

Music Ed Insights



Key takeaways from:

Beyond the Concert, Part 2: Grading, Evaluation, and Repertoire Choices with Scott Jones

Let Grades Reflect Learning, Not Just Compliance

- A course grade should represent what a student has learned and can do—not simply whether they showed up, brought an instrument, had their music, or followed procedures.
- Those expectations matter, but they are baseline behaviors, not learning outcomes.
- When expectations are not met, students may need: a conversation, support in solving the underlying problem, and/or clarity about the impact on the ensemble.
- Reflection question: If I removed all "points for showing up," what would be left in my grading system? What would it actually measure?

Treat Performances as Privilege and Service

- Scott frames concerts as more than assignments or point opportunities. Performance is a privilege: a chance for students to serve an audience and communicate something meaningful together.
- When a student misses or may miss a concert, the first move does not have to be punishment. It can be an in-person conversation that names the impact on: the section, the ensemble, and/or the student's role and commitment.
- Those conversations may not solve everything immediately, but they plant seeds for future growth.
- Reflection question: Do my students experience concerts mostly as grade events—or as meaningful chances to serve, communicate, and be part of something larger than themselves?

Choose Repertoire That Leaves Room for Skill-Building

- Repertoire should support independence, not replace the curriculum.
- If students can do almost none of what a piece requires when they first see it, you may spend weeks teaching the piece without building transferable skills for the next piece.
- Key shift: Don't rely on repertoire alone to teach the core skills. Protect rehearsal time for rhythm, reading, intonation, style, listening, and decision-making outside of the current concert music.
- Reflection question: If I removed this piece from the folder tomorrow, what skills would still remain with my students?