As I embark on this adventure we will call student teaching, I intend to reflect weekly on not only my classroom experience, thoughts, reflections, and aspirations, but also as I read “Teaching Music With Purpose” written by Peter Loel Boonshaft.

1/7/13

I was fortunately able to begin my student teaching two days early with Mrs. Allison Weitkamp at Lexington Catholic High School (LC), Mary Queen Middle (MQ), and Saints Peter and Paul Middle (SPPC). My first day was also Mrs. Weitkamp’s first day back. So, needless to say, it was kind of crazy, busy, but full of wonderful things. At MQ, the 8th grade band was welcomed back. My first observation is Mrs. Weitkamp’s great balance between the social and productive aspect of the classroom. She realizes her middle schoolers will often be social and with her balance they are happy yet very productive. Classes are started with a daily warm-up sheet consisting of scales, lip slurs, and choral exercises. As the first day back, it was primarily review throughout all the classes, to get the kids back and playing again. With the MQ 8th graders I noticed that I may be able to initially help with the percussionists, not only keeping them on track, but helping them to establish a better understanding of the music and their instruments. Here the students use Standard of Excellence.

At Lexington Catholic during both Symphonic and Concert Band rehearsals I was able to work with students individually to help ensure preparation for upcoming Honor Band Auditions. Between four students I saw completely opposite ends of the spectrum in musical performance.

At Saints Peter and Paul Catholic I met the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade bands. Here the students use Essential Elements for their warm-up exercises, similar to MQ. The 7th grade band has been the most difficult Mrs. Weitkamp has ever experienced and she is trying a new book to help get them on track, Accent on Achievement. I was able to play Trumpet during these classes, as I will continue to play secondary instruments to better myself and feel more comfortable on them on days that I don’t teach. With the 7th grade band, I hope that I can be a beneficial asset to help get the students motivated and on track.

After discussing both Mrs. Weitkamp’s and my goals for the semester, I am very excited at the many opportunities that are in store for me. Since she is at a multiple schools, I will have the opportunity to watch her teach in the morning at one, and then model from her as I teach the next class in the afternoon.

***I chose to begin reading a book not only for new information as a music educator, but for inspiration and motivation to become the best music educator that I can be. “Move immediately from one’s own set of problems in order to focus on the far greater good of helping others” (vi). I want to have the ability to make others feel greater and more important than myself, it’s not all about me. We think we know everything, then there are some things we don’t know, then there are many things we don’t know, then there is a lot we still need to learn, then there is more we don’t know than we do know, and ultimately we realize we don’t know anything (ix). Don’t waste a single moment of life. Michael Angelo, age 81 said, “Ancora imparo”, simply, “Still I am learning” (x). We must spend our lives asking questions, searching for answers, trying to new ideas, testing, seeking, looking, exploring, and aspiring for better. Sir Isaac Newton: “If I have seen father, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants” – we must appreciate the giants in our lives (family, friends, teaching, colleagues, students) who have taught us and continue to teach us. What is our purpose? A word that means so many meanings…we must remember the right way is not always the opposite of the wrong way.***

1/8/13

Student teaching orientation

1/9/13

5th-6th-7th – Essential Elements – 7th-8th Standard of Excellence Book 2 - Trying Accent on Achievement for one 7th grade class that just is being difficult. Today I met the rest of the students that I didn’t meet on day 1 – very exciting. How do teachers remember names? More work on high school audition preparation; the students actually seemed to work on what I recommended from Monday.

I got to learn how Mrs. Weitkamp organizes assessment worksheets within Conductor’s scores of books. Master copy, labeled with page number on back. (Resources pulled from various places, own material, lesson books, etc.) Master copies remain in book throughout and copies are made a few weeks in advance and placed within those pages paper-clipped and ready to use as needed. I look forward to establishing my own curriculum – luckily, I am able to begin this process these ideas and gain much experience from working with Mrs. Weitkamp. Organization is essential; fortunately I am very type-A, OCD, and organized.

Today I was played trumpet while sitting with trombones and reading there music – clef and Bb transposition practice. Incorporating cross-cultural and musicology aspects are easy simply by playing original recordings of the songs to the class and discussing them. (Yankee Doodle, Sousa, Folk Songs, Jazz Songs) It is easy to talk about the history, style, geography, meaning of lyrics, etc.)

