

Student-Musician Thoughts On Improved Programming

Survey Question:

Please Describe Your Thoughts/Suggestions Regarding the Programming In Your High School Band.

Student Response Highlights:

1. "To have a deepened connection with the music that I play in my school band, I must enjoy playing the music. Often, we are presented with awful parts, parts that are unimaginative, boring, and outright lame. When playing these parts, there is no way that we would be fully immersed in the experience, no matter how cool the music sounds. If the part is boring, we would get bored, and then we would get distracted. We should be presented with fulfilling instrumental parts that allow us to show off our technical abilities and strengths, rather than playing elementary-level music."
2. "Pick more engaging repertoire. Some of the pieces are very much below our level, and I can testify that over half the band simply does not care. Another thing would be to focus more on the ensemble as opposed to trying to fix every tiny thing in the piece. Often we will sit and wait as our director tries to work with individual sections. I'm not saying don't do it, rather, it shouldn't be a daily occurrence."



3. "Thoroughly study the music before you decide to program it. Don't choose music just because it sounds cool; make sure it highlights ensemble strengths and that everyone has enjoyable parts (don't make the low brass and low reeds sit around playing boring parts without any technical challenges). Also, consider choosing music that exposes more unusual instruments, rather than giving all the solos to typical players like trumpet, flute, and clarinet. Diversify and find low clarinet features, tuba solos, interesting bass trombone lines, and much more."

4. "Allowing students to directly involve themselves in the selection of pieces."

5. "Having a piece where the meaning behind it is something that I can relate to."

6. "A composer that is relatable or deals with similar issues that we deal with, yet also music that is not too contemporary or experimental."

