

GWINNETT COUNTY MUSIC TEACHERS EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

August 26, 2026

Zoom Meeting

OFFICER'S REPORTS:

President – Kimber Kwiatkowski called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. Kimber announced that Jennifer Luo has agreed to be our Performance Day Chair.

President-Elect – Kathy Dawal gave a preview of our upcoming programs for the year.

September 23: Cathy Thacker, Middle Movement Syndrome

October 28: Dr. Geoff Haydon, Incorporating Jazz Into The Piano Student's Diet

November 11, 2026: Business Meeting on Zoom, 9:30 a.m.

November 18: (co-sponsor, North DeKalb chapter) Dr. Barbara Lister-Sink, The Lister-Sink Method

January 27: Luncheon and Teaching gems.

Members, we only scratched the surface last year. So, please share your hidden gems, pieces that motivate, build up, dazzle. We particularly hope that you will share pieces you use that are not found in standard method books.

February 24: Lois Finlay, NCTM, using music theory in teaching pieces to enhance interpretation.

March 24: Master Class Dr. Grace Huang, UGA

May 12: May Luncheon and TOTY

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

Treasurer – Nancy Morris

Treasurer's Report for June, July, and August 22, 2026

Opening Balance: \$27,311.01 (corrected balance from May due to outstanding checks posted)

Income:

Membership Rebates \$1617.00

Sr.Club Dues \$276.00

Expenses:

WOY bouquet \$19.00

GMTA awards basket \$46.57

Mailing cost for NFMC awards \$51.79

Federated festivals residual \$695.92

GMTA advertising \$364.50

Webhost bill \$234.32

Dropbox \$119.88

Zelle \$1.44

Closing Balance: \$27,670.59

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Advisory – Gloria Park – No Report

Anti-Trust – Mary Ann McTier – No Report

Certification – Yanni Chan – Yanni plans to be proactive this year in drumming up interest for National Certification, by using both the newsletter and a peer/support network.

Digital Resources – Kathy Dawal – The Dropbox Library is in its beginning stages. Kathy thanked Diana Cleland Passmore and Tina Darden for their taking the time to upload past newsletters and meeting minutes to Dropbox. She will be setting up a system for regular file uploading and getting a permanent link set up for uploading recordings for our chapter's Virtual events.

Kathy is looking for an assistant to work with her as a backup. Because of internet access, she has never been in a position where she was unable to quickly provide help, but it is always a good idea to have another person able to access our information. If anyone would like to work with Kathy on digital resources, please let her know.

Directory/Internet – (Open)

Federated Festivals – Melissa Slocum – Area Chair –

Changes at National (NFMF)

- Certificate orders much earlier - why we had to ask for them from chairs now
- Birth certificates required for birthdate changes in student records in Vivace
- Bulletin online- much more available; Melissa will do a video tutorial for us
- Judging - no more + and -

State (GFMC)

- New officers elected
- Chairs should answer teacher questions first; if you cannot answer a question, forward it to me first. If I cannot answer the question, I will send it to state person. They are getting too many teachers sending questions that chairs should be answering.
- Likely must raise the per student registration fee to 8.50 from 7.50 next year

GCMTA

- Melissa has been creating documents and information that are more visual, less reading; chairs have everything available in Google Drive right now. Can be transferred to Dropbox.
- Younger (millennial and GenZ) teachers do not read websites or newsletters. Many others don't as well. We need to diversify our communication with pictures, videos, shorter communication bursts, and utilize socials if we want younger teachers to participate, attend, and get involved.

West – Becky Bonam – We have secured Berean Baptist Church for our festival site; the date is February 27, 2027; we have our judges; and in addition to piano, voice, flute and theory, we will be offering violin.

North – Melissa Slocum/Young Lee – Young is waiting on three more teachers in North to register. She will send a follow-up e-mail. The Festival Date is March 6, 2027, at First Baptist Church, Duluth.

