



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

**Building and Maintaining Middle
School Band Success**

**CLINICIAN:
Robert Herrings**

**TEXAS BANDMASTERS ASSOCIATION
2020 VIRTUAL CONVENTION**



**BUILDING AND MAINTAINING
MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND SUCCESS**

Robert T. Herrings, III

Katherine Willer

Aaron Sanchez

Hector Gil

Artie Henry Middle School, Leander ISD

**LIVING
AND
SURVIVING
IN THE
COVID-19
WORLD.**

Figure it out! It's
what we do best.

Modify and Adjust

Be FLEXIBLE.

Keep the learning
FUN!

Building and Maintaining Through...

▶ LEADERSHIP

▶ RELATIONSHIPS

▶ PLANNING

▶ TEACHING WITH
PRIORITIES



“

**Leadership is not
a position or a
title, it is action
and example.**

Donald McGannon

THROUGH LEADERSHIP...

How to be a GREAT Head Band Director:

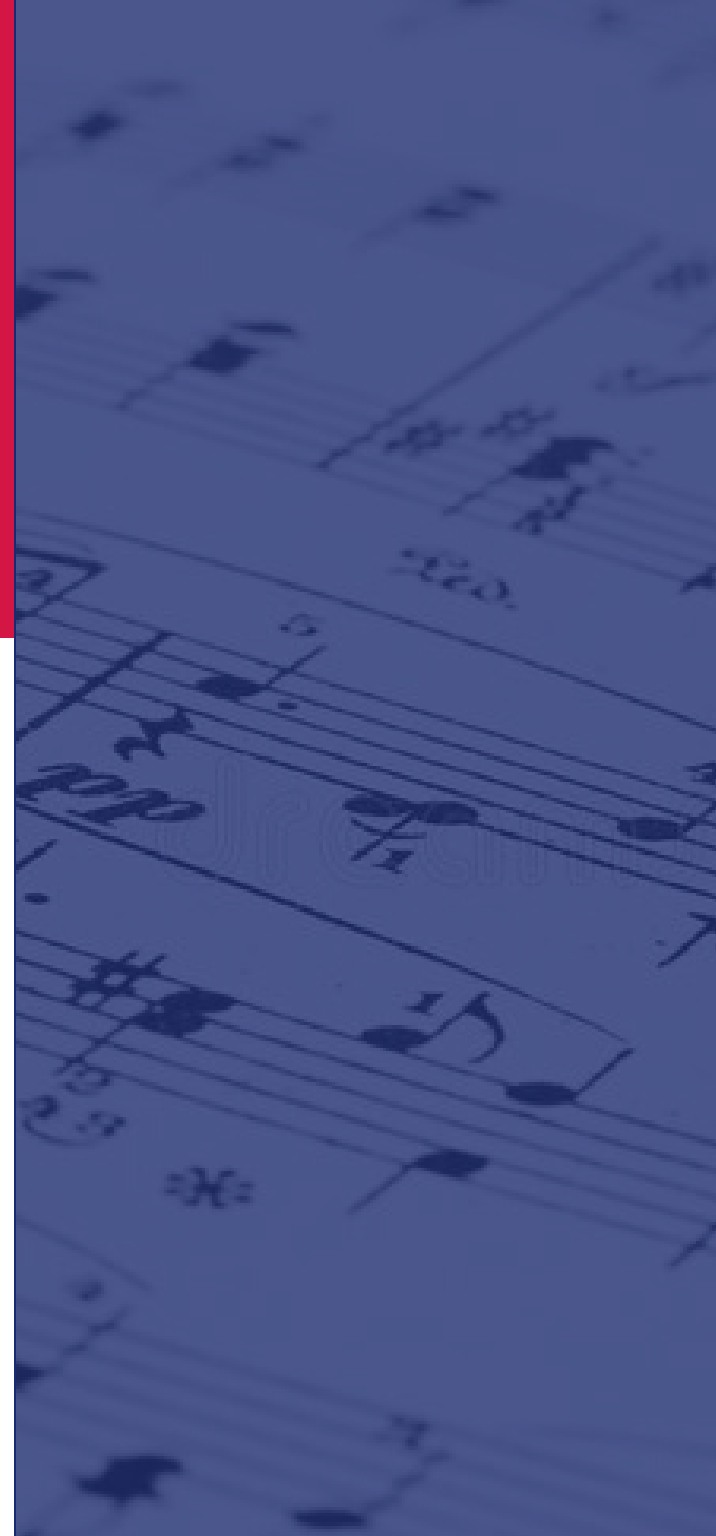
- Have a vision
- Be honest and be yourself
- Be a mentor
- Lead by example
- Build trust within your staff
- Everyone on the team on the same page
- Build a working relationship
- Stay positive
- Convince everyone to work hard
- NO EXCUSES
- Allow for everyone to have ownership
- Open, honest, and fair communication
- Unify your beliefs
- DELEGATE
- Grow your staff



THROUGH LEADERSHIP...

