I'm extremely excited that our winter conference has finally arrived. As a college student, it is without a doubt my favorite way to enjoy the remaining weeks of the fall semester. I know that a lot of us are stressed as we move closer to the end of the semester, so why not consider attending the winter conference as a way to set all of our other obligations aside for a few days and use the conference time as a perfect “reset” button?

This I say to you as I begin to practice for my Jury and hand in my final assignments. Also, consider this: all of the music teachers and other collegiate members who attend have as long a to-do list as the rest of us. That said, there are few opportunities during the year to engage with my present and future colleagues and learn outside of a classroom about music education for a change.

You can register and pay online to attend the conference. Go to www.nyssma.org, locate and click the winter conference link. Though both online and on-site registration is $40.00, online registration before the conference allows the Collegiate Board to plan more effectively for the business meeting (free dinner).

Our meeting will take place on Friday, December 6 at 6 p.m. in the CC Riverside Court. There will be informed about collegiate activities throughout the state, as well as upcoming opportunities to attend events in Pittsburgh, Albany, NY, and Washington, DC! Plus, we all get to have dinner together at no extra cost!

This year we have a range of sessions designed to meet the needs of all collegiate members. If you're an underclassman, you might check out our session about the NYS Standards or “Meet the State E-Board” to learn about what we can do for you! If you're on the tail end of your journey with graduation on the horizon, you should check out our sessions on public relations, our annual student teaching panel and, of course, “Mock Interviews with Music Supervisors,” coordinated by Dr. Jennifer Miceli of Long Island University. This is our second year hosting the student teaching panel, and I promise that it will be insightful and calming for those who may be panicking about student teaching in the spring. Either way, take a look at the full slate of sessions below so you can plan them into your conference schedule!

**Collegiate Sessions**

- **Collegiate Business Meeting and Dinner**
  - **Friday, December 6, 6:00 p.m.**
  - Session: Collegiate Business Meeting and Dinner
  - Location: CC Riverside Court
  - Presenter: Derek Schmelter
  - **NOTE: If you would like to participate, email Amanda Petrella-Christ. She is coordinating the panel this year: apetrella9@mail.naz.edu**

- **Collegiate Business**
  - **Friday, December 6, 6:00 p.m.**
  - Session: Collegiate Business Meeting and Dinner
  - Location: CC Riverside Court
  - Presenter: Dr. John Gallagher

- **Meet Your State E-board**
  - **Friday, December 6, 1:15 p.m.**
  - Session: Meet Your State E-board
  - Location: CC Riverside Court
  - Presenter: Lori Orestano-James
  - **NOTE: If you would like to participate, email Amanda Petrella-Christ. She is coordinating the panel this year: apetrella9@mail.naz.edu**

- **College to Know about the NYS Standards**
  - **Friday, December 6, 8:15 a.m.**
  - Session: What Collegiate Students Need to Know about the NYS Standards
  - Location: CC Riverside Court
  - Presenter: Fred Weingarten

- **Managing Public Relations (PR) for Future Music Teachers**
  - **Friday, December 6, 10:45 a.m.**
  - Session: Managing Public Relations (PR) for Future Music Teachers: Here’s What You Need to Know
  - Location: CC Riverside Court
  - Presenter: Dr. Jennifer Miceli

- **Mock Interviews with Music Supervisors**
  - **Friday, December 6, 9:30 a.m.**
  - Session: Mock Interviews with Music Supervisors
  - Location: CC Riverside Court
  - Presenter: Dr. Jennifer Miceli and Lori Orestano-James
  - **NOTE: If you would like to participate, email Michael Anzalone (LIU). He is assisting Dr. Miceli with registering students for the mock interviews: michael.anzalone2@my.liu.edu**

- **Student Teaching Panel**
  - **Saturday, December 7, 9:30 a.m.**
  - Session: Student Teaching Panel
  - Location: CC Riverside Court
  - Presenter: Tom Gellert

- **Practice Strategies Using Technology**
  - **Friday, December 6, 2:30 p.m.**
  - Session: Practice Strategies Using Technology
  - Location: CC Riverside Court
  - Presenter: Dr. Jennifer Miceli

- **Mock Interviews with Music Supervisors**
  - **Friday, December 6, 3:30 p.m.**
  - Session: Mock Interviews with Music Supervisors
  - Location: CC Riverside Court
  - Presenter: Dr. Jennifer Miceli

- **Music Teacher’s Soul**
  - **Friday, December 6, 7:00 p.m.**
  - Session: Music Teacher’s Soul
  - Location: CC Riverside Court
  - Presenter: Fred Weingarten

- **Collegiate Business**
  - **Friday, December 6, 6:00 p.m.**
  - Session: Collegiate Business Meeting and Dinner
  - Location: CC Riverside Court
  - Presenter: Derek Schmelter
  - **NOTE: If you would like to participate, email Amanda Petrella-Christ. She is coordinating the panel this year: apetrella9@mail.naz.edu**

Outside of the collegiate sessions, I'd like to point out some interesting sessions available throughout the conference. Here are my President’s Picks:

- **Purposeful Practice Strategies Using Technology**
  - **Friday 2:30 p.m.: Uke for the Music Teacher’s Soul**
  - **Friday 7:00 p.m.: Redefining “Mistakes” in Ensemble Rehearsal**

**In closing**

After the conference, we are all finishing up our coursework for the semester and looking forward to our winter break. For me, this is a time for rest and relaxation, as well as an opportunity to reunite with friends and family.

I’d like to wish a happy holiday season and a happy and healthy New Year to all our members across the state. Here’s hoping we get just enough snow to appreciate it, and not enough that we get stuck in the house. | |

All the Best,
Derek Schmelter