel comfortable with the procedure as a whole.

Piano Skills for Non-Pianists in Rehearsal - Sarah Herrington

Many choral directors step into the secondary choral classroom without strong piano skills and without an accompanist frequently present in the rehearsals. This session will demonstrate methods of facilitating students’ music learning without the need to play every note on the page. Several secondary choir directors who are uncomfortable with their piano skills will experiment with these methods throughout the fall semester. Their experiences will be presented during the clinic. These methods will not only create new possibility for the choral director, but will also facilitate and enhance greater musical development in the students.

Engaging Your Choir Students: Fun Warm-Ups, Games, and Activities - Stephanie Wilkerson

This interactive and engaging presentation will provide choir teachers with a variety of dynamic warm-ups, games, and activities designed to keep students actively involved and excited about choir. The session will focus on fun, inclusive, and effective techniques that can be easily incorporated into your daily practice to foster better vocal technique, teamwork, and a positive classroom atmosphere.

Middle School Choir Music Reading Session - William Gonzales

Mr. Gonzales will be providing a reading session that will include some of his favorite pieces along with new and fun pieces that he has researched.

Contemporary Vocal Technique; Jazz & Improvisation Workshop - Diane Richardson

Open to singers and instrumentalists of all levels, this workshop explores the essentials of contemporary vocal technique through the lens of jazz and improvisation. Participants will deepen their understanding of tone, phrasing, and stylistic nuance while developing confidence in spontaneous musical expression. Whether you're a student, professional, or community musician, come ready to experiment, listen deeply, and find your unique voice in the moment.

Collegiate Focused Sessions

Business & Organization – Laura Eberhardt, Neil Swapp, Amy Williams

Presenters will focus on concrete steps students can take as they complete their degree to prepare for a strong and confident start in their first teaching position. The session will help demystify the logistics and business side of teaching, including contracts, budgeting, communication with administrators, and managing time and responsibilities beyond the classroom. Topics will include professionalism, workplace expectations, collaboration with colleagues, building positive peer relationships, effective communication, organization, advocacy for programs, and developing habits that support both personal well-being and long-term career success.

Creating a positive Culture / Classroom Management - Paul Hallsted, Daniel Holmes, Jonathan Robak

This clinic focuses on building a positive, respectful culture in the music classroom and using effective classroom management strategies to support learning. Participants will explore practical ways to set clear expectations, foster student ownership, and create an environment where students feel safe, motivated, and engaged. The session emphasizes proactive approaches that reduce behavior issues, strengthen relationships, and allow more time for meaningful music making.

Mock Interviews and tips from seasoned educators – Daniel Fear, Joseph Flores, Kurt Schmidt, Renee Saucedo

Attendees will hear practical advice from experienced educators on both securing a teaching position and navigating the critical first years in the profession. The session will focus on real world strategies for building confidence, managing expectations, and establishing strong habits early on. Student volunteers will take part in mock auditions and receive direct feedback from the presenter, which will serve as a springboard for discussion about common challenges, professional growth, and what long term success looks like during the early stages of a teaching career.

General Music Focused Sessions

Fostering Vocal Creativity and Improvisation in Elementary Music – Heather Shouldice

Want to help your students create and improvise vocally but not sure how to start? This session is for you! The presenter will share strategies for using Gordon’s Music Learning Theory to help students develop the musical “vocabulary” and independence needed to create and improvise. These playful and engaging activities, using practical application of MLT, can help build students’ musical confidence and get them on their way to vocally improvising in no time!

More Bang for your Buck: Extending Lessons and Making Connections in Elementary General Music – Heather Shouldice

Elementary music can easily become a disjunct “grab bag” of activities. This session will equip elementary music teachers to help students make connections, continuously develop skills, and encourage deep understanding by extension and spiraling of concepts and repertoire through and across grade levels. Many national standards, including improvisation and composition, will be incorporated.

Teaching Harmony Step-by-Step: A Sequential Approach to Developing Harmonic Audiation – Heather Shouldice

Helping your students understand and sing in harmony can be a snap! The key is to think about readiness. Using ideas drawn from Gordon’s Music Learning Theory, this session will share practical activities and strategies for developing students’ harmonic skills in a sequential way.

Unmute the Grumps – Amy Sewell

A presentation of tried-and-true activities to pull in the most reluctant learners...5th grade, back row, boys, etc. Come learn today and teach tomorrow!!!

Creative Music Tech in the Elementary Classroom - Drew Wichman

This session will share practical, classroom-tested ways to use music technology with elementary students. We’ll explore tools like loopers, MIDI controllers, and recording software or hardware to help students create, improvise, and perform with confidence. You’ll also learn how to create custom accompaniment tracks and set up easy-to-use tech tools that enhance student engagement and musical understanding. We’ll also look at how music technology can complement or inspire teaching. The ideas and techniques are designed to be approachable for all experience levels — whether you’re new to tech or already experimenting in your classroom.

Where the rubber meets the road; Center Activities for practicing in the Kodaly Inspired Classroom – Ruth Brake

This presentation is aligned with the Kodaly approach in the music classroom. The 3rd phase of teaching focuses on practicing. Once students have learned the content, this is when practicing takes place. This clinic will give Center Activities for practicing: from reading and writing to creating melodically and rhythmically combinations. New inspiring activities to transform the elementary music classroom.

Teaching Music in a Multilingual World – Sarah Farrell

Most teachers in New Mexico have students in their class who are emerging bilinguals, learning English as an additional language at school. This workshop will be presented in Spanish, using sheltered instruction strategies to support teachers who are new to Spanish. In addition to learning songs, games and chants in Spanish for different ages, the workshop will guide teachers to examine how they felt to be in a class in which the language of instruction and content might be challenging for them. Together we will explore strategies to support the comprehension, participation and inclusion of all students.

Popular Music Education and Modern Band – Skye Hale

This workshop is centered on the belief that all people are musical. Participants will explore resources and methods for teaching popular music through performance in modern band. The content covered is applicable to P-12 and higher education classrooms and includes the culturally relevant music of students.

From Covers to Creation on the Ukulele – Skye Hale

Unlock the creative potential of the ukulele! In this hands-on session, we'll dive into methods for songwriting and improvisation, perfect for intermediate players seeking to expand their musical horizons. Participants will explore strategies to empower music-makers to express themselves through meaningful music-making and the use of message in songwriting. Attendees will depart with a multitude of free and resourceful ideas to integrate into their classrooms. This workshop is centered on the belief that all people are musical and celebrates the diverse musical choices of individuals. During this session, educators will: Learn to introduce songwriting and improvisation with a low-stakes, approachable method; Learn foundational tools to aid students in songwriting and improvisation; Learn simple performance techniques on the ukulele that may be applied to a variety of songwriting and improvisation situations; Create short musical compositions using the ukulele and vocals.

Folk Dancing! – Paul Hallsted

Folk Dances from Phyllis Weikhart

Elementary Choral Repertoire – Paul Hallsted

Favorite beginning repertoire and teaching techniques for elementary/beginning choral students.

Reading through Orff Resources – Cat Woo

Read and play through Orff-Schulwerk resource Music for Children Vol. 1 and other gems from the Off-Schulwerk.

General Music Read Through - Ruth Brake & Anabelle Rangel

This read -thru general music presentation is aligned with content focus approach in the music classroom. Educators will be given resources that help students learn new content more efficiently. This clinic will give repertoire for melodic and rhythmic content. Content that will help students learn easier and efficiently.

Game Songs and Dances Every Teacher Should Know – Jacob Lucero

Join us in learning multiple children's game songs and dances that are appropriate for students in Prek-6th grade. These games will give teachers an introduction to teaching game songs, pedagogical uses, and benefits of teaching game songs.

Guitar Focused Sessions

Sight Reading Preparation for Guitar MPA - Rebecca Simons

Want a great procedure that will help you teach sight-reading? Come to this clinic! Learn how to create a culture of singing, reading and understanding. Students can use this while working on a solo, or ensemble piece. Take this student-centered procedure and apply it to your classroom. You'll have great results and your students will be confident music readers. In the process, teach them the basics of music theory! It's a win-win!

Flamenco Palos Workshop - Donovan Perea

In this class we will explore the various techniques, rhythms, and idiosyncrasies of selected flamenco palos (styles). Materials and resources will be given to each participant that are specifically tailored toward intermediate/advanced guitar students.

Blues Guitar for the Classroom – Liza Gatica

Grab your guitars and join us for a Blues Jam Session! Liza will provide some handouts and would like to ask other teachers to share what has worked for them. Particularly concerning Blues pieces and Pentatonic scales. Then - get ready to improvise.

Guitar Ensemble Reading Session – Gwen-Marie Lerch

Bring your guitar and read through some great guitar ensemble pieces.

Memory and Performance – Joseph Duran

We will work on memorization techniques and strategies that will help to increase the level of musicianship and confidence in students. By forcing newly learned memories into long term memories, students memorize music much more quickly. This helps to allow the student to focus on performance and quality of playing.

Beginning Jazz Guitar - Ian Davis

In this session, participants will examine and discuss the challenges and joys of introducing jazz and jazz guitar to their guitar students and ensembles. We will discuss chord shapes and harmony unique to jazz, comping rhythms, and improvisation. Participants are welcome to bring their guitar with them for hands-on demonstrations of various ideas and concepts.

12 Ways to Improve Your Guitar Class - Michael Christiansen

This session is for those who are new to teaching classroom guitar, as well as seasoned teachers. Participants will learn key elements of guitar pedagogy that will assist in developing and/or improving successful guitar instruction. Skills that every guitar student needs to develop will be presented. Other considerations, such as sequential skill development, pacing, and incorporating various styles of music and ensembles will be discussed.

Jazz Focused Sessions (Concert All-State)

Beyond the Beat: Developing a Comprehensive Percussion Section – Jesse Parker

This clinic offers music educators practical strategies for developing well-rounded percussionists across all grade levels. Focusing on five key areas—technique, rhythmic vocabulary, harmony, reading, and drum set skills—this session provides tools to elevate your percussion section beyond timekeeping and into musical leadership. Attendees will explore progressive warm-ups, ensemble-based reading strategies, groove-based exercises, and creative approaches to teaching harmony and improvisation through percussion. Emphasis

will also be placed on building a rhythm section culture that supports both concert, jazz, and contemporary ensembles. Whether you're working with beginners or advanced students, this clinic will leave you with fresh resources and rehearsal-ready exercises to strengthen your program from the ground up.

The Jazz Ladder: Structuring Success from Ensemble to Ensemble - Joshua Dumais, Brad Dubbs

The Jazz Ladder: Structuring Success from Ensemble to Ensemble explores a proven system for developing jazz musicians through a tiered ensemble approach. By aligning expectations, curriculum, and culture across multiple groups, directors can cultivate consistent growth and readiness for top-level performance. This session offers strategies for maximizing each band's role in preparing students for the next level. Whether you're building a new program or refining an existing one, this clinic provides practical tools to elevate every ensemble.

