

Ms. Stark Teacher Perspective

Growing Pains, Expanding Our Sound, Outgrowing Our Space

In April of 2018 I decided I wanted to have a change of scenery. I found the band position open at Puget Sound/Kirkland SDA and did my due diligence. Imagine my surprise to find that PSAA was re-establishing the groundwork for a successful and active music program. I was called for an interview and as I stepped onto the campus for the first time was a little dismayed by the size of the band room. So much so that I asked if the teachers were provided hearing protection - yes, that's a thing for musicians that stand in front of well meaning, yet somewhat uncontrolled music makers, especially in spaces that are too small for the size of the groups. I noticed, with concern, the size of the academy band (around 40) and the truly "packed like sardines" set up. I was told numerous times of the plans to build a "Multi-Purpose" building that could house our music department. This building included a rehearsal room, limited storage space, some practice rooms, an open area for a lobby, restrooms and the all important multi-purpose auditorium/covered recess area. I was a part of a couple of meetings with the architect and have in my office the official blueprints to the building.

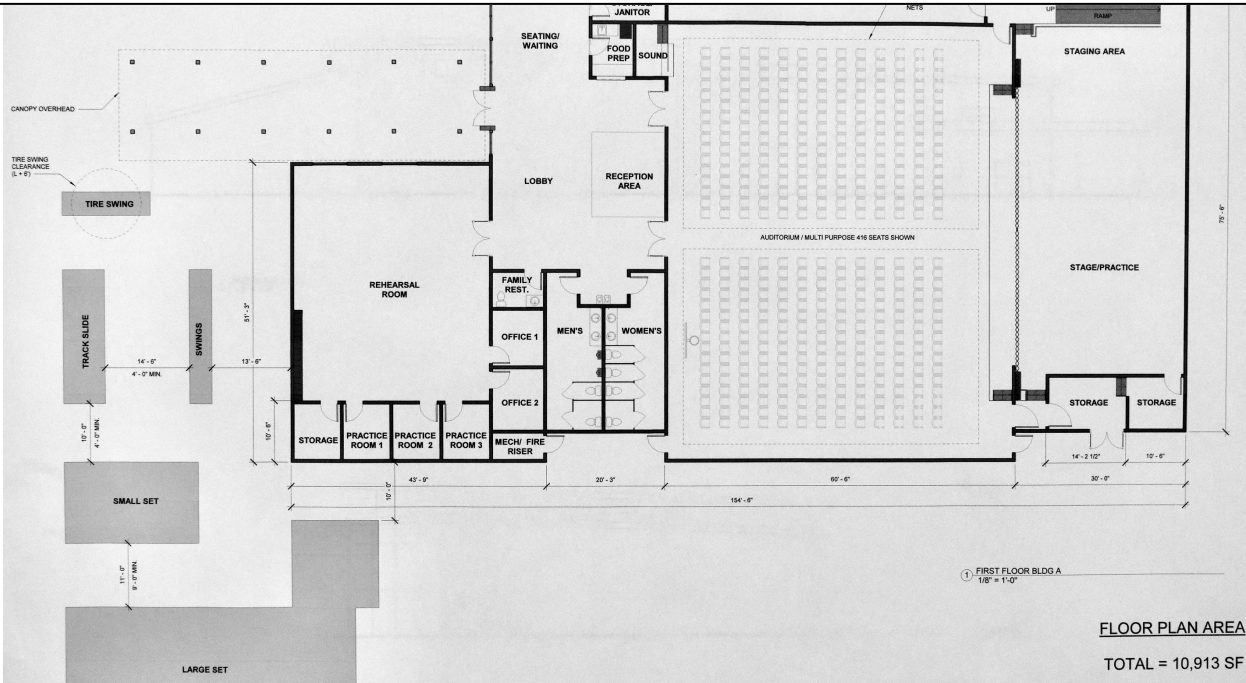
Fast forward 7 years. I have been told that the city shut us down. I'm not entirely convinced that this is the reason for not continuing to plan. I do know that the Covid years did hurt the process. Still our band is larger (46) - and at the beginning of the year we had to limit our numbers because of space.

