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**L.B.U.S.D.
PRINCIPAL'S HANDBOOK
INSTRUMENTAL
MUSIC**

Elementary School Winds Edition



Written by Kevin Hamilton in fulfillment of Music 539 PA 3
American Band College

LBUSD Principal Handbook - Elementary Winds

I

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	3
<i>Standards</i>	3
<i>Observing Your Teacher</i>	5
<i>Flute</i>	6
<i>Clarinet</i>	7
<i>Alto Saxophone</i>	8
<i>Trumpet</i>	9
<i>Trombone</i>	10
<i>Classroom Procedures</i>	11
<i>Concert Guide</i>	13

PREFACE

The purpose of this handbook is to help the elementary principals in the Long Beach Unified School District better understand what is expected of the instrumental music teacher. In an effort to get the teachers on the same page, each of them has been given a copy of the teacher's handbook with the critical concepts and yearly standards. The teacher's edition has numerous instructional strategies, procedures, and standards to help guide their instruction. Throughout this handbook you will find "**snap shots**," (like the one below), of sections from the teacher's edition that can be useful when conversing with or observing your music teacher. You will also see many pictures of the correct posture, and hand positions for each instrument, as well as pictures of common bad habits that your music teacher will need to look out for.

Snap Shot

STANDARDS

In nearly every subject being taught today, there are clear standards that have been laid out for both teachers and students. Every 5th grade teacher in Long Beach can tell you what math skills the 5th grade student is expected to learn and be able to demonstrate by the end of the year. Music must take the same approach. The three standards that I've put before you were not developed by an administrator or a district consultant. Instead, they are what our students expect us to provide for them when they sign up for music. We must live up to these standards.

1. Continued Success in Music - Your number one goal should be to provide each student with the fundamentals of air movement, hand position, posture, and embouchure. If the student can master these critical concepts, then they can have continued success in middle school, high school, and beyond. Without these critical concepts, the chances of the student finding enjoyment in music and continuing on are dramatically decreased.

2. Enjoy the Process of Making Music - Your students should be excited to come to class each week. Elementary students love praise, challenges, friendly competition, problem solving, compliments, creating, improvising, showing off, incentives, etc. Use a variety of motivational tools when planning each lesson. You are expected to teach music in a way that engages the student and leads to self motivation.

3. Appreciate the Skills of the Musician - Students that study music learn great life skills in the process; teamwork, focus, personal responsibility, and dedication to name a few. Make your students aware of the various "other" skills they are developing as a member of a music group. Show them the skill and dedication that professional musicians have developed in order to get where they are today. Your students will then develop a greater appreciation for all types of music.

WHAT SHOULD MY STUDENTS KNOW?

By the end of the first year, all students should be able to:

1. Sit with the correct posture when playing their instrument.
2. Correctly hold their instrument.
3. Play their instrument with the correct embouchure and air speed.
4. Play at least 6 different notes (Concert Bb, C, D, Eb, F, and G).
5. Identify the above 6 notes on the music staff.
6. Define and perform whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, and pairs of eighth notes.
7. Blow an 8 count air stream and correctly tongue a rhythm within those 8 counts.

By the end of the second year, all students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate numbers 1 - 7 above with greater proficiency.
2. Play with a characteristic tone quality.
3. Play low and high concert Ab, low and high A natural, concert Db and high Bb.
4. Play simple songs in 4/4, 3/4, and 2/4 time signatures.
5. Play simple songs in the key of concert Bb and Eb.
6. Make up simple songs using different notes and rhythms.



OBSERVING YOUR TEACHER

TIME MANAGEMENT

Due to the limited minutes the music teacher has with each group of students, it is imperative that he or she uses that time effectively. First, look to see that the teacher has a system in place for starting class. Are students getting ready without prompting? Is time being wasted? Does the teacher have to give instructions multiple times? Do students come in late? What is being done about tardiness?

DISCIPLINE

Time management and discipline go hand in hand. Without discipline, it is likely that time is being wasted. However, discipline should not equal anger. The music teacher must have consequences in place for students that disrupt the class and prevent others from learning. One of the best forms of discipline in a music class, is simply telling the student to put their instrument down until you decide that they can play again. Moving a disruptive student to another spot in the classroom can also be effective.

EXPECTATIONS

Does the music teacher have high expectations for his or her students in terms of posture, focus, and sound quality? These are the years in which habits are formed. If the teacher lets poor technique slide, they are in essence, putting a gigantic barrier between the student and long term success. Being good at an instrument should not be up to luck. Each teacher needs a bag of tools to use in order to correct students with improper technique.

