

Recruiting with Rizz!

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Are you seeking new ways to add some RIZZ into your band program? Are students chomping at the bit to be a part of your organization? Our goal is to provide specific ways to help address these issues with practical ideas for immediate implementation.

Recruiting with Rizz at the Beginning of the Year

Make it a high priority to visit elementary music classes in your feeder pattern. Nothing is more important than the students already recognizing your face and that your name is associated with Band! The goal would be to visit each 5th grade class at least twice during the fall semester so that each student is familiar with staff in advance. We just sit and join alongside the students in class and participate in the day's lesson, assisting the music teacher if asked. We even like to finish a visit with a guessing game where the students line up and we tell them what instrument they should try at our instrument drive! They love this and often, they come to try out to see if we were right!

When you're ordering your band shirts for your current students, order extra ones for any 4th and 5th grade siblings! This is free advertising when they wear their shirt to school, and students start to notice when many are wearing your Band shirt! This creates a long lasting bond when you deliver the package with a kind note, and it doesn't take much extra work.

Make a conscious effort to perform at elementary "Walk to School" Days, holiday tours, and assemblies. We like to take our Jazz Band for elementary assemblies so that we are exposing the students to all the different aspects of the Band. The goal is that your program should be visible and engaging so the elementary students look forward to being in it someday!

Recruiting with Rizz in the Middle of the Year

Send out holiday cards from your Band program to elementary schools and in the neighborhood mailboxes from your students. We have our Band Leadership Team (BLT) take a stack and personally deliver into neighbors' mailboxes! Use creative ways to invite your current 5th graders to your upcoming instrument tryouts. We include the information on a candy cane that is personally distributed to each campus.

As students are considering their elective choices for 6th grade, this is the time to educate parents. Parent testimonials are especially helpful as families are making decisions about their child's future. Experienced parents have great advice about how band can work in conjunction with other activities like sports or dance! Consider taking a picture of your band students dressed in the uniforms of the OTHER activities in which

they are involved (sports jersey, martial arts gear, scouts uniform, cheer uniform, etc.) and share it on your social media or website. It's so impactful to see how many of our students are involved in other things! You can also include in your information a presentation linked where students can read up on every instrument. This could include what type of physical characteristics work best for that instrument, about the sound and timbre, and even include links to videos for them to watch! It's even more fun if you include videos of your current beginners playing and point out that in one year, that could be THEM!

For your instrument drive date, you want parents to come in and see the best side of your program, to feel informed, and to be welcomed immediately. This can be as easy as making sure that you have a 1 to 1 ratio for a student guide from your current band with a new 5th grader trying out. This will help them to feel personally welcomed and have the freedom to ask peer to peer questions.

Once students have selected Band as their elective choice for the next year and have tried out the instruments, we visit the elementary schools to give out Golden Tickets. All 5th graders gather together and each band student comes up when their name is called, accepting the Golden Ticket invitation to play their instrument! We even have included a special box of goodies with candy, band stickers, pencils, and even a silicone wristband to help keep them thinking about the band all semester!

Retaining Students with Rizz

The most important contributor to keeping students invested in your band program is developing and fostering meaningful relationships and fun experiences! These are important with the students AND the parents. We have so many fun ways to keep families and students involved throughout the year. Some of our favorite ways of engaging families in the fun and learning are below (feel free to reach out for details):

- Hot Cross Buns where students teach their parents
- All Region Bingo cards
- 18 Days of Holiday Spirit
- Winter Home recitals
- Band Family Picnic social
- Student leadership/BLT's

Try to find times throughout the year to reward milestone achievements like passing off all their scales, finishing levels of rhythm charts, or winning a contest. Award a student each week to let them know how much individual students make a difference in your program and include their picture and name in your weekly newsletter!

One of the best ways to keep students motivated and excited is to schedule regular social events. This is a great way to foster the family atmosphere and ensure that everyone is

excited to be a part of the band family. There are tons of ideas below that cost little to no money and some that are more costly. You can choose what works best for your families. Here are some of our favorites:

- Band Family Picnic
- Ice Cream/Snow Cone/Popsicle Social
- Water Balloon or Snowball Fight in Summer Band
- Caroling Social and hot chocolate with cookies
- Band Hall elf (like Elf on a Shelf)
- Secret Gift Exchanges (Secret Santa)
- Band Hall Egg Hunts
- Birthday bags, playing Happy Birthday, Birthday hats
- Breakfast socials with sections in performing bands
- Coffee/Donut performance for staff members at UIL time
- UIL is Over Party!
- Outdoor/Indoor Movie Night
- Pinstack/Main Event/Six Flags

Rizz for the Future!

It's so crucial to always be thinking about ways to expand your program for future growth, more essential knowledge and skills, and of course, for more fun! We are ALWAYS here to support you, so please don't hesitate to reach out for extra ideas and information!

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