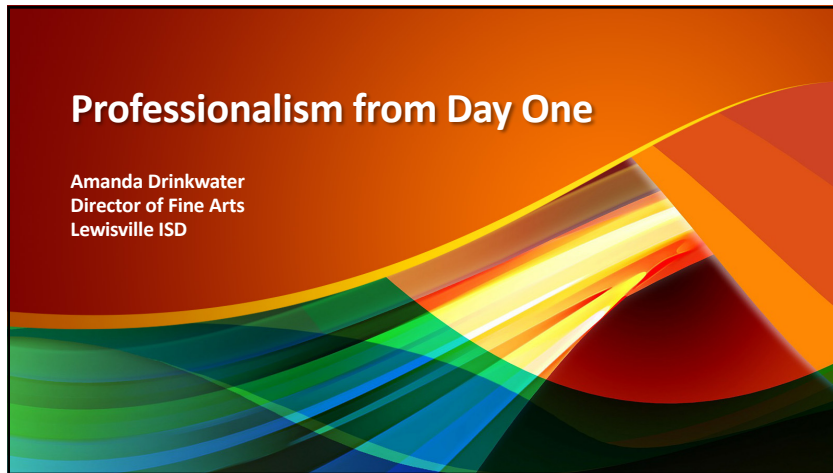




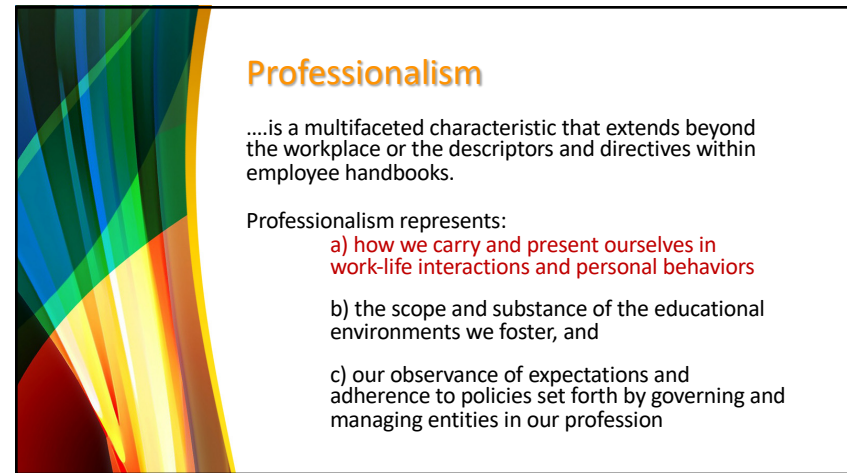
**Texas Bandmasters Association
Virtual Convention July 20-22, 2020**

Professionalism from Day One

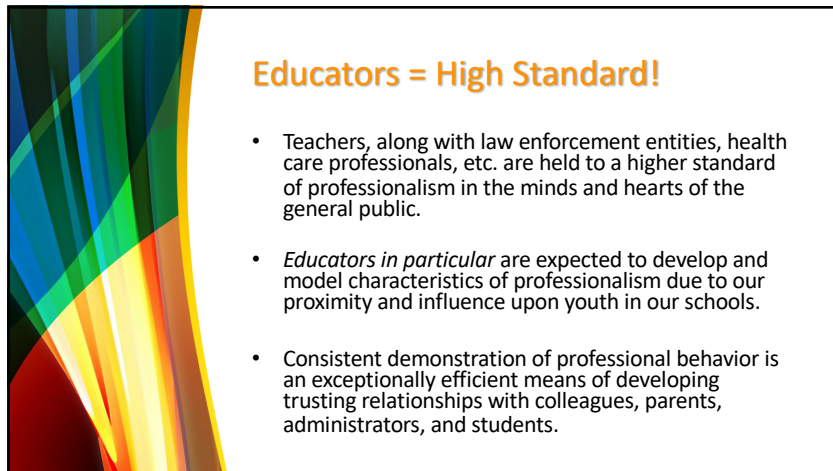
**CLINICIAN:
Amanda Drinkwater**



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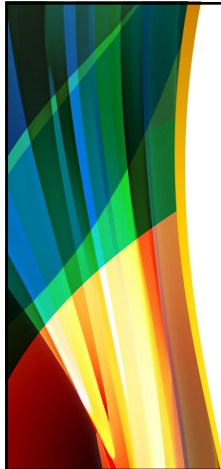
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3




4



Educators = HighER Standard

- Job applicants can expect to have their candidacy vetted through media profile reviews in addition to resume' verification and consultation of interpersonal references
- We forfeit our privacy every time we agree to the 'Terms of Service' on any number of technological platforms. This Information Age in which we find ourselves has resulted in a social environment of high accountability and consequence for professionals of all pursuits and vocations.