***Take students from where they are and move them to where we know they can go (1). Graham Greene, “There is always one moment in childhood when the door opens and lets the future in.” The beginning sounds of musicians; promise, hope, joy, success, and the future (3). Vision, being able to see something that is as what it can be.***

1/10/13

Learned grading method. Weekly sheets for each class – spreadsheet format for attendance. Participation and daily points based on having instrument, music, pencil, and good behavior. Daily schedule is placed on the board in grid format. Each grade has its own color. Schedule for next class period is placed on board before Mrs. Weitkamp leaves. (just in case of an emergency sub and for good preparation) Students have been established that they come in, get there materials, set-up, and look at the board for what warm-ups, book studies, and music will be worked on. On attendance sheet, what was accomplished in class that day is notated and what needs to be worked on next.

Reflection from 5th grade band at MQ today: reassurance (there was never any doubt) that this is what I want to do with my life). Students learned William Tell for the first time. After Mrs. W talked about Rossini, and classical music in Looney Toons, she played a recording of the beginning of the overture. It starts slow with a cell which she talked about, later she introduced the theme heard in Charmin commercials (spring time and waking up in the morning) – Then, when the fast part came, to see the students light up with excitement from recognizing the music was in itself priceless. Then the trumpets were ecstatic that they started the piece. As Mrs. W told the trombones that they joined, their faces lighting up was one of the moments, also the percussionist learning to play the crash cymbal part for the first time. Seeing the students relate their own instruments to amazing parts in beautiful music was an unforgettable experience.

High School Honor Band Auditions, sit in as judge. Experience listening and rating oboes, bassoons, and bass clarinets.

1/11/13

Today I began my day at the high school judging seating tests for the concert and symphony band. I was able to listen and grade flutes, clarinets, and bassoons. During some down time (during an administrative meeting while I waited in the band room) I graded some assessment worksheets and entered them into the online grading system, RENWEB. That afternoon at SPPS I got thrown into my first teaching experience, unexpectedly. After doing daily attendance and materials check (instrument, music, pencil) Allison told me to lead warm-ups. I’ve been watching this for a few days now, and wasn’t expecting this, but I did it anyway. Upon completion of warm-ups, she told me to follows the class schedule on the board. I was shocked, as I had never seen the music we were to work on it, but I turned to that number, glanced at it quickly, and began to ask the students question. The new concept with #97 was cut time compared to 4/4. Of course, students don’t like change. But after some explanation, discussion, and drawing comparisons on the board, we learned and performed the piece in 4/4 and then again faster in cut time. My biggest problem was losing the percussionists. This number incorporated multiple rudiments at a quick tempo and they weren’t keeping up with me. Luckily, Allison was able to pull them out to work on this while I kept working with the class and we discussed this afterwards. She also discussed things to me as I continued to teach, the class was eager to help me learn better ways to teach them. I realize teaching is a lot of improvising as to whatever needs to happen next with the students. The biggest thing I feel I could have done better was preparation (knowing the music so I didn’t have to analyze and look at it so much in front of the class and knowing the percussion techniques.

1/14/13

Today I got to lead warm-ups again with the 8th graders at SPPS. Names are getting easier as I do attendance and materials check daily for each class. Today I was able to help percussion with new rudiments and play flute while sitting with low brass and trumpets. I will prepare to lead an upcoming flute sectional for new band piece, *Mystic Dance.* Tonight I played cowbell with the pep band at a high school basketball game. During the pre-game meal I was able to chat with students getting better at names and getting to know each of them. They seemed to enjoy having a new noisy instrument in the pep band and I tried to have fun and make them enjoy playing at the basketball game.

1/15/13

Able to keep kids on task while sitting within ensemble playing trumpet. 6th grade learned a new note today, Low G on flute, Low A on clarinet and trumpet, and Low G on trombone. While Mrs. W showed percussion a new instrument, tambourine, and demonstrated low G for trombones, I was able to show the clarinets and trumpets their new note. With such a large class, it was helpful to have two people to keep everybody under control. With the other 6th grade last week, Mrs. W used a different approach to teach everybody the new note simultaneously. Both proved to be successful. 7th grade minor scales test. High school: played trumpet with concert band rehearsing pep band music. Helped a bassoon player in symphonic band with reed issues for next rehearsal.

1/16/13

While playing trumpet in the symphony band, I observed the director pass out music for sight reading. As the students received their music he was scouting through, pointing things to be aware of. Students were talking, therefore not listening and when reading they stumbled over the points that the director had made. He commented on this at the end of the piece and explained that if the students had been paying attention rather than talking, they would have likely not missed those points. He further proved this by doing the same thing with the concert band; however, he ensured that he had their attention first. In result and as expected, the students who were listening and paying attention more successfully sight read the score.

