

Anna Reitsma
2928 Scottsdale Smithton Rd. Scottsdale, PA 15683
Seton Hill University
Senior Honors Capstone Project

Characteristics of Successful High School Band Directors

The purpose of this study is to determine the key characteristics of high school band directors that contribute to the development of successful high-school instrumental programs. I focused on two research questions: 1) Do the selected band programs exhibit characteristics of a successful band program? 2) What personality characteristics do band directors of successful high school band programs exhibit?

I sent out two questionnaires to three band directors in the Pittsburgh area. The first questionnaire focused on the characteristics of the band and was taken from a survey created by Ann Deisler in her dissertation "A comparison of Common Characteristics of Successful High School Band Programs in Low Socioeconomic Status Schools and High Socioeconomic Status Schools." The second questionnaire focused on the characteristics of the band director and was taken from David Teachout's article "Preservice (sic) and Experienced Teachers' Opinions of Skills and Behaviors Important to Successful Music Teaching."

The results showed that the chosen bands were considered successful as they received a total score of 116 or more out of 145 on the band questionnaire. The results also showed that all three band directors strongly exhibited 20 out of the 40 characteristics on the director questionnaire. Some of these characteristics include enthusiasm, confidence, and a high level of musicianship. Further research could be done to see which of these characteristics are important to how they developed successful high school bands. One implication of this study is that school districts should help current and future band directors develop these characteristics in order to create and keep a successful band program.

Presented at the annual conference of the Pennsylvania Music Education Association Hershey, PA March 31-April 2, 2016

Relevance to teaching

- 1) As educators, we spend a good amount of time evaluating our teaching skills. What did we do right? What should we improve? And what should we not do again? This study gives us some characteristics to think about when evaluating our success in the classroom.
- 2) This study helps to identify characteristics of successful band programs as well. Band directors can take these characteristics to help identify the success of their band and find areas where they could improve their band.
- 3) We want our students to have the best education possible and to do that we desire to become the best educators possible. The results of this study evaluate how our characteristics can help contribute to the development of a successful band. Therefore we can provide our students with the opportunity to be a member of and contribute to a successful band program.

References

- Teachout, David J. "Preservice And Experienced Teachers' Opinions Of Skills And Behaviors Important To Successful Music Teaching." *Journal of Research in Music Education* 45.1 (1997): 41-50. *JSTOR*. Web. 13 Feb. 2015. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3345464> .>.
- Deisler, Ann M., "A Comparison of Common Characteristics of Successful High School Band Programs in Low Socioeconomic Status Schools and High Socioeconomic Status Schools" (2011). *Electronic Theses, Treatises and Dissertations*. Paper 784.