

LANDING YOUR FIRST JOB IN MUSIC EDUCATION



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2018 Illinois Music Education Conference
Saturday, January 27, 2018 | Peoria, Illinois
9:45am – 10:45am
CC 401

Session Overview:

Searching for a PK-12 teaching job can be a stressful and time-consuming process for music educators entering the profession. This session will share strategies and information that will help new teachers secure their first position. The presenter will discuss the varied characteristics of music jobs in public and private schools, provide sample resumes and cover letters, and share state and national web sites for finding PK-12 music positions. Participants will hear about interview preparation, have an opportunity to respond to common items administrators ask during brief mock interviews, and consider employers' intent when asking certain questions. Other topics will include considerations for faith-based schools, criteria for evaluating a position, the hiring process, and dos don'ts related to accepting, declining, or being rejected for a teaching job.

Clinician Biography:

Phillip M. Hash is Associate Professor and Coordinator of Music Education at Illinois State University in Normal. He holds an Ed.D. in music education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, a M.M in wind conducting from Northwestern University, and a B.M. in music education from Millikin University.

Dr. Hash is an active scholar with articles published in leading journals including the *Journal of Research in Music Education*, the *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education*, the *Journal of Band Research*, and *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*. Conference presentations include research topics, as well as sessions on instrumental music education, mentoring student teachers, and music teacher evaluation. Dr. Hash currently serves on the editorial committees of the *Journal of Research in Music Education*, the *Journal of Music Therapy*, and the *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education*. He also is chair-elect for the Historical Special Research Interest Group (SRIG) of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME).

Dr. Hash taught instrumental music in the Chicago area from 1989-2004. From 2004-2017, he served as associate professor and coordinator of music education at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Dr. Hash has received the Citation of Excellence from the National Band Association on two occasions as well as the Outstanding Chicagoland Music Educator Award. Bands under his direction have performed at the University of Illinois Superstate Concert Band Festival and the Illinois Music Education Conference. Dr. Hash regularly serves as a clinician and adjudicator, and publishes arrangements for bands, string orchestras, and small ensembles through Grand Mesa Music, Daehn Publications, and BRS Music.

XXXX Elliot St. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49507

February 27, 2012

Name
School District
Address
City, State, Zip code

Dear _____,

Please consider the attached resume for the position of _____ at _____ that is advertised on the school district's website. With the education I have received from Calvin College and various experiences with children, I am prepared to succeed in this position.

This May, I will be graduating from Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where I have gained valuable experience in music education from my coursework and placements in urban and suburban schools. During student teaching, I was able to interact with students in a high-risk middle school, which provided me with the tools needed to differentiate instruction for students with various needs. I also gained experience with implementing classroom management strategies to maintain a positive learning environment.

During high school and college, I have had the opportunity to tour around the world and will be traveling to South Africa in May with the Women's Chorale. These experiences have opened my mind to many different cultures and people that make up the world we live in. I hope to be able to share these experiences with my students as well as help them develop an appreciation for people and cultures that are different from their own.

Teaching includes more than just the lessons we impart to our students each day. There are also small details within the classroom and school building that educators must address in order for the system to run smoothly. Through working in the Calvin Music Department as Music Events Intern, I was able to gain experience in program planning and other administrative tasks that are necessary for staff, teachers, and students to have the best experience with the school music program.

As an organized and capable educator, I am confident that I would be an asset to the students at _____. Please feel free to contact me at (603)-XXX-XXX or (email) _____. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Heather A. Loock
XXXX [street].
Cincinnati, Ohio 45244
Telephone: (513)-479-XXXX
Email: loock.heather@XXXX.com

Name and title of person to receive the letter
Company/School
Address
City, State, Zip Code

February 14, 2011

Dear _____,

I have learned through the placement offices at Calvin College that a [music position] is currently open in at [location]. I believe that my education and experiences at Calvin College have prepared me to succeed in this position. Please accept the attached resume which discusses my qualifications.

I will be graduating from Calvin College in May with a Bachelor of Music Education degree with a general/instrumental emphasis. I recently completed student teaching at Ada Christian School in Grand Rapids, Michigan where I assisted in all aspects of the general music and band programs. I have also worked with young people as a student aide at Meadow Brook Elementary School in Grand Rapids and a volunteer with the Young Life program in Ada. Furthermore, my semester abroad in Honduras has helped me gain an international perspective that I hope to utilize in the classroom.

