

Matching Minds and Music:

Building Meaningful Relationships with your Students

Midwest Clinic
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Introductions

- Presenters
- Performers
- Spring Independent School District

Midwest Title One Initiative

- What is Title One and why is it important?
 - Title One is a federal program that provides funds to qualifying schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families.
 - Title One schools typically serve economically disadvantaged students
 - Arts programs, especially music, often struggle due to their expense
 - 29 % of all secondary public schools are Title One*
 - 67 % of all elementary public schools are Title One*
- The Midwest Clinic is seeking to help Music Educators in Title One Schools by:
 - Developing Resources for Teachers in At-Risk Schools
 - Presenting Opportunities to Recognize Success
 - Presenting Models for Achievement in Title One Schools

The Premise of this Initiative

- All Students are Valuable
 - The mission of the public school is to educate everyone
 - Effective teaching takes the student's circumstances into account
- Excellent Music Education is a Catalyst for Success
 - Music can engage students who are missed by others
 - Good music teaching develops learning skills
 - May intrinsically reward success
- Individual Students must be the Focus of Music Education
 - Teach the student, not the band
 - Solve problems beyond the classroom
 - Reward successful change

Andy Dekaney High School and the Performers

- Wonderful Example of Music Education in a Title One School
 - Consistently working at an excellent musical standard
 - Recognizing and rewarding student learning
- Terrific Students who are Succeeding by any Measure
 - Individual success as students and performers
 - Continuing to college
 - Becoming productive citizens

*U. S. Department of Education website, <https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/disadv/title1-factsheet.pdf>

Trent Cooper

Who We Are

- Andy Dekaney High School is ethnically diverse
 - 82% African-American
 - 35% Hispanic
 - 3% White
 - 2% Other Nationalities
- More than 60% of the student body is from a single parent home
- 82% Considered Economically Disadvantaged
- All of our students are categorized as “At-Risk”

Where We Started, Where We Are Now

- Our first rehearsal in June of 2007 had 26 band and colorguard students
- Current enrollment in all band classes exceeds 300
- This convention marks the third appearance of a Dekaney HS Ensemble at The Midwest Clinic since 2010

The Challenges We Face

- No clearly defined feeder system. Students come from seven different Middle Schools
- No unified instrument selection guidelines for beginners.
- Highly transient population in the attendance area
- Many parents have no experience with music or music education
- Two district “select” campuses that recruit students from Dekaney High School

Three Point Plan for Success

1. Create a process to achieve excellence that accounts for the circumstances

- Make individual musicianship the first priority.
 - Utilize and raise funds for private or small group instruction.
 - Create and look for ways for students to perform individually on etudes, solos, etc.
 - Chamber Music is an essential part of any successful program.
 - The most important factor to great playing is great sound, make it an unrelenting priority.
- Focus on one component of the program at a time
 - First, we focused on the Concert Band and Chamber Music
 - Second, we worked to develop and improve the Marching Band
 - Third, we started and continue to improve and advance the Jazz Program

- We are always seeking to improve the process and the program
 - Find a model school and talk to those directors about how they have developed their overall program.
 - Be creative and think “out of the box”.
 - Be prepared to work hard....very hard. Most weeks we exceed 70 hours with kids on our campus.

2. Expect excellence and a professional result

- Students want to be part of something they feel is successful and worthy of effort
 - We have found that our students take a lot of pride in the positive way people view them. So it is important to us to always present an excellent musical product.
- Define success and keep the students informed of their success.
 - We determine what we consider successful in our band hall. Likewise, we are honest with ourselves about when we are failing at something and immediately look for ways to improve and fix the problem.
 - We like to give our students feed-back on what people are saying about them and tell them that they are truly part of something unique and very special. We read comment sheets, emails, Facebook posts, when appropriate. We also tell them what adjudicators and audience members say about them after performances.
 - Never stop “raising the bar” and always be looking for ways to improve. Being satisfied with the status quo is not a pit-stop on the road to greatness.
- Teach the students to love performing.
 - Be careful of your demeanor when in warm-up. The more relaxed you are the more relaxed they will be.
 - Don’t be afraid to enjoy the moments with your kids on stage. If you are happy they will be happy.
 - Look for ways to increase your audience size.
 - Never think of performances as a chore or part of the job but a reward for the hard work you have done with your students.
 - Look for ways to bring alumni back into your program at concerts.

3. Be creative about solving problems and changing the circumstances

- Choose competitive events carefully to create both progress and success
 - With our marching band at Andy Dekaney, we look for contests where we compete against bands of like size, not schools of like size. Also we look for events that provide great adjudicators that give great feedback. We want honest critique.
 - We always look for ways to put our concert bands on stage multiple times throughout the year beginning in December. We do not limit our performance opportunities to a Winter Concert, UIL Contest, and Spring Concert. Our calendar usually includes a minimum of 5-6 concerts or competitive events December through May.

