

Beyond the Binary: The Current Status of Statewide Honors Vocal Jazz Ensembles

Abstract: Statewide honors vocal jazz ensembles play a key role in vocal jazz education at the secondary level. While existing histories of the vocal jazz education movement have centered on collegiate programs, these all-state ensembles remain largely unexplored. The following survey details the current all-state vocal jazz ensembles across the United States, focusing on their host organizations and geographic distribution. Information on the ensembles was gathered through the respective host organization websites. Collected data was sorted according to the number of all-state vocal jazz ensembles hosted, the host organization(s), the NAfME/ACDA division to which the state belongs, and the number and type of additional all-state ensembles within each state. The survey demonstrated that while nearly all statewide honors vocal jazz ensembles are hosted through either NAfME-affiliated state Music Educator Associations or state chapters of ACDA, all-state programs vary substantially between states and across regions. This body of research suggests several key points of entry for further inquiry, including an exploration of the processes by which existing ensembles were established, commonalities in these processes within similar host organizations, and the current barriers to new ensembles in states without an all-state vocal jazz ensemble.

Keywords: Vocal Jazz. All-State. Education. NAfME. ACDA.

Section I: Introduction

Since the establishment of the first collegiate vocal jazz ensemble in 1967,¹ vocal jazz education has grown tremendously. Eva Mae Pisciotta's 1992 history of the vocal jazz education movement outlined its origins through two subsequent generations of prominent jazz educators.² Gregory Amerind expanded that history in 2013 to include the movement's precedents and the developments of the 1990s and 2000s.³ Both authors focused on vocal jazz education at the collegiate and professional level. While this accurately reflects the dominant role collegiate programs have assumed within the field, it largely excludes the state of vocal jazz education in high schools.

In the US, statewide honors ensembles have become a key aspect of music education at the secondary level. As such, an examination of statewide honors vocal jazz ensembles could provide insights on the development of high school vocal jazz education. These ensembles represent the clearest point of intersection between the National Association for Music Education (NAfME), the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), and the vocal jazz movement: in all but three cases, those states with one or more all-state vocal jazz ensemble do so under the auspices of either their respective NAfME-affiliated Music Educators Association (MEA) or their state ACDA chapter. These ensembles provide a discrete measure of the presence of vocal

¹ Eva Mae Pisciotta, "The History of the Jazz Choir in the United States" (DMA diss., University of Missouri, Kansas City, 1992), 33-34.

² Ibid.

³ Gregory Amerind, "The Collegiate Vocal Jazz Ensemble: An Historical and Current Perspective on the Development, Current State, and Future Direction of the Genre" (DMA diss., Arizona State University, 2013).

jazz education at the secondary level, as well as the perceived validity of vocal jazz education vis-à-vis traditional bands, choirs, and orchestras.

To understand the historical origins of these ensembles, it is critical to first understand the diverse contexts of their present. In 2019, Lara Moline gathered information on the number of states with all-state vocal jazz ensembles to demonstrate their scarcity when compared with all-state traditional choirs.⁴ While this binary perspective effectively demonstrates the current gap in the prevalence of vocal jazz versus traditional choral programs, it masks a complicated patchwork of ensemble types, festivals, and host organizations.

Both NAFME and ACDA divide the country into six geographic regions.⁵ As such, this chapter outlines the current status of statewide honors ensembles in each state according to the six NAFME/ACDA divisions. I argue that distinct regional differences can be observed by organizing the states as such.

Section II: The Eastern Division

The eleven states of the Eastern Division clearly demonstrate the two dominant paths through which vocal jazz ensembles have been incorporated at the all-state level. Five host their ensembles through their MEA, and two do so through state ACDA organizations.

Maine and New Hampshire lead the MEA-hosted vocal jazz ensemble count with two each, though they differ in their approach: in Maine, students are divided between an SATB and

⁴ Lara Marie Moline, “Vocal Jazz in the Choral Classroom: A Pedagogical Study” (DA diss., University of Northern Colorado, 2019), 2-4.

