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The Modern Private Music Teacher

Dr. Razey

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Teaching Statement

The goal of music education within my classroom is to provide my students the opportunity to develop the skills that are necessary to be good people as well as great musicians. Students should expect to be challenged musically, as well as cognitively within my music ensembles. My students will be required to open their minds and hearts to get the most out of their musical studies within my classroom. This is because my classroom is an inclusive environment. My classroom welcomes neurotypical students, students with disabilities, English language learners, students who identify as LGBTQ+, cis gender students, as well as students of any race, ethnicity, or that practice any religion. The bottom line is that everyone is welcome to learn music in my classroom. With that being said there is no room for judgement or hate in my classroom; we have to work together to create beautiful music, not work against one another. Both being a good person and being a great musician start with fostering the ability to work with others, and therefore my classroom of musicians in training is also a classroom of positive community members.

Additionally, students in my classroom learn musicianship, which is what defines the quality of a musical performance. Each student will learn to use their instrument as an extension of their own voice, performing at a high level as both a soloist and within performing ensembles. Their instrumental playing will be based on several fundamentals, such as tone, techniques, rhythms, articulations, and dynamics. Through meticulous study of these fundamentals, students will acquire the skills of self-discipline, accurate listening, communication, and collaboration skills. Students will also study music history as it applies to the pieces we study. We will learn pieces that are historically important to the ensemble, like band standards such as the Holst Suites for band, as well as a variety of music that will expose students to new cultures and new musical styles. Student will investigate the performance styles of Eastern Asia, as well as African, South American, Caribbean, and American music. Students will have a variety of performance opportunities throughout the school year including at minimum 3 large ensemble performances to showcase the growth in their musicianship. Most importantly, students will grow in comparison to themselves. Learning musicianship is a personal journey, students cannot learn for one another and I cannot learn for my students. Therefore, it is crucial that students only compare themselves to their past selves. This also plays into the sense of community within my classroom; we are not competing against each other, rather we challenge ourselves to be a little bit better every single day.

That all being said, my primary philosophy of music education is that students learn music best through “musicing”: participating in the creation of music. That does not mean individuals only learn through playing, but they can participate in music by listening, reading, writing, or dancing to music as well. The only way students will want to do any of that is if they feel confident and welcome in a music classroom, and therefore my teaching is structured in such a way that they develop positive relationships with music and with one another.