As a knowledgeable, enthusiastic music educator, I am confident that I would be an asset to the music program at/in _____ school/school district. I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss my application with you in person and hope you will contact me soon to arrange a visit.

Thank you for your consideration of my qualifications.

Sincerely,

[Handwritten Signature]

Heather Loock

MELANIE L. DORN

xxxx [street] SE – Grand Rapids, MI 49506 – mld28@students.calvin.edu

Cell: (219) 776-XXXX

February 28, 2010

Mr. John Smith
Director of Personnel
Honolulu School District
Honolulu, HI 96801

Dear Mr. Smith:

I recently learned that there is an opening for a choral music teacher at Honolulu High School. Please accept my application materials for this position. With my major in Vocal Music Education, desire to help students succeed, and well-developed interpersonal skills, this job seems to fit well with my education, experience, and career interests.

In addition to receiving a degree in Vocal Music Education this past December from Calvin College, I have also conducted and taught musicians of all ages, from young elementary children in general music class to high school chamber singers to adult worship band members. My truest passion, however, is helping high school students develop the skills and knowledge needed to lead lives that include music making and enjoyment.

I am able to create a positive, efficient classroom environment that allows students to participate fully in the educational process. Furthermore, my time management skills will be a vital asset to your choral program, as students will quickly see evidence of my strong work ethic and desire for excellence in music.

I am especially interested in the Honolulu School District because of its commitment to quality education and reputation for excellence. I would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you regarding this teaching position. If you need any additional references or information, please call me at the number above. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Melanie Dorn

Enclosure

Steven P. Wideman

(616) 460-XXXX

stevenpwideman@xxxx.com

Current Address

[street]

Chino, CA 91710

Permanent Address

XXXX [street]

Grand Rapids, MI 49505

Profile

Enthusiastic Music Education student seeking a teaching position in an elementary, middle, or high school setting. Strong interpersonal and musical skills and the proven ability to collaborate with teachers, supervisors, and students to promote student success.

Education

Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI

Bachelor of Music Education, expected May 2011

K-12 Education Program

- **Study abroad in Kenya**, January 2009: Participated in a leadership course in Kenya; worked in schools, orphanages, clinics, and rural villages.
- **Study abroad in Ethiopia**, January 2010: Took part in a study of Ethiopian people, history, and culture, including observations in local and international schools.

NorthPointe Christian High School, Grand Rapids, MI

Diploma, June 2007

Certification

Michigan Provisional Teaching Certificate (K-12 Music)

Teaching

Student Teacher, Ontario Christian High School

Experiences

Student Teacher, Ontario Christian Elementary School

Ontario, CA, Spring 2011

- Planned lessons and rehearsals for elementary and high school students using differentiated instructional techniques
- Conducted rehearsals and performances of the High School Concert Choir, Chamber Singers, and Women's Ensemble; led sectional rehearsals; coached individual students and small groups
- Assisted with planning high school chapel services
- Taught general music in a team-teaching setting to grades 1 through 4
- Assisted with administrative duties of the elementary and high school music program
- Acted as the sole substitute teacher in the absence of the elementary general music teacher and high school choral director

Teacher Aide, Wealthy Elementary School

Teacher Aide, East Grand Rapids Middle School

Grand Rapids, MI, Spring 2010

- Observed and assisted students in general music, choir, and orchestra
- Developed and taught lessons using differentiated instruction
- Led sectional rehearsals and provided individual instruction time
- Collaborated with music teachers to develop a unit plan

Tutor, Grand Rapids Christian Middle School

Grand Rapids, MI, Spring 2009

- Assisted and observed students in choir
- Completed a case study on an individual student

Scholarships Calvin Faculty Honors Academic Scholarship
Judith Vroon Vander Zee Music Education Scholarship
Howard J. Slenk Music Scholarship
Vander Heide Voice Scholarship

Work Experience **Applebee's Restaurant, Grand Rapids, MI**

Host, August 2006-December 2007

Food Expeditor, September 2006- December 2007

Server, December 2007- Present

- Communicated with guests to provide the best possible dining experience
- Collaborated with fellow employees to create an organized restaurant environment

Admissions Office, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI

Tour Guide, September 2010-January 2011

- Led tours for prospective students around the campus of Calvin College
- Supplied prospective students and their families with information and personal perspectives on college life

Jamaica Link Ministries, Montego Bay, Jamaica

Volunteer, Summer 2008 and Summer 2009

- Provided administrative support for staff of Fairhaven Christian Retreat Center
- Prepared meals and facilities for missions teams
- Familiarized visitors with the city of Montego Bay and its various mission opportunities