Overcoming Hangups About Teaching and Playing Jazz - John Converse

This session addresses the common roadblocks educators face when teaching jazz, especially when they don't come from a jazz background themselves. Topics include developing confidence with improvisation, breaking away from concert band-style balance concepts, and building a more authentic jazz sound. Attendees will walk away with practical strategies and an encouraging framework for growing as jazz educators.

Jazz Focused Sessions (Jazz All-State)

From Fear to Freedom: Your First steps in Jazz Choir Improvisation - Jolynn Aleman

This is a clinic dedicated to exploring the unique aspects of vocal jazz. Participants will delve into scat singing, phrasing, articulation, and improvisation, learning techniques to enhance their vocal jazz performance. This clinic provides practical tools and exercises to develop mastery and confidence in these specialized skills as we reflect on the origins of the style.

What's in a Lead Player? "To lead or not to lead – THAT is the question" – Sid Shuler

Physical, technical, and mental approaches will be presented that can assist young trumpet players in becoming better lead players while avoiding injury and remaining contributing members of your large ensemble programs.

Non-Traditional Collaboration with your High School Jazz Band – Ty Frederick

Many of us have a goal of including more students in our music programs. Using your Jazz program is one of the easiest ways to begin this process. Through this discussion we will look at various ways to include

non-traditional musicians in collaboration with your jazz band. This can include vocalists and strings. Collaboration with a modern band setting can also help with recruitment. Combining this concept with unique performance venues can create a dynamic environment for all students.

How to Listen to Jazz? Project-Based Music Learning Across the Curriculum - Wat Niimori

Although students must listen to jazz in their learning process, the question is how they listen to jazz and how they can apply their listening skills to their performance practice. This clinic will discuss the difference between active and passive listening, demonstrate what students focus on listening to and how they imitate the materials from the recording. This learning process helps them learn not only jazz but also various styles of music.

Speak Your Sound: A Guide to Jazz Improvisation – Richard Schwartz

The workshop will focus on building practice techniques through permutations that may immediately be shared with students looking to improvise in the jazz medium.

Orchestra Focused Sessions

Mastery Through Movement II: Vibrato - Aaron Jacobs

Selected Action Movements from Paul Rolland

Mastery Through Movement I: Rolland Action Studies for Your String Students – Aaron Jacobs

Vibrato from Paul Rolland

Cultura y Conexion: The Impact of Mariachi and Creating Inclusive Opportunities for Students - Joseph Alcocer & Kenneth Tanuz

Growing role of Mariachi in K-12 education, particularly its impact on creating inclusive programs that welcome students from diverse musical backgrounds.

Intro to Composition in the Classroom - Zachary Bush

Composition tips, tricks, and activities for starting composition in classroom

Developing Musical Autonomy: Effective Practice Strategies- Carla Kountoupes

In this workshop we will explore simple, systemized strategies that will help students (of any/all levels) become more independent, productive and efficient in the practice room.

Topics and handouts will include:

- S.M.A.R.T Practice Goals - how to focus your practice to achieve your goals - intention is key!
- Effective Practice Strategies - tips and tricks on how to make the most efficient use of your practice time

Orchestra Repertoire Every Director Should Have in Their Music Library! – Erica Photiades

Standard rep and what every teacher should have in their library.

Differentiation Tools for your Orchestra Toolbox - Emily Awes

Physical examples of differentiation tools that can be used in orch classroom. Interactive workshop.

Music Reading Session – Art Sheinberg

Alexander Technique - Sam Brown

Clinician Bios



Josh Fiege serves as high school principal in Prescott School District in Wisconsin. Beginning his career as a social studies teacher before transitioning to school administration, this year marks his ninth year as Principal of Prescott High School. Known for his empathetic and curiosity-driven leadership style, Josh was recognized as Prescott Educator of the Year in 2022. He was honored with the Wisconsin Music Educators Association Distinguished Administrator Award in 2023 for his advocacy for the arts and his support for music educators.

Since 2024 Josh has spoken to education groups around the United States sharing a message of advocacy for the arts. Over the past three years, he has dedicated his focus to reimagining support for educators through instructional coaching, emphasizing the importance of leveraging each teacher's unique strengths.



Ashley Kelly joined the faculty of The University of New Mexico in 2016. She has taught courses in saxophone performance, saxophone chamber music, and music appreciation. In addition to her role as saxophone professor, she also serves as the Music Recruitment Coordinator for the UNM Music Department.

Dr. Kelly has enjoyed notable performances with the New Mexico Philharmonic, Santa Fe Pro Musica, Baton Rouge Symphony Orchestra and, most recently, the Santa Fe Opera, where she participated in the premiere of the Grammy award-winning contemporary opera, *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*. She has performed as a soloist at both national and regional NASA conferences and internationally in Croatia, Spain, and

Mexico.

Her research interests include, but are not limited to, early saxophone pedagogy, contemporary works by female composers, and the advancement of research within the saxophone world. Her dissertation, *The Saxophone Symposium: An Index of the Journal of the North American Saxophone Alliance, 1976-2014*, was cited at the 2016 NASA Biennial Conference and is the first index of its kind for The Saxophone Symposium. She received a Doctorate of Musical Arts from Louisiana State University, where she served as the graduate teaching assistant to Dr. Griffin Campbell. She also earned a Master of Music degree in saxophone performance from the University of New Mexico and a Bachelor of Music degree in music education and saxophone performance from the University of Montevallo in her home state of Alabama."



Emily Moss serves as Professor of Music and Director of Bands at the University of New Mexico where she conducts the Wind Symphony, oversees the graduate conducting program, and teaches other courses in conducting and wind literature. Her previous position at California State University, Los Angeles (2011-2023) included conducting the Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band, teaching undergraduate and graduate conducting and music education courses, and administering the instrumental music education program. She also held a similar position at the Conservatory of Music at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York.

Originally from the Pacific Northwest, Dr. Moss began her collegiate music studies at the University of Washington in Seattle, earning a Bachelor's degree in Music Education. After teaching middle school band for six years in both Washington and Arizona, Dr. Moss

served as a teaching assistant with the University Bands at the University of Northern Colorado, earning her Master's degree in Wind Conducting and the Doctor of Arts in Music Education and Bassoon Performance, studying with Kenneth Singleton, Richard Mayne, and Charles Hanson.

As a conductor and clinician, Dr. Moss is in high demand across North America and regularly gives band clinics at middle and high schools in her local area and beyond. Her style of teaching and rehearsing shows everyone in the room her commitment to music education, specifically to the musical skills and high-level performance ability of each student with which she gets to work. She is also an accomplished bassoonist, actively performing during her degree programs in Washington and Colorado, with the Conservatory Orchestra and other ensembles at Brooklyn College, and for student and faculty recitals at Cal State LA. Dr. Moss has presented at conferences across the United States on a variety of topics and is a contributor to the esteemed Teaching Music through Performance in Band series. She recently wrote a chapter for the book *Women in Wind Band*, titled "Defining and Redefining Success," and the book is available through GIA Publications. Her professional memberships include College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA) where she recently served as the President of the Western Division, World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles (WASBE) where she serves on the Board of Directors, National Association for Music Educators (NAfME), and the National Honor Society Phi Kappa Phi.

She resides in Albuquerque, NM with her husband Noah and their two daughters, Ella and Sadie.



[David Jennison](#) is a music educator of thirty eight years, a graduate of New Mexico State University and the University of Northern Colorado. Currently the conductor of the Youth Concert Orchestra of the Albuquerque Youth Symphony Program, Mr. Jennison also serves as a school mentor/teacher sponsored by the Santa Fe Symphony and the "Dream Big" program of the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival. As the Director of Instrumental Music for the Round Rock Independent School District, he presented at the Texas Music Educators Conference, the Texas Bandmasters Convention and at the Texas Fine Arts Administrator conference. Prior to becoming an administrator, he taught at Westwood high school in RRISD where he conducted the Wind Symphony,

Concert Band and was Associate Conductor of the Philharmonic Orchestra. During his tenure at Westwood these ensembles were consistent UIL sweepstakes winners and the Warrior Marching Band qualified for the 2014 Texas State Marching Band Contest for the first time in program history.

Throughout his time teaching in the Round Rock ISD, ensembles from Westwood High School and Grisham Middle School earned the honor to perform at the Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic and as TMEA honor ensembles. Mr. Jennison has had the great honor of conducting these honor bands and orchestras for many prestigious performances. From 2015 to 2018 Jennison was the Music Director and Conductor of the Vivace Youth Orchestra which served the greater Round Rock, Georgetown and central Texas area. A native of Santa Fe, New Mexico, Mr. Jennison attended New Mexico State University and the University of Northern Colorado. He is a member of the New Mexico Educators Association, the National Association of Music Educators, is a retired member of the Texas Music Adjudicators Association. As a performer on Euphonium and Trombone, Mr. Jennison is a member of Concordia Santa Fe, the Santa Fe Concert Band and the Santa Fe Great Big Jazz Band.



[Cameron Abeyta](#) is the current band director at Lovington Sixth Grade Academy and assists at Lovington High School. Cameron has primary experience teaching beginning and intermediate band classes at the elementary and middle school levels that have been in homogeneous and heterogeneous settings. He has been privileged to observe and assist several great elementary, choral, orchestral, and band educators throughout the states of New Mexico, Texas, and Ohio, as well as help emerging music professionals at the collegiate level. Cameron holds a Bachelor of Music Education from Eastern New Mexico University and a Master of Music in Instrumental Music Education from The University of Akron. His current areas of study include data

collection, assessment, and instructional methodologies. Throughout his collegiate studies, Cameron has also been a proud member of Kappa Delta Pi, Kappa Kappa Psi, and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia.



[Christopher Wilson](#) is an assistant professor of music and the coordinator of percussion at Washington State University. At WSU he teaches applied percussion lessons, conducts the percussion ensemble, and serves as Assistant Director of the Cougar Marching Band. Regionally he serves as principal timpani in the Walla Symphony Orchestra, principal of timpani and percussion in the Washington-Idaho Symphony, and is the president of the Washington Chapter of the Percussive Arts Society.

In 2025, Dr. Wilson released his first solo album on WSU's peer-reviewed recording label. The album, titled "Solemn Music," is a collection of the three unaccompanied marimba solos by David Maslanka: Variations on Lost Love, My Lady White, and the first professional recording of A Solemn Music. The album is available on all online and streaming platforms. In 2024 he co- led the commission of a new work for flute and percussion by composer Jennifer Bellor with his flute colleague Sophia Tegart, the recording of which is forthcoming.

