

All-State 2005

CLINIC: "SURVIVAL KIT FOR YOUNG TEACHERS"

Mike Croom

Calendar

Senior High

(Sectionals are on going for concert, contest, and tryout material)

(Private lessons are on going for interested students)

(Short hearings are on going for individuals and small groups)

July

Band Camp/Deadline to pick show music

Watch camp band directors rehearse

Mail summer rehearsal letter

August

Summer rehearsals/Bring in other teachers/Start percussion 2-3 days ahead

Learn marching folder and marching fundamentals

Play and march the first day/Use simple movement to scales/Vary rhythmic patterns

ABA – Attend clinic, concerts and meetings

September

Learn tryout scales/Memorize show music in sectionals

Learn drill with music/Film shows for critique

Pay ASBOA dues and send eligibility list to Region chairman

October

First week – Deadline for complete show to be on field

Teach tryout exercises to everyone in sectionals

Marching Contest/Make a day of it for your students/Watch others perform

November

Begin short taped assignments on tryout material

First mock tryout on tryout material

Select and rehearse holiday concert/parade music

December

Christmas concert and parade

Continue taped assignments up to a total of 3 to 5

Consider concert contest music/Post solo-ensemble sign up/Encourage solos and small ensemble

January

Second mock tryout on tryout material/2nd semester eligibility due

All-Region tryouts and Clinic/Watch directors rehearse

Rehearse two hard category contest choices/Pick solo/ensemble music

February

All-State Tryout and Clinic/Watch other directors rehearse/Attend clinics, meetings, concerts

Rehearse two medium level contest choices/Listen to all solo/ensemble entries

All-State Exhibits – Deadline to pick a march and look at Spring Concert music

Solo/Ensemble Recital

March

Rehearse one to two contest march choices

Intonation Survey/Deadline to settle on contest program

Solo/Ensemble Contest/Pre-Concert Contest Performance

April

Concert Contest/Listen to other performances

Region Meeting – Select judges, clinicians, sites, bring proposals for summer board

Rehearse Spring Concert music/Listen to bands at another contest

May

Auxiliary tryouts/Work on camp band placement music

Spring Awards Concert/Recognize student achievement

Uniform and equipment inventory/State Solo/Ensemble Contest

June

Instrument repair bids/Uniform cleaning/Camp tryout music hearings continue

Summer workshop opportunities for directors/Choose a job related area for improvement

1. ASBOA Responsibility

- Come to meetings and vote
- Come to events as a worker or judge
- Read the constitution/Know the rules
- Pay fees for events on or before the date due

2. Beginners

Recruiting

- Schedule music store demo meetings well in advance
- Recommend more than one instrument brand/model
- Include a quality mouthpiece with the instrument
- Ask other directors to assist at the sign-up meeting
- Establish a balanced instrumentation

Pedagogy

- Staff must agree on the book and counting system
- Staff should agree on amount of time to spend on embouchure/tone before starting in the book
- Staff should agree on supplementary material, rhythm slides
- Set a date for needed instrument switches
- Set a first concert date

3. Concert Band

Conducting

- Avoid excess motion
- Require students to watch the director
- Divide the beat mentally
- Keep head out of the score/Maintain eye contact with players

Balance

- Recommend the McBeth Pyramid concept*
- Recommend the Janzen set up with horns, trombones, tubas centered**
- Bring out melody or moving lines that need to dominate
- Reduce or increase written dynamics to work

Tuning

- Accurate student part singing results in better pitch
- Characteristic tone quality is a pre-requisite
- Adjust 3rds & 7ths of difficult triads and seventh chords***
- Cross tune unlike sections

Rehearsal

- Set a time and signal to begin
- Require complete attention of players
- Plan ahead – identify problems and solutions
- Plan amount of time to devote to each spot
- Focus on pitch, balance, precision

4. Related Activities

Sectionals (A MUST!)

- Identify and solve specific problems
- Move slowly – Be thorough
- Introduce difficult pieces in advance
- Stress technique, rhythm, pitch

Individual Hearings

- Important to improve tone and musicianship
- Groups of 2-3 of like ability also works
- Excellent preparation for tryouts
- Bring in private teachers or take students to them
- Directors should teach their major/minor instrument

5. Optional Activities

Intonation Survey

- Chromatic scale with strobe
- Identify repair needs
- Identify pitch tendencies
- Set brass valve slides
- Learn alternate fingerings to adjust pitch

Taped Assignment

- Legislates practice time
- Like a periodic test in another class
- Can help defend band as an academic subject
- More students improve musically

Mock Tryouts

Pre-Contest Concert

- Helps eliminate common performance mistakes
- Valuable judge's comments help students prepare
- Simulates tryout/contest conditions
- Demands performance level earlier

6. Selecting Music

- Mentally associate a part with a student
- Consider length, range, technique, soloists, band sound
- Have an alternate choice in each category
- Is it quality music?
- Does show music have audience appeal?

7. Marching Band

Pre-Marked Field

- Allows drill and music to be taught in segments
- Allows segments to be linked in order
- Students learn form awareness
- Can eliminate extra rehearsals

Fundamentals Check List

- Teach only fundamentals to be used in the show
- Students execute more uniformly
- Allows more time to be spent on difficult moves
- Students must finish the check list to have a position

Field Placement

- Stage weaker sections so their part is not covered
- Limit movement for certain parts to carry
- Do not block souses with bass drums
- Limit field coverage for small bands
- Mic woodwinds or bring them forward for features

8. Selecting Judges

- Adjudication and/or workshop experience
- Come from well established, successful programs
- Judges should tell it like it is in a professional way
- Specific critique with suggestions for improvement

9. Instrument Repair

- Do not allow students to play on broken equipment
- Repair bids should include chemical cleanse/pads/adjustments
- Buy a school owned set of good mouthpieces
- Keep a few loaner horns

10. Instrumental Staff Meetings

- Discuss calendar and coordinate fund raising
- Discuss timely issues and administrative requirements
- Inform students, parents, administrators about event dates
- Assess condition of uniforms and equipment/Share inventory
- Administrators want facts/figures to verify needs
- Discuss summer workshop opportunities

Suggested Readings

Effective Performance of Band Music* McBeth, Southern

The Band Director's Survival Guide** Janzen, Parker

A Guide to the Understanding and Correction of Intonation Problems*** Fabrizio, Meredith

Intonation and Sonority*** Gardner, BDG, April 1991

