EXECUTIVE BOARD EXAMINES MEMBER SERVICES

At its November meeting in Reston, Virginia, the MENC National Executive Board (NEB) discussed several national reports on the quality of American schools. In response, the NEB will develop a position paper on recent reports about excellence in education. This will be published in MEJ and disseminated to legislators, administrators, school boards, and other education organizations. To gather information for the paper, an MENC representative attended the final national forum on excellence in education held in Indianapolis, December 6–8.

Among the other important results of the NEB meeting were the following actions concerning member services.

- The board gave the final go-ahead for implementation of the data research project and hiring of a staff member to direct this databank. (See story below.)
- As a new benefit to members, the board approved implementation of special prices for MENC publications. Books, brochures, and service items will cost nonmembers 25 percent more than member prices.
- MasterCard and Visa credit cards will be available to music educators through MENC. Members will receive a special mailing about discounts and other benefits offered through these cards in January.

DATA RESEARCH PROJECT BEGINS

Daniel V. Steinel joined the MENC headquarters staff in November as Information Resources Project Director. He will plan and administer the new data research project for MENC, gathering and organizing facts and figures on areas related to music education.

For the past ten years Steinel taught instrumental music in the De Soto, Kansas, schools. In addition to experience with several computer-oriented projects, his credentials include bachelor's and master's degrees in music education from the University of Kansas in Lawrence.

PERFORMING ARTS SCHOOLS ORGANIZE NETWORK

The organizational meeting of the Network of Performing and Visual Arts Schools was held October 20–22, 1983, at New Haven, Connecticut. Representatives of over forty specialized schools for the arts serving students of high school age and younger attended.

According to Maurice Eldridge, secretary-treasurer of the network and principal of Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, D.C., the primary purpose of the organization will be to serve as a linking system among the schools. It will provide means for them to discuss common problems, develop funding, exchange faculty and students, develop standards, work with accrediting organizations, advocate the arts, and disseminate research.

Work on the network began three years ago, when a Los Angeles school district invited representatives of a dozen arts-related schools to meet. “We discovered how much we had in common and how much it helped to share,” said Eldridge. They met the following year at Interlochen, then at Houston, and last year wrote articles of incorporation at a meeting in Atlanta.

“The spirit is so incredible. It’s rare to see educational administrators get together and accomplish so much so quickly. It’s rare to see them so willing to share, to give, and not hold back. There was a kind of shock of recognition.... We have visions of the same kinds of things that will benefit our kids and schools.”

Although focusing on specialized arts schools, it is hoped the network will have a more widespread impact. “We have the potential to benefit all schools. We share the conviction that the arts are not a fringe subject.”

Priorities during the first year will be developing a newsletter and a membership list. The network’s second meeting will be held next fall at the North Carolina School for the Arts in Winston-Salem.

Membership dues are $150 for schools and $25 for individuals. For more information, contact Eldridge at Duke Ellington School of the Arts, 35th and R Streets NW, Washington, D.C. 20007.
EDUCATIONAL LEADERS RECOMMEND THAT ARTS REMAIN PROMINENT IN THE CURRICULUM

Leaders of eleven education organizations—representing teachers, school boards, principals, administrators, and parents—penned a powerful response to several national reports on excellence in the schools. Released last October, the group’s report supported most of the ideas of these national groups, but voiced concern for potential overreaction to education’s problems.

This Forum of Educational Organization Leaders recommended that state and local education agencies consider enacting higher base pay for all teachers; establishing a career ladder with roles for beginning, experienced, and master teachers; attracting to teaching and retaining top college graduates through recruitment efforts and additional benefits; guaranteeing safe, orderly schools; and providing salary incentives to keep teachers in the field.

The group suggested high school graduation requirements of four years of English and two years each of mathematics, history and social studies, and science. All students, the report stated, should have the opportunity to learn a foreign language. Although specific recommendations for the arts were not made, the forum agreed that, “It is crucial that the fine arts and humanities remain prominent in the curriculum.” For college-bound students it recommended four years of English, three years of science, three years of mathematics, and two years of foreign language, with early training in computer technology.