Band set up is a little tricky. It is more than just set the chairs and stands. Different instruments require different amounts of space. The size of the musician matters too. For example, clarinet and trumpet players do not need a ton of space but saxophones, trombones and even flutes need a bit more. If you come late for band and need to get to the other side of the set up, it is quite the undertaking to get settled. If you are a percussionist you can forget the rule about personal space. You also have to be creative when the band director asks you to watch.

While there has been rumblings of expanding the Choir room, I think there is just as much planning needed for that as for a new building. It is so much more involved than putting up a few new walls.

There are many benefits to additional space as well. The band room could be converted into usable classroom space for KSDA. In addition, if we were to add a new building the choir room could be used for a weight room or general classroom for health classes. From an organizational standpoint, how nice it would be for all of the music and equipment to be in the same general area.

The bottom line is that we need proper space for our musicians to continue to grow. As I look at the KSDA band program - the future of PSAA - we are strong! Let's continue to look forward and be proactive, and while we're at it, protect the hearing of our teachers!



Multi-Purpose building plan

Pastor Troy A PSAA Origin Story

I'm here because I forgot to show up for a chapel talk. Yep. In a nutshell, that's why. Let's rewind: Andrew Gagi, Class of 2015 and my friend from Green Lake Church, wanted me to come speak at his school, this place called, "PSAA." The chaplain at the time, Melissa Wirtz, scheduled me per Andrew's request. The Monday before this chapel, I started preparing. Come Tuesday, poof! Suddenly the talk was out of sight, out of mind. I don't know what happened. I had *never* forgotten to show up for a talk. That Friday afternoon, I got a text from Andrew, "You ok, man?" A rush of blood went to my head, and I could feel my heart thumping. *"I forgot! Oh no!"*

After texting Andrew with a profuse apology, I called Melissa, embarrassed and desiring to make amends. "It's ok," she said, "Well, I actually need a speaker for Week of Prayer in spring?" Fitting punishment: miss one talk, do five. "I'll do it!" The Monday after my blunder, I showed up to PSAA campus with a bag of candy. I met several students that day, roamed around introducing myself, "Hi, I'm Troy. I'm the guy who didn't show up last Friday. Here's some candy; you'll probably enjoy this more than anything I would have said."

Come springtime and that Week of Prayer, my life was about to change. The principal, Mrs. Taber, approached me after I spoke on Thursday and asked if I had interest in being a chaplain as Melissa was leaving. I expressed appreciation but declined to apply for the position. I'd been working on a church planting ministry for five years, and veering away from this was not a consideration. But a few weeks transpire after her initial inquiry, until one day at home, I'm praying because my current church planting efforts are not going well, "God, this isn't working. Should I keep at this? What next, God?" Suddenly, the phone rings. Yeah, I got an actual call from God! His messenger is Mrs. Taber: "Hi, Troy, I know you said that you weren't interested, but I can't get you off my mind so I decided to try one more time."

"Ummm, Linda...you're not going to believe what I was just praying now, the exact moment you called." A person of faith, she believed with ease. I could feel her smile over over the phone. Fast-forward: I'm about to complete my eleventh year at PSAA, and I'm so grateful.

Mr. Palmer

"The Glorious Future"

Hello, my name is Lemar. I am an AI built off thousands of school documents compiled, notarized, rasterized, and flagellated by the staff at PSAA. As such, I can act as a personalized companion for the discerning PSAA student.

"Info about music tour 2025"

I can certainly aid you in creating a packing list for the upcoming music tour to insert destination that would keep you comfortable. Pick destination:

"South CA"

One should pack the expected amount of clothing, toiletries, and various sundries for a Insert tropical, blizzard, apocalyptic destination.