Dr. Wilson is an active percussion pedagogue outside of his role at WSU. He is the co-chair of the Percussive Arts Society's Education Committee, where he has chaired the PASIC FUNDamentals subcommittee and hosts the the FUNDamental Friday series during the summer. He has contributed significantly to the PAS Classroom series and presented a clinic on graduated mallets at PASIC 2022. Dr. Wilson's current research area stems from his dissertation which analyzed the ability of commonly used band method books to prepare beginning percussionists for modern Grade 1 repertoire. He has subsequently presented his research at NAfME state music educator conferences in Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Michigan, Nebraska, South Dakota, Washington, as well as at the National Conference on Percussion Pedagogy.

Wilson received his Doctor of Arts from the University of Northern Colorado studying percussion performance with a secondary area in wind conducting. He is also a graduate of the Boston Conservatory and Eastern Washington University. Dr. Wilson is a proud endorser of Adams Percussion, Encore Mallets, Pearl Drums, and Salyers Percussion.



Bassoonist Dr. [Jacqueline Wilson](#) (Yakama) is an active performer, pedagogue, and collaborator who currently serves as Principal Bassoonist of the Washington Idaho Symphony and Assistant Professor of Bassoon at Washington State University. She regularly presents recitals, masterclasses, and clinics including engagements at the International Double Reed Society Conference, the International Alliance for Women in Music Conference, and the Meg Quigley Bassoon Symposium. As a frequent concerto soloist, Wilson has appeared with the Flagstaff Symphony Orchestra, the Mesquite Symphony

Orchestra, the Coeur d'Alene Symphony Orchestra, the Oregon East Symphony Orchestra, the Port Angeles Symphony Orchestra, Santa Fe Community Orchestra, and the Ravenna String Orchestra, among others.

An eager contributor to the double reed community, Dr. Wilson currently serves as President of the International Double Reed Society.

Wilson's creative activity centers Native American and Indigenous self-representation and artistic sovereignty through meaningful collaboration and relationality. In this capacity, she has premiered, commissioned, and recorded works by composers Juantio Becenti (Diné), Joy Zickau (Seminole), Michael Begay (Diné), Trevor Reed (Hopi), Connor Chee (Diné), Louis W. Ballard (Quapaw), and Raven Chacon (Diné), among others. These efforts can be heard on her debut album, *Works for the Bassoon by Native American Composers*, which was selected as SiriusXM's Symphony Hall Album of the Week and nominated for a Native American Music Award (Best Instrumental, Connor Chee Nocturne for Bassoon and Marimba). Featured on this album is the premiere recording of *For Jacqueline Wilson*, a work dedicated to Wilson as part of Pulitzer Prize winning composer Raven Chacon's collection of graphic scores titled, *For Zitkála-Šá*. She has participated in performances of *For Zitkála-Šá* at the Whitney Biennial and the Getty Center.

Expansion of this work was supported by a WSU New Faculty Seed Grant in the form of an international Indigenous artistic collaboration with Māori composers Takerei Komene, Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal, and Phil Brownlee, the results of which can be heard on her sophomore album, *Works for the Bassoon by Māori Composers*. In 2022, she received an Artist Trust Fellowship to fund the commissioning of Connor Chee's *Concerto for Bassoon and Strings*, a work she premiered, toured, and recorded on her most recent album release *Daughter of the Wind: Works for the Bassoon by Native American Composers*.

Wilson is also an active composer who was awarded the 2022 PatsyLu Prize for outstanding work by a BIPOC composer in the 41st Search for New Music Competition by the International Alliance for Women in Music for her piece *Dance Suite for Solo Bassoon*. Her method book, *Daily Routines for Bassoon*, was published by Mountain Peak Publishing in 2024.



[Steven L. Smyth](#) is Associate Professor of Music at New Mexico State where he serves as the Associate Director of Bands and Music Education Coordinator. In his duties he conducts the NMSU Symphonic Band, the Pride of New Mexico Marching Band, Roadrunner Basketball Band, Proud Pete Commercial Ensemble, and Jazz Ensemble 2. Dr. Smyth also teaches our Administrative Methods, Rehearsal Strategies, and Intro to Music Education Courses. In his spare time he administers and mentors our NMSU Mariachi and Folklorico as well as the NMSU NAFME Chapter.

Dr. Smyth's research interests span the subjects of live cinema, wind literature, leadership development, commercial music ensembles in education, and curriculum innovation. He has conducted, adjudicated, and presented all over the world including the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic, Texas Music Educators Association Convention, and the College Band Directors National Association Convention. At New Mexico State Dr. Smyth's ensembles achieved national attention for their innovation during the COVID-19 pandemic and was featured in *The New York Times*. While serving as Director of Athletic Bands at Iowa State University, the ensemble won the prestigious Sudler Award for Excellence in College Marching Band.

Dr. Smyth holds a Doctorate in Wind Conducting from the University of Kansas, a Masters of Conducting Pedagogy and Performance from Oklahoma State University, and a Bachelors of Music Education from Iowa State University.



[Kristen Silver](#) is an active teacher, clinician, and adjudicator in Southern New Mexico and the El Paso area, and she is in her 21st year of teaching as head band director at Mesa Middle School in Las Cruces, NM. Kristen has also taught at New Mexico State University in multiple capacities, currently as the Assistant Director of the Pride of New Mexico Marching Band and Desert Winds Indoor Ensemble. Previously, she has instructed Instrumental Techniques classes with the Music Education Department, in addition to the NMSU Horn Studio for the 2017 fall semester. Kristen has taught band at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, having held teaching positions in New Mexico, Texas, and Iowa.

Kristen earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees in music education from New Mexico State University in 2004 and 2024, respectively. She is also an active performer having played with the Las Cruces Symphony Orchestra, the Juarez Symphony Orchestra, the El Paso Opera, as well as solo performances in Beijing and Tianjin, China, and with the NMSU Horn Choir. Additionally, Kristen was a member of the Blue Knights Drum & Bugle Corps for the 2001, 2002, and 2004 seasons, where she was a featured soloist for all three years.

In addition to her teaching and performing, Kristen also has written marching band drill for New Mexico State University and other local high school programs, as well as being the mother of her three children.



[Michael Walker](#) inspires students and audiences alike with his multimedia, cross-cultural collaborations and imaginative recontextualization of the concert experience. As Associate Professor of Horn at the University of New Mexico, and a founding member of the Amity Trio, he leverages skills in entrepreneurship, musicianship and pedagogy to champion musical experiences outside the traditional Western conservatory canon.

Dr. Walker believes in creating and curating concert and listening opportunities through commissions and partnerships with composers, musicians and artists. Amity Trio recorded its debut album, *Between Us Now* in 2022, featuring commissioned music by composers who identify as women. A second series of albums, *Border Crossings*, featuring music by Mexican and New Mexican composers, is in progress. Amity Trio also has partnered with Mexican composer Nur Slim twice for bilingual children's opera productions produced both onstage and virtually, *Lucrecia y el canto de los Dudasaurios* (2022) and the upcoming *Olivero* (2025). Dr. Walker has commissioned over fifteen additional pieces for horn and natural horn, including chamber and solo pieces by Teresa Careño, Alice Jones, Francisco Cortés-Álvarez, Tonia Ko, Lauren Bernofsky, Ryan Chase, and Dana Wilson.

Dr. Walker is also responsible for much of the entrepreneurial and organizational work that empowers his projects with Amity Trio and other musical collaborators. Over the last three years, he was awarded ten separate awards to achieve recording, performance, and commission-related goals. In 2021, Dr. Walker was appointed as Associate Chair of the UNM Music Department, where he continues to use his business acumen and leadership skill to promote the growth and wellbeing of UNM Music. His students broaden their musical training through building leadership skills and experimenting with historically informed performance via his Seraphinoff replica natural horns from the early 19th century.

Dr. Walker also contributes to the local music scene as a performer, appearing regularly with the New Mexico Winds, Enchantment Brass, Opera Southwest, and Santa Fe Pro Music. He served as Second Horn of the Columbus Indiana Philharmonic for three years, and has performed with the Santa Fe Opera, New Mexico Philharmonic, Santa Fe Symphony, Performance Santa Fe, Utah Festival Opera, and others. If he

is not holding a horn you can find him camping and fly fishing the idyllic southwest with his wife and daughter.



[Daniel Marcos Gomez](#) serves as the Head Director at Roswell High School, overseeing two concert ensembles, two jazz ensembles, marching band, and a newly founded mariachi program. He holds degrees from South Plains College, Eastern New Mexico University, New Mexico State University, and The University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Gomez has extensive teaching experience in music appreciation, jazz appreciation, and both middle and high school band programs. Committed to supporting music education in a Title 1 school where the majority of students live below the poverty line, he actively pursues innovative fundraising initiatives to address students' musical needs. Dr. Gomez will co-present at an upcoming conference on the topic, "Me, the Music, and the Money: Fundraising, Grants, and 501(c)(3) Made Simple," offering practical guidance on sustaining music programs. He currently resides in Roswell with his wife, Megan, their three children, two dogs, and two cats.



[Dustin D. Seifert](#), a native of Lancaster, Ohio, is Director of Bands and Associate Professor of Music at Eastern New Mexico University (ENMU). Professor Seifert served as Chair of the Department of Music for 18 years (2007-2025).

Dustin received the B.M.Ed., summa cum laude, from The University of Akron and the M.M.Ed. with an emphasis in instrumental conducting from the University of Illinois where he was the recipient of the Guy M. Duker Award. His mentors include Richard L. Cass, Michael R. Golemo, Robert D. Jorgensen, Tucker R. Jolly, James F. Keene, Gary E. Smith, Mark E. Moore, and Deborah A. Confredo.

Professor Seifert is responsible for the operation and organization of a comprehensive undergraduate instrumental program. Dustin conducts the Wind Symphony, Symphonic Band, and Greyhound Sound Marching Band (GSMB), and teaches applied euphonium and tuba. Professor Seifert leads courses in low brass teaching techniques, techniques of marching band, band and wind ensemble history and repertoire, secondary instrumental methods, and beginning and advanced conducting. The ENMU Bands offer several important outreach events annually including the Green and Silver Classic Marching Band Festival, Hound For A Day marching band immersion event for high school students, and the ENMU Band Director Workshop - "The New Mexico Thing". In 2023, the GSMB was selected by the rock band Metallica as the Division II/III winner of the For Whom the Band Tolls marching band competition.

Widely honored as a Music Educator and conductor, Professor Seifert was elected to membership in the prestigious American Bandmasters Association in 2022. He received the "Spirit of Eastern Award" in 2004 acknowledging outstanding contributions, dedication and loyalty to ENMU over a sustained period. He was the 2005 recipient of ENMU's Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching. Dustin has been recognized as a Distinguished Alumnus in Music Education by The University of Akron School of Music and as Music Educator of the Year by the New Mexico Music Educators Association (NMMEA). Professor Seifert was inducted into the NMMEA Hall of Fame in 2026.



