

Hosting a State Collegiate Conference:

Here's how



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Overview: What's inside

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you, as collegiate chapter members, along with your faculty advisor, with helpful information while navigating the planning and implementation of a successful on-site state collegiate conference.

What you'll find in this handbook:

- An overview of what a conference is and why this is important
- Brief history of the New York C-NYSSMA conferences
- How to propose hosting the state collegiate conference
- Once your chapter has been selected, preliminary planning for the event
- Characteristics of a successful state collegiate conference
- Who is invited to attend? Participate?
- Session ideas
- Financial information and anticipated expenses associated with hosting the event
- Suggested Committees for efficient planning and implementation of the event
- Planning strategies for sessions, meals, lodging accommodations, signage, scheduling, promotional materials, signage, nametags, programs, handouts
- Developing a Collegiate-NYSSMA culture

The information provided has been gathered over the past fifteen years in my work as both a host of multiple state collegiate conferences as well as my experience as an advisor both as the state collegiate advisor for the Virginia Music Educators Association (VMEA) and the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA).

In closing, the information provided is not permanent but static. Feel free to pass along your own experiences after your event so that this handbook becomes more relevant as the years pass by.

I hope that you find the information helpful, inspiring, and worthwhile. Now, back to planning that conference!

Warmly,
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What is a State Collegiate Conference?

&

Why host such an event?

What is a conference?

A conference is an opportunity for people to gather as a community based on a facet of the community that unifies them. For example, when music educators gather at a formal event, what unifies the attendees of that event are their work or training, passion and interest in music education. They desire to learn more, especially from other music educators, as well as learn new developments and trends in music education.

Because the occupation of *Music Education* is considered a *profession*, it follows that as a member of that profession, there is the expectation that members will continue to grow and learn within it and some of that growth and learning occurs while attending professional meetings, such as state conferences.

Don't forget that it is also expected that professionals are members of organizations that represent it. Two of those leading organizations for music educators are (a) at the state-level, the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) and (b) at the national-level, the National Association for Music Education (NAfME).

Why a state collegiate conference?

While any state, region, national or international music education conference will usually provide sessions for college students, our state collegiate conference provides students and attendees alike with the following:

- Professional and leadership skills associated with coordinating formal events
- Opportunities to provide collegiate-specific sessions for an audience of collegiate members, Tri-M members, area music educators, music education specialists
- Ways to build chapter cohesion, engagement, and opportunities beyond what is already provided by your faculty advisor, degree program, and institution

We usually consider conferences formal in the sense that there are a certain set of expectations associated with it. For example:

- All attendees are expected to carry themselves in a professional manner throughout the duration of the event.
- There is a formal registration process that ensures that those who attend the will benefit from the kinds of sessions and other opportunities that are offered.
- They have made a professional, personal, and financial commitment to attend the event.
- There is an expectation that the sessions and other activities associated with the event will benefit all of the attendees in professional, yet personally rewarding ways.

First Things First: Making the commitment to host

Making a commitment to host a state collegiate conference is a big deal, It is a highly visible activity that takes a significant amount of long- and short-term planning, as well as time. With that commitment comes a list of responsibilities. Usually, collegiate chapters that make the decision to host such an event have a few things in common with chapters who have hosted the event in the past.

- A core group of collegiate members in the chapter who all see the value of hosting such an event.
- Collegiate members in the chapter demonstrate positive, successful skills in organization, planning, budgeting, decision making, coordinating, communicating. They also enjoy working with one another.
- The faculty advisor endorses the decision to take on the task and is willing to serve as a leader and mentor to the collegiate chapter members.
- The faculty advisor, along with the collegiate members are willing to reach out to agencies across their campus in order to coordinate efforts towards the planning and implementation of the state collegiate conference.
- The faculty advisor and chapter members communicate the status of the planning and preparation of the state conference to the Collegiate Advisor to NYSSMA.
- Engaged chapter members and faculty advisor(s) who are willing to take the extra time to adequately plan, organize, and promote the event.

