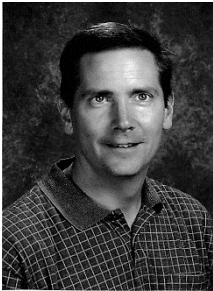
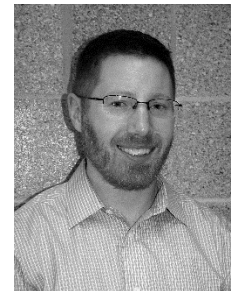


- 1) **Please tell us a little about yourself. Name, school, community, class size, job description, number of years teaching. Is there anything you would consider to be unique about your situation?**



My name is Kevin Makinster. I am the 5th Grade Band Director at Linn-Mar and am in my 33rd year teaching (HS 15 years, 5th for last 18 years). Linn-Mar is a growing 4A school in Marion. We have seven K-5 elementary buildings in the district. Each building has Group Band one day a week before school for 30 minutes (some combined). Every student has an individual 12 minute lesson once a week. Amy Sams is our ½ time 5th Grade Lesson Instructor to help cover all lessons. Linn-Mar will have a bond vote in September to build two new 5-6 buildings (would open in 2020) that would have a tremendously positive impact on the Band program!

I'm Tom Cronin, I teach 5th Grade Band and 6th Grade Choir in Harlan. Harlan is a rural 3A district made of up several small communities joined as one. This year's 5th grade has about 120 students. This is my 13th year teaching, 4th in my current position, and we are starting around 65-75 kids in 5th Grade Band on average. Every 5th Grade Band member has a 20-minute small group lesson once per week. We have group band three days per week for 40 minutes. Something unique about my position is that I wear many hats for the district, including assistant HS Band teacher, assistant HS Jazz teacher, and assistant JH Choir teacher. It makes for some busy days!



My name is Patti Bekkerus and I teach at Denison Middle School in Denison. Denison is a meat packing plant town and we have several minorities in our district. We are a 3A feeder school and the class size averages around 150 students. In addition, we also service two parochial schools and that enrollment usually is around 25 students combined. My job includes 6th grade band, 8th grade band, two middle school jazz bands, combined 7-8 and Schleswig 7-8 marching band, and a middle school mariachi program.

I'm Becky Meyer. This is my 21st year of teaching and 11th year teaching fifth grade band in Waukee. We are a growing 4A district in the western suburbs of Des Moines. We currently have 8 elementary buildings and 4 full time fifth grade band staff who each work between two buildings. Each elementary school will start 70-85 band students each year. Small group lessons are once each six day cycle for 20 minutes. Large group band meets during the school day twice per cycle for 45 minutes. Our band rooms are shared with traveling music teachers, so there is daily set up and tear down of chairs/stands.



Alison Anderson-Kahl, Rock Valley Community School, a 2A school in the NW district with about 62 students per grade. This is my 4th in Rock Valley, 5th year overall. I teach 5th-8th grade band. 5th grade band has 55 students, 6th grade band has 55, and 7th-8th grade band has 65. The 6th and 7th/8th bands rehearse every other day for 42 minutes. Middle school jazz band meets twice a week outside the school day from October-March. I get my 5th graders once a week as a full group for 35 minutes and the other three days I see 2/3 of the group for that amount of time because one class is in art for that time. I share a band room with our high school band director, who teaches all of the clarinet lessons.

Lisa Lang, Independence West Elementary in Independence, IA. I teach 5th and 5th grade bands and assist at the HS. 5th and 6th grade band students get a 15 minute, 1-2 person lesson, once per six day cycle. 5th grade band meets on Days 2 & 6 of the cycle for 40 minutes and 6th grade band meets Days 1, 3, & 5 of the cycle for 40 minutes. I have been teaching for 33 years.



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2) What does band recruitment look like at your school—timeline, instrument fittings, etc.?

KEVIN- Recruiting at Linn-Mar takes about 1 month to cover all aspects. In mid-April, all 4th Graders come to a “Band Demonstration” (done in each building and includes 5-8 Band staff). They are shown all of the beginning Band instruments, and get hands on experience with Flute, Clarinet, Cornet, and Trombone. They then indicate 2-3 instruments they are the most interested in. At the end of April the 4th Graders come to their MS to hear the combined 8th Grade Bands (and Orchestra) perform. We have parent meetings in early May to introduce families to the Band Program. Parents sign their student up for a “Band Interview,” and in mid-May, the “Band Interview” process begins. For 7 days/2 evenings (during school hours in each building + 2 evenings at the MS’s), parents and student attend with me or Ms. Sams (15 minute appointment). There, we try instruments from student’s interests and/or **instructor recommendations** to select student’s instrument. The FINAL decision on instrument selection is made by the student/parent, then in June we start the Summer Band Program. Beginners meet in like-instrument groups twice a week for 50 minutes for 6 weeks (\$90 fee).

