



Tips To Successfully Advocate for Conference Attendance

For some teachers, attendance at conference is contingent upon approval of their school administrator. Advocating for the music program can be a daunting task. Asking for release time and funding with the fear that it will be turned down might discourage teachers from trying. Here are some tried and true pointers:

- Be prepared. Go in with details concerning what professional development sessions are offered, how they impact the music program, and the costs involved. Bring brochures, Call to Conference, or Web site information. Be ready to explain how this conference, with its hands-on demonstrations, is different than many others.
- Explain the philosophy of Orff Schulwerk. Emphasize its ability to keep *all* learners engaged.
- Share Internet information. Many have benefited from this short conference video: <http://www.aosa.org/video4.html>
- Articulate how conference attendance will help your practice as a music educator at your school. Indicate how it fits within the total school program, mission, and goals.
- Discuss how attendance at the professional development conference fits your goals as a professional.

- Share the impact of specific sessions on the integrated curriculum. Relate how the music program supports and enhances English language arts, math and social studies as well as social skills.
- Refer to the advantage of being surrounded by colleagues who are impassioned and knowledgeable. At every turn, there is a conversation waiting that will inform and inspire.
- Down time? Not with this conference! Evenings include concerts and activities that will have an impact your teaching.
- Discuss the plans for your substitute to keep the instructional program rolling while you are gone.
- Do not be discouraged by any paperwork you might have to file or a report you may have to write upon return. If you are taking the conference sessions for credit this report can be the basis for what an administrator needs to see.
- Offer to share what you learned with your school and district colleagues upon your return. Emphasize what the school administrator gets for his/her school.
- Smile and use positive body language.
- If approved, pick up a small token of appreciation for your administrator from the Boutique or other exhibits.

If you have any other questions, do not hesitate to ask for the advice of seasoned chapter members who regularly attend the AOSA Professional Development Conference.

Your National Conference Co-chairs,
Alice Pratt at aosagopitt@gmail.com
Diane Sabourin at 3riversorff@gmail.com