



a voice for band in Alberta

5708 72 ST NW • Edmonton AB • T6B 3J4 • (780) 800-0482

August 1, 2020

Dear Administrator:

Music is a fundamental element in the education of students worldwide. The unique value of ensemble music making is well documented and necessary to students and society. A student's ability to participate in bands, orchestras and choirs is unique and irreplaceable. The future of large ensemble participation must be of paramount concern to teachers and administrators alike, while maintaining the utmost concern for the health and safety of music students and teachers.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, our goal is to retain as much student enthusiasm and educational rigor as possible while we ensure the safety of our students. Teachers and administrators must carefully evaluate all decisions while navigating these uncharted waters. Temporary adjustments cannot set the tone for unplanned long-term consequences. Whatever accommodations become necessary, the goal must be to return to full ensemble instruction in the regularly scheduled school day once health and safety permit.

The COVID-19 pandemic requires us to rethink "how" the school band program will deliver quality music instruction. Whatever the temporary solution, we must be steadfast in our commitment to provide musical opportunities that can only be found as a participant in a large ensemble. To that end, the Alberta Band Association has developed a set of Strategies for Indoor Instrumental Rehearsal and has sent these strategies to Alberta Health for review. These strategies have been developed using the information gleaned from the preliminary results of a study done in Boulder, Colorado and a second done at the University of Bundeswehr Munich in Germany. We are eagerly awaiting approval of this document which will help schools and band teachers resume teaching band, allowing students to engage in "protected playing."

The Alberta Band Association is committed to providing any assistance and feedback necessary to assist teachers, administrators and policy makers moving forward. Please feel free to contact us if further information would be helpful or if we can be of assistance in some way by emailing our Managing Director, Kimberley Denis, at director@albertabandassociation.com

Regards,

Brent Pierce
President, Alberta Band Association