

Celtic Air & Dance

By Michael Sweeney

American Band College at Central Washington University

KELLY CONNELL

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Candidate Introduction



Kelly Connell, Assistant Band Director at Aldine Middle School (Houston, TX), is currently in her sixth year of teaching, and her fourth year at Aldine Middle School. Connell conducts symphonic band, beginning woodwind classes, and assists the honor band. Under her direction, the AMS Concert Band received superior ratings at the UIL Concert and Sight-Reading Contest 2017-2019.

Prior to working in Houston, Connell served two years as Music Director at Holyoke Community Charter School (Holyoke, MA) where she built the school's inaugural music department. During that time, Connell was also the founder and director of the Pioneer Valley Beginner Band Camp (South Hadley, MA) and a member of Leap of Faith Jazz Combo (Springfield, MA).

Connell graduated with honors from the University of Dayton (Dayton, OH) where she received dual degrees: a bachelor of music degree in music education with concentrations in urban education and instrumental music; a bachelor of arts in human rights studies; and a minor in philosophy. While at UD, she was principal flutist of all performance ensembles.

Connell has won several awards in her field, including most recently the Sigma Alpha Iota Professional Development/Education Grant (March 2018). She is an active member of Sigma Alpha Iota, the National Association for Music Education, the Texas Music Education Association, the National Flute Association, and the Texas Bandmasters Association.

Connell is currently pursuing a master of music education in band conducting through the American Band College of Central Washington University (Ashland, OR).



The background is a close-up of weathered, horizontal wooden planks. A large, wavy graphic element, resembling a splash of paint or a stylized wave, is positioned across the middle. It features a gradient from dark green on the left to bright blue on the right. The text 'About Aldine' is centered within this graphic in a white, serif font.

About Aldine



Aldine and Houston, Texas

Houston, Texas is the largest city in the south and the fourth largest city in the United States. With a total area of 627 square miles, Houston is the eighth most expansive city in the United States¹. It is the largest city in the United States by total area¹. More than 6.9 million people of more than 100 different nationalities, call the Houston area home⁶. Houston is the most diverse metropolitan area in Texas, and as been described as the most racially and ethnically diverse major metropolis in the United States Houston's multiculturalism has been attributed to it relatively low cost of living, strong job market, proximity to Latin America, and role as a hub for refugee resettlement. At least 145 languages are spoken by city residents¹. Houston's economy is based primarily on energy, healthcare, manufacturing, aeronautics, and transportation, being the hub for the second most Fortune 500 headquarters of any United States municipality within its city limits (after New York City)¹.

15 miles northeast of downtown is Aldine, a family-oriented urban district with thriving businesses and churches, and residential neighborhoods. The district encompasses 7.92 square miles³. Of the people in Aldine, 81.1% speak a non-English Language, and 66.2% are U.S. citizens³. The largest industries in Aldine are construction, retail trade manufacturing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas extraction, real estate, agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining³. The median household income in Aldine is \$36,207³.



Aldine Independent School District



Aldine Independent School District (AISD) is located northeast of downtown Houston and is fully accredited by the Texas Education Agency. The vision of Aldine Independent School District is to “Improve the Nation’s Best.”

AISD serves 76,000 students, making it one of the ⁵ top ten largest school districts in Texas₅. Of the total enrollment, 73% of students are considered at-risk, and 86.19% are considered economically disadvantaged₅. The ethnic composition of AISD is 73.52% Hispanic, 22.76% African American, 1.68% White, 1.15% Asian, 0.64% Multi-ethnic, 0.17% Pacific Islander, and 0.07% American Indian or Alaska Native₅.

There are eight high schools, five ninth grade schools, 13 middle schools, one intermediate school, 39 elementary schools, 12 early childhood/pre-kindergarden/kindergarden schools, one special education school, one alternative school, two disciplinary alternative schools, and one night high school. AISD schools provide magnet IB, technical, and traditional educational choices for all grade levels.

AISD was awarded the Broad Prize for Urban Education in 2009, the 2008 H-E-B Excellence in Education award, and the Texas Quality award in 2006₅. Many AISD schools have earned recognition including making the Best High Schools in the United States from U.S. News & World Reports (Gold, Silver and Bronze Medals) and Best Schools Rankings by Children at Risk₅. Additionally, several AISD campuses have earned Excellence in Education Awards from the National Center for Urban School Transformation (NCUST)₅.

