

# Being a "GREAT ASSISTANT" is Crucial to the Success of the Total Band Program

Sponsored by Phi Beta Mu

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## Philosophy

- ❖ *We can't spell success without 'U'*
  - An Assistant should be treated as an Associate
  - All directors are a team - work together
  - Don't take each other for granted

## ***The Relationship***

### Communication

- Be clear about job expectations/assignments
- Don't assume the other person knows what you want, express yourself clearly and professionally
- Take time for planning sessions
- If something is bothering you, talk it out
- If there is a difference of opinion, come to an understanding
- Don't be afraid to ask for help
- Keep the head director well informed of everything going on with your groups/classes
  - Make sure everyone on staff is aware of student issues, even if they are not in your class; every teacher will have contact with every student at some point

### Support

- Be each others cheerleader
  - Be loyal to one another
  - Share each others successes
  - Shoulder the blame when necessary
- Be sensitive to each others moods and feelings
- Be a good listener
- Be open minded

- Mentorship
  - Watch the head director and other teachers and learn
  - Ask questions
- Show a united front for administrators, students and parents
- Promote all music programs on your campus
- Just like the head director, maintain a good relationship with all students
- Have a good relationship with the parents of your students
  - Most likely will be around for 3-4 years
  - Can be your biggest advocate
  - Don't be afraid to contact them if there is a problem - do it prior to the student getting home from school
  - Don't treat them as the enemy
  - Caution!!! Don't become 'best friends' with parents, maintain the teacher/parent relationship

## ***Teaching and Responsibilities***

### **Curriculum**

- Set and follow parallel goals
  - Have specific goals/objectives that go beyond contest
- Be pro-active in developing goals for the program
- Defer to the head director if the occasion arises....the buck does stop there
- Take some aspects of the curriculum and make them your responsibility for the entire program
  - Theory day
  - Rhythmic Reading

### **Teaching**

- "Head Director" of the non-varsity group(s)
  - Treat them as your top priority
  - Let them know how important they are to the program
  - Build leaders - have officers with specific duties
- Motivate students to excel
- Encourage retention no matter what ability level
- Set high standards for your beginners and non-varsity group(s)

- Realize students in the non-varsity group are less mature and need more patience and fundamental work
- Make it fun
- Try not to show frustration in front of the students
- Build self esteem
- Hire clinicians for your non-varsity group
- Be realistic with music choices -ask for advise
- Be consistent with head director in terminology, counting system, fundamentals, ensemble sound, etc.
- Assist with the varsity group, there are more performing responsibilities associated with this group
  - Sectionals
  - Pull out individuals from rehearsal
  - Be an extra set of ears in the rehearsal

### **Non-Teaching Responsibilities**

- Take some of the jobs not pertaining directly to teaching or budget
  - Assigning instrument slots
  - Assigning instruments
  - Inventory
  - Keeping the band hall clean and organized
  - Maintenance requests
  - Collecting forms and money
- Be aware of the things the head director is responsible for, but you may not see - behind the scenes - understand their need for more 'conference' time
- Be active in the band parents organization and don't let your 'groups' be overlooked
- Anticipate things that need to be done and get the ball rolling
- Be involved in decision making - calendar, budget, etc. - but realize that the head director has the ultimate say
- Be present and active at varsity activities as well as non-varsity
- Be aware of and follow school district policies as well as campus policies
- Handle as many issues not directly relating to music making as you can

- Reeds (purchase of)
- Bathroom passes
- Health room passes
- Instrument repairs
- Do your own paperwork
  - Entry forms
  - Bus requests
  - Purchase Orders
  - Bus seating charts
  - Be organized
  - Field trip forms
- Plan social activities for your non-varsity group
  - Have fun with them
  - Keep a scrapbook
  - Establish or support traditions that coincide with what the head director has already implemented
- Find time to continue to grow as a musician
  - Conducting Symposium
  - Perform with a professional or community group
  - Summer workshops
- Make time to be with family and friends

#### Hiring an Assistant

- Personality compatibility or complimentary
- Teaching philosophy
- Good musician
- Past experience or first year teacher
- Instrument field of expertise
- Special skills brought to the program