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SPECIAL RESEARCH INTEREST GROUP
OF
THE MUSIC EDUCATORS NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Newsletter No. 9

April, 1986

NEW CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN ELECTED

Congratulations are in order for our newly elected chairman and vice chairman. As a result of the February balloting of the SRIG membership, Mary Palmer of the University of Central Florida (Orlando) was elected as the new National Chair. Barbara Alvarez of the University of Wisconsin (Stevens Point) was selected as Vice Chairman. Dr. Palmer and Dr. Alvarez will assume their new duties following the SRIG session at the Anaheim convention.

REPORT OF THE NOMINATION AND ELECTION PROCESS
FOR NEW SRIG CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

submitted by
Dorothy T. McDonald, Election Chairman

In November, 1985, National Chairperson Jonny Ramsey^(A) asked Dorothy McDonald to (1) prepare a slate of candidates for the offices of National Chairperson and National Vice Chairperson of the Early Childhood SRIG, (2) submit the slate to the Early Childhood SRIG membership and tabulate the vote, and (3) prepare a report outlining the process and results.

The first task was accomplished by sending a membership list of the Early Childhood SRIG to each SRIG Task Group Leader. These five leaders were asked to nominate two persons for the position of National Chair and two alternates. In addition, they were asked to submit supporting statements for their nominations. These nominations were returned to Dorothy McDonald by January 28, 1986. The names of seven persons were submitted. McDonald contacted each of these persons; four expressed willingness to become a candidate; two declined because of pressing professional obligations; and one had left the teaching profession and could not be located.

When the candidates had been selected, a ballot was prepared. The ballot listed the names of the four candidates, together with two or three brief statements about (1) their current position, (2) their research area of special interest, and (3) their involvement in the Early

Childhood SRIG. A ballot was sent to each SRIG member; a total of 114 ballots was mailed. Members were asked to vote for one person. The person receiving the most votes would be elected National Chairperson; the person receiving the second highest number of votes would be selected National Vice-Chairperson.

Ballots were completed and returned by February 28, 1986. By March 3, 1986, a total of 51 completed ballots had been returned, for a 45 percent return rate. Two ballots were returned with "address unknown."

Mary Palmer received 40 percent of the vote. Barbara Alvarez received 25 percent of the vote. These candidates were the two highest vote-receivers. Each of these persons was contacted; each expressed willingness to serve in the elected position. Letters expressing thanks were sent to all candidates.

EARLY CHILDHOOD MUSIC SESSIONS
PLANNED FOR THE ANAHEIM CONVENTION

SRIG Session: SRIG members are reminded that our SRIG session has been scheduled for April 10, 1986 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. The exact location will appear in the convention program. The session will feature a panel discussion of "The Young Child's Musical Developments--Implications of Research for the Practitioner." Panel members will include Barbara Andress, John W. Flohr, Dorothy McDonald, and Gene M. Simons. In addition, the new National Chair and Vice Chair will be introduced to the membership.

Music Workshop for Early Childhood Care-Givers, Preschool Teachers, and Music Educators: A MENC pre-conference workshop in early childhood music has been planned for April 7 and 8. The workshop will be held at the Anaheim Hylton Hotel. Cost for participation is \$25 for one day and \$50 for both days. The workshop will feature clinicians Diane Cummings (Trinity University, San Antonio), Lin Johnson (The New Age School, San Antonio), Susan Kenney (Brigham Young University), Elayne Metz (The University of Arizona, Tempe), David Woods (The University of Arizona, Tucson), and Donna Brink Fox (The Eastman School of Music). An opening address will be delivered by Barbara Andress. The April 8th sessions will be a repeat of the April 7th sessions; however, participants will be able to select to see different clinicians on the second day of the workshop. Interested persons may register on site or by writing to MENC.

A FAREWELL FROM THE NATIONAL CHAIR

As this is the last newsletter which I will prepare as National Chairman of the SRIG, I wish to thank all the SRIG membership for the opportunity of serving in this office. I wish in particular to thank the Task Group Leaders and Divisional Leaders for all their help during the past two years. A special "thank you" is in order to the current Vice Chairman Gene Simons who has helped greatly in organizational matters and who has supplied much needed research materials for our Anaheim SRIG session.

As I leave this office, I will make the following recommendations to Dr. Palmer:

1. The SRIG organization needs to be restructured. Over the past four years, the SRIG task groups have not been as effective or as productive as originally planned. This has not been due to Task Group Leaders: they have worked diligently with both the task group members and with the National Chair; they, together with the Divisional Leaders, have in effect held the SRIG together and provided the SRIG leadership.

Rather the problem lies, as I see it, in two areas. First, the SRIG was originally conceived as a "working" organization; that is, the membership would work together on mini-projects of common interests and share their results with the rest of the SRIG membership. As the SRIG grew and membership increased, many persons joined who wished only to receive the newsletter; in addition, many of the membership became involved in personal projects and had less time for SRIG related projects. As a result, the SRIG task groups productivity diminished, and increasingly Task Group Leaders were left with the responsibility of carrying out projects alone. Second, over the past few years, the SRIG membership has not been able to meet on a consistent basis. Because our meeting times have been limited to convention activities, we have experienced several problems: (1) sessions have been scheduled at inconvenient times for the membership; (2) members have not been able to attend sessions as the convention sites moved from the East Coast to the West Coast; and (3) the session schedules have offered little time for the task groups to meet together to discuss and plan projects.

Do we wish to continue our original "working" SRIG concept, or do we wish simply to be linked by a periodic newsletter and biennial meeting? It is my recommendation to the new National Chair that the organization of the SRIG by task groups be re-evaluated in light of the current meeting constraints and membership desires.

2. As the cost of postage and printing has continued to rise each year, the cost of publishing and disseminating a

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newsletter has increased. Over the past year alone, the cost for the publication and mailing of one newsletter to the membership has been about \$70.00. Multiple this cost times four (quarterly issues), and it is evident that annual publication is expensive. This cost should not have to be assumed by the National Chair personally nor by the institution with which the National Chair is affiliated. Rather, the cost of the newsletter should be assumed by the membership. I recommend to the new National Chair that some minimal charge should be paid by the membership who desire to receive the newsletter.

I have enjoyed serving as National Chair. The SRIG membership has continued to grow in the past two years, reflecting the prevalent interest in early childhood musical development. Our newsletter has been successful; it has provided a forum from which our members have shared research and opinions. Our proposal for the Anaheim convention session was approved, insuring that the membership will meet and discuss current issues. Our SRIG is a viable organization; it will continue to grow and change with the desires of its membership, for we all know how important early childhood music is. We will continue to explore that area, asking new questions, conducting new research, sharing results, and finding new answers.