TOM- I try to make myself pretty visible to the 4th grade class—playing in their classrooms during a free moment, being in the halls at the dismissal bell, during lunch, etc. The 5th Grade Band performs a recruitment concert in March (Music in our Schools Month) for the 3rd and 4th grades together. In April, I send home information about 5th grade band and really start ramping up my visibility to the younger students. In May, we show a recruitment video (Be Part of the Band) in my band room and have some current students talk about why they love band and can manage their time with other activities. Instrument fittings take about a week, and we measure EVERYTHING (stature, hand size, finger width, arm length, etc.) and let the kids get up close with flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, and baritone. Students indicate their top two instruments, and I make a top two recommendation. All students can audition for percussion, but I give extra points to students for piano lessons. The TOP GOALS for recruiting should be: get kids EXCITED, get kids matched with the BEST FIT for them, and most of all, get them on an instrument they WANT to play.

PATTI- In March, our general music teacher gives the Selmer Music guided survey to our 5th graders and we start our recruiting in April. We present a concert for the 5th grade class (both public and parochial) at our high school fine arts center. There are performances by the high school bands, the 8th grade band, and a few ensembles. We get a sub for our middle school classes and we spend two days at the elementary and parochial school testing the students on all the instruments. We ask the students what their number one choice is and then we, taking into consideration their music test scores, “build a band” as to what an ideal balanced band would be. We send home letters inviting them to the instrument display night where they can rent instruments, learn more about the program, etc. along with our recommendation for which instrument we think they would be most successful and usually it is their first choice that they have already told us. Exceptions to that rule would be instruments such as the horn and tuba depending on their pitch scores from the music test and the size of the student (for tuba).

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BECKY- I meet with fourth graders during the school day from mid-April to mid-May. Students come with a partner and get a chance to try instruments (flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, baritone, percussion) to find their best fit. I do not give fourth graders any type of musical aptitude test, but the general music teachers give me notes about each child so I get an idea of musical leaders, recorder aptitude, behavioral concerns, ESL, IEP, etc. Once I have met with every student in a classroom, students take home a recommendation letter and the bottom portion of the letter is completed by families and returned to school. From there, a welcome letter is e-mailed home and families then have the summer to shop around for an instrument for their child. We encourage families to use our website to gather information. I also connect with families throughout the summer through e-mail in order to build relationships, provide information, and make myself open to questions and concerns so that I can help in any way as families are deciding about band and looking to rent/ purchase instruments. When I meet with the fourth grade students, I also try to keep in mind that a balanced band is not as important as a band full of kids who enjoy their instruments.

ALISON-In February, current 5th graders perform a concert for the 3rd grade class in the auditorium. In May, they play for the 4th grade class. I put extra chairs on stage and have the 4th graders sit in with the band by an instrument that looks fun to them. The 5th graders play some of the things from the April concert plus at least one new full-page song. During the first week of school, all the 5th graders come to the auditorium for a presentation where one upper MS student on each instrument introduces themselves, their other activities, what they like about being in band, and then play something short on their instrument. Then the students come to the band room in pairs to test every instrument. I give them a grade of A, B, C, or F. I have a table with two of every headjoint/mouthpiece and one body of the instrument. For percussion, I have them march quarter notes in place while clapping eighth notes and do paradiddle patterns with their hands on their legs and watch how they do. Then I tell them if percussion is their first choice they will come back later this week for percussion finals. After they've done everything I ask them to rate their top 3 choices. I pass out a letter to students about the process and ask them to bring back the page with the options (1) Yes I want to be in band and I am capable of getting my instrument, (2) Yes, I want to be in band, but I need help paying for an instrument, or (3) No thanks. At this point kids have seen me come down to their classrooms a lot and are super excited to find out what instrument they are going to play. I then deliver certificates saying they have completed the Instrument Aptitude Test and are invited to join band on a specific instrument. (If they had said no thanks, they do not get a certificate.)

