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## EDITOR'S NOTE

Three of the four studies in this issue of the *Bulletin* speak directly to the multifaceted dimensions of musical performance. Kinsey Edwards, Andrew Edwards, and Brian Wesolowski add to the ongoing refinement of instruments used to evaluate music performance through a study of a string performance rating scale. They argue that raters of these performances (commonly judges, teachers, and professors) introduce bias when using common tools such as rubrics, which are further compromised having been designed by teachers with little experience in constructing such assessment items. Their study focuses on establishing greater confidence in the implementation of skillfully constructed rubrics. Using the multifaceted Rasch partial credit measurement model, Edwards, Edwards, and Wesolowski analyze the reliability and validity of this rubric for evaluating string ensemble performance. Given the current emphasis on measuring students' musical achievement in performing ensembles, the findings of this project and the rubric used in the study will be of professional and practical interest.

In a related effort, Stefanie Wind and Brian Wesolowski employ Rasch measurement yet again to examine how raters' accuracy shifts over time, a phenomenon encountered in many solo and ensemble festivals, for example. Their study extends a line of related investigations of rater variability. Over a 5-day period, their results show that eight operational raters' scores did indeed shift when compared to the scores of an expert rater, with diminishing accuracy over time. Wind and Wesolowski's recommendations for improving the fairness of performance assessments by paying more attention to rater training protocols are especially pertinent as high-stakes decisions about teacher evaluation, for example, may be based in part on the ratings of solo or ensemble performances.

Expressive performance is the central focus of an article by Paul Broomhead, Jon Skidmore, Dennis Eggett, and Melissa Mills, who conducted a partial replication of a study involving a preperformance routine for singers. They organized a four-group design to test the preperformance routine with junior high choirs instead. Drawing upon interventions used in studies of sports performance to enhance mental readiness, or "mindset," the researchers engaged a clinical psychologist to prepare teachers to use a specific intervention using positive trigger words and specific strategies that encouraged students to shift their mindsets from a default mode to a bold, confident, and free approach. The researchers provide detailed descriptions of their processes for testing singers after the intervention. Readers will find the design and results of the study intriguing to both researchers and practitioners.

Forms and venues for music teachers' professional development continue to evolve, as does our understanding of teachers' ongoing learning as they respond to their students' needs, the dynamic nature of music, and community expectations. As the inherently social nature of teachers' learning is emphasized, researchers wonder how social media prompts teachers' growth. In 2014, Wesley Brewer and David Rickels published one of the first content analyses of the sort, analyzing the Facebook-hosted

Band Directors' Group in the *Bulletin*, while also addressing ways that the online group functions as a community of practice (CoP) as described by Wenger. The study in this issue, authored by Cara Bernard, Lindsay Weiss, and Harold Abeles, builds on Brewer and Rickels's work while also using the CoP framework. The context for their project is the Facebook Music Teachers group. They examine members' posts and comments and relate their findings to principles used by Wenger and colleagues to gauge the "aliveness" of a community. The *Bulletin* welcomes critical analysis of research on the use of social media as professional development for music educators, which is sure to remain an area of curiosity.

Janet R. Barrett  
Editor