



COLLEGE

What advice would you give graduating students who are preparing over the summer for their first job in music education?

- First, celebrate and relax! Taking time to recharge is paramount to a successful first year of teaching. After that, think through how you want your classroom to function. Once you have your ideal scenario, decide one thing you want to focus on for the year. You can grow from there by focusing on one thing to change or enhance each year. Build networks on campus with all staff and faculty. Visit other classrooms at least once a grading period. This will give you perspective and help build rapport with other faculty members. This career is not for the faint of heart but it is completely worth every bit of struggle. —*Whitney Crowley, Concordia University*
- Review materials from the previous instructor. Study lesson plans, warmups, and systems left behind to maintain continuity and build on a solid foundation. Foster relationships with your new team to set a positive tone. Attending conferences and seminars as professional development is key, so speak with head directors to learn about school support for these. Network with other local directors for support. Prioritize self-care as this first year will be hectic. Take time to rest and recharge to be at your best for your students. —*Brian Zator, East Texas A&M University*
- Do as much as possible before the year starts to set up your classroom and plan units and lessons. Being hyper-prepared will serve you well in your first year of teaching and in every following year. —*Lynette Vincent, East Texas Baptist University*
- For those going into elementary education, devise a clear and inclusive system for your lesson plans that includes Bloom's taxonomy and leads to student learning outcomes. Principals will often expect this from you. For middle school, find out which methods books are being used and what the required completion levels and due dates are for your school. Also, carefully review UIL requirements for the appropriate classification of your school's size and program. For high school band, you need to be comfortable in various marching styles and prepare yourself physically for the long days of band camps. —*Jamie Moyer, Texas A&M International University*
- Dedicate the summer to mastering classroom management strategies, enhancing communication skills, and establishing positive relationships with students. Furthermore, networking with colleagues, attending professional development workshops, and preparing lesson plans and materials ahead of time are essential. Above all, remain flexible and open to learning. —*Victor M. Martinez Jr., Texas Southmost College*
- Go through the PML and familiarize yourself with the literature that your level of ensemble will be expected to perform in contest season. Watch YouTube recordings, from both publishers and school groups to get a realistic idea of what these pieces will sound like. Build a list of at least 10 favorite selections and try one on your first fall concert. This can help you see where your group is and plan the rest of your year. —*Peter C. Jagdeo, Lone Star College-Creekside Center*
- Know who to ask if you don't know the solution to a problem. Whether it is other district directors, your mentor network, or your peers teaching across the state, someone you know probably has a solution to the very problem you are facing. Asking for help is not an admission of weakness; it is a sign of awareness and resourcefulness. The best teachers you know asked for guidance to help them achieve their success. —*Tim Pallone, Lamar University*
- During the summer, review what you have been taught in music classes and apply this knowledge when planning your lessons. This will create an enjoyable experience for all. Students will excel because of the excitement and motivation that music produces in the classroom. My advice is for the teacher to enjoy the experience, and this joy will filter down to the students. —*Mark W. Phillips, Prairie View A&M University*
- I recommend four steps: Research your school's curriculum, program's supports, resources and inventory, and evaluation process. Get to know all the people (students, peers, parents and administrators) involved with your program and the culture that surrounds them. Plan your lessons/rehearsals early so you're ready to go when new teacher training starts. Be aware of and avoid common new-teacher pitfalls (like the "apple cart turnover" and the "savior complex"). —*Eric Branscome, East Texas A&M University*
- While it is inarguably advisable for graduating students to review their class notes, build and maintain a professional network, and continue the inquisitive habits of the mind developed during undergraduate studies, the most beneficial focus is to *strive to be the kind of person your students will want to emulate*. Aligning your attitudes, affirmations, and actions before assuming your first position will provide the best foundation for professional success. —*Richard K. Fiese, Howard Payne University*