TAKING OVER A PROGRAM

- Ride it out with the current kids
- Embrace the community
- Focus on your 6th graders
- Not every kid is a band kid
- Change the culture, one step at a time



“

**Good
communication is
the bridge between
confusion and
clarity.**

Nat Turner

COMMUNICATION

- Staff Meetings
- Lay out expectations
- Unified language from top to bottom
- Checkpoints in teaching for all levels
- Everyone is on the same page
- Encourage everyone to ask questions

- Day-to-day consistency
- Assign responsibilities
- Trust your staff, but LEAD them!
 - Teaching
 - Planning
 - Lead, but allow room for their thoughts and ideas, too

SYSTEMS & PROCESSES

THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS...

ADMINISTRATION

PARENTS

PRIVATE LESSON STAFF

STUDENTS

Through Relationships...

ADMIN

- They have to be educated too!
- Build a strong relationship
- Win them over
- Try and think like them
- Invite them to events and recognize them!
- "No one is going to fight for your program but you."

PARENTS

- They hold us together, they are your greatest cheerleaders, AND they will recruit for your program!!

PRIVATE LESSONS STAFF

- They should not run your program
- Value their input and guidance

STUDENTS

- Maintain appropriate relationships
- Get to know who your students are as people
- Greet your students EVERY day
- Notice when something change
- Ask them how the are doing or talk to them about things they take an interest in
- Be present in the school
- Attend their events outside of band
- Celebrate ALL their successes
- Social events
- Set up a buddy system
- Be HONEST with your students
- Plan fun trips!

THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS...



**Kids don't care how
much you know until
they know how
much you care!**

Richard Floyd

SECTIONALS

- Not just designed to cultivate the individual musician
- Great opportunity to build relationships!
- Helps your students develop trust in you
- Good for students who thrive in small groups
- Second week to school to the week before last

- You do not have to be an expert at every instrument
- Be honest about getting help to figure out what is going on
- "All learning happens together."

**YOU DON'T
HAVE TO BE AN
EXPERT**

THROUGH PLANNING...

**There should always be a plan.
For Everything.**

- If you do not plan, you are wasting time
- Plan all details
- There is no such thing as "over planning"
- Do prep work in the summer
- Plan backwards
- Have goals

Have a new GOAL each year

- Not just what they ask for in your state evaluations
- Teaching, music, vision
- Could be based on what went well or didn't go well the year before

MAINTAINING YOUR FOUNDATION

RECRUITING

- Recruit the "band" kid
- Be present in the community
- Build relationships with your elementary music teachers
- Good kids attract other good kids
- Share your awards and recognitions

BEGINNER INSTRUMENT PLACEMENT

- Get kids on the right instrument from the start
- When it is right, they will not quit
- Teach with priorities
- Strive to have no re-teaching
- What they cannot do is a reflection of your teaching

THROUGH PLANNING...

**THROUGH TEACHING
WITH PRIORITIES...**

**WHAT ARE YOUR
PRIORITIES?**

Through Teaching with Priorities...

Have a level of detail in EVERYTHING you do.

Modify & Adjust

- Each year is different
- Beginner classes switch strengths every year
- Don't wait to adjust:
 - Goals
 - Pacing
 - Student achievement
 - Meeting your students at their ability levels

Don't give up on the "bottom" kids

- Your class means something to them
 - Those are the ones you hear from
 - Other teachers usually give up on them
- "A third band kid can play third clarinet in band forever."

Literature

- Program SMART
- Grow what is weak
- Feature what is strong
- Program with the kids in mind, NOT your ego
- Education vs. Entertainment

Through Teaching with Priorities...

Have a level of detail in EVERYTHING you do.

Developing your students

- Be a "Household Name"
- Help them learn to take ownership of their learning
- Celebrate successes and weaknesses
- Be an effective communicator

Growth is essential. Learning is lifelong.

- Don't be afraid to ask for help
- Sit back and listen when others are talking
- Be a fly on the wall of any great teacher
- Attend professional development opportunities
- Watch and learn from Region Band Clinicians, Band Camp Conductors, and Clinicians



**We should
remember that good
fortune often
happens when
opportunity meets
with preparation.**

Thomas Edison

THROUGH TEACHING TO PREPARE....

**Teach your students how
to practice to get better
day-to-day preparation!**

- Do not practice just to practice. Practice until they are PREPARED.
 - Correct repetitions
 - Build CORRECT habits
- Break things down!
- GO SLOW!!!
- Work on the things that they are bad at!
- Practice with a GOAL in mind! Teach them how to set a goal for every time they practice.
- KEEP GOING!
- Listen critically when they practice! Record and LISTEN to those recordings!
- Listen to professionals

**THANK YOU TO THE
TEXAS BANDMASTERS
ASSOCIATION!**



AND THANK YOU FOR COMING!

*Never doubt that band will change the lives
of your students for the better!*

**Questions? Send me an email!
Robert.Herrings@leanderisd.org**

