

## **Jeff Mount**

### **Equity Statement**

To me equity means every student having what they need to succeed. I have been very fortunate to work in a district that has a mission statement that reads "Where All Student Learn". Every student in our district is given the opportunity to reach their fullest potential. We have a vast system of supports to make sure that students learn and are accountable for their learning. With the afterschool programs, Saturday school, Pass Program and other supports I have had a good model for what educational equity can be.

One of the things I have personally been working on is building relationships with each band student. We are a large band for our size of school and in the last 20 years have had anywhere from 156-231 students. Our music department averages 44% participation. Just over 300 students of a student body of 700 participate in band or choir every year in Blair. We can't build that sense of belonging and inclusivity without building relationships. I make it a point each year with the incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders to find out something unique about each individual.

Finally, I've learned much about Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Access as chair of our ad hoc, now standing committee with the Nebraska Music Education Association. We are planning for the future and the future looks bright. I believe our work here and nationally will transform music education over the next several years. Our young pre service teachers will soon be on the front lines and modeling for our youth what a just and equitable world looks like. It is up to us as older educators to craft policies that support equity in our institutions, organizations and programs.