

Dear colleagues and esteemed music educators,

I hope that this letter finds you well. I know that you are all dealing with the COVID crisis in a myriad of ways, many of which have been decided by people who are making those decisions for you, and have no idea of how their decisions impact you, your students, and your programs. I hope that you, your students, and your families have been safe and healthy while we have been dealing with the pandemic. If you have had the virus, or have had family or friends that have had it, I wish you nothing but positivity and full recovery. With that in mind, I want to inform you of how the TSSBDA will be adapting to the situation at hand.

Our fall meeting is usually held after the ETSBOA meeting as a luncheon at Connor's Steak house. Our meeting this year is scheduled for September 12th at 1:00 P.M. We usually meet at 12:00, but sometimes ETSBOA has some heated discussions over scales or audition procedures that might run over. A major change that will be happening this year is that our meeting will be held virtually. I have created a Google Classroom/Google Meet room that we will all log in to so that we can have our meeting. With the COVID pandemic, it has always been strongly advised to socially distance and wear masks when in public places. With our traditional meeting being held at an eating establishment, it will not be possible to socially distance, and one cannot eat or drink while wearing a mask. So, for the safety of the members of our organization, it was decided to have this meeting in a virtual environment. The Google Classroom join code is jkxjxog. All you have to do is look up Google Classroom and enter the code to join the class. Once in the classroom, there is a video link (<https://meet.google.com/lookup/hcloqiew4o?authuser=0&hs=179>) that you can click on to watch the video feed, and participate in the meeting if you have a camera on your device. You can use a computer, or a cell phone that has the Google Meet App.

Once we make it to December, there is much hope that either the country will have control of the virus, or there will be a medical solution to the pandemic. We hope that the Spring will bring some return to normalcy. With that hope, we also hope to resume our clinics and festivals. Tentatively, and COVID's control will determine this, our clinics are in the process of being scheduled. As of now, Junior Clinic will be January 22nd-23rd. The location is being finalized, but there was some interest in it being hosted by Sequoyah High School. If this host site falls through, we will need to find another site to host Junior Clinic. Senior Clinic will be February 26th-27th. It will be hosted by Jefferson County High School. Union County will host the Concert Festival on April 24th. Of course, this is all depends on a semi-normal Spring and the remediation of the COVID virus. As we know more, we will let you know more.

If there are new directors in your area, please take the time to let them know about our organization. Also take the time to nurture and mentor them. Many of them will be at a new job, in a new area, in the middle of a pandemic, trying to deal with one of the most stressful jobs in education. Please let them know that they are not alone, and that there is an organization that is tailored for the needs of new directors, and developing band programs. If the director expresses an interest, let that director know that we have a webpage at <http://tssbda.org/> which should be able to answer many of the questions that may arise.

Please stay safe and healthy. I will see you virtually on September 12th.

Cordially,
Christopher Lee Metcalfe
TSSBDA President