Aldine Middle School

Aldine Middle School (AMS) is one of 13 middle schools serving the 76,000 students in Aldine Independent School District. During the Summer of 2018, Aldine ISD underwent district-wide rezoning, adding a high school, three middle schools, five elementary schools, and eliminating all intermediate schools. Because of this, AMS went from being exclusively a seventh and eighth grade campus to a sixth through eighth grade campus. Many faculty were rezoned to other schools, allowing AMS to welcome approximately 40 new faculty to our campus, including our new Principal, Christi Van Wassenhov.⁵



Of the 900 students enrolled at AMS, 18.6% identify as African American, 0.6% Asian, 78.3% Hispanic, 0.1% Pacific Islander, and 1.9% White⁵. Approximately 74.9% of students are considered, "at risk," 93.2% are economically disadvantaged, and 25% have limited English proficiency⁵.

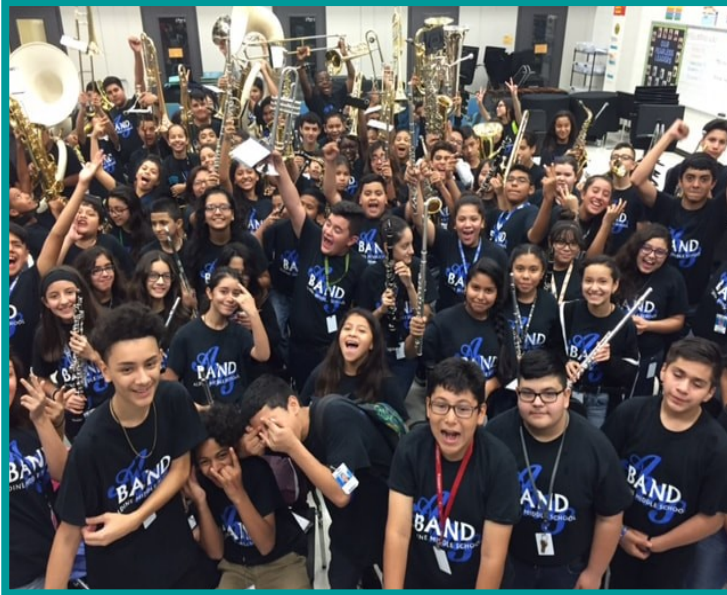
Aside from Band, AMS offers other ability-based electives including Choir, Theater, Art, Industrial Technology, Spanish, and LOTC.



The state of Texas assigns ratings to districts and campuses that designate their performance in relation to the state's academic accountability systems. In 2018, AMS "Met Standard⁵."

Aldine Middle School is located in northeast Houston approximately 20 minutes from downtown Houston, Texas.

AMS Band Program



The band program at Aldine Middle School has an enrollment of over 200 students ranging from grade sixth through eighth. Students at Aldine Middle School start their band experience in sixth grade in daily, homogeneous beginner classes. At the end of their first year, students audition and are placed into ability-based performing bands for their sev-

enth and eighth grade years.

Because of the district-wide rezoning that occurred during the 2018-2019 school year, the numbers in advance (non-beginner) ensembles has dropped drastically, as most of our students were rezoned to neighboring middle schools in the district. In past years, we have had three 50+ members per advanced band. This year we have one-35 member mixed ability level band. Our one band will be competing in UIL as a non-varsity ensemble this year due to the affects of rezoning.

Because of the rezoning, the AMS Band pushed beginner recruitment to offset the low numbers and recruited over 180 beginners for this school year.

The AMS Bands enjoy performing several concerts within the community throughout the year and consistently receive superior ratings at UIL Concert and Sight Reading and various state festivals. The band program is under the direction of Ernest Bottlinger, Kelly Connell, and Oliver Hellberg.

Additional information about the AMS Band Program can be found at www.AMSBand.com

AMS Honor Band

Due to the district-wide rezoning during the 2018-2019 school year, the AMS Honor Band is the only advance band in the AMS Band Program this year. This is a seventh and eighth grade band with a wide range of ability levels.

The honor band this year consists of the following instrumentation:

Woodwinds:

- 6—flute
- 1—oboe
- 2—first clarinet
- 1—second clarinet
- 1—bassoon
- 4—alto saxophone
- 1—tenor saxophone

Brass:

- 2—first trumpet
- 2—second trumpet
- 4—trombone
- 2—baritone
- 2—tuba

Percussion:

- 7—percussion

Total Instrumentation: 35 students

This year honor band performed at UIL Concert and Sight Reading as a non-varsity CC band and earned sweepstakes.







Celtic Air & Dance



Arranger Summary



Michael Sweeney graduated from Indiana University of Bloomington in 1977 with a bachelor degree in music education₈. During his time as an undergraduate he studied with Bernard Heiden, John Eaton, and Donald Erb₉. Following graduation Sweeney taught elementary through high school instrumental music in Indiana and Ohio. Since 1982, Sweeney has been a composer and arranger for Hal Leonard Corporation, the largest publisher of printed music in the world₈. Currently he oversees the development, production, recording, and marketing of new publications for school bands as Director of Band Publications₄. Sweeney has over 500 published works to his credit and in high demand as a clinician and guest conductor throughout the world₄.

