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## Philosophy of Music Education

I believe that music is one of the most powerful and unifying forces that exists. It is a force that humans are naturally drawn to for entertainment, celebration and expressing one's feelings, and we are surrounded by music from the moment we first experience our mother's heartbeat in the womb.

I believe as an educator, it is of utmost importance to instill skills in my students that will benefit them outside of the classroom. The music classroom is a place where more than just music is learned, it is where students learn the process of how to improve at something, where we can practice that process together, then be able to go off on our own and be independent learners and musicians. Not every student will pursue a career in music, but EVERY student should continue to be a lifelong learner. The most dangerous thing we as humans can do to advancing society is get complacent and believe that we know everything we can possibly know, because it is just not possible. There is always something new out there you haven't heard of, or some new way of looking at a problem that broadens your entire understanding of how to solve that problem. I am constantly talking to other band directors about anything related to music. Whether it is little idiosyncrasies about certain instruments I didn't know about, or how they interpret certain articulations, or how they combat certain issues in their ensembles, or how they pick the repertoire for they ensemble to play. I am always striving to learn more and wish to instill that same drive to learn in my students.

As a music educator, I also believe it is our job to guide our students in appreciating music as this incredible force, as well as how to create this force for themselves and move others emotionally; whether that is through performing music in an instrumental setting or composing music in a theory/general music setting. I believe as a music teacher it is important to get to know each of your student's musical preferences. Knowing and appreciating what your students' interests are, and implementing them into lessons, is one of the first steps to building a strong student-teacher relationship. Without a strong relationship and a mutual level of respect, it can be

very difficult to manage the classroom and keep the student's attention. Along with this, by knowing their musical interests, I can use this understanding to expose them to new styles of music to hopefully broaden their pallet of musical taste. I believe there is great music in all genres, and they all deserve to be appreciated.

On top of broadening the musical experiences that my students have had I believe it is important to develop great musicians as well. If you stay in your respective Band/Orchestra/Chorus ensemble into late middle school and early high school, you are considered to be a musician. This is so important as a music educator to understand. We are educating young musicians. It is our task to foster an environment where musicality and musicianship are greatly encouraged, and eventually expected, because just being able to "play notes on a page" doesn't make you a musician. Understanding and appreciating the music you are playing, aiming to evoke an emotional response from the listener, and putting that same emotion into your playing to illicit that response; THAT is true musicianship.