



The Midwest Clinic

International Band and Orchestra Conference

SHHHH----IT'S A SECRET!

SIZE DOESN'T MATTER!

HOW TO ACHIEVE BIG RESULTS WITH YOUR SMALL BAND

Chicago, Illinois

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2:30 PM

**REBECCA WARREN, MANDAN MIDDLE SCHOOL
MANDAN, NORTH DAKOTA**

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We were recently asked this question during the Alabama Music Educators annual conference....

“WHAT CAN WE DO TO CONVINCING PEOPLE SMALL BANDS CAN BE GOOD?”

Our answer: *“MAKE THEM BETTER”.*

Often times, smaller bands have a difficult time achieving the presence and perceived success of a larger band. How can smaller bands have big results?

1. BETTER FUNDAMENTAL TEACHING.

- **Build from the ground up starting with your beginning band students. Provide a solid foundation for all students. Teach all day-everyday-bell to bell.**
- **Keep your instrumental needs in mind as you place beginners with their instruments.**
- **Work on and insist that every student has proper basics, such as posture, hand position, embouchure--The 7 essentials of tone production.**
- **Set expectations high for musical growth and behavior standards. Students will rise to your level of expectations.**
- **Plan for success by establishing attainable short and long term goals.**

- **Students want to be successful and success breeds success. With success you will see a new sense of pride from your students, the parents, the administrators, and the community.**

NOTES:

2. GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF BALANCED INSTRUMENTATION

- **Find ways to rewrite parts so all parts are covered.**
 - * *Go to Robert W. Smith's clinic on Friday at 10:30 a.m.*
- **Choose music wisely. Just because you like it doesn't mean your band should play it.**
- **Know the strengths and weaknesses of your band.**
- **Choose music based on the educational value for your program. Use it to develop weak sections.**
- **Choose quality literature that has stood the test of time.**
- **Work toward a balanced instrumentation at every grade level.**

NOTES:

3. PAY ATTENTION TO DETAILS

- If better is possible then good is not enough.
- “Exposure to error” Make sure all your “i’s” are dotted and your “t’s” are crossed. Get a copy and use your state’s music performance rubric AND read it often and share it with your students.
- Pay close attention to things like articulation, accuracy of rhythms, uniformity of style, musical expression. Work for a precise performance.
- With the marching band do the same thing while making sure you include body carriage, mark time, style of steps.
- Have other directors come to a rehearsal to watch and listen. A few minor adjustments could make a huge difference!
- Learn to listen carefully to your band. Record often.

NOTES:

4. OWNERSHIP

- Develop a sense of ownership, leadership, and family within the band.
- Establish a mentoring program for students AND parents.
- Work for an attitude of “people taking pride in each and every performance”.
- Provide more performance opportunities.
- Become a more effective leader through professional development and building professional relationships.

NOTES:

5. CONSISTENCY

- **Be consistent in all things mentioned above. Eventually they will become habits, not only with you, but with all involved in your program.**
- **Students want the boundaries and discipline required to have a strong band program. You have to have rules and enforce them consistently. You are not there to be voted “Most Congenial”.**
- **Be consistent in your personal character and behavior. Do what you expect from your students. You should always lead by example.**
- **STAY!!! So many times directors will start their careers with a small band and in two or three years they leave for greener pastures. Bands need consistent teachers.**
- **Be patient. It takes time to develop and grow a quality band program. The students in small bands deserve to have a director that is willing to work hard, be dedicated, and strive to be the best. THE REWARDS ARE SO WORTH THE EFFORT. You can change lives, and after all, isn't that what we are really trying to accomplish?**

NOTES:

Recommended Reading List

***The Complete Instrument Reference Guide for Band Directors* Richard Williams & Jeff King with Derrick Logozzo**

***Effective Performance of Band Music* W. Francis McBeth**

***Tuning for Wind Instruments: A Roadmap to Successful Intonation and Developing the Complete Band Program* Shelley Jagow**

***The Art of Interpretation of Band Music* Dr. Mark Walker**

***Teaching with Passion, Purpose and Promise* Peter Loel Boonshaft**

***The Courage To Teach* Parker J. Palmer**

***Foundations for Wind Band Clarity* David W. Vandewalker**

***Teaching Music Through Performance In Band Series* compiled and edited by Richard Miles**

The Instrumentalist Magazine

***The Joy of Inspired Teaching* Tim Lautzenheiser**

***Adventures in Band Building* Thomas McCauley**

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**Thank you to Dr. Richard Crain, President Midwest Clinic for
inviting us to present this clinic as part of the Small School Initiative.**

Please contact the clinicians thru their email.

They look forward to hearing from you.

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