[William Austell](#) graduated from Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana with a Bachelor of Music Education degree. He taught at the high school level for 21 years in Pennsylvania before moving to New Mexico in 2001 to become a member of the faculty at Valencia Middle School in Los Lunas where he was the Band Director until 2018.

During his tenure at Valencia Middle School (formerly Manzano Vista Middle School), the VMS bands were consistently recognized for their excellence. Most notably, the VMS Advanced Band earned a rating of Superior every year at the CNMMEA Music Performance Assessment and placed first in the middle school division of the 2004, 2006, 2009, and 2011 NMAA State Concert Band Competitions.

In August of 2018, Mr. Austell was hired to create a music program for all students, grades PreK-6, at Tomé Elementary School in Los Lunas. This was the first year-round school music education experience for any of the Tomé students at that time and, more importantly, an opportunity to be enriched by the joys and benefits of music for years to come.

As a bass trombonist, Bill is a member of the Albuquerque Jazz Orchestra (AJO). In addition to being a member of the AJO, he has performed with the New Mexico Philharmonic Orchestra, Santa Fe Symphony, NDI New Mexico and Opera Southwest. As a member of the AJO, Bill has performed with Bobby Shew, Wayne Bergeron, Bob McChesney, Pete Christlieb, John Fedchock, and Toshiko Akiyoshi. He has also appeared with The Manhattan Transfer, Aretha Franklin, Johnny Mathis, and Natalie Cole.

Mr. Austell also works as a clinician, adjudicator and marching band consultant. Most recently, he served on the adjudication panels for the 2023 NMMEA District 7 (Albuquerque) High School MPA, the 2024 ABQ/UNM Jazz Festival, the 2024 Albuquerque Marching Band MPA, the 2024 Los Lunas Marching Invitational plus the 2025 NWNMMEA and CNMMEA Concert Band MPAs. This year, he will be serving on the judging panel for the 2026 SENMMEA MPA.

Bill was on the staff of the Albuquerque Youth Symphony as co-conductor of the AYS Junior Orchestra from 2013 until 2019. During the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years, he served weekly as a volunteer clinician with the Junior Orchestra.

Bill is a member of the New Mexico Music Educators Association (NMMEA), the current President of the NMMEA Central District (CNMMEA) and a 2023 inductee into the NMMEA Hall of Fame.

[Kevin Everitt](#) has taught band for 18 years. He currently serves as the director of bands at Goddard High School, is the facilitator for secondary music in Roswell New Mexico, and is an adjunct professor of education at Eastern New Mexico University.



[John Converse](#) is in his third year as the Director of Bands at Jefferson Middle School and is in his 22nd year of teaching in the Albuquerque Public Schools. Prior to his position at Jefferson, Mr. Converse served as the Director of Bands at Eisenhower Middle School (2005-2011), the Associate Director of Bands at La Cueva High School for 4 years (2004-2006, 2009-2011) and the Director of Bands at La Cueva for 12 years (2011-2023). Under his direction, Mr. Converse's bands have earned 2 New Mexico Music Educators Association (NMMEA) Honor Concert Bands, 4 NMMEA Honor Jazz Bands, 5 New Mexico Activities Association State Concert Band Championships, 5 Bands of America Regional Final appearances (including a class championship at the 2019 Flagstaff, AZ Regional), 5 class championships at the New Mexico Pageant of Bands, 13 consecutive

finals appearances at the Zia Marching Fiesta and consistent superior ratings at concert band and Jazz band assessment events throughout the country. In 2021, the La Cueva Jazz Band 1 performed at The Midwest Clinic in Chicago, IL. In addition to his duties at Jefferson, Mr. Converse serves as an active adjudicator, clinician, consultant and guest conductor throughout the region.



[Siromani Leath](#) has taught choir and world music drumming at Heights middle school, in Farmington for the past 15 years. She is currently teaching her 22nd year in music education, starting first in elementary. She earned her Bachelors in 2003 and Masters in 2011 from UNM.

Siromani was in choir all of her years in public school and made all-state when she was in high school. She often enjoys singing with one of the community choirs in Farmington. Siromani has been teaching musescore to her students for the past 5 years, encouraging students to compose their own choral warm-ups.

Mrs. Leath has 5 kids, three yorkies and lives happily with her husband on 15 acres near the La plata river. She has sung under many inspiring conductors, including her dad, Shane Gallagher, her community college mentor, Linda Edwards and her colleague, Virginia Nickles.



[David Edmonds](#), D.M.A, has served as Director of Choral Studies at the University of New Mexico since 2018 where he directs the UNM Concert Choir and University Chorus and teaches undergraduate and graduate conducting and choral repertoire. Recent UNM choral highlights include Mahler’s Symphony no. 2 in C minor (“Resurrection”) with the New Mexico Philharmonic, the world-premiere of Kile Smith’s Where the Mind Is Without Fear, and the presentation of A Concert of Healing, in which the UNM choirs and UNM Symphony Orchestra gave the world-premiere performance of Andrea Clearfield’s Singing Into Presence. In 2024, the UNM Concert presented a special concert Sacred Choral Music and Ritual Dance on the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, in collaboration with the John Donald Robb

Trust, and curated by Dr. Javier Marín- López of the University of Jaén, in Spain. Before coming to UNM, Dr. Edmonds led the choral music program at the University of Montana. During his six years there, the UM Chamber Chorale was invited to perform at both ACDA and NAFME regional conferences—both first-time invitations for that ensemble.

In addition to his current role at UNM, Dr. Edmonds serves as Artistic Director and Conductor of Dolce Canto, a community-based choral ensemble in Missoula, Montana, presenting two regular-season performances in Missoula and the surrounding areas. The 2025-2026 concert season marks Dolce Canto’s 25 th year of successful music- making. Dr. Edmonds also recently completed a one-year tenure as the Interim Artistic Director of the New Mexico Symphonic Chorus, guiding the ensemble in their preparations for four choral/orchestral masterworks performances for the 2023-2024 season.

Edmonds served for six years as ACDA National Repertoire & Resources Chair for Student Activities, working on the R&R team to create programming and initiatives supporting the ACDA national student membership. An advocate for new music, Dr. Edmonds has commissioned and/or premiered works

by composers including Kile Smith, Jake Runestad, Katerina Gimon, Daniel Elder, Z. Randall Stroope, and Andrea Clearfield. He has received commissions for his own original compositions and arrangements from both school and church organizations in the United States and Canada. Some of his choral works are published by Alliance, Colla Voce, and MorningStar Music Publishers. Dr. Edmonds obtained advanced degrees in conducting from the University of North Texas (D.M.A., '12) and Westminster Choir College (M.M., '10) after teaching high school choral music for seven years in Iowa and Texas. He lives in New Mexico with his incredible wife and their two (often) well-behaved daughters.



[Elijah Estrada](#), a Las Cruces Native, has been involved in the choral community in and around southern New Mexico for nearly twenty years. He has been a singer his entire life with a strong passion for the choral tradition. He began his choral music education career at NMSU, completing his undergraduate studies in the Spring of 2021 and his graduate coursework in the Fall of 2024. His first and current teaching position is at Lovington High School in Lovington, NM; where his choirs have achieved superior ratings in sight reading the past several years. During his tenure at Lovington High, he has striven to establish a culture of excellence within his programs. In addition to running the high school choir program, Elijah has also been in charge of the middle school choral programs in the district as well as the high school drama teacher. Outside of his regular school job, Elijah has also been the Director of Music Ministry at Hobbs First Methodist Church since August of 2022 where he runs the contemporary worship and leads a chancel choir.



[Jadira Flamm](#) is the Director of Choral Activities and Fine Arts Instructional Leader at V. Sue Cleveland High School in Rio Rancho, NM. She is a graduate of Santa Teresa High School. She holds a Bachelor of Music Education with an emphasis in voice from New Mexico State University and her Master of Music Education from the University of New Mexico. This is her 21st year teaching in the Rio Rancho Public Schools and she holds a NM Level Three-A Instructional Leader/Teaching License and a Level 3 Kodaly certification. As a music educator, Ms. Flamm's goal is to inspire students not only to love music, but to love the process of making music. She believes that music should be accessible and inclusive to ALL students. Music education is important to Ms. Flamm because it opens the door to endless creativity and future musical experiences. She believes that music changes lives and it provides an unexplainable bond in humans.



Tami Martin is the Clovis High School Choral Director. Additionally, she oversees the choral departments of all the secondary schools. She is in her 30th year as a secondary Choral Director. Mrs. Martin received her undergraduate degree in Music Education and graduate degree in Administration from Wayland Baptist University. Before moving to Clovis, she taught her first 12 years in Lubbock, Texas. Over Mrs. Martin career, she has served as the Region 16 TMEA Junior High Vocal Division Coordinator, SENMMEA Choral Vice-President and President, served on the NMAA Choral Advisory Board, and several other state choral committees.

Mrs. Martin's choirs consistently earn top honors at contests, including sweepstakes at MPA Concert and Sightreading Contest. Each year, many of her students are selected into the NMMEA All-State Choirs, as well as making top ratings at the SENMMEA Solo and Ensemble Contest. She has been honored to have had choirs perform in Carnegie Hall in New York, the Bahamas, and Sydney, Australia.

Mrs. Martin has also served as the Clovis Community Chorus Director since 2018 where they perform locally, have collaborated with ENMU in performing Orff's "Carmina Burana", along with having traveled and performed in Prague, Vienna, Salzburg, London and Paris.

Outside of her career, she is the wife of Roy Martin, Minister of Music at Parkland Baptist Church, and the proud mother of twin boys, Joshua (and daughter-in-love Reagan) and Jacob, and daughter and son-in-love, Lauren and Josh Reynolds.



Sarah Herrington serves as the Director of Music Education for the Amarillo Independent School District. Additionally, she is honored to serve as Artistic Director for the High Plains Choral Society, based in Amarillo, TX.

She is a multi-faceted musician, currently serving in the worlds of choral conducting, vocal training, choral clinician and judge. She has directed choirs and taught students previously in public and private school districts, Texas Tech University, and Lubbock Christian University. Sarah has been fortunate to serve through the years as a conductor of school, collegiate, church and regional choral ensembles, vocal coach and soloist, private voice and piano instructor, and accompanist in school, collegiate and church settings.

Sarah is passionate about music education and vocal instruction in an ensemble setting. Her excitement for guiding singers to learn about their own instruments is equally as strong as her excitement for the music itself. Her research interests include guiding healthy vocal technique and developing music literacy in ensembles. She received her Bachelor of Music Education from Wayland Baptist University, Master of Music in Vocal Performance from Texas Tech University and Doctor of Musical Arts in Choral Conducting from Texas Tech University.

Two of Sarah's greatest blessings in life are her boys, Jackson and Mac. She is particularly blessed to share her passion for choral music – and the journeys of life – with her incredibly gifted husband and conductor, Dr. Scott Herrington.