Chapter members find the taking on of such an event as a great way to build chapter cohesion, accountability and representation not only on their campus, but also with their Province, Collegiate-NYSSMA and beyond.

The benefits of hosting the state conference provide compelling information about the caliber of the music education degree programs here in New York, leadership experiences for students and the further development of professional expectations associated with music education degree programs.

In addition, as you will learn, hosting a state conference will provide other music faculty, staff, and administrators with an opportunity for involvement.

So, in a sense, hosting a state conference benefits not only New York collegiate members, but the music education degree program, the music department on your campus, your institution at-large, as well as Tri-M chapters and music programs in surrounding areas.

Short History

As far as we can go back, the following institutions and advisors have coordinated state collegiate conferences in New York:

- 2020 The College of Saint Rose, Albany, NY
Dr. Jennifer Campbell, Chapter Advisor

- 2018 Queens College-CUNY, Queens, NY
Dr. Susan Davis, Chapter Advisor

- 2016 Houghton College, Houghton, NY
Dr. Patricia Gingras, Chapter Advisor

- 2014 SUNY-Fredonia, Fredonia, NY
Dr. Jill Reece & Dr. Christian Bernard, Chapter Advisors

- 2012 Nazareth College, Rochester, NY
Dr. Keith Koster, Chapter Advisor

- 2010 Hofstra University
Dr. Cindy Bell, Chapter Advisor

Getting Started with Preliminary Planning: The proposal to host

First things first

If you and your chapter members are interested in hosting the state collegiate conference. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- The event is held in “even” years *opposite* the Eastern biennial meeting of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME). Eastern-NAfME happens in “odd” years. For example, in 2019, E-NAfME met in Pittsburgh, PA.
- In other words, the state collegiate conference is determined *two years in advance*. You will have two years to plan and coordinate the event.
- There is an approval process for the event. Interested chapters must attend the state collegiate conference *two years before they host the event* and during the Collegiate Business Meeting at the current state collegiate conference:
 - Members who represent chapters interested in hosting the event will complete a short 5-7 minute presentation seeking the vote of attendees to win approval to host it.
 - Voting is done by delegate: Each chapter in attendance gets one (1) vote and the chapter that receives the most votes by a simple majority will be determined to host the event *two years from the year of the current state collegiate conference*.

So, there’s a presentation to make?

Yes, take 5-7 minutes and prepare a handout that indicates your rationale for wanting to host the state collegiate conference. Cite opportunities that your venue can provide, session ideas, commitment of your faculty advisor and chapter members, location, etc. Also, make sure that you have the support of (a) your institution, (b) your music department, and (c) your faculty advisor prior to making your presentation.

Remember that Collegiate-NYSSMA encourages chapters *who have not* previously hosted the event to propose hosting it. A priority will be given to those chapters who have not hosted the event.

Preliminary Planning: You've been selected!

So you've been approved to host the state collegiate conference in two years. What's next?

Here is a list of considerations for you to determine:

When to have the event?

The state collegiate conference usually occurs on a Friday and Saturday between mid-February through late-April.

- Make sure to check your campus calendar to avoid any scheduling conflicts (i.e. Spring Break, etc.)
- Don't forget to check other collegiate chapter's calendars as well noting that other colleges and universities may be away on Spring Break
- Check the NYSSMA calendar to make sure that there are no scheduling conflicts with events associated with NYSSMA
- Make sure that your music facility is open and available for the two-day event.

Is there a specific time for the event?

That is up to your chapter, faculty advisor, and conference planning committees. Note that college students are usually in classes on Friday and would most likely be travelling to your venue later on that day. In the past, most state collegiate conferences have started after 5 p.m. on Friday and include a social event in addition to sessions or other related activities.

The event has usually been scheduled from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. Please note that college students will most likely need to travel back to their home campuses after 5 p.m. on Saturday. That said, one chapter ended the event with a formal dinner that didn't wrap up until 7 p.m. Another chapter ended the day with a faculty recital that began after 7 p.m. In other words, it's totally up to what you plan.

