

# **How to Develop a Summer Music Program for your District**

**Presented by Anthony Susi for the 2018 CMEA Conference**

When I reflect on my teaching career, one of the major components to the success of my music program in every district I taught was a summer music program. I thought it would be beneficial to share materials from my past and present summer music programs that I believe could help my colleagues' programs to grow as much as they did mine.

I feel it's important to list my background in this area for this workshop. My experience with summer music programs began as a high school student at **Laurel Music Camp**, followed by a staff position for the **Hartt Summer Youth Music Program** right out of college. It inspired me to get involved with the **Manchester Summer Music Program** when I was hired at Bennet and fortunately became the program director a year later when the previous person left for another job. With that opportunity, I began to expand what had been a Jazz Camp to include a Pops Band, String Orchestra instrumental lessons and team teaching with 4 other music teachers from our district. While I was teaching in Manchester, I was offered the opportunity to develop music classes for the **Summer Excursions in Learning Program** sponsored by MCC. The first National Standards were hot off the press so I focused on 2 areas that received little attention in the curriculum at the time – improvisation and composition, by offering a **Young Composers Workshop and MCC Jr. Jazz Ensemble**. When I left Bennet for the high school band director position in Coventry, I immediately established a **Coventry Summer Pops Band** there and expanded that program over the years to include instrumental lessons and a Jazz Band, incorporating alumni and former student teachers as instructors. Most recently I have had the pleasure of directing the Concert Band, Jazz Band and instrumental lessons for the **Glastonbury Music & Arts Camp** the past 2 summers.

## **BENEFITS:**

- 1) Provides students **Motivation to Practice/Perform** over the summer months.
- 2) Potentially **Longer, Uninterrupted Blocks of Time** provide opportunity to
  - a. Focus more on **Fundamentals/Technique**
  - b. Focus more on **Improvisation Skills**.
- 3) **Improve Retention/Attrition** by bridging the gap between Elem., Middle & High School through cross grade level experiences.
- 4) Opportunity to **Start Beginners & Switch to New Instruments to Balance Needed Instrumentation** for the coming school year.
- 5) **Convenience and Cost** will likely involve more students.
- 6) **Public Relations & Enrichment** – Hold Concert Outdoors in your Community if possible. Feature guest soloists (Local Private Teachers +/- Alumni perhaps?)
- 7) **No Performance Tests/Grades** to interfere with Enjoyment of Making Music!
- 8) **Summer Income for Music Dept.**

# KEY CONSIDERATIONS

## WHEN and FREQUENCY TO OFFER IT?

**JUNE** – If you try to begin right after school lets out, you run the risk of **Snow Days Interfering** with start date as is the case with Glastonbury Music & Arts Camp & Laurel Music Camp this year. Do you and/or your students need a break from school before jumping right in?

**JULY** – If you start the beginning of July, you will likely lose students to Holiday Celebrations on and around the 4<sup>th</sup>. Generally hottest month. Is facility air-conditioned?

**AUG.** – Popular month for Family vacations before school begins. Do you and/or your students need a gap between music camp and starting the new school year?

### **Other Factors:**

Can you avoid conflicts with other popular sport(s) camp?

Can you coordinate with Parks & Rec Camp?

When is the rest of your staff available/willing to work?

2 Weeks or 4 Weeks?

Daily or M, W, F?

**\*Recommendation:** Poll Students, Parents & Music Staff to find a major consensus.

Once your program is established, majority of parents will plan around your dates!

## TRANSPORTATION

Can the School District assist with providing a **Bus**?

If relying on **Car Pooling**, provide a list of participants to parents in advance to make arrangements.

## HOW MUCH TO CHARGE

- 1) Will the program be **Sponsored by the District** OR does it need to be **Independent** of it?  
The answer to this question affects **Contracted Pay Rate** and **Liability Insurance**.  
**1099 MISC** or **Taxes/Soc. Security** Withheld?
- 2) Will the program be **Self Funded** OR the **District, Boosters or Grants Assistance**?
- 3) Will anticipated **Enrollment** determine salary?
- 4) How many **Paid Staff** do you anticipate needing?
- 5) Can any **Excess Revenue** be deposited into Music Activity account?
- 6) Will the music in your library be sufficient or will you need to Purchase New Music?
- 7) Do you need to fully or partially fund a **Bus**?
- 8) Do you want to offer **Multiple Siblings Discount** to families enrolled?
- 9) Can the Music Boosters provide “**Scholarship**” **Money** based on Talent +/-or Need?

## STAFF

- 1) Does Paid Staff need to be **Certified Music Educators**, present **College Music Ed. Majors**?  
\*Recommend Former Student Teachers and Alumni who are familiar with your program!
- 2) Will they be **Posted Positions** or **Director Appointed Jobs**?
- 3) Can High School students serve as **Volunteer Aides**?
- 4) What **Vetting Process** is needed?

(Letters of Recommendation, Child Abuse Training, Finger Printing, Drug Testing? etc.)

**REPERTOIRE & ACTIVITES** should be Appealing & Fun!!