

National Research Project for *El Sistema*-inspired Orchestras

Greetings in 2015

This is the second newsletter from the research team at Longy School of Music of Bard College and WolfBrown. This regular newsletter is designed to keep us all in touch and on track – and to spare all of you a snowstorm of separate emails. In each issue we also include links to amazing events, people, and projects in the world of music – links you can click on at the end of the day and be reminded of the remarkable work you and your musician colleagues do.



January 9, 2015

Key Topics:

- **Milestones**

- **Right Now**

- Permissions
- Dropbox
- Why a Leaner Piloting of Student Measures
- Pilot materials arriving
- Training for the pilot process
- Reflecting on the piloting
- Site specific measures

Links: David Lang, composer, talks about music, heroism, love and loss, and why music builds bridges whether we want them or not.

Milestones: Recent Accomplishments in the Study

Complementing the original grant from the Buck Family Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is supporting two aspects of our shared work: 1) research on what it takes to train young professionals to have the musical, teaching, and research skills to lead *El Sistema* work; and 2) the effects on symphony orchestras that support *El Sistema*-inspired youth orchestras. Here are some headlines:

- 1) **MAT Students training as researchers:** The Longy Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) students in Los Angeles have been working with their professor, Ndindi Kitonga and with the research team to serve as data gatherers at the two West Coast Core Sites in San Diego and Santa Barbara. Along with site teaching artists, they are trained as evaluators for the individual music performance measures. Similarly, three graduate students from Longy's Cambridge campus will assist at Conservatory Lab Charter School with the performance measures. The MAT students are also working as collaborators with the research team to pilot an ensemble music measure that will be used by all next year.
- 2) **Orchestra interviews:** Beginning this month we will start interviewing orchestras about why and how they support Sistema-inspired youth orchestras. A major focus will be identifying whether and how this work changes their relationships with their host communities. Since many of you are on the inside of this relationship, we would love to hear your suggestions about what to ask and topics for discussion.

Right Now:

Permissions: By now you should have signed permission forms (found in the study Dropbox) from parents of children in both your treatment and your control or comparison groups. These should be entered in an Excel spreadsheet that tracks from whom you receive forms, and includes the group to which the student belongs (treatment or comparison/control) as well as the following information you may have: school, grade, gender, and ethnicity. Please send these files to steven@wolfbrown.com, and keep the original hard copies of the forms on file at your site. Send a scan of the signature pages of these forms in a single file to jane@wolfbrown.com.

Dropbox: All site liaisons should have received the information to access the National *El Sistema* Evaluation Drop Box; it can be found at the following link (either by clicking or pasting in your browser):
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ug9grq5swim1u5d/AACkxReCcBS07CwhYUDUmg4a?dl=0>
This location will hold digital copies of all the materials that sites need for the pilot and will allow 24x7 access to all the documents and make it possible to make additional copies when needed.

Leaner data collection: At each site we are asking you to pilot the **booklet measures** with a small sample of both treatment and comparison/control students this winter. We are recommending that you do a structured sample of 12 – 15 students who represent the range of ages and levels among your 2nd to 4th grade students. That means 6-8 students from your program and 6-8 students from the comparison group: 12-15 total number. For the music **performance measure** we are recommending that most sites work with a sample of about the same size 12-15 students that represent a range of instruments, grade-levels and experience levels (number of years in program). This group of children, all from your program, should include **the same 6-8 children who did the music booklet measure**, and then a few additional to reach 12-15. **All measures should be completed by the end of February.**

Based on piloting we did with similar students to yours throughout the fall, we realized how much work it takes to get things running smoothly. There is much to be worked out in relationships with families and school partners, places and times to collect the data, training for proctors and evaluators, etc. Hence, it makes sense to scale back and make time to think about our tools and results before plunging into full-scale data collection in the Spring.

Pilot materials arriving: A box was Fed-Exed to each core site. It contains all the printed student school and music program booklets, staff measures, proctor directions, even special pencils all sharpened with good erasers. The originals of all of these documents are posted in Dropbox for your reference. Look for this box to arrive by the **today or early next week.**

Also in Dropbox are many other materials that you will need to Xerox at your site since you know the numbers of students, classroom teachers, and music teachers involved, such as, the repertoire for the music performance measure (which is not being sent in the box).

January training for the pilot process: Once you have looked over the materials that arrive in your box, it is time to set up a **training call** for your liaison and proctors who will be administering the booklet measures. It will take 60 - 90 minutes. In the call, we will walk you through all the materials, share some strategies we have learned this fall, and answer any questions that you have. We should do this in January.

In addition, you should begin **training your teaching artists as evaluators for the music performance measure** by using the 11 training videos found on the Vimeo site to which each liaison should have already received an invitation. If you have not received this invitation, or need another, please contact Judy right away. There is an accompanying **GUIDE** for using the Videos that is found in Dropbox only. This walks you through each video with accompanying text and

instruction. Many sites are gathering their TAs for a 1-2 hour meeting to go through the videos and training together. There are many advantages in building a community of staff who are involved in the work – learning and critiquing together.

