

**The Joy in a Lifetime of Teaching:
Thoughts on Ensuring Longevity as a Teacher
2013 UMEA Mid-Winter Conference
John Miller – Presenter**

“There is nothing more noble than affecting the life of a young person. It is a worthy lifelong commitment. And it is a profound way to contribute to others” -Dr. Tim

What can we do to make all this happen?

- Develop the best possible music program and involve as many students as possible.
- Everything we do is advocacy
- Personal thoughts on ensuring longevity.
 - Recall what got you into this profession in the first place.
 - Excuses –
 - Following success or failure!
 - Small, not enough students
 - Lack of administrative support
 - Need time for family
 - The model of Scouting
 - Desire to work with youth
 - The Methods of Scouting – The Patrol Method / Sectionals etc
 - Get Trained – Wood Badge / Covey
 - Enjoy what you do! Don’t get poisoned by the faculty room.
 - Humility and a willingness to learn
 - We all make mistakes, get over it and move on

The Vision

- DREAM BIG!!!
- If I had the “Ideal” program, what would it consist of?
- Make a list of what you need or want and systematically make it happen!

Share the “Vision” with others

- Spouse
- Mentors/Friends
- Music Staff / Students / Parents
- Administration

Recruitment

- Systematic and focused
- Music Missionary at all times. “What instrument are you going to play?”
- MB Tour of Elementary schools
- Involve music stores
- Parent/Student meeting
- Instrument selection
- “Band Bash”

Musical Goals

- Quality vs. Quantity
- Selection of challenging and motivating music
- Music is a vehicle we can use to affect students’ lives

Calendaring

- Share long range with parents and students (1-2 years out)
- Avoid conflicts (don’t make students choose between events if possible)

Communication

- Newsletters, Charms, Website, Texting, email, etc

The “Team” Concept / Delegate, Delegate, Delegate

Key Staff

- Assemble a group of teachers who share your vision of the program and who will join forces with you to help to make the vision become a reality
- Who can be your staff?
 - Feeder Teachers, School teachers, Private Teachers, Parents, College Students, Alumni
 - Give them an assignment then empower them to do it

Relationship with H.S./ JH Director

- Curriculum coordination
- Recruitment
- Marching Band
- Guest clinician/Conduct on Concert etc.
- “Team” concept

Feeder Directors

- They are “Essential” to your programs long-term success.
- Get them actively involved in your program and you get involved in theirs.
- Develop a “Total Program” philosophy

Sectional Teachers

- Get the “Best” to serve as musical models for your students
- Make them a part of your instructional team
- Private Instruction
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Develop an “Esprit de Corps”

- Staff shirts
- Dinners
- Clinics,
- Concerts
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Staff Recognition

- If people are not told they are appreciated, they will assume the opposite
- Share the responsibility and glory
- List on programs
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Student Leadership

- Training Sessions
- Select the best players not the most popular person
- “Esprit de Corps” among sections
- Recognition

Booster Organization

- Their purpose is to lessen your load so you can “Teach”!
- Can’t live with them, Can’t live without them!
- Create a relationship of respect and trust.
- Your parents are your most effective advocates for music!!
- Long-Term Boosters are Key!

Lead, Lead, Lead

- Make decisions and stand by them, but be flexible?
- Your band will be a reflection of yourself
- Spiritual leader of the band program
- Have a vision and share it with key people
- Set Goals and write them down
- Advanced planning
- Executive Band Directing
- Support of school administration
- You don't have to "go with the flow"
- React positively to change
- Make things happen

Care and Feeding of your Administrators

- One of your jobs is to make them “Look Good”.
- Invite to concerts and recognize their attendance.
- “State of the Band” meeting and written report at the end of the year.
- Create a relationship with School Board members and District Staff.
- Don’t create problems for them. They have enough without your help.
- How to work with/sweet talk your principal, secretary, custodian, choir, orchestra, drama teacher.
- **Things to ask Principal and/or Head Secretary**
 - **Budgets!!!** Where does the money come from? What does the program get each year? How to look at the budgets. How to spend and account for the money. Bidding process for equipment. Is there a way to get money for things (music, equipment, software) besides just the music budget?