Some additional considerations:

- In order to get a sense of how many collegiate members will be attending your event, make sure that the date of the state collegiate conference is well-circulated through social media and in the collegiate newsletters that Dr. Koster sends out.
- It's best to have the date selected by August preceding the event.
 - For example, if you are hosting the event in April 2023, you will want to make sure that the event has been scheduled no later than August 1, 2022.
- Several months before the event, send out e-invites and see how many students are planning to attend. In addition, make sure that members of your chapter and faculty advisor attend the NYSSMA Winter Conference Collegiate Business meeting, held on the Friday or “Collegiate Day” of that event.
 - At the annual NYSSMA Winter Conference, you are encouraged to announce the event as well as highlight information about:
 - The date, time and location of the event
 - The cost to attend
 - How to register
 - On-site and off-site lodging or travel arrangements
 - Sessions that you will be offering
 - Any other information that would be helpful in your planning of the event

Planning 101: Strategies for success

A successful state collegiate conference has some or all of the following characteristics:

- All members of the collegiate chapter and their faculty advisor are fully committed to the event and are excited about hosting it
- A realization that all chapter members and the faculty advisor will have a role to play in the design, implementation, and presentation of the event as well as reporting afterwards. (See *After the Conference*)
- The development of several committees whose work will streamline the entire state collegiate conference planning process
- The selection of sessions for the event that reflect current issues and trends in music education, teacher preparation, and future work in music classrooms that also reflect equity, diversity, representation, and inclusion
- Presenters who are honored and excited to participate at the event

Who should be invited to attend the conference?

- All collegiate members of NAFME can attend. While it's a state conference, consider inviting chapter members from other states that may be within a reasonable distance to your location.
- Tri-M chapter members can also attend. NOTE: You may want to offer these members of NAFME a reduced conference registration fee to attend.
- Area teachers can be invited as well as area music merchants, and other vendors as they can be a part of an Exhibitor's area. (See *Exhibitors*)
- Invite the rest of your music department or school of music students and faculty to spend the day with everyone.
- NYSSMA Executive Council members can also attend. Make sure to circulate the invitation to the state collegiate advisor (Dr. Koster, kkoster8@naz.edu) in order for him to pass along the invitation to NYSSMA Executive Council members.

Who should be invited to present at the conference?

- Consider any or all of the following:
 - Area music educators, music supervisors
 - Researchers in Music Education
 - Area specialists in the teaching of instruments (including voice)
 - Area music merchants who specialize in the care and maintenance of instruments
 - Music vendors who can showcase methods and materials for music educators
 - Specialists who work with all learners
 - Those who are known for their work in Music Advocacy
 - College students who are completing or who have completed a student teaching experience
 - New music teachers who have completed 1-3 years of work
 - Inspiring collegiate faculty who can talk about music in any context that seems beneficial to the event
 - Specialists with state and national standards
 - Specialists in areas pertinent to music teaching and learning such as, assessment, classroom management, curriculum, instruction, building a community of learners, building a music program, outreach in the community and garnering support
 - Specialists who can address issues related to teacher certification: state examinations such as the CST, EAS and edTPA
 - Members of the NYSSMA Executive council can be inspiring speakers to. Reach out to them at: www.nyssma.org

- Schedule the two-day event with all campus agencies, not just your music department. In other words, make sure that your campus has the date of the event on their calendar as well.

- Working with your music department administrative staff, reserve rooms in your department needed for the event being mindful that there will need to be a large space to accommodate all of the attendees for some general sessions as well as meals.

- Determine the kind of conference you wish to create.
 - How long will the sessions be?
 - Conference sessions are usually 50 minutes in duration with a 10-minute break between them. That said, you could schedule 70 minute sessions as well. It is up to you.
 - Will you have multiple sessions taking place at the same time?
 - Such as specific strands for sessions in general music, instrumental (band), instrumental (string), instrumental (jazz), choral, etc.
 - Or, will you have single sessions for *all* attendees throughout the day? Some of these single sessions include a special guest speaker and are called either a *General* or *Keynote Session*.