POSITIVE INTERACTION

It's important for students to have a positive connection with music. Does the music teacher make class fun and interesting? Do they use various methods to engage students in their learning? If students aren't enjoying music class, they won't continue the following year. It has to be worth it to be pulled out of class each week.

MOTIVATION

Finally, do the students seem motivated? Does the teacher challenge the students and get results? What types of motivation does the teacher use? The music teacher must find ways to get kids to practice at home.

FLUTE

POSTURE

Flute players should sit forward in their seats with a tall but relaxed posture. The head can be slightly tilted to the right as long as the lip line is parallel to the body of the flute (fig. F1).



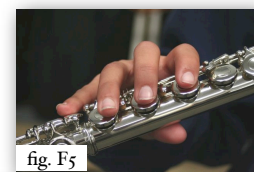
Bad Habits -

1. Resting the right arm over the back of the chair (fig. F2).
2. Tilting the head too far to the side (fig. F3).

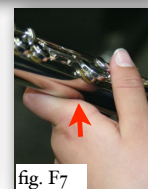


HAND POSITIONS

Right Hand - The right hand should be relaxed, with the fingers curved, and thumb pointing forward (fig. F5).



Left Hand - The left hand fingers should be curved (fig. F6) with the base of first finger supporting the flute (fig. F7).



Bad Habits -

1. "Flat fingers" (fig. F8). Finger tips should be directly on the keys.



EMBOUCHURE

1. The lip plate should rest under the bottom lip.
2. The corners of the lips should be firm (fig. F9).
3. The bottom lip covers 1/4 to 1/3 of the embouchure hole.
4. The air should be blown in a downward direction, creating a pure tone (fig. F10).



CLARINET

POSTURE

The clarinet player should sit straight and tall (fig. C1).

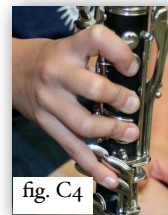
Bad Habits

1. The head is tilted down
2. The body is slouched
3. The forearms are resting on the thighs (fig. C2).
4. The clarinet enters at an 90 degree angle to the face (fig. C3).

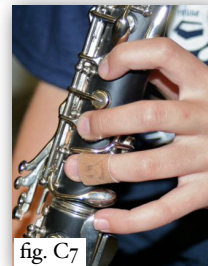


HAND POSITIONS

Right Hand - The fingers angle downward, covering all of the holes (fig. C4). The thumb **tip** is under the thumb rest (fig. C5).



Left Hand - The thumb covers the thumb hole with the tip on the register key (fig. C6). The fingers angle downward, covering all the holes (fig. C7)

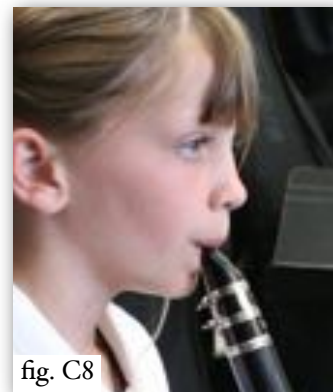


EMBOUCHURE

1. The bottom lip is flat and covers the bottom teeth.
2. The top teeth contact the top of the plastic mouthpiece.
3. The corners of the lips are firm.
4. The chin should be pointy, not bunched up.
5. The head is straight, and the clarinet enters the mouth at a 30-45 degree angle (fig. C8)

Bad Habits

1. Both lips are covering the teeth.
2. Embouchure is too loose
3. The angle of the clarinet to the body is too small or too big.



ALTO SAXOPHONE

POSTURE

Saxophone players should sit forward and tall (fig. S1).

Bad Habits -

1. Tilting the head to the left while playing (fig. S2).
2. Having the neck strap too high or too low (fig. S3).
3. Slouching while playing.



fig. S1



fig. S2

fig. S3

HAND POSITIONS

Right Hand - The thumb tip should be under the thumb rest. The fingers should be spread, like large crab claws, in order to avoid hitting keys near the palm (fig. S4).

