

GWINNETT COUNTY MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION MINUTES

March 25, 2026

PianoWorks

Following our Student Masterclass, David Reesman performed Gershwin's *Lullaby Prelude*.

OFFICER'S REPORTS:

President – Kimber Kwiatkowski called the meeting to order at 11:15 AM. We had a great masterclass. Kimber is in the process of cleaning up the e-mail list for MailChimp. The Atlanta Music Club is offering scholarships. She passed around a flyer.

President-Elect – Kathy Dawal – Our next meeting will be May 13, for our annual Luncheon and announcement of the Teacher of the Year. Kathy Dawal will be in touch with more details via email. Plan to be there to show your support for our 2026 teacher of the year. Anyone with suggestions for a performance during our meeting should contact Kathy as soon as possible.

Secretary – Tina Darden – The minutes were approved as posted on the GCMTA website.

Treasurer – Nancy Morris – The opening balance is \$52,111.28 and the closing balance is \$ 36,373.51. Income and expenses were itemized in the full treasurer's report which was emailed to the membership. The report was approved as emailed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Advisory – Gloria Park – No Report

Anti-Trust – Mary Ann McTier – No Report

Certification – Yanni Chan – No Report

Digital Resources – Kathy Dawal – Digital Resources: As our year is winding down, please think about changes you would like made to your web pages and forms. We are focusing on streamlining our content. Right now, information, such as dates, location and deadlines, is repeated several times throughout an event page. Like repeats in our Festivals, this only gives us more opportunities to make mistakes. Kathy will be sending out information over the coming months to help us create a standard format that can be used with each event while still leaving room for event-specific information.

Directory/Internet – (Open)

Federated Festivals – Melissa Slocum – Area Chair

Melissa is meeting with all District Chairs on April 1st to discuss many items from this past year and then make a few recommendations to the Exec Board if we find changes are needed.

Overall, all Festivals went well - thank you to all participating teachers and students!

Special thanks to Kathy Dawal for organizing the Virtual Festival!

Please be patient with regard to Gold Cups. Chairs submit reports to our State and then the State has steps to complete before they can approve our festival. Then orders are submitted to our State Gold Cup Chair. We do not control the timelines for the actual orders and shipping. Therefore, we do not know when the Gold Cups will arrive. Please do not ask whether Gold Cups will arrive in time for your Spring Recital or event. We have no way of knowing.

Dear Teachers - please READ the emails and the GCMTA newsletters for information about deadlines and how to do things related to our festivals and competitions. We had a lot of unnecessary emails to respond to during critical times. It IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to find and read the information provided on the GCMTA website, in the GCMTA newsletters, in the EMAILS from your Chairperson(s), and in your Federated Bulletin.

- Melissa is working on creating better informational tools for all teachers, so that you can find and see information laid out more visually, simply, and graphically.
- Melissa is working on increased coordination and communication between districts so that we continue to ensure we are offering the events we need to offer for teachers and students. Again, I hope to communicate those things in ways that are easier for teachers to find and understand.

If you have feedback about our Federated Festivals, please let your chairperson know, or please let me know directly. We are happy to consider changes and make recommendations to the Exec. Board for next year.

Thank you for participating in Federated Festivals!

West – Becky Bonam – The West Gwinnett Festival was a very successful, smoothly-run event on Saturday, Feb. 28 at Berean Baptist Church. Out of the 238 who performed in person or virtually, there were 223 Superiors, 12 Excellents, 1 Satisfactory, and 2 Comments Only. Voice Scholarship Winner: Olivia Crook (Deanna Peterson). Honorable Mention: Caylah Griffin, Kari Hassan, Ava Richards (Deanna Peterson), Isla Dysart (Deb Hughes). Woodwind Scholarship Winner: Alaina Boulanger. Honorable Mention: Avery Parry. Both are students of Marcia Rygh.

High School Piano 1st Place Eva Huynh (Cathy Thacker); 2nd Place Sebastian Dimu (Cathy Thacker); 3rd Place Isaac Hong (Cathy Thacker); 4th Place Ariana Encarnacion-Rivera (Marcia Rygh) Honorable Mention: Dinara Fernando, Suny Peck (Susan Andrews); Matthew Goldie (Becky Bonam); Chloe Stanley (Yumi Patterson); Ella Munar (Cathy Thacker); Vedaant Rana (Marcia Rygh)

West had a surplus of \$237.

