

THE MIDWEST CLINIC

A BREATH OF FRESH AIR FOR BANDS IN A SMALL, RURAL COMMUNITY

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FIRST THINGS FIRST

Start the year on the right track.

As you begin a new year, find out what has been set in motion. Who are the members of your new ensemble? Who are the parents of these band members?

WHAT HAS BEEN SET IN MOTION?

1

Music, drill, guard uniforms, props, choreography, etc.

HANDBOOK AND CALENDAR

2

Be thorough. Too much information is ok.

Give students a clear idea of upcoming events.

MEETING THE BAND

3

Meet with students leaders, full band, parents, and booster.

WHAT ELSE?

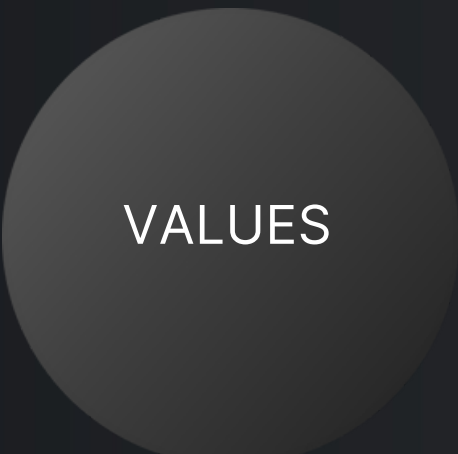
4

Plan for anything that can go wrong.

CULTURE

Keep what works; slowly change what doesn't.

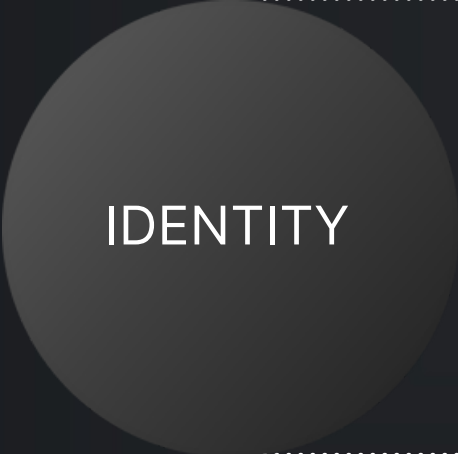
Changing the band's culture is more difficult than changing (improving) the band's musical ability.



VALUES

1

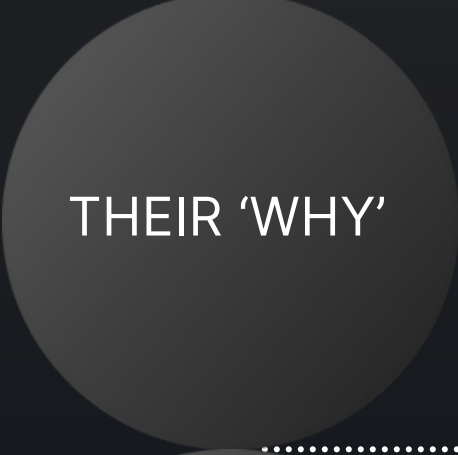
What's important to the students and the program?



IDENTITY

2

What is the students' vision of themselves and of their program?



THEIR 'WHY'

3

Why band? What makes them tick?



CULTURAL ROAD BLOCKS

4

Where is the breakdown happening?

ROLE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Take a step back and view the band from the outside looking in.

Most of your audience members will not know if the band is out of tune; however, they will know if the Star Spangled Banner, Fight Song, or School Song sound bad.



1

Parades, Christmas Programs, Perform, perform, perform!



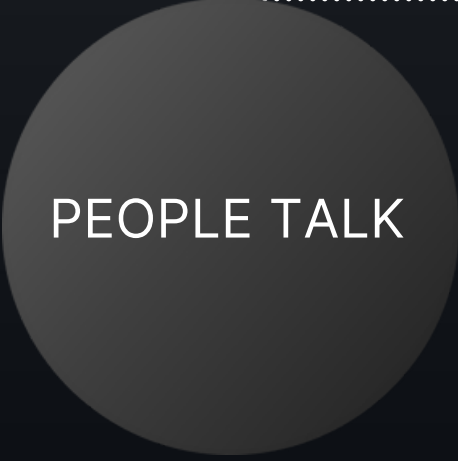
2

Most communities think large numbers equal good quality.



3

You must be an advocate for other programs in the district. Your students are all involved in other things besides band.



4

It's a small town; people will have opinions.

MUSICAL EXCELLENCE

“Critical observation with positive, encouraging comments and a calm insistence to do the right thing.” – Dena Laurel

This is the BEST part of the process. Have high expectations and even more patience.

FUNDAMENTAL
911

1

Start-Sustain-Release
There is no substitute for a beautiful sound

SUCCESS
ASAP

2

Put trophies on the wall. Kids want to see the positive affirmation.

FIX THE ISSUE
AT THE
SOURCE

3

The work begins at the beginning level. Mold middle school students into your version of a successful band.

WHO'S CHECKING ON YOU?

"You can't see the forest
for the trees."

-James Keene

OVERWHELMED
YET?

1

It's ok to be frustrated. Have a
mentor that's been through it.

SETBACK
AFTER
SETBACK

2

"Stop and smell the roses."
-Dan Gibbs

EXPECTATIONS

3

Have realistic expectations of
what you and the students can
achieve.

SOCIAL
OUTLETS

4

Read a novel. Learn to cook. Go
fishing. Find something that
grounds you.

THANK YOU

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