

Advising

Experience has shown that the most effective way to retain new members is to involve them immediately in the activities of the association, and to assure them that their contributions are essential to both the association and their profession. Through personal contact the adviser is in a unique position to discover the interests and leadership qualities of the new member, and to guide each new member in a direction that is equally beneficial to the member and the association.

The following pages contain specific suggestions and tools for establishing a formal state advising program. Many local associations do some of these advising activities in a less structured way.

None of the forms included here need to be sent to the national office. They are for your use in evaluating your program's effectiveness.

State Advising Program—Recommended Procedures

Securing Advisers

- Appoint an advising chair or designate a person responsible for the program. Both a state chair and local association chair may be appointed, if necessary.
- Secure a list of potential adviser volunteers.
- Provide each adviser with a description of adviser responsibilities and a form for them to document advising activities. You might hold an advising workshop to discuss and formulate procedures.

Contact With New Members

- A designated person (advising chair, association president) will send a welcome e-mail to each new member, including the following:
- A brief description of student opportunities provided by your state and local associations (festivals, competitions syllabus and so on).
- A brief description of teacher opportunities provided by your MTA (certification, conferences, workshops, newsletters, master classes and other programs)
- Name and contact information of adviser.
- Advisers will contact new members. You could hold an informal meeting or coffee to introduce new members to their advisers.

Ongoing Communication

- Advising chairs and membership chairs will keep in contact so that no new member is "lost."
- The advising chair will contact all advisers periodically to monitor activities.
- Advisers will document activities and write comments on how the program is proceeding.
- If both a state and local advising chair are appointed, communication between levels will be maintained to ensure success of the project.
- Annual evaluation of the program will provide opportunity for alterations and improvements.

Responsibilities Of An Adviser

- Contact your assigned new member as soon as possible.
- Discuss information included in the welcome letter; answer any questions that the new member might have.

- Invite the member to an organized new member meeting, to your studio or for lunch just to get acquainted.
- Discuss the privileges and responsibilities of MTNA membership at all levels.
- Acquaint the new member with national, state and local programs and activities. Emphasize the connection between all levels of the association.
- Help the new member to determine those areas that are of most individual interest; encourage and initiate participation as early as possible.
- Offer to accompany the new member to a first association meeting.
- Encourage certification. Discuss all the avenues available and assist with paperwork. If certification by examination appears necessary, offer to assist with procedures and preparation.
- Assist the new member in preparing students for competitions or exams. Help to familiarize new members with syllabi, competition fees and deadlines.
- Be prepared to answer questions regarding local studio fees, studio business practices, and community performance opportunities for student and teacher.
- Communicate frequently with advising chair.

Member retention is critical to the future prosperity of MTNA. First-year members must have a positive and valuable experience with MTNA for them to want to renew their membership. Focus most of your retention activities on this group. Personal contact—especially with an adviser who is a veteran member of MTNA—is the best way to make new members feel included and valued.

Sample adviser's reports follow on the next page.

Adviser's Report—Model 1

Please complete this form at the end of your one-year advising.

Your name: _____ New member's name: _____

Contact descriptions	Date(s)	Amount of time spent	Comments
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Initial contact:

Follow-up contact:

(Explain programs and calendar, assess goals.)

Activity assistance:

(List the program and type of assistance given.)

- a.
- b.
- c.

**Invitations extended to
MTA educational workshops, local
association meetings, state conventions**

(Please list each item separately.)

- a.
- b.
- c.
- b.
- c.

**Invitations extended to
MTA educational workshops, local
association meetings, state conventions**

(Please list each item separately.)

- a.
- b.
- c.

Year of advising: _____ State/local association president
signature: _____

Adviser's Report—Model 2

Please list all new members contacted this year. Return to Chairperson by: _____

	Initial Contact	Follow- up Contact	Activity Assistance	Invitations Extended
Name:				
Address:				
City, Zip:				
Phone:				
	Initial Contact	Follow- up Contact	Activity Assistance	Invitations Extended
Name:				
Address:				
City, Zip:				
Phone:				
	Initial Contact	Follow- up Contact	Activity Assistance	Invitations Extended
Name:				
Address:				
City, Zip:				
Phone:				
	Initial Contact	Follow- up Contact	Activity Assistance	Invitations Extended
Name:				
Address:				
City, Zip:				
Phone:				
	Initial Contact	Follow- up Contact	Activity Assistance	Invitations Extended

Name:

Address:

City, Zip:

Phone:

Name of adviser: _____ Return to: [Advising Chair]

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Advising Evaluation Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is not to evaluate you or your adviser, but rather to assist us in improving the advising program for our new members. Please return this form to

by _____. (Attach a separate sheet if necessary.)

Your name: _____

Your adviser's name: _____

Year of advising: Initial contact from your adviser—Date: _____ Time spent: _____

List the areas in which you received assistance and rate each one's effectiveness.

	Not helpful		Very helpful		
a. _____	1	2	3	4	5
b. _____	1	2	3	4	5
c. _____	1	2	3	4	5
d. _____	1	2	3	4	5
e. _____	1	2	3	4	5

List any other areas in which you would have liked to receive help from your adviser.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

List the meetings you attended.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

List the workshops you attended.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

List the volunteer activities in which you participated.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

List the student programs (event, number of students entered and levels) in which your students participated.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

List the state convention programs that you found most helpful or interesting.

- a. _____
- b. _____

c. _____

List the areas in which you have some future interest.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

How could the advising program further assist your orientation to and participation in the
_____ MTA?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____