



Long Term Success in a 1A School

CLINICIAN:

Carl Idlebird

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HENRY B. GONZALEZ CONVENTION CENTER

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Texas Bandmasters Association Convention

July 27 – 30, 2014

“Long Term Success in a 1A School”

Clinician: Carl E. Idlebird
Date: Sunday, July 27, 2014
Time: 4:45 p.m. - 5:45 p.m.
Place: CC Room 216

This clinic is designed for young and interested directors of 1A schools or small schools with one director. Suggestions will be made to help the participants to arrive at and sustain a successful band program.

I. Build Your Rapport(s)

1. “Love them to death” (people know when you are real)
 - a. You have the privilege of treating everyone the same
 - b. You have the privilege of facilitating their love of music
 - c. You have the privilege of teaching them about intrinsic values
2. Develop good relationships with students, parents, administrators, school board members, teachers, coaches, patrons, the community (you need them)
 - a. Most of the uncooperative ‘spirits’ come from a lack of communication and relationship
 - b. “It takes a village to raise a child”
 - c. The kids deserve a successful experience in everything they participate in
3. Be professional (you are a teacher first):
 - a. Support the district’s policies
 - b. Be on time
 - c. Dress nice
 - d. Lead by example
 - e. Don’t isolate yourself
4. Plan to stay a while (longevity helps to build trust, consistency, and support from families – look forward to siblings):
 - a. It may take a while to build it
 - b. Those who stay in the program like knowing what to expect
 - c. The longer you stay, the more ‘ownership’ you can take
 - d. Some things get easier for you

5. Do things for and in the community (they will do things for you):
 - a. Perform at patriotic events
 - b. Have a “Big Band Dance”
 - c. Perform at the local nursing home
 - d. Participate in local parades
 - e. Play music that your community will enjoy (Country, Jazz, R&B, Polkas, Mariachi, etc.)
6. Go to the kids’ ‘other’ events whenever you have time (i.e. baseball / softball games, basketball, Quinceaneras, etc. – it is amazing what spending a little time on them will do):
 - a. Being a band director can be a position of influence
 - b. This gives you more opportunities to show that you care
 - c. You show your support for kids who are not in the band program
7. Be flexible with schedules (there will always be conflicts)
 - a. Don’t lose control (remember the rapports that you have built)
 - b. Accommodate the kids but have make-ups planned
 - c. Rehearse well with who you have
8. Look for “Cooperative Learning” opportunities (examples: an art show with music / a musical)
 - a. A valuable learning opportunity (History, The Arts)
 - b. An unusual opportunity for cooperation (teacher/teacher, teachers/students, students/students)
9. Build your student leaders and mentors:
 - a. Teach your leaders to lead by example
 - b. Relate the leadership and followership dynamic to ‘real life’
 - c. Students helping students is a win – win proposition (one of the reasons I became a director).
10. Remind the students about the importance of respect for adults, peers, and things.
 - a. You are not the only one who should have the privilege of enjoying the kids
 - b. The program cannot afford to run chaperones and bus drivers away
 - c. Good help is hard to find
 - d. Make sure you get compliments everywhere you go

II. Get Help

1. Invite seasoned directors into your band hall
 - a. You didn’t learn everything you need to know about this job
 - b. There are many who are willing to help (your former directors, retired directors, surrounding band directors, TMEA Mentoring Network)

- c. Don't be afraid or embarrassed to ask
2. Develop a strong band booster organization
 - a. Can be a tremendous asset
 - b. You have to be involved and at the meetings (parents can fight like the kids)
 - c. The success of the organization depends on the leadership
 - d. Can organize the extra help
 3. Ask for a band secretary
 - a. A relief from paper work / You have more time to teach
 - b. Helps to keep things organized (inventories, fundraising, purchase orders, etc.)
 - c. Another person the kids can trust
 4. Ask for and work with the general music teacher
 - a. A tremendous help in preparing the kids for band
 - b. Kids develop an appreciation for band early
 - c. A great experience in Elementary can enhance the future experiences

III. Be Very Organized

1. A successful flow depends on how organized you are
 - a. Organize for the daily flow
 - b. Organize for the year's flow
 - c. Organize to address specific problems
2. You can have high expectations if you organize for it
 - a. Set the picture / show kids what you are trying to reach
 - b. Work things slowly / Gradually add
 - c. Dream bigger
3. Good discipline develops when kids buy into high expectations
 - a. The kids want to be successful too
 - b. The kids enjoy meeting those expectations
 - c. It is especially helpful when goals and expectations are clear
4. Take care of little things
 - a. Set your band hall up and have music on the stands before they arrive
 - b. Keep things as clean and organized as possible – pride
 - c. Get seated before you begin any warm-ups (individual or band) or take restroom breaks
 - d. Make percussion assignments