Are there specific sessions that are required for the event?

C-NYSSMA asks that you include a State Collegiate Business Meeting. Usually the business meeting takes place right after lunch on Saturday or can also take place earlier on Saturday or at the end of the conference. The purpose of the business meeting is to present the following:

- Current news related to NYSSMA and NAfME
- Presentations by State Collegiate E-board members and the state advisor that include updates about collegiate initiatives, etc.
- Presentation by the host chapter officers
- Determination of the next chapter host and institution for the subsequent state collegiate conference
 - This aspect of the meeting is led by the current State Collegiate President and President-Elect
 - Presentations by chapter members on why they should host the event in the future
 - Overview of the delegate voting process
 - Voting
 - Announcement of the next location of the state collegiate conference

Forum for Faculty Chapter Advisors

In addition, it would be helpful to schedule a meeting for collegiate chapter advisors. This informal session can provide faculty advisors an opportunity to discuss issues related to C-NYSSMA with the state C-NYSSMA advisor. Usually, the State C-NYSSMA advisor leads this session.

Forum for Collegiate Chapter Officers

Having a gathering for collegiate officers allows leaders from different chapters to get to learn more about what kinds of activities are taking place across the state. Remember to make sure that during the collegiate chapter officer forum or meeting, State Collegiate Executive Council members are also present. Usually, the State Collegiate President or President-Elect leads this conference session.

Financial information

The collegiate chapter that hosts the conference needs to generate a list of expenses associated with the event. Note that presenters do NOT receive an honorarium for their services. However, they could receive a mileage reimbursement for travel, provided there is funding that you (your chapter) are able to provide.

NYSSMA does not pay for the operation of your event. Your chapter is fiscally responsible for the cost of the event. NOTE: NYSSMA may offer some financial support usually by covering the cost of one of the meals associated with it. For example, NYSSMA may cover the cost of a boxed lunch on the Saturday of the event. Contact Dr. Koster for details.

What are some expenses to reconcile?

- Nametags and other signage for the event such as road signs, signs on campus, signs at the venue that indicate such locations as “Registration”, etc.
- Printing services (NOTE: Usually presenters bring their own handouts or post them online for access; Program from the event.)
- Meals or snacks
- Certificates to distribute to presenters
- Possible mileage reimbursement for presenters (usually .54 per mile, plus tolls)
- Miscellaneous: Leave extra room in your budget for any unexpected expenses not included in this handbook. How much? Some chapters who have hosted the event in the past have kept between \$100 and \$300 available.

Nametags, Signage, and Swag

Chapters manage this either with peel-off nametags or more elaborate ones. If your campus can't donate these, it is an added expense for lanyards, etc. In addition, you'll need signs to guide your attendees to the event. Also, since your campus is hosting, check your Admissions office for free swag such as pens, bags, paper tablets, etc. **NOTE: Swag is NOT required.**

NOTE: This does take some careful planning. For example:

- Will you need signs at the edge of your campus? Once on your campus, will additional signs to get to the location (including parking) be needed?
- Will attendees need parking passes for the event?
- Once on campus, is the location easy to find? Will there need to be signs near campus buildings?
- You'll also need room signs that indicate the following:
 - Time of the session
 - Title of the presentation
 - Name of the presenter, **see below**
 - Hint: Make sure the room number is large enough to be seen at a distance
 - Check out the example below

2030 State Collegiate NYSSMA-Conference at Northwoods College

Room A456

10:00 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.

"How to assemble an amazing conference"
with Mr. Lisle Moore

11:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.

"How NOT to assemble an amazing conference"
with Dr. Liesel More

12:00 p.m. – 12:50 p.m.

"Why assemble an amazing conference?"
with Ms. Liesette Moor

Back to Swag for a moment...

