

Susan L. Smith
Leadership Statement

I believe that today's effective leader is evolving from enforcing policy compliance to one of modeling, influence, and reflection. From my journey as a young section leader and drum major in my high school marching band to the President of our state music education association, I have seen and lived the role of servant-leader for the collective whole. The pandemic has required us to be champions of change, influential innovators, and models of creative thinking. Consistent positive reinforcement and modeling are our most effective tools to influence people and facilitate change. I have often shared with my students that one does not need a title to be a leader. Many leaders have emerged without an official title during the pandemic, providing comfort and guidance to their professions without any thought of remuneration. Their simple goals were to help and mentor. Our choices are influenced by what we believe and who we are as human beings, evident to all in our multiple spheres of influence. I believe that leadership must embrace the ideas of the young, guided by the wisdom of the experienced. Visionary leadership is vital to our momentum, progress, and future.