

Classroom Management, Discipline & Motivation



Kim Garza

As band directors, we are the managers of our programs. How we manage the team directly affects the learning process and overall success of our students and program. Managing a team successfully, especially the size of a band organization, involves having a great bag of tools that include strategies for effective classroom management, tips on how to avoid discipline issues that interrupt the learning/teaching process, and ways to increase intrinsic motivation within your program. By creating an enjoyable learning environment, we can begin to cultivate discipline and motivation, which lead us into a classroom atmosphere where there can be a great balance between working hard and having fun, and one that inspires our students to perform better on a daily basis.

As educators, our goal is to deliver instruction in a way that reaches our students.

Classroom Management, Climate & Culture

As educators, our goal is to deliver instruction in a way that reaches our students. The first way this can be achieved is by having great classroom management and creating a positive culture and climate where instruction can be received without disruption. Effective classroom management gives students a chance to LEARN and us the ability to TEACH, while in turn enjoying the process and our time together, which can greatly affect student success and teacher longevity. Below are some tips that can be effective in creating a good, positive, and safe environment for you and your students.

Climate - *Establish an environment that is organized, clean, positive, and safe.*

- Have an organized environment that students walk into daily as this not only creates a calm environment as students walk into your room, but also teaches them what your expectations are for keeping and respecting the space.
- Set expectations for how students enter your room, seating arrangements and how/where to organize their own materials. What goes on music stand, do you want things under or next to seat, do you want nothing at their seat that can be a distraction to your organized environment, etc. Have a plan!
- Build relationships with your students. Greet them daily, know their names, interests, share appropriate stories/experiences that relate to them and allow them to get to know you, check-in with them about their day/progress, etc.
- Create ownership and leadership skills by assigning student tasks, such as students that oversee lights or chairs and stands, collecting items/assignments at start of class, setting up the metronome, reminders of materials that should be out on music stands, passing out music/materials, countdown person, etc. The more involved your students feel, the greater the chances of them taking pride in what they are doing and learning each day.
- Create a learning space that is also fun and positive. Decorative and fun, accolades on wall, meaningful quotes, memes, birthday board, band member of the week, etc.

Culture - *Create a culture where students love to practice and perform.*

- Set expectations for behavior, classroom routines and expectations from day one! We want to ensure that students mutually understand and respect each other and the culture of the classroom. Having some basic structure also allows students to feel safe. Keep the rules simple and be sure to post these set rules or behavioral expectations somewhere in the room. It is important to also follow through with consequences for disruptive behavior. Private conversations with a student are a great place to start, so as not to embarrass or give the student more negative attention or promote more disruption.
 - Praise students for their good work and efforts. Giving each student in the class even the smallest bit of praise can go a long way in keeping students motivated and engaged. As often as possible, try and share these positive comments with parents as well. Students feeling supported both at school and home make for a very positive experience for the child as well as the classroom environment as a whole.
 - Give opportunities for students to interact in an organized manner.
 - Actively monitor. Don't feel like you must always teach from the front of the room.
- Walk around, interact, teach in between, behind or amongst student seating. This is a simple way to keep students engaged, "in-line," and comfortable around you.
- Keep students actively engaged. This is band! Kids love our class because they get to move, play, participate out loud verbally, etc. Try different techniques to keep every student participating positively while working with individuals or small groups. Great way to develop individual confidence, teamwork, togetherness, and keep kids on task. Plus, your admin will love seeing this environment and think you're a pro!

Discipline - *Establish a code of classroom etiquette through good classroom management.*

Establishing a code of classroom etiquette through good classroom management diminishes occurrences in behavioral issues. It is important from day one to set expectations and follow through when not complied with. Many times, discipline issues can arise from not having order in the classroom. The more routines, expectations, and engagement you can have in place for students daily, the more possible it will be for them to thrive.

- Model the kindness and respect you expect your students to have for you and each other. Through your leadership and role-modeling, students can quickly adapt to appropriate classroom behavior.
- Give feedback appropriate for the situation and keep it positive – a quick comment, standing by a student, private conversation after class.
- Have a system in place to follow up with consequences when inappropriate behavior persists such as contacting a parent via phone, email, or even having student placing a call to parent themselves to explain the disruption in their day. Keep emails or phone calls positive before jumping into concerns. Communication with parents early on can many times nip things in the bud before things can get out of hand.
- Have a plan to get students back on track quickly such as a quick hand signal, preferential seating, time out/take a deep breath area. My favorite technique is to assign student a task that engages or redirects the student back into the learning process and reinforces positive participation.
- Praise, praise, praise! The smallest comment to a student about ANYTHING they are doing well can go a long way in keeping a student on task and not causing disruption to the learning environment. You can praise them very quickly and privately in class, aloud amongst their peers, or to parents by sending a quick message home or even through school accolades if there is something like that in place on your campus to promote positive behavior.
- Keep students active! In band, this is easy to accomplish if the teacher has prepared and planned every step of an engaging lesson. The more active students are, the less time for disruptive behavior. This doesn't mean solely keeping the horn in their face. Teach listening skills! This is just as important in keeping good discipline in the classroom as anything.
- Again, maintaining good routines and classroom expectations, keeping healthy open communication and relationships with students, and realizing that each day is another day to be positive and help a student be successful are strategies that can help avoid any discipline issues in your learning environment. Be patient, but firm as you establish a positive learning environment.

