



**WMTA Executive Board
Meeting Minutes
Friday, June 13, 2025
Waunakee, WI**

- I. Call to Order/Welcome
Called to order at 9:33am. Present: Mickey Lytle, Rachel Fritz, Mary Tollefson, Justin Krueger, Mary Anne Olvera, Opala Bilhorn, Nick Phillips, Roberta Grube, and Katie Butler.
- II. Adoption of Agenda
Moved by Nick Phillips. Seconded by Opala Bilhorn. Foundation Fellow business added to the agenda. Approved by consensus.
- III. Approval of Minutes from February 2025 meeting
Moved by Rachel Fritz. Seconded by Mickey Lytle. Approved by consensus.
- IV. Reports of Officers
 - a. President Mary Tollefson, NCTM
See attached report. The MTNA Foundation Fellow will be discussed later in new business. We did apply but did not receive the 150th MTNA affiliate grant proposal.
 - b. Immediate Past President Mickey Lytle, NCTM
See attached report. The main item of note was results of the membership survey. The executive board got all the results including direct comments. It would be helpful for executive board members to review the information and to address concerns and questions that were shared. Several members shared valuable suggestions that can be considered by the board. We may be writing a newsletter article for later in the year that would be good to discuss or clarify issues that came up. The idea was discussed about having a Conference presentation specifically about how auditions work. Most of the teachers participate in auditions in one way or another. One of our goals is to make membership valuable beyond auditions. We are a teacher support organization, not a student support organization. The board discussed ways we can communicate better with the membership to help us grow as an organization such as a change in the newsletter structure to include a Table of Contents, a focused newsletter article, and maybe the Facebook page. The virtual association did confuse a few members but would be of value to those who participate in auditions and are not currently part of a Local Association. Research is still being done into this opportunity and will be discussed in the future meetings what all the information has been gathered.
 - c. 1st VP-Conference Stacey Kraus, NCTM
See attached report. Everything is on track to open registration once the financial program has been connected. We have approved a lower booth cost of \$100 for individuals who want to exhibit without the combined advertisement rates. Some of the current Conference program was discussed regarding the District Chairs and Local Association meetings and where they are located in the schedule. All of the events will be at the same location so it will be easier for everybody to transition. The meetings will be held at the same time and individuals who need to be in both meetings should attend the District Chairs meeting.

- d. 2nd VP-Membership Justin Krueger, NCTM
See attached report. Many of our members have already renewed their membership, and they have until July 1st for renewals. We will have a better idea after that date as to where we are at this year for membership numbers.
- e. Treasurer Rachel Fritz
See attached report. Be careful with the forms submission so we are very accurate. Errors cause extra time, and many people had errors in their submissions. We also experienced some issues with potential fraud because districts with two chairs had duplicated expense submissions. We are switching to google forms to help with some of these issues. Some districts were mailing awards out to those not in attendance. This incurred a large fee to the organization. The board discussed ways for the organization to have fewer fees due to award delivery, particularly with the 100-point plaques, so we don't incur additional costs in the future. Roberta Grube is going to review the costs and ordering options with the award company, so we know our options.

V. Reports of Program Chairs

- a. Regional & State Keyboard Competition Mary Anne Olvera, NCTM
See attached report. The report breaks down the districts through the years. We did have a pressure point where we had a large number of 5th grade students, so they were combined with the 4th grade to ease the burden on the judge. The combined-class policy was added to the website in case it is needed again in the future. We have some very competitive teachers while others value the experience more, so we continue to work towards everybody's goals. The space rental costs in the different districts are very different so we are working to balance some of the higher spaces. Parking spaces and costs are also being considered as well as organizations that are easy to work with and the centralized location for those participating. The position of the award ceremony on the day was clarified. We had a couple regional students who decided not to move forward with the state competition so we will be clarifying that students who compete at regional are expected to move forward to the state competition, or they otherwise take that opportunity from another student.
- b. Regional Vocal/Instrumental Opala Bilhorn, NCTM
See attached report. Our state competition ran smoothly, and the report has all the information. While some teachers were dissatisfied with the location, we had more students this year than last year. The combined event makes it easier for many of the families as they participate in both events. It also reduces the rentals and fees. The duet cost is currently the same as the solo, so the board discussed raising the costs as they receive an additional trophy. This issue impacts district and state competitions. This can be proposed in advance and voted upon at the next meeting.
- c. College Faculty Representative Nick Phillips, NCTM
No report.
- d. District Auditions Roberta Grube
See attached report. Our numbers went up this year, which is very exciting. This includes new teachers with big studios who are participating. Roberta Grube continues to hold weekly meetings and addresses issues as they come up. Overall, everything went well.
- e. Independent Music Teachers Forum Margaret Burton (Absent)
No report.
- f. Local Associations Catherine Walby, NCTM (Absent)
No report.

