

# Addressing Holistic Student Needs: Strategies for Success in the Music Classroom

By Dr. Andrew Richardson

**T**his panel discussion, organized by the PAS Education Committee, will explore practical approaches to addressing the current needs of percussion students in the classroom and private studio environments. Educators at all levels are increasingly tasked with supporting students who face socio-economic challenges, physical and mental health concerns, and other unique circumstances, all while fostering musical growth and performance excellence. This session is designed specifically for music educators, with insights tailored to percussionists and the unique dynamics of percussion pedagogy. Panelists will share real-world strategies

- Supporting the physical and mental health needs of student musicians to optimize learning and performance.
- Effective teaching methods for all learners.
- Creative strategies to foster collaboration, community, and a sense of belonging within percussion ensembles.

The committee has curated a series of questions for each specific area. Examples include: How do your retention strategies for student involvement differ based on the socio-economic needs of the students? How do you work around unique issues such as outside work or childcare needs? What are some cre-

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for building inclusive, supportive, and equitable music classrooms representing several areas of music education such as middle/high school, university percussion, private teaching, student wellness.

Dr. Andrew Richardson will moderate the discussion. Panelists will include: Diane Downs, Founder, Executive and Artistic Director of The Louisville Leopard Percussionists; Kim Brower, Social Emotional Arts Therapist and Owner of Pulse Drumming; Dr. Brad Meyer, Associate Professor of Percussion at Stephen F. Austin State University; Riley Warren, Director of Percussion at Forney High School.

Topics will include:

- Addressing socio-economic barriers to music education, including access to instruments and resources.

ative ways to develop belonging in ensembles? What does music, or percussion specifically, offer as a program in comparison to other options, such as sports, scouts, and other extra-curricular activities?

Many educators have felt a growing need to address student health and well-being. Students are pulled in many directions during their school years and may face pressures — placed on themselves or from other people — of enrolling in many AP/honors courses, achieving success in other extra-curricular activities in addition to music, as well as an ever-distracting online and social media landscape. We hope to present actionable ideas about how to help students progress both musically and personally. In this way, teachers can help students have more control of their education and development. We hope to ex-

plore ways that educators can balance pushing students to be their best, explore new areas of music, and be active members of the ensemble/studio, while also recognizing when fear of trying something new may be a symptom of other anxieties, pressures, or other holistic wellness concerns.

Attendees will leave with actionable ideas for creating positive, student-centered learning environments. Whether you're an educator, administrator, or policymaker, this panel will inspire new approaches to empowering student musicians to thrive both in and out of the classroom.

**Dr. Andrew Richardson** is Assistant Professor of Percussion at Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tenn. His students have gone on to successful careers as percussion specialists, band and orchestra directors, professional performers, and university faculty. Andrew is published by Tapspace Publications, Marimba Publications, Inc., Boxfish Music, and in *Percussive Notes*. He serves on the PAS Education Committee, is a member of the Black Swamp Percussion Educator Network, and is a past-president of the Oklahoma PAS Chapter. [PN](#)

## DRUMSET

**Dave Weckl**

**Drumset Clinic**

For over 40 years, Dave Weckl has developed and maintained a reputation among fans, peers, and the international music community as one of the great living drummers. His contributions to iconic music, music education, and the gear that drummers use are many. *Modern Drummer* magazine inducted Weckl into their Hall of Fame (2000) and named him "one of the 25 best drummers of all time." These honors, in addition to many more bestowed by the music community, are the product of Weckl's commitment to excellence. His dynamic and diverse drumming, which has inspired musicians worldwide, is built on a foundation of knowledge and passion.

Peter Erskine recommended Weckl for his first "big gig" with the group French Toast, which featured electric bass player Anthony Jackson. Jackson then recommended Weckl for the 1983 Simon and Garfunkel reunion tour. This led to many session opportunities, including radio and TV jingles, soundtrack sessions, and top recording dates with George Benson, Peabo Bryson, Diana Ross, Robert Plant, and many more. In 1985, Weckl began performing with Chick Corea's Elektric Band. In 1990, his solo career began with the release of *Master Plan*, followed by nine other solo/leader recordings to date. In 1998, Weckl formed The Dave Weckl Band, which released five studio records. Instructional videos have played a big role in Weckl's career, and recently he returned to touring with the Elektric Band, Mike Stern, and Oz Noy, while completing sessions in his home studio.

## DRUMSET

**Marc Dicciani and Nick Costa**

**Drumset Clinic / Performance**

**Practice Makes Permanent: Teaching and Learning Through Focus**

Drumming skills are developed in many ways, but sometimes we choose strategies that aren't the most effective. Breakthroughs in neuroscience have improved our understanding of brain and nervous systems function and motor skill acquisition, and applying these principles help us develop our abilities quicker. Effective practice involves the what and the how, and this session will present advanced protocols to improve our drumming. Topics include purposeful practice and play; differential learning; habit/skill; the context principle; using drum books creatively; building your practice grid; comfort/learning zone; the 4 F's; teaching K-12 educators and their students; innovation/tradition; motoric variability; genetic entrainment; E-kits and VR; our bilateral motor system (handedness); repetitions, error correction, and neural plasticity; 1% marginal gains rule; placebo and mindset.

Nick Costa is an independent drummer, clinician, and drum technician with national and international touring experience. Nick has focused on providing ways to integrate drumset studies into K-12 Music curriculum to bridge the gap between general and instrumental music studies, and he is an active session musician engineering and recording drum tracks remotely from his studio.

**JP Bouvet**

**Drumset Clinic**

**How to Teach Improvisation on the Drums**

After having specialized for years in teaching improvisation to thousands of students at my online drum school, JPBouvetMethod.com, in this clinic I'll break down (a) my approach to learning and teaching improvisation, (b) the underlying psychology that makes it possible, and (c) specific approaches for teaching and learning improvisation.

JP Bouvet is a drummer and teacher, and runs the educational website JPBouvetMethod.com, where he specializes in creating courses that teach improvisation with step-by-step methods. He is the author of *On Drumming: The Psychology and Philosophy of Improvisation*, and creator of the rhythmic training app RhythmBot. He has toured with such artists as Steve Vai, Zakk Wylde, Periphery, and more. He also runs his own band, Childish Japes.