

*The OBA presents*

# "IN IT TOGETHER!" Series



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## Session #3

### **Bring It On: Creativity, Flexibility, Adaptability in Online Band Education**

Crisis can be a catalyst for innovation. We already know our rehearsals will not look the same this fall. Whether hybrid models or fully online, what can we offer our band students that meets course learning outcomes and still provides deep, meaningful, musical experiences? This session consists of intimate facilitated breakout spaces for elementary and secondary educators, to share, explore and discuss alternative ideas and approaches for continued excellence in instrumental education.

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Information is slowly being shared, giving us a glimpse of how the fall might look. Different pictures have been emerging by level, by school, by board. While being proactive, we must also develop a range of possible options from which to choose, depending on what options will be made available. We will be split into four groups today (approx. 20 people in each group). As such, you and your group will consider, brainstorm, discuss and share ideas for the following plausible scenarios:

**If 1:1, then ....**

**If sharing, then....**

**If small ensembles, then ....**

**If large ensembles, then ....**

# COMPILATION OF ALL NOTES POST-SESSION BY CATEGORY

<b>Bring It On: Creativity, Flexibility, Adaptability in Online Band Education</b> Resources collected from four co-facilitated conversations with our OBA membership and guests.	
<b>1</b> If 1:1, then ...	<p>Group 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Begin new routine of emptying water keys to ensure safety</li><li>• Own kits for mouthpiece cleaning</li><li>• Arrangement of rows in the classroom</li><li>• Networking is going to be very important for instrument sharing among schools and advocacy</li><li>• Flipped classroom (play at home - discuss debrief in the building)</li><li>• Beginner How To videos available</li><li>• Video challenge - sharing; Flipgrid</li></ul> <p>Group 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Colleen - hoping that Western will be able to provide some videos on “how to assemble instruments”, how to play Rutledge - a great resource on the beginning steps.</li><li>• NAFME (Stillwater) - in the US. something on how to do things.</li><li>• Zoom eg. master clarinets- homogenous divisions of kids ... strategies</li><li>• Western U will be using Smart Music - lots of flexibility with this program. They even have “Music for Prague”- we have also been using this during the past month at MDHS - we hope the price is less than you’re thinking. A great program - but perhaps too expensive for some</li><li>• Bill - how do we balance time with, say 80 kids. 80 kids for 1 ½ hours is fine, but if we need York, perhaps, setting up a liaison with schools for opportunities - mentoring, tutoring, etc ... Basically older kids helping younger kids.</li></ul> <p>Group 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rental may focus on the cheapest instruments to obtain. Focus on renting the “Big 4” (Fl, Cl, Tpt, Tbn) so that it will be possible for everyone to have access to an instrument</li><li>• Rotate through instruments</li><li>• Partner sharing with schools. Including co-planning to make the sharing process easier and more efficient</li><li>• Instrument matching will be a challenge because there’s a need to work directly with students.</li><li>• There may be restricted options of available instruments to students; students who want something else might need to consider renting their own</li><li>• Decisions might need to be made to focus the assignment of instruments in the most strategic ways.</li><li>• The goal might be to develop instrumental skills as a basis first.</li></ul>

