

Portland Symphony Orchestra

Educator Day
Draft Summary Notes

Saturday, March 15, 2008, Rehearsal Hall, Merrill Auditorium

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About the Forum

Overview

The Portland Symphony Orchestra recognizes and takes seriously its role as a leading community educator about orchestral music. To be most effective the PSO wants to nurture collaborative relationships with music educators and organizational partners from throughout the community.

To discuss and prioritize answers to these questions in a fun yet efficient way, the PSO Education Task Force convened a Music Educators Day and hired a professional meeting facilitator, Craig Freshley of Good Group Decisions based in Brunswick.

Thirty-three people attended the event.

Forum Objectives

- Get to know each other and develop productive professional relationships.
- Shared understanding of the purpose and activities of the Portland Symphony Orchestra.
- Ideas and consensus on how the Portland Symphony Orchestra can best collaborate with music educators and our organizational partners.

Agenda

12:30 **Lunch**

1:00 **Opening**

 Welcome

 - Ken Spirer and Phyllis Givertz, Co-Chairs,

 Portland Symphony Orchestra Educational Task Force

 Meeting Overview

 - Craig Freshley, Facilitator

1:10 **About the Portland Symphony Orchestra and Education Initiatives**

 We will hear from PSO Executive Director Ari Solotoff and Education Coordinator Heather Klenow about the PSO's history, mission, and educational programs.

1:35 **Advice for the Portland Symphony Orchestra**

 Working in small groups and then as a full group, we will discuss:

1. How can the currently planned programs of the PSO best serve Music Educators?

2. How can the PSO best partner and collaborate with music educators on its current and future educational programming? We will identify, organize, and prioritize the best ideas generated by the discussion.

2:25 **Closing Comments**
 - Ken Spirer and Phyllis Givertz

2:30 **Adjourn**

3:00 **Orchestra Dress Rehearsal**
 Music educators are invited to observe a dress rehearsal of the Portland Symphony Orchestra on stage in Merrill Auditorium.

Ground Rules

- Fun and supportive learning environment
- All views heard
- No bad ideas
- Raise hands to speak
- Careful listening
- Neutral facilitation and report

Welcoming Remarks

Phyllis Givertz, member of the Portland Symphony Orchestra Board of Trustees and Co-Chair of the Education Task Force, welcomed the group. She also introduced Ken Spirer, also a member of the Portland Symphony Orchestra Board of Trustees and Co-Chair of the Education Task Force.

Phyllis offered welcoming remarks as follows:

- Seven months ago the Education Task Force was established to evaluate community education and outreach, and make recommendations to the board for improvements
- The Task Force is made up of trustees, staff, and members of the Orchestra
- By surveying other orchestras, the Task Force has identified education programs implemented by other orchestras
- The Task Force has also collected input internally, most notably via a “café” held last summer.
- The Task Force is committed to this basic principle: That the PSO is committed to taking a leadership role in collaborating with music educators to nurture the love of music.
- A very important piece of our work is to ask the opinions of educators throughout the community.
- Thank you for participating today.

About the Portland Symphony Orchestra

Ari Solotoff, Executive Director of the Portland Symphony Orchestra, and Heather Klenow, Operations and Education Coordinator, offered the following remarks:

- Introduction (Ari)
 - In this group I feel like I'm among family
 - My heroes for the day are the musicians (thank you for participating today) and Heather (thanks for all your work Heather).
 - This is a very exciting time for us at the PSO – the beginning of a new era!
 - Thanks to Ken and Phyllis for chairing the Task Force
 - We rarely get to hear from you about how to partner with you in the future – that's what makes today so special
 - Reference the Statement of Common Cause: Orchestras Support In-School Music Education
 - We want to partner with you!