Feel free to send a letter (on school letterhead) or a formal email to Corporate members of NAFME (www.nafme.org/membership/nafme-corporate-members/) inquiring about promotional items that could be sent to support the conference. Provide them with an address and if you have room in your budget,

offer to off-set shipping expenses. Plus, add their name and contact information in the printed program of the conference to the list of people and organizations to recognize and **publicly acknowledge and thank** for their assistance with the event. If you need help generating this professional email, see your faculty advisor for assistance or email Dr. Koster (kkoster8@naz.edu). In the past, chapters who have received promotional materials have sent a personalized **thank-you** after the event along with a copy of the conference program.

Printing Services

If you decide to have a paper copy of the conference program on the day(s) of your event, you may need to cover those expenses. Check with your faculty advisor. Think about any other items that you might need to print and add them to the queue such as:

- Campus map
- Meal pass
- Tickets for activity-based events
- Handouts from your presenters
- Program
- Nametags (See *Nametags and Signs*)
- Signs (See *Nametags and Signs*)

Of course, **it's more cost efficient and better for the environment to have all of this information available on our devices** (iPhones, tablets, laptops, smartwatch, etc.). Consider utilizing online resources and providing attendees with a QR-code, etc.

Meals or snacks during the event

Once you determine the length of your event (one-day, two-day, etc.), you'll need to contemplate meals and there are many options.

- Remember that attendees don't have to have every meal on your campus. For example, if you're planning a Friday afternoon, all-day Saturday schedule, attendees could "dine on their own" for Friday evening.
- People need coffee, tea, and snacks in the morning including juices and water. For Saturday, breakfast could be "dine on your own" and then upon arrival, coffee, etc. could be provided. NOTE: You'll need these

much-needed drinks and snacks available throughout the day, especially as the conference progresses.

- Make sure your committee reaches out to your campus Food Services/Catering Division as they will also help you decide what kind of food options you'll need for the event. In addition, they'll advise you on what kinds of "break" foods and drinks are recommended for an on-campus conference as well. They are experts with all of this.
- You'll need to get way out in front of this with scheduling and cost-estimates of food. Plan for at least 100 attendees while doing the initial preparations as you most likely can make adjustments after registration is open. For example, if it looks like more than 100 will attend, management and coordinators in Food Services/Catering will need to know right away. NOTE: The reverse is also true.
- Food is going to be a major expense for your conference, so plan accordingly.

Certificates

You will most likely want to present your clinician(s) with a certificate as your room presider thanks them publicly after their session. These can be created using any word-processing program and a printer. If you need a sample, see your chapter advisor (who probably has a few of these in their office), or email the state collegiate advisor (Dr. Koster, kkoster8@naz.edu) and he can send you a sample that has been used in the past. NOTE: If you decide not to create your own, purchasing a set of blank certificates is relatively inexpensive. Plus, your campus may have blank certificates available that they can provide to you at no extra cost.

NOTE: For students completing professional development activities and in need of documentation for a portfolio, you may want to consider providing conference attendees with a certificate as well. You can call this certificate "Certificate of Attendance" or "Certificate of Participation" and present these at the end of your conference. That way, attendees can add this documentation to their portfolio.

Mileage/Travel reimbursement (Optional)

Remember that you **are not allowed to compensate presenters**.

However, pending your budget and finances, you could offer conference presenters who are say, further than 50 miles away from the venue, either (a) a fixed-sum (twenty-five dollars, e.g.) or (b) .54 per mile for travel reimbursement. NOTE: This may include tolls. This is totally up to your chapter and faculty advisor whether or not you decide to offer this.