	<p>Group 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing fundamentals</li> <li>• Concerns surrounding instrument and tech access</li> <li>• Website links for starting beginners kids - YouTube etc. links that will reinforce fundamentals if teaching is hybrid (part online, part in-person)</li> <li>• Composition with and without the use of tech</li> <li>• Google Forms for beginner instrument choices (brand new to band). Form could include preferences, physical notes that might affect instrument choice, etc.</li> <li>• Digital recruitment - videos from junior highs and high schools to be sent to feeder schools in order to stir excitement</li> </ul>
<p><b>2</b> If shared, then ...</p>	<p>Group 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semester elementary to allow all to have a chance to play</li> <li>• Semester / Quadmester classes so they're playing wind instruments in chunks of time. Doesn't mean they're only doing paper work when not on band instruments - use percussion etc to keep active creation going.</li> </ul> <p>Group 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laura Lee - the research says its not the mouthpiece worry, rather the touch surfaces of instruments. Perhaps a rotating schedule of instruments? The instrument has to sit for 5 days (the max) to get rid of the potential virus.</li> </ul> <p>Group 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students should have their own mouthpiece, which can diminish the time with sharing instruments.</li> <li>• Quadmester the music program so only certain students have access to instruments while others are doing non-performance work.</li> </ul> <p>Group 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 300 kids and 50 instruments - CAN we start them? What if that decision comes at the beginning of the year or part way through? Keep contact with schools in our boards - share so that everyone has an instrument. Communication is key.</li> <li>• Software purchases instead of prioritizing band purchases - supporting kids through online learning and potentially spending less \$\$\$ on what we normally would.</li> <li>• Mantie: What if we considered starting homogenous instruments and do rotations. The thought kind of makes me itchy, but you could have them all try out, see what is going on etc. This would depend on having a fleet of instruments to use.</li> <li>• Recruitment/starting beginners: sharing videos about band; testimonials; Bitmoji classrooms with links; share videos as intro to instruments; have older kids play samples for beginners</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John Phillips: Have you discussed the instrument challenges with your local music retailer? Do they have a way of supporting you in the short term with the hope that eventually your school(s) might set up a longer term rental program. Any surplus instruments within your school board or at the neighboring high school you can borrow? Perhaps parents will want to rent instruments because of this health concern?</li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b> If small ensembles, then ...</p>	<p>Group 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sectionals</li> <li>• Similar instrumentation groupings</li> <li>• Small</li> <li>• Different instrumentation on different days</li> <li>• Flex band</li> <li>• Interchangeable small ensembles</li> <li>• Space may be at a premium</li> <li>• Lead sheets</li> <li>• Smart music</li> </ul> <p>Group 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homogenous groups ... all clarinets together, etc</li> <li>• Problem is space ... how large are our rooms, etc</li> <li>• Colleen can have 31 in her largest space - this sounds good to me! I hope we get that accommodation!</li> <li>• Question - Western's decision or government ... ultimately Western is being positively aggressive on their decision "the joy of music in a group of 5"</li> <li>• Mary - up north - everything is shut down until January. Her focus will be on small groups in other locations. Eg. a woodwind ensemble with 13 people ... they will be rehearsing outside while the weather is pretty good.</li> <li>• American BandMasters - working to allow online sharing of their music. Also, Brian Balmages - looking at reimagining their pieces into just four parts, to allow for flexible approach to making music. Keep an eye on their personal websites to follow these developments.</li> </ul> <p>Group 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Space will be an issue.</li> <li>• Flex instrumentation and using Mixed Bag small ensemble rep.</li> <li>• Beginning method books - mainly unison</li> <li>• Small group of students in class while another group is in the hall - or maybe working independently</li> <li>• We might be in an every-other-day situation because of staffing restrictions.</li> <li>• A and B schedule - where group A is in school for 2 days and B is in school for 2 days and all are online Fridays</li> <li>• At a post-secondary level, there's a strategy to front-load theory and history and then double-up the ensemble hours later.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Composition time could be valuable within the small ensemble. Live composers could connect with the students as part of the process.</li> <li>• Universities and community groups might be able to offer masterclass opportunities.</li> <li>• High school students could have a project to facilitate a private or group instruction with elementary students.</li> <li>• Set up masterclasses to support students working independently or working on solos</li> <li>• Dr. Selfridge as a YouTube resources</li> <li>• Sharing teaching -learning videos - instrument assembly, teaching scales</li> <li>• Teacher as sound leader; students play along with microphones off. Individuals can turn mics on for feedback.</li> <li>• Encourage kids to play along with youtube videos of band repertoire - even though they will not receive the feedback, they do get to still play along in an ensemble</li> </ul> <p>Group 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tracey: grouping kids in the room (if/when possible) on similar instruments or same instrument</li> <li>• Amy Abbott: chamber music; focussing on fundamental</li> <li>• John Phillips: flex ensemble approach</li> <li>• Stuart Siu: playing chorales</li> <li>• Mantie: elementary kids - collecting sounds, environment, talking about elements of music (form, dyn's, etc) and organizing sound w/o sharing instruments, gear.. Soundscape compositions</li> <li>• Tracy Brown: words as syllables -&gt; rhythm (teaching organization of sound without instruments)</li> </ul>
<p><b>4</b> If large ensembles, then ...</p>	<p>Group 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small ensembles within AMR courses</li> <li>• Free arrangements by Fraser Linklater</li> <li>• Lead sheet</li> <li>• Virtual Band with the various "classes"</li> <li>• Smart Music</li> <li>• Audacity</li> <li>• How to grab attention of grade 8s - online tutors for grade 8s, connect with videos of what we do, how can we help as secondary folks</li> <li>• Assignment for seniors to help grade 8s or 9s</li> </ul> <p>Group 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound Trap - you can collaborate with people in real time - easy to use. We would need to provide a lead sheet. An integrated app with Google ... an udu account. Note? ... like other notation software.</li> <li>• Colleen - Give our students choices for projects ... this is a great idea. This is already good teacher practice, but makes a lot of sense in this situation. Master classes on "how to use this software" would be very helpful</li> </ul>