1/17/13

Today I observed some rehearsal techniques in the high school with the assistant director. I have noticed that sometimes he allows more talking than usual, and today was one of those days. I was sitting in playing various instruments and saw how easy it was to lose control of the class and really make no progress with music. Although both pieces were new, they had already been sight-read earlier this week and I feel more progress could have been made with a better agenda prior to rehearsal. Solo and ensemble music was selected and distributed for middle school students. I was able to have a flute sectional with 8th graders as their big piece features flutes in the very low register, something these students are not familiar with. Good progress was made and suggestions were given for practicing techniques.

With the 5th grade band I really like how Mrs. W will have the students scout out and discuss a piece, and then they count and clap the piece. Next they will air play with a hissing sound as she models the piece on an instrument (flute, clarinet, trombone, etc.) then she will have the students play it. I have seen her do this and not do this, to prove a point to me. With the first option much more success is always achieved. I have seen this with string students, and this method ensures more accuracy of correct pitches and better intonation than just one shot sight reading.

1/18/13

At times it is necessary to put yourself at the level of the students. With the middle school bands, remind them that the instrument you model on; flute, clarinet, trumpet, and trombone, is NOT your primary instrument and that they should be able to play it better than you. Ask questions that value student input. If students feel like their opinion or ideas matter, they will work harder for you. Don’t get in front of your high school without a plan. They know if you’re not prepared and are just trying to ‘wing’ it.

1/22/13

Today I had the opportunity to work with middle school students preparing for solo and ensemble contest. This is my project to prepare these students and I got to work with a French Horn and Trombone student. I have hardly played French Horn and couldn’t tell you hardly a thing about Trombone (bass clef, 7 positions, how do you hold it?) I must add, this isn’t due to a poor education, it is because I took two semesters of string methods and only one brass, which was high brass trumpet and French Horn. Luckily, my trombone student is very motivated and learns quickly. The notes are there, now we just have to work on musically and ease of technique. I’m starting to see a trend of lack of interest and lack of motivation in the high school bands. These observations make me wonder what I could do as a director to inspire and motivate these kids, to remind them why they enjoy band in the first place.

1/23/13

Worked on Solo and Ensemble music at the High School and at SPPS.

1/24/13

Another assembly at Mary Queen. Worked with Solo and Ensemble students. Led warm-ups for 5th grade and 6th grade. The High School had a great rehearsal, being motivated and focused to perform well. Percussion Ensemble working for tour next week.

1/25/13

Today I got to lead 5th, 7th, and 8th grade warm-ups after taking attendance and materials check. I need to get better at keeping things moving. I don’t know to take so much time to transition, simply keep the beat going and count off the next exercise. I taught the concept of ties and dots to the 6th graders after having observed Mrs. W do this at MQ. Repeat after me: “A dot. Does not. Mean to add 1.” This is a common misunderstanding and she eliminates this from the beginning. With the slur, students ask why they would tie two quarter notes rather than write a half. I explained there a numerous ways to write my name: Capital, Print, Cursive, yet they all say the same thing. Composers simply just have multiple ways to express whatever they want. I got to introduce another cut time piece to the 8th grade and it was also a pentatonic Chinese example in Concert C. We emphasized this scale in warm-ups. Have them finger each note but only play pitches 3 (E natural) 6 (A natural) and 7 (B natural) while Mrs. W played all on the piano. This enforced the altered pitches from normal concert Bb or Eb, allowing more pitches to be correct on our first read through. While Mrs. W worked on concert music I continued to work on Solo and Ensemble groups for contest. As projected, I have students who will not need a lot of work, and others whose primary practice will occur with me during class time.

1/28/13

Must. Keep. Going. It is evident that I have established the expectation for my students that I will stop, announce, count off, and begin each exercise or piece. In my attempt to flow things together in less time, I realized students are used to me stopping and I must make it clear my expectations of them. With 8th grade warm-ups I still took too long between each exercise, but I did do better. Progress is better than no progress. I got to peruse jazz ensemble music today, helping pick the repertoire for this semester with rehearsals beginning this upcoming Saturday. I will be reviewing with 5th grade a new concept on Wednesday, along with leading warm-ups. After discussing this with Mrs. W I am excited about her expectations from me and successfully performing this challenge.