⁵ “Federated State Associations,” NAFME History and Leadership, NAFME, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://nafme.org/about/federated-state-music-education-associations/>; “Chapters and Regions,” About ACDA, American Choral Directors Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://acda.org/about-us/chapters-and-regions/>.

an SSAA ensemble,⁶ while New Hampshire distinguishes its two SATB ensembles according to a hierarchy of proficiency.⁷ This two-tiered system parallels a similar distinction between New Hampshire's all-state jazz band and honors jazz band. Moreover, the NHMEA hosts their vocal and instrumental jazz groups in a separate festival in February, prior to their spring conference, during which all other all-state ensembles perform.⁸

New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania each host one all-state vocal jazz ensemble. While New York and Pennsylvania do so wholly through their MEAs,⁹ the NJMEA collaboratively hosts their vocal and instrumental jazz groups with the New Jersey Association for Jazz Education.¹⁰

⁶ "MMEA All-State Audition Materials: Four-Year Rotation," Maine Music Educators Association, last modified May 10, 2020, https://docs.google.com/document/d/11HhinmiIUM-zViz_1cAjEPZUAAzPDITYhW92meHufgY/edit#; Rosana Eckert, "I'm back home after a wonderful weekend directing the Maine All State Jazz Treble Choir," Facebook, January 14, 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/rosana.eckert/posts/10213941832716736>; Kate Prather Reid, "The Maine all-State Jazz mixed choir was so wonderful!! Great people and musicians-we dug deep into the rep and all left with some new things to think about," Facebook, January 4, 2020, <https://www.facebook.com/kate.p.reid/posts/2609711892440187>.

⁷ "NHMEA Jazz All-State Auditions," Festivals, New Hampshire Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://nhmea.org/festivals/jazz-all-state/>; Nutfield News, "Pinkerton Hosts All-State Jazz Festival at Stockbridge Theatre. The New Hampshire Music Educators Association presented the 2018 All-State Jazz Festival on Saturday, Feb. 3 in the Stockbridge Theatre at Pinkerton Academy," Facebook, February 10, 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/NutfieldNews/posts/pinkerton-hosts-all-state-jazz-festival-at-stockbridge-theatrethe-new-hampshire-/10155189424296129/>.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ "New York State School Music Association 84th Annual Winter Conference," NYSSMA, last modified August 26, 2019, <https://www.nyssma.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/2019-Winter-Conference-Attendee-Brochure.pdf>; "PMEA All-State Information," Pennsylvania Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.pmea.net/pmeaall-stateinformation/>.

¹⁰ "Important Information for Students Accepted into All State Jazz Ensembles," New Jersey Association for Jazz Education, accessed December 3, 2020, <http://www.njaje.org/nj-honors-jazz-choir.html>.

Delaware and Rhode Island are unique in the Eastern Division in that their respective all-state vocal jazz ensembles are hosted by each state’s ACDA chapter.¹¹ In both states, all other statewide honors ensembles—including traditional choirs and jazz bands—are hosted by their respective MEAs. Delaware is unique among the ACDA-hosting states, with both an SATB and an SSAA vocal jazz ensemble.

The remaining states in the division—Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, and Maryland—are alike in that each hosts all-state ensembles through their respective MEAs, and none include a vocal jazz ensemble among them.¹²

Section III: The Southern Division

Throughout the Southern Division, no state hosts a statewide honors vocal jazz ensemble. In spite of this apparent uniformity, these eleven states represent a broad spectrum of organizational approaches to their respective all-state ensembles.

¹¹ “Vocal Jazz,” Resources, Delaware American Choral Directors Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <http://www.deacda.org/vocal-jazz.html>; “Virtual Jazz Honor Choir,” RIACDA, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://sites.google.com/view/riacdaorg/virtual-jazz-honor-choir>.

¹² “All-State Festival & Concert,” Massachusetts Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <http://www.massmea.org/newsevents/all-state-festival-concert>; “All State Music Festival,” Vermont Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.vmea.org/copy-of-all-state-music-festival>; “All-State Festival,” Connecticut Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://cmea.org/student-events/all-state/>; “2020-2021 All State Ensembles,” Maryland Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.mmea-maryland.org/all-state-auditions-handbook>.

Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Louisiana each host one or more traditional choirs and jazz bands through their respective MEAs,¹³ much like the MEA-dominant states of the Eastern Division. Louisiana does, however, include some jazz singing at the all-state level: it is the only state in the country with a dedicated vocal chair in their all-state jazz band.¹⁴

North Carolina hosts its orchestral, choral, and instrumental jazz all-state ensembles through distinct sections of their MEA, and though their MEA includes a band section, the statewide honors bands operate under the auspices of the NC Bandmasters Association.¹⁵ South Carolina shares a similar instrumental separation, with the SC Band Directors Association hosting two all-state jazz bands and an honors combo,¹⁶ while the state MEA's choral division hosts three traditional choirs.¹⁷ Virginia's statewide honors bands, choirs, and orchestra are

¹³ "All Divisions," Georgia Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.gmea.org/all-divisions>; "Conference & Allstate Programs," Tennessee Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.tnmea.org/conference--allstate-programs.html>; "All-State Information," Kentucky Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://kmea.org/InfoCenter/allstate.htm>; "Audition Results: All-State," All-State, Louisiana Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.lmeamusic.org/all-state/all-state-audition-results/>.

¹⁴ "All-State Jazz Ensemble," All-State, Louisiana Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.lmeamusic.org/all-state/jazz/>.

¹⁵ "All-State," Jazz, Sections, NC Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.ncmea.net/sections-2/jazz/all-state-jazz-registration/>; "NCBA All-State Honors Band," North Carolina Bandmasters Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <http://www.ncbandmasters.org/honorsband.html>.

¹⁶ "All-State Jazz Band," Jazz, SC Band Directors Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.bandlink.org/jazz/all-state-jazz/>.

¹⁷ "all-state-2020-2021-instructions," SCMEA Choral Division, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://choraldivision.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/all-state-2020-2021-instructions.pdf>.

hosted jointly by the MEA, the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors' Association (VBODA), and the state ACDA chapter,¹⁸ with a separate VBODA event for instrumental jazz.¹⁹

This trend toward joint hosting reaches an extreme in Florida. There, twenty statewide honors ensembles operate under the auspices of an array of component organizations, including the Florida Bandmasters Association, the Florida College Music Educators Association, the Florida Elementary Music Educators Association, the Florida Orchestra Association, and the Florida Vocal Association.²⁰ The MEA only directly hosts an all-state guitar ensemble and a unique all-state "Popular Music Collective," set to debut in January, 2021. This new ensemble will focus on original student works, and will include a DJ, rappers, vocalists, guitarists, a bassist, drummers, and keyboardists.²¹

The three remaining states represent outliers within the division, and indeed, the country. West Virginia is one of only two states with neither an all-state vocal jazz ensemble nor an all-state jazz band.²² Mississippi and Alabama each host a statewide honors show choir; Mississippi's as part of a joint ACDA/MEA festival,²³ and Alabama's through a separate show

¹⁸ "All-Virginia Band and Orchestra," Events, Honors Ensembles, VBODA, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.vboda.org/index.php/events-2018/honor-ensembles/all-virginia-band-and-orchestra.html>.

¹⁹ "All-Virginia Jazz," VBODA, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.vboda.org/index.php/home-jazz.html>.

²⁰ "All-State Ensembles," FMEA, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://fmea.org/programs/all-state/>; "Component Organizations of FMEA," Programs, FMEA, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://fmea.org/programs/component-organizations/>.

²¹ "All-State Popular Music Collective," All-State, Programs, FMEA, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://fmea.org/programs/all-state/popular-music-collective/>.

²² "Annual WVMEA In-Service Conference," Annual Conference, West Virginia Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.wvmea.org/index.php/2015-02-02-15-01-12/event-schedule>.

²³ "All-State Choirs," Mississippi Choral Directors Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <http://www.msacda.org/all-state-choirs/>.

choir event, hosted by the MEA.²⁴ Though they share common elements with vocal jazz ensembles, show choirs represent a distinct arranging tradition and performance practice, and the two have been represented by independent committees within ACDA since 2004.²⁵

Section IV: The North Central Division

With seven of their ten states hosting one or more statewide honors vocal jazz ensemble, the North Central Division boasts the highest proportion of all-state vocal jazz among the six NAfME/ACDA divisions.

