

Presented by
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August 22, 2022

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Recruitment & Retention Strategies

Developing a Band Program that Welcomes, Encourages, and Supports ALL Students



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OVERVIEW

- ◆ The importance of a comprehensive recruitment strategy.
- ◆ Potential recruits.
- ◆ Important considerations during the recruitment process.
- ◆ Obstacles that can discourage enrollment in band.
- ◆ Optimal time to recruit.
- ◆ Resources to assist in the recruitment process.
- ◆ Things to avoid.
- ◆ Improve Retention.
- ◆ Focus on the Summer Months
- ◆ Focus on the Beginning of the School Year
- ◆ Focus During the School Year
- ◆ Performances at the Feeder Schools

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The importance of a comprehensive recruitment strategy

- Inform students and parents in the feeder school that a band program exists.
- Inform students and parents of the opportunities available in the band.
- Band is usually not a required course of study.




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INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Potential recruits

- ALL students currently attending the 5th grade in the feeder schools.
- ALL siblings of current students who will attend the feeder schools in the future.
- All new students moving into the attendance zone for your school.



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Important considerations during the recruitment process

- Students AND Parents are the target audience of recruitment efforts.
- Balanced instrumentation is required for meaningful music study from the 6th through the 12th grades.
- Inventory must be sufficient to allow students to study tuba, baritone sax, bass clarinet, bassoon, horn, oboe, and other highly-priced instruments.



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Obstacles that can discourage enrollment in band

- Purchase/Rental cost for a band instrument.
- Demands placed on the family calendar by MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND rehearsals, concerts, and/or other activities taking place outside the school day.
- Eventual expense and demands placed on the family calendar by HIGH SCHOOL BAND rehearsals, concerts, and/or other activities taking place outside the school day.
- Peer pressure not to join the band.
- Unethical recruitment practices of other school groups (music and/or sports).



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Optimal time to recruit

- Throughout the entire school year
(Remember: You are always recruiting CURRENT band members to remain in band)
 - Every class rehearsal
 - Every concert
 - Every PTSA meeting
 - Every Open House
- Final weeks of the school year
- Throughout the summer months
- Final weeks of summer
- First days of the school year



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Resources to assist in the recruitment process

- Current band members
- Current band parents and family members
- Databases of names and contact information maintained by the school system for current 5th grade students.
- Automated phone calling services available through the school system.
- PTSA meetings at the feeder schools
- Fall and spring festivals at the elementary schools.
- Local news media
- Social media
 - Band website (useful for those moving into the attendance zone)
 - Facebook
 - Many more!



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Things to avoid

- Avoid any questionable or unethical recruitment practices.
 - Never recruit active members in other school music ensembles.
 - Never communicate false advertisement about the band program.
 - Never withhold information about time commitment or expenses.
 - Never publish an incomplete band calendar for the year. Calendar should show August through May.
 - Never discourage any student due to disability, gender, race, or religion.



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Improve Retention

- Treat ALL students with respect and recognize their human dignity.
- Help each student become the best musician they can be.
 - Build a band with a fine sound built on strong fundamentals.
 - Adopt the philosophy that the band director SERVES the students... the students do not SERVE the band director.
 - Respect the family calendar of each student by publishing a COMPLETE and HONEST calendar of ALL band obligations PRIOR to the start of each school year.
 - NEVER make attendance MANDATORY for unexpected rehearsals and/or performances added to the calendar AFTER the students and parents have made the commitment to participate for the school year.
 - Run efficient, productive, and positive rehearsals.

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SUMMER MONTHS

- Work with the middle school band director to gather a database of 5th grade students
 - Name
 - Phone Numbers
 - E-Mail addresses
 - USPS mailing address
- Use existing social media
 - Websites
 - Blogs
 - PTSA Electronic Newsletters
 - Automated phone calling systems



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SUMMER MONTHS

- Contact your local school secretary for names of students moving into your attendance zone who did not attend a feeder school.
- Post a highly visible recruitment link on your band website for use by families planning to move into your attendance zone.
- Distribute your own band newsletter along with an informative video with video testimonials recorded by current band parents and students.
 - Include information to encourage parents to contact YOU.
- Not all parents attend parent information meetings.
- Use ALL available methods of communication.