Strategies to Offset Expenses

- Make sure that your chapter completes a series of fundraisers in order to offset expenses associated with the event. Usually these fundraisers can take place
 - the year before and
 - the semester before the event
- Remember that the conference registration fees can be used to offset expenses. Here are some things to decide:
 - What fee will you charge for:
 - Early registration
 - Late registration
 - Onsite registration
 - Will host chapter members have to pay a registration fee to attend the conference? Or not?
 - Most chapters charge a fee for members to attend the event, especially if they were not able to assist with the planning of it.
 - For example, those who assisted with the planning of the event might pay a 50% reduction in the registration fee.
 - Those who are working at the event throughout one or both days may get a reduction in registration fees or pay nothing.
 - Again, this is something for your chapter and faculty member to discuss.
- In order to get a sense of how many collegiate members will be attending your event, make sure that the date of the state collegiate conference is well-circulated through social media and in the collegiate newsletters that Dr. Koster sends out.
- It's best to have the date selected by August preceding the event.
 - For example, if you are hosting the event in April 2023, you will want to make sure that the event has been scheduled no later than August 1, 2022.
- Several months before the event, send out e-invites and see how many students are planning to attend. In addition, make sure that members of

your chapter and faculty advisor attend the NYSSMA Winter Conference Collegiate Business meeting, held on the Friday or “Collegiate Day” of the event.

Exhibitors at your event?

If you have open space, why not invite locate vendors or other music education-related agencies to provide a booth at the event? Don’t forget to do the following:

- Make sure that you have campus approval to provide this aspect of the conference
- Don’t forget to add the list of exhibitors to your program, that is, if you have them in attendance
- Exhibitors may be able to provide promotional materials in the form of say, “door prizes” etc. It never hurts to ask.

Getting Organized with Committees

As you read through the handbook and begin to learn more about the details of the state collegiate conference, you are most likely getting a sense of the kinds of committees that you will need in order to manage the many aspects of the planning and implementation of such an event.

Remember that you'll need to work with many different agencies on your campus who will assist you with the following:

- Food Services/Catering and onsite accommodations
- Additional resources for cleaning, care and maintenance of the event throughout the day
- Approval to host such an event
- Printing services
- Security, parking and signage

In addition, the Advisor for Collegiate-NYSSMA, Dr. Koster will be with you every step of the way. Don't hesitate to reach out to him for any assistance: kkoster8@naz.edu

Below is a list of suggested committees. **NOTE: These are just suggestions** because you are allowed to go about this aspect of the event in any way that you think is best. Your faculty advisor can help you with this aspect of the conference.

How many students should be on each committee?

That depends on how everyone will manage the work. For example, sometimes just one highly motivated person could manage all of the responsibilities associated with a specific aspect of the conference. On the other hand, sometimes groups of students may choose to work together. It's usually best to have a chapter-wide conversation about determining the best organizational structure and move forward with the planning of the event.

Creating, promoting, and hosting a state conference will take a lot of work in managing all of the different parts of it. Consider creating a series of conference committees. Here is a sample:

- **Conference Planning Chair(s)**

Usually this is the faculty chapter advisor and chapter president

Sample Responsibilities

- Communicate regularly with the Faculty Advisor and conference planning committees
- Present the organizational structure and oversee the committees associated with it
- Be able to respond and address all concerns, questions about the planning and implementation of the event
- Be responsible for all aspects of the event and be aware of what is being coordinated
- Regularly report to the state C-NYSSMA Advisor (Dr. Koster, kkoster8@naz.edu) and on-campus personnel at the site location about the status and progress of the committees and the planning and implementation of the conference

- **Promotion, Marketing, Signage, Publications**

This committee would be responsible for creating the program document, signage for the event from outside the location to room signage on the day of the event. In addition, this committee would promote the event through social media and in publications associated with NYSSMA (Collegiate Newsletter), reach out to NAFME vendors to request free swag to offer conference attendees as well as determine if local music vendors could participate by selling merchandise or offer other services.

Sample Responsibilities

- Managing the promotion of the event through email, social media, and other ways of communicating information about the event
- Creates signage for the event
- Secure swag for the event by reaching out to on-campus agencies (ex. Admissions), area music vendors and vendors associated with NAFME. See Corporate Members: <https://nafme.org/membership/corporate/nafme-corporate-members/>
- Communicate regularly with the Faculty Advisor and Conference Planning Chair

- **Accommodations: Food, Parking, On-site or Off-site Lodging, Swag**

This committee determines the menus and expenses associated with all of the accommodations related to food: From bottled water for the presenters, coffee breaks, breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, etc. In addition, parking for the event is coordinated by securing temporary parking passes (as needed) as well securing blocks of rooms in area hotels, requesting a “conference” lodging rate and ultimately provides conference attendees with maps, directions, and information about food, dining choices, lodging, and parking.