[Stephenie Wilkerson](#) is in her 14th year as a music educator, currently serving as the choir director at both Rio Rancho Middle School and Eagle Ridge Middle School.

As a New Mexico native and graduate of Mayfield High School in Las Cruces, NM, Stephenie went on to earn a Bachelor of Music Education, and a Master of Secondary Education degree from Eastern New Mexico University.

With a career spanning multiple educational levels, Mrs. Wilkerson has taught elementary music, middle school choir, and high school choir in eastern & central New Mexico. Throughout her years of teaching, her choirs have consistently achieved superior ratings in performance and sight-reading assessments and contests.

Stephenie and her husband, Dane, have four children and enjoy spending time outdoors. They moved to the Albuquerque/Rio Rancho area in 2022. Mrs. Wilkerson is deeply passionate about fostering collaboration among students, encouraging them to create beautiful music together.



[William Gonzales](#) is a proud New Mexico native who graduated from the University of New Mexico in 2010 with a degree in Music Education. After graduating, Mr. Gonzales spent six years in the Washington, D.C. metro area teaching and earning his Master's degree in Music Education from the University of Maryland.

While in Maryland, he taught at Newport Mill Middle School, where he grew a choir program from 42 students to over 130 singers across four ensembles. He also served as ensemble manager and assistant director of the Strathmore Children's Chorus Concert Chorus, a prestigious vocal ensemble for high school-aged female singers. In this role, he collaborated with dedicated students and professionals to produce exceptional choral performances on nationally recognized stages.

Since returning to New Mexico in 2017, Mr. Gonzales has served as the choir director at Eisenhower Middle School. Under his direction, the Five Star Show Choir won 1st place at the 2023 Light Up the Stage Show Choir Competition in Burbank, California. His Concert Choir has consistently placed 2nd or 3rd in the middle school division at the NMAA State Choir Competition. In recognition of his work, Mr. Gonzales has been invited to clinic and adjudicate choral events across multiple NMMEA districts.



[Diane Richardson](#): Founder and Artistic Director of the Jazz Performance Arts Collective (Jazz Pac), Diane Richardson served as Professor and Assistant Chair of the Voice Department at Berklee College of Music until her retirement in 2015.

Diane Richardson holds a Doctor of Musical Arts in Jazz Studies, Music Education and Vocal Pedagogy from the University of Southern California, a Master's Degree in Jazz Studies from The Boston Conservatory, a Bachelor's Degree from Berklee College of Music, and a Bachelor of Science in Economics from the University of Maryland, College Park.

Recordings include "Portrait: The Music of Charles Mingus," "Negro Spirituals and African American Art Songs," and "The Sacred Music of Duke Ellington." She has performed with the Berklee Sun Ra Arkestra, the Langston Hughes Project: Twelve Moods for Jazz, and was a member of the Boston-based big band Makanda Project. Visit [Jazz Pac Presents!](#) for more information on local performances.



[Amy Williams](#) is a retired yet highly active music educator with a distinguished career in band education. She taught band in the El Paso, Gadsden, Rio Rancho, and Albuquerque school districts and holds a Bachelor of Music Education from New Mexico State University and a Master of Music in Instrumental Conducting from the University of Oregon. Under her baton, ensembles consistently earned top accolades, and she remains in high demand as a clinician, adjudicator, and private trumpet instructor.

Although retired from the classroom, Amy continues to be deeply involved in the music community. As Assistant Executive Director of NMMEA, she is a dedicated advocate for music education, committed to inspiring and empowering the next generation of musicians and educators.



[Daniel Fear](#) earned his Bachelor of Music Education from New Mexico State University in 1999, where he studied tuba with Dr. Jim Shearer and conducting with Dr. William Clark. During his time at NMSU, he performed in a variety of ensembles led by Dr. Ken Van Winkle and Dr. Greg Fant, experiences that deeply shaped his musicianship and teaching philosophy. He later completed his Master's Degree in Educational Administration from Eastern New Mexico University in 2015.

Since beginning his teaching career in the fall of 1999, Mr. Fear has served in a variety of instrumental music positions—all within Farmington Municipal Schools in Farmington, New Mexico. His roles have included high school assistant band director and middle school band and orchestra director. In April 2016, he was appointed Fine Arts Coordinator for the district.

In addition to his administrative role, Mr. Fear currently serves as the orchestra director at Piedra Vista High School, where he continues to foster student growth through meaningful performance experiences and ensemble instruction.

Mr. Fear has served as president of the Northwest New Mexico Music Educators Association and holds active memberships with the National Association for Music Education, New Mexico Music Educators Association, and the New Mexico chapter of Phi Beta Mu. His commitment to arts advocacy extends through service on the boards of the Southwest Civic Winds, and the New Mexico Advisory Council on Arts Education.

An active performer, Mr. Fear plays tuba with the Celebration Brass of First Presbyterian Church–Farmington, the Southwest Civic Winds, the Kissmah Brass Band, and the San Juan College Concert Band. He is also a frequent clinician and adjudicator throughout New Mexico and Colorado.

Outside of his professional life, Mr. Fear enjoys spending time with his wife and two children. Together, they enjoy movies, bike rides, and exploring the outdoors.



Joseph Flores serves as the Director of Fine Arts for Teaching and Learning for Las Cruces Public Schools. A graduate of New Mexico State University, he holds both a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education and a Master of Music in Instrumental Conducting. He began his career in 1997 and taught middle and high school band programs in Las Cruces, New Mexico, and El Paso, Texas before transitioning to administration in 2019. His ensembles were consistently recognized for musical excellence and earned multiple state championships and selection as New Mexico Music Educators Association (NMMEA) Honor Ensemble, finalist placements at Bands of America and Winter Guard International regional events, and departmental recognition as a Grammy Foundation Signature School.

His honors include the NMMEA Music Educator of the Year (2017), Rollie Heltman Distinguished Service Award (2019), Doña Ana Arts Council Papen Family Award (2023), and induction into the NMMEA Hall of Fame (2024). Since assuming his current role, Mr. Flores has helped to greatly expanded district fine arts programs, increased staffing and funding, and led Las Cruces Public Schools to earn national recognition as one of the Best Communities for Music Education. He has an extensive history of service as executive officer for NMMEA and is the Southwestern Division President-Elect for the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) in addition to his work as an active guest conductor, speaker, and advocate for excellence and access in arts education.



Kurt Schmidt, a native of Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, received his Bachelor of Music Education degree in 1991 from Central Michigan University, where he studied French horn, instrumental music education, and German. He also holds a Master of Arts in Liberal Arts (1995) from St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland, and a Doctor of Education degree (2023) from the University of New Mexico.

Dr. Schmidt played in numerous small and large ensembles in Michigan and the Washington, DC area, and lived for a time in Vienna, Austria, where he studied horn with members of the Vienna Philharmonic and played in the Wiener Waldhorn Verein (Vienna Horn Society).

Dr. Schmidt previously served as band director in the Carson City-Crystal Area Schools (Michigan) and at The Maret School (Washington, DC), and spent 16 years as Director of Bands at Rio Rancho High School, where he taught Band, AP Music Theory, and served as Fine Arts & Electives Instructional Leader. Before becoming Executive Director of Fine Arts, Dr. Schmidt served as assistant principal at Eagle Ridge Middle School in Rio Rancho for three years. He is currently the Past Chair of the New Mexico Advisory Council on Arts Education, and has served as president of the New Mexico Music Educators Association District VI.



Neil Swapp grew up in rural New Mexico and earned a Music Education Degree from New Mexico State University and a Master's Degree in Trumpet Performance from the St. Louis Conservatory of Music, where he studied with members of the St. Louis Symphony. After the completion of his degree he returned to New Mexico to begin his teaching career. Neil spent 7 years as Director of Bands at Cibola High School in Albuquerque and 17 years as Director of Bands at Mayfield High School in Las Cruces followed by 4 years as the Chair of the Music Department at the New Mexico School for the Arts.

After 28 years in the public schools Neil retired from the classroom. In retirement he has stayed active in the music world by serving as the NMMEA Executive Director and Webmaster, teaching as an adjunct professor at Western New Mexico University, clinicing bands throughout the state, mentoring younger teachers, guest conducting, and acting as an adjudicator throughout the Southwest. He also serves on numerous state councils and committees including the New Mexico Advisory Council on Arts Education, New Mexico Activities Association Activities Council, and the NMMEA Music Education Task Force.

Neil served 2 terms as NMMEA Band Vice President and one term as President and Past President. During his time as president he spearheaded the creation of a new NMMEA website and continues to spearhead technological advancements in the organization.



Renee Saucedo has more than 25 years of experience serving students, teachers, and school leaders in the Rio Rancho Public School system. She currently serves as the Secondary School Improvement Officer, supporting middle and high schools across the district, mentoring new and aspiring administrators, and supervising district middle and high school principals. She is passionate about building strong leadership and expanding meaningful learning opportunities for students.

Before moving into district leadership, Renee spent ten years as Vice Principal at V. Sue Cleveland High School. Earlier in her career, she taught high school science. She brings a blend of classroom, campus, and district experience to her work.



Jon Robak is in his 11th year of teaching and his 7th year as the band director at Eagle Ridge Middle School. At ERMS, he directs two Beginning Band classes, Cadet Band, Concert Band, Jazz Band, and Symphonic Band. A proud product of the Rio Rancho Public Schools, Mr. Robak is grateful to now serve the community where he grew up.

He earned his Bachelor of Music Education degree from the University of New Mexico in 2015, where he studied saxophone with Dr. Eric Lau. While at UNM, he performed with the Symphonic Band, Wind Symphony, Jazz Bands, saxophone quartet, and various jazz combos. In 2025, he completed a Master of Arts in Music Education from Adams State University.

Mr. Robak began his career as Assistant Band Director at Valencia High School, where his ensembles consistently earned superior ratings. In 2019, he was recognized by the New Mexico Music Educators Association as the New and Emerging Teacher of the Year.

Outside of teaching, he enjoys spending time with his dogs- Pepper, a lab/golden mix, and Ella, the goofiest golden retriever you'll ever meet.



Daniel Holmes is the Director of Bands at V. Sue Cleveland High School in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. Now in his ninth year at CHS and seventeenth year of teaching, Mr. Holmes directs the CHS Storm Regiment Marching Band, Wind Symphony, Jazz I, and co-directs the Concert Band.

Under his leadership, the CHS Wind Symphony won the New Mexico Activities Association 5A State Concert Band Championship in 2024 and 2022 and was named the 2023 NMMEA High School Honor Band. The concert ensembles at Cleveland consistently earn Superior Ratings at the District VI Music Performance Assessment. The Storm Regiment Marching Band has won the Pageant of Bands 5A Championship in 2023, 2021, and 2018, and has been a perennial finalist at the Zia Marching Fiesta and Tournament of Bands, as well as a 2024 finalist at the BOA West Texas Regional.

