

TMEA Executive Director

ROBERT FLOYD

Never Have We Needed It More

Never has our need for each other been more apparent than during the four-day Celebrating Music Together convention.



Throughout the pandemic, we all began to recognize the one basic need that overrode all others in terms of healing and surviving. We realized we need each other to withstand the challenges that the pandemic brought from its first days. As we all began to teach and work virtually, the isolation began to wear on us more each day, and we soon realized videoconferencing, email, or phone calls were inadequate to meet that need,

both professionally and personally.

We first began to see that need surface in our students. The isolation began to erode social skills, and mental health issues became more prevalent as students' abilities to concentrate, focus, and communicate in a personal manner lessened, though we did not realize the depth of that impact until this past fall when everyone returned to school. Thankfully, a healing process in our classrooms, while still ongoing, is progressing in a positive way.

Initially, many believed our students would weather the pandemic with minimal challenges. After all, kids have grit, they are resilient, and they are tough, and as teachers and parents we generally believed that. However, I recall hearing a mom on a national news program even recently proclaim, *not so fast!* She shared that in the case of her son, he heard that message as well, and because he did not want to disappoint, he suppressed his real emotions over the months of isolation and as a result is battling serious mental health issues.

Even now, NPR recently shared a study that 94% of parents believe their children have social and emotional health challenges because of COVID. Please never forget that *we are the healers in our classrooms*, and

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

CHECK WWW.TMEA.ORG FOR UPDATES

April–May—Attend your spring Region meeting (see page 2).

May 1—TMEA 2022–2023 membership year opens for online and mail/email submission.

May 1—Deadline to nominate students for a Texas Music Scholar award.

May 1–June 1—2023 Clinic/Convention proposals accepted online.

June 30—All 2021–2022 TMEA memberships expire.

July 21–23—TBA, TCDA, TODA conventions in San Antonio.

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