

BUILDING BETTER BANDS

Missouri Bandmasters Association



IMPORTANT DATES

NOVEMBER 7-21
ALL STATE BAND
REGISTRATION

DECEMBER 2, 2023
STATE BAND AUDITIONS

JANUARY 24-27, 2024
MMEA

JUNE 16-19, 2024
MBA SUMMER
CONVENTION

Beginning Band by Brad Hudson-MBA President

This newsletter will relate to both the beginning and end of our instrumental music education programs. Just like in Sarah's article on page 2, all of our programs are different. In some there are separate people teaching beginners, and in others they have the same teachers throughout their entire band experience and sometimes they enter music experience K-12. The similarity is their excitement to try something new and to be part of something. You cannot describe the look on a student's face when they pick up the instrument that ends up being "the one" and they make a beautiful and natural sound. For this to happen, I believe there are three things that must happen for students to be successful in the band.

#1. They must want to play the instrument.

#2 They must test the instruments to see what instrument(s) is the natural fit. Many times, a student naturally grabs an instrument, they have never touched and they make a natural sound. Then, they know that is what they want to play.

#3. They must have a good quality instrument and equipment to be successful. Many parents do not want to invest in something because their child may quit. That is a valid concern. Encourage them to buy used instruments of specific brands. Many of the off-brand instruments do not play well, will not play with a characteristic sound, and many times cannot be repaired due to cheap metal and lack of replacement parts.

Beginning band is the foundation. Tone, postures air support, balance, blend, articulations, and phrasing all starts here. Work to get them on the right instruments so you can Build Better Bands in your school district.



Sponsor Feature: Conn-Selmer and Hal Leonard

Our summer convention would not be possible without the support of our sponsors. This year we had three Platinum Level Sponsors. This month we would like to feature two of them. Conn-Selmer is the leading manufacturer of student, intermediate, and professional instruments. They make many different brands of instruments and are well known around the world. Hal-Leonard is the world's largest music publisher and has published many of our students method books and other music literature.

With the help of Conn-Selmer and Hal-Leonard we were able to bring in Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser as a keynote speaker at the Missouri Bandmasters Association Summer Convention. Dr. Tim brought laughter, wisdom, to all ages of band directors. He also had the opportunity to spend time with the 1-3 year teachers at the convention.

Marching Band by Sarah Sacco- MBA President-Elect

Marching bands come in all shapes and sizes! Just like the communities we teach in the set-up of our programs vary. Some schools have no marching band, some only play at football games, some are competitive but on a very small scale, some put efforts towards a competitive show but are not "all in", and some travel across the country to compete with the best of the best. Here is what everyone needs to remember...none of these programs are "a better way" than the other! The most important thing is teaching kids music and marching band is just one avenue to do that! Find what works best for your community, your school, and your students!

Here are some tips, tricks, and thoughts after years of teaching marching band. The first and most important step is buy-in. YOU have to buy-in before your students will. If you don't love what you are doing they will not either, but if you are excited and invested your students will be most likely to be the same. Your students are often a reflect of YOU. So show them what you want them to show you! My next tip is to remember to have some fun. Sometimes I think we forget as band directors that when a student first joins band it is because it looks like fun! Don't lose that! Every minute of every rehearsal isn't always fun, but think about ways you can incorporate fun into your program. Lastly, and in many ways the most important, marching band is still BAND. Focus on music first. You can have everything else perfect. They could march wonderful, sets are hitting, props look like right out of a movie, but if they can't play, none of it matters. Marching band is about putt everything else together to make music visual, but without the music it isn't band!

We wish you all the best this fall and happy marching!

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