Student Development Office, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI

Orientation Leader, August 2010-October 2010, January 2011

- Welcomed freshman and transfer students into the Calvin College community
- Facilitated a successful transition into the college atmosphere through a five-day orientation program
- Planned and taught lessons, directed discussions through a six-week introductory class

Professional Activities Attended the Michigan Music Conference; January 2011

Attended the "Joy of Singing" Conference in Columbus OH; August 2007, 2008, 2009

Attended the Michigan American Choral Director's Convention; October 2009

Member of MENC: The National Association for Music Education

Member of the American Choral Director's Association

Skills Proficient in singing in multiple languages, basic accompanying skills, basic Spanish skills

Credentials Available upon request from Calvin College Career Development at (616) 526-6485 or edcareer@calvin.edu

Chelsea LaJoy

[address]

[phone]

[email]

Education **Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI**
Bachelor of Music Education, K-12 certification, May 2014; GPA: 3.614

Teaching Experience **Student Teaching, Forest Hills Central High School**

Grand Rapids, MI, Spring 2014

- Led rehearsals and sectionals for choirs in grades 9-12
- Selected music
- Assisted with administrative duties of the program

Vocal Coaching, Grand Rapids Christian High School

Grand Rapids, MI, January 2014

- Worked with a class of high school students in a winter interim course about musical theatre
- Taught group and private voice lessons every day to work on vocal technique and performance

Choir Assistant, Michigan State Honors Choir

Grand Rapids, MI, January 2014

- Assisted in sectionals and choir rehearsals for the TTBB chorus
- Coached soloists in technique and performance

Education Intern, Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park

Grand Rapids, MI, Summer 2013

- Led educational activities in the children's garden
- Co-taught for day camps
- Led teams of volunteers in their responsibilities and other special events

Music Director, First Presbyterian Church of Hastings

Hastings, MI, September 2011-September 2013

- Directed and selected music for volunteer adult choir in weekly rehearsals and worship services
- Led and selected music for youth praise team in weekly rehearsals and worship services
- Taught children's Sunday school music twice a month

Voice Lessons

Hastings, MI, Winter 2012, Fall 2013

- Taught a 9th grade girl for 3 months in preparation for Solo and Ensemble
- Coached a 10th grade girl for her high school musical and regional honors choir audition

Tutoring, University Prep Academy

Grand Rapids, MI, Spring 2011

- Assisted, tutored, and observed sixth grade classroom
- Developed case study for individual student to determine learning style

Piano Lessons

Hastings, MI, Summer 2011

- Taught beginner level piano lessons twice a week
- Instructed one student and developed lessons for her unique learning style, accommodating social and physical impairments

Additional Experience**Choir President, Women's Chorale of Calvin College**

Grand Rapids, MI, Fall 2012-Spring 2013

- Led an officer team in planning and managing choir business
- Responsible for running officer meetings, addressing members' questions, and managing events outside the regular rehearsals and performances

Assistant Director, Thornapple Arts Council Summer Youth Theatre Program

Hastings, MI, Summer 2009, 2010

- Assisted in teaching music to the ensemble, and soloists
- Assisted in stage directing

Tennis Instructor, YMCA

Hastings, MI, Summer 2009, 2010

- Instructed tennis players grades 4-12 for summer day camp
- Assisted coaching and planning drills

Performance Experience

Grand Rapids Symphony Chorus, Spring 2014

Capella of Calvin College, Fall 2011-Fall 2012

Women's Chorale of Calvin College, Fall 2009-Fall 2012

Oratorio Society of Calvin College, Fall 2010-Fall 2011

Collegium Musicum of Calvin College, Fall 2011-Spring 2012

Junior Recital at Calvin College, Fall 2012

Awards and Scholarships

Winner of Concerto Competition, Calvin College 2013

Opera Grand Rapids Scholarship Finalist, 2013

Vander Griend Voice Scholarship

Gayla R. Witte Oratorio Scholarship

Howard J. Slenk Music Scholarship

Leonard J. and H. Elaine Hofman Music Scholarship

Seymour Swets Voice Award

John and Doris Van Dellen Music Scholarship

J.C. Lobbes Education Scholarship

Judith Vroon Vander Zee Music Education Scholarship

James J. and Helen A. DeJonge Voice Scholarship

Allene Huizenga Goguen Music Education Scholarship

Vander Haagen Family Scholarship for 5th Year Education Students

Professional Memberships

National Association for Music Education (NAfME)

Michigan Music Education Association (MMEA)

American Choral Directors Association (ACDA)

Professional Conferences

Michigan Music Conference—Grand Rapids, MI: January 2013, 2014

National Music Educators Conference (NAfME)—Nashville, TN: October 2013

American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) MI Conference – Mt. Pleasant, MI: October 2011

Table 2. Overall Rank Order of Interview Questions.