North – Melissa Slocum/Young Lee – North Gwinnett Federated Festival - March 7th, 2026 at First Baptist Church, Duluth

Total Events: 275

Total Teachers: 22 (5 new)

Out of District: 8

Judges: 8

Superior Ratings = 99%

Fair Rating = 1%

Total Cups Earned: 60-Pt = 4; 45-Pt = 7; 30-Pt = 10; 15-Pt = 57

Overall - Thriving Festival with many great young performers and many teachers helping out; good feedback from judges about the performances and the schedule overall

Biggest Opportunities:

- Create an even more celebratory environment for families and students on the day of the festival
- Continue to support teachers with education/information and organization
- Continuing to upgrade organization of supplies and event tasks before festival
- Continue to involve more teachers in the preparations ahead of time
- Continue to Participate in Virtual Option
- Be Clear about which Events we will offer & Coordinate with other Districts

Scholarship Winners:

1st - Kale Maxwell (Gloria Park) \$500

2nd - Eli Brown (Ping Xu) \$350

3rd - Grace Han (Ping Xu) \$250

4th - Elizabeth Kim (Hyunjung Kim) \$100

Honorable Mention - Nehemiah Yoo (Gloria Park)

Central – Kathy Dawal/Lisa Ogg – Central Federated Festival: We had nearly 200 students participate. Participation and Superior certificates are available for Central teachers in the back. Our Violin winner was

Chaewon Kim, student of Sungsin Kim.

HM: Yuri Jeon, student of Sungsin Kim

HM: Eileen Kim, student of Sungsin Kim

HM: Ellie Jang, student of Sungsin Kim

Our high school piano winners were:

1st place: Oliva Tran, student of Mary Ann McTier

2nd place: Juha Park, student of Tammy Noh

3rd place: Dariana Henriquez, student of Mary Ann McTier

4th place: Elizabeth Robinson, student of Mary Ann McTier

HM: Alicia Kizza, student of Mary Ann McTier

HM: Chloe D'Cunha, student of Olga Pikus

HM: Michael Zheng, student of Mary Ann McTier

HM: Dhruv Honrao, student of Olga Pikus

Our Virtual event went well. We had 66 participants. All videos will be deleted. The rating sheets and scores are in a box in the back. If you sent them to Kathy in a bag or holder, she tried to put the materials back in the same bag. The rest of the rating sheets are combined by teacher and placed in file folders in the box. We have a few that she couldn't match with a teacher. They are also in the box.

GMTA Auditions – Sun Hee Kim – No Report.

GMTA/GATE Theory – Rie Hosoi- No Report

Hospitality – Sarah Peterson – No Report

Junior/Senior Scholarship – Cathy Thacker, NCTM -- Jr./Sr. Scholarship is scheduled for Saturday morning, April 18, 2026, at 9:15am in the recital hall at PianoWorks. Eight entrants are

performing, all in piano. Auditions are open, and you are welcome to come, but we do ask that there be no applause to allow the judge to focus on the performances.

If you have questions, please contact Cathy Thacker, NCTM, Chair, at <mailto:csbt88@gmail.com>.

MED/PED Scholarship – Kathy Dawal – Application deadline is May 1. Please see our webpage for applicant requirements.

Member-at-large – Susan Andrews, NCTM – No Report

Membership – Deb Hughes, NCTM— **Encouraging membership**—especially for something like our GCMTA works best when it feels PERSONAL, VALUABLE, and WELCOMING rather than pushy. Think of it less like “recruiting” and more like *inviting people into something meaningful*.

Here are some practical ways to do that:

- **Make the value obvious**
- **Personal invitations work best**
- **Highlight the student benefits**

Music Day -. No Report

Music Link – Chris Morrow --No Report

MTNA Foundation/GMTA Awards – Mary Ann McTier – No Report

Newsletter – Diana Cleland Passmore – No Report

Performance Day – We are looking for someone to chair this event.

Teacher of the Year – Gloria Park – We have the teacher. Come to our May 13 meeting for the big reveal.

OLD BUSINESS – Thanks to David for performing today. We will be applying for the American Composer Award (\$500 award).

NEW BUSINESS - Valencia Giles announced that Lawrenceville Suwanee School of Music is opening a third location in Snellville. She wanted to let our teachers know about this opportunity. If you have any questions, contact Valencia.

GOOD OF THE ORDER –

Motion to Adjourn –The meeting was adjourned at 11:33 AM.

Attendees: Susan Andrews, Tina Darden, Mary Marshall Dekkers, Patti Bennett, Valencia Giles, Deb Hughes, Sun Hee Kim, Kimber Kwiatkowski, Serene Lee, Young

Lee, Jennifer Luo, Nancy Morris, Gloria Park, Sarah Peterson, Dave Reesman,
Jungwin Shin, Melissa Slocum, Tami Stroup, Cathy Thacker

All actions for this **Executive Board Meeting OR Business Meeting** were taken in accordance with the stated purpose of the organization and in accordance with the Bylaws.