

**The Iowa Model of Excellence**  
**Structuring a Statewide Mentoring Program**  
**The Midwest Clinic**  
**An International Band and Orchestra Conference**  
**9:45 AM Thursday, December 20, 2007**

The purpose of this presentation is to provide information on improving the quality of music education through mentoring assistance of first-year instrumental music teachers. One of the most important traits of mentor leadership is to create an environment in which quality can flourish and benefit our beginning teachers. Increased opportunities for success will benefit these teachers, the students in their classrooms, the local school district, and the state.

The Iowa Bandmasters Association and Music Mentors of Iowa successfully piloted a mentor project during the 2005-06 school year. The enthusiastic feedback from the first-year teachers confirmed the importance of the need for an “active mentor”, an “observation mentor”, attending conferences specifically designed for the first-year teacher, and for professional development. The establishment of an active communication network of professionals is a key element in the success of this mentoring program.

The Iowa Arts Educators Mentor Program is designed to enhance, not supplant the established local/district/state mentoring programs. The mentoring program is discipline-specific. The information that is made available to the first-year teacher through this program ranges from “survival” to “mastery” skills needed to be successful in the arts classroom. The information is tailored specifically to the individual teacher and teaching situation. This information can also be accessed immediately (through emails/phone calls) or after observation and reflection (mentor visits). It also provides for networking with other first-year and veteran teachers throughout the state.

One of the strengths of the model is the statewide scope of the project. The Iowa Alliance for Arts Education is uniquely positioned to manage this project. All of the participating arts organizations are members of the IAAE “umbrella.” The leadership of the Iowa Bandmasters Association and Music Mentors of Iowa participate in IAAE programs and has representatives on the IAAE Advisory Board. IAAE, collaborating with the Iowa Department of Education, has been a leader in the development of statewide arts programs in the areas of assessment, standards and benchmarks, integration, advocacy, and leadership development.

The mentoring project is a natural outgrowth of the IAAE mission statement, which is to “increase the support of policies, practices, and partnerships that ensure quality arts education for all Iowans.”

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Please feel free to contact us for further detailed information.

## **The Iowa Model of Excellence - A Statewide Arts Mentoring Program**

Iowa Alliance for Arts Education – Music Mentors of Iowa – Iowa Department of Education

### **Phase I –Mentorship Structure Development:**

- Identify mentor chair
- Create a process to identify teaching positions and first-year teachers at the district/state level
- Create a process for two-way communication between first-year teacher and active mentor for emergency/survival support and advocacy
- Identify teaching positions and first-year teachers at district/state level
- Identify active mentors
- Implement two-way communication between first-year teacher and mentor for emergency/survival support and advocacy

### **Phase 2 – Scholarships to attend professional organization conferences**

- Continued development of mentor structure and process of Phase 1, including articulation of Phase 1 as a basic mentorship component between beginning teacher and professional organization
- Conference registration scholarships specific to discipline for professional growth and networking
- First-year teachers attend conference
- Award scholarships

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### **Phase 3 - Participation in statewide symposium**

- Continued development of mentor structure and process of Phase 1 and Phase 2, including articulation of Phase 1 as a basic mentorship component between beginning teacher and professional organization
- Development of statewide symposium for first-year teachers, second/third-year teachers, retired teachers, and participating mentors.
  - Sample Symposium schedules from previous years
- Participation in statewide symposium for first-year teachers, second/third-year teachers, retired teachers, and participating mentors.
  - Video presentation of symposium participants

### **Phase 4 – Development and participation in observation mentor program using active/retired members**

- Continued development of mentor structure and process of Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3, including articulation of Phase 1 as a basic mentorship component between beginning teacher and professional organization
- Create process to identify first-year teachers and observational mentors who want to participate
- Implement Observational Mentor Program

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### Sample Mentoring Structure

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<b>Phase 1 - Mentorship Structure Development</b>			
1. Identify association mentor chair	x		
2. Create process to identify teaching positions and first-year teachers	x		
3. Create process for two-way communication between first-year teachers and active association mentor	x		
4. Identify teaching positions, first-year teachers, and possible active mentors state wide	x	x	x
5. Implement two-way process for first-year and active association mentor	x	x	x
<i>Phase 1 must be completed by October 1 to move to Phase 2 within the year</i>			
<b>Phase 2 - Conference Scholarships</b>	Target date - October		
1. Continued development of Phase 1 mentor structure and process		x	x
2. Notification to first-year teachers for conference scholarship	x	x	x
3. First-year teachers attend conference	x	x	x
4. Award scholarships	x	x	x
<i>Phase 2 must be completed before moving to Phase 3</i>			
<b>Phase 3 - Participation in Statewide Symposium</b>			
1. Continued development of Phase 1 and 2 mentor structure and process		x	x
2. Development of Symposium for specific association		x	
3. Participation in mentor symposium		x	x
<i>Phase 3 must be completed before moving to Phase 4</i>			
<b>Phase 4 - Observation Mentor Program (using retired or active members)</b>			
1. Continued development of Phase 1, 2 and 3 mentor structure and process			x
2. Create process for identifying observation mentors (similar to Phase 1)			x
3. Create two-way communication between first-year teacher and observation mentor			x
4. Implement observation mentor program			x

**The Iowa Model of Excellence**  
**Observation Mentor Program**  
**The Midwest Clinic**  
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**3:00 PM Thursday, December 20, 2007**

This presentation provides information on improving music education through mentoring of first-year teachers. It features discussion with project participants and highlights the observation mentor/mentee component within the Iowa Bandmasters Association mentor program. This session will discuss how a model program may be established and observe testimonials of mentor/mentee relationships.

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One of the strengths of the model is the observation mentor component. First-year teachers are paired with retired teacher mentors. The project supports up to four visits per school year for each mentor/mentee pair. The IBARD members operate strictly in a relaxed and non-threatening manner. IBARD members may observe rehearsals, direct rehearsals, listen to concerns, help with literature, classroom management, build up and offer suggestions for improvement to the new teachers. It is a special opportunity for retired teachers and beginners to combine efforts. It helps young teachers set a straight path for a lifetime of positive and dedicated teaching of the young musicians of Iowa!

### **The IBARD Connection**

The IBARD Organization (IOWA BANDMASTERS ASSOCIATION RETIRED DIRECTORS) was formed in the early 1990's by two Iowa Band Directors, Ralph Paarmann and Jerry Kinney. The IBARD group now boasts approximately 160 members. Dues for IBARD members are \$10.00 annually.

Members have the following opportunities each year:

1. Volunteer for several different options to works with High School Bands in Iowa such as Guest Direct on Concerts, critique Band Programs etc.
2. Play in the IBARD Band. Performs at the IBA Conference every other year. The Band numbers approximately 80 members.
3. Support the IBA in every possible way.
4. Have a visual and active presence at each Conference with a special badge identifying each of the members.
5. Participate in the Observation Mentor Program with first-year teachers.

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The Iowa Observation Mentor Program has provided young band directors opportunities that would have otherwise been unattainable or even unavailable. It stands as a catalyst for professional networking and information sharing. The nature of it allows for individual needs of young teachers to be matched with the expertise of specific content area masters of the trade from IBARD.

Comments from Mentees:

“This mentorship program was more helpful than my undergraduate studies at a University”

“...rubbing elbows with experience! It was good to be able to ask the questions!”

“I had no idea that there were so many experts available to help me become an outstanding teacher...it helped me raise my expectations and sharpen up my pedagogy!”

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