Interview question	M	SD
1. How will you connect with your students?	4.64	0.56
2. Tell me what I'll see happening in your classroom? ^a	4.61	0.59
3. How would you make sure students are successful in music? ^a	4.51	0.70
4. Tell me about your music training and experience. ^a	4.43	0.71
5. What are your ideas about discipline? ^a	4.40	0.64
6. Do you believe all students can learn? ^a	4.36	0.91
7. How do you provide support for students with exceptional ability?	4.33	0.68
8. Why do you want to come to this school and teach? ^a	4.28	0.82
9. How would you mainstream special education classes and/or ensembles?	4.269	0.74
10. What role do standards play in your classroom?	4.261	0.74
11. How have you integrated technology into your teaching instruction?	4.20	0.75
12. Describe the concept and components of your favorite music lesson.	4.15	0.76
13. Describe your ideal music program.	4.128	0.79
14. What are the most important ways a teacher can help students? ^a	4.123	0.81
15. Tell me about a troubled student you have taught and how you helped him or her.	4.11	0.80
16. Tell me about yourself. ^a	4.09	0.93
17. Why is music important in the educational scheme? ^a	4.08	0.93
18. How can you tell you've had a good class session? ^a	4.05	0.77
19. Tell me how you are going to develop a lesson plan based on your methodologies. ^a	3.99	0.83
20. What do you like most about teaching as a career?	3.89	0.95
21. Why do you want to be a music teacher? ^a	3.87	0.98
22. What is your philosophy of education? ^a	3.86	0.97
23. Why should I hire you? ^a	3.81	1.09
24. What do you think is the greatest challenge facing students today?	3.76	0.95
25. What are your plans concerning professional development?	3.65	0.89
26. What do you want to be doing in 5 years?	3.43	1.10
27. How would your best friend describe you? ^a	2.71	1.22

^aDenotes questions taken from Brinkman and Mallett (2000).

Sample Interview Questions

Possible Interview Questions

- Background/General Information (Tell us about yourself)
 - Educational background
 - Previous teaching experience
 - Hobbies/Interests
- What have you heard about this district or program?
- Describe some of your experiences/beliefs:
 - Recruiting students (who should pick the instrument, - teacher or student?)
 - Music contests
 - Parent organizations
 - Marching/jazz band, show choir, fiddling, etc.

Questions

- Describe your abilities in regard to:
 - Organizational Skills
 - Communication with parents, students, and colleagues
 - Motivating students
 - Initiative
 - Technological skills
 - Working with peers (Are you a team player or an individual worker?)
 - Dependability (provide scenario)
- [Keep it brief. Give an example.]

Questions

- Experiences working with minority/underserved/special learners?
 - [All students can learn]
- Greatest strengths/weaknesses?
- What grade level do you think would be best for you to teach? Why?
- What do you see yourself doing five years from now?
- Classroom Management
 - Describe your daily rehearsal (What would I see if I walked into your classroom?)
 - How would you handle minor to severe disciplinary problems? (interviewer might provide scenarios)
- How do you believe instrumental music students should be graded?
- [Be ready for hypothetical situation]
 - Mortensen, G. (1991). Reality 101, *Music Educators Journal*, 78(4), 45-49.

Questions

- What was your most positive experience in education?
- What was your most negative experience in education?
- What is your philosophy of education or music education?
- What would _____ (reference or cooperating teacher) tell me about you?
- Why do you feel especially qualified for this job? (Why should we hire YOU?)
- If music educators are involved in the interview:
 - Demonstrate the fingerings/positions for _____.
 - How do you compensate for weak instrumentation/voicing?
 - How do you teach intonation?
 - What would your curriculum look like? Are you capable of drafting a document?
 - Why are you available now and what is your job-search status?

Questions for the Interviewers

- Extracurricular or non-music responsibilities?
- Is there a parent group? How are they involved?
- How do you define success in this position?
- What are your expectations for the program?
- When will I hear from you about this position?
- [Avoid salary questions]