VI. Standing/Special Committees

- a. Finance Mary Tollefson, NCTM
We did not receive any collegiate study grants for 2025.
 - b. Nominating Mary Tollefson, NCTM
No Report.
- VII. Old Business
- a. Self-publishing Compositions Policy Mary Tollefson, NCTM
Performers are permitted to include repertoire in their programs that has been obtained directly from the composer's official website, including music that has been purchase or licensed through the site. A performer must provide a full and accurate attribution. The board discussed a new policy that would state that we do not accept music that is self-published unless it is available on the composer's official website. The board discussed the current form and how and when we should require information so make sure stay consistent and legal.
- VIII. New Business
- a. Youth Protection Policy Mary Tollefson, NCTM
See attached report. We have had a lot of costly challenges with audition background checks. This is about youth protection for minors. Having the guardian attend with the student would remove this task for district workers and remove the fee for background checks because the student would remain in constant custodial care. The change in procedure would create multiple challenges, but the benefits would be profound. The board discussed the logistics of the change. Nick Phillips made a motion to approve the new policy. Micky Lytle seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
 - b. Budget Rachel Fritz
See attached report. Rachel Fritz reviewed the budget that is being proposed as a new operating budget. This is being proposed for 2026. We are projecting to have a positive net balance for 2026, which will be the first time we have achieved this in over a decade. The process of creating the budget made some categories, such as awards, stand out as being large costs. As we adopt the budget, this will allow us to better plan and to make intentional choices with areas of greater costs. It is beneficial for leaders within the organization to understand current costs of their events. The board discussed how this will work when submitting expenses and will help members to understand where their fees are going. Nick Phillips moved to accept the proposed budget for 2026. Justin Krueger seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
 - c. Foundation Fellow Mary Tollefson, NCTM
Foundation fellows were nominated and discussed. A few nominations were discussed. Martha Fisher and Bill Lutz were recommended for joint Foundation Fellows. Stacey motioned to nominate them. Justin Krueger seconded. Discussion was made. Motion approved unanimously.
 - d. Business Mary Anne Overa
How to distribute regions for auditions in preparation for October's meeting. (Tabled)
- IX. Announcements
- a. Next Executive Board Meeting set for the Thursday before October Conference.
 - b. Submission for the August newsletter are due to Katie Butler by July 15th.
- X. Adjournment
Moved by Rachel Fritz. Seconded by Justin Krueger. Meeting adjourned at 11:43.
Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Katie Butler, Administrative Assistant

Officers Reports

President's Report-Mary Tollefson, NCTM

On behalf of WMTA, I attended the MTNA National Conference. I attended the meeting of the East Central Division (WI, IL, IN, MI, OH) and the State Presidents' Advisory Council (SPAC). I shared some of the interesting activities offered by other states in the ECD in the 2025 May WMTA Newsletter; briefly, those activities included non-competitive festival events, inviting proposals and attendance from all states in the ECD, tying collegiate chapters to districts, and creating a series of online webinars to reach rural members.

At the State Presidents' Advisory Council (SPAC) meeting: received updates from Outgoing MTNA President Peter Mack and CEO Brian Shepherd and can be found in the summary of the MTNA Business Minutes of the 2025 National Conference. It was announced that the 2027 MTNA National Conference will be in St. Louis, MO (the 2026 MTNA National Conference is scheduled for Chicago, IL). The only business that transpired was electing the new SPAC Chair, Carmen Hall (President, Utah MTA).

