



From the Page to the Stage: How to Achieve Excellence

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PRESENTERS: TODD EBERT and KATIE EBERT

DIRECTOR OF BANDS AT CUTHBERTSON HIGH
SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL, WAXHAW NC

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Todd Ebert, Director of Bands at Cuthbertson High School, Waxhaw NC. Mr. Ebert has been teaching at Cuthbertson for 15 years and a total of 24 years.

Mrs. Katie Ebert, Director of Bands at Cuthbertson Middle School, Waxhaw NC. Mrs. Ebert has been teaching at Cuthbertson for 15 years and a total of 20 years.

The Cuthbertson Bands have performed at NCMEA conference 2 times, the MFA southeastern regional 2 times, the UGA Honor Band clinic, and the high school has also performed at the USC clinic, and the MFA National Concert Band Festival featured stage 3 times.



MPA ADJUDICATION FORM

Tone Quality: Characteristic Resonance Control Clarity Consistency Match within section

Intonation: Ensemble pitch center Adjusts chord tones Melodic line Corrects flaws

Balance/Blend: Presentation of musical roles Texture Between timbres Between winds/percussion

Precision: Pitch accuracy Articulation clarity Note shape Vertical alignment Pulse Subdivision Technique

Basic Musicianship: Adherence to printed directions not addressed by previous captions

Interpretive Musicianship: Choices of style, tempi, dynamic range and contrast, melodic inflection to produce composer's intent

AIR FOR BAND

(Revised Edition)

Full Score

By FRANK ERICKSON
(A.S.C.A.P.)

Slowly (♩ = 68-72)

The musical score is a full score for a band, titled "AIR FOR BAND" (Revised Edition) by Frank Erickson. It is in 4/4 time and marked "Slowly (♩ = 68-72)". The score includes parts for the following instruments: Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, 1st & 2nd B♭ Clarinets, 3rd B♭ Clarinet, E♭ Alto Clarinet, B♭ Bass Clarinet, 1st & 2nd E♭ Alto Saxophones, 3rd Tenor Saxophone, E♭ Baritone Saxophone, 1st & 2nd B♭ Trumpets, 3rd B♭ Trumpet, 1st & 2nd F Horns, 1st & 2nd Trombones, 3rd Trombone, Baritone, Tuba, String Bass, and Percussion. The score features various musical notations including notes, rests, slurs, and dynamic markings such as "p" (piano) and "f" (forte).

TONE

WHAT IS (GOOD) TONE?



- The most important factor to the overall sound of a band
- Requires **AIR!!** (loud vs soft)
- Requires director to know how to teach proper embouchure
- Has overtones and resonance
- Use YouTube for models and troubleshooting. Make a page of links and great examples

HOW TO INCORPORATE INTO REHEARSAL



- All the time, on everything!!
- Give immediate, specific feedback on tone and how students should improve this
- Hear one student at a time for individual corrections
- Ask students which performer's tone they like best
- Chorales, chorales, chorales!!


INTONATION

WHAT IS (GOOD) INTONATION?



- Uniform pitch center
- Requires a philosophy on how to teach this and how to help student develop their ear. Harmony director, etc...
- Job of individual – can use a tuner to assist (increases awareness)
- Chords – lower the third for major chords (-13), and raise the fifth slightly (+2)
- Too often overlooked

HOW TO INCORPORATE INTO REHEARSAL

- Tuning note (who gives this?)
- Hear 1 section at a time (maybe only 1 section per day for pacing) and check individual students. Have the rest of the class listen and see if their answer matches yours. Sharp sounds bright, flat sounds dull
-  Check tuning note first, then tendency tones. Give students a copy.
- Tuners.....the process
- Chorales, chorales, chorales!!

BALANCE/BLEND


WHAT IS (GOOD) BALANCE/BLEND?



- Made up of melody, bass line, and inner parts (sometimes several, possibly countermelody)
- Melody should be the loudest by an average of 30%. If there's a countermelody, it should be next in volume, followed by the bass line
- The inner parts are where most muddiness, wrong notes, and tuning problems occur
- Blend-matching tones and volumes of instruments within a section. Fit in the trio!