Only two states in the division host their all-state vocal jazz ensembles through their MEAs: Illinois and North Dakota. Illinois leads the region, with both an “all-state” and an “honors” vocal jazz ensemble,²⁶ akin to the two-ensemble model in New Hampshire. Notably, the Illinois MEA is organized into four performing divisions—band, chorus, jazz, and orchestra; both vocal jazz ensembles are hosted through the jazz division, along with two jazz bands and a combo. North Dakota, by comparison, appears more like New York or Pennsylvania, with one vocal jazz ensemble within a unified, MEA-hosted event.²⁷

Indiana, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Nebraska each host one statewide vocal jazz ensemble.

While in each state, the traditional all-state bands, choirs, and orchestras are hosted by their

²⁴ “All-State Show Choir (ASSC), Alabama Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.myamea.org/ava/assc/>.

²⁵ Mark Malone, “A Vote to Expand the R&S National Committee Is Proposed,” *The Choral Journal* 44, no. 3 (2003): 55.

²⁶ “All-State Vocal Jazz,” Vocal Jazz Information, Illinois Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://ilmea.org/allstate-vocal-jazz>.

²⁷ “North Dakota All-State Music Festival,” North Dakota Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.ndallstate.org/copy-of-jazz-band>.

respective MEAs, their all-state vocal jazz ensembles are hosted separately by their state ACDA chapters.²⁸ The contexts in which all-state jazz appears further varies among the four. The all-state jazz bands in Indiana and Iowa are hosted through separate jazz educator organizations; while Indiana’s ensembles perform within the broader MEA-hosted festival,²⁹ those in Iowa perform independently at the Bandmasters Association conference.³⁰ Wisconsin’s statewide vocal jazz ensemble is unique, in that it maintains dedicated chairs for one soprano, one alto, one tenor, and one bass from post-secondary institutions to serve as section leaders.³¹ And at the ACDA conference in Nebraska, the vocal jazz ensemble appears alongside an all-state show choir.³²

Michigan is a unique case in the division: it is one of only three states in the country to host an all-state vocal jazz ensemble through an organization other than an MEA or state ACDA chapter. In an arrangement similar to that found in Virginia or Florida, two independent organizations—the Michigan School Vocal Music Association (MSVMA) and Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association (MSBOA)—host each of the respective vocal and instrumental all-state ensembles within an event jointly hosted by the MEA.³³ The statewide honors vocal jazz

²⁸ “All State Choirs,” Indiana Choral Directors Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.in-acda.org/all-state-choirs>; “Iowa All State Jazz Choir,” Iowa All State Jazz Choir, Facebook, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.facebook.com/IowaAllStateJazzChoir/>; “Vocal Jazz Choir,” Wisconsin Choral Directors Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.wischoral.org/vocal-jazz-choir>; “All State Vocal Jazz,” Events, Nebraska American Choral Directors Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://acdanebraska.org/events/all-state-vocal-jazz/>.

²⁹ “All-State,” Indiana Jazz Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <http://indianajazz.org/allstate.php>.

³⁰ “All-State Jazz,” Jazz Educators of Iowa, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.jeiowa.org/all-state>.

³¹ “Vocal Jazz Choir,” Wisconsin Choral Directors Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.wischoral.org/vocal-jazz-choir>.

³² “All-State Show Choir,” Nebraska American Choral Directors Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://acdanebraska.org/conference/all-state-show-choir/>.

³³ “Welcome to the Michigan Music Conference - 100% Virtual in 2021!,” 2021 Virtual Michigan Music Conference, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://amr.swoogo.com/mmc2021/725333>.

ensemble is organized through the MSVMA,³⁴ along with traditional choirs at the high school and middle school levels.

The states of the North Central Division with no statewide vocal jazz ensemble can be considered in two groups. Minnesota and Ohio both host a substantial number of statewide vocal ensembles, both through their MEAs and their state ACDA chapters;³⁵ ACDA-MN hosts seven statewide honors choirs alone, in addition to the three hosted by the Minnesota MEA.³⁶ South Dakota, by stark contrast, hosts only one mixed choir at their all-state music festival, and though they host two jazz bands and a combo, there is no statewide vocal jazz ensemble.³⁷ South Dakota is also one of a few states to host these ensembles through their High School Activities Association, a state affiliate of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). In addition to music, NFHS hosts a range of interscholastic events in states across the country, including sports and other performing arts programs.³⁸

³⁴ “Vocal Jazz,” Virtual Honors Choir, Michigan School Vocal Music Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <http://www.msvma.org/virtualhonorschoirs#VocalJazzHonors>.

