MUSIC & LEADERSHIP

Craig Hlavac, Ed.D.
Associate Dean, Liberal Arts
Director, University Band
Southern Connecticut State University
ACTIVITY

KEEP THE BEAT!
WHO AM I?
GUSTAVO DUDAMEL & LA PHILHARMONIC
WHY ME?

• Music major students
• Non-majors interested in music
• Non-music faculty (French, Library Sciences, Physics)
• Community professionals (PhD/MD in Psychiatry, IT professionals, Yale librarians, CHE professor, architect, etc.)
• Sound familiar?
“THE THEORY OF RELATIVITY OCCURRED TO ME BY INTUITION, AND MUSIC IS THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND THIS INTUITION. MY PARENTS HAD ME STUDY THE VIOLIN FROM THE TIME I WAS SIX. MY NEW DISCOVERY IS THE RESULT OF MUSICAL PERCEPTION.”

- ALBERT EINSTEIN
CONNECTION & COMMUNICATION

- Build trusting relationships
- Encourage a culture of mutual accountability
- Model leadership with actions and consistency
- Listen constantly, demonstrate clear direction, speak seldomly
- Communication is a two-way street, but ultimately the players make the music
• Patiently teach while providing historical and experiential context

• Encourage members to achieve their fullest potential, leveraging their strengths

• Consistently and constantly assess and correct performance

• Think creatively and seek innovative new ways to lead
LEADERSHIP

• Lead with clear and rigorous expectations
  • *Clear is kind. Unclear is unkind.* - Brené Brown
  • A 90% musical performance - not good!
• Capitalize on ensemble strengths while improving on group deficits
• Much of musical leadership is service
• Administrative skills are required. Marketing, professional writing, media relations, accounting, fundraising…
• Remain humble – the music does not come from you
TIMING & TEMPO

• Starting and stopping are the most important things we do!
• Pacing content based on what the group can handle is critical
• Knowing when to push forward and when to retreat
• Time management for rehearsals (meetings)
• The right piece (initiative) done at the wrong time can lead to failure
MISSION-CENTERED

• What is your primary mission?
• Who are your primary stakeholders?
• How do you define success?
• How do you assess and hold yourself accountable?
SOME ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS...

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ARTS IN SCHOOLS
“MUSIC IS A WAY FOR OUR STUDENTS TO FIND THEMSELVES AND LEARN CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS. IN FACT, MUSIC PROBABLY DOES MORE TO DEVELOP CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS AND ANALYTICAL THINKING AND IMPROVISATION THAN MANY OTHER TOPICS WE SPEND TIME ON IN SCHOOL. FOR ME IT’S AN INTEGRAL PART AND ONE OF THE BEST WAYS WE CAN NURTURE THE NATURAL TALENT THAT STUDENTS HAVE…”

DR. MIGUEL CARDONA, US SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
Mean GPA of High School Students (2005) (On a four-point scale)

- Low arts, low SES: 2.55
- High arts, low SES: 2.94
- Overall Sample (All SES): 2.84

Mean Math GPA of High School Students (2005) (on a four point scale)

- Low arts, Low SES: 2.48
- High arts, low SES: 2.63
- Overall Sample (All SES): 2.54

HIGH SCHOOL DROP OUT DATA

Percent of 13-17-Year-Olds Who Did Not Graduate from HS (2008)

- 22% Low arts, low SES
- 4% High arts, Low SES
- 7% Overall sample (All SES)

Other Relevant Findings

- The arts play a key role in keeping students in high school and graduating on time [3]
- Students at risk of dropping out of school cited participation in the arts as their reason for staying in school [4]
- In a 5-year study of nearly 175,000 first-time 9th graders in Texas, the authors found that cumulative credits in the arts were consistently associated with reduced dropout, even after controlling for prior achievement and concurrent course completion in core subjects [5]

Through a randomized controlled trial with 10,548 students who were enrolled in 42 schools across the Houston area, researchers found arts-learning experiences benefit students in terms of reductions in disciplinary infractions, increases in compassion for others and improvements in writing achievement.

“IN TERMS OF ACADEMIC OUTCOMES, RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT PARTICIPATION IN THEATRE AND MUSIC IS ASSOCIATED WITH ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT, AND PARTICIPATION IN ARTS EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY IS ASSOCIATED WITH ACADEMIC ASPIRATIONS, UNIVERSITY ENROLLMENT, TIME AT UNIVERSITY, AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT.”

EXCERPT FROM "THE ROLE OF ARTS PARTICIPATION IN STUDENT OUTCOMES" [7]
TAKEAWAYS

1. Music conductors and K-12 academic leaders have much in common

2. Leadership skills are applicable across many different disciplines, organizations, and arenas

3. Keeping our primary stakeholder front-of-mind is important

4. The arts are essential for a holistic public education
THANK YOU!

CRAIG HLAVAC
HLAVAC@SOUTHERNCT.EDU
WWW.SOUTHERNCT.EDU
REFERENCES