I submitted a 150th Anniversary Affiliate Grant proposal (requested \$1,000 for the State Conference) and I was notified that the proposal was not selected.

To this date, no WMTA officers have resigned. I received a gracious thank you from Rachel Fritz to WMTA, with appreciation for her being honored as a 2025 MTNA Foundation Fellow.

I am inspired daily by the talent and dedication of our members. Thank you for the honor of serving as president of WMTA.

Immediate Past President-Mickey Lytle, NCTM

My WMTA time this spring has been spent ordering several background checks during audition season. I worked with the board on updating the membership survey questions for 2025, worked with Katie on publicizing that to the membership, and compiled the results of the survey. The Executive Board and Admin Council have received the results and those will be reviewed and discussed at their June meetings. The results of the survey will be published for the full membership in the September newsletter.

1st VP-Conference: Chair's Report-Stacey Kraus, NCTM

We are slightly delayed with the registration roll-out due to some moving parts, however, we plan to launch on June 16. Everything else is on track according to the timeline. We already have some exhibitors that have reached out to Katie as well. There was an inquiry about having just a booth without advertisement and Katie and I discussed giving that as an option for \$100. Committee members have been great in assisting.

Thanks, Stacey Kraus, NCTM

2025 CONFERENCE SCHEDULE	
THURSDAY 23	
6pm-9pm	Board Meeting
FRIDAY 24	
8:00	Registration. Meet and greet.
8:15	Opening Remarks
8:30	The Adaptable Teacher: Approaching Every Music Student According to Their Learning Temperament - Drea Wagner

9:30	Piano Safari Showcase (Katherine Fisher)
10:30	Getting Over The Hump: Preparing Students for Advance Repertoire- Michael Rector
11:30	Lunch - on your own
1:00	Masterclass (Christopher Fisher)
2:30	UpBeat! The Power Within-Matthew Arrau
3:30	Beyond The Right Turn of Phrase: Listening More Objectively- Shad Ryan Wenzlaff
4:30	Local association and district chair meeting
5:30	Cocktails
6:00	Dinner and awards ceremony
7:30	Concert - Christopher & Katherine Fisher
Saturday 25	
9:00	Rote Teaching - A New Paradigm (Katherine Fisher)
10:00	Lessons Learned from a Tiger (and the Research): The Role of Parental Support in Music Study - Dr. Christopher Fisher
11:00	Collegiate Presentations (Bridging Cultures Through Piano: Indonesian Folk Tunes for Young Pianists & Strategies for Effective Teaching of Group Piano Classes
12:00	Lunch & meeting
1:30	Lightning Games!
2:30	Helping your Middle/High School Piano students in the Jazz Band- Marty Robinson
3:30	Closing

2nd VP Membership-Justin Krueger, NCTM

Renewals are trickling in and will continue to be big over the summer months. Please encourage your LAs to renew their membership. Consider a summer event to encourage renewals - maybe a cookout or a get together to get folks to come together and share ideas!

Treasurer-Rachel Fritz

Treasurer's report 6.13.2025

The current financials are included in the FY 2026 budget attachment, so they are not listed here.

Thank you to everyone for your patience as I learned new process and a new to me accounting software. June 30, 2025, will mark a full year of using Xero for WMTA finances. This is great as many of the contacts will now be entered for use next year. Using this software will allow WMTA to change its W-9 collection as this information will now be able to be collected directly to Xero. There is no need to use separate software for this.

Beginning July 1 there will be a new income/expense form to use. We are moving away from Jotforms for a few reasons:

- 1) This information can be collected via a Google form which then allows the information to be saved and stored directly in the Treasurer's Google Drive. It eliminates a step of downloading the form from Jotforms to the Google Drive.
- 2) Storage considerations - Jotforms has limited storage capabilities. This meant that the Treasurer was having to regularly delete and organize files to make sure there was room for forms to be submitted or pay an additional cost.

The new form will be available on July 1. This is the start of the fiscal year.

The finance committee met multiple times this spring and we will be sharing with you a proposed budget for the upcoming year.