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BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

- Orientation meeting with all parents (7:00 PM-ish) prior to the first day of school.
 - Explain the guided instrument selection process.
 - Explain required forms for scheduling students into the band.
- Orientation assembly during the school day with ALL 6th grade students during the first week of school.
 - Include Chorus, Orchestra, and Band directors.
 - Provide information letter for students to take home to parents.
 - Provide live demonstration of all instruments offered.
 - ❖ Avoid gender bias for specific instruments.

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BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

- Hold follow-up meetings with students in smaller groups.
 - Provide detailed discussion of the various instruments.
 - Guide students on the instrument selection process.
 - Distribute registration forms to be submitted for joining the band.
 - ❖ Require a parent signature to confirm instrument selection and permission to join band.



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DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

- All concerts throughout the year serve as a recruitment tool.
 - Each concert program should include:
 - ❖ Names of every student performer
 - ✓ *If you don't place student names in the program, then leave your name off of the cover! THEY are the stars!*
 - ✓ Pre-concert slide show highlighting performers (demo sample)
 - ❖ Student successes, recognition, and awards
 - ❖ Future band performances and activities
 - ❖ Statistics supporting participation in band.

NOTE

If a band photo is made, make sure the director is NOT front and center.

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Dodgen Middle School
8th Grade Band


The Stars of our Show


Adam
Aaronson


Taylor
Anderson

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**Dodgen Middle School
8th Grade Band**



The Stars of our Show



**Justin
Bae**



**Caroline
Bergwall**

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**Dodgen Middle School
8th Grade Band**



The Stars of our Show



**Connor
Bhandari**



**Eric
Brosius**

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**Dodgen Middle School
8th Grade Band**



The Stars of our Show



**Michelle
Brown**



**Annique
Browne**

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**Dodgen Middle School
8th Grade Band**



The Stars of our Show



**Eric
Bryant**



**Jack
Burrows**

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Dodgen Middle School 8th Grade Band



The Stars of our Show



**Nathaniel
Castillo**




**Vanessa
Chan**

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DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

- Invite guest performers to perform at winter holiday concerts...
 - Band Alumni
 - Parents
 - Family members
 - Faculty, Staff, Administrators
 - Make at least one concert each year a true P.T.S.A. event.
 - **THE HIGH SCHOOL DIRECTOR** should serve as a guest conductor for at least one selection on the Middle School Band concert. Great opportunity to speak with all parents about the high school band program.

DO NOT MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY!



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PERFORMANCES AT THE FEEDER SCHOOLS

- Have small ensembles, or full band, perform at PTA meetings at the elementary schools.
- Have small ensembles or full band perform at Fall or Spring Festivals sponsored by the elementary schools.

NOTE

Don't be so consumed with performances out-of-state that you forget to perform frequently in your home community.

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STUDENT/PARENT ORIENTATION SESSIONS "INFORMATION FAIRS"

- If your school holds an information fair, set up an attractive and informative booth/table.
- Have a small ensemble perform near the booths.
- Display photos of activities
- QR Codes of concerts
- Plaques/Awards/Recognitions
- Consider a slide show projected inside a Bass Drum!
- Prepare band room for visitors...
CLEAN UP THE PLACE!



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INSTRUMENTATION

- ✓ Anticipate the instrumentation demands of the literature.
- ✓ Musical understanding and development are enhanced through balanced instrumentation.
- ✓ The middle school director is responsible for setting up proper instrumentation for continued study in the high school band program.
- ✓ Plan/anticipate that a certain number of students will move away or drop band. Don't start 4 tubas thinking the high school will have those same 4 tubas 4 years later.

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