Literature History & Information

Celtic Air and Dance is an arrangement of two traditional Celtic folk melodies, “The Parting Glass” and “Tha Mi Sgith.” The piece is in single movement form, 76 measures long, in common time, modulates from the key of concert Eb to concert Bb, and has a duration of approximately three minutes. *Celtic Air and Dance* is listed as a grade one level and is published by Musicworks, a division of Hal Leonard Corporation₉.

The two folk songs utilized in this composition can be traced back to Scotland and Ireland. The earliest known appearance of the tune associated with “The Parting Glass” is a tune for fiddle entitled “The Peacock₄.” The tune itself and the text has gone through many transformations over time₄.

“The Parting Glass” lyrics:

<i>Of all the money that e'er I spent, I've spent it in good company, And all the hard that ever I did, Alas it was to none but me, And all I've done for want of wit, To memory now I can't recall So fill to me the parting glass, Good night and joy be with you all.</i>	<i>Oh, all the comrades that e'er I had, They're sorry for my going away, And all the sweethearts that e'er I had, They'd wish me one more day to stay, But since it falls unto my lot, That I should rise and you should not, I'll gently rise and softly call, Good night and joy be with you all₄.</i>
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*If I had money enough to spend,
And leisure to sit awhile
There is a fair maid in the town,
That sorely has my heart beguiled,
Her rosy cheeks and ruby lips,
I own she has my heart enthralled,
So fill to me the parting glass.
Good night and joy be with you all.*

Literature History & Information

“Tha Mi Sgith,” which translates to “A Fairy’s Love Song,” also has many variations and is known by another title, “Buain na Rainich,” meaning “Cutting the Bracken⁴.” The lyrics tell the story of a fairy who fell in love with a young girl whom he met when she came out to cut the bracken (fern)⁴. When her family found out about the two, they locked the girl up at home⁴. When she never returns, the fairy loses hope and sings this lamenting song⁴.

“Tha Mi Sgith” translated lyrics:

Verse 1

*Often, my love and I
Were in the misty glens,
Listening to the sweet choir of the grove,
Singing in the corpulent forest*

Chorus

*I am tired and I am alone,
Cutting the bracken, cutting the bracken,
I am tired and I am alone,
Forever cutting the bracken,*

Verse 2

*If I saw you coming,
I would run to meet you
But if you do not come here to search for me,
How can hope return?*

Chorus

Verse 3

*Behind the knoll, the top of the knoll,
Behind the lovely knoll,
Behind the knoll, the top of the knoll,
Every day, alone.*

Chorus

Verse 4

*In the fairy hill, oh I will be tired,
And often my hear would be
wounded,
When others sing their songs,
I will do nothing but drone⁴.*

Chorus



The background is a close-up of weathered, horizontal wooden planks. A large, wavy brushstroke in shades of blue and green is painted across the middle of the image, partially obscuring the wood. The text 'Sight Reading' is centered within this brushstroke in a white, serif font.

Sight Reading



Anticipated Problems

In preparation for performing this piece, concert Eb and Bb major scales and scale patterns from *Foundations for Superior Performance for Band* have been practiced with the honor band. This ensemble consists of strong third year and weak second year players alike, so concepts such as blend, balance, and tuning are still in intermediate stages of development.

Strengths of this ensemble are the clarinets, tenor saxophone, trombones, baritones, and percussion. Weaknesses of this ensemble are flutes, oboe, alto saxophones, trumpets, and tubas.

I anticipated the following challenges as the group sight-read through *Celtic Air and Dance*:

1. Flutes and trumpets having difficulty counting and missing most entrances as there are a number of weak second year band students in these sections.
2. Percussion one and keyboards getting lost and having difficulty reading rhythms and notes through the piece. They are not strong sight readers, but work hard to learn their music.
3. Transition difficulties due to the key change at measure 57 due to general inexperience of the group.
4. Flutes and trumpets having difficulty counting the dotted quarter note counter melody at and after measure 67.
5. As this is an intermediate group of musicians, the focus was anticipated to be mainly on notes and rhythms, with doing their best to remember changing articulations and key signature.
6. Many students getting lost because they are still learning to look ahead in their music.
7. Balance, blend, dynamics and intonation being ignored by most students due to inexperience.

