

LEARN BY HEART

Spotlight on Cliff Reppart

For Cliff Reppart, Band Director at Bridgman Public Schools, the students' enjoyment in band is more important than the outcome.

"I wanted band to be fun," said Mr. Reppart. "I've had plenty of great instructors but some focused on the outcome more than the experience. And I watched some very talented musicians just walk away from band."

Students and parents have raved about Mr. Reppart because he makes band an enjoyable experience for students. He chalks that up to his personal philosophy.

"When you have work to do you have two options: you can trudge through it and just push through it or you can find a way to make it interesting or make it fun," said Mr. Reppart, "If you make it fun, it'll be fun."

He makes his expectations clear that even though band will be fun, there will be plenty of work to do. He believes there is a perfect balance between working hard and having fun.

During marching season alone, Mr. Reppart and the high school marching band dedicated over 200 hours of work in between practices, band camp and competitions. This does not include the 20-50 hours Mr. Reppart put in beforehand to prepare for the upcoming season. The fun and hard work paid off with multiple Division I ratings.

In addition to marching season, the middle school and high school bands also participated in concert festival, where they both received Division I ratings as well.

"I often will say there's nothing like a little bit of success that breeds and generates more success or ignites that fire to go to the next level, and this is the finest group I've ever had the privilege of standing in front of," said Mr. Reppart. "They're just fantastic."

Mr. Reppart believes band is a place where everyone belongs.



**CLIFF REPPART,
BAND DIRECTOR**

"Mr. Reppart is one of the most down to earth people you will ever encounter in your life," said student Alivia Green. "The learning environment that he provides makes all students feel appreciated and cared for."

"I am so thankful for Mr. Reppart and the band program," said Bridgman Public Schools parent Cathy Demuth. "Mr. Reppart's love of music is contagious! The atmosphere he creates of acceptance and belonging is not just for a few but for the entire band. He goes the extra mile all of the time! From offering open practice times in the evenings to extra help after school, Mr. Reppart is there. For those who try to retreat because they don't feel good enough, he assures them that they are good enough, that they are a part of the Bridgman band family."

Mr. Reppart has been teaching for 15 years at the Bridgman school district, and he plans for it to be his one and only teaching position.

"I'll be one of those people that only ever teaches in one place because I don't want to go anywhere," he said. "It's a great school district."

That is a very good thing for the students at Bridgman Public Schools. Mr. Reppart was recently selected as Teacher of the Year by his colleagues in the Michigan School Band & Orchestra Association (MSBOA) for District 6, which is all of Southwest Michigan.

Congratulations on this well-deserved honor, Mr. Reppart! Thank you for making band fun and helping students Learn by Heart!