1/30/13

Today was Mega Mass where Mrs. Weitkamp helped selected high school students to perform with the music ministry. During band I transcribed a Trombone 2 and Tenor Sax 2 part. Because of a delay with the Mass, I taught 5th grade at SPPS by myself as Mrs. W couldn’t make it back in time. I was excited but prepared to do so. I conducted warm-ups which were played wonderfully. I reviewed the dotted half note and they read Camptown Races almost flawlessly. After review we moved on to concert music. Ode to Joy went very smooth as well. After reading I had each section demonstrate their own individual parts, seeing who had similar parts and how the different parts were indeed different. After putting it all back together and performing it together we moved on to the next concert piece. I had them air play while I demonstrated the first eight measures on the flute. Then I had them read the eight measures themselves. After realizing the piece isn’t exactly what they expected to hear, I played all of the parts simultaneously on the piano. After discussing the various things that make it sound unique, we read it again, just in time for class to end.

1/31/13

Today I taught everything by myself. Mrs. W and the High School directors were on tour with the LCHS Percussion Ensemble. 8th grade band at MQ was started with warm-ups then we went straight to concert music. We reviewed some familiar material and then started learning a new section. After convincing the students that I was serious about them learning something new, they finally began working for me. By the end of the class period we had completed learning and playing through the final half of the piece. We ended the class with a complete run through of the piece. Moving next to the High School I started with the Concert Band. Today was the first day I had ever been up in front of either of the High School bands. I’ve worked with the students in small groups and individually, establishing a good relationship getting to know them. I started with their normal warm-ups, and then moved on to Concert A-flat, the key of the day. They hadn’t played this key yet this semester, but I was prepared to work with them as needed. As expected, many of them didn’t get the concert D-flat. I had them stop on scale degree four, then proceed again. We moved on to the chorale in A-flat then on to concert music. Instead of reading new music, I decided to work on Blue Ridge Overture with them. After it reading it all the way through, I found a section that needed some work and we worked on it. They progressed on what I wanted them to, and seemed satisfied with the great sounds they were making. Symphonic Band went well also. I challenged them with two excerpts in A-flat, both with a grade level difficulty of 4-5. Then second had some challenging rhythms, but we talked about it, read it slow, then played it again faster. I was expecting this to take a lot longer, but it didn’t’. Next we worked on concert music as I had prepared to work on an excerpt of one of the pieces. After isolating melody, counter-melody, and accompaniment lines, I felt much progress in musicality and expression had been made in the rehearsal. I decided to challenge this group in reading something not only new, but a style they aren’t familiar, a march. We listened to National Emblem, talked through it, and then played it slowly. After a successful read through we ended class. Moving back to MQ for 6th grade things continued to go well. 7th grade went great too. Ultimately, it was a great first day of teaching by myself.

2/1/13

LCHS Teacher In-Service. MQ & SPPS - Snow Day

2/4/13

I got to school this morning and received a phone call from Mrs. W that it was her turn to stay home with a sick son. Mr. Jackson covered the MQ 8th grade band while I worked on Solo & Ensemble groups which went well. I also worked on SE groups at the high school. At SPPS I was by myself, working independently with 6th, 7th, and 8th grade. It took me awhile to get the 6th grade to work for me, but eventually I did. The 7th grade is a class that is a constant struggle for Mrs. W. None of these classes have had band since last Monday due to Mega Mass and a Snow Day, so routine was definitely not in order. Basically acting as a sub for the students, their expectations were not clear of me and it took quite a bit for them to realize I was serious. I was disappointed how chatty and unwilling to work for me the 8th grade was; as this is usually one of the best classes I get to work with. Granted, it wasn’t all of the students, but I soon explained that there was no ‘I’ in band and that it only takes one to ruin it for the group. Needless to say, it was a very frustrating day overall, but nonetheless a great learning experience. After having such a great experience last week, I needed to have a not so pleasant experience as I prepare to be on my own both Thursday and Friday this week as Mrs. W and the high school directors are away at KMEA.

2/7/13

This week has thus far been an adventure. Between preparing for Solo and Ensemble next weekend and preparing to teach at four schools while the high school directors are away at KMEA, I have definitely been busy. Today I taught at Lexington Catholic, Mary Queen, and Christ the King. Juggling my day with 8 band classes was very exhausting, but in the end it was very rewarding.