Lesson Plan

Rehearsal Objectives	Band students will sight read <i>Celtic Air and Dance</i> by Michael Sweeney.
Warm Up	Concert F <i>Foundations for Superior Performance</i> ¹⁰ <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1A• Concert Eb scale and scale patterns• Concert F scale and scale patterns• Chorale
Repertoire	<i>Celtic Air and Dance</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Identify key signature and key signature change2. Identify time signature3. Identify fermata at measure three4. Identify accidentals throughout the music5. Think and finger from the beginning of the piece with the director conducting the time while talking through the music. As we move through the music in time, the director will add additional comments such as, when instruments enter, appropriate dynamic levels, watching for certain flats or natural marked notes, tonguing and slurring articulation markings, counting specific rhythms, and helping the band navigate through music.6. Play through entire piece under tempo from beginning to end without stopping.

Rehearsal Reflection

In planning for my rehearsal, I opted to do the sight read based loosely on the University Interscholastic League (UIL) guidelines: Walk through the piece and point out key changes, tempo changes, melody/bass lines, etc..., have the students finger along, then perform. I chose to use a metronome and no baton during this rehearsal for a few reasons:

1. I was confident students would have their eyes glued to their music (not on me) the entire time.
2. My job during sight reading is to be incredibly clear with counting and giving cues.
3. I want students to focus on getting notes and rhythms accurate.

At the beginning of the piece, there were calm sounds coming out of horns and a lot of wrong notes. We will have to work on balancing and aligning during those first four measures. I also heard no suspended cymbal! I am frustrated with how I handled the fermata—I do not think I explained it enough before hand. Though regardless of how clearly I could have explained it in the first rehearsal, it is something we will need to work on. My bell player entered measure four playing too slowly, but I was happy to hear he made the adjustment by the next measure with correct notes.

During the first melody in measure six, I anticipated some counting errors across woodwinds, but was surprised to hear flutes consistently play quarter notes like eighth notes! They were also playing far too softly, but I am not going to worry about it too much right now.

I made the decision to not change any tempos or acknowledge ritardandos so we can play correct notes and rhythms during the sight reading. I was impressed to hear my snare drummer making some decent attempts at the drags! I am surprised there are drags in a grade one piece at all. She started playing some of the drags like five strokes, and again, I am not too worried about it right now. She is one of my stronger eighth grade musicians—I am confident she will figure it out.

Rehearsal Reflection

At measure 14 the low brass and woodwinds came in strongly but there was no sense of balance. All I could hear was tenor saxophone! Entering measure 16 with the melody, clarinets and trumpets need to come in more confidently, while the rest of the ensemble listens and adjust to them.

Generally speaking across the entire piece, students who are confident sight readers are playing loud while those who are not so confident are playing too soft. This can be heard in measure 17 where the entire band has three beats that should line up together and you can hear varying articulations and volume choices.

In measure 25 none of the alto saxophones came in on their entrance. I was not entirely surprised, as this alto saxophone section consists of timid players. I am impressed generally by the confidence students are playing with on entrances. I expected it to be a challenge, but the students are doing a decent job understanding the general flow of the piece.

Measure 30-32 is a very exposed section. Flutes need a lot more air to support their sound, especially considering they are establishing the melody and style for the band in multiple situations throughout this piece.

In measure 35 and 57, I opted to not change speeds. Although the style and tempo increased, I wanted to focus more on assuring students can read notes and rhythms correctly during the sight read. I made the decision that we can learn about increasing the tempo strategically at a later time.

I heard the snare drum come in at 35 and nothing else (bass drum and tom tom?). The clarinet drone needs more warmth to the sound, but I am happy they came in confidently on their own! Flutes made a good effort of playing the theme at 37 with correct articulation. There is no alto saxophone heard in 41. I am going to pull them out and work with them. They will hide in the band sound if I let them.

Rehearsal Reflection

Trumpets entered at measure 45 very flat. Generally speaking, most of the melodic lines were played deflated with not enough air support. There will have to be a lot of work playing out and fitting into the bassline.

The balance in measure 49 to the melody in the flute line is decent, though intonation will certainly have to be addressed. The trumpets have this interesting part where they are essentially emphasizing the off beats in the melody, creating this tribal sound. We will have to break that section down and address how their part fits into the melody line during rehearsal.

I am pleasantly surprised with the balance in measure 57. Though it is too loud, I appreciate the enthusiasm to play with energy during this part of the piece. It lets me know that at this point they understand there is a juxtaposition between the first melody and second, we need to work on *how* to play them differently.

I am not too surprised the trumpets and flutes flaked on their counter melody in measure 67 and 71 respectively. Dotted quarter notes are weird enough counts for intermediate players to understand but not brave enough to go out on a limb and play out in a sight read. Special attention will have to be brought to this section, balancing the low bassline, melody, and counter melody.

