

BRING YOUR BAND PROGRAM TO THE NEXT LEVEL: BENEFITS OF UTILIZING A CLINICIAN

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Suggestions for WHY, WHEN, and HOW to use a clinician, HOW this experience can benefit you and your students, and steps to take in order to eliminate any anxiety you may feel about having someone work with your ensemble/students.

WHY?

- Benefits to the student
- Benefit to the director
- Development of concepts and skills
- Development of colleague network

WHEN?

- Factors that determine the “when”
 - Experience/Needs of the director
 - Needs of the ensemble/program
 - Budget
- Calendar/Suggested timelines
 - Fall
 - Contest specific preparation
 - Year-round

HOW?

- Choosing a clinician/mentor
 - Recommendations
 - Reputation/research
 - Location
 - Priorities that match
 - Financial considerations
 - Use of multiple clinicians
- Prepare the students
 - Clinician background
 - Purpose
 - Clinician/guest etiquette

NEEDS AND GOALS

- Evaluate performing bands
 - Improving a piece (or pieces) of music
 - Improve teaching skills
 - Identify ensemble concepts to improve
 - Send recordings to clinician
- Evaluate beginning instruction
 - Inexperienced teacher
 - Consistency of instruction
 - Identify strengths and weaknesses

FINAL SUGGESTIONS

The director should have an idea of what he/she wants to accomplish during the session and discuss this with the clinician. For example... focus on one piece, several pieces, a particular section, or a fundamental.

Once the basic (tone, articulation, notes and rhythms) are in place, a clinician can make significant improvement in one session.

To make the most of your clinician experience, record the session and listen to it afterwards.

When trying to improve basic fundamentals, the effects will usually not be long-lasting unless there are multiple visits.

Keep in mind that a clinician's suggestions are not gospel! Use what you like and keep the other ideas in your "bank of knowledge" to possibly use later.

FEAR FACTOR – "My band isn't ready for a clinician yet!" This may be when you need to make the call!

Resources:

Band Director Support Network (BDSN) – www.pbmalpha.org

Music Educators Resource Network (MERN) - www.foundationformusiceducation.org