

Candidate for Region IV Representative: Laura Petersen



Biography:

Laura Petersen teaches elementary music in Washington, D.C. She holds Level III and IV certifications in Orff-Schulwerk from George Mason University and studied at the Orff Institut in Salzburg, Austria. Laura teaches movement in AOSA-approved teacher education courses and presents locally and nationally. She serves as Past-President of the Middle Atlantic Chapter.

CANDIDATE FORUM

1. What do you see as the role of Orff Schulwerk in music education today?

Being a hands-on, experiential, playful, creative approach enables the Orff Schulwerk process to fit seamlessly with the many trends in education. Those whom we are teaching, and those for whom we are working, yearn for an environment in which these things take place. Orff Schulwerk covers all the bases and even goes beyond expectations for teaching to the whole child. Part of the magic of the Schulwerk is its ability to adapt and work for many different teaching situations and styles. In an Orff Schulwerk classroom, students learn to think creatively while developing their artistry and musicianship skills. As Liz Gilpatrick said in an article for the Summer 2009 Orff Echo, "We move students past the imitation and replication stage and into the realm of exploring and creating." The result of this Orff process is students who are able to express themselves with a high level of artistry through doing work that is student-centered and not always teacher-driven. How wonderful and exciting to have a classroom where students are not only meeting the core standards but are learning to think critically, creating original ideas for movement and music, and developing their artistry as musicians.

2. What are your leadership strengths, and how do you think they would contribute to the work of AOSA and promoting Orff Schulwerk?

From the first day of my Level I training, I was completely engrossed in this world of Orff Schulwerk and jumped in with both feet. Since that moment ten years ago, I have been an avid learner, completing my levels, traveling to the Orff Institut in Salzburg, attending local workshops and National Conferences, serving on the board of my local chapter, giving workshops, and teaching movement in levels courses. These experiences have opened my eyes to seeing the many ways in which the Schulwerk can be successfully implemented. Serving as Vice-President, President, and now Past-President of my local board has enabled me to showcase my organization skills as well as be a friendly, encouraging leader. As a leader, I think it's also important to learn from those around you, especially those with different opinions and perspectives. My passion for the Schulwerk is strong, and I hope to be able to translate that passion to serving on the National Board.

3. What is the role of the National Board of Trustees as it relates to the general membership and how would you fulfill this role?

The role of the Board is to promote and encourage dialogue, provide support, and to help AOSA reach and grow to its full potential. By doing so, the National Board helps to provide a community for its membership in which Orff Schulwerk teachers can unite and make connections both personally and professionally. In order to help fulfill this role, I will maintain an active membership in my local chapter and help communicate ideas between the National Board and the local chapters.

4. What is your vision for AOSA and Orff Schulwerk in the future?

My vision for AOSA is for it to continue serving as a network for Orff Schulwerk teachers by offering support, resources, ideas, and communication about ongoing changes. The current Board has created an exciting energy around the future of our organization especially with the new website and the digitization of the AOSA Lending Library. I hope this energy and momentum continues to build and grow.

My vision for Orff Schulwerk is for it to continue to foster the idea of play within the music classroom and beyond, to offer opportunities for growth, and to connect the past with the present and future.