Woodwinds and trumpets completely missed their entrances at 73 and 74. I think they were running out of steam getting to the end. We will have to spend some time working on connecting those lines to sound seamless. I was pleasantly surprised most of the band played the last two beats in measure 76 correctly!

Overall, I am pleased with their sight reading. I was worried about how they would handle a fermata, time change, pick up beats, and keep up with the melodic lines. I was happy to see we made it to the end in one piece! I think *Celtic Air and Dance* is a great piece for this ensemble. We will have a great time rehearsing it!





Mid-Point Rehearsal

Lesson Plan

Rehearsal Objectives	Band students will rehearse <i>Celtic Air and Dance</i> arranged by Michael Sweeney, addressing balance, articulation, and transitions.
Warm Up	Concert F <i>Foundations for Superior Performance</i> ¹⁰ <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1A• 1C• Chorale
Repertoire	<u>MELODY ONE</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Throughout the piece, agreeing on melodic style between flute, clarinet, and trumpet.• Measure six—Mezzo piano, balance & blend in harmony, tuning high C in Flutes, and having harmony fit <i>into</i> flute sound.• Measure 14—Clarinet and trumpet melody enter lighter and connected.• Measure 25—Saxophones play out and stretch eighth notes.• Measures one through four—Start softer, oboe fit into ensemble more. Tuning. <u>MELODY TWO</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trumpet entrance. Center sound and play out.• Three overlapping themes: Listen to the incoming melody.

Rehearsal Reflection

The morning of this recorded rehearsal started with in a panic because some students did not bring their instrument to school that day due to a “flood day” earlier in the week that caused the school administration to move state testing. Because of this, it was unclear in communication whether students should bring their backpacks (and in turn, instruments) to school. Thankfully we were able to resolve all issues before first period!

Rehearsal began as it does everyday. In the fall semester, the majority of rehearsal time was spent reinforcing fundamentals utilizing *Foundations for Superior Performance*. The last month and a half of school, the warm up consists of the same four exercises: Concert F, 1A, 1C, and chorale. We spend less time on our warm up because at this point in the year, the band is at peak ability levels and we like the students to enjoy more time playing music and less on technical studies as school winds down.

We start rehearsal with concert F to get students warming up their faces, balance, blend, articulating together, and getting minds focused for rehearsal. 1A and 1C are for range warm up, and the chorale is our transition into *Celtic Air and Dance*. The first melody in *Celtic Air and Dance* is very chorale-like, so it makes for an easy musical transition.

I started the rehearsal with concert F which was inconsistent from note-to-note. The first time I cued unmetered, then counted four beats. It threw off some of the students, but the majority were able to keep up. Incidentally, one could argue it forced the band to keep their eyes on me, so I suppose it could have been worse!

During the *Foundations for Superior Performance* exercises, I was pleased with my directions given during the rests. I think they were clear, and concise. I originally instructed students to move together, and when they did not adjust, I told them to focus their sound on the “middle note.” Students were able to then correct themselves. I think it was a great way of addressing a concern without saying the same thing twice.

Rehearsal Reflection

Generally speaking, this ensemble does a great job rehearsing and responding to critiques. Additionally, I think I do a good job with pacing. I remember having a professor in college say it is important to say what you need to with the least amount of words possible or students will zone out. That has been something I have tried to carry in my teaching on and off the podium. My conducting pattern is clear, but probably too large for the warm up. But I would like to acknowledge my improvement in this: During my first year video submission, large drum major-like conducting was a big hurdle for me. I think my conducting is looking softer.

There were good adjustments made during the chorale. My conducting was way too large for this. I think I get excited about conducting grandiose sounding pieces, but need to work on reflecting on a smaller plane. Originally when watching myself conduct, I thought I was looking at the score a lot during the chorale. I am keeping my head down so I can focus on hearing (I have not had a *Foundations for Superior Performance* score on the podium since November). I do not know if that is “okay” but it doesn’t hurt to keep my head up facing the band more.

I am happy with the musical responsiveness of the band during the warm up. It is clear throughout rehearsal they made a concerted effort to make musical adjustments.

When working on the first melody with flutes, clarinets, and trumpets, I was pleased with how the trumpets, playing on their mouthpieces transformed their pitch center. It was night and day!

The woodwind feature in measure six has been the death of us! The flutes struggle to play out no matter how much permission I give them to play forte. Their tuning on the high C in the melodic line was dissonant and I tried to make them listen, but did not want to waste full band rehearsal working on it. I made the mental note to address it during sectionals where I can take the time to listen to each student individually and make adjustments with alternative fingerings and write pitch tendencies in their music.