HOW TO INCORPORATE INTO REHEARSAL



- Hear/check the melody first (including tone and tuning)
- Add the bass line and ask students to put their sound into the melody
- Add the inner parts and ask students if they can hear the bass line. Ask them to put their sound into the bassline and melody
-  • You can also audio record the band and playback for students so they can hear what you hear 😊
- Chorales, chorales, chorales!!

PRECISION

WHAT IS (GOOD) PRECISION?



- Timing/Technique/Notes/Articulation/Rhythm
- Timing – consistent tempo, maintain
- Technique – facility on the instrument, correctly holding the instrument
- Notes – correctness (predict based on key)
- Articulation – correctly done (staccato, slur, accent, etc...)
- Rhythms - correctness
- We spend a large part of our time on this category.....maybe too much?

HOW TO INCORPORATE INTO REHEARSAL

- Metronome – use as needed, or have your students be the metronome by counting and subdividing, and the best – tapping self with subdivision
- Scales and scale patterns for technique and note patterns
- Articulation exercises (can be used on scale patterns!)
- Rhythm exercises – pick 1 per day and put it on the board. Clap/tap, count, and then play
- Split class in 2 and have 1 half play/perform for other half. Students give feedback (keeps engagement)
- Chorales, chorales, chorales!! (Can you change articulation – add accents, staccatos?)
- Concert F

INTERPRETIVE MUSICIANSHIP

WHAT IS THIS CATEGORY?



- Basic Musicianship – Adherence to printed directions
- Interpretative Musicianship - Choices of style, tempi, dynamic range and contrast, melodic inflection to produce composer's intent
- Phrasing, phrasing, phrasing – we need to teach students HOW to phrase. Put an X over most important note
- The feeling in the music!

HOW TO INCORPORATE INTO REHEARSAL

- Teaching how forte on the page may not mean YOU get to play forte
- How to phrase – use any unison melodic line. Go over where/when to breathe and where the peak of the phrase is (notes that go up crescendo, notes that go down decrescendo). Sometimes, a good way to do this is to write out the melody for every instrument on one of your pieces
- Phrase in your warm-ups! 😊
- Chorales, chorales, chorales!!

GENERAL TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Record the band and play it back for them
- Give IMMEDIATE feedback, both positive and corrective
- Celebrate success!
- Be mindful of time (wasted vs productive). Play as much as possible.
- Bring in clinicians to give feedback to your students (and you!)
- What you say is really important
- How you say it is really important
- Consider a yin/yang approach
- Have your students listen to great bands and great performers on their instruments
- Teach on a spiral curriculum
- Chair placements, have top 15% do sight-reading in addition
- Building vs maintaining
- Team vs Group



GENERAL TIPS FOR SUCCESS

-CONT'D

- Have a student mentor program – Free Melodies
- Growth mindset
- Seating placement matters hugely to the sound of the band
- Fun, Fast, Fridays
- Trips can be so beneficial! Find places to take the band whenever possible (festivals, MPA, solo and ensemble, etc.). It develops trust in you and a new perspective for the students
- Prevent burnout by sharing gratitude and attending professional development opportunities – use your superpower!
- Keep your expectations high – your students can and will surprise you!
- You don't have to be afraid to play the “good stuff” – just know how to teach it 😊



RESOURCES

Books

- So You're the New Band Director: Now What?
- The Art of Possibility
- Rehearsing the Band
- The Artistry of Teaching and Making Music
- Stuff Band Directors Need to Know
- The Conductor as Prism
- Teaching Music Through Performance in Band series

Professional Journals

- The Instrumentalist
- SBO
- NBA Journal

Maestros in minivans



THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

Feel free to email us for further discussion/brainstorming. You are not alone!

Todd Ebert - Todd.ebert@ucps.k12.nc.us

Katie Ebert – Katie.ebert@ucps.k12.nc.us