LISA- We start recruitment at the beginning of the school year. Letters are sent home with the kids the first day of school about joining band. Signs are put up in each classroom and throughout the school. The whole class watches "Be Part of the Band" video in the band room. Each class is scheduled for a 1 ½ hour session with me and the other band directors in the district. Every child is tested on flute, clarinet, trumpet, trombone and percussion. Only those interested in oboe, sax, horn, baritone and tuba try those. After each class tries out, we have the "finalists" for the special instruments come down and re-try. I find out who continues to do well, and is truly interested in those specialty instruments. Certificates are sent home first week of September, instrument night is second week of September and they start lessons the day after the instrument night.

3) What is your school's instrument rental situation?

KEVIN- School rentals include: Bass Clarinet, French Horn, Baritone and Tuba (\$45 for the year). We also have the "Music Connects" program funded by the L-M Foundation. It provides instruments for students in the "Free/reduced lunch" program as well as summer lesson scholarships. For more information on this amazing program, contact me.

TOM- Harlan has a number of instruments for students in grades 5-8 to use at no cost. I was fortunate to have a fundraising drive wrapping up when I took the job, so we had enough money to purchase several instruments for beginning and middle school band. Since then, I've worked hard to collect used instruments and have them repaired through our school's PPEL fund. I have also sought out grants for the purchase of instruments, and have been fortunate to receive a two large grants in four years. My administration and I firmly believe that ALL students should have the opportunity to participate in band, regardless of socioeconomic standing.

PATTI- We currently have around 60 basic school instruments (Flute, Clarinet, Alto Sax, Trumpet, Trombone) to rent out to people who can't afford a new rental. We have limited numbers of tuba, french horn, and baritone to use as well. We ask for a usage fee of \$40 a semester for the school instruments and that is to cover any minor repairs the instrument may need while the student is using it. Unfortunately those 60 instruments are checked out to band students in grades 6-12 so sometimes I'm very limited in what I can use for students.

BECKY- Families who qualify for free and reduced lunch are able to borrow (not rent) school owned instruments through an online application. We have a nice inventory of trumpets, trombones and flutes to meet these needs. Instruments are assigned on a first come first served basis. We also have a non-profit community organization that families can contact for assistance. The school owns baritones for students interested in baritone regardless of financial need. Students borrow (not rent) these baritones for the school year.

ALISON-We do our best to make sure every student has an instrument available if they need help. We have a good stock of pretty much every instrument that the high school director and I have found from pawn shops. If a student indicates they need help paying for an instrument they can rent from the school for \$40 a year in 5th grade and \$55 the other years. The more expensive instruments like baritone, tuba, and double horn we expect that they will rent from the school. We try to make sure there is a tuba or baritone at every student's house to use and one they share at school.

LISA- Oboe, Bassoon, Baritone, French Horn, Tuba and Percussion pay \$75 per year rental.

4) What part of recruiting students and families do you feel is really effective or unique in your community?

KEVIN- MOST important factor for student's choice is: 1. What do you WANT to play. 2. What CAN you play. Don't get stuck in the "we HAVE to have this specific instrumentation" mode. I've talked to so many adults who were told what instrument to play (not their choice), so they quit. IF you truly want to teach students MUSIC, they should play an instrument they WANT to play. Group Band balance and blend can be taught/adjusted/arranged by the Director... Linn-Mar Band students are **never** told what instrument they can/can't play. Our instrumentation is usually pretty good year to year, and our Concert Bands, well, come hear one of our 8th Grade Middle School Bands play today at 1:00 PM, and our top High School Band play today at 5:00 PM!

TOM- I think that the success of our bands is a huge draw to students, and I totally use that to our advantage! We have our current 5th graders visit a couple of middle school rehearsals during the school day so that they can go sit by someone who plays their instrument and listen to our awesome middle school jazz band, which ups the excitement big time. We have middle schoolers come play at the younger kids' lunch periods, which is always a big hit. Our 5th graders perform for the 3rd and 4th grade students every March during "Music in our Schools Month." The kids LOVE this annual event. I also have called every incoming 5th graders' family over the summer to offer them the opportunity to ask questions and get a feel for whether they want to Be Part of the Band...it takes time, but establishes a connection.

PATTI- Truly, we let the program recruit for itself. Students are very aware of the band program in the school. Recently, we started a mariachi program which made a huge impact on our students and our communities. I think that making the program visible in the community and giving the students opportunities in music is important to the students and their families.

