



**Texas Bandmasters Association
Convention/Clinic July 21-23, 2022**

**Developing “Superior” High School
Non-Varsity Bands**

**CLINICIANS:
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HENRY B. GONZALEZ CONVENTION CENTER - SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS



Developing “**Superior**” High School Non-Varsity Bands

TBA Clinic 2022

Panel Members:

Aaron Collins, Chair - Jack C. Hays High School
Julia Donnel - Claudia Taylor Johnson High School
Aldo Morales - Del Rio High School

Description of Clinic:

This clinic will explore the many facets of nurturing and growing your high school non-varsity band programs. We will focus on developing a healthy culture and strategic curriculum that will help develop mature musicians and future leaders within your program. Collectively we will share our experiences as well as field questions and offer advice on how to implement changes within your own programs. Other talking points include selecting appropriate band repertoire, recruitment and retention and maximizing the roles of each level learner.

Development of Culture / Classroom Management:

It is our belief that the culture in which you establish within your non-varsity program is foundational to the overall musical and professional development of your students. By promoting strong professional characteristics such as accountability, communication, respect and punctuality to name a few, you are helping establish a culture of excellence that will only benefit your musical goals. The culture and identity of the organization is a valuable tool that can be used to improve the educational quality of the classroom. We all have traditions and habits in our programs that are ingrained in the older students that are passed down to the younger students. What if you established new traditions and habits for the benefit of the program? The master-teacher will take these characteristics and relate them directly to the music learning process.

Strong classroom management tools can help tremendously in furthering the progress of your non-varsity ensemble. Typically our non-varsity groups are filled with some of the youngest students and sometimes even staffed by the youngest band staff members. Use your culture to enhance your classroom management. What does respect look like in the classroom? Perhaps respect is displayed by following the tasks given by the instructor and may also mean not talking while others are learning. Work to create an endless cycle of culture, management and music!

Strong Cultural Beliefs → Elevated Classroom Management → More Productive Rehearsals

Being Vulnerable:

It's no big secret that classroom management and rehearsal techniques are some of the most common struggles amongst younger educators or instructors of non-varsity groups. Be ok with being vulnerable and allowing yourself to seek mentorship and continued growth. Make the learning process a team effort between you and your students. They will learn from you just as much as you will learn from them.

Rehearsal Techniques & Applications of Content:

Daily Routines & Drills -

It is important to develop a consistent approach to your daily routine / drill. While the content being taught may change day to day, the approach to teaching and the expectations of musical mastery should continue to be held to a high standard. It is important to focus on the "what" you're teaching. Example, the 5 "T's," the UIL concert rubric, finding model recordings of the instruments and bands, etc. Keep in mind, the aural model in your head may change depending on the literature you are playing. Additionally, it is important for the students to understand the "why?". Why are we spending this much time learning this? How does it benefit me as a musician? In relation, you as the educator should be mindful in helping ensure the mastery of these techniques and skills through pass-offs, down-the-line or frequent chair tests. It is also important to highlight the application of these skills in relation to the literature in which they are playing.

Organized Practice -

Part of creating a strong culture is teaching your students to be self-sufficient when it comes to practicing and advancing their techniques and skill sets. When teaching non varsity ensembles, it is important that we demonstrate how to practice effectively during the rehearsal.

Pass-Offs -

Each student receives a one-on-one or small group instruction from the director to cover the music that is being taught in class. The student is expected to utilize their tuner and metronome during this lesson to ensure accuracy. This teaching tool allows students an opportunity to receive feedback relating to pitch, rhythm or style accuracy. This tool also allows the director the opportunity to discover which concepts need to be revisited in class.

Record, Reflect & Refine -

Recording both your teaching and your ensemble's playing can be some of the truest and best ways to hold yourself accountable as a teacher. It is important to find a quality recorder to better hear the musical details of your ensemble. When recording yourself, use the video reflection as an opportunity to observe both your classroom and time management. Are you efficient in your time? Are you clear with your instruction? Are you clear with your conducting? All of these elements when maximized to their fullest potential can lead you to have stronger ensemble rehearsals and greater musical performances.

Student Led Sectionals / Rehearsals - (*careful with younger students leading sectionals*)

We are firm believers in student ownership of our band programs. When the students feel like they are contributing to the overall success of the program the buy-in process is accelerated.

Outside The Classroom:

Seek Mentorship:

No one should ever be expected to know EVERYTHING. Take advantage of the more experienced staff on your teaching team or mentors that you may have collected throughout high school or college. Reach out to other educators in your district or surrounding districts. Utilize social media forums for answers to questions or suggestions on how to improve your practice.

Build Relationships With Your Colleagues:

Work to develop an open line of trust and communication with your teammates. Allow them to give you feedback on a teaching episode. If classroom management is an issue in your rehearsal setting, ask for their help in maintaining focus from individuals and redirecting attention to you, the teacher. Ask them to run a sectional and observe how they teach. With the right colleagues, the options are limitless.

Communicate Your Needs To Your Head Director:

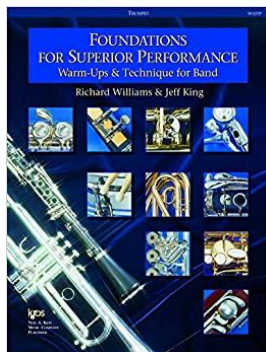
This one can always be tough. However, if you feel that you are not getting the support you need from your head director, do not be afraid to have that conversation. If you don't ask, they may never know that you need more support / help. They are typically going to be your best resource for guidance, a second opinion or even just basic life advice! Keep the line of communication open and transparent. Again, be ok with being vulnerable.

Find Your Work-Life Balance:

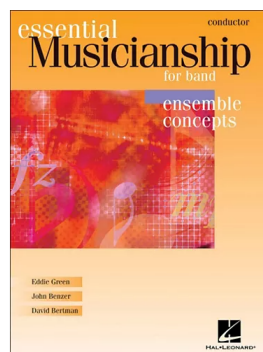
This is probably one of the most important things that one should consider to avoid teacher burnout. There will always be a "to-do" list. As you begin to gain success/experience in your field and you make changes in your teaching for the better, we encourage you to not only find new strategies but also find methods that decrease the amount of time you spend in the bandhall before and after school to avoid teacher burnout.

Resources -

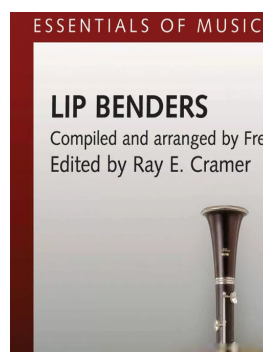
1. Foundations for Superior Performance (Blue Book) - Richard Williams & Jeff King
2. Essential Musicianship For Band - Eddie Green, John Benzer and David Bertman
3. Lip Benders - Ray Cramer
4. 204 Progressive Sight Reading Tunes - Robert Winslow
5. *Alan Sharps Fundamental Book*
6. Zoom H2N Sound Recorder - www.sweetwater.com/store/detail/H2N--zoom-h2n-handy-recorder



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