



# ***THERE IS LIFE AFTER COLLEGE!***

Navigating Interviews, Accepting Your First “Big Kid” Job  
and Thriving in Your First Year of Teaching!



Kathleen Amabile, Elk Lake School District  
2022 PMEA Conference  
Thursday, April 7th 1:30 PM



# ***WELCOME!***

## ***THANK YOU FOR COMING!***

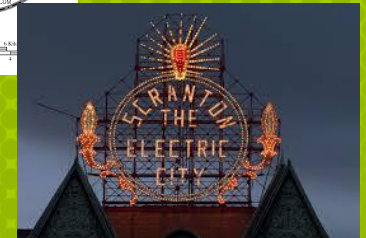
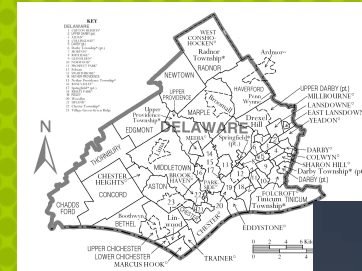
A little bit about me...

Elk Lake School District, 5-12 Band Director  
Adjunct Woodwind/Music Education Instructor- Clarks  
Summit University

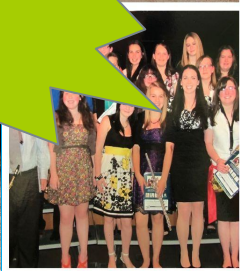
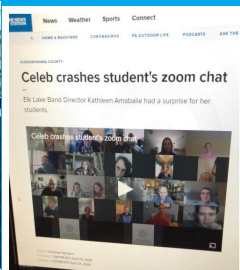
Went from Philly Suburbs to small town NEPA

West Chester University (2009)  
Wilkes University (2014)  
Messiah University (2021)

PMEA District 9 Band Fest Coordinator & HS Professional  
Development Representative







**WHY AM I  
HERE  
TODAY?**

# ***ROADMAP FOR WHAT TO DO BEFORE GRADUATION***

PREPARE THAT  
RESUME!

1

Find opportunities  
for networking!

3

Find out what  
openings may be  
coming up!

5

Obtain rec letters/fill  
out all certification  
paperwork and  
update clearances.

2

Get familiar with PA  
Reap/PA Educator &  
other job search sites.

4

Have application  
packets/digital  
portfolios ready to go!!


6



[illegible]

# JOB SEARCH


## ***SEARCHING AND APPLYING FOR POSITIONS...***



It will feel  
like a full  
time job!



Be open  
minded!



Cross your  
T's and dot  
your I's!

# ***THE INTERVIEW PROCESS***


Research the  
school/district!

What  
makes  
you stand  
out?

Be  
passionate  
about kids!

You are  
interviewing  
as an  
employee of  
that district.

The 5 Year  
Question



***CONGRATS!***  
***YOU GOT THE***  
***JOB!***  
***NOW WHAT?!***



## ***BEFORE THE FIRST DAY***

Take a pause to enjoy the moment! This is a huge deal!

Visit the school/classroom if you are able to.

Set up a meeting with your building administrator or department chair/department members if possible.

If you can, find out:

- What your schedule will look like.
- Is there an existing curriculum that I need to follow?
- What are the expectations for me/the program in the position?
- Is there a booster organization/parent group?

# ***CHAPTER 1: YOUR FIRST YEAR***

Close your eyes, imagine your vision of yourself in your own classroom and what that looks like...



# REALITY



Education has changed a lot since your parents or grandparents were teachers...

Be prepared to prioritize things in the following order:

1. Kids
2. Adults
3. Curriculum

## ***#1- KIDS***

Be passionate  
about your  
content- but  
be more  
passionate  
about kids.

They don't care  
how much you  
know until they  
know how much  
you care.

Students are  
incredibly  
perceptive



## ***YOUR TEACHING PHILOSOPHY & YOUR WHY***

Who are you as a person?

Why do you want to teach?

Do you believe that every child can learn & improve?

How will you create an environment that ensures success?

# ***"THAT'S NOT MY JOB- OH, BUT IT IS!"***

A significant portion of what you will do is not part of the traditional job description.

Sometimes it feels as if the music teaching is secondary!

It's best to avoid the mindset altogether!



- × Non instructional duties
- × Extra Curricular Clubs/Contracts
- × Taxi/Banker/Chef/IT support
- × Life Coach/College admissions counselor/Personal Cheerleader

## ***COMMON FEELINGS/PHASES/MOODS OF NEW TEACHERS***

Beginning:

EXCITEMENT!

I'M TOTALLY PREPARED!

I'M GOING TO SET THE  
WORLD ON FIRE WITH  
MY LOVE OF MUSIC!

Reality Check:

I have no idea what I'm  
doing!

I'm so overwhelmed!

Why don't all of my  
students love music as  
much as I do?

Funks:

Did I choose the right  
profession?

Am I even making a  
difference? Do they like  
me?

Can't I just go back to  
college?

# ***EVERY SCHOOL WILL HAVE ITS QUIRKS***

Don't be scared off by the first imperfection you see.

# ***THERE IS NO EUTOPIC PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT***

The perfect job doesn't exist.

# ***DON'T LOOK FOR GREENER GRASS***

Water the grass that you're standing on!



## ***COMBATING THOSE FEELINGS- AVOIDING SURVIVAL MODE***

Don't try to be someone else- find your own voice.

Get involved! Don't isolate yourself.

Don't try to change too much in year #1.



Keep detailed notes!

Have friends outside of music and teaching- helps with perspective.

It's not all about you- look at the bigger picture.

## ***SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE***

Education is not 100% what you see on TikTok and Instagram.

Be mindful of what you post!



Do you want to experience your first  
year of teaching 30 times...  
or to measure your career in one 30  
year story?

# ***THANK YOU!***

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Elk Lake School District Administration and Board of Education

Midwest Clinic

PMEA



@ELK LAKE MUSIC DEPARTMENT, @Mrs.Amabile



INSTAGRAM: @ELK LAKE MUSIC DEPARTMENT, @AMABELSMUSIC