

Greetings, fellow elementary music educators. I trust that you had a restful and rejuvenating summer break and your 2012-2013 school year is off to a good start. As our Virginia students settle into the school routine, I hope you are enjoying the settling in of fall. Fall is one of my favorite times for teaching music. There are so many thematic lessons that you can plan with songs and singing games to go along with the fall season.

I want take a moment to introduce myself in my first article as president of our organization. My name is Jason Kriner and I am honored and humbled to serve as your VEMEA president. I am also a proud product of VMEA. Having grown up in Virginia, I participated in and benefited from many VMEA events during middle school and high school. VMEA has been a part of my life for over 22 years: as participating student in a Virginia public school, as a collegiate member, and now as a teacher. My Bachelor of Music Education degree is from Christopher Newport University and my Master of Music Education degree is from Shenandoah University. As both institutes I had the pleasure of learning from music educators who actively supported and were engaged in VMEA. I have served three terms as the VEMEA District 8 representative and have been coordinating our VEMEA All-Virginia Elementary Chorus since 2007. The past year and a half I have been serving as president-elect and have assisted Marie Weber with conference planning and our grant program. I am looking forward to serving as president of our great organization and I hope to continue the success of our programs and events for the better of our membership and your students.

I would be remising if I did not offer a "Thank You" to our exiting president, Marie Weber. Marie was elected to serve as president but stepped up early when our organization faced an unexpected leadership change. She did not have a full two years to serve as president-elect and she was asked to take the reins early. Marie did a wonderful job to transition our organization and execute a phenomenal conference in 2011 with very short notice. She has been a great friend and mentor to me and I look forward to continue working with her for the next two years in her new capacity as Vice President. Our outgoing president automatically assumes the role of vice president.

I also want to thank some other past presidents of VEMEA who have been particularly influential to me over the past years and have helped me in my career as a teacher and tenure with VEMEA. I have learned from the leadership of Becky Riebeling, Michael Milam, and Debra Kay Robinson Lindsay and I thank them for their VEMEA leadership and friendship over the past decade.

Our VEMEA council is a strong group of leaders who will dedicate their time and energy to for the next two years. I would like to introduce you to these council members:

Marie Weber: VEMEA Vice President; John Tyler ES (Portsmouth)

Andrea Cottrill: VEMEA Treasurer; Guardian Christian Academy (Chesterfield)

Katie Madrid: VEMEA Secretary; Virginia Avenue Charlotte deHart ES (Winchester)

Jerrilyn McDanel: VEMEA President-Elect (Harrisonburg)

Susan Hagel: VEMEA Member-at-Large; Crossroads ES (Norfolk)

Each VMEA district has an elementary representative and I encourage you to meet and know your district representative. You can visit our website, www.vemea.org, to find contact information for your district information and the current VEMEA council members.