

Becca Lipsky

MUSC239: Secondary Choral Methods

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Choral Education Philosophy Statement

As a choral music educator, I firmly believe in my role as a facilitator of learning. The greatest thing I can give to my students is a life-long curiosity for the world we live in. Whether they choose a career path in music or not, my goal as an educator is to expose them to multiple perspectives, skills, and experiences through the lens of music. In my ideal classroom, students learn to listen deeply and intently, explore the social and cultural values of music in this and past centuries, and develop a stronger appreciation and understanding of their strengths.

My approach to teaching choral music is structured and strategic; I prioritize building fundamental skills and independent musicianship above the quality of performance. Objectives in the curriculum should be made in collaboration with the students; the learning we do during the year should be useful and of interest to them. Similarly, the material covered should have cultural value to the students. Ensemble music-making is by nature a collaborative effort, so the curriculum should include multiple opportunities for students to work together in different contexts. Through performances and small group projects, students will have multiple opportunities to showcase their learning to the community and learn to take pride in the work they create. The repertoire we cover throughout the year will showcase numerous musical figures (composers, conductors, performers) with a variety of identities and backgrounds. Students should be able to see a part of themselves in the material we study. Music class will serve as a

survey of many styles of music, with the opportunity to take a deeper look into genres or composers that interest the students.

I aspire to create a classroom environment that welcomes all identities and celebrates mistakes. This charge is led by the passion and enthusiasm of the educator. I believe a music educator serves not only as a musical model, but also as a model for communication and collaboration. The music classroom should be a place where students feel seen, heard, and valued. Daily mental health “check-ins,” discussions on world events, and maintaining personal interest in the lives of students are a few practices I plan to implement. I feel it is equally as important to normalize performing in front of one another in the music classroom; this will instead be viewed as sharing a musical moment, rather than an examination. My hope is that students will feel comfortable expressing their true selves and be willing to explore new interests and challenges.

I hope students will leave my classroom not only with a deeper understanding of music fundamentals but also a stronger sense of self awareness and confidence. The skills we practice in the choir room (collaboration, leadership, analytical thinking) will carry over into whichever career path students may choose. As an educator, I have a duty to lay the foundation for future learning. I choose to be an educator so I can inspire students to remain curious, imaginative, and confident for the rest of their lives.