Sample Responsibilities

- Determine food accommodations for the entire event
- Become aware of campus policies regarding food on campus for such an event
- Work with on-campus agency who manages campus dining, catering
- Determine budget and expenses associated with food
- Coordinate parking information for the event, communicate information to Marketing Committee in order to provide appropriate signage
- Reach out to area hotels to secure conference pricing for lodging, consider blocking rooms for the event, Communicate lodging information to the Marketing Committee in order to include that information in the promotional materials
- Determine what maps, directions, and information about on-site and offsite venues will be needed. For example, will attendees be expected to dine off-site during the event? If so, what locations are recommended and are close by?
- Communicate regularly with the Faculty Advisor and Conference Planning Chair

- **Finance & Registration committee**

Keeps track of billing and invoices associated with the event. Manages a planned budget, determines cost of registration (pre-registration fee, on-site registration fee), prepares a spreadsheet that involves all financial information associated with the event. Oversees registration process, establishes registration procedures, registration dates and deadlines, keeps a spreadsheet of registrants, keeps registrants informed about all aspects of the conference.

Sample Responsibilities

- Develop a preliminary plan of the different component parts of fiscal matters related to hosting the event.
- Encourage committees to seek donations and on-campus support for what is needed for the event
- Communicate regularly with the Faculty Advisor and Conference Planning Chair
- Manages the registration area, check-in, clinician or presenter check-in, name tags
- Is the on-site “go to people” for questions or assistance during the event as they are usually working at the registration table
- Coordinates conference set-up and conference-clean up as well as event reporting to Dr. Koster (See *After the Big Day*)

- **Sessions and Event planning committee**

This committee would determine a theme for the event and would be responsible for contacting clinicians, creating the schedule, and activities related to the event. In addition, this committee would manage the reservations associated with the spaces that will be used for the event.

Sample Responsibilities (continues on next page)

- Along with chapter members and your faculty advisor, consider developing a *theme* or focus idea that will guide the kinds of collegiate sessions and related events that you would want to provide at the venue.
- Generate lists of possible presenters, clinicians, vendors, and area Tri-M chapters, collegiate chapters, etc. Have this contact information handy in order to secure participants and ultimately to promote the event.
- Develop a list of on-campus contacts and the services that they provide. For example, who do you reach out to in order to reserve rooms for the state conference? NOTE: Your faculty advisor will be able to assist you with this information.
- Review past conferences that your peers have attended and study the scheduling of those past events. Then, take time to establish a sample schedule to share with all who are involved with the planning of the state conference.
- Communicate regularly with the Faculty Advisor and Conference Planning Chair

(Sample responsibilities for “Sessions and Event Planning” cont.)

- Assign **Room Presiders** for all sessions
 - Room Presiders
 - Introduce the clinician and the session
 - Welcome attendees to the session
 - Assist the clinician in setting up (and cleaning up) before, during and after the session
 - Keep track of time so that the clinician doesn't go over. For example, the Room Presider may stand up
 - in the back of the room 15 minutes before the session is over.
 - Congratulates the clinician for their session, presents the certificate.
- Make sure that Computer/Technical Services is on call during the event in case there are any glitches with technology.
- Confirm clinicians and check to see what equipment they will need for their sessions.
- See *After the Big Event* for an additional list of tasks

On the Big Day(s)

It's here! After two years of planning, it is time for the conference. Granted, you may not have slept much these past several days as thoughts such as: Did we confirm the use of Room A7? Will the food arrive on time? Will anyone show up? Will it be fun? will all certainly be in your thoughts as well as your faculty advisor, and all of your collegiate members who assisted.