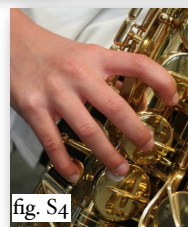


fig. S4

Left Hand - The left thumb should rest at an angle so the thumb tip can still press the octave key (fig. S5). The left hand fingers should be open to avoid hitting the palm keys (fig. S6).



fig. S5

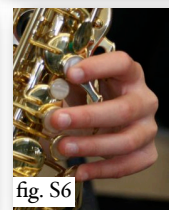


fig. S6

EMBOUCHURE

1. The bottom lip is soft, and slightly covers the bottom teeth.
2. The top teeth contact the top of the plastic mouthpiece.
3. The lips hold the mouthpiece in an "O" shape.
4. The head is straight and the sax enters the mouth at a 80-90 degree angle (fig. S7).



fig. S7

TRUMPET

POSTURE

Trumpet players should sit forward in their seats with a tall but relaxed posture (fig. T1).



Bad Habits

1. Resting the elbows against the body (fig. T2).
2. Extremely high or low trumpet angle (fig. T2 and T3).
3. Slouching while playing.



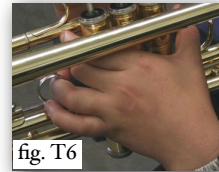
HAND POSITIONS

Right Hand - The thumb tip should be between the first and second valve casings, directly under the lead pipe (fig. T4).

Curve the rest of the fingers, and place the pinkie **on top** of the pinkie ring (fig. T5).

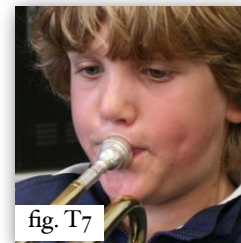


Left Hand - Position the thumb behind the valve casings, the three fingers around the opposite side of the valve casings, and the pinkie along the third valve slide (fig. T6).



EMBOUCHURE

1. Have the mouthpiece split 50% on the top lip and 50% on the bottom lip.
2. Have firm lips, not puckered.
3. Maintain a tight seal between the cheeks and the gums (fig. T7).



Bad Habits

1. Puffed cheeks (fig. T8).
2. Puckered or pursed lips.
3. Excessive pressure against the lips.



TROMBONE

POSTURE

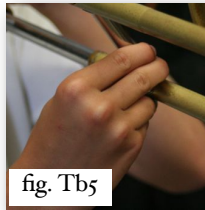
Trombonists should sit tall and forward (fig. Tb1).

Bad Habits

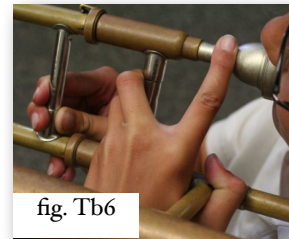
1. Tilting the neck when playing (fig. Tb2).
2. Pointing the slide off to the right (fig. Tb3).
3. Slouching while playing (fig. Tb4).

HAND POSITIONS

Right Hand - The slide is held between the thumb and the first two fingers of the right hand (fig. Tb5). The fingers should pinch the slide, not wrap around or grab it.



Left Hand - The thumb goes under the bell brace, and the pointer finger rests along the 1st brace or by the shank of the mouthpiece. Wrap the other three fingers around the 1st brace (fig. Tb6).



EMBOUCHURE

1. Have the mouthpiece split 50% on the top lip and 50% on the bottom lip.
2. Have firm lips, not puckered.
3. Maintain a tight seal between the cheeks and the gums (fig. Tb7)



Bad Habits

1. Puffed cheeks (fig. T8)
2. Puckered or pursed lips.
3. Excessive pressure against the lips.



CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

ENTERING THE CLASSROOM

Every elementary school music room is different. Many schools use the auditorium stage for rehearsal, others have classrooms or portable rooms. Whatever your classroom situation, you need to establish a procedure for your students to follow upon entering the room. Consider the following points when designing your own procedure.

1. What type of environment do you want to work in? Kids can adapt to and be comfortable in very structured classrooms as well as more independent classrooms. Whatever type of classroom you want to have, establish it from day one. Teachers that decide to establish structure in a class that was originally unstructured will have a year long struggle.
2. Start on time. Don't wait for students that arrive late from their regular class. You want the students to know that your class is just as important to you as their regular class is to their regular teacher. Late students should be instructed to come in quickly and quietly.
3. Maximize music time. Design a procedure that gets the instruments out and assembled as quickly as possible.

TAKING ROLE

It is important that you take role each day. The school district wants to know how many students are participating in the music classes. This data is critical to the justification of funding elementary music in Long Beach.

