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- Keeping Middle School Students Engaged
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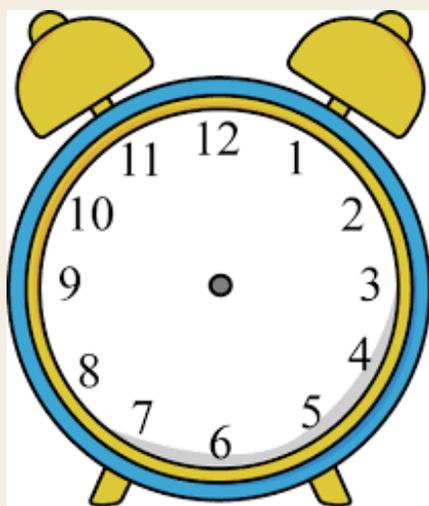
January 2020

PMEA Music Advocacy Newsletter

current topics >>>

5 Suggestions for Better Time Management for Music Educator-Entrepreneurs

1. **Know when to say No.**
2. **Balance is a myth.... “Ebb” and “Flow” is Factual**
3. **Phone/Computer Free Time**
4. **Clock In and Out When You NEED to Clock In and Out**
5. **Calendars are there for a Reason**



Healthy Habits for a Healthy Year

Staying healthy is always the goal as we are right in the middle of cold and flu season. We all understand that getting sick is inevitable, but we need to all find a way to maintain our health so we can continue to enrich the lives of our students with music. Here are a few tips to help you remain healthy.

1. **Get Moving!**
Science has proven that the more we move and stay active the bigger the boost of our immune systems. 10-15 minutes a couple of times per day of exercise will do wonders to your body. Take the stairs instead of an elevator, or walk a couple laps around the gym. The more you move the better the chance of remaining healthy.
2. **Eat well.**
Eat a well balanced meal. Cut down on the sugars, because that is what will leave you fatigued and suppress the immune system. Don't forget about your fruits and vegetables.
3. **Take a mental break**
Find something to take your mind off of the job. Take a few moments and breathe, stretch, and something that you are grateful for.
4. **Wash your hands**
Wash your hands periodically throughout the day. Germs are everywhere and on everything we touch. They spread very quickly, but remembering to wash your hands multiple times a day will help alleviate the chances of becoming sick.
5. **Advocate for a school nurse.**
Support the school nurses in your building! They can help spread the word of proactive health preventative measures as well as take care of medical emergencies and dispense medicine when needed.
6. **Hydrate!**
DRINK WATER! As we go throughout our day and work such hectic schedules we forget to stop and drink water. The goal is to try to drink 2 liters a day. That's eight 8-ounce glasses!

Importance of Grant Writing!

Money, Money, Money.... That is what all our departments need and a lot of times our budgets can not handle what we need in our classroom. Here are 5 reasons that you, and every music educator you know, should learn grant writing.

NO SELLING: We all grew up fundraising for things, but this has always been a headache for music educators. Instead of selling and dealing with fundraisers, write grants! It is possible to get more money through grant writing then fundraising.

YOU ONLY HAVE TO ASK ONCE: If you have a well crafted appeal, that information can not only be used for grants, but also for donation pages, direct mail campaigns, and any other types of donations. Remember to develop your “ask” in every way you can.

YOU CAN GET A GRANT FOR ANYTHING: Find the right search tools and anyone (local clubs to national foundations) will be willing to give you funds.

THEY NET A LOT MORE THAN INDIVIDUAL DONORS: Even though it is nice to write and receive donations from alumni and the community, you can accomplish the same task with less work just by writing out one application.



YOU KEEP WHAT YOU GET: When fundraising you have to always keep in mind how much your spending verses making money. With grant writing you do not have to worry about how much extra you need to charge to make a profit. Everything is a profit with a grant. Applying for one grant could get you the same amount (with a lot less aggravation) than dealing with fundraisers.



5 Reasons to Ponder on Why You Should Apply for the CMA Foundation Music Teachers of Excellence Award

1. **Reflection**
2. **Advocacy for your Music Program**
3. **National and Local Recognition**
4. **Professional Opportunities**
5. **Access to Resources**

Technology Causing Problems?