Just remember to:

- Review the plans for the event
- Be prepared to make decisions involving some last-minute and often, unexpected changes (i.e. clinician is ill, collegiate member who was involved with a session or responsibility may be ill, a glitch in technology, misplaced conference handouts, running out of nametags). NOTE: Actually, these are wonderful opportunities to demonstrate how to manage these temporary challenges both positively and proactively...a very important set of skills that will serve you well in the music classroom some day!
- Stay hydrated and nourished throughout the event
- Take “time outs” when possible. Sometimes it's good just to step away from the event for a brief period and get some fresh air and breathe.
- Avoid getting “worked up” when something changes, especially if it involves a chapter member. **Remain calm.** It's better to just expect that during this kind of event, things will happen. That way, in a sense, you won't be surprised when it occurs. Just do your best to resolve the situation positively and proactively.
- Most importantly, be helpful to yourself and to others. Everyone will appreciate your willingness to offer assistance and support.

Regardless of any mishaps pertaining to the conference, remember that your hard and perhaps stressful(?) work in putting it together is as big a part of the state collegiate conference as will be the actual day or days of the event.

Collegiate members who have hosted the event recall the following:

- After all of the planning, they are surprised how fast the event happens and then, suddenly, it's over!
- They have developed an understanding and can speak about the following:
 - How taking on this huge responsibility has strengthened their chapter and has also increased their identity not only within Collegiate NYSSMA but also on their campus, with area music educators as well as Tri-M members
 - Will be the source of many positive memories in the future, not only for the host chapter but for all of those who attended the event
 - How they managed the creation, development, and implementation of a statewide event
 - Ideas and plans for future state collegiate conferences

After the Big Event

You will certainly be exhausted after the conference! So, take some time afterwards to sleep, etc. Once you have recovered from the event, here is a list of tasks to consider:

- Have a full chapter meeting to discuss the event. What worked? What didn't?
- **Thank** everyone who helped you (on campus and beyond) with all aspects of the conference. It will most likely be a long list! You can send thank you notes electronically or cards in the mail. For example, if you received financial assistance from NYSSMA, make sure to thank them formally with either (a) a letter or (b) card.
- Complete and submit a short summary of the event to the state collegiate advisor that includes:
 - Your impressions of how the event went for your chapter and faculty advisor
 - Colleges and Tri-M chapters who attended (simple list will work)
 - Number of registrants who attended the event
 - Copy of the program
 - Take-a-ways: Knowing what you now know, what would you have done differently?

In the future, be ready to share your experiences with the next New York collegiate chapter that will host. You'll have a lot of information to provide and the next host-chapter will appreciate all that you will be able to provide to them!

In addition, after the experience, feel free to revisit this handbook and send editing suggestions or enhancements to Dr. Koster (kkoster8@naz.edu).

What All of This Means: Building a culture of Collegiate-NYSSMA

Ultimately, the planning, implementing, and presenting of a state collegiate conference promotes our collegiate culture in New York. Through the interactions with other collegiate members, music educators, scholars, and music education leaders, it helps to further develop a collegiate identity within the structure of NYSSMA and NAFME.

It provides an opportunity for collegiate members to engage in professional experiences with others. It invites members to learn and demonstrate professional behaviors associated with being a music educator. In addition, collegiate achievements can be shared and recognized.

Through discourse with other collegiate members, music educators, scholars, and music education leaders, state conferences are an opportunity to identify and promote collegiate identity and communicate relevant needs and issues related to music education as it pertains to future music educators.

Within Collegiate-NYSSMA, **all collegiate voices** are relevant, valued, and important. The state collegiate conference allows a venue for those voices to be heard. Contemporary, pertinent issues at the forefront of music education can be addressed at venues such as the state conference, where collegiate members can share their voice and ideas towards positively reconciling those issues.

Collegiate members gain a broader understanding not only of the profession but also the critical, important role that they will play in shaping the future of it.