BECKY- Our beginning band website is a great resource for families. Our elementary band staff makes all information about band accessible and transparent, while also promoting our willingness to answer questions or help in any way as families make decisions about band. While there are always some parents/guardians with experience in band and are now very excited for their own children to begin learning a musical instrument, there are also so many other families for which all of this is new. They are looking for a positive musical experience for their child to try, but they have many questions. It's important to educate and inform kids and families, and by utilizing our school website, the information is easily and readily available.

ALISON-I feel really lucky that I am able to spend 20-30 minutes with students two at a time during the school day to go through every instrument with them. I think this gets a lot of kids who are on the fence about band because they get to experience what it's like actually playing one. My elementary music teacher is also really awesome about letting me interrupt her classes with older students playing their instruments throughout the year.

LISA- The community knows that we test the 5th graders at the beginning of the school year. Most parents know that we have limitations on certain instruments and know that there are certain expectations for particular instruments. This isn't anything unique, but just having consistent directors and traditions, has helped our program be effective.

5) **How do you make band attractive to all students, from high achievers to low achievers and everyone in between?**

KEVIN- A long tradition of excellent Bands, and high participation numbers is a great recruiting tool. All students are able to participate due to the “Music Connects” program.

TOM- Having instrument fittings with EVERY 4th grader really gets them excited. After fittings, I visit the classrooms to give the kids their instrument recommendations. Man, those kids are practically jumping out of their skin to see what they should play! I also make sure to communicate to the kids that band and activities can be fully compatible as long as they choose to make it that way. We have some of our outstanding high schoolers come at the end of the year to tell the kids all of the great things they are a part of besides just band. I also communicate to everyone that if you WANT to Be Part of the Band, I will find a way to make that happen!

PATTI- One of the things we touch on when recruiting are the many activities all students in high school band are involved with besides just band. We want them to know that band is a place for everyone and you can be involved in a lot of activities and still be involved in band. We also have a lot of family involvement, in other words, they have brothers, sisters, and cousins who are currently in band so they want to be a part of it.

BECKY- I try to make band rehearsals fun and interesting by balancing performance time with whole group, sections, and individual time. I like kids to reflect on what they hear and share out positive points as well as things for improvement. I try to give the kids some ownership in rehearsals by having different kids select lesson book exercises, vote on spring concert music selections, and work together to determine the order of pieces for our spring concert program. Throughout the school year, we only play Grade ½ music (FJH has some of my favorites!) so that large group band music can feel attainable and enjoyable. It is in lessons that more differentiation can occur so that high flyers feel challenged and kids who struggle are given a chance to learn at their slower pace. I use positive reinforcement to promote best behavior and celebrate the success along the way. Through incentive charts, goal setting, progress checklists and earning tickets, band students are rewarded for the positive behaviors I want to focus on. I have stopped making practice minutes at home a high priority, and focus more on how, what and why to practice at home. I am finding that when kids know how to practice and what to practice, they grow as musicians more than if I am just rewarding them for how many practice minutes they’ve recorded.

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ALISON-I think the biggest way to attract people to band is your energy level. I do my best to be super visible and high energy. During instrument testing week I stand in the hallway as they're going through the lunch line and quiz myself on their names. I try to make it clear that you can do band and sports and that I love doing both and use sports analogies. Something new I've done this year is used pop songs that they suggest for ear training warm ups and that has been a hit. I group students in lessons by ability so I go faster through the book with students that can. I try to make them as successful as possible because people want to be a part of something that is good. For lower achieving students sometimes I alter parts to make them easier. All of our 6th-8th graders perform a solo in the spring so we can tailor their solo to their ability level. In the upper grades I try to get the high achievers in a one-on-one lesson.

LISA- Making connections with students when I see them in the hallways and telling them that I am looking forward to having them in band next year, saying hello, talking to them at breakfast, etc. Building relationships and making everyone feel valued. Also, for some weird reason, the Band Karate belts keeps kids motivated all year.

6) How do you aid in retention from first year to second year? Activities, performances, etc.? Additionally, how do you combat the "springtime blues" or re-ignite the fire and excitement when morale dips?

KEVIN- Retention hasn't been an issue in the L-M Band program, and many times enrollment goes up from 5th to 6th as non-Band 5th graders watch/hear what happens during the year, and want to join. Keeping students playing avoids the "blues". Student instruction in lessons should focus on Lesson Books (not Band Music). FUNDAMENTAL development of tone/technique happens here. In Group Band, music should be worthwhile and EASIER than materials in the lesson book. FUNDAMENTAL development of balance/blend, teaching of Musical form and rehearsal technique happens here. If you're looking for ideas for music selection – ASK!