There were no applicants for the Collegiate Study grant this year.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Fritz
WMTA Treasurer

Addendum Regarding Auditions and Related to the Treasurer

Audition notes

- 1) No longer a need to collect W-9 information by District Chairs or ask for this to be sent. There were still a few that sent this information to me via jotforms and the link to complete will come to contractors from Xero as needed.
 - 2) Accuracy in form submission and addresses. A challenge for me this year was the number of errors to sort through.
 - a) Address errors - Several items had address errors. Examples are addresses missing a digit, zip codes missing, names misspelled.
 - b) Multiple expense forms completed for the same expense. This presented with multiple co-chairs at a site submitting the same expense. Or an error uploading or clicking through the form too quickly on submission that resulted in expenses and their documentation to be on multiple forms.
- I understand that these things happen, and they do add to the time it takes for the work to be completed.

Regional and State Keyboard Competition Chair-Mary Anne Olvera, NCTM
JUNE 2025 REGIONAL KEYBOARD CHAIR REPORT
2025 REGISTRATION BREAKDOWN - *Region & Grade*
(2025 - 2024 - 2023 - 2022)

S REGIONAL - UWW, MAY 9, 2025 - 161 Students, 43 Teachers, 7 Judges/adjudicating sites

2024 - 127 students, 33 tchrs, 6 judges

2023 - 129 students, 40 tchrs, 6 judges

2022 - 136 students, 41 tchrs, 7 judges

4	18 - 25 - 15 - 14	7	23 - 11 - 15 - 18	10	13 - 8 - 11 - 16
5	39 - 25 - 21 - 15	8	8 - 19 - 21 - 13	11	11 - 10 - 10 - 10
6	24 - 16 - 11 - 27	9	20 - 7 - 11 - 13	12	9 - 6 - 8 - 11

NE REGIONAL - UWO, MAY 9 2025 - 105 Students, 27 Teachers, 6 Judges/Adjudicating sites

2024 - 101 students, 29 tchrs, 6 judges

2023 - 99 students, 22 tchrs, 5 judges

2022 - 123 students, 37 tchrs, 5 judges

4	22 - 14 - 6 - 19	7	19 - 11 - 13 - 9	10	5 - 5 - 12 - 9
5	12 - 13 - 24 - 14	8	9 - 16 - 7 - 11	11	3 - 11 - 4 - 6
6	15 - 22 - 14 - 20	9	10 - 6 - 4 - 10	12	9 - 3 - 6 - 5

NW REGIONAL - UWRF, MAY 9, 2025 - 76 Students, 24 Teachers, 4 Judges/Adjudicating sites

2024 - 72 students, 33 tchrs, 4 judges

2023 - 41 students, 20 tchrs, 3 judges

2022 69 students, 30 tchrs, 3 judges

4	14 - 11 - 4 - 6	7	7 - 13 - 4 - 5	10	4 - 5 - 1 - 8
5	12 - 11 - 8 - 17	8	9 - 8 - 5 - 13	11	7 - 2 - 1 - 5
6	15 - 10 - 5 - 10	9	4 - 7 - 8 - 5	12	3 - 2 - 5 - 1

PARTICIPATION - S Regional had significant increase in numbers, with the greatest pressure in 5th grade. Because of the size of this group, grades 4&5 were combined, creating a 4/5A and a 4/5 B group. All indicators of grade level and district were taken out of all docs. As expected there was pushback - and animated conversation re: other options, purpose of regionals, etc - but judges in the combined rooms chose one 4th grade winner, and one 5th grade winner solely on the merits of the overall performances.

S required more adjudication sites than in years past (7/2025, 6/2024, 6/2023, 7/2022). NE, NW regionals went smoothly, with increased effort on the part of NE Regional Keyboard to be more aware of and welcoming with VIE at NE.

VOLUNTEERISM - Weighted averages were determined for each region to identify who needed to volunteer, and how long. This method provides a bias free framework for how long each teacher needs to either be present, or provide a sub. This has worked well for the past 2 years. If tchrs only had one entry, they were given a pass for that year, provided there was sufficient coverage by other tchrs.

