

WHY TEACH MUSIC?

Music is a science. It is exact, specific, and it demands exact acoustics. A conductor's full score is a chart, a graph that indicates frequencies, intensities, volume changes, melody, and harmony all at once and with the most exact control of time.

Music is mathematical. It is rhythmically based on the subdivisions of time into fractions, which must be done instantaneously, not worked out on paper.

Music is a foreign language. Most of the terms are in Italian, German, or French, and the notation is certainly not English - but a highly developed kind of shorthand that used symbols to represent ideas. The semantics of music is the most complete and universal language.

Music is history. Music usually reflects the environment and times of its creation often even the country and/or racial feeling.

Music is physical education. It requires fantastic coordination of fingers, hands, arms, legs, lip, cheek and facial muscles, in addition to extraordinary control of the diaphragmatic, back, stomach and chest muscles which respond instantly to the sound the ear hears and the mind interprets.

Music is all of these things, but most of all music is art. It allows a human being to take all these dry, technically boring (but difficult) techniques and use them to create emotion. That is one thing science cannot duplicate: humanism, feeling, emotion, call it what you will.

That is why we teach music!

Why Do We Do It?

From: Dr Tim Lautzenheizer

Why do we do it? Why do we insist on going outside during the hottest time of the year and strap on drums which cause excruciating pain to the collar bone, try to keep horns to our mouth in some sort of workable embouchure (yes, even with braces cutting into our inner lips), and throwing flags, rifles, and all other kinds of makeshift guard substitutes over the tops of each other? If successful, nobody gets hurt; if not, the bandages come out and we try again. We spend countless hours charging up and down the rehearsal field learning, relearning, re-working, and refining until we simply run out of time and are faced with a performance deadline. What's the payoff for all this effort?

Only a person deeply involved in the activity could even begin to understand the answer to this perplexing question. Only someone who has ignored the parched throat and unbearable thirst so there could be one more run-through knows the answer. Only the directors and staff, who press beyond much needed sleep so they can re-write for the next day's practice, know the answer. Only the parents who drive countless miles, readjust their family schedules, and sell every product under the sun to raise the needed support funds, know the answer.

Everyone who has touched the activity in any way, from the bus driver to the fan in the stands has the fever. It is an extraordinary phenomenon, which says, I want to be the best I can be --- to push myself to the ultimate limit and to share this journey with others who feel the same.

Real happiness comes from giving and when we combine a group of people all possessing musical talent, a process of putting together a quality production offers a challenge that no real champion can refuse ... so the answer to the question, why do we do it? There is an unquenchable desire in the human being to break through to new levels. Even when we accomplish something of significant acclaim there will certainly be a challenge to do it faster, more flawlessly and more creatively. We simply won't allow status quo to prevail ... even in the marching band activity where we are now enjoying field performances by teenagers which would have been scoffed at as totally impossible in 1950.

The sense of appreciation comes from the effort, not the results. It is the planning, practicing, organizing, sharing, and day-by-day putting it together which is the pay-off. Certainly, not the trophy or score. The feeling of self-worth cannot be transferred to a plastic trophy, nor can a trophy by itself insure the feeling of self-worth. That's my ultimate level so far--a new level which will serve as a stepping-stone to an even higher level.

We hope you enjoy the competition and please remember that every student who steps foot on this competition field today is a true winner in every sense of the word. Enjoy the enthusiasm, joy, and spirit that they put into their performances. Today, hundreds of young people have chosen to pursue excellence, to dedicate themselves to a goal--to do the right thing. Let's recognize each and every band with our applause and our support.

A CREED FOR PERFORMERS

Janet Larsen

2. **I am thankful** for the members on my team who stand beside me. From each of them, I gain something valuable to me.

3. **I am thankful** for my competitors, even those who may not challenge me at the some level of difficulty, for though they are trying to accomplish the some purposes, they may not have the same encouragement, financial support, parents and community interest, or experienced and committed teachers. I will not mock or laugh at them. Their respect for me humbles me.