TOM- We have our current 5th graders visit the middle school and sit in on a 6th grade band rehearsal and stay to listen to the concerts. The kids get to sit next to their instrument in the 6th grade band and see and hear one of the great pieces they've worked up for contest. Springtime blues can be a REAL thing! We perform for the younger students in March, and have a solo festival that students can opt to perform in that month also. Students who play solos in 5th grade get an ice cream party with me at the end of the year. Our final concert is in early May, and from there through the end of the year I find silly games and challenges to push the kids during rehearsals. We also do a lot of review of easier material late in the year...it's surprising how much the kids enjoy going back to the front of the book and playing songs in different ways (cut time, funny dynamics, etc.).

PATTI- We perform at a large group contest at the end of April and the judges' comments and success usually are a great morale booster. I also have them play a large variety of music at year end to re-ignite the fire. I try to give them a taste of what is in store for them in 7th grade.

BECKY- In a very large school district, I do not feel as much pressure to retain students past fifth grade, and for some families, their children go into fifth grade band more as an experience for just that year. My role in the 5-12 band department is to provide the best musical foundation I can and make this first step a positive one regardless of how long a student continues on. Our middle school band colleagues visit the elementary schools to introduce themselves to our fifth grade band students to provide information about band and answer any questions they may have. It's nice for the kids to put a face with the name of the middle school band teachers. Once the sixth grade teachers have their rosters, we help in transition by providing notes about each student on a google doc. Our calendar varies enough that I don't see a big drop off in interest or enthusiasm. We begin lessons at the start of the school year and perform the first week of December for a school assembly and an evening concert for families. After that, we begin working on solos as we prepare for a solo festival the first week of February. We dig back into the lesson book the weeks prior to spring break with a fun BINGO style incentive earning practice tool. Both of my schools have a concert after spring break, and then new music to prepare for a school assembly in May.

ALISON-At the end of the year I try to get kids in the mindset of being in 6th grade band. I ask them what their goals are for next year. I do four weeks of lessons in the summer before school starts. If they do not fill out their preferences I assign them a time slot unless their parents specifically tell me they are quitting. If students don't show up in the summer I make a phone call to find out if they are doing band. A few students always quit, but I am able to save some by a personal conversation with them about why I want them in band. Most students who quit make sense, but I have learned now to expect at least one high flyer that surprises me will quit. February is the worst month for morale. I send out an encouragement email to parents sometime that month. Adding the extra unofficial concert for 5th graders in February has helped. I've done a March Madness competition that focused on lesson attendance and preparation to help students get fired up again about practicing. The winning team got pizza.

LISA- Retention has always been pretty good. I send letters or emails to the students and parents over the summer to check in on them, and tell them that I'm looking forward to having them in band next year. I also send home a summer practice challenge. To aid in the "springtime blues", I usually have one or more challenges for the students. We have done Brownie Points, March Madness, Band Bingo Practice Challenge, Super Lung Challenge, Secret Contest Day, etc. We also have a concert in May that keeps us working towards a goal for the end of the year.

7) What do you see as the biggest challenge facing band participation for young students moving forward, and what is your advice to meet that challenge head-on?

KEVIN- Students are involved in many more activities now. Finding time to do sports/dance/gymnastics/drama AND Band can be a challenge. Encouraging students/families that, at this age, they CAN/SHOULD be involved in many activities and providing some flexibility with those extra busy students (as far as practice expectations) is helpful. Those “busy” kids are the ones you want.....

TOM- Lack of engagement is a trend I’m seeing more in students and families as the years go by. The great kids are still great, but they are busier than ever. Now there are more and more “digital babies” who have grown up in front of a screen. They have a harder time focusing and a much harder time seeing goals through when the positive feedback isn’t instantaneous. Often these are the students whose parents are digitally distracted as well. I’m trying harder to keep my messages and communication consistent, as well as infrequently rewarding the behaviors that I want students to model. I think that’s one of the ways to break through that shell of distraction—they just need to hear the same message being stated consistently and enough times that it finally soaks in! These students also seem to be more engaged through challenges or games—find silly ways to get them doing what you want!

PATTI- I think a challenge is working with students who are addicted to screens. They want instant gratification and are not patient enough or willing to put the time in to practice and improve, not only in their playing but their music reading ability. To improve reading ability, I use that screen addiction and give them electronic flashcards to practice. If they can read the music, they will want to play. When they can read the music, it’s fun to give them more things to practice, perhaps a book with pop songs or music that interests them.

