

The Gift of Service

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At this time of year, we all tend to be in a giving frame of mind. Service is a great opportunity to give back to our profession...and there are ways to serve in many capacities and at many different levels. “To Lead is to Serve” is one of those axioms that I have heard forever; even going back to my high school Drum Major camp days listening to Dr. Tim speak to many eager student leaders. And it is SO very true!!

As a Band Director, we have so many avenues in which service is needed. Here are a few suggestions:

At Your Campus

Most schools have a Campus Improvement Team (CIT) consisting of teachers, administrators, and parents. Depending on the district, this body sets campus wide policy and helps guide many campus based decisions. Having a voice on this committee can definitely help promote and defend Fine Arts at your campus. Hey, you might even get a free lunch whenever the CIT has a meeting!!

Other campus based committees might be available and having the Band Director on board shows the other teachers and administration that you are a TEAM PLAYER and have a vested interest in things outside of Band. This helps build relationships with Admin and fellow teachers that can benefit you and your program in the future.

At The Region Level

This is where I learned so much in my first five to ten years of teaching. I started off helping someone that was organizing an all region band. Then, a few years later, I was the organizer. It was great to coordinate with the clinician and I learned so much from working with them throughout the Region Clinic/Concert. Doing this also helped me to learn better ways to organize, communicate, and manage time.

Another opportunity is helping with All Region auditions. Yes, we are required to attend the auditions if we have students entered, but I highly encourage you to get on a judging panel or at least volunteer to be a monitor. This is a huge learning opportunity especially for younger directors. The Region Band Chair will GREATLY appreciate having extra judges on hand. And, if you don't end up being needed to judge or monitor, you can offer to stick around and help out with things in the contest office.

TMEA has several elected Region Officer positions that you could consider. These positions are elected at the Spring Meeting every two years. What a great chance for you to not only serve your fellow music educators, but also represent the Region at the State level.

The TMEA Mentoring program is another opportunity for you to work with a younger director and help provide an instant “phone call away” resource. This can be such a rewarding experience by getting to share ideas and learn new things yourself from another colleague.

UIL has the Music Advisory Committee made up of members from each region. This committee has input to UIL on many important matters and again, allows an opportunity for you to share ideas from your local region to the State UIL Office.

TBA also has the Region Rep position which is selected by your TBA Board Member every two years. If you are interested in this opportunity, please reach out to your TBA Board Member and let them know.

At The State Level

For both the TMEA and TBA conventions, there are MANY service opportunities available. This could include helping monitor or preside over a clinic, actually presenting a clinic, judging All State Auditions, assisting with Honor Band listening sessions, helping with tabulation during the All State auditions, assisting with the All State Student registration, assisting with the Member Registration, and these are just a few ideas.

These conventions are a huge undertaking and being involved not only helps make things run smoothly, but provides you with so many networking and learning opportunities.

As you prepare for your Spring Semester, take a few moments and think about how the **Gift of Service can inspire, encourage, uplift, recharge, and help others while doing the SAME for YOU.**

I hope to see you at the TMEA convention and at the TBA Convention/Clinic next July!!