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CCSD Mentor/Coach Induction Meeting
August 18, 2022
2:00 PM GVHS Principal's Conference Room

I. Introductions

Shelly Burger, 6-12 Strings
Rayne Ellison, 6-12 Band
Karen Heater, K-12 Art

Kimberly Ritzer, Consultant
Anne Stephen, 6-12 Vocal
Pam Taylor, K-5 Music

II. Identifying Common Challenges and Solutions

A. **Classroom Management**—Provide strategies for getting students into seats and getting class underway. Rayne recommends doing a mock demo when the students are not in the room. Have teacher emulate. Karen recommends seating chart for when school first starts. Kim recommends that students sit where they want on the first day then never in that arrangement again as they will choose to sit with their friends that day.

B. **Classroom Procedures**—**this goes along with getting class underway. Students need to know how to enter the room**, then what happens next, next, next until they demonstrate the routine without prompting. Even if teachers are a month into school, new teachers can simply say, on any given Monday, “OK. . .beginning today, we have new procedures. You will ‘a, b, c, d, e, etc.’ now let’s do it.” Then re-start the class and have the students do what you have asked. Each day, teachers must **INSIST** on the same behavior and go back and review (just as they would when teaching musical skills) as needed. This is how students learn. **REPEAT, REPEAT, REPEAT.**

C. **Owning the Space**—Karen shared that the new Art teachers were given a deed to their classroom which provided them with a sense of ownership and empowered them to be “in control” of their space. The deed was posted which became a physical reminder of who was in charge. She also shared that it is important for coaches to ask the teachers what they need. CCSD procedures are new to these folks so they might need to be explained in more detail. Be sure that your mentees have your contact info so that they can reach out as needed in between your classroom visits.

III. Approaching the Teacher with Observed Challenges/Providing Possible Solutions

A. **Starting the Conversation.** Ask teachers, “How do you think it went today?” and let them tell you first then diagnose and address the root challenge (never “problem”). Remember the five (5) whys. If you sense that teachers are not following through with recommendations, feel free to “**REVIEW, REVIEW, REVIEW**” with them otherwise their challenges will never get resolved.

- B. Body Language Awareness.** Let's be sure to keep an eye on the teachers' physicality. Are they dressed appropriately? I'm old school but I truly believe that how teachers dress has an immense impact on how students respond to the teacher. Showing respect for oneself by "dressing as a professional" also shows respect to the students. It tells the students that the teacher cares enough about THEM to make a little extra effort in terms of their appearance. Check their teaching posture. They should stand tall and proud! As a result, students will sense their level of confidence.
- C. Classroom Procedures.** (Also see II. B. above) Is it obvious what the expectation is? If not, provide the teacher with some step-by-step ideas and let them know that what is taught today **MUST BE REVIEWED TOMORROW!**
- D. Rehearsal Strategies, Technique and Fundamentals.** (See attached Pacing Guides with hyperlinks. . .are they close to being on target?) Be sure that the teachers aren't stressing about the Pacing Guide though. It is a GUIDE. It helps to know what to teach first, second, third, etc. Help them with pedagogy. This is an area that universities really don't address enough. The key is to focus on fundamentals. We walk before we run. Many teachers just need help on learning how to fix student issues. . .playing position and instrument hold are HUGE for beginners (beginning students as well as beginning teachers). Are there tricks to help improve these fundamental skills. If the school can afford it, teachers should think about using a Harmony Director. Monica Guido uses one and so does her husband, Ramiro, who teaches mariachi. It helps with the tuning IMMENSELY!!!! (If you don't know what this is, be sure to schedule a time to visit with Monica to see how she uses it.)
- Appropriate Literature Choices.** This is a struggle even for experienced teachers so help them make good choices so that they don't over-program. Remember that the music is the vessel through which we teach musicianship skills. Include difficult passages in the warm-up exercises. Share your bag of tricks. Be sure they know that adjudicators don't judge them on the level of the music they choose to perform but, rather, on how the students perform the level of music chosen for them by the teacher. Skill-building through the music is the point.
- E. Communicating with Administration.** Keep the good news coming! Schedule a **First Performance National Day of Celebration** (an organized demo concert) for the 6th or 7th week of school and ask the principal to serve as emcee. (Script is provided.) It will get the kids "on task" pronto knowing that they have a performance right around the corner! Here's info on how it works: <https://www.msfg.org/fpndoc> Even though this was designed as an activity for beginning instrumental programs, it also works for choral programs. Parents and principals love this. Another idea is to provide student recognition awards. . .Most Improved _____; Student of the Week, etc. Get the good news on the principal's desk and share it school-wide. This is advocacy at its best. We don't want our arts programs to be the best kept secret in the school.
- F. Retention.** One of the most important facets of a successful program is **THIS YEAR'S BEGINNERS** so it's vital to focus on these novice musicians **BIG TIME** so that they continue beyond this year. Year two (2) is the come-back year! Things really do get easier

from there. Make a big deal out of each student. Can teachers have a website for their program and post posters of each beginning student? (Refer back to the MSFQ email where these Notes were provided for an easy-to-replicate sample.)

G. **Isolate One Item.** Let's not put too much on their plate at one time. Choose one (or two) items that really need attention. Chances are it will have to do with classroom management or daily procedures. Whatever the case, give them suggestions to work on (for next visit) to improve the item needed most.

IV. Keeping a Journal of Progress for Each Teacher

A. **Take Good Notes and Record Progress.** Feel free to provide a summary of your visit with recommendations but don't make it directive in nature. Remember, anything that is put in writing can come back so keep it casual.

B. **Share input with Jeff.** Always find at least one good thing to share! If you are having issues with a teacher, be sure that Jeff knows about it.

V. **Your ID, Credentials, etc.** For returning coaches, see Jeff to get your sticker for this year. For new coaches, reach out to Sue or Jeff.

VI. **Payment Structure.** All payments are provided electronically. Karen and Pam are to submit their hours monthly to Sue who will approve them and forward to me for processing. Shelly, Rayne, and Anne are to submit their hours to me directly on the attached forms and I will forward to Jeff all at the same time. For increased efficiency, please do this at some point during the first week of the subsequent month so that I can submit your hours for payment on one invoice.



PLEASE SIGN UP TO BEGIN RECEIVING THE MSFQ (MORE TO START, FEWER TO QUIT) RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION TIPS distributed by the Music Achievement Council and encourage your new teachers to do the same. These tips come out monthly with tips specifically timed to keep music teachers informed with what they could be doing at a given time of the year to enhance recruitment and retention efforts. They are written by considerable experts in the music ed field—Cheryl Floyd in band and Soo Han will soon be joining us for strings—are among the contributors. The tips come right to your email in-basket and also include one general Success Tip. Here's where to sign up: <https://www.msfq.org/guide> You have already received the email regarding the **First Performance National Day of Celebration**. Feel free to forward it to your teachers.

*Thank you for all that you are about to do this year!
YOU ARE MAKING A HUGE DIFFERENCE
for your teachers but more importantly, their students.*