Central – Kathy Dawal/Lisa Ogg - Festival Date: Saturday, March 20, 2027

Location: First Baptist Church of Lawrenceville

Chair: Lisa Ogg lisa.ogg83@gmail.com

Co-Chair: Kathy Dawal kdawal81@gmail.com

We have only just secured our location and have several new teachers in our group this year. We will be arranging judges once we determine the number of students participating.

Virtual - Kathy will set up a secure Dropbox link for Virtual participants. She is working out how to exclude non-participants from uploading videos. All uploaded videos are secure, more secure than YouTube.

GMTA Auditions – Sun Hee Kim – The 2027 Local Auditions will take place on Saturday, February 20, at PianoWorks. Sun Hee has secured the facility and confirmed three adjudicators.

Beginning this year, the Local Auditions will be held on the third Saturday of February to avoid conflicts with Gwinnett County Public Schools' Presidents' Day weekend break. *(A report was submitted after the meeting.)*

GMTA/GATE Theory – Rie Hosoi- Everything is on the website. There was some discussion on work requirements for teachers who only enter their students in theory and not the performance event.

Hospitality – Sarah Peterson created a Signup Genius for hospitality volunteers and submitted it to be emailed to members.

Junior/Senior Scholarship – Cathy Thacker, NCTM

Jr./Sr. Scholarship is set for Saturday morning, April 17, 2027, at PianoWorks. Dr. Vicente Della Tonia, Jr., will be the judge. Registration is online, and the firm deadline is March 19, 2027; please see the website at <https://gcmta.org/home/index/student-activities/juniorsenior-scholarship> for the information and repertoire requirements. This is a reminder that students must participate in at least one other GCMTA-sponsored event during the school year to be eligible.

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

MED/PED Scholarship – Kathy Dawal –. Registration is open. If you have high school seniors interested in pursuing a Bachelor of Music Education or Pedagogy, please fill in the online form. A print form is also available. Registration deadline is May 1.

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

Membership – Deb Hughes, NCTM - Welcome to **NANCY ELTON** from Atlanta who teaches piano and voice, **YU PARK** from Suwanee, **JEE EUN WADA** from Alpharetta, and **DANIEL WILKINSON** from Peachtree Corners who all teach piano. We are looking forward to having them get involved in our many activities. No one has indicated a

desire for mentors. But if so, is there anyone who would volunteer? - Please contact Deb Hughes.

Our current number of members for which I have received notification as of July is 70. We ended May 2026 with 93 GCMTA members.

We are certainly glad to have new members join us. Do **YOU** know of someone **YOU** can invite to our meetings? There will be a prize for anyone who brings a potential new member to our September meeting! We have seven prizes ready. We can have more available for those who will invite another!!

Music Day – Serene Lee –

The Music Day Event will be held at First Baptist Church of Duluth on November 14th.

Rental fee of the venue is \$700

The judges are:

- Dr. Patti Dinkins-Matthews
- Dr. Grace Huang
- Rebekah Boles
- Donna Bailey — Voice & Piano
- Leslie Kennedy — Guitar & Piano
- Dr. Karen Lin — Strings & Piano
- Stephanie Freeman
- Debbie Murphy
- Lois Finlay — Virtual Judge

Registration begins on September 1st.

We propose to raise the registration fee to \$30 for 1st event and \$20 for 2nd entry to cover judges' fees.

The registration form and lunch form will be updated after the executive board meeting.

(A report was submitted after the meeting.)

Music Link – Chris Morrow -- Chris is now the Regional Coordinator for the Southeast. She works with 7 states in the South to get new students and make

teachers aware of Music Link's mission. Please spread the word to other teachers and associations even if you are not a ML teacher yourself. Thank you!

MTNA Foundation/GMTA Awards – Mary Ann McTier – After discussion, it was decided that our Gift Basket Themes for the Conference will be Children's Music Books and Gardening. Mary Ann will prepare newsletter content for basket donation requests.

