

**Local Reviews of Undergraduate Teacher Education Programs**

**Question Set III:  
Preparing Teachers for Community Music Schools**

Music Teacher Preparation Working Group

National Association of Schools of Music

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### Question Set III: Preparing Teachers for Community Music Schools

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF MUSIC

#### Introduction

- The premises and questions that follow are intended to assist institutions engaged in reviewing their undergraduate teacher preparation programs and interested in community education aspects. Answers to the questions will necessarily be institution specific.
- Question Set III is a tool kit and users are intended to draw from it and combine elements as necessary to their work. It is particularly useful in conjunction with Question Sets I and II.
- Question Set I focuses on content; II, on the process of developing change proposals.
- The focus in Question Set III is content and issues associated with the preparation of teachers for work in community music schools.
- A primary purpose is to consider connections among studies in music, pedagogy, and other areas associated with success in community school settings.
- There are many additional questions that could be asked. For example, how an institution's community-oriented teacher education effort and the community can be a resource for each other.
- Faculty and administrators are encouraged to alter or expand the list of questions consistent with their specific review needs.
- These Question Sets have been developed as resources for professional discussion and development. They are not associated with the accreditation function of NASM, nor do they represent a policy position of the Association.

#### Notes about Structure

The questions are organized in series of eight points. They deal with:

- A. Local context
- B. Curricular and course content issues

- C. Extra-musical skills.
- D. Resources
- E. Relationships to other teacher preparation efforts

### **Suggestions about Local Application**

- Edit and add to this material as necessary to meet your needs.
- Strive for diversity of opinions; search for outside perspectives; consider applicable research.
- Allot plenty of time for discussion, consultation, and analysis; do not short-change deliberations about purposes, values, and matching goals to resources.
- Develop a communication and consultation plan, especially if the inquiry is to be conducted or supervised by a small group.

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##### **Preamble**

Best estimates are that there are thousands of community arts education providers nationwide, including about 500 organized as focused music schools. Our nation's community arts schools serve over one million students. Community music schools continue to be established and are a growing component of the total effort to provide children and youth with an education in music.

Most community music schools have a strong focus on solo and ensemble performance. Private teaching is the primary means of instruction. However, community music schools also teach musicianship, theory, music history, appreciation, and various other music subjects.

Institutionally, community music schools encompass private, group, and ensemble teaching in an institution that is not a public or private elementary or secondary school.

The institutional character and the scope of activity in community music schools create particular opportunities for music graduates interested in teaching, but who may not have an inclination or orientation to teaching in the public or private schools.

Preparing teachers for community music schools can involve bringing together knowledge and skill development resources that are already present in many music schools and departments. Performance, pedagogy, music education, and other studies can be combined in different ways to address the necessary competencies. The following questions are intended to facilitate opening an inquiry about teacher preparation in your institution and its relationship to the work of community music schools.

##### **Questions for Institutions of Higher Education**

1. Is there a community music school in your local community? Is it independent, part of your institution, or part of another institution of higher education?
2. Beyond the local community, are there community music schools in your region?

3. To the extent that your graduates work nationally, what is the national prospect for community education development over the next decade?
4. If your institution has an entrepreneurship program, to what extent are there possible connections between entrepreneurship and the organization and development of new or existing community music schools?
5. How would the present or projected curricular and course content address the following expectations for most community music school faculty:
  - a. performance consistent with graduation expectations of the Bachelor of Music degree?
  - b. knowledge of child and adolescent learning?
  - c. knowledge of the history and diversity of various pedagogical approaches, including breadth in terms of repertory, instructional sequencing and curriculum development, and teaching in various settings?
  - d. the ability to teach musicianship and music theory musically? This includes knowledge and skill and ability in the areas included but not limited to ear training, sight singing, and improvisation.
  - e. coaching and conducting?
  - f. the ability to apply collegiate-level studies in theory and history in teaching, conducting, and coaching situations?

Given this list, to what extent does your institution have the resources to develop this set of competencies? If the resources are available, what is required to shape these resources into opportunities for those who wish to prepare for teaching in the community music school setting?

6. The following extra musical skills are important for teachers in community music schools:
  - a. understanding of the institutional context, and the ability to work and eventually thrive in an institutional setting;
  - b. the ability to teach in a variety of settings, sizes, and types of groups;
  - c. fulfillment of the basic responsibilities of any job, including but not limited to punctuality, fulfillment of assigned duties, cooperation, and participation in common efforts;

- d. organization skills, including the ability to operate a studio, class, or ensemble operation;
- e. the ability to do administrative tasks is highly desirable, and the ability to apply entrepreneurial skills is often essential;
- f. the ability to understand and work with the cultures in the community;
- g. the ability to talk to, work with, and lead as appropriate students, parents, and colleagues;
- h. the ability to develop in students, parents, and other constituents the basis for lifelong engagement with music as an amateur musician, audience member, and supporter.

Given this list, to what extent does your institution have the resources to develop this set of competencies? If the resources are available, what is required to shape these resources in to opportunities for those who wish to prepare for teaching in the community music school setting?

7. Mentorship, practice teaching, and other field experiences are critically important in the preparation of teachers for community music schools. These aspects need to be integrated with formal studies in music and in pedagogy.

To what extent can your institution provide these opportunities? How many students can be accommodated at one time? What about experience with different age groups: K–12, early childhood, advanced high school, adult learners, elderly, etc.? What about opportunities to work in a variety of types and sizes of groups: traditional one-on-one setting instruction, small groups, large groups, master class settings, music appreciation, etc.?

8. What partnerships might be possible or necessary to fulfill the various functions of a teacher preparation program oriented to community music schools? To what degree are there parallels or synergies with the programs to prepare teachers for public and private schools? What about partnerships with community music schools that are either part of the institution or are independent institutions in the local area? For example, what are the possibilities for establishing a program of supervised fieldwork with the community music school as the laboratory? This concept would be similar to clinical experiences in medical or nursing school experiences throughout the four year undergraduate degree.