Rehearsal Reflection

In the same woodwind feature, the saxophones and clarinets are not matching articulation and moving together under the melody. I was trying to keep calm during this rehearsal, but was getting frustrated with the clarinets dragging. I started to snap my fingers at tempo and they moved along quicker, which immediately let me know this is a matter of them internalizing pulse. I did not want to dwell on the problem more than I already had, but I know now I need to continue to drill this section with the clarinets.

As the band continued through the rest of the first melody, it is becoming clear to me my conducting pattern can still evoke the broad style of the piece, while also staying in a smaller conducting “box.” Especially my entrance cues. They are unnecessarily large. I had to talk to the band about not giving it all away (dynamics) in the first 37 measures, and I am now wondering, after watching my video recording, if they assumed larger sound because my pattern was so large. I am going to experiment with that in upcoming rehearsals.

I wish I can start the concert playing the warm up chorale before playing *Celtic Air*, because every time we do, the band knows *exactly* how to articulate the entrance at the beginning of the piece. I feel like I have to reiterate this piece is chorale-like every rehearsal! At the end of the introduction the band needs to soften the dynamic at the ritardando.

Percussion have come a long way in learning their parts! I am pleased with how they’re coming along. The student playing suspended cymbal was originally playing way too soft. I was happy to tell him to back off. I always tell my students I would rather have to tell them to back off than to ask for more.

I am proud of the flutes and their efforts to play with appropriate style and articulation. Knowing this group of students, I was worried they would not have the musical maturity or bravery to play them. But as we continued in the piece, transitioning from melody one to melody two, the flutes did a good job establishing the style change for the rest of the ensemble.

Rehearsal Reflection

Trumpets made excellent adjustments at measure 45 after buzzing on mouthpieces first. I love how doing that works like a charm! Going forward I have to keep an eye on them not rushing through those eighth notes.

When addressing balance in measure 59 to the end I was originally thinking about listening to different sections play and layering them one at a time. During rehearsal however, I decided in the moment to explain to students how they need to listen to the incoming melody that being added and to balance to it (which, frankly, was a lot easier!). I am glad I went with my gut reaction in the moment, because the band instantly adjusted. I think teaching it this way was also a lot more meaningful, because students are not being told to adjust, but understanding how their part fits into the texture of the overall section.

It was a productive rehearsal. Watching and listening allows me to appreciate my students and how quickly they are able to respond to instruction. There is still plenty of room for improvement between this mid point rehearsal and the concert, but I am feeling comfortable with how we're progressing.





The image features a background of weathered, horizontal wooden planks. A large, wavy brushstroke in shades of blue and green is painted across the middle of the page, partially obscuring the wood. The text 'Final Performance' is written in a white, stylized font across the center of the brushstroke.

Final Performance

Performance Reflection

Our spring concert was scheduled two weeks before school was out for the summer. Due to severe thunder storming, our district called a “flood day” the day of our concert. With all of the end of year events already scheduled during the final days of school, it was decided the spring concert would be cancelled. I arranged to have our final performance video taped during our final band rehearsal. I told the students playing this piece would be their last time playing together and, for many of them, their last time playing in this band hall.

I was so disappointed when we had to restart. It was clear during the first attempt students put their heart and souls into it, but the second time it did not feel the same. I blame it partially on being derailed by announcements. The first melody did not have the same warmth it did the first time. Students were pinching more. The woodwind feature in measure six was rushed and tempo increased about ten beats per minute. The clarinets still moved slower than preferred, but improvements had definitely been made. That section was certainly one of the more challenging in the entire piece for us in rehearsals. Once the band got back in the groove, I think they nailed the rest of the piece.

The students have a great sense of style overall. They were sensitive to the smooth and legato style, understood the overlap of parts and entrances, and knew how to balance to the melody. I was impressed with their sensitivity. Even the saxophone section, who are not particularly confident, played out and in style during their feature. The low brass did an excellent job articulating, blending, and moving together as a section.

I want to also congratulate my snare drummer for her great attention to style and articulation. I am pretty sure, she hit every single accent. She also did a great job watching and counting with me during both time changes.

The tempo we performed the brisk section at was around 142, which was about ten clicks faster than the recommended tempo! I was worried the band would get derailed by the speed but they hung in there.

Personal Reflection

This project was a true joy for me. I loved putting so much effort into picking a high quality piece my students would enjoy, reviewing rehearsals videos, planning, and reflecting on my students' playing and my directing.

Throughout this entire experience I recorded most rehearsals as part of my preparation process. I noticed my conducting pattern was often unnecessarily large. Over time I worked to make my conducting smaller and more reflective of the style and I think that can be seen in the progression of videos.