- **Music expectations-** Are there community events the ensemble is expected to play at? Parades, field shows etc. Is Pep Band required? How many games are expected, just region games or every game?
- **Travel-** Procedures for out-of-state and non-school related trips. How to get them approved and what the requirements are. (Chaperones, notice) How do I get students out of class?
- **Band Uniforms-** Does the school own any? What are the procedures and where are they stored?
- **Fundraising-** What can you do for a fundraiser? Are there limits on how many you can do in a year?
- **Scheduling-** Who does it? How soon in advance can things be on the calendar?
- **Auditorium-** Who schedules it? How is it used/shared? What's the procedure for scheduling?
- **Custodians-** Who is the head custodian? What the hours the school is open? Is it possible to come after hours, how to do that? Exterior key? Who can use the music room, do they schedule through me, or the school? Do I have to let outside groups use the music room or the equipment?
- **Wish list-** Of instruments and equipment
- **How do I resolve scheduling conflicts?** In the Auditorium, music room and region festivals (track meet same time as Region Festival).

Finances

- Budgets
- Fundraising
- Accountability and transparency
- Ordering procedures: PO's, Credit Card, Bids, etc.
- Music, can I borrow?
- Repair

Community Involvement

- Represent your community at community events.
- Develop a relationship with community leaders.
- Join forces with your community Arts Council.
- Start a community Band!
- Recognize and reward contributors!

Mentors and Mentoring

- Seek role models to emulate but Be Yourself.
- Jermie Arnold – A desire to learn Visiting other programs -
- True Collaboration – Go to lunch
- Invite fresh Ears into your band room. Cooking Cabbage!
- Pay back to the profession by helping others be successful.

Opportunities to Excel and Showcase

Concerts

- Be prepared with a strong musical product
- Publicize, Publicize, Publicize
- Quality program filled with Advocacy Quotes and info on your program.
- Short, Entertaining and informative

Invitations to Major Events

- Be honest
- Fiesta Bowl
- Rose Parade
- Bands of America National Concert Band Festival
- Bands of America Regional and National Competitions
- Presidential Inaugural Parade
- Macy's Parade
- Mid-West

Tours

- Make them centered around music.
- Fun activities
- Creates unity among ensemble, students and parents
- Make sure they are organized first class
- Do it yourself vs. Tour company

Community Performances

- Be selective
- Develop long term relationship (Bank of AF, Doug Smith, Savages)
- Recognize contributions

Continual Publicity

- Special invitations to administrators, board members, business leaders, etc.
- Develop a relationship with local press.
- E-mail press releases
- Posters

All State and Festivals

- All-State- When are the dates and how do I get my kids to be involved?
- Recruiting ideas and plans
- Recognition at concerts and in programs

Develop the Social Aspect of your Program (Tribal Mentality)

- Be the “Best Gang in Town”
- Logos and clothing
- Social events
- Summer events
- Camps
- The music room as their second home

Sharpen the Saw

- I lost my own identity
- I had to choose between my job and my marriage.
- I want to spend more time with my kids.
- I’m burnt out from all I have to do to be a good director.
- I am always tired and stressed out.

Professional Development

- Be involved in state & National organizations
- NAFME
- NBA
- Music For All
- Bandmasters Associations
- Volunteer for committees
- Serve when asked

Personal Development / Life Balance

- Get a life! Teaching music should not consume you.
- Family comes first. “Marry wisely or not at all” McBeth
- Involve your Spouse and Children
- Monday Collaborations
- Personal escape activities.
- Professional Development
- Attend Clinics and workshops
- Read journals and books
- Dust off your instrument and rediscover why you got into this business in the first place!
- Join a community performance ensemble
- How to register for MENC/UMEA/NBA/ and conferences

Music: It’s one subject that prepares students for life.

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