The other main reason for taking role is to monitor your students' progress. If you have a student that is frequently absent, you will want to contact the child's parent or classroom teacher to try and remedy the situation. It is in everyone's best interest that you address these issues as soon as possible.

One of the quickest ways to take role is to have assigned seating and a seating chart. This way you can quickly check off who is missing.

SHOWING UP WITHOUT AN INSTRUMENT

Students that forget their instrument should still attend music class. These students need to watch the lesson in order to have a chance at success the following week. When students are sent back to class for forgetting their instrument, there can be negative results for your music program. Some of these results are listed below:

1. You will have to re-teach what the student missed and possibly more. Students that miss a lesson not only lose out on the new material, but also have a harder time remembering content from the previous week.
2. Students will forget their instrument on purpose. This happens when students feel that they are missing out on something “better” in their regular class, like P.E., art, a special project, recess, etc. By having the students attend music class, you are teaching them the importance of upholding a commitment.

DEALING WITH CLASSROOM TEACHERS

On occasion, you may run into a classroom teacher that doesn't particularly enjoy sending his or her students to music. Often, these feelings stem from the pressure of raising test scores. Teachers are expected to show improved test scores from year to year regardless of the level of students they happen to teach. Plan a time to meet with the teacher to discuss your concerns. Explain to them that you take your teaching as seriously as they do and that you feel each student deserves a well rounded education. If the teacher is still uncooperative, it is probably best to discuss the conflict with the school principal.

Other times, you will encounter teachers that habitually send their students to music class late. Teachers often lose track of time and don't realize it until one of the students speaks up. Others, don't send their students to music until the exact time your class is scheduled to begin. By the time the students grab their instruments and books and walk to your class, they are 5 minutes late. Send a polite note asking the teacher to send his or her students so that they arrive at the start time. Again, meet with the teacher first. If the tardiness continues, speak to the principal.

CONCERT GUIDE

THE FIRST CONCERT

The goal of the first concert is provide your students with a chance to show their families what they have learned during the first part of the year and to motivate your students to practice. Don't be overly concerned with how the students sound. At this point, you should be more concerned with how they are creating their sound, holding their instrument, sitting while playing, and focusing on the music.

HINTS FOR A GREAT CONCERT

1. When you send home a concert information flier, inform the parents about the importance of attending the concert and the role live performance has in learning an instrument. **Critical** - Be sure to also include a list of the songs/exercises that the children will be performing. This way, the parents can support their child's preparation for the concert.
2. Make sure your concert is advertised in the PTA newsletter. It's a good way to keep your program visible.
3. Encourage kids to prepare solos. This is a great way to motivate students. By choosing a handful of students to play solos, you are rewarding them for their hard work while also showing the rest of your students, and their parents, what is possible when time and effort are put in.
4. **Critical** - Make concert programs. In order to keep your students in music, you want them to have fond memories of their concerts. Kids get so excited just seeing their name on a piece of colored paper.
5. Make sure your audience has a place to sit. If there is standing room only, schedule your concert differently. Consider having your string classes at one time and your winds later in the evening. No parent wants to stand in the back.

1. During the concert, tell the audience why you are playing a particular song/exercise. What are the children learning from this song? What skills are involved in performing this song? Better yet, have individual students announce the songs and additional information. The students will have a great sense of pride doing this and the parents will be super impressed.
2. Plan for a photo opportunity. At the end of each group's performance, have each row of students stand up so that the parents can get a good picture of their child. Taking a minute to do this shows the parents that you care about their desire to get that great picture of their child on stage with their instrument. You'll win many parents' hearts with this simple gesture.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT MY BEGINNERS TO DO ?

First of all, realize that the parents of your beginners aren't expecting their child to sound like a pro at the first concert. It's very likely that you've only had 8 to 10 meetings. But, here is a list of things that parents can and should witness at the first concert.

Correct posture – Have your students sit with good posture from the very first day.

Correct hand and body playing positions – Students should be able to adjust their instruments, neck straps, mouthpieces, music stands, etc. so that their body is tall, straight, and relaxed while playing.

Focus and Discipline – The students should be focused on making music while on stage. Teach the students proper concert etiquette.

Music Making – Pick 4 or 5 songs/exercises that cover the first part of the year. Don't be afraid to play songs with 2 or 3 different notes. If they are performed with focus, discipline, and good playing position, your audience will be happy.

FINAL CONCERT

The main goal of the final concert is to show your audience the progress the students have made since the first concert. It's important that the songs are more advanced and that the technique and tone of the group has improved.