

Through the Looking Glass: Music Educator Values as Interpreted Through the Student Experience



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Considerations & Suggestions For Music Educators

1. **Student Agency** - Music Educators are encouraged to brainstorm, create, and develop opportunities within their music program for students to have increased agency in their artistic/music program experiences:
 1. Agency in literature programming.
 2. Agency in the programming of artistic and educational experiences offered.
 3. Agency in other areas of the music program as possible.
2. **Move Beyond “What” to “What & Why”** - So much of the student experience in their music program is about *what* they are performing, *what* the next event on the program calendar is, etc. Music Educators are encouraged to create time for students to be informed about *why* and *how* artistic, musical, and other music program decisions are made. Perceptions of prescribed artistic activities held by music educators and students often have drastically different interpretations, especially regarding the educational/artistic intent that informs the activity.
3. **“Some Things I Believe” (H. Robert Reynolds)** - Do students know the underlying values of their music educator that are “operationalized” into the experience(s) that students are currently undertaking? Music Educators are encouraged to create opportunities to fully discuss and share their values/beliefs that inform the student music program experiences with students and parents. Opportunities for open, honest, and straightforward dialogue regarding band program experiences and the reasoning behind them between student and music educator are vital to create trust and allow opportunities for genuine understanding.
4. **“Look Through Different Lenses”** - While music educators may see performances and culminating artistic events as an end unto themselves, student perceptions move beyond mere performances/culminating artistic events - and are often deeply rooted into elements of Participatory Performance (MacGregor, 2019).
5. **Slow The Music Program Pace** - Often the pace of the school music program is “**Event/Performance** —> **Preparation for Next Event/Performance**”. Music Educators are encouraged to create opportunities in the school music program calendar to implement a variety of summative experiences for students to reflect, discuss, and share their thoughts about the most recently experienced event/performance/etc.

6. *The Next Generation* - Pre-Service Music Education Programs are encouraged to design and implement curriculum in which participating students are implored to consider their own values/beliefs for music education; and adjudicate how those values/beliefs are informed (including through their own personal experiences as a student), and operationalized.

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