

# CHOOSING HELP OVER HURT

## SUCCESSFUL HABITS *for Teaching Band in Underserved Communities*

The Midwest Clinic  
Chicago, Illinois  
McCormick Place  
December 22, 2023

LINARD MCCLOUD

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*Successful Habits for Teaching Band in Underserved Communities*

## **Solution #1: All acts of connection come from building relationships**

As the director, you are a surrogate parent, guardian, doctor, psychiatrist, social worker, friend, confidant, private lessons teacher, and countless other titles. Love comes in many forms and your ability to make an impact is profound in underserved communities.

## **Solution #2: Have a positive attitude about your students and believe that ALL will succeed**

You must believe in the success of your students. In addition, get to know their struggles, their background, their family situation, and their test scores. You can help them believe in themselves and help them create a version of themselves that is greater than expected.

## **Solution #3: Create a Saturday Enrichment Program**

The Saturday Enrichment Program not only helps students with their academic work but also implements systems and processes for building music fundamentals.

## **Solution #4: Teaching students to love music is the same everywhere**

Students should never be defined by their neighborhoods, zip codes, or bank accounts. All students can love music and all students can succeed at making music.

## **Solution #5: Be creative with marching band and class scheduling**

Many factors contribute to challenges associated with creating a schedule that works for all students. There are several solutions to help address students who are in the program but not scheduled for the class.

## **Solution #6: Be proactive when addressing transportation issues**

More and more students are having issues getting to school and rehearsal. There are several solutions we've used over the years to address this problem.

## **Solution #7: Create a "concert band" book and a "jazz band" book**

With schedule difficulties and constant change year to year with personnel and school choice, the inclusion of a concert band book and a jazz band book will be an effective strategy to enhance the overall success of your band program.

## **Solution #8: Match veteran parents with new parents to help build community and create an "Adopt-a-Child" program**

This not only helps with onboarding new parents but helps to create a new "band family" that will last for years, even after students graduate.

**Solution #9: Build strong relationships with your administration, other teachers, guidance counselors, and city leaders**

Each of these relationships is crucial to creating a strong culture of excellence, inside and outside of the school setting.

**Solution #10: Open the band room as THE practice room**

Many students live in housing situations where practicing at home is quite challenging. One of the best solutions is to open the band room for practice. This also allows the director to monitor HOW they practice and provide coaching.

**Solution #11: Be visible in your feeder schools**

These relationships need to be built well before recruiting time takes place. Make time in your schedule to be visible and help with your feeder schools.

**Solution #12: Devise solutions to recruit students earlier than normal**

In low-income situations, recruiting students earlier than normal can literally change the trajectory of their life.

**Solution #13: Have student recognition programs**

As a director in a low-income school, you will soon learn that many of your students have been deprived of opportunities for social celebrations that shape character, boost self-esteem, and elevate confidence; recognize your students every chance you get.

**Solution #14: Create partnerships with colleges and universities**

Providing scholarship opportunities for students in your program can many times be their only opportunity to attend college.

**Solution #15: Love your students and leave a legacy**

Students need a music educator who is going to be a champion for their success and understands the importance of leaving a musical and personal legacy. Success stops at retirement, but SIGNIFICANCE leaves a lasting impact on the lives of your students.

From the musical *Hamilton*: Legacy. What is legacy? It's planting seeds in a garden you may never get to see.  
*Lin-Manuel Miranda*

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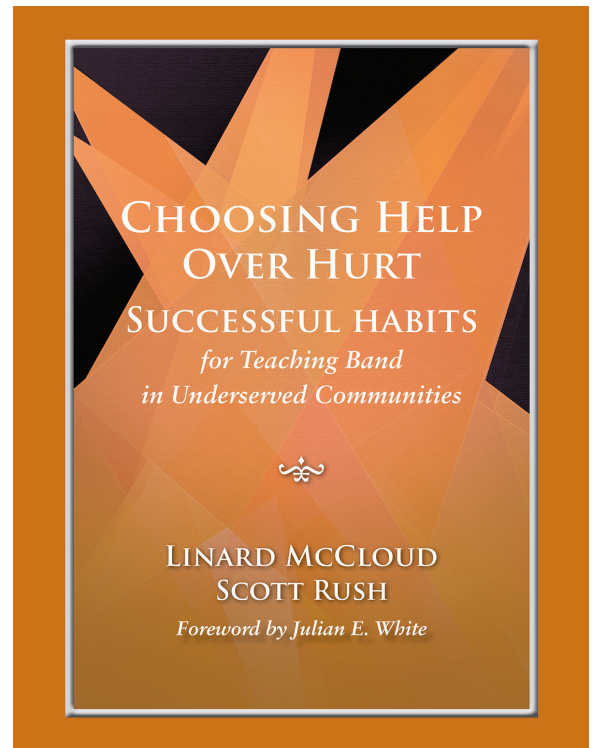
Linard McCloud, Scott Rush

“This book is a perfect resource for ALL teachers! Linard McCloud gives readers a front-row seat to his teaching experience in a community where music education became the catalyst for positive change. Mr. McCloud has transformed the lives of his students and the community through music.”

—Dr. William J. Earvin, Conn-Selmer Education & Director of HBCU Collective

“As college classmates, I find Linard McCloud to be uniquely qualified to co-author a book on students and communities with economic challenges while achieving at an unusually high level. This book is a unique contribution to our band director library and a “ must-read” for everyone in our profession.”

—Alfred Watkins, former Director of Bands, Lassiter High School



Children should never be defined by their neighborhoods, their zip codes, or their bank accounts. All students are teachable, regardless of their financial situation. *Choosing Help Over Hurt: Successful Habits for Teaching Band in Underserved Communities* is about making a difference in young people’s lives, one student at a time.

The book’s primary author, Linard McCloud, shares his personal experiences as a band director at his alma mater, where over 90 percent of the school’s predominantly black student population is low-income. He has been teaching at this school for 44 years, and he shares his incredible knowledge and wisdom to help all band directors create a culture of excellence in their programs. While the principles and solutions outlined in the book are at times unique to low-income teaching situations, many are universal to all music education settings.

*Choosing Help Over Hurt* provides suggestions and solutions for making a difference in underserved communities and covers important topics such as:

- Loving your students
- Challenges in Title One schools
- Various roles of the band director
- The band booster community
- Band class enrollment influences
- Fundamentals time
- The components of playing
- The teaching inventory database
- Student recognition programs
- Music making
- Setting goals and benchmarks
- Leaving a legacy
- *And much, much more!*

**Linard McCloud** is the Director of Bands at Burke High School in Charleston, South Carolina.

**Scott Rush** is the team lead for the *Habits* series published by GIA and is the former Director of Bands at Wando High School.

G-10796 Choosing Help Over Hurt: Successful Habits for Teaching Band in Underserved Communities . . . . . U.S. \$31.95



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