"Tropical, I guess? Is Southern California tropical?"

There are items that students would be expected to pack for a tropical destination to the southern tip of California. Remember to pack various oils to grease down instrument valves. Coconut oil makes for a marvelous valve lubricant and pulls double duty as a versatile cooking oil with a high heat point as well as remaining solid at most room temperatures. It also makes for a luxurious hair conditioner. Do not hesitate to ask Mr. Patel for grooming tips. Speaking of grooming, refrain from bringing bulky hair dryers, curling irons, and eye lash curlers as they can take up precious cargo space that surfboards, volleyball nets, fanny packs, and roller blades could fill. Mr. Munson will kindly allow you to use his hair equipment. Other bulky items to avoid would include heavy, antiquated office technology including but not limited to typewriters (digital or manual), rotary phones, record turntables, and mimeograph machines. These items will not fit in the overhead compartments or in the bulkhead of any major airliner and instead should be shipped via your local shipping vendor.

As you are on a musical tour, it is heavily suggested that you pack a harmonica, washboard, banjo, mouth harp, dual spoons, or cartoonishly oversized milk jug, should a rival school challenge you to a hillbilly duel.

Certain members of the PSAA family would do well to pack multiple charging cables, as well as battery packs; as the quest for charging could lead to awkward questions after one mistakenly shuts down Tomorrowland due to unplugging a necessary cord near the Star Trader next to Space Mountain.

Mr. Patel

Here's My Advice: Take It or Leave It

The most important piece of advice for a college student that is universal across majors is building relationships with your professors or teaching assistants (TA). The easiest way to accomplish this would be to either participate in a class or talk to them during their designated office hours. Prepare a few questions focused on the prior lecture if you're not sure what to talk about. These interactions will help you distinguish yourself from your peers and can be helpful if you ever need to extend a deadline. More importantly, these interactions can also become mentorships, internships, and job opportunities. Remember to read your syllabus, and write down the due dates of major projects and tests. Professors tend to get frustrated when students email them about something that was clearly stated in their syllabus. I would also recommend going to your advisor with your class list before finalizing your schedule. Many classes will have many prerequisites and they are not always intuitive. Some classes can be used to fill multiple requirements for either Gen Ed's or your majors. Some majors will have bulletin changes and add new requirements. Your advisor will be able to help you maximize your choices, so you can save time and money.

If there is a mandatory meal package which will often be the case your first year at university; take the minimum package because you will likely not go to the cafeteria as often as you think you will. You will likely go to the cafeteria 1-2 times a day and if you bring your own containers you can fill up for other meals. It is also helpful to stock up on ramen and canned goods for late night meals.



Mr. Bokov
March 10
IT Director

Staff Spotlight
Principal Yoshihara

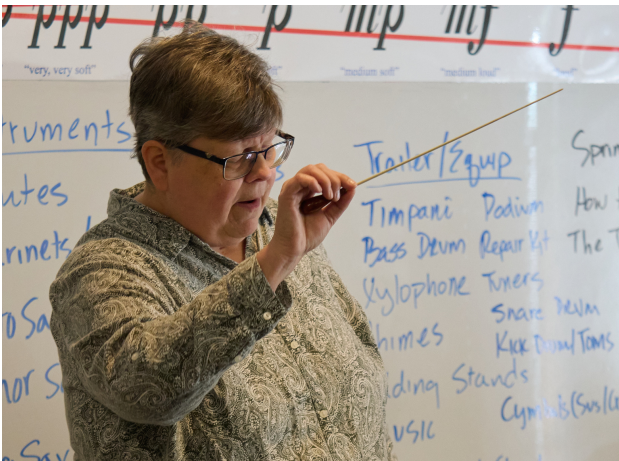
Most people spend 4 years at PSAA. For some people it is even less, but can you imagine having been here 23 years? Well, if you are Mr. Bokov you can. He started working here back in 2002! Mr. Bokov is one of those guys who just seems to know everything, and if he doesn't know it himself, he knows a guy who does! To the Shark family, he is a technology and media expert, but that is just a small portion of his skill set. He is also fluent in Russian and English as well as having some abilities in Ukrainian, German, Latin and Greek! I know there are many multilingual people here at PSAA, but I think Mr. Bokov has us all beat! Hopefully I have piqued your curiosity a bit about who this mystery man is, so keep reading, because the story doesn't stop here. Mr. Bokov began studying as a young man at a state university.