Additionally, I noticed I have a lot of interesting facial expressions when I am conducting! I joked with colleagues that I am often caught on video making an "OH" face. In the moment, I know my logic is to evoke long, relaxed, and open sounds. But that is not coming across! I tried to put more emotion into my gestures and facial expressions to better match the style of the piece. Looking at the final performance, there are moments where I can see myself going back to the "OH" face, but I think overall I've improved with emoting more effectively.

I am often insecure when conducting beginner band repertoire. Sometimes I feel like all the band needs is a 4/4 pattern with a couple cues, and often catch myself mirroring. I tried to make a better effort utilizing my left hand only when necessary (and not waving it around senselessly). It felt weird in the moment, but watching myself it looks so much more comfortable and relaxed, which adds to what I was going for in the piece. Especially in the brisk section where the tempo increases I would normally react by mirror conducting. But seeing how much more relaxed the section feels with one hand conducting, I think mirror conducting would in contrast be counterintuitive.

This project took a lot of work, a bunch of deadlines, and many risky variables that could go wrong. But nevertheless it was career affirming, and allowed me to appreciate my students' musicianship! I am looking forward to video taping my rehearsals more often and continuing to make self reflection a regular part of my work.





Full Score & Works Cited

Full Score

MusicWORKS
GRADE I

FULL SCORE

CELTIC AIR AND DANCE

Arranged by Michael Sweeney

INSTRUMENTATION

1	Full Score	5	B♭ Trumpet 1
8	Flute	5	B♭ Trumpet 2
2	Oboe	4	F Horn
6	B♭ Clarinet 1	8	Trombone/Baritone B.C./Bassoon
6	B♭ Clarinet 2	2	Baritone T.C.
2	B♭ Bass Clarinet	4	Tuba
4	E♭ Alto Saxophone	4	Percussion 1
2	B♭ Tenor Saxophone	2	Percussion 2
1	E♭ Baritone Saxophone	2	Bells

Duration - 3:05

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Full Score

PERFORMANCE NOTES

This arrangement of traditional Celtic folk melodies allows young players to experience two completely different styles of playing while enjoying the tuneful nature found in early Celtic music. "The Parting Glass" provides a showcase for the woodwind section first followed by a chorale-like statement by the full ensemble. The style here needs to be very smooth and sustained in nature. Encourage your players to hold notes their full value and maintain the flow of air and breath support through the phrases.

"Tha Mi Sgith (A Fairy's Love Song)" is sometimes performed in a slow tempo. However, it is presented here in an uptempo and lilting setting featuring a driving rhythmic accompaniment in the percussion section. These players will need to be careful not to cover up the melody in the other parts, while still maintaining a steady and energetic pulse. Brass and woodwind players should pay close attention to the indicated articulations in order to capture the correct musical style.

ABOUT THE ARRANGER

Michael Sweeney (b. 1952) is a graduate of Indiana University where he studied music education and composition. Mr. Sweeney taught five years in the public schools of Ohio and Indiana where his teaching experience included working with successful concert, jazz and marching programs at all levels from elementary to high school. Since 1982, he has worked full time for Hal Leonard Corporation in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and is currently Director of Band Publications. In addition, he contributes as a composer and arranger in all instrumental areas. Michael is particularly known for his writing at the younger levels for concert band and jazz, and has over 500 publications to his credit. His works appear on numerous state contest lists and his music is regularly performed throughout the world.

A winner of multiple ASCAP awards, his *Ancient Voices* (1994) and *Imperium* (1992) are featured in the acclaimed "Teaching Music Through Performance" series by GIA Publications. Other compositions such as *Black Forest Overture* (1996), *The Forge of Vulcan* (1997) and *Distant Thunder of the Sacred Forest* (2003) have become staples in the repertoire for middle school bands. Michael is also in demand as a clinician and conductor for honor bands and festivals.

Full Score

CELTIC AIR AND DANCE

Arranged by MICHAEL SWEENEY

Slowly (♩ = 80) Rit. *a2*
Moderately (♩ = 88)

Flute
Oboe (Opt.)

B♭ Clarinet 1, 2

E♭ Alto Sax

B♭ Tenor Sax

B♭ Trumpet 1, 2

F Horn (Opt.)

Low Brass & Woodwinds
Tbn., Bar., B.Cl., B.Sx.

Percussion 1
Sus. Cym. (with Mallets)

Percussion 2
Triangle

Bells (Opt.)

