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## Just Look at the Guy

One of my all time, top five, favorite music teacher stories is told by my friend Carol Burton. Once upon a time, as the new Choir Director at Garfield High School, she traveled to the now defunct IAJE conference with her colleague Clarence Acox. They were attending a performance together and Carol wonders if Clarence isn't enjoying the music as much as she isn't. She feels apprehensive to ask the legendary Acox, but asks anyway, because this is a professional development opportunity after all. Clarence turns to Carol and in his epic voice responds, "Well, they say a band is a direct reflection of its director. Just look at the guy."

Honestly, I've spent hours laughing about this story, and equal hours being haunted by the implications. And I'll tell you

what, it's the truth. Directors with nervous energy have bands that rush and sound anxious. Directors with strict classrooms have bands that sound like computer music. Directors that are drenched in sincerity have bands that sound soulful. Let's just say that "Just look at the guy" bouncing around in your head while reading adjudicator feedback isn't a recommended activity.

As any arts administrator with OCD does at the start of a new year, I decided that I was going to write down my values as a music educator so that I have a rubric to use as I'm ruminating on building programming at Seattle JazzED. "Available, soulful, edgy, honest, rugged, clever, classic, thoughtful, humorous, inspiring, generous, connected..."

And then it hit me like a ton of bricks: Single Band Director Seeks Like-minded Music Department. I mean, how do my values as a music educator actually sound like my dream man? It's hilarious. But also, maybe it's "Just look at the guy" showing up in a helpful way.

Our values as humans are reflected in our programs. You can see our individual values in our performance uniform choices, in our song selection, in our classroom management, and even in the sound and feel of our students. Knowing this, I feel we'd be wise to take the time to really reflect on our decisions as music teachers and as humans living in the world.

And if your music department wants to go on a date...hit me up...drinks on me...

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