- Laura Lee - good point about starting fresh in September ... it might help
- Andrew - a bit of a worry ... will the arts/music still be able to maintain a “role” in students lives this fall, especially in elementary
- Colleen - Western has three technology groups... they will focus on certain technologies for the sake of sanity. We need to be an advocate for “our needs” to those making decisions, within our boards
- Leah - very strict with software in her board. Suggesting her board is phasing out Google classroom and bringing in Brightspace. This is yet another challenge for her colleagues in that board.
- York U - pretty strong message, online everything, but they might have ‘blended’ courses. They face challenges of student retention.
- Colleen’s suggestion - break the 100 student band into four rooms, etc .. and have them work on their own. The challenge that I see, for high schools/elementary schools ... supervision!!! I don’t want to be negative, but most administrators will not allow this to happen (but, I might be wrong).
- How do we get instruments in kids' hands ... This is a real challenge!
- How make music fun?! The “Hose Toot Challenge” It was all about sound, making instruments, pitches, etc ... Laura Lee was a judge. Guest teachers, speakers, etc... Dr. Tim, etc ..
- Bill - university directors are having these conversations as well. SHARING, SHARING, SHARING of events, activities and resources..
- Beginning band symposium - Jim Harris ... a great resource. Very creative guy. His session will be very interesting and helpful.
- THANK YOU EVERYONE ... GREAT SUGGESTIONS AND IDEAS. WE HAVE TO BECOME FLEXIBLE
- ELIZABETH’S POINT - HAVING GOALS IS REALLY IMPORTANT! I THINK THIS IS REALLY IMPORTANT. OUR CURRENT STRUCTURE IS FILLED WITH GOALS ... FESTIVALS, CONCERTS, ETC ..

### Group 3

- Seating plans as straight rows, not curved row.
- Rehearsals by sectionals, not full group.
- Seating plan
- Small sectional rehearsals weekly until being able to
- Beginning rehearsals can happen outside on a field or a parking lot.
- Large spaces: learning commons, gyms, cafeterias. Outdoor rehearsals prepare for weather!
- Rehearse outside
- Book large spaces - library, gym
- Plexi-glass shields
- Style change: consider jazz band or other repertoire.
- Concerts may be restrictive. Livestreaming could be an issue with copyright.
- “Virtual cafes” with pre-recorded sessions. Run it through a Slides presentation with videos on each slide
- Performances help set a goal for the students.
- Ensure final goals - something to work towards

- Events might happen, but look differently.
- Multi-tracking - Play along with the recording - to create Virtual Ensemble. There is value in the process of improvement.
- Focus on the process
- Partner with other departments - tech? To facilitate Virtual Ensembles

#### Group 4

- Sound Trap
- Chamber music in 4 parts
- Smart Music
- Playing outside
- Utilizing auditorium, larger spaces
- Female composer - Alex Shapiro describes a project she did with students on improving to a drone - jump to the latter part of the podcast... <https://www.windconductor.org/single-post/2020/05/21/Alex-Shapiro-Embracing-the-New>

## Additional Resources (software, websites, advocacy material, unit and lesson plans, etc.)

Please be sure to add your name to the items you share.

Stuart Siu: <http://aaronmcole.com/chorale.html>

John Phillips:

<https://www.jwpepper.cMusic for Small Bands / Flexible Instrumentation | Sheet music at JW Pepperom/sheet-music/music-for-small-bands-flexible-instrumentation.list>

<https://www.halleonard.com/menu/1501/flex-band?subsiteid=6&dt=item#products>

Eighth Note Publications <http://www.enpmusic.com>

David: Sound Trap

Barth: Standard of Excellence - Festival Ensembles book 1 & 2.

Amy Abbott - Desert Island Playlist Lesson

Abbott: Google Chrome Song Maker for comp.

**John Phillips:** soundscapes, singing etc. , find new ways to be creative. Use this opportunity

**David Lum (from an MBA session):** explore sound w/o instruments, sounds in the room, can develop skills w/o instruments

**Barth:** A Capella app

**Barth:** Flat.io

**Barth:** Jodie Blackshaw's site for comp/nontraditional writing

**David \_\_\_:** <https://shedthemusic.com/> and Note Flight

**Mantie:** "Teaching Improvisation in Concert Band" Thomas Herb.

**Mantie:** R. Murray Schaffer resources to check out " A Sound Education" , " The Thinking Ear".

**Tracy Brown:** <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1evJRMBIMTmPCIY1s-us2k1qa6Gr5z-6YbmxiXOcQ68/edit?usp=sharing>

**Abbott:** maintaining community - "my band kids secretly went around to each other's driveways and wrote notes (literal and figuratively) and found my driveway somehow too... I called them the chalker stalker"

**JP:** <https://www.windconductor.org/single-post/2020/05/21/Alex-Shapiro-Embracing-the-New>

**Beryl Macleod:** Kahoot

#### **General Concerns (Room 4):**

- How to adapt
- Loss of community
- Human and 1-1 connection (immediate one-on-one feedback that you can give in the classroom that online learning doesn't necessarily allow for)
- Less effective - how can we react to the kids who aren't the super keeners? Providing a meaningful music education experience?
- Tech access is a huge issue
- Lack of instruments - working on fundamentals
- How can we organize in large numbers to be proactive and defend what we do? Talk to admin, gov't
- John Phillips: OBA/OMEA to be in close contact with government to discuss curriculum expectations that ARE being bet through online learning? Lobbying at Ministry of Education?