SECURED VENUES FOR May 9, 2026 REGIONAL EVENTS ARE:

S REGIONAL - UW-PARKSIDE

NE REGIONAL - UW-STEVENS POINT

NW REGIONAL - UW-LA CROSSE (w/UWEC backup, pending UWL costs)

For future consideration/discussion: When securing venues, which is the higher priority, rotation of districts, or cost of venue?

**STATE COMPETITION
SATURDAY, MAY 10, 2025**

This was another successful year for the State Keyboard Competition, held at UWSP. Most grade levels had representation from all three regions.

At grade 8, this year's NW Regional winner chose to not advance to the state competition. The option to play was passed to the runner up, who also chose not to play.

Coincidentally, both of these students were Regional winners last year and advanced to the state event, but they were both firmly against playing this year.

This resulted in no representation from NW at grade 8.

Moving forward, I think clarification on the state track is important for students:

1. Dates for the state competition are published very early for planning purposes
2. It is understood that students who enter the state track and win their regional event will be available and committed to advancing, barring any unforeseen family emergencies
3. This also applies if the opportunity to play is passed to the runner-up
4. The set deadline date for this competition refers to payment of fees only, and does not refer to a student grace period to determine whether they want to play

(This final understanding is necessary due to the very short turnaround time between regionals and state, and the very large amount of work required to prep for the event)

The judges designated five grade level winners from S Region, with one winner from NE.

The new Judge’s Choice Award was given to a NE student, for a thoughtfully presented and interesting blend of program.

And because of the fluid nature of this award, I think it’s a very good addition to this competition. It can be awarded, or not, at the full discretion of the judging panel, for whatever reason they determine. It allows lots of opportunity for the panel to acknowledge a student, at any grade level, that has uniquely distinguished themselves, but not quite in the same way as a winner.

Admissions brought in \$330 from paying audience.

And it is my intention to put greater effort into securing sponsorship for this event next year.

Mary Anne Olvera, NCTM

VIE State Competition Chair’s Report-Opala Bilhorn

The 2025 WMTA Vocal | Instrumental | Ensemble (VIE) Competition at UW-Oshkosh ran smoothly. Four judges adjudicated 41 students in String, Woodwind/Brass, Keyboard Duet & Vocal performance. Winners were declared for Elementary & Intermediate String, Brass, Woodwind, Intermediate & Advanced Keyboard duet, Elementary, Intermediate & Advanced Vocal divisions.

Communication with the site chairs/coordinators Kirsten Ihde and Annemarie Birschbach was excellent.

This was the second year that the State Keyboard Duet track was coordinated under VIE. This change seemed to be managed without trouble by the teachers who registered students. Mary Anne Olvera and I (Opala) coordinate schedules to accommodate this.

Below are participation numbers from the past 5 State VIE events.

2021 Virtual	2022 UW-Stevens Point	2023 UW-Oshkosh	2024 UW-Stevens Point	2025 UW-Oshkosh
String – 18 Vocal – 15	String – 14 Vocal – 17	String – 7 Vocal – 14 Ensemble – 1 Woodwind – 1	String – 7 Vocal – 17 Ensemble – 2 Guitar – 1 Keyboard Duet – 6	String – 7 Vocal – 18 Ensemble – 1 Woodwind – 1 Brass – 1 Keyboard Duet – 4 Total 32 entries (41 students b/c duets & Ensembles)
Total 33	Total 31	Total 23 entries (26 students b/c ensemble)	Total 33 entries (37 students b/c duets & ensembles)	

	2024	2025
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Dual-Instrument Participants	6	13
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Entries By Region				
	Northeast	Northwest	South	Total Participating teachers
2025	15	10	9	15

Observations:

- Fifteen teachers contributed 32 entries (41 students). Three teachers contributed 3 or more students. The remaining teachers sent 1 or 2 students.
- Forty percent (13 out of 32 entries) of students were dually qualified piano and a VIE entry. With regards to volunteers, one challenge is that with so many students are dually qualified (piano and vocal/string, etc.) these teachers also have dual commitments. We navigated this challenge with several solutions-
 - o Several teachers volunteered for multiple jobs and worked the entire day
 - o Mary Anne allowed teachers with dual commitments to prioritize VIE volunteer commitments
 - o I (Opala) brought 2 volunteers in addition to myself
- There continues to be a steady, albeit small, stream of teachers/students participating in the VIE track.
- Two new teachers participated in State VIE (one was a teacher who had not participated for several years and was returning)
- There is dissatisfaction among some Northwest teachers when the VIE State Competition is held in Oshkosh because it is a less central site. Our participation numbers do not seem to change much whether the event is in UW-SP or UW-Oshkosh though.

