

Heid Music Congratulates the September School of the Month

Escanaba Junior High School Band

led by Laura Robinson

The Escanaba Junior High School Band program has been under the direction of Laura Robinson since 1991. Over the past 25 years, the program has expanded to over 200 students and includes four junior high bands, two jazz bands and a wide variety of extra opportunities. Students in the EJHS band program participate in the district solo ensemble have earned top ratings, and the 8th grade bands continuously earn superior ratings in the MSBOA Festival evaluation process. EJHS is represented at the state level in the MSBOA Middle School All-State Band, and the percussion ensemble composed its own work and performed it at the state's music conference.

Students all participate in chamber ensembles, which visit area nursing homes, retirement communities, and elementary schools. "Our band students are good musicians, but more importantly, they are good young people, says Director Laura Robinson. "Being kind is critical. Being nice is important. EJHS band students hear this message from their first day with me." Students describe the EJHS band program as anything but ordinary.

Every concert is unique and there are many interesting experiences. For example, there's a "Holiday Collage Concert" featuring all 200 students, the "Composer's Cemetery Concert" and the crowd-favorite "Around the World Concert". Students also create movies to be shown while the band plays a soundtrack. Robinson believes keeping things interesting keeps kids excited, and learning to work together towards a common goal is a real life skill.

The Esby Boosters and the Patrons of the Performing Arts (Spotlights) are the two support groups that help the EJHS program succeed, along with a very supportive parent, staff and administrative team.