1 2 3 4 *mp*

Flute only

6 "The Parting Glass"

5 6 7 8 9

04002574
Celtic Air And Dance - 3

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Full Score

Flute/Oboe

B \flat Clar. 1, 2

E \flat Alto Sax

B \flat T. Sax

B \flat Tpt. 1, 2

F Horn

L.B./W.W.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Bells

20 21 22 23

(-Tuba, B.Cl., B.Sx.)

25

Flute/Oboe

B \flat Clar. 1, 2

E \flat Alto Sax

B \flat T. Sax

B \flat Tpt. 1, 2

F Horn

L.B./W.W.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Bells

24 *mf* 25 26 27 28 *f*

Tbn., Bar., B.Cl., B.Sx.

+Tuba *mf*

Sus. Cym. *p*

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Celtic Air And Dance - 5

Full Score

37 "Tha Mi Sgith (A Fairy's Love Song)"
Flute only

Flute/Oboe *mf*

B^b Clar. 1, 2
stagger breathing as needed

E^b Alto Sax

B^b T. Sax

B^b Tpt. 1, 2

F Horn

L.B./W.W.

Perc. 1 *mf*

Perc. 2 *mf*

Bells

37 38 39 40

Flute/Oboe
+Oboe *mf*

B^b Clar. 1, 2

E^b Alto Sax *mf*

B^b T. Sax *mp*

B^b Tpt. 1, 2

F Horn *mp*

L.B./W.W.
(-Tuba) *mp*

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Bells

41 42 43 44

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Celtic Air And Dance - 7

Full Score

Musical score for measures 53-56. The score includes parts for Flute/Oboe, B♭ Clar. 1, 2, E♭ Alto Sax, B♭ T. Sax, B♭ Tpt. 1, 2, F Horn, L.B./W.W., Perc. 1, Perc. 2, and Bells. The percussion parts feature a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and rests. The woodwind and brass parts are mostly silent, with some notes appearing at the end of the section.

Musical score for measures 57-60, marked "Brisk (♩ = 126-132)". The score includes parts for Flute/Oboe, B♭ Clar. 1, 2, E♭ Alto Sax, B♭ T. Sax, B♭ Tpt. 1, 2, F Horn, L.B./W.W., Perc. 1, Perc. 2, and Bells. The woodwind and brass parts have melodic lines starting in measure 59. The percussion parts continue with their rhythmic patterns. Dynamics include *mp* and *mf*. A note in the Trombone part is marked "Tbn., Bar. div. - lower notes opt." and the Perc. 2 part has a note marked "On Shell".

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Celtic Air And Dance - 9

Full Score

Musical score for measures 61-64. The score includes parts for Flute/Oboe, B♭ Clar. 1, 2, E♭ Alto Sax, B♭ T. Sax, B♭ Tpt. 1, 2, F Horn, L.B./W.W., Perc. 1, Perc. 2, and Bells. The key signature is B-flat major. Measure 63 features a first ending bracket labeled 'a2' and a dynamic marking of *mf*. Measure 64 features a dynamic marking of *mf*. The percussion parts show a consistent rhythmic pattern with snare and tom-tom accompaniment.

Musical score for measures 65-68. The score includes parts for Flute/Oboe, B♭ Clar. 1, 2, E♭ Alto Sax, B♭ T. Sax, B♭ Tpt. 1, 2, F Horn, L.B./W.W., Perc. 1, Perc. 2, and Bells. The key signature is B-flat major. Measure 67 features a first ending bracket labeled 'a2' and a dynamic marking of *f*. Measure 68 features a dynamic marking of *f* and the instruction 'On Head' for Perc. 2. The percussion parts continue with the established rhythmic pattern.

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Celtic Air And Dance - 10

Full Score

Musical score for measures 69-72. The score includes parts for Flute/Oboe, B♭ Clar. 1, 2, E♭ Alto Sax, B♭ T. Sax, B♭ Tpt. 1, 2, F Horn, L.B./W.W., Perc. 1, Perc. 2, and Bells. The key signature is B-flat major. Measure 71 features a dynamic marking of *f* and a second ending bracket labeled *a2*.

Musical score for measures 73-76. The score includes parts for Flute/Oboe, B♭ Clar. 1, 2, E♭ Alto Sax, B♭ T. Sax, B♭ Tpt. 1, 2, F Horn, L.B./W.W., Perc. 1, Perc. 2, and Bells. The key signature is B-flat major. Measure 73 features a dynamic marking of *a2*. Measure 75 features a dynamic marking of *mf*. Measure 76 features a dynamic marking of *f*. Measure 77 features a dynamic marking of *ff*.

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Celtic Air And Dance - 11

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Central Washington University
400 E University Way
Ellensburg, Washington 98926



American Band College
407 Terrace Street
Ashland, Oregon 97520