



GIA Publications, Inc.

Poverty, Barriers, Music and Success: Understanding and Helping Low-Income Music Students Succeed

Clinician: Don Stinson

Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic

Wednesday, December 21, 2022, 12:15pm, W187

This handout and the slide presentation are available at www.donstinson.net/midwest



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- Introduction/The “Ghetto” Band - How One Comment Can Extinguish Months Of Work.
 - Program Breakdowns: Short History. Evolved Into A “Challenging” Position.
 - Uncommon Procedures For Uncommon Programs
 - Sporadic Attendance
 - Beginners In Auditioned Ensembles
 - Sometimes Our Musicians Just Get Up And Leave
 - Autonomy And Opportunities
 - Complain Twice Rule
 - We Supply Everything
 - Kids Playing Multiple Instruments
 - No Common Assessments
 - Practice Not Required
 - Sometimes, We Don’t Even Get To The Literature In Class
 - Why Am I Talking To You?
 - Bio: Former Low-Income Kid
 - Practicing Teacher At My Alma Mater, Which Is A Title I School
 - Mindset
 - Money Is Nice, But Doesn’t Fix As Much As We Want It To
 - Characteristics And Categories Of Poverty
 - Absolute, Relative, Generational, Rural, Urban, Situational
 - What It Costs To Be Poor: Musical Conversions To Minimum Wage
 - Who We Are Working With: Experiences Versus Media Perceptions.
 - Kids Have To Make Adult Choices
 - Transportation, Abuse, Sibling Care, Finances, Pregnancy, Etc.
 - Dysfunction
 - Skipping Steps Encourages Dysfunction
 - We Can Help By Identifying And Filling In These Gaps
 - We Are Not An Expert In Every Field
 - Guidance Counselors And Social Workers Are Better Equipped To Help When Needed.



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- Actions By Those In Poverty Are Coping Methods - Poverty Is Not A “Culture.”
- Attendance: Why Do Kids Miss School Or Class?
 - You Can Only Control This With Actions In Your Classroom.
 - Performance Music: Consider Negotiables. [If Everything Is Important, Nothing Is Important.](#)
- Behavior: Sweating The Small Stuff
 - Preventative Maintenance
 - It’s Not Personal
 - “Mr. So And So Lets Me Wear A Hat In Class.” The “Cool” Teacher Makes Everyone Else’s Job Harder.
- [Utilizing Your School Report Card](#)
 - Does Your Classroom/Program Represent Your School And Community? Utilizing Your School Report Card.
 - How To Read Your School Report Card
 - Predicting Future Issues
 - Programming Based On Your School Report Card.
- [Practicing Not Required](#)
 - Why Kids Don’t Or “Can’t” Practice.
 - Goal Setting
 - Routine And Literature Breakdown
 - Compound Lifts Related To Music
- Representation
 - Kids Need People In All Areas Of Music That Look Like Them. Not Just Support Roles, But Leadership Roles.
- Hard Realities (Every One Of These Items Has A Positive Flipside!)
 - Our Socio-Economic Status Cannot Be Used An Excuse For Progress And Success.
 - No One Will Care As Much As You Do About Where Your Kids Are Coming From.
 - Math, Science, And English Will Always Win



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- We're Not Always Ready For Critical Thinking
- A Goal That You Know That You Or Your Group Knows That They Can Achieve Is Not A Good Goal.
- Students That Don't Like You Won't Behave For You.
- Kids Will Test You To See If You're The Real Deal.
- You Won't Like Every Student; Also, They Will Know When You Don't Like Them.
- Music Making Needs To Be At The Core; We Need To Stop Reminding Students Every Five Minutes That They Have Problems.
- Our Bleeding Hearts Can't Pay The Bills
- People Have Two Responses To Complaining: 1. They Don't Care. 2. They're Just Glad It's Not Happening To Them.
- An Ensemble Or Classroom Is A Direct Reflection Of Its Director/Teacher.
- Scenarios For Music Teachers: Live Group Activities
 - No Equipment And New Shoes
 - A Scheduling Error In The Music Class
 - A Low Quality Instrument And An Angry Parent
 - A Music Trip Extension And A Case Of Beer
 - A New Student Cannot Make Outside Of School Events
- [What About The Teacher?](#)