Before joining CHS, Mr. Holmes served as the Associate Director of Bands at Coronado High School in El Paso, Texas. During his time there, the CHS Symphonic Band earned consecutive UIL Sweepstakes Awards from 2012–2017, and Jazz II was a two-time Non-Varsity Division Champion at the Hanks Jazz Festival. As a co-director of the Thunderbird Marching Band, he helped lead the group to three consecutive UIL State Marching Contest appearances, a UIL Area A Championship, and a 2013 Tournament of Bands Grand Championship.

Mr. Holmes began his teaching career at Albuquerque High School, where he guided the band to its first-ever Zia Marching Fiesta Finals appearances in 2009 and 2011, and a 1st Place finish in 4A at the 2009 Pageant of Bands. In 2012, the AHS Jazz Band was named the New Mexico Jazz Educators Honor Jazz Band and performed at the NMMEA All-State Conference.

He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from New Mexico State University (2008) and a Master's Degree in Music Education from Adams State University (2022), graduating Summa Cum Laude. Outside of the band hall, Mr. Holmes enjoys spending time at the lake with his wife Daniella and their three children—Davien, Dulcinea, and Dayani—and is proud to call Rio Rancho home.



[Heather Nelson Shouldice](#) is Professor/Coordinator of Music Education at Eastern Michigan University (Ypsilanti, MI), where she teaches graduate and undergraduate courses, supervises student teachers, and directs the early childhood music program through EMU's Community Music Academy. Her research—which has been published in many of the top journals in the field—focuses on music teacher beliefs and their relationship to teaching practice, musical development and musical identity in young children, and issues of justice in music education. Dr. Shouldice is author of the book *Weaving It All Together: A Practical Guide to Applying Gordon's Music*

Learning Theory in the Elementary General Music Program (GIA Publications), hosts/produces a podcast about Music Learning Theory called *Everyday Musicality* and is a professional development faculty member for the Gordon Institute for Music Learning.



[Drew Wichman](#) is an Orff Level III Certified music educator with over 20 years of classroom experience. He currently teaches at Vista Grande Elementary in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. Drew studied piano, voice, and music industry at the University of Southern Mississippi, and brings a passion for creativity, technology, and student-centered learning to his teaching. He loves exploring how synthesizers, loopers, and recording tools can enhance the Orff-Schulwerk approach and inspire musical expression. He also served two years as General Music Vice President for the Central New Mexico Music Educators Association, helping support and represent elementary

music educators across the region.



Jacob Lucero received a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education at Western Colorado University, and a Master's Degree in Music Education at The University of New Mexico. Jacob's past teaching positions have been at North Seattle College where he taught Beginning Ukulele and Guitar as part of the Continuing Education program. Jacob has taught K-5th elementary music, elementary and middle school Orchestra, Choir, and led musicals at Villa Academy in Seattle, WA. Jacob is certified with the Smithsonian Folkways in World Music Pedagogy from The University of Washington, and has completed Level 2 in Kodály. Currently living in New Mexico, Jacob is teaching K-6 elementary music and elementary choir in Los Alamos.



Paul Hallsted currently serves as the Content Specialist for Fine Arts in the Las Cruces Public Schools. With over 40 years of experience as a music educator, he has taught students at every level—from preschool and elementary general music to middle and high school choir, as well as music education courses at the university level. Paul earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees from New Mexico State University. He is an active instructor in AOSA-approved summer teacher education courses across the country and frequently conducts honor choir festivals throughout the region.



Ruth J. Brake has been teaching at the Artesia Public Schools since 2013. She has taught band and is currently teaching elementary music. Ruth grew up in New Deal, Texas, where her first introduction to music was when her sister joined the band because her parents were deaf. In the sixth grade, Ruth joined the band program and began to learn how to multiple instruments. She graduated from New Deal High School in 2004 and started her college career at South Plains College. After South Plains College, Ruth transferred to Eastern New Mexico University, where she pursued her Bachelor of Music Education with an emphasis in Instrumental Music and she obtained her Bachelor's degree in 2013.

In the year 2017, Ruth Completed her Master of Educational Technology from Eastern New Mexico University in Portales, NM. Her master's degree came in handy during COVID-19, when she made an online class platform that her school still uses to this day, a testament to her innovative thinking and adaptability. While teaching, Ruth works to service the community through Altrusa International of Artesia, Inc. She believes in serving the community in and out of her classroom. Ruth has completed levels 1, 2, and 3 of the OAKE endorsed Kodaly Method through the West Texas Kodaly Initiative, showcasing her commitment to continuous learning. Ruth believes in pursuing knowledge and its power to improve the classroom for everyone involved.

Ruth loves being a mother to her two children: Lorelei, and Sebastian. Ruth's unwavering dedication to her students is a testament to her commitment to education. She strives to meet her students'; needs and ensure they are in a safe learning environment that allows them the freedom to make mistakes through self-discovery. The best part of Ruth's job is making a difference in each person she meets and helping students become amazing individuals through music.



[Sarah Farrell](#) teaches K-8 Music in Spanish in a dual language program at Sandoval Academy of Bilingual Education in Rio Rancho, NM. Sarah is Orff Certified, and has taken Kodály I in English and Spanish, World Music Drumming 1, and Modern Band 101 and 102. With a Masters in Reading, and National Board Certification in Early Literacy, she has taught in bilingual settings for 28 years.



[Skye Hale](#) joined Music Will in 2016 as the Technology Education Manager. While teaching in New York City public schools for 3 years, Skye focused on combining instrumental performance with recording and digital music production. Her students learned to play guitar and keyboard and produced music using iPads and laptop computers.

Skye focused on cultivating a love of music in their students and providing them with the skills necessary to continue to learn on their own. Skye's YouTube channel was built to support their students' learning, and features over 500 educational videos including instrumental lessons, software demos, and play-a-long tracks. It has over 80,000 subscribers and over 25 million views.

Skye was in the first graduating class of New York University's dual degree program, completing their BA in Music Performance in 2012 and their MA in Music Education the following year.

Outside of work, Skye is an avid skateboarder and dedicated cat mom.



[Donovan Perea](#) was born and raised in Albuquerque, New Mexico. After accidentally being enrolled in Eduardo Trujillo's guitar class at Cibola High School he began playing guitar and drum set in Albuquerque's DIY punk and hardcore scenes. Donovan would go on to earn a Bachelors of Music Education while studying classical guitar under Michael Chapdelaine. He has since studied flamenco guitar with renowned Spanish guitarist Jose Valle Fajardo "Chuscales" and is now studying jazz with local guitarist Lewis Winn. Currently, Donovan is the proud guitar instructor of George I. Sanchez Middle School and Atrisco High School. When he's not playing guitar or drum set in Albuquerque's musical theater, diy punk, and country music scenes he is an avid rock climber, where he enjoys traveling the country to fall off very easy routes on very tall mountains.



[Gwen-Marie Lerch](#) is a music educator, conductor, and professional guitarist. She is director of guitar at Capital High School in Santa Fe, and serves as the NC District 4 Vice-President of Guitar, Mariachi, Piano. She also serves as the Southwestern representative on the NAFME National Council for Guitar Education, and is president & education director of Guitar New Mexico, a guitar education and advocacy non-profit. She holds music performance and theory & composition degrees from St. Louis Conservatory and the University of New Mexico.



[Ian Davis](#) is currently a professional musician in Albuquerque, NM. Ian currently performs with the EQNX Jazztet, The Abe Mac Band, and is the resident bassist for Tri-M Musical Productions in Santa Fe. They regularly sub with the Albuquerque Jazz Orchestra and other groups throughout Albuquerque. Previously, Ian taught for three and an half years at Tony Hillerman Middle School as their assistant band director, and the last two years at George I. Sanchez Community School and Atrisco Heritage Academy High School as their director of guitar.

Ian holds a Bachelors in Music Education from the University of New Mexico and a Masters in Music Education with an Emphasis in Peacebuilding from Elizabethtown College. Ian has studied guitar for the last 5 years with Michael J.

Anthony.



[Joseph Duran](#) was born in Texas and raised in New Mexico, where his passion for music began as a public school student through the saxophone and middle school band. His early experiences led to advanced study and performance opportunities, including international travel and music study abroad.

Joseph brings a broad appreciation for music in all its forms and is deeply committed to sharing that appreciation with students. He has owned and operated a private guitar school for the past ten years and has served as a music educator with Albuquerque Public Schools for seven years.

He holds an Associate Degree in Music Technology from Iowa Western Community College, a Bachelor of Music in Guitar Performance with a minor in Psychology from the University of New Mexico, a Master's degree in Guitar Performance from the Universidad de Alicante in Spain, and a Master of Arts in Elementary Education from the University of New Mexico.

Joseph lives in New Mexico with his wife and their two elementary-aged children.



[Liza Gatica](#) has a degree in Instrumental Music from BYU Provo and a Master's in Music Education from UNM. She plays violin with the Albuquerque Philharmonic Orchestra, and guitar with the Guitar Chamber Players of Albuquerque. She has taught at Del Norte High School for the past 14 years. Liza is also a secretary for the board of Guitar New Mexico and a co-conductor for the GNM Youth Ensemble.



[Mike Christiansen](#) is Professor Emeritus in the Music Department at Utah State University. He was Director of Guitar Studies at USU for 39 years. His awards include: Utah State University Professor of The Year, Caine College of the Arts Professor of the Year, and a U.S. Carnegie Professor of the Year. He has been a TED speaker. He has authored/co-authored over 40 guitar and ukulele instruction books and appears on hundreds of instruction videos. He works as a soloist, with the Brazilian group, Evening in Brazil, with the Lightwood Duo, and the band, Mirage.



[Brad Dubbs](#) is in his 28th year of teaching. He is currently the Assistant Band Director at Rio Rancho and Mountain View Middle Schools in Rio Rancho, NM. Prior to this position, he was the Director of Bands at Eldorado High School in Albuquerque for 10 years, where he taught the Wind Ensemble, Golden Eagle Marching Band, three jazz bands, and co-taught the Concert Band. He has also served as Director of Bands at Manzano High School, Jackson Middle School, Keller Middle School (Las Vegas, NV) and was the Associate Director of Bands at Rio Rancho High School for 6 years.

His bands have consistently earned superior ratings at concert, jazz, and marching band festivals in the area and throughout the country. Mr. Dubbs' jazz bands have been selected as the NMMEA All-State Honor Jazz Band in 2004, 2015, 2018, and 2023. His jazz band was also named the Outstanding Band at the UNM Jazz Festival in 2002. During his time at Rio Rancho High School, the marching band was awarded the Zia Grand Champion in 2004 and 2005. In the spring of 2018, the Eldorado Marching Band was featured in the Main Street Parade at Disneyland. In 2004, the Rio Rancho High School band hosted legendary trumpeter, Maynard Ferguson. In 2005, that same group hosted the World-Famous Count Basie Orchestra. His bands have also featured world-renowned guest artists such as Bobby Shew, Wayne Bergeron, Butch Miles, and Mike Williams. His jazz bands have commissioned pieces from Bob Washut and Paul Coleman.