KIM GARZA is in her 24th year as a music educator. She holds a Bachelor of Music Education degree from the University of Texas-Pan American. Mrs. Garza is currently the Director of Bands at Jose M. Lopez Middle School in the North East ISD in San Antonio. Prior to her current position, Mrs. Garza has also held positions in San Antonio as the Associate Director of Bands at Lopez Middle School, Director of Bands at Alamo Heights Junior School, Associate Director of Bands at Alamo Heights High School and Associate Director of Bands at Del Valle High School in Austin. Mrs. Garza is an active clinician, mentor, adjudicator, and guest conductor for both All-Region bands, UIL contests and summer university music camps around the state. Professional affiliations include being a member of TMEA and TBA. Mrs. Garza is married to Mr. George Garza, retired band director/active percussion instructor. They have 3 boys-Ryan, Jacob, and Riley. They enjoy sharing their love of music together.

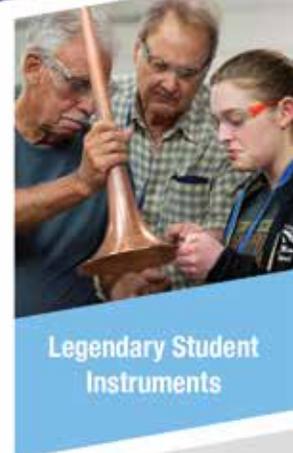
Motivation - Motivating your student can come in different forms, intrinsic versus extrinsic.

Motivation is an important component to the success of the student and overall learning environment in your classroom because even with a great lesson plan and every other aspect in place, an unmotivated student cannot thrive. Because each student is unique, so is what motivates them. Developing intrinsically motivated learners involves a love of learning or interest in music, their instrument, and band in general. Extrinsic motivation would be outside forces to gain something such as a reward, but this is not sustainable. It is imperative that we get to know our students and what motivates them and have as many tools in our box as possible to best help them succeed.

- Creating a safe environment where mutual respect and expectations are established is the first step.
- Have a classroom culture and space that is inviting. The aesthetics in your room should be inviting.
- Build healthy relationships with each other through fun "get to know you" exercises. Team building exercises can do the same. A student wanting to be in your class is half the battle!
- When you think of motivation, think positive. Praise students for their hard work or efforts. Even noticing what may seem like the smallest achievement from a student can have a huge impact on the mindset they carry with them the rest of the day and building their self-esteem in your classroom.
- Set clear goals and high expectations for your students and allow them to set goals for themselves and the team as well. Extrinsic vs. intrinsic.
- Don't give up! Some students/classes will respond well to rubrics, charts, graded assignments, general pass-off goals, stickers, etc. If a student does not respond well to same objectives as rest of class, don't be afraid to create what works for them. Remember every student is unique, and what works for one may not be what works for another.
- Share experiences of both successes and failures of your own with your students. Show them it is okay to struggle and even fail when working towards a goal. Finding the motivation to keep going is often something students struggle with because they feel alone. "Without failure, there is no success."
- *Anonymous*
- Band family! Building community within your program is excellent motivation that comes from students/parents. Parent volunteering, peer assistance, buddy systems, program communication are just some ideas to keep everyone feeling invested.
- Strive for excellence! Don't be afraid to show, teach, share, and demand excellence! It's no doubt that many of us are motivated by having witnessed amazing programs that have a wonderful culture of excellence and community. Your students, parents, and admin feed off your energy!
- Be a cheerleader for each and every student in your program! Not every student in your program may go on to be a professional musician, but every student has a place in your program and something to contribute! Find that thing in each student and you will set up a community of musicians that thrive, want to be there for each other as teammates, and that want to leave a legacy for future students in your program to be successful long after they are gone.



Industry and Education Partnering Together



Supporting Music Education Worldwide
Through Personalized Service and Support



Tim Lautzenheiser
Sr. Vice President of Education

Connect with us today!

education.connselmer.com

@connselmereducation