³⁵ “All-State,” Minnesota Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://mmea.org/events/all-state/>; “OMEA All-State Ensembles Application,” Ohio Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://app.getacceptd.com/omea>.

³⁶ “ACDA-MN State Honor Choirs,” ACDA of Minnesota Honor Choirs, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://mnhonorchoirs.org/>.

³⁷ “All-State Jazz Band Handbook 2020-21,” Fine Arts, South Dakota High School Activities Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.sdhsaa.com/Portals/0/PDFs/Handbook/FineArts/6c-AllStateJazzBand.pdf>.

³⁸ “State Association Listing,” Resources, National Federation of State High School Associations, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.nfhs.org/resources/state-association-listing>.

Section V: The Southwestern Division

Though just fewer than half of the seven states of the Southwestern Division host all-state vocal jazz ensembles, the region holds one of the nation's most vibrant statewide vocal jazz programs. Offering an SATB, SSAA, *and* TTBB ensemble through their MEA, Colorado is the only state in the country to host three fully-statewide honors vocal jazz ensembles.³⁹

Missouri and Oklahoma follow the model established in many midwestern states, hosting their respective all-state vocal jazz ensembles through their state ACDA chapters. While Oklahoma's MEA hosts traditional bands, choirs, orchestras, and a jazz band,⁴⁰ Missouri's model more closely resembles that of Virginia, with MOACDA hosting traditional choirs within an MEA event.⁴¹ The all-state vocal jazz ensemble, however, does not perform there, but rather during the MOACDA's own conference in the summer.

Arkansas follows a similar model, hosting traditional choirs and two jazz bands in a joint ASBOA/ArkCDA event, though like the remaining states in the division, they host no all-state vocal jazz ensemble.⁴² Kansas, New Mexico, and Texas each host the majority of their all-state ensembles through their MEAs, though their approaches vary in size and scope. In Kansas, participating schools must be members of their state NFHS chapter to send students to the MEA's all-state ensembles.⁴³ New Mexico hosts three high school jazz bands and one middle

³⁹ "Jazz Choir," Colorado All-State Choir, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://aschoir.com/jazz-choir/>.

⁴⁰ "HS Vocal Jazz Repertoire," OkACDA, accessed December 3, 2020, <http://www.oklacda.org/all-state-organizations/hs-vocal-jazz-ensemble/>.

⁴¹ "All-State Jazz Choir," Summer Honor Choirs, Missouri American Choral Directors Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <http://www.moacda.org/project-definition/all-state-jazz-choir>.

⁴² "Arkansas Music Conference - All-State Clinic," Arkansas School Band and Orchestra Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.asboa.org/All-State/2020/Conference20.html>.

⁴³ "Audition Guidelines," Kansas Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://ksmea.org/allstate/audition-guidelines/>.

school jazz band at the all-state level, performing in a dedicated statewide jazz festival.⁴⁴ And in Texas, the MEA boasts eighteen statewide honors ensembles, including four choirs and two jazz bands, the latter of which are organized jointly with the Texas Jazz Educators Association.⁴⁵

Section VI: The Western Division

The five states of the Western Division represent some of the greatest extremes of statewide honors ensemble programs.

Arizona lies at one end of this continuum, hosting two all-state vocal jazz ensembles.⁴⁶ As does Nebraska's, Arizona's ensembles perform alongside an all-state show choir, though Arizona hosts both ensemble types through its MEA, not its ACDA chapter.

California, like Michigan, hosts an all-state ensemble through an independent organization—in this case, the California Alliance for Jazz (CAJ).⁴⁷ CAJ hosts both the vocal and instrumental all-state jazz ensembles in California; the ensembles perform in a joint all-state event, organized between the California Band Directors Association, California Choral Directors Association, California Orchestra Directors Association, and the state MEA.⁴⁸ In addition to this

⁴⁴ "Jazz," All-State, New Mexico Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.nmmea.com/all-state/jazz-all-state-information/>.

⁴⁵ "TMEA REGION AND ALL-STATE JAZZ ENSEMBLE AUDITION TRYOUT PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES," Texas Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, https://www.tmea.org/wp-content/uploads/Region_Admin/2019/Policy_Documents/TMEA_Jazz_Audition_Policies_and_Procedures_2019_2020.pdf.

