

## Philosophy of Education

I am going to be instructing students in instrumental music. A student's experience in my program will be that of individual growth and teamwork. For individual growth, students should learn more than just the basics of mathematics, languages, science, and history. They need to be introduced to various non-academic subjects as well, and be encouraged, if not required, to hone at least one particular skill such as dance, auto-mechanics, painting, martial arts, baseball, drumming, etc. Developing mastery of a particular skill at a young age is important practice for the ability to master additional skills later in life. Regarding teamwork, each student will be one member of an ensemble, a team of musicians, all striving toward the same goals. Each student will be dependent on the participation and cooperation of everyone else in the group. Students who participate in my music program will become "miniature masters" of their particular instruments *and* become a cooperative/contributing members of our microcosmic society. Music will simply be my students' vehicle for developing themselves as individuals within a group of other individuals for the larger society, commonly referred to as "the adult world."

As far as the nuts and bolts go for in the classroom, my students will have specific responsibilities. For example, the procedure for the beginning of class: be on time and ready to rehearse, which means, have instrument cases put back into lockers, be seated, have all equipment and materials set up--such as instrument, music stand, sheet music, be warmed up and ready to produce the appropriate sound at the drop of my baton. My students will be responsible for showing up to all outside obligations such as performances and fundraising events, unless they have been excused because of illness or special circumstances.

My role as their instructor, *and leader*, will be the demonstrator and shining example of all the attributes I will expect from them. I will be ready and fresh for each new day. I will communicate my thoughts to the best of my ability, not only to my students, but to the parents, administrators, and community members. I will lead the ensembles by literally standing before them to conduct the music and by offering words of “how to,” suggestions, and wisdom in helping them to make good decisions. It will also be my responsibility to provide a safe, nurturing environment. I will manage any disputes and conflicts as soon as possible to avoid escalation. I will treat my students with respect and compassion.

In many communities in the United States, the local high school band is an important part of the town’s culture. As the director of such an ensemble, I will want to make the relationship extremely positive. The band will be active in the community in such ways as performing in parades, churches, hospitals, schools, football games, and holiday celebrations.

It is human nature to maintain what is good and improve what is bad. The educational world is always looking for renewal and reform. I believe continuing the tradition of American marching bands and symphonic bands is *good*. Healthy traditions maintain healthy nations. But as much as there is room for tradition, there is also room for reform and innovation. Change is necessary for a nation to improve and grow. My students will play familiar tunes, but will explore new styles of music, new instruments, and new ways of thinking.