

Teaching music at a high level is about finding the potential in each student to express themselves, engage with the world, and grow as a person. In an ensemble setting, teaching music is about fostering collaborative skills in a social, supportive environment with high expectations for growth. I see music making as a creative and expressive act that requires commitment, determination, and methodical practice. Not only do musicians engage with other musicians through rehearsal and lessons, but studying music allows students to engage with culture in meaningful ways. Music has always been at the center of my life as a means to express, engage, and grow. I have seen how dedicated music learning can build strong communities and am eager to build this kind of community for a new generation.

I believe the best way to foster a strong community is through compassion and dedication towards the students as individuals and the group as a whole. My goal is to make sure each student is growing as a person in the ensemble by building strong relationships of trust and care. This process should provide an enriching ensemble experience through attention to the social and collaborative aspects of music making. My goal is for every member of the ensemble to feel valued and for the ensemble to be valued by every member by holding every student accountable to achieve at their highest level.

In addition to being a place of community and growth, I believe the music classroom should be a place of creativity. This creativity can be found in the types of music studied as well as the way this music is learned and performed. Every student should feel like they actively make decisions and find solutions in a way that is expressive. The music the ensemble plays should reflect this desire for students to find ways to be creative and connect to their identity. All of this best happens when the expectations for the level of music making are high.

Expecting high-level achievement from ensembles can help give the larger school community something to be proud of. I have seen how communities, either close-knit or divided, can come together to support music ensembles. I see the school music program as a place for students, parents, and the larger school and town communities can come together to appreciate and support the value of collaborative music making. This relationship with the community works both ways. A music program should constantly look for ways to give back to the community in ways like concerts that support the community, commissioning/hiring local artists, and inspiring a life-long appreciation and support of local arts.