

## Low SES and At-Risk Band...

The Challenges aren't what most would think!

"Poverty is a chronic experience resulting from an aggregate of adverse social and economic risk factors." -Eric Jensen (author of *Poor Students, Rich Teaching*)

I remind my students that their situation is NOT WHO they are, but their current life SITUATION. I also remind them that, at their age, they can't control much of their situation BUT they do have choices when they are in school and in band. I also remind them that school and especially MUSIC can help them to create a different future for themselves that they can be proud of.

What is really different?

- Their Tools: The "Toolbox" verses the "Multi-Tool"
- Their life outside of school
- Their motivations
- Their perception of possible future outcomes

What shouldn't matter?

- Their parent's income
- Their living arrangements
- Their likelihood to move



**The supreme importance is LOSING the "Deficit Lens" that many people use when looking at students in a Low SES or At-Risk Situation.**

How can we be the groundwork for their success?

The Classroom:

- Procedures
- Consistency
- Positivity
- Safe/Supported Risk Environment

The Teacher:

- Must have the BEST pedagogy
- High expectations
- Set a "Growth Mindset"
- SPEAK THEIR LANGUAGE!

### Goal Setting:

- Attainable is where they are comfortable.
- WE must teach them that setting goals that might be unattainable won't make them a failure if they don't complete them, because they will go further than they originally thought they could.
- They must have time for guided reflection. They likely don't know how and WON'T take the time without help.

### What does success look like?

- Do the kids love the band room like it's their home?
- Do the kids push themselves to try hard, even new things?
- Do the kids take pride and ownership in the program, its achievement, and its future?
- Do you have kids that want to share the love of music with others?