

DIVISION of EDUCATION

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Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser Vice President of Education

tlautzenheiser@conn-selmer.com Cell: 269.410.0717

Kelly Bryan

mkamphuis@conn-selmer.com Work: 574.523.0677 Cell: 574.607.6000 **Grant Johnston**

gjohnston@conn-selmer.com Work: 574.523.0701

A Note from Dr. Tim

Greetings. In this edition of *Touchpoint*, **Marcia Neel**, President of Music Education Consultants, Inc., discusses the topics of RECRUITMENT and RETENTION as integral components of a successful program.



Welcome to our newest V.I.P.s

Erin Cole Tapp Middle School, GA

Howard Summers Utah Wind Symphony, UT

> **Richard Miles Morehead State** University, KY

Michael Pote Carmel High School, IN

Our Next Issue Featuring: Part 2: Tips for Setting Up your Budget and Instrument Replacement Plan by Marcia Neel

In Our Last Issue: You Have Friends in High Places by Dr. Charles Menghini

Click here for the full article

BY Teachers FOR Teachers: By Marcia Neel Tips for Recruitment and Retention

HELP! I just took a new position and only have twenty-six students enrolled in band! My goodness! My supervisor just told me that the Guidance Department has decided to move registration back to February. How will I ever be ready? With all that students have to choose from as they progress from middle to high school, how can our instrumental music program compete and keep students involved? Oh my!

So many questions....so many answers! How can we accomplish all of this and get even more helpful information? Lucky for us that the best instrumental music educators in the country have been coming together to provide answers to questions just like these through a series of real-life, hands-on, complimentary resources available from the Music Achievement Council. More about to how to access this information later. In the meantime, let's look at some of the above scenarios and possible solutions.

RECRUITMENT

Whether building a program from scratch, or losing a huge chunk of your ensemble to gradation or a new school opening in your same zone, recruitment and retention is JOB #1 and thus a year-round effort. Recruiting requires getting out to other schools as often as possible. How often can we visit the schools that prepare students who eventually come to our programs? Weekly? Twice a week? Can your supervisor help by scheduling your prep time so that you can spend more time off-site with your colleagues who teach the younger students? Can we ensure that students from these programs are performing on a regular basis with our own students even if it means scoring a part for "recorder" so that the 3rd grade students can be featured in the middle school band or orchestra concert? How about involving the middle school band students in one of the high school marching band shows? I recently enjoyed watching a half-time show that featured 2nd year middle school band students "rocking out" on just two well-placed notes in one of the songs being preformed. The students, and of course their parents, were THRILLED to be featured and they now have a solid, meaningful memory of their first (dare I say, "entertaining"?) experience on the field that will stick with them FOREVER!

RETENTION

Are all levels of your district's music educators-elementary, middle, high schools—on the same page with regard to the K-12 experience? Are all empowered to help retain students as they progress from one level to the next? It's important that we think of ourselves as one faculty that works together consistently to provide one sequential, seamless program with the ultimate goal of creating lifelong music-makers. Some ideas to retain students no only involve the teachers themselves, but the parents and current ensemble members as well. For example, high school band/ orchestra parents could host an "Informational Parent Night" for the middle school band/orchestra parents since parents have their own, distinctive perspective from that of the directors. Another example might be to have the middle school parents write letters of invitation to the parents from the elementary school encouraging them to bring their children to an upcoming performance. Parents reaching out to parents—whether through a potluck supper, an informational meeting or a simple email-is one of the most successful ways to get (and keep) them engaged.

Conn-Selmer, Inc. is proud to serve as one of the sponsors working to offer these resources that have been provided BY THE TEACHERS FOR TEACHERS to assist in the classroom. Most of these are complimentary and include First Performance Concert for Beginning Band or Orchestra, A Practical Guide for Recruitment and Retention, Tips for Success Guide for Instrumental Music Teachers and the newly released, Bridging the Gap between Middle School and High School. As Dr. Charlie Menghini wrote in the last edition of Touchpoint, "In order for us to be successful in our school band and orchestra programs it is important for us to realize that we have a network of friends ready, willing and able to help." All we need to do is take advantage of all that is out there

The Music Achievement Council was formed for the express purpose of supporting instrumental music programs in our schools. Most resources are complimentary and available to download at www.musicachievementcouncil.org.

Click here for the full version of this article.