The forum stressed that officials should concentrate on quality of time spent in school before lengthening instruction time. Students should be given a choice to study one or two months more per year, and according to Chairman Harold Hodgkinson, “Extra time spent on education should... offer a variety of programs beyond the basics such as a choice among schools offering certain foreign languages, computer instruction or extra work in the arts.” Included in recommendations was assignment of one hour of homework per day for elementary school students and two or more hours of homework in high school.

The Forum of Educational Organization Leaders, which wrote the response, is composed of representatives of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, American Association of School Administrators, American Federation of Teachers, Council of Chief State School Officers, Education Commission of the States, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Association of State Boards of Education, National Congress of Parents and Teachers, National Education Association, and National School Boards Association. For further information or copies of the report, contact Harold Hodgkinson, Institute for Educational Leadership, 1001 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 310, Washington, D.C. 20036.

ENDOWMENT GETS FUNDING INCREASE

The National Endowment for the Arts fared well when Congress approved the Fiscal Year 1984 Interior Appropriations bill last October, receiving $162 million, a jump of nearly $20 million over the previous year. The Reagan administration had proposed spending $125 million, but the president was expected to sign the bill. The National Endowment for the Humanities received $140 million, $10 million more than its 1983 appropriation.

HANDBOOK BEING DEVELOPED FOR DIVISION PRESIDENTS

Five MENC members have set about to develop a handbook on the role and responsibility of MENC’s six division presidents. Chairwoman Marianne Holland, of Columbia, South Carolina, will head the committee made up of Robert Zimmerman, Waynesboro, Pennsylvania; Robert Klotman, Bloomington, Indiana; Bert Burda, Boise, Idaho; and Winston Christian, Santa Fe, New Mexico.
### SOUTHERN BAND DIRECTORS MEET THIS MONTH

The Southern Divisions of the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA) and the National Band Association (NBA) plan a joint meeting January 25–28, at the Hilton Inn Florida Center in Orlando. In addition to college and high school band performances, the conference will feature a special session by Karel Husa and a backstage Disneyworld tour. For information, contact Joseph R. Scagnoli, Secretary-Treasurer, Southern Division CBDNA, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, North Carolina 28723.

### LOOKING FOR A GENERAL MUSIC CLINICIAN?

The Society for General Music (SGM) has compiled a state-by-state listing of available clinicians. This resource has been mailed to all SGM state and national representatives and to the MENC National Executive Board. For information, contact your state SGM representative or MENC.

### “THE HILLS” ARE ALIVE DURING MIOSW

West Virginia is planning its seventh annual Showcase of Music Education to celebrate Music In Our Schools Week (MIOSW), March 5–11. As in past years, the West Virginia Music Educators Association will work with the Department of Education to bring more than twenty-five performing groups, involving hundreds of students, to the Capitol Complex Conference Center Foyer. The groups will perform March 6–8, drawing attention to school music during the busy legislative session.

Olga S. Hardman, West Virginia MIOSW chairperson, also is coordinating a unique MIOSW observance in Harrison County, where she is music resource specialist for the board of education. She has reserved a renovated “grand Southern mansion” and its Steinway grand piano during each day of the week for performing groups from various local schools.

### LAST CHANCE TO ORDER MATERIALS

Promotional items for Music In Our Schools Week must be received by January 16. For order forms, see page 11 of this issue. Buttons, banners, posters, stickers, and other materials sport the logo and theme for this national recognition week, March 5–11, “Music Is A Sharing Experience.”

### DEFINING ESSENTIALS

MENC President Russell P. Getz has appointed a four-person Ad Hoc Committee on Essentials of Music Education. Chaired by Harry Mamlin, Indianapolis, Indiana, the committee consists of Susan Vaughan-Kamla, St. Paul, Minnesota; Charles Hoffer, Bloomington, Indiana; and Jackie Boswell, Tempe, Arizona.