- Consider allowing kids to double on other instruments to fill out deficiencies in instrumentation. Students who want to pursue music in college are often times very interested in doing this.
- Beginning Band
 - Yesterday, there were three students in the band that were beginners at Dekaney HS and had never played an instrument before they joined band. In addition, many members of the Jazz Band rhythm section were learning a secondary instrument.
 - Forecast instrumentation deficiencies and target students to solve those problems
 - Make the goal of performing in a band by the second semester
- Programming for Success
 - Choose music to draw a larger audience and promote concert attendance. Students like being in front of bigger crowds. Consider doing a joint concert with an elementary school or your school choir or orchestra.
 - Create a positive image for the students and program in the community. Look for ways to perform outside of your school. Park concerts, district-wide convocations or even performances for your school faculty are great ways to promote your kids and the work they do.
 - Students like being in front of bigger crowds
 - Again, teach students to love performing
- Utilized other performance mediums
 - Do what is popular to your student body to draw new members. Jazz, Dixieland, Mariachi, Steel Drums, Drum-lines, Hand-Drumming groups are all great ways to attract new members.

Always maintain the highest expectations

- “Failure is NOT an option”
- The culture develops the students, so establish the culture that you want
 - Don’t be afraid to create positive and personal relationships with your students. Take the time to just talk with your students and find out what is going on in their life.
 - Create an environment in your class and rehearsal that is focused, yet relaxed and fun. Humor can be a good thing from time to time. Listening to music should be done from time to time.
 - Caring about the kids is more important than caring about the band
“One size fits all”, teaching and discipline is not good for everyone.
 - Guide them to be successful people as well as successful musicians.
Teach gratefulness, honesty, a strong work ethic and humbleness.
- Be patient, “Rome was not built in a day”

Chase Giddings

Specifics about Middle School Training

Recruiting at the Elementary Schools

- Establish a rapport with your elementary music teachers and administrators.
- Be visible at the elementary schools.
- Students feel special when the band director comes and gives them attention.
- Find ways for elementary students to hear performances.

Middle School... The formative years!

- Build **trust** with students and the parents
- Establish structure and discipline early. Reinforce it consistently.
- Teach to the individual child.
- Be consistent.
- Create a safe and warm environment that also fosters high expectations and achievement.
- Keep the students informed.
- Communicate with all constituents

Get them to the High School!

- Our most important job is to get them into the high school music program.
- Coordinate events with the high school teachers.
- Always speak to students in terms of their long term commitment
- Show the middle school to the high school program.

Shelby Chipman

Topic: At-Risk Students: This discussion will focus on bridging the gap between teachers/band directors and suggestions on working with students who may be identified as at-risk.

Need for this Topic: It is imperative that instrumental teachers/band directors address the needs of at-risk students. While teachers have focused upon intervention with at-risk students, the concept of building upon the strengths and benefits of musical instruction have been relatively unexplored. At-risk students occupy the lowest level of academic success and attainment, and highest incidence of academic failure. These students exhibit lower rates of success than others in areas such as high school graduation, undergraduate enrollment, degree attainment, graduate program admission, and professional credential acquisition.

These academic problems contribute not only to the high unemployment and underemployment rates among at-risk student in many states, but also bring about a host of societal problems associated with crime and delinquency.

FOUR (4) Stages Linked to At-Risk Students:

1. At-Risk Students: At-risk students are defined as those who are facing debilitating social-emotional, socio-economic, physical, academic, and criminal difficulties, as well as those where circumstances may diminish their likelihood of graduating from school and /or becoming successful in society.

2. At-Risk Programs: At-risk programs are those programs that are integrated into the curriculum and help at-risk students become successful, as well as educate others through teaching strategies that assist in developing these students.

Secondary schools' failure to address the success of at-risk students results largely from the fact that all children are expected to learn a specified battery of skills in so many years. Fair at-risk programs are those that seek to support everyone who attends the school.

At-risk children are essentially everywhere: home, the schools, and most importantly, within our community. We must work together to bridge the gap.

At-risk programs also attempt to find ways of developing methodologies, 1) Safe Schools/Healthy Student Initiatives, 2) Families and Schools Together, a parenting program, and 3) On-campus Intervention Program, an alternative to out of school suspension for high school students.

3. At-Risk Students in Music: Participation in the arts in school can help at-risk youth break the behavioral lines (Taylor, 1997). The arts contribute something to the school day environment other subjects cannot accomplish.

