

NON-MUSICAL ASPECTS OF A SUCCESSFUL BAND PROGRAM

So much of what makes an instrumental program special has little or nothing to do with notes and rhythms. I feel like a big part of our job is to teach kids how to be better people and how to succeed in life.

PRIDE/INTEGRITY

- Teach the kids how to be good citizens, both in and out of the classroom.
- Help them understand that the band is a family-a team.
- Instill pride in your students by telling them they are a special group of kids-they are! Teach them to take pride in their instruments and band room.
- Make students aware that when they become a part of the band, they no longer just represent themselves.
- Teach and expect students to do the right thing, even when no one is watching. Help them understand what self-discipline is and how it works. Teach them what you expect of them as a member of the band.
- Set an example of treating all students equally, even those who are the most annoying!
- Demand attentiveness, participation, and common courtesy.
- Encourage common sense, and initiative.
- You must model daily the traits and behaviors you expect from them.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

- Get to class on time, with all materials.
- Take care of your instrument. Don't let others play with it as if it were a toy. This demonstrates responsibility as well as showing respect to your parents who had enough faith in you to invest in an instrument.
- Demonstrate responsibility to other band members by practicing and being able to play their part. Do not display any behavior that keeps others from learning.

OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

- Communicate with the parents- let them know what's going on in class and what they should be hearing at home in the way of practice. Be sure they understand the class expectations, and the rewards they can expect!
- Let parents know when their kids are struggling and how they can help them. Also make them aware when their child is doing well, or has made significant improvement in a particular area.
- Get to know everyone at your school. Develop a friendly relationship. Volunteer your time and talents when needed.

REHEARSALS

- Be prepared for class and ready to start at the designated time each day. Have chairs and stands neatly set up when students arrive.
- Have instructions on the board when they enter the room.
- Start at designated time with something band related- not with roll call. When ready, take roll quickly and get right back to business ASAP.
- Don't allow students to come to the podium with problems before class.
- Move around during class. Know what the kids are doing – who's participating and who's not. Make sure they are all on task. Always have them finger along as you rehearse other sections.
- Say what you need to say, and then move on. If you talk too long, they tune you out.
- Tell them what you're going to do, then do it. If you make a habit of repeating simple instructions, they learn that they don't need to listen the first time.
- Don't dwell on misbehaviors. Address it directly and move on. If problem continues, have them pack up and sit in a designated area until the end of class when you can talk to them one on one.
- Have a purpose for each rehearsal and be sure the kids know what it is. It's always better to work towards a specific goal.

PERFORMANCES

- Stress timeliness! 10 minutes early is on time.
- Appropriate/uniform dress for performances-girls skirt length and blouse coverage. When in uniform EVERYONE must adhere to the uniform code with no exceptions.
- File onstage and off in orderly fashion. Carry instrument in front of body as if ready to put it up to play. Discuss exactly how you want them to come on and off, and when and how to stand at the end.
- Professionalism- no cheering, yelling, name-calling from the parents and no waving from the kids. Any behavior that directs attention to an individual instead of the performing group would be considered inappropriate. They should behave like professional musicians.
- Explain appropriate concert protocol. Explain this to the students as well as to their parents.

SUMMER

- You are a band director; you don't get "summers off". Summers are to prepare for the next fall.

Things to do:

- Take students to camps or consider a summer program to keep them playing!
- Be sure uniforms are cleaned, organized, and stored properly.
- Have previously used music sorted and filed.
- Give thought to what pieces you'll want to play in the coming year.
- Get lockers and general areas cleaned and organized.
- Get your office area cleaned and organized.
- Take care of necessary instrument repair.
- Update student records- addresses, phone #'s, etc.