BECKY- Building relationships and differentiating instruction are so important to a successful band program. The challenge is really getting to know all the kids and meeting their needs so that they make appropriate musical progress. You can only push kids when the kids know you care about them, and the way we communicate with families and kids can promote or deter a desire to participate. As a band teacher, you need to find that balance, get to know the kids, provide meaningful experiences in lessons and in large group band, and support kids at their level. If the rigor is too low or too high and the connectedness to the band teacher is not positive, there is nothing making a child want to stay in band. We are our biggest advocates, so our challenge is seeking solutions when there is a concern and finding balance so that families and kids will want to continue. As an elementary band staff, we ease the transition from elementary school to middle school by providing middle school teachers with information about the incoming sixth graders. I also stay connected by attending middle school band concerts and sending little e-mails home when former band students are selected for honor bands or receive other musical honors.

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ALISON-At my school we have problems related to sports practice times due to facilities available. This makes it very difficult to schedule jazz band rehearsals. I had to get creative about my jazz band rehearsal schedule. It could not be at a consistent time every week so I made sure to plan ahead and make a detailed schedule and sent reminders to families via the Remind101 app. It also seems like there are more and more out of season sports leagues (“tournament ball” vs “school ball”.) and other activities vying for our students’ time and attention. Sometimes students feel like they do not have enough time for band. I would rather have students participate and not practice outside of school than to not participate at all. I do my best to make sure our band sounds good even though not everyone’s practicing on their own at home. I don’t do practice logs, but I do make them turn in playing tests of themselves playing certain measures of the concert music 2 weeks before a concert.

LISA- Keeping kids on track to practice is always a huge challenge. Sometimes they feel like they don’t have time, have other activities or are getting behind. I make sure that students know that everyone has bad days and good days. They need to remember how good it felt when they practiced hard and came to a lesson and earned a Band Karate belt. We always set a goal and strive to meet that goal.

8) Do you have any tips for younger teachers who may just be starting out? Any mistakes you’ve made along the way that you would do differently now?

KEVIN- KISS (Keep It Simple Stupid)! Don’t try to push students too fast. FUNDAMENTALS are the focus during the first year, and take TIME to develop. Beginners MUST have time to develop tone/rhythm skills/technique, etc. Move **slowly**, but **consistently**, through a quality lesson book. Play easier (Grade ½) Band Music to develop ensemble skills, and have students feel/hear what a good Band can sound like, even as a beginning Band! ASK veteran teachers from quality districts for suggestions.

TOM- Praise what you want students to do when you see it; the others might get the hint. Be genuine but remind yourself to stay positive. Kids need plenty of time for reinforcement and development of basic skills, but they are capable of great things with a consistent message and consistent expectations over time. Don’t be afraid to introduce “advanced” concepts to them (balance, intonation, articulation...) as long as you have the patience to realize that those concepts will not be mastered in your classroom. Be consistent in your procedures, so that kids can feel safe in knowing what to expect from at least one adult in their life. And when all else fails, smile and toss them a Jolly Rancher!

BECKY- It is so important to build positive relationships with classroom teachers and general music teachers in your building. They can provide you with a wealth of information about kids and families! Don't forget they're kids! They want to smile and laugh and fail and get better and please you. They like when YOU are having fun WITH them. You probably became a band teacher because of a band teacher you loved, so be sure you share your passion instead of getting bogged down with all the tiny things that can be frustrating. Beginning band students need lots of positive reinforcement. They're like kindergartners (but our kids can tie their shoes). Whatever you want them to do, be sure to praise it! Praise for sitting up. Praise for home practice. Praise for bringing their instrument to school. Praise individuals during large group band and you will see others try to get your attention, too. I do give incentives for home practice minutes, but the minutes have become less important to me. Helping kids learn how to practice and what to practice is more valuable than just how much they practice. Helping families and kids see the connection between home practice habits leading to success is key.

ALISON-More prep work ahead of time means less work later on. Read The First Days of School by Harry and Rosemary Wong. It's all about how to make concrete procedures for everything so your classroom runs smoothly. For the first few days (or weeks) of full group beginning band, don't let them play their instruments until you give the cue. Put their instrument in time out for a while if they do. There are always students who need help with something and you need the quiet.

LISA- The band is a direct reflection of you! If you are energetic and positive, then they will be energetic and positive. If you expect excellence, they will give you excellence. The same goes if you are giving bad vibes, then they will reflect that. Be willing to try new things, be flexible and keep learning!