Mr. Dubbs is an active clinician and adjudicator throughout New Mexico at both the middle and high school levels. He has worked with many middle school bands in New Mexico at music camps and retreats. He has adjudicated bands in every district in New Mexico. In addition, he conducted NM Jazz All-State Band 3 in 2007, 2010, 2018, and 2025. He was a featured clinician at the Western Kentucky Honor Band Clinic and the Eastern New Mexico Jazz Festival. In the spring of 2022, Mr. Dubbs served as a guest conductor with the University of New Mexico Symphonic Band.

As a performer, he has played lead and jazz trumpet with the Albuquerque Jazz Orchestra for the past 33 years, performs regularly with the R and B/soul band, Chill House, various salsa groups in the Albuquerque area, and has also performed with the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra and Santa Fe Symphony. Mr. Dubbs has performed with the national tour pit orchestras for Chicago, the Book of Mormon, Carol King the Musical, and MJ the Musical. He has also backed up such guests as Jeff Coffin, Randy Brecker, Eddie Daniels, Dick Oatts, Bobby Shew, Wayne Bergeron, Lyle Lovette, Wayne Newton, The Four Tops, The O Jay's, and Mary Wilson and the Supremes to name a few.

Mr. Dubbs Holds a Bachelors Degree in Music Education from the University of New Mexico. He is married to his wife, Kim, and has two kids, Andrew and Kate. They also have two boxers, Zoey and Murphy.



[Sidney E. Shuler](#) holds a Bachelor of Music in Education degree from Youngstown State University (OH) and Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts Degrees from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His major trumpet teachers include Ronald Romm and Dr. Michael Ewald (University of Illinois) and Dr. Christopher Krummel (Youngstown State). Equally influential are his wind band directors, Dr. Stephen Gage (YSU) and James Keene (University of Illinois).

Dr. Shuler currently performs as co-principal trumpet of the Roswell Symphony Orchestra, principal trumpet with Southwest Symphony Orchestra (NM), and performs regularly with the West Texas Symphony Orchestra. Previously, Shuler served as principal trumpet with the Danville Symphony Orchestra (IL), Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra (IL), and guest principal trumpet of the Peoria Symphony Orchestra (IL). He has also performed with additional ensembles including the Moscow State Radio Symphony Orchestra (RUS), Illinois Symphony, and Green Bay Symphony Orchestras, and the New Mexico Philharmonic.

Shuler has performed with artists such as Rachel Barton Pine, Mark O'Connor, Lynn Harrell, Mannheim Steamroller, Art Farmer, Sean Jones, Byron Stripling, Roger Williams, and the Preservation Hall Jazz Band. Additionally, he has also performed under the baton of esteemed conductors David Zinman, James Conlon, and Michael Stern, along with many others. Adding to his performance credits, Shuler has been heard in solo recital and chamber performances across the United States as well as abroad in Russia and in Spain.

Along with his colleague and spouse, Dr. Pamela Shuler, Dr. Sidney Shuler perform regularly as the Shuler Duo. They have engaged in a multi-year commissioning project to expand upon the existent repertoire for Clarinet and Trumpet. Recent collaborations have been premiered at international festivals and conferences for clarinet and trumpet – the International Clarinet Association (ICA) and International Trumpet Guild (ITG), respectively.

Dr. Sidney Shuler is Associate Professor of Trumpet and Assistant Director of Bands at Eastern New Mexico University in Portales, NM where he resides with his wife Pamela, daughters Eleanor and Beatrice, and their dogs, Honus, Fergie, and Isla.



[Jesse Joaquin Parker](#) is a versatile percussionist and passionate music educator whose career spans more than 25 years of performance and teaching. He has performed at venues ranging from the Telluride Jazz Festival to DROM in Manhattan to the Nuyorican in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and at music festivals around the world. He has toured or recorded with Bernard Purdie, Bata Ire, the Mike Crotty Jazz Quintet, Taumbu International Ensemble, Chuchito Valdés, Raul Pineda, Carmela y Más, John Rangel, and with the New Mexico Philharmonic, Phoenix Symphony, Mesa Symphony, and El Paso Symphony. He currently tours and performs with the legendary Latin powerhouse, Nosotros. Mr. Parker earned a Bachelor of Music Education degree from New Mexico State University and a Master of Music in Percussion Performance from Arizona State University. He has also studied Afro-Cuban and Brazilian music with Taumbu, Emilio Caruso, Porangui, and Ricky Carrido. He began his teaching career directing percussion programs at Mayfield, Organ Mountain, Coronado, and Franklin High Schools. He has instructed with the Blue Knights and Southwind Drum & Bugle Corps, taught for eight years at Mandela International Magnet School, and served on faculty at Arizona State University and Paradise Valley Community College. He is now Music Department Chair and Director of Percussion Studies at the New Mexico School for the Arts. Mr. Parker is a proud Tycoon Percussion Artist Endorser. Beyond music, he loves spending time with his wife, Johanna, and their two amazing daughters, and enjoys vintage hi-fi and exploring the outdoors.



[Jolynn Alemán](#) is a lifelong lover of music. She graduated with a Bachelor's Degree Music Education with an Emphasis in Voice in 2018 from the University of New Mexico and will complete her Master's in Music Education at Adam's State in May 2026. She began teaching Choir at Mountain View Middle School in Rio Rancho, New Mexico in 2019. Jolynn has taught with Albuquerque Guitar School and Heartstrings Children's Theater, and Rock 101 Music Academy. Jolynn is an active performer, recording artist and songwriter. She released her first single "Rainy Season" in 2021 and second single "Little Things" in 2022 which won Best Arrangement of an Original Composition for The New Mexico Music Awards. Music Collaboration and Creativity are some of her passions in and out of the Music Classroom. She's interested in furthering Vocal Jazz in any way she can in Music Education to make it more accessible and exciting for music educators.



[Joshua Dumais](#) is currently in his 10th year of teaching and 7th year as full-time associate director at V. Sue Cleveland High School. Prior to this, Mr. Dumais taught at Mountain View Middle School in Rio Rancho, NM while still assisting at CHS. Mr. Dumais received his bachelor's degree in music education from the University of New Mexico. Mr. Dumais believes music to be an essential part of a well-rounded education and he works hard to constantly bring new students into his programs. His professional affiliations include the New Mexico Music Educators Association, National Association for Music Education, and Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia.



Wataru (Wat) Niimori is a pianist, composer, orchestrator, conductor, music preparator, and educator from Kyoto, Japan. He is a Lieutenant Colonel, Bandmaster and Associate Professor of Music at the New Mexico Military Institute. He directs the Regimental Band, Concert Band, Athletic Band, Drumline, Bugle Call, and Jazz Band at the NMMI. He also serves the United States 300th Army Band.

He earned a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance and Composition from Temple University, a Master of Music in Jazz Studies (keyboard and composition) from Indiana University, and a Doctor of Musical Arts in Composition with an emphasis on orchestra conducting from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he received the Fellowship Award.

As a pianist, Dr. Niimori was trained in Classical music and explored Jazz, Rock, Latin, and Country music. He won the Silver Prize in the Yamaha Piano Competition and 1st prize in the Kinki Piano Competition in Japan. After he moved to the U.S., he was a rehearsal pianist for Broadway shows, toured with the Glenn Miller Orchestra, and joined several recording sessions. He performed with various musicians, including Bobby Shew, Darmon Meader, Terrel Stafford, and Victor Lewis. He also performed solo piano at various concert halls, including Jazz at the Lincoln Center in New York and Powell Hall in St. Louis.

As a music preparator, he worked with film, TV, and video game productions in Los Angeles, assisting John Williams, Danny Elfman, and Alexandre Desplat through JoAnn Kane Music Service. He was also involved in the video game project, Ghost of Tsushima, by Sony Interactive Entertainment.

As a composer, orchestrator, and conductor, he has performed in the U.S., Australia, Croatia and Japan. His compositions include scores for a documentary film, Nebraska Stories: VIETNAM, produced by Nebraska Educational Telecommunication, and a short film selected by the Omaha Film Festival 2018, Central Incompetence. He also received a commission to compose and conduct music for the chamber ensemble, Emily Dickinson Song Cycle and String Quartet No. 1 in G Major, at the Milna Summer Music Festival in Croatia. Recently, he orchestrated Toby Keith's American Soldier for the U.S. 300th Army Band (concert band) and performed for the world premiere at Fort. Knox, KY, in August 2024.

Dr. Niimori previously taught at University of Kansas, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Temple University and Goddard High School.



Carla Kountoupes, violinist, is a member of the Santa Fe Symphony Orchestra, Arizona Opera Orchestra, Santa Fe Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra, and Piazzolla da Camera Piano Trio. Carla has toured and performed professionally with orchestras and chamber ensembles in Central America, Taiwan, Germany, and all over the United States, including as a member of the New Century Chamber Orchestra in San Francisco and the Costa Rican National Symphony Orchestra. She enjoys performing and recording many genres in addition to classical, including Latin/world, alt-rock/pop, and jazz. A dedicated music educator, Carla holds a Master of Music degree in Music Teaching. She has taught private violin lessons to children and adults for

more than 25 years and is currently on faculty at the New Mexico School for the Arts. Carla was awarded Music Teacher of the Year in 2016, by the American String Teachers Association (ASTA) of New Mexico, and received the Santa Fe Public Schools' 2017 Teachers Who Inspire Award. She is a graduate of Oberlin Conservatory (Violin Performance) and Oberlin College (English Literature). Carla's violin was made in the 1740's and was inherited from her grandfather.



[Aaron Jacobs](#), Assistant Professor of String Pedagogy and Director of the UNM Music Prep School and String Pedagogy Lab School, is an accomplished string player and passionate educator who has channeled his energy into inspiring musicians at every level—from preschool-age beginners to graduate students and beyond. He has served as a violin professor on the faculties of Millikin University and Illinois State University and is a licensed music educator with public school teaching experience at the primary and secondary levels. While at the University of Illinois, he founded the Illinois String Academy, a dynamic program that offered private and group instruction on the violin, viola, cello, and double bass, as well as orchestra, chamber music, music theory, and composition. He also created a violin program for the Danville, Illinois public school district that served nearly 200 first- and second-grade students.

