

# Small Band Programs: Strategies for Success

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# Clinic

- Personal experience
- Working w/ small bands
  - Rural
  - Private
  - Urban
- Defining “Small”
- Maximizing what we have vs. making it bigger?



Shabbona HS

# Five Basic Principles

1. Wide range of abilities
2. Everyone contributes
3. Cover all parts
4. Solutions not ideal - OK
5. Must create musical success today!
  - “Will \_\_\_\_\_ create a more musical experience for students?”



# Instruments

- Insts. in good repair
- Mouthpieces & Reeds
- Beginning Band Priorities
  - Woodwind
    - Double Reeds?
  - Brass
    - Horns?
- Use similar equipment
- Leave out piccolo?
- See handout for recommendations



# Non-Traditional Instrumentation

- E Eb Ctra. Clarinet
- E Eb Tuba
- Valve Trombone
- F or Eb Alto Horn



# Non-Standard Instrumentation

- Marching brass
- Drum set in concert band
- Electric keyboard
- Electric bass
- “Will this strategy...?”



# Seating

- Acoustical cup
- Same parts together
- Stack large sections
- Directional brass
- Bass voices centered together
- Perc. centered
- Experiment



# Fundamentals

- More apparent in small bands
  - Tone
  - Intonation
  - Balance
  - Blend



Waterloo, Wisconsin, Juvenile Band



# Chorales

- All ensemble basics
- Musical context
- Chorale Characteristics
  - Simple, Homophonic
  - Easy keys and ranges
  - Consistent SATB scoring
  - Soft mallets & timpani only
- 3 & 4 part chorales in handout
- Unisons & Octaves – 1 part at a time



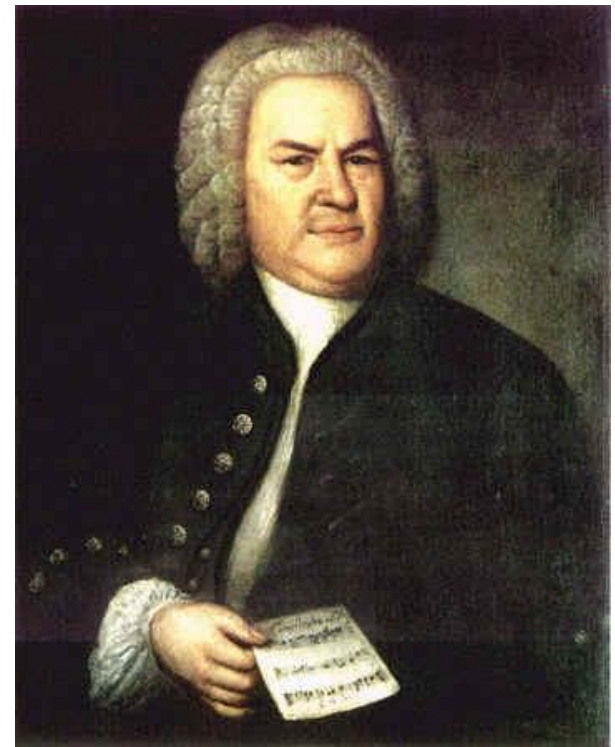
# Altering Parts

- Rewriting or redistributing parts
  - Missing instruments
  - Strengthen weak sections
  - Reduce upper/increase lower parts
  - Simplify for an individual
- Goals when altering parts
  - Maintain composer's original intent
  - Leave all parts intact
- Examples
  - Folk Song Suite (I) Vaughn Williams
  - *Air and March* Purcell/Gordon



# Transcriptions

- Transcriptions vs. arrangement
- Check original score
  - International Music Score Library Project (<http://imslp.org/>)
- Renaissance, Baroque, Classical
  - Intended for small groups
  - Often w/ flexible instrumentation
- Percussion requirements
- Classical Minuets & Marches



# Old Band Music

- PDF Band Music Library
- Intended for small band
- Marches of Fillmore (H. Bennett) & K. L. King
- Redistributing Parts
  - Omit Piccolo
  - Omit Clar. 1 – Use cornet pts.
  - Trombone T.C. to Tenor Sax
  - Bass Saxophone
  - T. C. Bass/Trombone 3
  - Eb alto horn to alto sax



# Flexible Repertoire

- Ken Harris Marches
  - Barnhouse
- European Arrangements
- *Flex-Band Series*
  - Hal Leonard
- *Build a Band Series*
  - Barnhouse
- *American Instrumental Ensemble Series*
  - Salvation Army
- Various Church instrumental series