- About the PSO in general (Ari)
 - Fourth largest and second oldest orchestra in New England
 - 82 Musicians
 - Tuesday Classical
 - Sunday Classical
 - Pops!
 - Magic of Christmas
 - Independence Pops

- KinderKonzerts (Heather)
 - 77 total KinderKonzerts performed in 2006-07
 - 23 Brass
 - 29 Woodwind
 - 25 String
 - Numbers of attendees in sites that we sponsor
 - 2093 Brunswick
 - 96 Freeport (new site)
 - 1765 Lewiston
 - 2228 Saco
 - 987 South Portland
 - 143 Windham
 - Other sites: Manchester, NH; Shelburne, NH; Conway, NH; Waldeboro, NH; Sanford; Biddeford; Gorham; Pittsfield; South Hiram and Oxford
 - Our approximate total attendance for the year was 15,000
 - Teacher guides are sent in advance

- Youth Concerts (Heather)
 - 123 different schools attended our Youth Concerts in 2006/07.
 - The total attendance for the fall youth concerts was 4,775 and the spring youth concerts was 6,496.
 - Total attendance of 11,271 students.
 - Demographics
 - Target ages are 8-13.
 - Tickets cost \$5.00.
 - 12,000-14,000 children attend annually.
 - 28,000 students in grades 4 and 5 in Maine.
 - PSO is reaching 40% of the population!

- Side by Side (Ari)
 - An opportunity for orchestra musicians to play side by side with members of the Youth Orchestra

- Musically Speaking/Concert Conversations (Ari)
 - Four lectures given at the Portland Public Library
 - Historically given by Toshi
 - Scott Harris is the acting lecturer for 2006-07 and 2007-08 seasons.
 - Program is free and open to the public.
 - Pre-concert lectures prior to all classical concerts
 - Typically the conductor or a guest artist will speak about the program on the concert
 - Includes a question-answer component
 - Free and open to the public

- Possible New Education Initiatives (Ari)
 - Concert Series
 - Family Series
 - Concerto Competition
 - Run-out concerts throughout Maine/New Hampshire
 - In-School Activities
 - Expand KK to include older children
 - All KK instrument groups all year
 - Statewide public and private school needs assessment
 - Adult Education
 - Post-concert Q&A
 - Strong Collaborations
 - Take Musically Speaking on the road; webcast
 - Side-By-Side (turn into a concert with 2 rehearsals)
 - USM Youth Orchestra
 - All State Orchestra
 - Adults
 - Other
 - Toddlers/Early childhood development
 - String scholarship program

Advice for the Portland Symphony Orchestra

Craig showed the following two questions on the screen and asked for the questions to first be addressed in small group discussions then by the full group as a whole.

1. How can the currently planned programs of the PSO best serve Music Educators?
2. How can the PSO best partner and collaborate with music educators on its current and future educational programming?

Summary of Comments

In the full group discussion, the following comments were shared and discussed (organized by Craig):

- Orchestra Experience (and chorus)
 - Increase knowledge of open rehearsals
 - Other open rehearsal times
 - Create an orchestra experience – bring in musicians
 - Expand side by side – play with school musicians
 - Side by side for chorus
- Marketing
 - Market to school administrators (not just educators)
 - Educate school administrators
 - Talk to administrators as parents
 - Seat on the board for press/outreach
 - Maine Music Education Association
 - Workshop at conference
 - League of American Orchestras
 - Maine Alliance for Art Education
 - Connect with Laptop Initiative
 - Channel 3 TV
- High School Outreach
 - Musician blogs
 - Interactive website
 - For research
 - Audio
 - Kid friendly
 - Better presence in schools
 - Posters in schools
 - More attention to High School
 - Orchestra members adopt High School musicians

- General concert program for High School age group
- Align our programs with Learning Results
- Working Collaboration Between PSO and Educators
 - PSO: better understand what already exists
 - Establish a network of music educators
- Advocacy
 - Advocate regarding Maine Learning Results
 - More City government support – Angel Patron Program
 - Concert at the State Capital
- Other
 - Like Wellesley Composers Conference
 - Composition competition
 - Music in Our Schools Month
 - Capitalize on “Global”
 - Music is the global language

Comments submitted in Writing

The following comments were submitted in writing via feedback forms (not in any particular order – grouped by form):