The positive benefits conveyed by music education can be grouped in four categories:

- 1) Success in society
- 2) Success in school
- 3) Success in developing intelligence
- 4) Success in life

Why At-risk Students Fail:

- 1) Teacher consistently presents instruction in ways that match his or her own preferred learning style, rather than the preferred learning style of the student
- 2) Student has difficulty learning in one or more of the four basic learning styles, and therefore has trouble learning when the teachers in those styles
- 3) Teacher develops only a limited number of student's intelligences, ignoring the musical intelligences
- 4) Student lacks skill in working with others toward positive goals
- 5) Student lacks concentration and attending skills
- 6) Student suffers from low self-esteem
- 7) Student is frustrated by inability to keep up with others

At-risk students may lack desire to learn because

- 1) Student finds no reason to attend school
- 2) Projects or tasks presented to student are trivial and/or fail to engage student's problem-solving abilities
- 3) Student does not take a personal stake in the assigned projects or tasks,
- 4) Student perceives school as threatening place
- 5) Student perceives school as dull and unappealing
- 6) Student suffers from depression and emotional instability

Music can help students succeed by

- 1) Providing instruction in student's preferred learning style
- 2) Helping student learn to use his/her weaker learning styles
- 3) Providing learning through aural and visual/sensory modes
- 4) Providing self-discipline through intrinsic rewards
- 5) Providing a context for team effort toward shared goals

Music can motivate students to learn by

- 1) Providing stimulating experiences that draw student to school
- 2) Presenting projects or tasks that require student to solve engaging, inherently interesting problems
- 3) Providing opportunities to produce own composition or performance,
- 4) Providing an effective outlet for emotion and communication, and a source of comfort

- 5) Applying knowledge rather than information gathering
- 6) Working in groups, not in isolation only
- 7) Utilizing an open-ended tasks rather than narrowly defined problems
- 8) Going beyond grades or contest awards as motivation for good work.

Thome (1996) offered the following suggestions for must teachers that can make a difference when working with at-risk students:

- 1) Discuss the placement of the student with an administrator
- 2) Make contacts with the special education support
- 3) Find time to meet with the student and parent(s) on an individual basis
- 4) Make your expectations clear
- 5) Give the student a choice
- 6) Follow up classes with disruptive behaviors with a phone call home, however, also acknowledge appropriate behavior.

Campbell (1992) concluded that, "the challenge to teach music from a multicultural perspective can seem overwhelming. The teacher plays a principal role in the cultural formation of society, and the music teach can have direct impact on the music al and multicultural sensitivity".

Practical Steps

- 1) Choosing literature and programming
- 2) Analyzing music
- 3) Warm-ups and rehearsal strategies
- 4) Listening and the music library
- 5) The rehearsal room/environment
- 6) Small ensembles and solos
- 7) Don't forget about the PERCUSSION section.

Therapeutic music activities

- 1) The use of songwriting as a positive form of self-expression
- 2) The use of music ensembles as a tool for promoting cooperative behavior
- 3) The use of listening as an agent to stress management,

Robinson (2004) summary of teaching at-risk students includes:

- 1) Having high but fair expectations for students
- 2) Developing trust and respect with students
- 3) Stopping off-task behavior immediately
- 4) Teaching using efficient pacing
- 5) Taking a personal interest in each student
- 6) Finding strengths of each student
- 7) Making music relevant to life
- 8) Accommodating various learning styles
- 9) Helping them reach their individual goals.

4. Music Programs for At-Risk Students: Music teachers should meet the challenges of inclusion by teaching learning strategies to each student's strengths and weaknesses.

<p>Strengths, Skills, and Talents</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) participates actively in class 2) accepts leaderships 3) shows good verbal skills 4) loves listening to music 5) reacts energetically 6) offers creative ideas in class 	<p>Weaknesses and Limitations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) has difficulty getting along with others 2) is easily frustrated 3) shows difficulty sitting still 4) reads with limited ability 5) difficulty with following directions
<p>Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Objectives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) follows teacher's directions 2) works with a peer during activities 3) asks for help when frustrated 4) focuses attention on task at hand 	<p>Strategies for Success</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) uses trusted peer buddy to help with tasks 2) teacher breaks down directions into small steps 3) teacher offers leadership opportunities as reinforcement

There are NO QUICK FIX answers to teaching at-risk students, but early intervention, knowing strengths and weaknesses, consistent motivation and maintaining a commitment to student success can positively impact at-risk students as they participate in rewarding musical experiences.