Before finishing that degree, he ran into issues with keeping Sabbath and was expelled from that university. After that he was drafted into the army and his education was put on pause. After the army he studied theology from Zaoksky Adventist Seminary, got a bachelor's in linguistics and a Master's Degree from Andrews University. So how did he end up here at PSAA? His in-laws were already living here and had invited him to come. In 2001 right after 9/11 Putin became president in Russia and he decided the time was right to come since conditions in Russia were not quite as attractive as they had been. In the states he began looking for work. He heard of the position at PSAA where they needed an IT person. Mr. Bokov had not worked in IT before, but he had quite a lot of experience in learning. So he got a book, bought some second hand computers and set up a network in his hotel room. That was the start of his IT career at PSAA. Twenty three years later he has a lot of fond memories of mission trips and Connects. If you ever want to hear good stories, I recommend seeking out Mr. Bokov. Try asking him about his raccoon battle. You will not regret it!



Other members of the PSAA family should think twice about packing clangorous metal waterbottles as they have a tendency to fall from great heights, clatter ominously, and terrify flight attendants, which could lead to emergency deplaning and the subsequent ejection of PSAA students from Alaska Airlines. Another tip for both the flight and subsequent bus rides would be to be open to love blossoming on a school trip. Your third or fourth choice of a romantic companion may finally be receptive to allowing love birds to soar. Should you find yourself in a romantic midtrip situationship, you would be advised to keep your arms and feet above the seat ahead to avoid accusations of untoward behavior. Do these tips give you the information you need?
"No, I just need the permission slip for Food Lifeline"



Photos: Mr. Bokov

FAQ

Student's Questions. Teacher's Answers.

Q: Once I arrive for school, can I leave campus? What if I am a Senior?
A: NO. At PSAA we have a closed campus. Teachers and staff are responsible for your safety during school hours. You are not allowed to leave campus by foot, car, bus, bike, etc. unless your parent signs you out (see the clipboard at the front desk). As a Senior, you are not allowed to leave campus unless a parent signs you out OR when Senior lunch privilege begins (around 2nd semester). Seniors must meet certain criteria and follow the rules to earn and keep this off-campus privilege. If you have a study hall (or two ...) you're not allowed to leave during those times either even when the off-campus privilege is in effect. All of this will be communicated to you by your class sponsors when the time comes.

Q: Do teachers have a life outside of school?
A: NO. Well, sometimes. We have to really "work" at that work-life balance (no pun intended) because it takes a ginormous amount of time to plan, grade, write and answer emails/texts from parents and students, create quizzes and tests, grade, plan (oh wait, did I already mention that?). However, the time spent on teaching is worth it because we absolutely ♥ seeing the smile on your face when the math lesson makes sense, the pride of an essay you didn't think you could finish, the victory in a game against a team you expected defeat, when you finally conquer the process of photosynthesis, get hyped about the debate over a controversial topic, make connections and memories at Rosario, WWU and mission trips, and find a deeper relationship with God during a discussion in Bible.

Q: What should I do if I am failing a class? Ask for extra credit?
A: NO. First, you should be aware of your grade by checking Jupiter at least once a week (you know, when Ms. Jordan sends you an email on Sunday). Also, arrive to class on time! But most importantly, talk to your teacher! Take it from a teacher - WE WANT TO SEE YOU SUCCEED! A short conversation can go a long ways in helping turn things around. But don't wait until the last week of the semester. By that point, you're cooked. :)