

Candidate for AOSA Treasurer: Sarah Fairfield



BIOGRAPHY

Sarah actively supports the American Orff-Schulwerk Association through servant-leadership. Currently, she serves on the PL3 sub-committee. She was a National Conference Chair for the 2018 Professional Development Conference in Cincinnati. Sarah also served the National Board of Trustees from 2010-2013, and as President/President Elect of her local chapter from 2005-2009.

CANDIDATE FORUM

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

An Orff-Schulwerk classroom is a place of musical experimentation and expression, community and culture building, creative thinking, movement and of course, joy! I see the role of Orff-Schulwerk as integral to a child's development as we prepare children for an increasingly complex and demanding world. Orff-Schulwerk offers a necessary balance to a child's education by providing experiences in those aspects of human life that are most important: the ability to innovate, work effectively with others, and express one's own ideas in a productive and artistic manner.

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 organized, dependable, and able to carry out tasks in a timely manner, with a focus on quality. I value the ability to collaborate with others and see the benefits of sharing opposing ideas, but always in a positive and professional manner. Perhaps my greatest strength as a leader is the ability to listen intently to others and see multiple sides of a complex issue.

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

A focus on diversity and equity is more important than ever in the 21st century. Many leaders in the educational system have shed light on the systematic racism that exists in our schools and our country. As a result, I have been examining my own implicit bias, and how it may unintentionally impact students and families of color in my own school, community, and classroom. Currently, I am leading a weekly discussion group in my school district regarding Social Justice in music education. I did not bring a lot of expertise to this group, but instead, I made it clear that I wanted to learn alongside my colleagues. Through this group, we have been exploring restorative justice, issues regarding decolonization, implicit bias and culturally relevant teaching. This group is collaborating with educators across the globe to expand our thinking about bringing social justice into the classroom. I believe my learning from this group would directly align with AOSA's goals of strengthening our diversity and providing more equity for members and the children they serve across our country. I bring the strengths of empathy, a willingness to accept my own biases, and a desire to make change.

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

My goal for AOSA is to become an advocate for the importance of children's access to high quality music and movement education in America. I hope to see AOSA provide increased resources for teachers to address the changing needs of 21st century classrooms, which are more culturally diverse and more dependent on technology, all while maintaining a strong philosophy about the Schulwerk based in its roots. I see AOSA as a responsive organization, and I hope to help keep it on a path towards quality professional development, meeting the needs of the membership, and sharing the philosophy of the Schulwerk with other educators and administrators.