
Grow and Cultivate Your Small School Band Program

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Culture

Student Leadership

- **Create a core leader group that uses peer accountability to keep students focused on goals**
 - **Qualities we look for in student leaders: not always the people who lead loudly, but also the ones that lead from behind the scenes**
 - **Intrinsically motivated**
 - **Positive attitude (most of the time)**
 - **Servant heart**

Goal Setting

- **Students set goals at the beginning of each semester**
 - **Goals are posted for all to see**
 - **Goal setting is guided by the directors using SMART goal system: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Based**
 - **Students are also encouraged to set personal goals and discuss those goals with directors so we can help them make a plan**
 - **Reassessment of goals in a post mortem session to analyze what went well and what could have gone better**

Community Presence

- **Perception vs. reality**
 - **Not everyone gets to be in the “room where it happened”**
- **Elementary school presence**
 - **Drumline performances**
 - **Student demonstrations**
 - **“HS Band Director” visits**
- **Community performances: take EVERY opportunity**
 - **Volunteer Jazz Ensemble**

- Banks, nursing homes, parades, special events
- **Logo**
 - Don't have one...get one.
 - Put it everywhere.
- **Advertise accomplishments, tell your story!**
 - Newspaper
 - Website
 - Social Media
 - Banners
 - Newsletter

Curriculum

Elementary

- **All students Pre-K through 5 receive music everyday. (25 minutes)**
- **Divided programs throughout year**
 - Christmas Sing-Along
- **Vertically aligned**
- **4th & 5th Community Choir**

Beginner Band

- **Split 6th grade beginners (WW, Brass, Perc)**
 - Brass (horns every other year)
 - WW (double reeds in 7th grade)
- **Main Focus**
 - **Rhythmic Stability**
 - **Pass-offs**
 - **Stickers, brag tags, etc.**
 - **Posture**
 - **Tonal Development**
 - **Use multiple resources**
- **Building the Binder**
 - **Rhythm**
 - **Fundamentals**
 - **Musical Mastery, Recipe for Success**
 - **Beginner Books**

- Online resources
- Fingering Chart (laminated)

JH Band

- Continuation of fundamental concepts
 - Rhythm Pass-offs
- Creating a “Band Sound”
- All Region, S&E
- Spring competitions based on instrumentation and progression.

High School Band

- Year divided into 4 overlapping sections
 - Marching, All Region, S&E, Concert
- Marching
 - Summer Band
 - Separate leadership camp
 - Sectionals (teachers brought in)
 - Split marching/playing
 - Team building
 - Booster Presence
 - Music pass-offs
 - Accountability
 - Make music more accessible
- All Region
 - Begins in summer
 - Both HS & JH
 - Did improvement happen?
- S&E
 - Every student learns something!
 - During-period preparation, sectionals, rotationally
 - Meet the students where they are
- Concert Band
 - Reinforces concepts taught throughout the year.
 - Sectionals, during period & afterschool
 - Music Passoffs-scheduled, in person & recorded
 - Fundamental Focus

- Tonal Concepts
- Rhythmic Stability
- Articulation

Consistency

Mentors

- Don't have one...get one!
- Quarterly program assessments.
- Ask questions, share ideas, implement solutions.
- Same idea, different vernacular.

Administrative Communication

- Weekly visits
 - In person
 - Find something to talk about
- Join the administrative team
 - Get first-hand information
- Never stop asking
 - Make a list of needs vs. wants (ask for both)
 - Budget, uniforms, trailer, instruments, band hall, staffing
- Know your board members, admin staff
 - Go out of your way to say hello!
 - Most will not know what you do, but will be glad that you do it!

Program Communication

- Use ALL the tools: Social media, Group apps, Website
 - Take pictures, sing praises
 - Celebrate successes with the community
- Band Boosters
 - Align goals
 - Built-in advocates
- Keep other activities informed.
 - School calendar
 - Emails, phone calls, texts, newsletter

Define and Demand

- **Expectations**
 - Is that how we _____?
- **Fundamentals**
 - Let it go once...it's gone.
- **Personal Teaching**
 - Positive takeaways
- **Instructional Goals**
 - Making your “Best...Better!”

Resources

Teaching Rhythm Logically (*Williams*)

Musical Mastery (*Burks, Desoto, Johnson, Meredith, Talanca*)

Recipe for Success: A balanced curriculum for young horn players (*Houghton/Nye*)

A Fresh Approach to the Snare Drum (*Wessels*)

Habits of a Successful Beginner Band Musician (*Rush/Scott*)

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