Technology is everywhere and is being used every minute of the day, in and out of the classroom. Our job is to make sure that we find a way to use the technology to our advantage. You do not have to be afraid to use technology in the classroom, but you do need to put limits on it. At the beginning of the year (or new semester) establish the behavioral approach you want to take with your class. Make sure they know what the expectation is and how much technology will be used. Establish your music classroom as an environment that creates and nurtures music with, at times, the help of technology.

If the students are abusing the technology here are two examples to help eliminate the power of technology. You could use The Carrot Approach. This is where you have a designated spot in your room for charging purposes only. Students will plug their devices in and won't touch them for the duration of class. The second approach is The Stick Approach. This will be “jail” for the confiscated technology devices. If the device is “in jail” the student will not receive their device back until the end of class. This is for those who abuse the the technology privledge.

Again, we cannot shy away from using technology because we are surrounded by it, but we need to find the middle ground. Establish your rules and if they are broken, what are the consequences?

Keeping Middle School Students Engaged

Middle school students are full of contrasts, but are always open to trying new and creative things. They still obtain their childhood wonder, but at the same time want their independence. It is our job to make that work to our advantage.



There are 4 main concepts to keep in mind when working with middle school students. The concepts are Content, Process, Environment, and Assessment.

Content:

Diversity is key for success in the middle school setting. So, its time to spice up the material. Hit all the different genres of music with all the key musicians. Let's talk about Prokofiev and Brahms, but lets also touch on John Cage, Scott Joplin, and Li Huan Zhi.

Process:

Encourage the students to lean on their strengths, but challenge them to push past their comfort zone. Let the students take ownership in their learning- self discovery!

Environment:

Middle school students are at the age where they have a hard time dealing with their emotions so creating an environment that is positive and encouraging will only help the class having meaningful discussions of topics. Allow the students to make mistakes and encourage them to taking risks in their learning environment.

Assessment:

Assessment burnout is inevitable with middle school, so the recommendation is to create an observational checklist that you can check off as the students succeed at the task. It will help you not burn out with constant grading and the students won't feel like they are being tested.



Women in History month is coming up in March! How can you incorporate female composers and musicians into a few lessons during that month?

Music Advocacy Day

Music Advocacy Day will be on Monday, March 23, 2020. All PMEA members, community members, and students are welcome to attend.

Other Upcoming Dates:

District Orchestra: January 29-31, 2020
District Band: February 13-15, 2020
Region Chorus: February 27-29, 2020
District Jazz: March 6-7, 2020
Region Orchestra: March 12-14, 2020
Elementary Band Fest West: March 20, 2020
Region Band: March 26-28, 2020
Intermediate Band/Orchestra Fest: April 15, 2020

"With music, one's whole future life is brightened. This is such a treasure in life that it helps us over many troubles and difficulties. Music is nourishment, an elixir. Music multiplies all that is beautiful and of value in life."

- Zoltan Kodaly



Don't Forget...

Registration is now open for the PMEA state conference!

Location: Kalahari Resort & Convention Center

250 Kalahari Blvd

Pocono Manor, PA18349

Dates: April 23-25, 2020



Top 10 Most-Read Music Ed. Blogs of 2019

- Number 10: Tools for Survival in Today's Climate
- Number 9: Professionalism in Teaching
- Number 8: Ways to Celebrate *Music in our Schools* in Your Schools
- Number 7: Make it Stick: Implement Rehearsal Routines
- Number 6: Bridging the Gap between Music Teachers and Administrators
- Number 5: Music Education and Social Emotional Learning
- Number 4: You Might Be Left with Silence When You're Done
- Number 3: Make a Sound! Interview with Drummer Extraordinaire Michael Bland
- Number 2: Organization Tips for the First Day of School
- Number 1: How *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* Impacted Music Education

When you have a free moment I would recommend everyone to read some of these blogs. There are a lot of insightful information.

[Link to the Blogs](#)

Music in our School Month: March 2020

Music in Our Schools Month takes a new tactic this year, focusing on lessons for second- and fifth- graders that help them learn elements of music through some classic children's songs in English and Spanish. The lessons and songs, however, can be shared on many levels. All are available without charge to teachers for their use during MIOSM and beyond! Please click on the following link for the lessons:

<https://nafme.org/programs/miosm/music-in-our-schools-month-miosm-grade-2-5-lessons-2019-2020/>