⁴⁶ "Events," Arizona Choral Educators, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.azchoraleducators.org/news>.

⁴⁷ "2021 All-State Jazz Ensembles," California Alliance for Jazz, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.cajazz.org/honor-groups>.

⁴⁸ "All-State Ensembles," California All-State Music Education Conference, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://casmec.org/all-state-ensembles/>.

statewide ensemble, two additional independent organizations host broadly regional honors vocal jazz ensembles in Northern and Southern California, respectively—the Northern California Band and Choir Directors Association (NCBCDA)⁴⁹ and the Southern California Vocal Association (SCVA). The SCVA ensemble represents a particularly interesting variation, as it is designated the “contemporary a cappella and vocal jazz studio honor choir.”⁵⁰

Neither Utah, Nevada, nor Hawaii host an all-state vocal jazz ensemble. Utah’s statewide honors ensembles include three choirs and a jazz band, each hosted through the MEA.⁵¹ Nevada’s statewide ensembles include choir at the high school and middle school levels and one jazz band; Nevada’s MEA is also one of a few such organizations to host a statewide honors guitar ensemble, and joins the Texas MEA as one of two states with an honors Mariachi program.⁵² Hawaii’s MEA hosts only an all-state string orchestra and an all-state ukulele ensemble;⁵³ the state ACDA chapter jointly hosts one all-state choir with the Hawaii Youth Opera Chorus.⁵⁴ With no statewide instrumental or vocal jazz ensemble, Hawaii represents the other end of the continuum in the division.

⁴⁹ “2021 Honor Groups,” Northern California Band and Choir Directors Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <http://www.ncbcda.com/2020-honor-groups.html>.

⁵⁰ “Vocal Jazz Honor Choir,” Southern California Vocal Association, accessed December 3, 2020, http://www.scvachoral.org/vocal_jazz_honor_choir.php.

⁵¹ “ALL-STATE,” Utah Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.umea.us/all-state>.

⁵² “All-State Festival,” Events, Nevada Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://nmeamusic.org/nmeaevents/all-state-music-festival/>; “TMEA REGION AND ALL-STATE MARIACHI ENSEMBLE AUDITION TRYOUT PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES,” Texas Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, https://www.tmea.org/wp-content/uploads/Region_Admin/2020/Policy_Documents/TMEA_Mariachi_Audition_Policies_and_Procedures_2020_2021.pdf.

⁵³ “AllStateUkulele2019,” Hawai’i Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.hawaiiimea.org/allstateukulele2019/>.

⁵⁴ “Nā Leo Hou,” The Hawai’i Chapter of the American Choral Director’s Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://hawaiiacda.wordpress.com/events/na-leo-hou/>.

Section VII: The Northwestern Division

The Northwestern Division is unique in that it is the only one of the six that hosts regional honors vocal jazz ensembles; both ACDA and NAFME host All-Northwest honors vocal jazz ensembles during their respective biennial conferences, which occur in alternate years.⁵⁵ It is possible this reflects the region's pioneering vocal jazz history.

Idaho and Washington each host a statewide honors vocal jazz ensemble through their MEAs, with one notable difference: Washington does so only every other year, in alternation with the NAFME division-wide ensemble.⁵⁶ Wyoming hosts an all-state vocal jazz ensemble as well, but not through their MEA; as in Michigan and California, the all-state vocal jazz ensemble in Wyoming is hosted through an independent organization. The Wyoming Jazz Educators (WJE) host both the instrumental and vocal jazz ensembles; most uniquely, they perform at separate jazz festivals in a rotation among four college campuses around the state.⁵⁷

Despite the historical origins of the vocal jazz movement at Mt. Hood Community College near Portland, the state of Oregon does not host a statewide honors vocal jazz ensemble, though traditional choirs and a jazz band are hosted through its MEA.⁵⁸ It is possible that this

⁵⁵ "NAFME All-Northwest Music Group Governing Policies," Washington Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://wmea.org/Content/C208/All-NorthwestPolicy.pdf>; "Northwestern ACDA Conference 2020," NWACDA, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.nwacda.org/2022-conference>.