5. Teach well (You have to live with what you produce)
 - a. Be sure that your beginners are taught well fundamentally
 - b. Start band in fifth grade
 - c. Have a scope and sequence for each band

IV. Build your players

1. Build musicianship / know your players
 - a. Hear them play (taped, after school, individually in class)
 - b. Have some days that are devoted to practice during class (or at least part of the time – and monitored)
 - c. Use chair test wisely (can have an adverse effect – a 7th grader beating a junior)
 - d. Everyone learns scales, all-region music, band etudes
 - e. Do as many solos and ensembles as you have time to work (director chooses wisely)
2. Challenge your kids (push them enough for improvement, but set them up for success)
 - a. Don't be afraid to have every student play an easy exercise in front of the class
 - b. Put a challenging selection in the mix
 - c. Find and push some kids a little harder than others
3. Play appropriate literature
 - a. Do a lot of listening to know what the “appropriate literature” is
 - b. Let the kids hear good recordings
 - c. Hold each player responsible to learn their part
4. Change-up your rehearsal techniques occasionally
 - a. Everyone in section plays 3rd or 2nd parts
 - b. Flip rows
 - c. “Band Stew”
5. Be competitive (UIL, ATSSB, TMEA)
 - a. Use these activities to set goals
 - b. Excellent evaluation tools
 - c. Keep your kids busy
6. Expose your band to high quality - live performances
 - a. University bands on tour
 - b. Attend University concerts
 - c. Push All-Region, All-State, Summer Band Camp

V. Work Hard

1. Cut your own grass / Line your own field
2. Teach well (Keep improving)
3. Take trips (In and out of State)
4. Do your homework to be competitive (Know your kids / set reasonable goals / go for it / what was learned?)

VI. Enjoy Yourself

Somerville, Texas

The city of Somerville is located on State Highway 36 South, approximately 30 miles south of College Station, 15 miles west of Brenham, and 18 miles east of Caldwell. The population is slightly over 1300. The biggest employers for Somerville wage earners are the Koppers Railroad Tie Plant, Citizens State Bank, Somerville ISD, and Texas A & M University. The total enrollment for the Somerville Independent School District by the end of the 2014-15 school year was 482. The high school enrollment for grades 7-12 was 187. The enrollment for grades 9-12 was 117. Seventy-five percent of the total enrollment of the District is on the free and reduced lunch program. The ethnic make-up of the district is 50 % Anglo, 26 % Hispanic, 23 % African American, and 1 % other.

Somerville ISD Bands

Beginners: All 5th grade students in the Somerville Elementary are required to take band. The total number of students average 25 – 30. All students are in one class for 50 minutes per day.

Beginning students are instructed with the Essential Elements method book as well as supplements which include scales, rhythm worksheets, basic theory lessons, and full band concert music. Emphasis is placed on creating a high quality sound on each student's instrument. The beginning band performs three concerts a year and some are selected to perform with some of the sixth grade band members in an invitational competition.

Sixth Grade: All 6th grade students in the Somerville Elementary are also required to take band. The total number of students averages 25 – 30 students. All students are in one class for 50 minutes per day.

Intermediate students are instructed with the Essential Elements method books 1 & 2 as well as supplements which include scales, rhythm worksheets, basic theory lessons, and full band concert music. Emphasis is placed on creating a high quality sound on each students' instrument. The intermediate band performs three concerts a year and some are chosen to perform with some of the fifth grade band members in an invitational competition.

High School: The High School Band consists of students in grades 7 – 12 and meets as a full band for 50 minutes daily. The average size of the band is 60 to 65. It is not uncommon for 60 to 70 percent of the 9 – 12 grade students to be shared with football, volleyball, and cheerleading.

Summer Band begins August 1st and continues for two weeks. Full band 'two a days' and sectionals are scheduled each day. After the two week period, students are expected to attend two sectionals per week. This is to accommodate football and volleyball schedules. Once school starts, full band practice is set to meet every Monday night from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. Early morning run-throughs are scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 7:15 to 7:35 a.m.

Students are encouraged to work on and prepare for All-Region auditions, UIL Solo and Ensemble performances, and special Jazz Band performances. Each of these is extra and must meet outside of the regular school day.

Contact Information

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