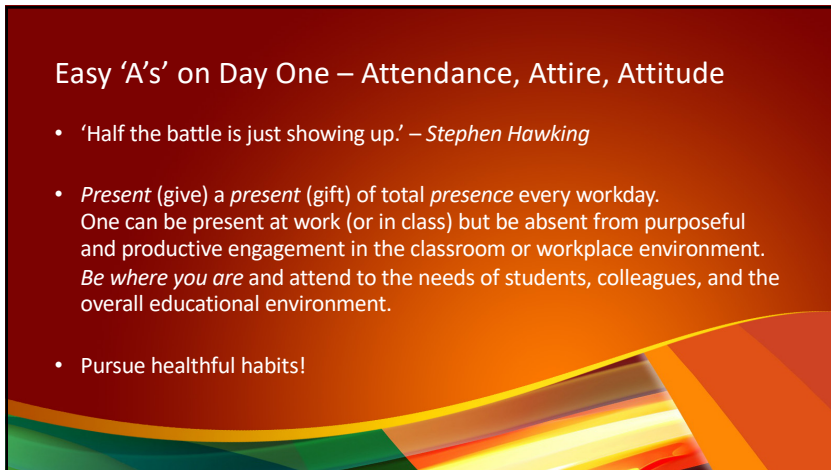
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Digital tattoos

- Our professional reputations (and real or perceived professionalism) can be impacted by information made available by us or those entities with whom we engage through technological resources.
- Think of every keystroke, image, 'friend', 'like' and 'share' as a digital tattoo for life.

6



Easy 'A's' on Day One – Attendance, Attire, Attitude

- 'Half the battle is just showing up.' – *Stephen Hawking*
- *Present* (give) a *present* (gift) of total *presence* every workday. One can be present at work (or in class) but be absent from purposeful and productive engagement in the classroom or workplace environment. *Be where you are* and attend to the needs of students, colleagues, and the overall educational environment.
- Pursue healthful habits!

7



Easy 'A's' on Day One – Attendance

- Consider a standard for professional attendance that meets or exceeds expectations placed upon program members. If missed rehearsals or concerts are only excused in the case of serious illness or family emergency, consider these the acceptable reasons for your absences as well.
- Earn trust and collegial appreciation by demonstrating dependable support for start- and end-of-day tasks and procedures that result in a student-ready environment. One of the first positive impressions a new director can make is that of thoroughly informing themselves of all associated details regarding the educational facilities.

8

Easy 'A's' on Day One – Attire

- Workplace attire should reflect an elevated educational environment. Clean and professional attire should fit well and appear neat. Avoid stained, odiferous, wrinkled or disheveled items (pet hair), attire with holes or rips in the fabric, items missing buttons or with fasteners in disrepair, or clothing items better suited for workouts, clubbing, or date night.
- As a newer teacher, consider going a step above the campus median in terms of attire to create a clear delineation in role from the students as well as a positive, professional impression on campus.

9


Attire isn't everything, but it does send a message!



10

Parting thoughts.....

- Educators should be able to carry out their role comfortably, including demonstration on all instrument types, moving chairs and stands, and conducting from the podium.
- If one has to 'double check' the faculty or student dress code to see if some fashion-forward item or statement is allowed, avoid it at work. Just because we 'can' doesn't mean we 'should'. Observe and emulate the existing cultural standards for the administrators on campus.

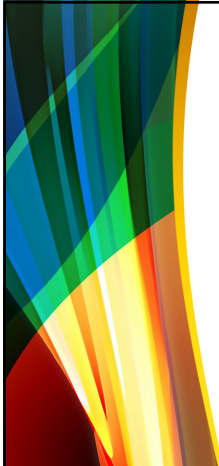


11

Look the part, Maestro/Maestra!

- Consult online resources for recommendations and images of conductors' attire, select flattering looks that do not distract audience or students
- Be mindful of the fit and give of fabrics. Hemlines should never be shorter than that of the performers. Consider silent synthetic soles/heels on dress shoes and pair with longer-than-necessary black socks or tights. Always wear concert black if the students are in black or formal uniforms.
- Haircut and style should not require touching or adjustment for the duration of the performance engagement.