⁵⁶ "2021 All-Northwest Honor Groups," Washington Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://wmea.org/ardisplay.aspx?ID=240>; "IMEA All-State Auditions," Idaho Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, https://www.idahomusiced.org/events/allstate/as_Auditions.php.

⁵⁷ "All State Jazz Choir and Band Rotation Schedule," Wyoming Jazz Educators, accessed December 3, 2020, <http://www.wyojazz.org/all-state-jazz-choir-and-jazz-band-rotation-and-links.html>.

⁵⁸ "All-State Information," Oregon Music Educators Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.oregonmusic.org/All-State-Audition-Application-Info.html>.

reflects the opportunity for yearly honors vocal jazz participation in the respective NAFME- and ACDA-hosted division/regional ensembles.

Montana and Alaska, like South Dakota, host their all-state ensembles through state High School Activities Associations.⁵⁹ Though neither host a statewide honors vocal jazz ensemble, they both host some form of statewide honors jazz band. Montana's was recently reinstated after a fourteen-year hiatus between 2005 and 2019.⁶⁰ Alaska's is the only statewide honors instrumental jazz ensemble hosted through an independent festival; the Sitka Jazz Festival invites both instrumental and vocal jazz ensembles from secondary schools across Alaska to perform in clinics and to attend both workshops and concerts by guest artists.⁶¹

Section VIII: Summary of Trends at the National Level

A few key trends appear at the national level. The first involves the role of host organizations. Of the twenty-two states that host one or more all-state vocal jazz ensemble, half of them do so through their MEAs. Moreover, since five of these states host two or more vocal jazz ensembles, these MEA-hosted ensembles represent a clear majority of the total statewide honors vocal jazz ensembles, accounting for nearly 60% of the total ensembles.

⁵⁹ "Music," Sports/Activities, Montana High School Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.mhsa.org/music>; "All-State Music Festival," Music, Activities, Alaska School Activities Association, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://asaa.org/activities/music/music-all-state-music-festival/>.

⁶⁰ Michelle McConnaha, "Corvallis' Gladwin selected for 2020 Montana All-State Jazz Band," *Ravioli Republic*, January 11, 2020, accessed December 3, 2020, https://ravallirepublic.com/news/local/article_bfb6e046-0b46-5737-8bc4-999559539257.html.

⁶¹ "Announcing the 2020 All Alaska Jazz Band!" Registration, Sitka Jazz Festival, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.sitkajazzfestival.com/2020-all-alaska-jazz-band>; "School Groups," Registration, Sitka Jazz Festival, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.sitkajazzfestival.com/school-participants>.

Clear regional trends emerge as well. Over 80% of the states with MEA-hosted vocal jazz ensembles are in the northern half of the country. Those that host through ACDA chapters are all located in the midwest, with the exception of Rhode Island and Delaware. NFHS appears to exert a leading role in music education within large, predominantly rural states in the west and north of the country, hosting traditional all-state ensembles in South Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, and Alaska. And most strikingly, none of the states in the southeast host an all-state vocal jazz ensemble.

Section IX: Points of Entry for Continued Research

Several key questions arise from this preliminary study. Of particular interest would be any pattern in the historical processes that led to the creation of these all-state vocal jazz ensembles. What factors contributed to the divide between the MEA- and ACDA-hosted ensembles? Given initial findings, I hypothesize that the most recently established all-state vocal jazz ensembles are ACDA-hosted, though it is unclear whether this reflects any underlying causality.

The emergence of the all-state vocal jazz ensembles in Michigan, Wyoming, and California might also reveal an important aspect of the relationship between NAFME, ACDA, and vocal jazz education, since those states host their respective ensembles through independent jazz and choral education organizations.

The history of recently-established, nontraditional all-state ensembles might provide insights for the future establishment of all-state vocal jazz ensembles. Both the statewide honors mariachi ensembles in Texas and Nevada and the popular music collective in Florida exist

outside the dominant band, choir, and orchestra paradigm, as do all-state guitar ensembles and the all-state ukulele ensemble in Hawaii.

Additional influences on the emergence of all-state vocal jazz ensembles might include the presence of collegiate vocal jazz programs, audition and selection processes for statewide ensembles, and general demographic trends across the country, including socioeconomic, cultural, and racial factors.

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