2/8/13

Two days, four schools, 15 band classes, and extra rehearsals after school both days for upcoming solo and ensemble. ..I am exhausted, but so thankful for such an amazing opportunity. Beginning at the high school, all three classes worked well for me. I know high school is a time of social and busy work and I think it is important to find a balance between social and productivity. Rushing to teach at Christ the King for Mr. Jackson’s 5th grade band was a new experience. Walking into a band I had never really met proved challenging, but it was a welcoming and great learning opportunity. The kids realized my expectations right away and after some persistence really worked for med. 5th, 7th, and 8th grade each went well at SPPS. I have worked with all of these kids, they know me and what I expect, also what Mrs. W expects upon her return.

2/11-2/15

This week is the final week in preparation for Solo & Ensemble this weekend. It is frustrating when you feel as though you have been preparing students for weeks and then realize they haven’t been working to prepare for their upcoming performance. I can’t help but feel guilty, but after reflecting what I have done to help prepare these students, I don’t think it is truly my fault. I gave them the resources to practice and prepare, while working with them every day during class, the fact that they aren’t fully prepared is due to their lack of taking instruments home and practicing. This week I have also had the opportunity to see the perspective from another band director. Juggling three high school ensembles, middle schools, and extra-curricular high school ensembles (morning percussion ensemble and jazz ensemble) is a lot of work for even two people. Wednesday I started by day at 7:00 with morning percussion ensemble at the high school. Followed by three high school classes, (concert, symphonic, and percussion) then drove to the middle school where we had four classes (5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade) and then back to the high school for after school jazz ensemble. This is a long day…how does a band teacher do this day after day? This is just classroom time as it does not include all of the administrative behind the scenes work and planning that has to be done outside of the class time. Thursday and Friday rehearsals included time at the end of each class to listen to solo and ensemble participants perform their pieces. Performing for your peers is far more difficult than playing for a ‘judge’, so it is a good experience for the kids. If they can successfully play in front of the class, on Saturday they know they can just have fun and perform well naturally. Friday night entailed set-up as Lexington Catholic hosted District Solo and Ensemble. Getting there early Saturday morning, they day went by smoothly, or as smoothly as it seemingly could be. With 1086 events scheduled, I would be accompanying 47 and trying to support my other students with their ensembles. In the end, nearly all of the students from my three schools received Distinguished or Proficient ratings with a few only receiving comments as requested. I would say it was a very busy but a very successful week, weekend, and weeks leading up to this event.

2/19-2/22

This was a great week after the busy week last week and weekend involving solo and ensemble. Monday was President’s Day, a much needed and appreciated day to catch up and rejuvenate. This week I taught a lot of sectionals and was able to on the spot lead some classroom teaching. At the high school, the teachers were needed last minute for a conference and were able to call upon me to lead class rather than one of them sacrificing the conference. This was great as I got to use my ears while working on performance repertoire, deciding on the spot which musical elements I wanted to focus in on and improve during that rehearsal. On Thursday I had my first observation with Dr. Hudson from UK. With all of the experience I have had thus far this semester, I was honestly more excited than nervous. It was a big deal because the 6th graders unexpectedly jumped ahead on Tuesday and were ready to learn the Concert Bb Major Scale a class period sooner than anticipated. Mrs. Weitkamp could have let me stick to our original plan but decided it was time and she trusted me to do it. I was scared that I may mess up her system of teaching, but was humbled that she trusted me with such an important concept. I reviewed my ability to play the scale on flute, trumpet, clarinet, and my trombone fingerings, ready to remind the students of the higher notes and the clarinets of the two new notes they had just learned on Tuesday. The class caught on to the concept much sooner than anticipated, but I knew they would be successful. I could have spent more time reviewing crossing the break for the clarinets. After they successfully played their first scale a few times, I moved on to concert repertoire. I hadn’t anticipated having so much time to spend on the concert repertoire, so I had to improvise quite a bit during this class. I started the class at a good teaching pace, but as I became nervous I caught myself picking up my pace and starting to ramble a bit. Ultimately, Mrs. Weitkamp and Dr. Hudson were both very pleased with my lesson. I had learned a lot in order to improve as I continue to teacher, and I now feel more comfortable. Most of my teaching so far has been without another teacher in the room while Mrs. W is away on a conference or something. I was more nervous for her watching me teach her concepts to her students than anything else. Ultimately, I’ve realized and accepted that she trusts me and I should be proud of that and I look forward to continuing to grow and improve my teaching skills every day.

2/25-3/1

This week showed me some of the unexpected excitements of school music programs. The boys basketball team made districts, and on Monday morning Mrs. W had to arrange students and transportation to get everybody to EKU for the game. Unfortunately, the school wasn’t helpful in finding a bus driver, so the band didn’t participate Monday evening. The band did however, play on Friday night. Other excitement this week included preparing a practice log and grading rubric for seventh grade preparations and assessments. At the high school I got to see how fundraising works. I watched the kids do their part along with Mrs. W crunching the numbers for profit and students costs for their upcoming trip this spring.

