

Phase 2 – Day 2: Health in Fine Arts Professional Development Workshop TCPAH NIH Grant Project

October 14th, 2019

Day two of the Health in Fine Arts Professional Development Workshop for Fine Arts Educators was held on Monday, October 14th. This event was also led by faculty and graduate students from the Texas Center for Performing Arts Health (TCPAH) and held at Denton Independent School District. The goals of this professional development day were to highlight the impact of performing art-related injuries, synthesize the information discussed during Day 1, and develop strategies to respond to performing arts health-related issues in the classroom.

To begin, Dr. Eric Nestler (saxophone professor at UNT) and Dr. Daniel Peak (Professor of UNT's Information of Technology and Design Sciences) shared their personal experiences with focal dystonia to the group and how the disorder affected their playing and altered their career as musicians. Because these types of injuries can lead to an inability to perform and can cost professional musicians their livelihood, it is imperative that we educate students about health concepts from the beginning of their performing arts education. Teachers in Texas are keenly positioned to meet this need in the classroom because they are mandated by the state to address these health concerns and have the most impact on students learning and performing in their classrooms.



Eric Nestler shares his experiences with focal dystonia and its impact on his ability to play the saxophone.

In order to prepare educators to meet this demand in the classroom, the TCPAH partnered with DISD and worked with six music educators during Phase 1 of this project. We selected six music educators to work with a team of faculty and graduate students over the summer to begin developing strategies to meet this need in the classroom. During Phase 2 - Day 2, these music educators spoke to the entire fine arts faculty about their approach to fulfill

these state mandates in the classroom and reported on the discussions from Phase 1 of the project.



UNT Doctoral Student, Rachel Nyetam, discusses a research project she conducted with DISD in Spring 2019.

Highlighting the history of cooperation between the TCPAH and DISD, Rachel Nyetam, a doctoral student in vocal performance, familiarized the attendees with her study on health education theories in the music classroom. In Spring, 2019, Rachel worked with the Strickland Middle School choirs in DISD to test the efficacy of two health education theories in delivering vocal health information to students. The results of

this research provided the fine arts educators with ideas to deliver health concepts in their classrooms.

Participating in Professional Learning Community Discussions enabled fine arts educators were able to clearly identify the most urgent questions and concerns that were specific to their classroom and rehearsal experiences. These groups had the opportunity to ask industry-experts, Drs. Austin, Chesky, and Lee, questions related to vocal, hearing, and musculoskeletal health, respectively. Through these discussions and small-group experiences, Fine Arts Educators developed distinct strategies that could be implemented in their classrooms to meet state mandates about the inclusion of health concepts.



Graduate Students from UNT
Left to Right: Victoria James, Meghan Taylor, Roger Hoverson, Brian McGoldrick, Kourtney Austin, Nabeel Zuhdi