

SCSBOA 2019 CONFERENCE SESSION

FROM SIMMER TO BOIL:

HOW TO KEEP THE POT FROM BUBBLING OVER

Classroom management strategies for the music classroom

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What do you want your classroom to be like?

- An inviting, interesting place for kids to create and discover the amazing world of making music.
- A safe place that encourages teamwork, cooperation, in a positive environment.
- An organized and effective workspace for music making.
- **All of the above.**
- Your classroom is a reflection of *you*.

What is your classroom *culture*?

- Is there a sense of *"This is how we do things here"*?
- Is there an *expectation* of excellence? (Outstanding vs. Standing Out vs. Out, Standing...)
- Is it positive?
- Is it safe? *Can students make mistakes without fear?*
- Is it fun? *"Fun" can be defined in many ways, and they're all valid – do what you're comfortable with*

Do you have established routines?

Systems, systems, systems! Kids thrive on structure – establish a routine for everything.

- Entering the room.
- Where instruments and backpacks go.
- When it is okay to talk freely.
- When paperwork is collected.
- Grading
- Passing out/collecting music
- Folders/books
- When is question time?
- Packing up.

Do you want to take a *day* to deal with it, or deal with it *every day*?

Do you have a personal organizational system? Learn to be efficient.

- If it doesn't require a music ed degree, try not to do it yourself.
- Kids want to help with anything!
 - Utilize student leadership – officers, section leaders, class leaders, row leaders - whatever
- Parents can help (*if you let them*)
 - Create a parent group (doesn't have to be a booster org.)
 - Having involved parents = clout with your admin!
 - Learn to ask, not tell. SignUp.com is a great way to gather your volunteers!

How does your class run?

- *How* do you start?
 - *When* do you start?
- Energy – who generates it – you, or the students? Both! The kids are the fuel, *you are the spark*.
 - How do you get the spark lit?
 - What is your energy and enthusiasm like – *how do you show it?*
- Pacing – “Time is a great equalizer in life; it is not your friend”.
 - Say less, do more.
 - Allow *specific* amounts of time for each goal
 - Prioritize what you need to do – now, today, this week, etc.
- Noise – what’s your comfort level
 - Listening is a one-way street.
 - Decide when you want them to listen, and when they can “disengage “ from direct instruction.
 - *Establish firm rules about this!* An easy one is “Conductor on the podium has your eyes and ears always”.
- Collaboration – what does it *look like* in a band class?
 - Share with the person next to you...
 - In your section/sub section...etc.
- What are your hard rules?
 - Why do we have rules? *So we can all play and enjoy the game!*
 - Keep them simple, keep them few.
 - In the box/out of the box

Setting Goals – What your students *need* vs. what you *want*

- Are you teaching them, or your “dream band”?
- Success is a daily goal – *it should be experienced on some level by every student, every day.*
- What is success?
 - Did you grow today?
 - Were you helpful?
 - Can you do something you couldn’t do before? Better than before?
- Goals can be small or large, but need to always be present.
- Do your students know what the goal is?
- They can’t aim if they don’t have a target.

Student Behaviors

- The *behavior* is not the *child*. Learn to separate the two. Respect the *child*, deal with the *behavior*.
- *Not* dealing with a behavior is your tacit *acceptance* of that behavior, no matter how small.
- Every time you ignore a negative behavior, you are also *reinforcing* it.
- Get in the habit (because we’re not) of reinforcing *positive* behaviors & things that are happening in your room as much, *or more*, than the negative things!
- Improve a negative by pointing out a positive example – the kids totally get this! Then catch the “offender” getting it right! *More than once*.
- Say what you mean, mean what you say.
- Don’t offer a consequence that you’re not ready to follow through on. Smaller, but meaningful levels are better.
- Deal with issues yourself as much as possible and your admin will appreciate it.
- Document everything, and document *often!*

- 3 Levels of behavior motivation – Fear, Obedience, and Love
 - Level 1 – student behavior is motivated by fear of consequences
 - Level 2 – student behavior is motivated by someone telling them what they must do
 - Level 3 – student behavior is motivated by knowing what is right to do.
 - *Get your kids working towards level 3!*

Working with parents...

- Rule #1 – You are both on the *same* side! (Even when you're not)
- Use the phrase “Let’s talk about what we can do to help your child...”
- Be proactive and call or email them before you really need to.
 - Include the good with the bad and your message will be more easily received.
- Show them what their kids are doing.
 - Photos.
 - Videos.
- Bombard them with information.
 - Get a “return receipt” with anything sent home. Make it for credit.
- Many parents (mistakenly) get lulled into a false sense that once their children start becoming more physically independent that they are capable of being intellectually. They are not (Not completely, anyways). Encourage *active* parenting – as a “partnership” of sorts.

Learn to laugh at yourself & life. Share laughter with your kids

Things to take home:

- **What do you want your classroom to be like?**
- **What is something you can improve in your preparation, daily class, or in dealing with behaviors?**
- **What can you try on Monday?**

Questions?

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At your service



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