Culture by Design: Building Community and Sense of Purpose in the Large Ensemble

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What is culture in the large ensemble classroom?

Classrooms are a reflection of a teacher's relationship to music and their students. However, the connection between a student and their teacher is the foundation for which all other classroom priorities are built (Edgar, 2017; Hibbard, 2017).
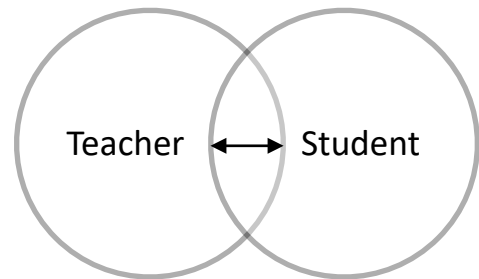
Key Takeaways:

Why Culture?
- Develops musical and extra-musical standards
- Emphasizes trust and rapport
- Music program identity as a reflection of your teacher identity

What Does Culture Look Like?
- Physical space is organized and supports clear communication
- Teaching how to give and receive constructive feedback
- Mutual empathy and celebrating vulnerability
- Practice and model "question asking skills"
- Aligning with Social Emotional Learning (SEL)
- Create and sustain a shared sense of belonging

Where to Begin?
- Taking inventory of self and program
- Nuance and understanding your context is important
- Supporting culture with new members vs. veteran member

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Glossary of Terms:

Belonging the feeling that youth are cared for, trusted, and respected by adults in positions of power within school (McNeely, Whitlock, & Libbey, 2010).

Boundaries: Beliefs about what is appropriate and beneficial between and educator and their students which has been found to be inherently tied to a person's teacher identity. Teachers often use the metaphor of a "line" describe the difference between useful involvement and becoming too involved (Hibbard, 2017).

Clear is Kind (Brown, 2018).

Empathy is connecting to the emotions that underpin an experience (Brown, 2018).

School Connectedness of students to school is their perceptions of relationships to adults at school and to school as well as attitudes toward school (Rawlings, 2015).

Shame vs. Guilt: Shame is the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are flawed and therefore unworthy whereas guilt can be thought of as the painful feeling or experience of believing that you did something wrong (Brown, 2018).

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in Music Education is "education-based interventions addressing social competency training, positive youth development, violence prevention, character education, and mental health promotion" (Edgar, 2013, p. 29).

Teacher presence is a "state of alert awareness, receptivity, and connectedness to the mental, emotional, and physical workings of both the individual and the group in the context of their learning environments, and the ability to respond with a considered and compassionate best next step" (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 266).

Vulnerability is uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure (Brown, 2018).

Clarifying and Operationalizing Your Values:

Vulnerability within Teaching:

Approaches Featured in the Session:

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