



August can be exciting in the band world—but it can also be tough. Sometimes students we thought would be with us for years decide not to come back.

We want every student to stay in band and love this activity as much as we do. So when someone leaves, it's easy to ask: What did I do wrong? What could I have done differently? Why didn't they want to stay?

Years ago, Aaron Bryan from Palen Music gave me advice that has stuck with me: Focus on the students who are choosing to be there. We should still listen, reflect, and look for ways to improve, but we can't let the loss of a student steal the joy from those still in front of us. Maybe it's time to hit Ctrl + Alt + Delete.

CTRL — Control ourselves.

We can control how we respond and work to create a place where students feel valued, supported, challenged, and like they belong.

ALT — Alternate our mindset.

Instead of focusing on who isn't there, look at who is and make their experience the best it can be.

DELETE — Delete the negativity.

Stop comparing this year's numbers to someone else's, or even your own from five years ago. Reflect, adjust, and move forward.

Our programs aren't defined only by how many students are on the field, on the stage, or on the roster. They're also defined by the experiences we create for the students who choose to be there.

IMPORTANT DATES

All-State Band Registration Window

November 3-24, 2026

All-State Band Auditions

December 5, 2026

All-State Paperwork Due

December 15, 2026

All-State Payments Due

January 12, 2027

All-State Band/MMEA

January 27-30, 2027

MBA Summer Convention

June 27-30, 2027

Control what you can. Alternate your mindset. Delete the negativity.

<https://missouribandmasters.org/>



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FREE RESOURCE

Looking for fresh ideas for your jazz program? Check out Dobie Carroll's Jazz: Class Structure and Resources for practical ideas on daily routines, improvisation, theory, assessment, ensemble structure, and more—with plenty of ready-to-use resources along the way!

Mr. Dobie Carroll's Jazz Class Structure & Resources

Did you miss the 2026 MBA Summer Convention?

You're in luck!

If your MBA membership is up to date, you can log in to the MBA website and access materials and resources shared by our 2026 convention presenters. Catch up on what you missed—or revisit your favorite sessions!

This Is Your Village

As we jump into another school year, remember: you don't have to do this alone.

Whether this is your first year teaching or your thirtieth, there will be days when you don't know the answer, rehearsals that don't go as planned, and moments when you wonder if everyone else has it figured out. They don't.

One of the greatest things about our profession is the people willing to answer a question, share a resource, listen after a hard day, or remind us why we do this.

MBA is your village. Reach out. Ask the question. Share the struggle. Celebrate the win. And when you see someone else who needs their village, be that person for them.

We're better when we do this together.

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Thank You to Our Sponsors

The Missouri Bandmasters Association extends a heartfelt thank you to all of our convention sponsors for their generous support of the 2026 MBA Clinic & Convention. Your partnership helps make it possible for us to provide outstanding professional development, meaningful networking opportunities, and valuable resources for band directors across Missouri. We are grateful for your continued commitment to music education and for investing in the success of our members and their students. Thank you for helping make this year's convention a success!

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A special thank you to Ernie Williamson Music for their continued support of the Missouri Bandmasters Association and music education across Missouri. Their commitment to serving band directors, students, and school music programs makes them a valued partner in our profession. We appreciate their continued investment in music education and their support of MBA!

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