4. **I am thankful** for my competitors with high standards. Though we are dressed in different colors, represent different schools, and come from different homes and places, we have more similarities than differences, for both of us have sacrificed our individual needs for our group's causes. I need my competitors, for there can be no contest without them. They are my friends, not my enemies. I will not criticize or envy them. Their qualities challenge me, and their excitement makes my adrenaline flow.

5. **I am thankful** for my director and leaders, for they have served me with consistent dedication and commitment. Now they will stand back while I enter the spotlight. I will not fail to show my appreciation to them. Their belief in me inspires me, and their devotion and experience guides me.

6. **I am thankful** for the sacrifice of my parents, brothers, sisters and friends who have freely given their time and treasure that I may be well-suited, well-fed and well-cared for. I will not take them for granted. Their love sustains and encourages me.

7. **I am thankful** for the early patriots of liberty whose faith and foresight created America -- a country where I am free to make choices for myself. Even though they lived long ago, I will not overlook them. Their sacrifice and vision created the opportunity for me to participate today.

8. **I am thankful** for the crowd watching and listening. There are strangers who I do not know, but they deeply share similar feelings that bind us as brothers and sisters. As the signal to begin is made, and the nervous anticipation surges through my veins, I will remember each and every one of these -- my parents, my brothers and sisters, my friends, my fellow competitors, my director and leaders, and my audience of strangers. Love and support echoes in their cheers and shouts. I will not fail to acknowledge all of them graciously. Their thunderous applause inspires me.

9. **I am thankful** even though my performance arouses all of them, I am not better than any of them. For of what good am I, the giver, if there are none to receive my gift?

10. **I am thankful** as I carefully take in my first breath and boldly place my first step, I will remember the One who is above us all -- the God who gave me life. I will consecrate my performance to Him and give my life serving others as appreciation for all that has so freely been given to me.

They chose their paths
not because
they were easy,
but because
they were difficult.

*--Mary Doria Russell,
The Sparrow*

One of the major differentiations between success and failure---across the board---is the failure to commit to excellence, the acceptance of mediocrity.

Our vision is to go where no person has gone before. That sounds very familiar, because it is, but it's fun! We're going to a place that has been uncharted, we have to have the courage to try things, and to leap forward. We're constantly challenging the status quo of how we're doing things.

---Rob Knapp, Merrill Lynch

To push oneself to one's limits
Inevitably involves risk, otherwise
they wouldn't be one's limits. This is
not to say that you deliberately try
something you know you can't do.
But you do deliberately try something
Which you are not sure you can do.

--Woodrow Wilson Sayre

Ask yourself for one moment what your feelings have been on the eve of some act involving courage... Has it not felt something like this? I cannot do this. This is too much for me. I shall ruin myself if I take this risk. I cannot take the leap, it's impossible. All of me will be gone if I do this, and I cling to myself.

And then suppose that the spirit has conquered and you have done this impossible thing, do you not find afterwards that you possess yourself in a sense that you never had before? That there is more of you?...So it is throughout life...you know. "nothing ventured nothing won" is true in every hour, it is the fiber of every experience that signs itself into the memory.

- J. N. Figgins

“I’m a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work, the more I have of it.”

---Thomas Jefferson

“The will to win is important, but the will to prepare is vital.”

---Joe Paterno

Excellence is about consistent high performance...about knowing how much you have to give,

Excellence is never having learned enough.

Excellence is the gradual result of always wanting to do better.

“It’s what you learn after you know it all that counts.” ---John Wooden

Effort is the path to excellence.

Stretching beyond present levels of success...needs to become a habit and a system.

When the opposition’s talent and experience levels are bumping up against your own, sustained effort creates a durable edge.

Some of us are like wheelbarrows---only useful when pushed, and very easily upset
---Jack Herbert