### BASIC RECIPE FOR EXCELLENCE

Excellence calls for several basic ingredients, commented MENC Executive Director John J. Mahlmann in the September 21 issue of School Board News, and music is among them. Deprived of music, he said, schools “could end up as flat as dough without the necessary yeast. It might still provide sustenance, even some nutrition, but it will be far short of what is possible. Education must provide more than the basics needed to exist. It must provide the basics needed to enjoy living and learning.” For a copy of this guest column, write to National School Boards Association, 1055 Thomas Jefferson Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20007.

### MENC ELECTION PROCESS BEGINS

Ballots for the MENC elections for national president-elect will be mailed to all MENC members during the week of January 9. In addition, MENC North Central, Southern, and Western Division members will receive ballots to vote for division presidents-elect. Ballots must be received at MENC headquarters before March 2 for votes to be counted. Biographies of candidates appear in the December 1983 MEJ.
DIVISIONS PLAN 1985

Three MENC divisions that will convene in 1985 have set up planning meetings this spring. Organizers for the Eastern Division conference will meet February 24–25 in Hartford, Connecticut; Southern Division planners will meet April 27–28 in Atlanta; and the Northwest Division will hold its planning meeting May 25–26 in Spokane, Washington. For information about the 1985 division conferences or the 1984 MENC National In-Service Conference in Chicago, contact Gene Morlan, MENC Director of Professional Programs, 1902 Association Drive, Reston, Virginia 22091.

The Northwest Division special project, which will be a leadership meeting, will be held in conjunction with the planning meeting, May 24–25.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE RATES STUDENT ESSAYS

Division chairpersons for the MENC Student Membership Committee have selected an essay by a student member from each state, forwarding these to National Student Member Chairwoman Harriet I. Hair. This month judges will screen these semifinalists, and the winning essay and three runners-up will be announced. The four essays will be published in MEJ.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND THE ARTS

The Spring 1984 issue of the Journal of Arts Management and Law, published by Heldref Publications, will be devoted to "Information Systems and the Arts." This follows another special edition of the journal, published in Spring 1983, on "The Arts and Public Policy." For information, write to Heldref Publications, 4000 Albemarle Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20016.

INVITATIONS OUT TO ISME PERFORMING GROUPS

The International Society for Music Education (ISME) has invited thirty-three performing groups to appear during its July 8–14 conference in Eugene, Oregon. Each group will perform twice during the conference. On October 28, American groups on tape were screened at headquarters and twenty-two tapes were sent to Morrette Rider, chairman of the conference, who then invited ten groups to perform. American groups include the following: Rainbow Singers, Chinle, Arizona; Portland State University Chamber Choir, Oregon; Male Ensemble Northwest, Longview, Washington; Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphony, Minneapolis; North Texas State University Symphonic Wind Ensemble, Denton; Kenwood Academy Mixed Choir, Chicago; Dennis Crabb Recorder Consort, Long Beach, Washington; Montana Consort, Bozeman; Bay Bell Ensemble, San Francisco; and the University of Oregon Percussion Ensemble, Eugene.

Invited foreign groups include the following: Children's Choir of the Bulgarian Radio and Television, Sofia, Bulgaria; Cumann Na gCór, Cork, Ireland; Gruppo Vocalle da Camera, Trento, Italy; Johoku Glee Club, Tokyo, Japan; Kinder Choir Grossvorderberg, Tirol, Austria; Kumamoto Children's Choir, Tokyo, Japan; Landesjugendchor, West Germany; Luzerner Singers, Zurich, Switzerland; State Academy of Music Chamber Choir, Stockholm, Sweden; Hillsborough School Choir, Hillsborough, New Brunswick, Canada; Polytech Choir of Finland, Espoo, Finland; Nottinghamshire Country Orchestra, Nottinghamshire, England; CEDAR Orchestra, Republic du Zaire; Hungarian Section, Budapest, Hungary; Singing Strings, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada; Polytechnic Brass Band of Huddersfield, Huddersfield, England; Trondheim Youth Choir, Trondheim, Norway; Surrey Delta Youth Choir, Delta, British Columbia, Canada; String Orchestra and Madrigal Choir, Adelaide, Australia; Patchway Primary School Handbells, Patchway, England; Trondheim String Quartet, Trondheim, Norway; Quartet Jerome Simon, France; and Japanese Choir and Brass Band, Japan.