12



Easy 'A's'– Attitude

- There is no greater impact upon one's real (or perceived) professionalism than that of demonstrated attitudes in the workplace.
- For each school year, consider one allowable expression of complaint for every year of teaching *completed*. Keep in mind there are really no bad rehearsals, kids, duties, tasks, etc. **Regard your professional glass as 'half full'.**

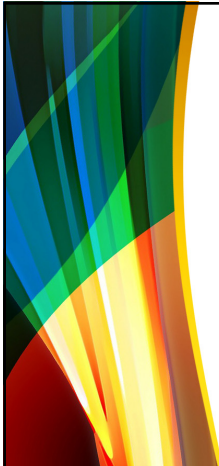
13



Easy 'A's'– Attitude

- Regard individuals to whom you report (head directors, principals) with respect and deference. Take in everything you can from their shared experiences and situational responses.
- Direct concerns about job related matters to entities that can positively impact issues in a respectful manner. Schedule an appointment and convey the intended discussion points.
- Consider every word / act at work a matter for public dispense and review.
- Professionalism transcends compulsive behaviors inclusive of gossip, unproductive criticism, unwarranted comparison, competitive posturing, casual complaint, and self-promoting/ self-indulgent expressions.

14



COMMUNICATION - OVERVIEW

- Strong communication skills foster positive and productive relationships between directors and colleagues, administrators, parents, and students 'from Day 1 to Day done'.
- Written communications (calendar planning, event scheduling, production of instructional and promotional materials) and interactive communications (meetings, conversations, parent conferences, email interchanges) may comprise the most time-consuming category of tasks outside of the instructional environment.

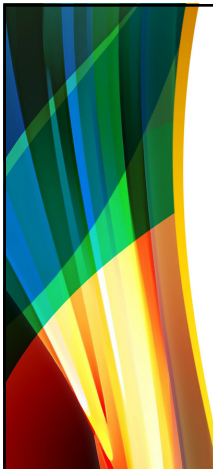
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Calendar planning and Event scheduling

- **Extend Clear, Timely Scheduling Expectations**
Program families deserve the opportunity to consider our special scheduling requests for their elective membership activities in a timely manner.
 - Issue calendar/event information well in advance
 - Provide a time frame if precise dates/times are not available
 - Verify national holidays, national testing dates, district & campus events and imperatives before distributing
 - Have a clear means of issuing reminders about upcoming events
 - Go above and beyond to ensure campus administrators are aware of events and that facilities and climate control are reserved as needed/expected
- Consider multiple platforms for calendar and scheduling conveyance: email, website, mobile link, hard copy, etc.

16



Calendar management is ONGOING

- **Unavoidable conflicting events may arise after your calendar is set**
 - *Construct a reliable means of communicating changes and updates*
 - *Verify and confirm dates/times of important events with campus facilitators*
 - *Demonstrate an ability to adapt and compromise when changes occur. Never penalize a student's grade or threaten future consequence if a (legitimate) absence in whole or part results from a change in the performance date or time. Construct alternative assignments and redistribute parts or solos if necessary.*
- **Make It Work!** *Students will learn from director behaviors when we must constantly make scheduling adjustments and accommodations.*

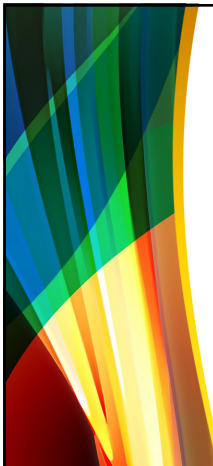
17



Written Communications – Instructional and Promotional Materials

- **Proofread all instructional and promotional materials (including audition results, concert programs and awards) prior to upload, print or distribution**
- **Consider all district, campus, and organizational policies in all materials**
- **Observe restrictions on copyrighted materials and obtain permission before sharing the work of others including authors, mentors, clinicians, colleagues, etc.**
- **Utilize a cloud service and back-up your hard drive(s)/devices regularly**
- **Re-evaluate content of classroom materials annually or by semester as needed. Documents or processes that remain unaltered or considered may be at best, outdated, out of touch, or at worst, out of compliance with new or revised guidelines or policies**
- **Promotional materials (including recruiting materials) should positively frame the organization without direct or inferred disparagement of other organizations**


18



Art of the Conversation

- **Students (and adults) are increasingly unwilling/incapable of engaging in conversation but subsequently proficient at expressing themselves in short bursts (think emojis) in print. The typed or printed word does not necessarily develop those expressive and interactive skills that are so very important in every social aspect of our lives.**
- **Our ability to sustain authentic personal and professional relationships is in part contingent upon the quality of our conversational interactions**

