



TOUCHPOINT

The Division of Education Newsletter

That Very Special Time of the Year by David Branson

The smell of fresh cut grass, the taste of your first foot long hot dog of the season and the sound of the umpire yelling, "Play ball" signal the beginning of spring training in baseball. What a special time of year for every team! There is so much excitement, enthusiasm and passion for the game in the air at the beginning of the season. The start of the school year is every bit as special for teachers, administrators and students as spring training is for baseball players. The new school year is about to begin; everyone's energy level is high and there is a great optimism in the room. This is the time of year when teachers and administrators can set the stage for a successful school year by providing leadership, demonstrating a high level of preparation and building a strong sense of community within the program.

Leadership—Possess a clear vision for your program. Ensure that your program goals and the objectives are aligned with your vision. Communicate your vision, goals, excitement and enthusiasm for the upcoming school year with students, parents, staff and school administration.

Preparation—Establish plans for the entire school year before school begins; performance dates, music literature to cover, skills and concepts to be presented and evaluations and assessments to be used. Communicate your plans through your handbook, calendar and webpage. Develop your daily and weekly lesson plans and then review them at the end of each day and week. Use backwards planning to ensure you are staying on task with student learning objectives.

Building Community—Meet with staff and student leaders prior to the beginning of rehearsals and classes. Develop ownership in the program by including them in discussions and decision-making as it is possible. Plan a beginning of the year social event to encourage students and staff to become connected. Mentor upper classmen in how to communicate the program culture you want reinforced.

You can make the most of this very special time of year by providing leadership to your program, being prepared for the entire school year before it begins and building a program community. Enjoy the beginning of the school year!

Bridging the Gap by the Music Achievement Council

Students continue to participate in our music programs because they cannot imagine school without the meaningful engagement that our courses provide. Yet, for one reason or another, not all of our students continue their participation throughout their high school years. The key to successful retention is ACTION.

Host a "Marching Band Night" at the high school with the eighth-graders from the middle schools featured prominently in the halftime show. Middle school directors should be involved in the planning and should be invited to conduct in this performance. To ensure their subsequent participation, make this an exceptional and memorable experience that guarantees success for these younger musicians.

Maintain high performance standards for students but be reasonable in demands on their time. Do not overburden them to the point that being in the program takes an inordinate amount of time away from their other activities. Never put students in a position where they HAVE to quit the program because they just do not have the amount of time required to participate. Think of their participation in music as one of many subjects they are taking at school. When you do have extra rehearsals or activities, make sure that their time is never wasted. Always provide a meaningful experience.



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for

CSI 2014 !!

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Conn-Selmer
DIVISION of EDUCATION

Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser
Vice President of Education
tlautzenheiser@conn-selmer.com
Cell: 260.410.0717

Michael Kamphuis
Managing Director,
Division of Education
mkamphuis@conn-selmer.com
Work: 574.523.0677
Cell: 574.607.6000

Kelly Bryan
Manager of Educational Outreach,
Division of Education
kbryan@conn-selmer.com
Work: 574.523.0651
Cell: 574.329.8727

Grant Johnston
Program Coordinator
gjohnston@conn-selmer.com
Work: 574.523.0701