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ESFRS Board/Parent/Teacher Town Hall: Thursday, March 25, 2021

In attendance: Kathleen Schoen, Kelly Komm, Leigh-Anne DeVries, Dorothy Beyer, Darrell Biggelaar, Beth Gardner, Roni Kraut, Rosemarie Siever, Kayleigh Cline, Dan and Genoa Valle, Nicolette Garman, Susanna So, Frank Doruiter, Anna Constantin, Baiju Vareed, Ruth Mitchell,

Meeting begun at 6:36 pm

Informal agenda:

What are the takeaways?

- Technology we want to continue to use even after we are all back in person?
- Audience outreach
- Scheduling
- Parent involvement
- Online resources - wonderful to have, they take hours to create!

What have we learned?

- Taking turns instead of playing together - is this really so strange?
- The importance of recordings in learning to LISTEN
 - listen to reference recording
 - listen to yourself
- Cyborg Llama
 - opportunities for additional group practice on your own
 - participation
 - access - internet equity
 - school issues, esp. for older students

Moving forward:

- plans for resuming in person instruction.

- when / how is it safe to do so?
- liability
- controlling number of close contacts
- government regulations vs the real science of it all

Discussion:

- Dr. Suzuki was often championing technology by encouraging listening to LP's as part of music training. He would likely be happy to embrace video conferencing during this pandemic to keep practices going!
- Various parent feedback:
 - Don't miss the driving, but nothing replaces in person playing together.
 - Doing ESFRS meetings online in the future might be a good idea since turnout might be much better.
 - The technology glitches are frustrating and cumbersome.
 - Online makes it possible to collaborate with virtually (literally!) anyone!
 - Something to consider might be planning an outdoor event down the road, and having the kids use Thursday nights to practice on their own. Then once the weather improves, and protocols allow, we can all participate in an outdoor group event.
 - Time differences don't even matter really, as we can still connect at mutually beneficial times.
 - Fancy Zoom accounts make language translation possible with multi-lingual groups.
 - Online group concerts with the ability to invite anyone, anywhere, is something we should continue doing post-Covid.
 - With sick kids, being able to quickly pivot to an online lesson in cases of illness, etc, is something to continue.
 - Mental health is important too, and an option for an online lesson is a good thing to keep in instances of anxiety, stress, etc.
 - Good to keep in mind the differences between preparation for a real concert vs. preparation of an online performance. Is one getting the same focus as another? Is one concert experience teaching the same as the other?
 - Inquiring into continuing online groups for the rest of this school year:
 - Toolbox group seems to be really enjoying it.
 - Little bit older kids are hit & miss when it comes to enjoying and wanting to continue online. Some are bored and find it monotonous. Some miss the social aspect.

- For the much newer kids, online group lessons are all they have experienced. It may take some time for them to be comfortable with in-person group lessons.
 - Might be worth having a “getting to know you” group lesson once we can do them again.
- In asking teachers about how they feel about waaaaay down the road when we can see each other in-person: would gradually resuming lessons by one or two students at a time be a good way to go? Two teachers answered and were both unable to predict such a thing. Both felt they couldn’t even imagine it yet.
- Group activities for getting to know each other right now online might be worth considering. Different online board games or drawing games might be fun for the kids. Kelly suggested Kahoot, Rosemarie suggested Skribbl.io (unsure of spelling). Ruth suggested Backyard.co. Frank shared a link to an amazing video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7cPh3hJCDhQ>
- Concluding, Kathleen thanked everyone and basically noted that it appears no one is in a hurry to change the online element of group flute. Overall, a lovely and interesting discussion!

Meeting concluded at 7:51pm.