

ALLOW. SUPPORT. BE.

A band director's manifesto for change.

1. **ALLOW.** Give someone whose ideas differ from yours breathing space. Step back so they can step forward. You may not like it initially, but seriously, who *loved* salted caramel the first time?
2. **RELEASE YOUR FEAR.** Anything new is frightening. Accept that this is *your* fear, then find your own way to process it and move on.
3. **TRUST.** Trust everyone. Your students, your colleagues, yourself. Everyone has something of value to bring to the table. Let it happen. (If you're shaking your head, see #2.)
4. **IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU.** You're not a God, you're a teacher. You are there to educate students and give them a life-long love of music, not win competitions playing *one* style of music in *one* way.
5. **EMBRACE THE PROCESS.** Not everything you do has to end up in a concert.
6. **SUPPORT.** Do you know someone who is trying to change how band is taught in their school? Write a letter to their Principal, share the experience, bring coffee, hug. It's that simple.
7. **HAVE THE ANSWERS.** My father always said "Provide the answers, not the questions." Write a solid proposal, know exactly what you want to do and how to achieve it, then deliver it with irresistible enthusiasm.
8. **MOVE.** The cerebellum sits at the base of the brain and processes new learning through movement. If all your students do is sit while playing, then you are providing students with a music education that is *devoid of feeling*. Ever wondered why your kids can't feel the pulse or play with emotional attachment? Sorry bucko, it's you. Get off the podium and move your butt. Just do it (and if you're still shaking your head, see #2 then #4).
9. **CREATE.** Being creative means being interactive and giving students the chance to discover music in their own time, without your interference. This can be as simple as briefly talking to the person next to them or as involved as dividing the ensemble into small groups to explore musical elements. Investigate + Create + Fail + Discover = LEARN.
10. **DO SOMETHING ELSE.** Music is an art-form, not a report card. Take a year off competitions and try something different. Hold an *informance* and share the process of learning with your families and broader community. Collaborate with a composer or your local elementary school. Devise a mentoring program that embraces disadvantaged citizens. Please. Just *do something else*.
11. **BE.** Take a risk. Fail and celebrate that failure with your students and colleagues. Learn and keep learning. Give your students the chance to do the same. Share.