<p>Specific techniques that are effective when teaching at-risk students</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Use discovery learning activities, use activities, use preview/review activities 2) Silent rehearsal (teacher nor students may speak) everything is written on the board, sung, counted, clapped, etc. 3) The pass-off system for beginners is great because it allows every student to be on their own level 4) It is imperative that the teacher be enthusiastic and genuinely interested in student progress 5) Mentoring – telling them about your experiences growing up, particularly if you were an at-risk youth 6) Creative thinking in developing self-esteem. Make them feel like they belong. Involve at-risk students with specific duties responsibilities to assist the band program and give them self-worth 7) Cooperative learning, students helping students, sectionals, and small groups 8) Program a wide variety of music from various cultural traditions to maintain interest 9) Expose all students to music in the highest most uplifting manner possible. Music is universal 10) Don't treat at-risk students differently in terms of learning to be great, 11) Relate music to something in students' lives, both personally and philosophically...use vernacular students are comfortable with...thus allowing them to identify their teacher with mainstream student life.
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<p>I offer the following questions to all assembled here:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How do you identify an at-risk student?
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- 2) Have you been able to help at-risk students do better in school, and perhaps even stay in school?
- 3) Have you had students who were identified as at-risk go on to graduate from your school, and later come back and share some of the successes with you?
- 4) What have been some of the most effective training courses, articles, clinics, or workshops that have improved your understanding of at-risk students?
- 5) In what ways does participating in your band assist disadvantaged or at-risk youth?
- 6) What types of individual or group activities in your band program have proven to be effective for reaching at-risk students?
- 7) What is the greatest challenge you face in working with at-risk students?
- 8) What is the greatest reward you receive from working with at-risk students?

Rank the following related to your Approach to Teaching Students

- ___ Knows Various Teaching Strategies
- ___ Motivates Students
- ___ Mentors Students
- ___ Increases Self-esteem
- ___ Encourages Creativity
- ___ Transfers Concepts to other Disciplines
- ___ Administrative Support

Campbell, P.S. (2000). What music really means to children. *Music Educators Journal*, 86, 32-36.

Robinson, N. (2004). Who is "at-risk" in the music classroom? *Music Educators Journal*, 3, v. 90(4), 38-43.

Thome, A. (1996). "At-Risk" – and it's the teacher. *Florida Music Director*. Tallahassee, FL, 9, 17-20.

Whitlock, L. (1998). Sudden Assignment: Teach prekindergarten music. *Teaching Music*, vol. 5(4), p 40-41.

PERFORMERS

DEKANEY HIGH SCHOOL TROMBONE QUARTET

Processional Fanfare.....Elizabeth
Raum

Jose Fuentes, Armando Bautista, Daniel Etumnu, Benjamin SanJuan

DEKANEY HIGH SCHOOL WOODWIND CHOIR

Pavanne pour une infante défunteMaurice Ravel/James
Thornton

Uche Etumnu, Piccolo Saxophone	Nelson Lopez, Oboe	Kierra Brown, Clarinet	Xavier Robinson, Alto
Aidee Morales, Flute	Alex Franco, Oboe	SaDaejah Powers, Clarinet	Esteban Jofre, Tenor Saxophone
Luis Duenez, Flute Saxophone	Katia Osorio, Bassoon	Omar Carrillo, Clarinet	Labria Lanaux, Baritone
Dylan Masariego, Flute	Juan Guardiola, Bassoon	Yuliza Carballo, Clarinet	
Velia Mier-Luna, Flute	Gabriel Manzano, Bassoon	Alice Rivera, Clarinet	
Kaithlyn Bruno, Flute	Carlos Villatoro, Clarinet	Matthew Yanez, Clarinet	
Ananda Martins, Flute	Juan Morales, Clarinet	Cameron Bean, Alto Saxophone	

DEKANEY HIGH SCHOOL PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

An Ideal of Hope.....Hans
Zimmer

Jillian Downs, Marimba	Juan Guardiola, Piano
Josh Ferrell, Marimba	Gabriel Manzano, Synth
Nelly Canales, Vibes	Katia Osorio, DTX
Tyler Sutton, Vibes	Louie Philip, Drums
Donovan Kelly, Xylo / Crotales	Derek Braxton, Drums
Nelson Lopez, Bells	Alexis Morgan, Percussion

DEKANEY HIGH SCHOOL STEEL DRUM ENSEMBLE

Josh Ferrell, Lead	Donovan Kelly, Guitars
Tyler Sutton, Lead	Alexis Morgan, Bass
Jillian Downs, Double Tenors	Derek Braxton, Drum Set
Louie Philip, Double Seconds	

ANDY DEKANEY JAZZ BAND

Mambo Inn.....Tito
Puente

Gerson Sibrian, Trumpet	Julio Hernandez, Trombone	Eddie Manuel, Guitar
Giovany Cruz, Trumpet	Benjamin Sanjuan, Bass Trombone	Stalin Santiago, Bass Guitar
Josh Palomo, Trumpet	Cameron Bean, Alto Saxophone	Derek Braxton, Drums
Edgar Del Angel, Trumpet	Xavier Robinson, Alto Saxophone	Juan Guardiola, Piano
Armando Bautista, Trombone	Esteban Jofre, Tenor Saxophone	
Arturo Hernandez, Trombone	Clarence Woulard, Baritone Saxophone	

Acknowledgements

The Midwest Clinic Board of Directors
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