3/4-3/8

Vary the tempo, keep the students listening and on track; I saw great use of this during 8th grade warm-ups. Conducts woodwind sectionals all week during high school ensembles. Lead middle school multiple days when Mrs. W sick and didn’t make it to school. This was a great opportunity for on the spot reviewing of lesson plans and basically just hitting the ground running as each class started. The students at Mary Queen work very well for me and as we approach our concert next week the students are excited at how great they are starting to sound and continuing to work hard in order to sound even better. I started a project of reorganizing and creating a library of the music at the high school. With limited space I have already found some challenges, but I enjoy organizing and making things accessible and I look forward to exploring new music and creating a more efficient and accessible system for organizing all of the music for grades 5-12.

3/11-3/15

Rehearsals, dress rehearsals, paperwork, planning, and preparing for the area concert!!! With 401 middle school students performing, I have successfully organized percussion parts for four middle schools and how each of the instruments needed from each school will get to the high school on Tuesday for the concert. Playing missing parts, such as percussion during high school rehearsals is helpful for the students in becoming more familiar with how the pieces will actually be performed. On Friday, Dr. Hawkins from Transylvania University came to work with the students in order to fine point some details prior to the concert. How long is a beat? The ictus is a point of undefinable shortness. Don’t think beat to beat. Think within the beat. Music is lost if you only play the beat. Larger phrases create more musicality. “Notes are like children; the smaller they are the more care they need.” The volume of air used changes the dynamics. For forte, more volume is needed, a bigger airstream. For piano, less volume is needed a smaller stream. The aperture determines the volume. Ask students to perform each dynamic, forte, mezzo-forte, mezzo-piano, piano. Ask them what is physically different? Return to phrases trying to change dynamic contrast and have students play in unison. Breathing must complete the phrase. Ask accompanying parts who has the melody. What is melodic dynamic? You must support, not destroy the melody. Have the melody performed slowly. Establish tone, notes, balance, and intonation on long sustains especially. Change the shape and size of your hands in order to convey what you want and to gain attention and response of ensemble ((( ))) Style. The horns do not make the music – you make the music. The how is what matters and is most important, not the notes that you play. You must communicate to your audience.

3/18-4/12

Having a successful concert, which included 6 ensembles and 13 songs in 56 minutes, is very rewarding. The hard work and perseverance early in the semester really did pay off. Planning, organization, and parental support are key to such a large event. Ultimately, there were over 500 chairs on the gym floor, divided into four ensembles, combining 5 middle schools and 4 high school ensembles. Transitions went smoothly and each performance went very well. Coming off of a large concert quickly has been a challenge. Picking new repertoire and distributing to students is a task in itself. With school activities and early spring concert, there is very little turn around to prepare four new pieces in time for the spring concerts in early May. At both middle schools the 8th grade classes take a weeklong trip to Washington D.C. during different weeks. The Spring concert will combine 6,7, and 8th grade bands, but the ensembles must rely more on the experience and skill of the 8th graders. I see this as an opportunity and challenge for the younger classes to step up to the next level perhaps quicker than they traditionally would. The high school has been preparing for their spring trip, this year going to Atlanta to perform at the Music in the Parks festival. Being active in the paperwork, fundraising, and planning for this trip has helped prepare me as I may take on a challenge such as this in the future as a high school band director myself.

4/13-4/26

This has been by far the most rewarding experience of my collegiate experience. Any student teacher should feel as motivated, eager, excited, encouraged, and limitless as I do. Unfortunately, I know that I have been fortunate to have a much more meaningful and rewarding experience than most students are able to undergo. This semester I have had the opportunity to work with great groups of kids among three schools and with an excellent teacher who is passionate about the field of music education as well as the future of her students. I have learned classroom management techniques and ‘secrets’. I have learned rehearsal do’s and don’ts. I have learned concert programming and preparation. I have learned concert set-up and recruiting volunteers. I have learned the behind the scenes necessities for everything the band does (solo & ensemble, festival, band trips, concerts, pep band, fundraising, etc.) I have known that I wanted to be a music teacher since middle school. This semester only reaffirms and sparks the fire that will motivate me to be the best music educator I possibly can. I intend to use my resources, colleagues, professional organization, graduate school, and any other possible thing I can to improve myself in order to improve my field.