- “Choral/Orchestra Day”
 - 10am to 1pm
- Choir Practice
 - on their own
 - 3 or 4 choral/orchestra
- Pieces (examples)
 - Halleluiah from Mt. Olives/Beethoven
 - 2 choruses from Messiah/Handel
- On orchestra Day – Chorus sits on the balcony and rehearse with the orchestra ending with an informal-type concert where the orchestra also plays a few pieces by themselves
- A lot of area choruses would participate if there wasn’t a night concert commitment
- This could also include side by side High School orchestra students on stage with the orchestra
- I would love to see KinderKonzerts expanded to 4-6 graders to facilitate or enhance how and why these kids _____ an instrument to learn in the school music program.
- Implement a working network/dialogue between PSO and the music education community at large. Maybe have music educators on the PSO Education Committee
- PSO members and board advocate for music education with state and county policy makers and funders

- You Tube or MySpace
 - Follow a player
 - His part alone
 - With section
 - In orchestra (selected segment of a piece)

- I am interested in pursuing an adoptive relationship with Portland High School to take advantage of our proximity to Merrill Auditorium. If possible, we could get a few musicians into the school for side-by-side, live performance in our hall (chamber, even early music, etc.) lessons, coachings, music appreciation classes

- Reach out to and educate top levels
 - Governor
 - Superintendents

- Get school music students into performance opportunities with professional orchestral musicians
- Send PSO trustees out to schools to advocate for music education at administrative level and to community leaders

- Members of the PSO “family” who have children in the schools can be appointed “music education” ambassadors to those schools. Administrators might be more open to a member of their own constituency.
- Microphone for conductor at open rehearsal
 - Awareness of not boring the audience

- Channel 3 TV
- Side by side opened to private students
- Groups of teachers to take 1:1 students further
- Transportation \$ (?)
- Brochures out ASAP so goes in budget ASAP
- All teachers in the general area get notices
- Concerts at 3:30 or 4:00 so teachers’ lessons integrate
- Reps at school committees when music cuts are on the agenda
- PSO go into schools other than strings to expand student awareness of all sections of the orchestra
- Info on laptops in the middle schools
- Get Mike Hugo (former lobbyist) to volunteer

- More age appropriate for High School
- Broader scope side by side is very specific
- What about general concert programs for ages 13-18
- Align education programs with Maine learning Standards/Results
 - K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-diploma
- Connecting with other schools via marketing
 - What about those who don’t know and aren’t yet involved?
- Can the PSO send requisite groups out as necessary

- Growing the program internally
 - Geographical range of location – none-coastal
- Make sure all pertinent info gets to Argy Nestor at the Maine Alliance for Arts Education
- Any time the orchestra can be represented at an arts organization day (last year at the Samoset) it should be
- Visual presence in school hall bulletin boards
- Posters of orchestra up at school
- A student-friendly brochure
- Remind music educators to make the connection between student and musician by having musician sign program
- Have student talk about concert in class (extra credit)
- Podcasts – connecting with the 7th and 8th grade laptop initiative
- Collaboration with Portland Conservatory of Music

- The more the PSO can be presented in our communities the stronger the support for school music programs will be
- I want the PSIO to help recruit in September – can y’all come help me out
- Marketing - The Detroit Symphony has an oversize magazine style brochure that allows you to remove pages like posters
 - Their youth orchestra is also part of this.
 - I have a series of posters (that were free) that I have in my music room.
 - Too bad they advertise the DSO, not the PSO
- Dress rehearsal during the school day
- What about helping talented students get better instruments

- Offer musician visits to classrooms to talk / outreach

- Allison Ciechowski, Audrey Cabral, Gil Peltola, Ann Step – Teachers for a “day in the life”

