

From: Pam Vaden <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 12/9/2021 10:31:23 AM
To: Mark Kinzer <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Dana Ausbrooks <[REDACTED]>; Jason Golden <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Choir

Before I send this response to Dr. Kessler, I wanted to run it by you. She noted in her last email that only 1 song on Monday night was secular. So, I responded with the first paragraph. Next, she is insisting that Sarah not participate in any performance in a church second semester. But, [REDACTED] is auditioning in several of these state-run events. Thank you and I wait for your response.

Dr. Kessler,

At the Monday evening performance, pieces were sung from all different backgrounds in all different languages, including Hebrew (3 pieces), Old English, Nigerian (Yoruba), Norwegian, a classic Lauridsen, German, and Liberian.

Regarding future events at churches, I just learned that [REDACTED] auditioned for Mid-State, an event that if she makes it takes place in a church as it has for the past several decades. We have no control over the venue because it is a state-run event. So, if she makes it to Mid-State, the performance is at First Baptist South.

Similarly, MTVA District Choral Festival, which all school choral programs participate in throughout the entire region of Middle Tennessee takes place at First United Methodist as it has for the past many years. Again, we have no control over the venue because it is run by the state MTVA organization. This competition is a huge deal for the choral program because it determines if we qualify for State Choral Festival. Pieces from diverse backgrounds will be sung.

The National Association for Music Education (NAfME) has a statement about this issue that may be helpful:

"In an effort to expand our musical experiences, the highest level of repertoire from the last 600 years will be studied and performed, including works both sacred and secular by master composers. To be sensitive to the diversity of our community, sacred pieces of multiple religions will be presented as works of art with historical significance. The meaning of the text of the sacred work is not the purpose of study, but rather the music is studied because it is worthy repertoire. To exclude from a public school curriculum all choral music which has religious meaning associated with the text is to severely limit the possibilities of teaching for artistic understanding and responsiveness. Such an exclusion has as its parallel to the study of art without any paintings related to the various religions of the world or the study of architecture without reference to the great temples and cathedrals of the world. For more information on this, visit the NAFME website."

From: Mark Kinzer <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 12/9/2021 11:01:23 AM
To: Pam Vaden <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Dana Ausbrooks <[REDACTED]>; Jason Golden <[REDACTED]>
Subject: RE: Choir

Good Morning Dr. Vaden,

I think your response is appropriate and to the point. The program presented did an incredible job of representing Secular and Sacred Music from a variety of cultures. In my opinion it is a stellar example of programming and ensuring the representation of many cultures. I wish everyone across the nation and our district could see this fine representation. I don't have my program in front of me but there were several secular compositions on the program.

In the choral world, it is quite difficult to program as so much of the repertoire comes from religions of all persuasions. This discussion nationally as well as some court challenges prompted NAFME and other national organizations to put out statements concerning music compositions, particularly from the choral repertoire. Arts of all types would be in jeopardy.

Please let me know how I can help as this event is truly a model of excellence.

Thank You,

Mark Kinzer
Director of Fine Arts
Williamson County Schools
Work: [REDACTED]
Cell: [REDACTED]
Twitter: @wcsCOfinearts
<https://wcs.zoom.us/j/87937730038>

From: Pam Vaden <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, December 9, 2021 10:31 AM
To: Mark Kinzer <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Dana Ausbrooks <[REDACTED]>; Jason Golden <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Choir

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From: Dana Ausbrooks <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 12/9/2021 1:27:56 PM
To: Mark Kinzer <[REDACTED]>; Pam Vaden <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Jason Golden <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Choir

Pam,

I have reviewed your response and agree with Mark. Your response is appropriate and on point.

Thanks,
Dana

From: Mark Kinzer <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, December 9, 2021 11:01 AM
To: Pam Vaden <[REDACTED]>
Cc: Dana Ausbrooks <[REDACTED]>; Jason Golden <[REDACTED]>
Subject: RE: Choir

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Mark Kinzer
Director of Fine Arts
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Work: [REDACTED]

Cell: [REDACTED]

Twitter: @wcsCOfinearts

<https://wcs.zoom.us/j/87937730038>

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Sent: Thursday, December 9, 2021 10:31 AM

To: Mark Kinzer <[REDACTED]>

Cc: Dana Ausbrooks <[REDACTED]>; Jason Golden <[REDACTED]>

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