Reflecting on the piloting: As you work with your 12 – 15 pilot students on the booklet measures, please keep notes about suggestions that you have, as well as insights that come to you. Do this right in a spare booklet where relevant. Scan and send to us. Then we will arrange a second conference call or visit to find out what you have learned from both the booklet and performance measures, and answer any further questions. We should accomplish this by the end of February. This will give us time to make the changes that we learn are important to help you set up for the larger-scale data collection in the spring.

Site specific measures and additional information: Expect a call next week. Judy, Dennie and Steven will check in to make sure you received your box of materials and that you are clear about next steps. As well, we will spend time with each of you discussing the path forward for your **site specific** measures. While we have had some very preliminary conversations with each of you, we can now begin to think about if and when we might pilot your site specific ideas in the spring.

Finally, we have included here the packing list for the box that will soon be arriving – so you can anticipate the materials and proceed with your planning. It also contains a chart that is a helpful guide to the booklet measures, indicating which constructs are being explored in each section of the booklets.

A Treat: Go the Carnegie Hall year in review blog:

<http://www.carnegiehall.org/Blog/Best-of-2014>

Among the blog posts, locate those from Bang on the Can composer, David Lang. He has been programming a concert series where he pairs two major and often unexpected works in order to explore a deeply human theme: love and loss, heroism, or spirituality. His commentary is far ranging, generous, upstart, and moving.

Any Questions?

- Judy Bose (hudyjill@gmail.com)
- Steven Holochwost (steven@wolfbrown.com)
- Dennie Wolf (dennie@wolfbrown.com)

Packing List for January Pilot Materials

These materials assume: 12 pilot students, 1 site liaison, up to 6 proctors, up to 6 classroom teachers, up to 6 music instructors. Additional materials can be Xeroxed.

Items	Number of Items	Purpose/Comments
General Instructions	6 proctors	For site liaison and proctors

	1 site liaison Total: 7	
Permissions Packet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family permissions • Student consents • Music teachers • Classroom teachers 	1 master set for the site liaison	Available in Spanish and in English. To be copied in the numbers and languages needed by the specific site.
School Measures Booklet: All about You in Your School	12 students 6 proctors 1 site liaison Total: 19	Liaison and proctors should review ahead of time so they are familiar and bring their copy to the session for reading measures.
Proctoring School Measures	6 proctors 1 site liaison Total: 7	Liaison and proctors should review ahead of time so they are familiar and bring their copy to the session for reference.
Music Program Measures Booklet: All about You as a Musician	12 students 6 proctors 1 site liaison Total: 19	Liaison and proctors should review ahead of time so they are familiar and bring their copy to the session for reading measures.
Proctoring Music Program Measures	6 proctors 1 site liaison Total: 7	Liaison and proctors should review ahead of time so they are familiar and bring their copy to the session for reference.
In-school classroom teacher measures	1 master set for the site liaison	To be copied in the numbers needed by the specific site
Music teacher measures	1 master set for the site liaison	To be copied in the numbers needed by the specific site
Two sets of "Thank You" pencils and bookmarks to help students follow format	12 students for school session; 12 students for music session	Students can keep these as a reward for completing the measures.
Music Performance Measure Directions and Rubric	12 (6 pairs of evaluators) 1 site liaison Total: 13	These are common across all levels and instruments. Evaluators should review and become familiar prior to sessions.
Individual Music Performance List	1 for site liaison 6 for proctors Total: 7	For site liaison and proctors.
Scores for Music Performance Measures	Each site will need to tailor its own set, given the particular students in the pilot.	Available for several levels and varied instruments. May be accessed online from the Dropbox folder to which you have been given access, and printed out in the numbers necessary for the site.

If you have questions about the School or Music Program Measures, please contact: Dennie Wolf: dennie@wolfbrown.com or Steven Holochwost: steven@wolfbrown.com. For questions about the Music Performance Measures, please contact: Judy Bose: hudyjill@gmail.com.

SCHOOL MEASURES BOOKLET

SECTION of BOOKLET	CONSTRUCT EXAMINED
All About You in Your School	Basic Information
Being at School with Other Kids	Prosocial Behaviors (Cooperation)
Getting Along with Other Kids	Prosocial Behaviors (Empathy)
Organizing for School	Academic Behaviors
Which Kids Am I Like in School	Achievement Motivation
Thinking About How You Learn	Growth Mindset
Being A Part of School	School Belonging
Thinking About You as a Student	Self-Efficacy
How Do You Keep Going	Persistence

MUSIC PROGRAM MEASURES BOOKLET

SECTION of BOOKLET	CONSTRUCT EXAMINED
All About You as a Musician	Basic Information
Doing Music with Other Kids	Prosocial Behaviors (Cooperation)
Getting Along with Other Musicians	Prosocial Behaviors (Empathy)
Organizing Yourself for Orchestra	Academic Behaviors
Which Kids Am I Like in Orchestra	Achievement Motivation
Thinking About How You Learn Music	Growth Mindset
Being A Part of a Music Program	School Belonging
Thinking About You as a Musician	Self-Efficacy
How You Keep Going	Persistence