



Larry Brownlee – Sterling, KS

Larry believes in setting high expectations and showing students how to meet and exceed those expectations. His goal is to instill a sense of joy and wonder in students through music. He states that “music has the power to work in students’ lives physically, emotionally, and spiritually”. He further believes that students with physical, mental, or emotional disabilities can participate in the music classroom and performance stage, and, in fact, need to participate. Every student can participate in music! Larry says “with music, students can express how they are feeling, show empathy for others, change the mood of the audience, build a sense of accomplishment and purpose, and become a part of a community,”

To start his education path he attended Sterling College in 1976 through 1980, where he earned a BA in Music Education and graduated Summa Cum Laude. Then he attended Wichita State University from 1982-1985. He earned his MME in Music Education there and also took many post-graduate courses throughout his career from varied Universities.

He began his teaching career in 1981 at Chase, KS. From Chase he moved to Eureka, KS and finally to Sterling, KS where he has taught since 1985.

Throughout his career he earned numerous awards and honors. His bands received high honors as well as he himself getting the SCKMEA Outstanding Music Educator in 1999 and 2010. His bands were selected to perform at state KMEA conferences 9 times. His High School Concert Band won Sweepstakes Trophy at Worlds of Fun Band Festival 3 times.

Not only were his bands and programs honored, but he was also recognized for his Civic duties as well as Coaching Girls’ Basketball, Cross Country teams, Sponsoring the National High School Honor Society, the School S.A.D.D sponsor, and the High School Scholars’ Bowl Coach. He also found time to direct the United Presbyterian Church Choir, serve as an elder, youth director, and a deacon. With the remainder of his time he participated with the Sterling, Hutchinson, and Lyons Community theatres as well as working with Boy Scouts earning Merit Badges, the 4H Photography, entomology, robotics and forestry project leader and providing Vocal Groups for local community events.

Dan Whisler, a colleague of Larry’s, says that “true leaders in the classroom make all around them better and engage the larger school and community, too. This was one of Larry’s greatest gifts to all those he served throughout his career.”

Larry has been fully committed to teaching for 40 years. He is still impacting students today. For four decades he has been the first teacher at school and the last to leave. He has given his nights and weekends to performances, cross country meets, and basketball games. He has

consistently shown students what dedication, commitment, and hard work look like. It is this hard work and commitment that makes Larry an exemplary member of the KTHOF class of 2020