

At Anthony Middle School, the classroom learning environment is a mix of positives and negatives. I felt that the environment was set up in a mostly orderly fashion and there were rules in place. However, I felt that there was a disconnect in learning that may be bridged with a few changes in the environment set up by the teacher.

In regards to respect and rapport, I feel that there is plenty of this present. The students are able to communicate and interact with each other and with Mr. Freeby. It was clear that students were not afraid to play alone, something that would demonstrate a lack of respect if this were an issue. The students encourage each other throughout the rehearsal and you can see friendships that are there. I don't believe that I encountered any negativity in this aspect of the classroom.

Student engagement and responsibility varies from student to student. In smaller sections, the students understand they are all there is. In the larger sections, all of the students know who the standout players are. There isn't any particularly "weak" section, but there are weaker players who simply don't seem as interested in the learning. There is also a sense of my part versus everyone else's part and they don't have anything to do with each other. This was apparent when I was working with the ensemble. I remember one day in particular where I worked with the low brass for about three minutes and when I looked at the front row there were two flute players reading a book. It surprised me that this seemed to be a normal and accepted thing in the classroom as it allows them to disengage from the subject matter at hand (music). I also didn't always feel that the students were responsible for their own learning. Many times I saw students semi-spoon-fed their parts, which didn't seem to be the expectation that should be made in the classroom for a positive *learning* environment.

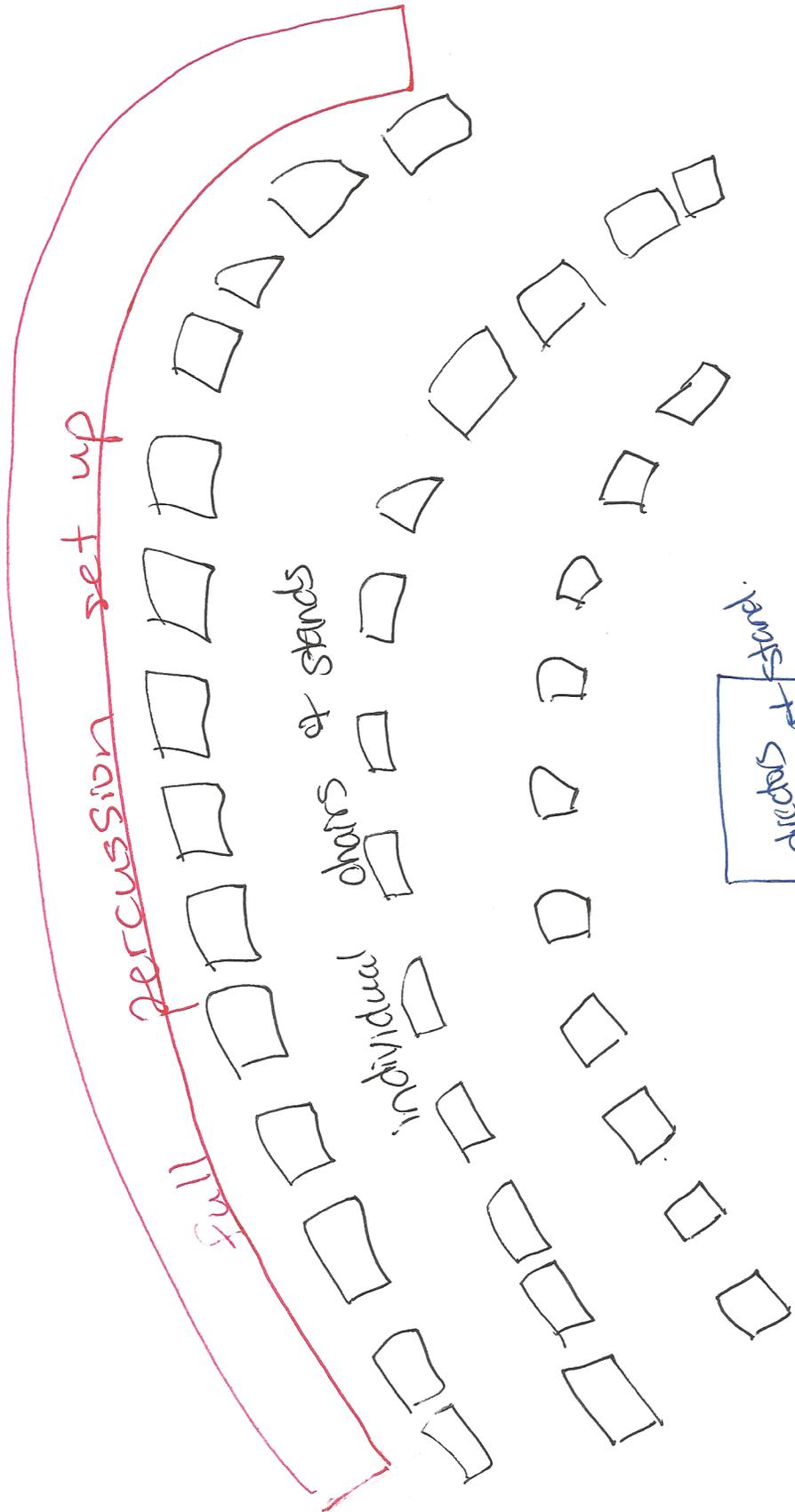
There were set procedures in the classroom. It was understood that you came in, got your instrument put together, sat down in your assigned seat, and started warming up. Then there was always a set of rote warm-ups, followed by the plan for the day that was written on the board. When dismissed, students would put their instruments away and be allowed to wait at the door until the bell rang. I felt that overall this was good procedure. However, there was a lot of class time eaten up from instrument repair or music finding. While the instrument repair is something that you want to do when it happens so that the student can play during class, if it takes more than a couple minutes you are cheating students of valuable learning time. The music problem could be fixed by having the students have music folders instead of just simply leaving all of the music on the stands. This is unorganized and music often gets lost. The music table at the front is also unorganized, so even finding a new part is a hassle.

Student behavior at the basic sense is pretty set and students are well-behaved. I still think that the classroom could be more effective if there was more of an expectation for focus at all points of the rehearsal and less talking over students that had to occur.

The room is set up as a basic band classroom would be. The chairs and stands as well as percussion is always set up so that students don't have to deal with this. This is helpful in getting class moving quickly. The students do face the clock, which would bother me as a teacher. However, Mr. Freeby actually announces out loud how much time is left as an incentive to the students to keep going. Overall, the room set up works – though it gets a little cluttered with bags and instrument cases during rehearsal.

Instrument lockers

instrument lockers



Mr. Fredrick's office

Mr. Fredrick's

other music office

room of music lockers

white board

MUSIC table

directors podium stand

Clock

door from hall

instrument lockers

door to band room