- Need a press seat on the PSO board

- Pictures should always be accompanied by pictures of people holding/playing the instruments for scale/size
- Rehearsals that are open and done during the school days
- Education collaborate with Bangor
- Wellesley Composers Conference and Chamber Music
- School principals / School Principals Association
- Run-out to schools (performance and side by side)
- Outreach to fragile strings programs critical
- Audio available (maybe website) of upcoming concerts
- Remain tied to the Learning Results
- Grad student to fill role as a seasonal sub for the PSO
- Develop a 4th/5th grade KK program – Soloists (either “music minus one” or special arrangements plus ensemble)

- Schedule youth concerts at time when they are not cutting into very precious classroom time
 - In my school, classroom teachers are unwilling to let students go to PSO during the day
 - I'd like to try a 4:00pm concert
- How to overcome transportation issues
 - School busses are becoming cost prohibitive even for school field trips
- Podcasting/technology – school blogs with PSO's musicians mentoring
- Change “ghetto-ization” of strings programs by bringing PSO woodwind, brass, percussion to make possible orchestral repertory
 - right now, since 2005, I have been hiring USM faculty and advanced students to perform
- Get all music teacher and school administrators' e-mail addresses for timely info
- Transportation is a major issue for immigrant population
 - Parents holding down 3 jobs, kids serve as translators, not always available
- Tie in thematic programmatic; ie., USM did Monteverdi Orfeo in Nov. 07 and PPS High School orchestra and chorus doing Gluck “Orpheus and Eurydice” in May, 08
- Symphony perhaps write a grant to help pay the cost of private lessons
- Talk about existing programs and how the PSO could help
- Lending library
- I feel that I am a representative of the PSO in Portland's public schools – I have been reprimanded for this
- Consider having individual players speak to high school groups/classes about professional playing
- Use the Maine Music Educators e-mail list
- Invite local press to cover all in-school events
- Superintendents and school board chair persons might be able to help
- Encourage music educators to get involved
- The Maine School Management Association can help provide e-mail lists of these people
 - The Dept. of Education also has a list
- Mix ensembles – not just the 4 ensembles
- 3rd grade
- KinderKonzerts for middle school
- Interactive websites
 - For example DSO
 - Port Portal.com organizes websites for kids
- MMEA
 - Attend the conference
 - Workshop education outreach
- Open rehearsals
 - Monday is late

- How can you enhance the budget
- Future
 - Concerto competition- local solidarity
 - Composition competition
- “PSO Family” – Rob Lehmann will go in!
- Extend invitations to principals for this type of forum
- Increase knowledge of open rehearsals
 - Can PSO help organize attendance?
 - Can parents extend marketing and play a larger role?
 - Anything during the school day
- What can be done to encourage educational exchanges with Bangor Symphony Orchestra?
- Would like to see greater expansion of side by side to have more players go into orchestras, communities, ensembles, to help spread the word
- How can PSO help the stretched string teacher’s load
- Some kind of tie-in with recordings (either at libraries or music stores) of the coming season
- Music van – Heather ask me (John Poupore)
- Set up interactive child-friendly website
- Open rehearsals other times – Monday night too late
- Schools are cutting back on funds for field trips
- What to do to reach community?
- Maine Music Educators Association Annual Conference in May: workshop on PSO educational opportunities
- Local access TV
 - Film KinderKonzerts and put on access TV for a limited time, use it to advertise concerts
- We see students once a week – need teaching materials way ahead of time to prepare students
- All state D-II festivals
- Advertise open rehearsals more
- Master classes in schools
- Educational materials way ahead of time
- Mailings before school year
- Make the PSO educator day an annual event

Closing Comments

Ken Spirer offered the following Closing Comments:

- Ari said at the beginning of the Forum how important it is for us all to listen – we have had a lot to listen to!
- Wish we had scheduled a longer time for this Forum – there’s a sense that we could go on and on. There is still so much energy.
- There is a tremendous amount of energy and talent in this room.
- We have heard a lot today about “humanizing the music”
- Would you like to do this sort of thing again?
 - General agreement – yes!
- Thank you all for participating today. This has been very helpful.

Last details:

- Please turn in your feedback forms
- You can also e-mail comments to hklenow@portlandsymphony.com
- We will send you all a Summary Report of the Forum