

Jim Dunlop
Band Director

R: What events do you think have affected Century the most this year?

J: Well, I think there's been a lot of distractions, like budget talk, cut days, uncertainty of schedule, uncertainty of what classes are going to be offered, for me that's been the most confusing, disorienting things this year.

R: What can be done to deal with the distractions?

J: As we enter a new year, hopefully that won't be the case again. Plus I found that these things tend to work themselves out. This year, it's just the uncertainty, if people would just make up their minds we could move. That's what I'd like

How has the tentativeness affected your department?

J: Our budget is cut in half next year but I think we'll be fine. I mean we've been really lucky-no classes have been cut. No huge substantial things like that. It looks exciting-Mr. Fotland will be at hill high. We're excited that we'll have a team there that we can work with. I'll be full time at century so that will help with distractions instead of teaching at six other schools; I'll be at one school so I can really focus my energy here. But if we don't get sixth grade band back, which is one of the things cut, all the work we've done will be destroyed in a few years.

R: What do you see with our band as far as competing and performing with the departure of Mr. Fotland?

J: It'll work out just great for us, the reality is I have had to a lot of other stuff this year and so if all I have to do is century-I'm already doing most of that- so that will be great, I can tighten down on concert band a little bit- I don't think it's really gonna affect us except that Mr. Fotland is great to have around and a lot of kids- enjoy his presence.

R: What's going to be done differently to compensate for the loss of funding

J: We planned an international trip for next year, so we slashed that idea. Kids are going to have to pay more to do things and not all kids can do that so we're going to have to make up the difference.

R: How do you feel about kids having to pay more?

J: Ideally, kids shouldn't have to pay anything. We want kids to be involved and to have fun, but I think most kids would rather pay than lose things.

R: Are you worried about participation next year?

J: Well, I'd feel real sorry for anyone who didn't stay next year because the band's going to be phenomenal. Success breeds success and I think that will incline some kids to stay. I think if we were still struggling that would be an issue, but everyone realizes that next year we'll be strong

R: Are you worried about jazz band next with the change in start time?

J: Well, I think it would have been really hard, because kids would need to be here at 6:45. They would have done it, they're committed. It's nicer that they don't have to, and this way we can get some extra time in for practice. I have to say, a lot of jazz bands don't practice as early as we do.

R: Was there any dissention in the staff about start times?

J: I don't know, because everything else have been going on and I don't think anyone was paying much attention to that. Most are really concerned about having jobs and they're not so worried about whether we start at eight or 8:30

R: What about the waiver vote?

J: I think our staff can disagree and work things out for the good of the kids and we have a great principal who helps us with that. Ultimately, I believe it worked out for the best. Hopefully next year things will settle down and we'll be able to grow and develop some more.

R: So, looking back to the beginning of the year, how do you think the band program has grown?

J: Well, we're better musicians. I think some of our leaders have stepped up, some of my juniors have stepped up as well. Our numbers look good. Even though we're losing seniors and liberty kids our numbers have stayed about the same. So, I believe we've continued to grow. Our jazz band is better than ever. I think even with the distractions we've been able to step up.

R: How would you rate band morale?

J: I think positive. Of course everyone is ready for school to be done. It's been a pretty stressful two weeks, so people will be relived when school ends. I think most of the kids feel good about what they're doing.

R: If you could change something about the year, what would you?

J: Personally or District-wide?

R: District-wide.

J: I wish the days would have been cut way earlier and spread them out. It's unfortunate the district let that wait so long, it really caused a lot of stress. I also think some things should happen faster. People want to

know about decisions that affect them whether it's good or bad, that way they can adapt. Being silent like,"I'm not sure, I'm not sure, maybe it's going to open, maybe it's not," I think those decisions could have been made faster.

R: Alright, is there anything you'd like to add?

J: I'm excited to start a new year, but I feel like we've done great things. The music department at century continues to grow and improve, I think kids are ready to take the next step and compete with the top ten in the state. I'm just excited to see what we can do.