

Candidate for AOSA National Board of Trustees Region I:
Dan Gullick



BIOGRAPHY

Dan Gullick teaches elementary music, choir, Orff ensemble, and is K-5 music curriculum leader in Woodbury, Minnesota. He holds degrees in music education from Luther College (BA) and the University of St. Thomas (MA). Dan is past president of Minnesota Orff, an AOSA digital mentor, and an AOSA teacher educator.

CANDIDATE FORUM

1. What do you see as the role of Orff Schulwerk?

Orff Schulwerk is a dynamic and impactful form of music education that is essential to the 21st century learner. The Orff approach supports students musical growth through clear and creative processes that reinforce learning through imitation, exploration, and improvisation. Through this process students are led through a personalized music experience that focuses on student growth. Orff students engage in a model that promotes lifelong learning. First, students imitate concepts through teacher directed activities, then they explore the concept with a teacher guide, finally they improvise and create their own artistic work. Orff education is a lifelong learning model, supporting students musical growth and their overall learning. An Orff education gives students musical and movement tools, and also encourages personal and social-emotional growth through connections with others through music and critical thinking. Not only does this approach engage students in musical learning and understanding, but it furthers their growth as humans in the 21st century learning environment.

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

I am a detail-oriented leader who never loses sight of the fact that my decisions, and those of the people with whom I serve, may have an impact on others well into the future. In my work as a grade-level dean and in the various positions I have held on my local chapter's board, I have aimed to work from a systems perspective. Within the Orff Schulwerk world, I have sought to grow my teaching by working to implement DEI initiatives, attending supplementals in various courses, presenting workshops for other chapters, and, most recently, serving as a teacher educator in levels courses. All of these experiences have deepened my appreciation for the breadth and beauty of the Schulwerk. They have furthered my belief that we need to do everything in our power to ensure that all children have access to an OS based program. I believe my experience leading teams of people both at school and at the chapter level would be an asset to the AOSA board.

3. AOSA is committed to diversity and equity. What experiences and/or skills do you possess to strengthen our organization as we move forward?

Founded ten years before Brown v. Board of Education, my current school was established so that children of various races, ethnicities, and religions could study together side by side within the context of a deeply segregated city. From its inception, the school's mission has always been oriented toward the promotion of social justice, and I continue to benefit from this unity of purpose amidst a sea of diverse perspectives. As a white, gay, cis-man, I am called to interrogate my own identity both inside and outside the classroom. I have a responsibility to ensure that there are windows and mirrors for my students, and that all aspects of their identities are celebrated within the music room. My training at the Diversity Leadership Institute calls me to continuously evolve as a teacher and person and has helped me to gain tools to unpack this work. As a leader, I aim to share my own story with vulnerability, while always keeping my ears open to the stories of others. I am so pleased with AOSA's meaningful calls to action and am excited by the prospect of serving at this time.

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

I am excited by the many possibilities this unique moment holds for AOSA. As a member, I have benefited immensely from efforts to modernize our digital footprint and institute systems that better support our membership. I am energized by the actions the board and professional leadership team have taken to promote greater diversity, equity, and inclusion within our organization, and would be honored to help further these efforts. As an emerging teacher educator, I am eager to explore and expand the ways in which AOSA supports teachers around the country, particularly during this moment.