The Advocate’s Plan: Saving and Building Music Programs for Life

Dr. John L. Benham

The mission of education is not teaching children – it is children learning.
Advocacy Is ...

... caring enough to put the STUDENT FIRST!
3 Keys to Success:

1. The Procedure
2. The Parents
3. The Profession
1st Key to Success:

The Procedure

Understanding the timeline and process by which decisions are made in a school district.
The Model District

- The Community
- The School Board
- The Administration
- The Educational Community

All collaborating to focus on student learning
The Typical District

- Administration & School Board
- Teachers’ Union
- Community Excluded

Focused on adult-centered issues such as money and power, with little or no community involvement
Making Decisions

Decision Makers:
- The Law
- Normal Practice

Decision Drivers:
- Yearly Schedule
- Adult Priorities
- Student Issues
Decision Driver: Schedule

- **Fall:** Initial Budget Discussions
- **January:** Registration (MS/HS)
  - First Public Awareness
  - Excess Levy Votes
  - Threats vs. Promises (Surveys)
- **March:** Pink Slips (Cuts)
- **June:** Budget Decision Deadline
- **September:** Program Reinstatement
Influencing Decisions

- Get involved in the process
- Proactive vs. Reactive involvement
- Get organized
Remember . . .

PROCESS IS POLITICS!

“The decision belongs to those who show up!”

Dr. Dennis R. Morrow
Seek Positive Reform

Reform Means Change

it does NOT guarantee improvement!
2nd Key to Success:
The Parents

An organized Music Coalition is the most effective way for parents to influence the decision-making process in the school district.
The Music Coalition

ORCHESTRA

CHOIR

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

GENERAL MUSIC

BAND

ALL SCHOOLS • ALL LEVELS • MUSIC TEACHERS • MUSIC COMMUNITY
The Music Coalition

Teams:

1. Communications
2. Administrative Liaison
3. Statistics and Finance
4. Philosophy and Curriculum
1. Communications Team:

- Recruit/Activate Parent Support Groups
- Develop & Maintain Mailing Lists
- Establish Rapid-call Telephone Bank
- Develop & Publish Music Newsletter
- Use the Press to Inform and Educate
2. Administrative Liaison Team:

- Establish Lines of Communication with Administration
- Acquire Knowledge of Administrative Proposals
- Develop & Present Music Proposals
- Representation at School Board Meetings
- Recruit, Train, Support, & Elect School Board Members
3. Statistics & Finance Team:

- Maintain Statistical Data
- Work with Administrative Liaison to Develop Proposals
- Manage All Fund-raising Activities & Monies
- Assist in Development & Presentation of Music Budget
Philosophy & Curriculum Team:

- Assist in Development of District Music Philosophy & Policy
- Assist in Development of Student-centered Curriculum
- Present to School Board for Official Adoption as District Policy
Teachers and advocates need to work together for the benefit of the students.
Music Teachers

- Orchestra
- Choir
- Band
- Music Education
- General Music
- Music Teachers
Music Curriculum

CURRICULAR

MUSIC EDUCATION

COCURRICULAR

EXTRACURRICULAR
Music Curriculum

Written, sequential teaching objectives with student outcomes that are . . .

• Specific
• Achievable
• Measurable
Crisis Management

In any crisis . . . Identify the issues first!

• Faculty Issues
• Curricular Issues
• Student Participation Issues
• Economic Issues
Target the Issues

Reform

Hidden Agendas

Budget Crisis

Hidden Cuts
The Financial Crisis

Strategies for the most common school issue—

Full Time Equivalent (FTE)
## Average Student Loads Comparison (Music/non-music)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FTE Load</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Classes x Students</th>
<th>Student</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Non-music Classroom Teacher</td>
<td>5 x 30</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Music Performance Teacher</td>
<td>5 x 40</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Non-music Classroom Teacher</td>
<td>5 x 30</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Replacement Teacher</td>
<td>5 x 30</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>Replacement Teacher</td>
<td>2 x 25</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.0 FTE Music Teacher = 1.4 Classroom Teacher

Music Teacher Financial Value = 1.4 FTE
Reverse Economics

5.2 FTE Cut
Projected savings - $156,000

ANNUAL BUDGET MISCALCULATION
$534,000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>New Classes</th>
<th>New Classroom FTE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>12.6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Projected savings: $156,000
Never suggest cuts or compromise!

Make Impact Statements!
Where Do You Stand?

- In Denial?
- Helpless?
- Apathetic?

Be an Advocate!
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