

President-Elect's Thoughts

On A Mission – Part II

November 2016

Myron Peterson

21 pages. Is that, A) how long this article will be? Or B) how many pages of input the IBA membership contributed in the *On A Mission* survey during July and August?

That's right. It's B. In September, a diverse team of IBA members studied those 21 pages of input which resulted in the concise affinity diagram included at the end of this article. During the process, the team looked to identify patterns and themes among the data, while organizing and distilling it into the content-rich document that will serve as a catalyst to craft a 21st century mission to guide the IBA's 21st century work.

Now it's time to turn the process back over to the members. Soon, members will be invited to write and submit potential mission statements. In the true nature of brainstorming, all ideas are welcome and submissions will be visible by all members along the way in the hopes that each idea may spark yet another. While we read the affinity diagram and allow ourselves to dream about potential mission statements, let's also consider the characteristics of great modern mission statements.

Many of us vaguely remember those paragraph-long, verbose mission statements of our schools "back in the day." They were long, full of jargon, and included every word contributed by every team member. It was an exercise in how to construct a statement that remained grammatically correct while including everything – yet committing to nothing. Those mission statements provided little inspiration to actually focus and energize the work of the organization.

Conversely, modern mission statements are:

concise – usually one sentence

inspiring and memorable – engaging and informing members and guests

concrete and action-oriented – typically starting with a verb such as "providing" or "to provide"

focused – representing overarching key goals and values; strategically aligning operations

Consider these mission statements. Is it possible to identify what type of organization these mission statements represent? (answers at the end of the article)

- Linking people with nature by footpath¹
- Delivering high-quality, low-cost healthcare to the world's poor²
- Teaching All – Reaching All³
- Providing jazz resources for Iowa's educators⁴
- Growing in love of God and neighbor⁵
- To organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful⁶
- To give everyone the power to create and share ideas and information, instantly, without barriers⁷

Imagine how those mission statements might inspire and guide the work of their respective organizations. Imagine how a mission statement might inspire and guide the work of the IBA.

In the coming days, watch for an Iowa Bandmasters eNewsletter with a call for member input on potential mission statements. Get creative. Work together. Socialize. Have fun talking about this shared passion of ours.

Before the end of 2016, we will assemble another representative team to comb through the submissions and recommend a final set of potential missions for the membership to consider. These will be presented in *On A Mission – Part III* in early 2017.

As promised, here are the organizations that belong to the aforementioned mission statements.

¹ *Superior Hiking Trail*, ² *Possible Health*, ³ *Urbandale Community School District*, ⁴ *Jazz Educators of Iowa*,
⁵ *Plymouth Church*, ⁶ *Google*, ⁷ *Twitter*

And finally, thanks to all who submitted reflections on the initial survey and to the team that assembled in September to synthesize the data. The work was inspiring, it belongs to all of us, and is worthy of our study.

On A Mission – Affinity Diagram

September 18, 2016

Things IBA Does Well

- Annual Conference: Relocation to Marriott, broad range of sessions, great concerts
- Providing Resources: performance opportunities, clinics, mentorship, IBARD, honor bands, contributing to IHSMA through “Affairs Committees,”
 - The Iowa Bandmaster Magazine
- Honoring a variety of people annually: Karl King, 30-year Tenure, Retiring, Outstanding Administrators, Major Landers
 - Networking Opportunities
- IBA’s organizational structure: highly organized and detail oriented, members who are committed to the organization, division of labor (Board of Directors, Advisory Board, and Committees), 6 districts
 - Support of IAAE
- Online voting that is user friendly
 - Communication

Professional Development (PD)

Annual Conference

- Educational programming to support the mission and current educational trends facing band directors
- Providing performance opportunity
- Networking opportunities

PD Outside the conference

- IBA could organize a series of PD on different topics during the school year. Perhaps help organize groups according to geographical and teaching assignment level and invite them to attend a seminar with a veteran teacher to present/share ideas about any number of relevant topics.

Collaboration

- Develop more opportunities for teachers to collaborate
- Strengthen relationships with colleges/universities to ensure beginning teachers are prepared and supported as they enter the field.
- Partner with other state and national organizations to advocate for arts education

Mentorship

- One of IBA’s key roles is to support new teachers to help them find success
- IBA is an organization that supports each other and it doesn’t matter from which school we teach, or how long we’ve been teaching. We are always eager to share and help each other.
 - Utilization of IBARD as a tremendous resource

Technology

- Further develop use of technology for collaboration, communication, efficiency of operations
 - Explore avenues to musically reach more students through the use of technology mediums: electronic music and instruments, recording and producing, and more
 - Help veteran members learn to use and stay current with technology

Values

- Promoting band music in the state of Iowa
 - Helping those interested in band music in Iowa connect with one another
- Providing avenues for band students to have meaningful musical experiences that encourage them to make music a lifelong activity
 - Promoting music education in Iowa
- Maintaining the strong wind band tradition that has existed in Iowa by providing support for teachers, schools, and students
 - Encouraging and supporting the programming of quality literature at all levels

Communication and Public Relations

- Use multiple platforms to promote IBA's mission and values to the government, administrators, school boards, communities, etc.
- Use multiple platforms to communicate news and educational developments to all members.
 - Develop strong social media platforms to support IBA's mission and values

Challenges

Shifting Culture

- Iowa demographics are shifting. Populations are leaving the small towns for metropolitan areas. Money is tighter, both for school districts and students/families. Poverty's impact on students and band participation is undeniable in many, if not most, of our communities.
 - Funding for education, including arts education, is increasingly politicized.
 - The way that students are being assessed in classrooms is rapidly changing; one example is "standards-based grading."

Advocacy

- Continue advocating and demonstrating, at all of our state and district events, best teaching practices. Our best practitioners should be models for educators across all disciplines
 - Develop a strong statement for why music should be part of the public education of Iowa students.
 - Face challenges in Educational Funding

Affinity Diagram Contributors: Steve Cook, Jill Dobel, Paul Hart, Craig McClenahan, Myron Peterson, Tara Smith, Courtney Sommer

The complete 21-page compilation of survey submissions is available upon request by contacting Myron Peterson.