

**BUILDING BLOCKS TO
DEVELOPING A
COMPREHENSIVE BAND
PROGRAM**

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Director of Bands (retired)

Lassiter High School

LEADERSHIP CURRICULUM

- Election of Student Officers (previous Spring
- Purpose Appointments (principal players, etc.)
- Selection of Drum Major(s) and Section Leaders
- Criteria, Expectations and selections

RECRUITMENT

- Contact with prospective freshmen
 - In letter form to parents/students during the winter months
 - Always audition incoming players
- ...MAKE IT A BIG DEAL!!

RETENTION

- Make band the “cool” place to be
- Each year must be a rewarding musical experience for the students
- Efficient management of rehearsal time is vital for student retention
- Too much practice will destroy esprit de corps
- Your flexibility is key; you must respect your students and their time

MARCHING BAND

- Purpose

 - To assist in (musical) esprit de corps in the community

 - To assist in maintaining school traditions

 - Entertainment at football games

 - Musical education of your audience

 - Performance of well-rehearsed music and drill

- Musical Components

 - Traditional, Drum Corps Style, others

PROGRAMMING

- Music to be performed must be of the highest quality
- Decisions must be based on many factors (i.e. skill in group, instrumentation, strong/weak sections, solos, musical substance, organization, form, structure, etc.)
- Long term (months) versus short term (weeks) must be considered

CONCERT BAND

- Music selection

Find symphonic music appropriate for group.

Music should be challenging yet within grasp of most students.

Selection of music to highlight sections is encouraged
but not at the expense of the ensemble.

Music highlighting weak sections will strengthen them.

Broaden your horizons.

Develop a library of reference recordings.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL REHEARSALS

- Never rehearse the marching band more than the concert band/chamber.
- Required attendance
- Opportunity to develop and refine small group skills

Refinement of:

Literature, detailed work, uniformity and clarity of individual sound, matching articulations, sectional and tutti balance, blend, timbral matching, refined pitch, note lengths, broader musical comprehension

DIRECTOR PHILOSOPHY 101

- Comprehensive musicianship
- Sectionals
- Master classes
- Listening Sessions
- Individual Coaching
- Ensembles
- Concerts by local talent

DIRECTOR PHILOSOPHY 102

PRIVATE INSTRUCTION & WIND PEDAGOGY

- **Good modeling; not for just the “kids with promise”**
- **“Skills: they’ve got to have skills” - AW**
- **Private instruction is not for remediation but is for enhancement**
- **Learn your craft – whatever the job entails**
- **Director Knowledge is critical**

DIRECTOR PHILOSOPHY 103

CHAMBER MUSIC PROGRAM

- Can be implemented as early as marching band camp
- Offer incentives for participation
- Host regular recitals and concerts
- Develop a library of music and recordings of each instrument
- Large and small ensembles
- Great place for concert percussion

DIRECTOR PHILOSOPHY 104

AUDITIONS FOR BAND PLACEMENTS/CHAIRS

- Make it a complete examination
- Do auditions yourself to evaluate progress
- Always include scales, arpeggios, etudes/solo and sight reading
- Give students at least two weeks to prepare audition material
- Post scores immediately

DIRECTOR PHILOSOPHY 105

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

- Polite, yet focused rehearsals at all times
- Talking during rehearsals??
- Neat classroom encourages attention to detail
- Never allow students to enter classroom noisily
- At times, make your conversations relevant to popular culture
- Heads and shoulders in place

DIRECTOR PHILOSOPHY 106

CLASS STRUCTURE

- Warm-up (Scales in Unison)
- Long Tones/Lyrical playing
- Chords
- Chorales
- Tuning (length of tubing AND ear training)
- Technique exercises (Class Method Book)
- Rhythm/Articulation Building Exercises (Method Book)
- Sight reading Exercises (Method Book or Lit.)
- Singing
- Literature

FOCAL PERIODS

CONTESTS, CONCERTS, EVALUATION

- Macro - Micro – Macro
Full Band, Choirs, sectionals, solos, choirs, Full Band
- Comprehensive Musicianship
Historical, group projects, video conference with composer, imagery
- Score Study
Sing every part, hear every chord, markings, indicate phrasings
- Modeling
Speak in musical terms, recordings, iPods, reference material

CAMPS

Local/Regional/National Camps

High School Symphonic Band Camp (Fri/Sat/Sun) **

7TH & 8th Grade Symphonic Band Camp (Sat/Sun) **

Beginning Band Carnival (Sat) **

Marching Band Camp (Mon-Sat)

Jazz Band Camp (Fri/Sat/Sun) **

Chamber Music Camp (Fri/Sat/Sun)

BAND TRAVEL

- Educational Intent
- Balanced sets of events
 - Advanced planning
- Fully articulated budget
 - Community support
 - Classic Spring Trip

YOUR MUSICAL HEROES

COMPOSER(S)

PEDAGOGUE

INTERPRETER (INSTRUMENTALLY/VOCALLY)

POPULAR MUSICIAN(S)

CLASSICAL ARTIST(S)

JAZZ ARTIST(S)

CONTEMPORARY HEROES

JAZZ COMPONENT

American Music

Belongs in every music classroom

Small Ensemble (musical and social benefits)

Listening to masters

Developing Improvisation

Guest artists

DEALING WITH ADMINISTRATORS

Principal - the leader of the school

Meeting times (before & after school)

Developing a relationships in their interest area

Executive Secretary

“They just don’t understand what we do” - so teach them

Address band, conduct band, announce for the band, guest of honor, take on trips

BAND BOOSTERS

Should be a strong ally

Communication of your philosophy

Attend Meetings

Establishing the Agenda

By-Laws (critical)

Assist in selecting officers

BUDGETS

A forecast but needs to be well planned out

Pie Charts are great and lean them heavily toward quality instruction

Live musicians as source

Full Year budgets with monthly flow charts for planning

Clinics/Conferences for directors (must be their suggestion)

Personal Date Forms

WHO ARE YOU?

Must be Creative (Walt Disney Effect)

Must be enthusiastic and knowledgeable

Must learn your craft

Must be respected

Must be a Musical “sponge”

Must be a Lifelong learner