Susan Andrews made a motion to designate the chapter's \$100 MTNA Foundation donation toward making Rebekah Healan Boles a Foundation Fellow. Mary Ann seconded the motion. Kimber called a vote and the motion passed.

Newsletter – Diana Cleland Passmore – Please get articles to Diana for the September Newsletter no later than September 1st.

Performance Day – Jennifer Luo will work with Deborah Hughes to learn about Performance Day and begin planning for the upcoming year. She will discuss budget needs for Performance Day (e.g., certificates) at the first general meeting.

Teacher of the Year – Gloria Park – GCMTA presented the 2026 Teacher of the Year award to Rebecca Bonam at our May meeting. Becky's friends and colleagues joined us at the celebration and in the wonderful meal prepared by Kathy Dawal. Becky later sent an email of heartfelt appreciation that has been included on our TOTY webpage. Susan Andrews has forwarded her nomination to GMTA for consideration for the state TOTY award.

Please consider nominees for our 2027 TOTY. All nominations and forms must be submitted by December 31, 2026.

OLD BUSINESS –

Mary Marshall Dekkers is giving up the role of handing out name tags. Kimber will ask a member to take this role on.

Congratulations to GCMTA for winning four NFMC Senior Club Awards this year. This means we won in each category that we entered and that's huge because many clubs enter from all over the US! Here's the breakdown:

~American Women Composers - \$100

~American Music Award - 3rd place \$100

~Schramm Parade of American Music in November - 2nd place - \$200

~Jazz Award - \$100

Discussion was had on how to use the prize money from the NFMC Senior Club Awards.

NEW BUSINESS

Deb Hughes made a motion that the NFMC prize money of \$500 will be used for \$15 cash prizes or gift cards per each non-competitive piano event judge at the three Federated Festivals. Becky Bonham seconded the motion. Kimber called a vote and the motion passed.

Kathy Dawal made a motion that Music Day and Federated registration fees be raised to \$30 for first registration and \$20 for second registrations, effective for the 2026–27 year. Susan Andrews seconded the motion. Kimber called a vote and the motion passed.

Nancy Morris made a motion to open a Truist Bank Money Market account and deposit \$10,000. This was seconded by Susan Andrews. This was approved by vote.

Kathy Dawal made a motion that the compensation for judges increase to \$45/hour, and that the mileage increase to .55/mile with a cap of 150 miles round trip. Susan Andrews seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Young Lee raised concerns about low meeting attendance among teachers who participate in festivals. There was discussion on how to encourage teachers to attend our meetings. Membership Chair Deb Hughes and Young Lee will meet to discuss further.

GOOD OF THE ORDER -

Deborah Hughes announced the NFMC Angie Greer Music and Poetry Contest; deadline is November 1. Open to students; members are encouraged to visit the NFMC website or contact Deborah Hughes for details.

Melissa Slocum suggested purchasing an 8x8 foot banner with the GCMTA logo for use as a photo backdrop at festivals, Music Day, Performance Day, and auditions. Melissa researched local vendors; estimated cost is approximately \$140 for the banner and stand. No vote was taken; Melissa will bring a formal proposal to the next meeting.

Cathy Thacker invited all members to a private concert by Jericho Vasquez at her home on Saturday, September 19, at 4:00 PM. A follow-up email will be sent.

Cathy Thacker thanked Kathy Dawal for her extensive work updating the chapter website, and Deborah Hughes for securing the NFMC prize money.

Motion to Adjourn –The meeting was adjourned at 11 :56 AM.

Attendees: Susan Andrews, Becky Bonham, Tina Darden, Kathy Dawal, Rie Hosoi, Deb Hughes, Kimber Kwiatkowski, Young Lee, Jennifer Luo, MaryAnn McTier, Nancy Morris, Gloria Park, Sarah Peterson, Melissa Slocum, 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.