An engaging and innovative clinician, Aaron has presented at national conferences such as the Midwest Clinic and ASTA. He is regularly invited to lead clinics and master classes for teachers and students of all ages and has worked with hundreds of educators and performers as a faculty member and Director of the Paul Rolland String Pedagogy Workshop, helping expand its reach to six continents. As a performer, he appears regularly in recital with his wife, pianist Tatiana Shustova, with whom he has toured throughout the U.S. and Europe and earned awards at two international competitions. He has been featured as a soloist with orchestras in Illinois and Ohio and has served multiple appointments as concertmaster, principal second violin, or principal viola in professional ensembles.

Aaron strives each day to live out his mission of genuinely caring about people and enhancing their lives through music.



[Zachary Bush](#) (b. 1993) studied composition with Dr. James David and bass performance with Dr. Forest Greenough at Colorado State University from 2011-2015. Zachary graduated from CSU in 2015 with degrees in Music Composition, Music Performance, and Music Education. While at CSU, he won two awards in the CSU annual composition contest and received two composition commissions from CSU's Middle School Outreach Ensemble. He also played in the Cheyenne Symphony Orchestra for 3 seasons and in the Fort Collins Wind Symphony for 2 seasons.

Zachary graduated from Arizona State University in 2018 with a double Master's in Music Composition and Music Performance. He studied composition with Jody Rockmaker and bass with Catalin Rotaru. He stayed at ASU and completed a DMA in Composition in 2021. While at ASU, he received several commissions from The Harmony Project Phoenix, collaborated with the Biodesign Institute at ASU, and won a first-place prize in the 2019 Mykytyn composition competition. His music has been performed and commissioned in multiple states. Zachary held principle bass positions in local Arizona ensembles ProMusica, Musica Nova, Symphony of the Southwest, and the Four Seasons Orchestra. He also played section bass in the West Valley Symphony and freelance bass for other local concerts and music theaters. In 2022, Zachary won a one-year principal bass position for the New Mexico Philharmonic.

He currently teaches orchestra in the Rio Rancho Public School District, plays with Opera Southwest, New Mexico Performing Arts Society, and Festival Ballet Albuquerque. He also substitutes with the New Mexico Philharmonic and Santa Fe Symphony.



[Emily Awes](#) received her BM in Music Education from St. Olaf College, in Northfield, Minnesota. She is in her twenty-seventh year of public school orchestra teaching. Currently, she is the orchestra and guitar teacher at Sandia High School. Ms. Awes has taught locally at Madison Middle School, Cibola High School School, Garfield Middle School, Taft Middle School, and the Public Academy for Performing Arts. She is a proud alumnus of the Albuquerque Youth Symphony Program and is in her 13th year as conductor for that organization's Junior Strings Orchestra. Ms. Awes is a frequent clinician for orchestras around Albuquerque and has been a judge & guest conductor for several festivals with Districts IV & VI.

Over her career, Ms. Awes has served 3 terms as NMMEA District VII orchestra officer. She has hosted numerous District VII festivals and has been host chair for the NMMEA All-State auditions on multiple occasions. In past years she has presented several sessions at the NMMEA All-State Conference. She is a past NMASTA President. As a cellist, Ms. Awes gigs with several other orchestra teachers for weddings and special occasions. She frequently performs with several cello choirs in Albuquerque. Outside of music, Ms. Awes enjoys making jewelry, quilting and reading while curled up with her two cats.



[Sam Brown](#) is an orchestra teacher at Albuquerque High School. He completed the American Society of Alexander Technique Teachers (AmSAT) Teacher Certification in 2020 from the Alexander Technique Center of Albuquerque under the direction of Karen DeWig.



[Joseph Alcocer](#) is the new Orchestra and Mariachi Director at Nina Otero Community School in the Santa Fe Public Schools, where he teaches K–8 students and leads both the traditional string orchestra and the mariachi ensemble. He also serves as a String Specialist for the Santa Fe Symphony's education programs, supporting youth string development across the region.

A passionate advocate for culturally responsive and community-centered music education, Joseph blends his orchestral expertise with a deep connection to mariachi traditions. He is a performing member of Mariachi Diferencia de Santa Fe and served as a Middle School Violin Clinician for the Mariachi Spectacular de Albuquerque Spring Workshop.

Previously, he served as High School Orchestra and Mariachi Director and String Area Coordinator for Roswell Independent School District, where he led program expansion, mentored new teachers, and oversaw \$120,000 in instrument acquisitions to improve access to string education. Under his direction, the Roswell high school orchestras earned their first sweepstakes ratings in decades, and his mariachi students

had the opportunity to study and perform at the Viva Aztlán Festival in Lubbock, Texas. Joseph is a recipient of the Bornoff FASE Diverse String Teacher Fellowship and currently serves as Member-at-Large for the New Mexico chapter of ASTA. A frequent presenter at music education conferences, he continues to champion inclusive, high-quality music opportunities for all students. Outside the classroom, Joseph enjoys collecting arcade cabinets and reading Marvel comics.

[Kenneth Tanuz](#), originally from Pecos, New Mexico, is a native of northern New Mexico. He began his musical journey in fifth grade while attending Pecos Elementary School. There, he began playing euphonium in the school's 5th-grade concert band. However, once he arrived at middle school, he began playing trumpet and joined the combined middle and high school Mariachi group. Throughout middle school and high school, Kenneth was a member and, for a time, served as the musical director of the Pecos High School Mariachi Sabor de Pecos.

He graduated in 2018 and attended New Mexico State University. There, he attended the music education program and was a member of the trumpet studio under Dr. Pancho Romero. During his time at NMSU, he took part in the Pride of New Mexico marching band and all major ensembles available at NMSU. Throughout his time at NMSU, he was on staff with the Las Cruces High School Showcase marching band and visited the LCHS Mariachi program as often as possible.

During his junior and senior years, Kenneth was able to participate in a private study led by Dr. Steven Smyth, in which he was tasked with developing a mariachi curriculum for public schools. During this time, Tanuz also helped form New Mexico State University's very first official Mariachi, known as "Mariachi Orgullo de Nuevo Mexico." During his student teaching, he took the position of k-5 elementary music teacher at Valley View elementary in Las Cruces where he continued to teach for one year after he graduated from NMSU in the fall of 2022.

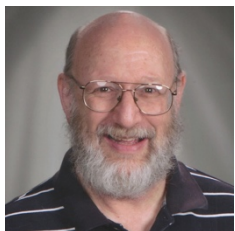
In the spring of 2024, Las Cruces public schools made the decision to incorporate Mariachi into their middle schools in an effort to build upon the single high school program that existed at Las Cruces high school. After applying, Tanuz was awarded with the middle school Mariachi position at Zia middle school and took over as had Mariachi Director Las Cruces high school; previously run by the esteemed Jennifer Rogers.

Currently Tanuz serves as the Director of NMSU's Mariachi Orgullo e Nuevo Mexico, Head Director of mariachi at Las Cruces High school and Zia middle school and he also performs in Las Cruces based "Mariachi Jaliscience".



[Erica Photiades](#) started playing violin at the age of 4 via the Suzuki Method. She has a Bachelors in Music Education from Michigan State University and a Masters in Music Education from Baylor University. She has taught orchestra in Michigan, Texas and New Mexico and performs regularly with the San Juan and Roswell Symphonies. Her former orchestra students in Texas were the TMEA Middle School Honor Orchestra in 2020. This is her 8th year teaching at Desert Ridge and Eisenhower Middle Schools in Albuquerque Public Schools, where her Advanced Orchestras were the NMMEA Honor

Orchestra in 2023.



[Art Sheinberg](#) has a bachelor's degree in Music Education and a master's degree in double bass performance from the University of New Mexico. He taught orchestra in the Albuquerque Public Schools from 1977 to 2013, and was also director of the Albuquerque Junior Orchestra from 1981 to 1996. He was a member for the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra for fifteen years, has served as an adjudicator and clinician throughout the Southwest, and has composed and arranged numerous works for school orchestra.

He is also a founding member of Música Antigua de Albuquerque, specializing in performance on medieval and Renaissance string instruments. His awards include the Golden Apple Award for excellence in public school teaching in New Mexico (2003), the New Mexico Educators Hall of Fame (2004), the American String Teachers Association (New Mexico chapter) Lifetime Achievement Award (2009), and the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra Teacher of the Year (1996).



[Rebecca Simons](#) has been the orchestra director at La Cueva High School since January of 2011. In that time, the orchestra program has grown tremendously as the program just grew from 2 ensembles to 3. Under her direction, both Camerata and String Orchestra have received superior ratings at district, state, and national festivals. The LCHS Camerata Orchestra was selected in 2017, as the NMMEA honor orchestra. In 2019, Camerata was accepted to and performed for the National Orchestra Festival as part of the American String Teachers Association's national conference.

Under Mrs. Simons' direction, Camerata won 3 consecutive NMAA state championships while the competition was in existence. From 2013-2015, Mrs. Simons served as the NMMEA Orchestra Vice President for the state, served on the committee for the NMAA state orchestra competition, and assisted the La Cueva High School music department as they received their first ever NAMM Support Music Merit Award in 2015.

Mrs. Simons has adjudicated at several festivals around the state, has conducted the honor orchestra in Farmington, and teaches a private oboe studio. In addition to being the director of orchestras, Mrs. Simons started a guitar program at La Cueva and the top ensemble has received superior ratings at several festivals. Mrs. Simons was the co conductor for the Albuquerque Junior Orchestra, which is part of the Albuquerque Youth Symphony Program, and was a sectional clinician for the high school ensembles. In 2025, Mrs. Simons launched the Bear Classic String Invitational for orchestra and guitar ensembles-the first of its kind in NM. In addition, she has presented her sight-reading clinic for NMMEA, NMMEA collegiate members, and for the Summer University of Kansas conducting class. Mrs. Simons has also presented for New Mexico State University's Education classes. Mrs. Simons has performed professionally with the New Mexico Philharmonic, the Santa Fe Symphony, the Las Cruces Symphony, the El Paso Opera, Southwest Opera, and Arizona Broadway Theatre. Rebecca Simons received a bachelors and masters degree in oboe performance from Arizona State University, and a music education certification from the University of New



Laura Eberhardt was born in Albuquerque, NM. She began playing the trombone in fifth grade because there were already too many students playing the saxophone. Laura obtained her degree in Music Education from the University of New Mexico in December 2011.

Laura teaches sixth to twelfth grade band in the small communities of Cimarron and Eagle Nest as the only music teacher in the district. Her high school band consistently earns superior ratings at the North Central NM Music Performance Assessment and is a yearly contender in the NM State Band Contest. Her favorite part of teaching in a rural area is getting to personally watch her beginner students grow up into awesome young adults in the high school band and beyond.

In her free time Laura enjoys the outdoors, especially fly fishing. She lives along the Cimarron River in Ute Park, NM, with her wife Tessa Fleming, dogs Willow and Oliver, cats Bad Cat and George, and her favorite chicken Elphaba.



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