Since 2022, State VIE has been held in the North East Region concurrent with the Regional Keyboard Competition. The North East Regional Competition rotates competition venues between UW-Stevens Point and UW-Oshkosh. There has been conversation regarding if VIE should rotate between all three Regional Keyboard sites (Northeast, Northwest and South). It is my opinion that we should continue as we have for the following reasons:

- Of all the Regional Keyboard Competition sites, these (Stevens Point and Oshkosh) are the most geographically central sites in the state.
- In 2025 40% of student participants were dually qualified (piano and VIE instrument) – keeping the VIE at the same site as the Regional Keyboard competition allows these students and teachers to attend one site for both their Keyboard and VIE entry.
- This plan supports a small competition (VIE) with the resources and student overlap between the larger Regional Keyboard Competitions; making it simpler for teachers and families to participate.

The 2026 State VIE Competition is Saturday, May 9th at UW-Stevens Point.

Opala Bilhorn, NCTM

Collegiate Faculty Representative-Nick Phillips, NCTM

Nothing to report.

Nick Phillips, NCTM

District Auditions Chair-Roberta Grube

We have an amazing group of District Chairs that make auditions happen throughout the state. They are already confirming locations and auditions dates for the 2026 audition season.

Gail Heywood has stepped down as District Chair for Stevens Point. She has a potential replacement and is talking with them.

Summary of 2025 District registrations:

WMTA 2025 Auditions					WMTA 2024 Auditions
District	District Non-Competitive	Regional	State	Total Entries	Total Entries
Appleton	79	20	35	134	113
Eau Claire	72	45	51	168	154
Kenosha	29	11	12	52	72
La Crosse	65	6	18	89	87
Madison	87	40	40	167	134
Merrill	28	1	2	31	30
Milwaukee	48	40	35	123	123
Oshkosh	52	9	21	82	72
River Falls	94	11	2	107	102
Sheboygan / West Bend	39	31	16	86	95
Stevens Point	46	10	35	91	83
Superior	31	10	5	46	34
Wausau	59	23	28	110	99
Whitewater	41	17	41	99	116
Totals	770	274	341	1385	1314

I updated the District Chair handbook for the 2025 audition season. The handbook was put on the shared drive and the WMTA website.

Throughout the year during our weekly District Chair Zoom meetings, I received suggestions and requests on how to improve the audition process. Following is a list of suggestions:

- A request was given to Sydney to re-record the aural tests. She agreed to do so however, I have not been notified of any progress on this.
- Continue to allow districts to administer theory tests online or in person
- Have a topic for the weekly meetings like we did for how to use the registration spreadsheet, it was well attended and answered lots of questions
- Update theory tests
 - Eliminate some of the key signatures, seems overwhelming
 - Review the IA and IB test definitions matching sections. For example:
 - on the IA test definitions (matching)
 - Andante - is defined as a "moderately slow tempo"
 - Moderato - is defined as a "Medium tempo"
 - on the IB test definitions (matching)
 - Vivace - Quick & Lively tempo
 - Allegro - Fast tempo
 - Presto - Very fast tempo
- Suggestion to have one obvious wrong choice on the aural portion and two or three to choose from
- Add links in the handbook and then include a list of all the links
- Create a regional qualifier tab in the registration spreadsheet

- Consider raising the Judge's rate
- Make it clear that all points for the Young Composer contest are added to the student's total points towards earning awards
- Include the track on Judge's sheet
- Make it clear who does what with an out of district entry
- Consider using a Google form for registration, not sure this may work with calculation fields

This summer I will working on the above recommendations that I have direct control over.

Don't forget to renew your WMTA membership!

Independent Music Teachers Forum-Margaret Burton

Nothing to Report.

Local Association Chair-Catherine Walby

Nothing to Report.