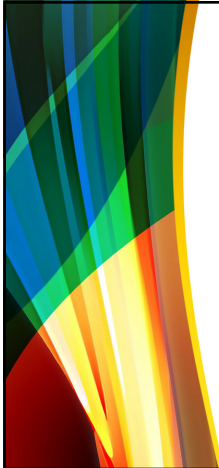
19



Student / teacher interactions

- **Children & young adults have an extremely wide range of verbal skills.**
- **If the conversation is a brief response to a disciplinary or behavioral concern, draw the student(s) into an area in which the conversation cannot be overheard by other students and solicit the presence of another director if possible.**
- **Remain calm and utilize purposeful, descriptive verbiage inclusive of intended outcome and future expectations. Encourage eye contact and responsiveness without making the student(s) feel uncomfortable.**
- **Consult and engage counselors and parents as the situation warrants.**
- **Adjust tempo, volume and timbre to suit the student(s)' personality and communication style. Remain attentive to their voluntary and involuntary responses to determine your next statement or response.**
- **Maintain a role of professional educator within all conversations.**


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Collegial conversations or meetings

- Don't forget to TALK to one another as colleagues. Directors share a relationship comparable to that of a 'professional marriage' of sorts. There will be tough days as well as very rewarding ones. All on staff and within the department should seek to recognize and appreciate the strengths of their colleagues and to defer to the greater good when conflicts arise.
- Set start and end times for meetings and stick to an agenda. Short and frequent meetings tend to be more productive than long and infrequent ones. Try to collaborate to conclusion and forward motion on specific topics within formal or defined meeting settings and reserve philosophical wonderings and 'brain drains' for casual exchanges and chats.
- There are no bad ideas. Younger/newer teachers can find their ideas frequently met with responses reflective of a span of professional experiences. The best teams seek the best ideas to float them to the top.

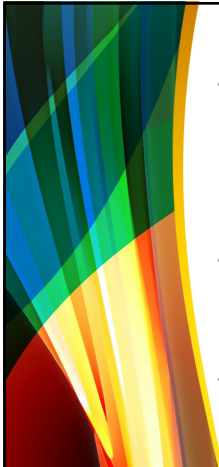
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Parent/teacher conferences – not scary!

- Remember that parents are tax-paying community members as well as life-givers, caretakers and protective guardians of their children. They deserve our time and respect regardless of their perspective of our efforts as music educators.
- Greet parents warmly at the outset of the conference. It should be clear that you, the professional educator, are engaging in the discussion with sincerity and that a positive outcome is intended.
- Consider the space in which the conference is to occur. It is preferable to have all parties in a perceptibly equivalent seating arrangement.
- If you (the director) have requested the conference, present the most pressing issues efficiently and avoid emotionally charged language and tone. Avoid reading from a list and approach the conversation from a perspective of factual relay accompanied with a request for the parent(s)' assistance to address the challenge(s) at hand.


22



Parent/teacher conferences – can be helpful!

- If the parent has requested the conference, be prepared to listen intently and to avoid taking a defensive posture in the initial presentation of issues. Know that you will likely be put in a position to present or defend expectations that have already been presented many times over. If the tone or timbre of the meeting appears to take on an accusatory or threatening tone in a setting in which the director is unaccompanied by another professional, politely bring the meeting to a close and request that a continuation be scheduled with the presence of a campus administrator.
- Parent conferences are terrific places to build relationships. These conferences should not bear an inherently negative connotation. Conflict resolution is often a matter of two or more individuals engaging in a sincere and respectful conversation where all perspectives are heard and where facts are delineated from rumors or perceptions.
- Absolutely do not hesitate to express regret or remorse for regrettable relays or unintended responses by students. An apology for inadvertently hurting a child's feelings can go a long way and will demonstrate the director(s)' humility and sincerity.

23



Final Thoughts

- Practice eye contact (at first) with individuals with whom you feel comfortable
- Listening is 51% of your role in any conversation
- Learn to 'interject' rather than 'interrupt'; allow interjections from others
- Validate the other person's expressed thoughts or feelings with verbal or non-verbal responses
- Seek out opportunities for verbal interactions whenever possible with colleagues, parents, students, administrators (these are so much more efficient and personable than email!)
- Teacher/administrator- Foster a positive relationship with administrators by interacting with them beyond those instances that there are conflicts or concerns. Stop by for a quick 'hello' or 'thank you', and your administrator(s) may be happy to see you come through the door

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Special thanks:

- TBA Board of Directors
- TBA Academy
- TBA Academy Sponsors



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