**Characteristics of Great Band Directors**

**Passion/Enthusiasm**

The successful director must have a passion for all aspects of the total band program—marching, concert, jazz and winter activities and the well-being of the students. This enthusiasm is always reflected in the band members.

**Open Minded/Learning Attitude**

One of the strongest characteristics of a great teacher is the willingness to learn from all opportunities. The band director can only come close to mastering the job in a lifetime and only if he/she is constantly learning and growing. The director who “knows it all” and is unwilling to change, will not be successful in the long run.

**Confidence**

Every successful band director exudes confidence in a humble manner. It is a fine line between confidence and arrogance, and the director must be careful not to cross that line. Everything is new to a young teacher and he/she must sometimes “act” confident. Great teachers are also great actors when they step on the stage (podium).

**Energy/Fortitude**

To run a successful total band program, the director must have great energy and fortitude. The job entails long hours daily, often 6-7 days a week and sometimes 24 hours a day. Even the daily rehearsals demand high energy to motivate and inspire teenage musicians.

**Communication**

The great director communicates well with students, staff, administration, parents and the booster organization. This is a characteristic that must be a priority. It is vital for the director to say “please” and “thank you” frequently. Band directing is a *people skills career* working with students, parents, administrators, secretaries, custodians and fellow staff members. Appreciation goes a long way in creating support.

**Organization**

“Organization is the key to success” is an often-quoted phrase that is certainly applicable to the band directing profession. The office work done outside of rehearsal can be overwhelming. It is important to handle paperwork efficiently and meet all deadlines.

**Knowledge of Band Pedagogy**

A basic foundation of pedagogical skills learned in college, from experience and from master teachers is essential to success. The band director who is a *good musician*, enthusiastic, open minded and confident will learn and grow throughout his/her career.

**Humility**

All the above characteristics would be awe-inspiring but without a dose of humility, would probably be intolerable. It is okay, in fact essential, to say, “I made a mistake” from time to time when it happens. Students usually know anyway! It will make you seem human and students will have more respect for you.