# Jazz Band Music

- Why not a concert/jazz band?
- *Belwin Jazz Ensemble Series*
  - Grades 1-4
  - Works w/ reduced inst.
  - Alt. pts. for flute, clar., horn, bar. T.C., tuba (bass line)
- *Essential Elements Jazz*
  - Grade 2
  - Alt. pts.
- *Little Big Band Series*
  - Hal Leonard
  - 3 sax, 1 tr., 1 tbone, rhythm
  - Extra pts. alto, ten., tbone





Retention

# Why Students Quit

See Gemeinhardt Studies

## Reason to Dropout

- Conflicting Interests
- Conflicting Schedules
- Lack of Progress
- Bored
- Low Recognition
- Peer Pressure

## Reasons to Stay

- Social benefits
- Enjoy Performing
- Musical enjoyment

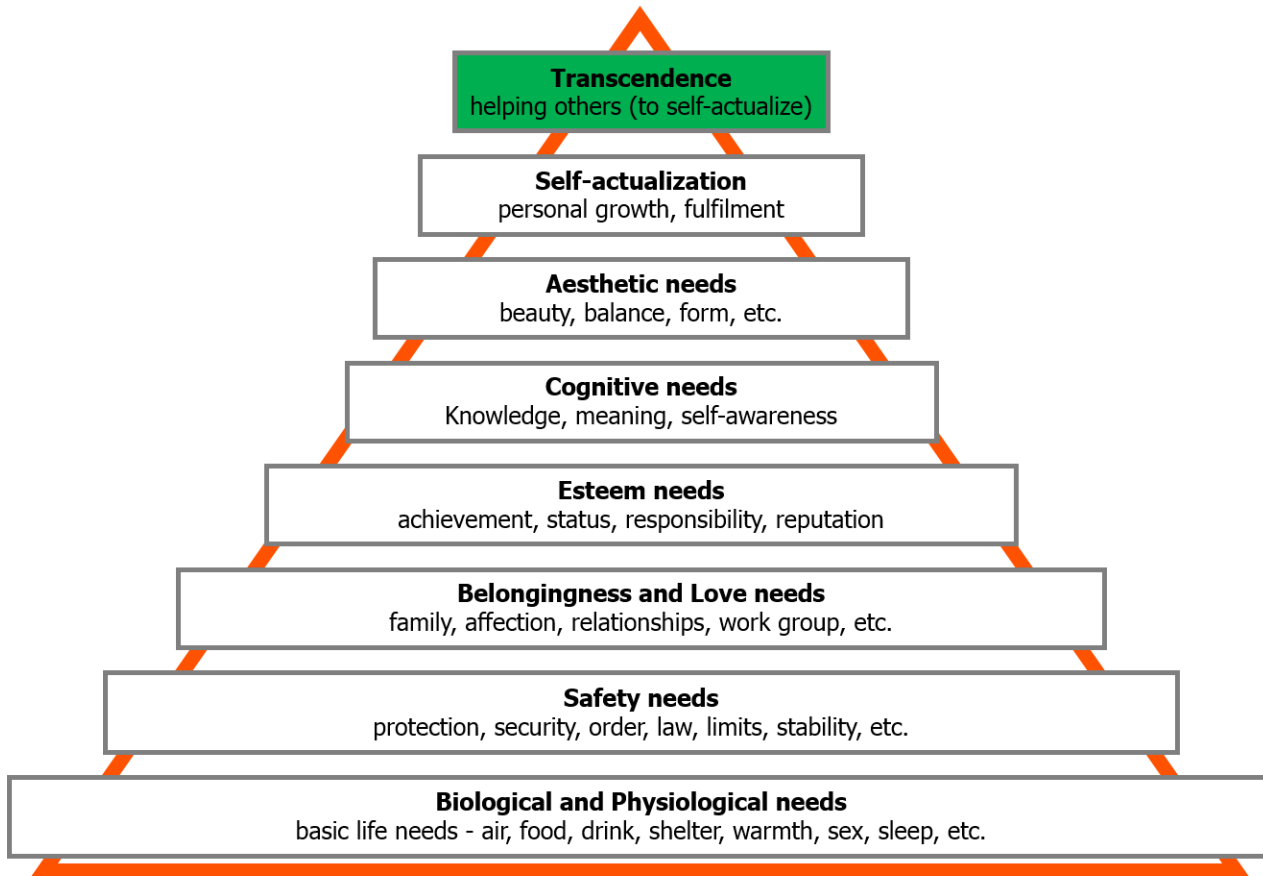




# Are Students Getting What They Need in the Band?

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Extended Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (90s)



# Performance & Scheduling Alternatives

- Non-Rated Festivals
- “Comments Only”
- Guest Conductor or University Visit
- State Capitol
- Combined
  - Parades
  - Pep Band
  - Concerts
- Outside players



# Thank You!

