

The McNeil High School Maverick Band

Courtney Acosta, Principal



www.mcneilband.org

2017-2018

Student Handbook

Jason Dimiceli, Director of Bands
Joshua Muñoz, Associate Director
Mike Champagne, Assistant Director
Chris McCarthy, Color Guard Director

Instrumental Music Code and Band Handbook

2017-2018

McNeil High School Band

1.0 Purpose

The Instrumental Music Code has been written to help students gain the most from their band experience as well as provide guidance to the practical everyday experiences of the band program.

1.01 Our Mission

To create an organization that strives to perform at a quality level, while maintaining unity and fun through common goals. Also, we strive to develop proficient musicians who will have a lifelong appreciation of music and will continue to support the music and arts community for the rest of their lives.

1.02 General Goals and Objectives

I. Mental and physical discipline

- A. Develop powers of concentration
- B. Memorize music
- C. Learn techniques of preparation as they relate to group and individual performances
- D. Develop self and group discipline

II. Citizenship through group endeavor

- A. Develop leadership abilities
- B. Develop responsibility
- C. Develop ability to cooperate with others and to work as a team member
- D. Develop diligence
- E. Stress importance of community through sharing music and service

III. Socialization

- A. Develop friendships with a diverse group of students
- B. Interact with others in professional and social functions

IV. Physical conditioning

- A. Develop strength, stamina, and endurance
- B. Develop coordination

V. Cultural growth

Provide opportunities to attain knowledge of music history through performance of various types of instrumental literature.

VI. Value Judgments

Ability to make musical value (as they pertain to a musical setting) judgments through critical listening. The student will recognize quality of sound, pitch, style, tempo, rhythm, blend, balance, phrasing, dynamics, and articulation.

VII. Music theory

- A. Know and use note values and rest
- B. Know and use keys, key signatures, and scales
- C. Know and use musical terms, signs, and symbols
- D. Recognize and tune intervals and harmony
- E. Ear training / listening skills

VIII. Proper instrumental technique

- A. Care of the instrument
- B. Assume correct posture and playing position
- C. Develop the embouchure / stick grip / hand position
- D. Develop characteristic instrumental tone
- E. Develop proper breathing techniques
- F. Develop technical instrumental proficiency (fingering, articulation, rudiments, scales, etc..)

IX. Creative self-expression

- A. Express oneself in every performance experience
- B. Explore careers

In addition to the State of Texas guidelines, the McNeil High School Band will strive to:

1. Provide any interested student with opportunities for musical knowledge, musical fellowship, and fun through participation in band.
2. Provide for the mental, physical, social, and emotional development of students.
3. Instill pride and discipline in each student.
4. Provide each student with solo and group endeavors to achieve personal goals and satisfaction.
5. Provide basic psychological needs such as recognition, belonging, self-respect, and a feeling of achievement.

2.0 General Conduct / Expectations

Band Members will observe all policies set forth by the Round Rock Independent School District, in addition to the following:

1. All students are expected to conduct themselves properly at all times. Display of profanity, temper, flagrant violation of rules, etc., will not be tolerated. Individual behavior during a band function is a reflection of the group.
2. Students will address all directors / staff by their deserved titles.
3. Students will follow director's instructions.
4. Students will be in their assigned rehearsal area ready to work at the set rehearsal time.
5. Students will bring all equipment including music, pencil, instrument, and all supplies to rehearsals daily. (See detailed supply list for each instrument.)
6. Students will keep hands, feet, and other objects to themselves.
7. Students will maintain a high level of good and acceptable behavior.
8. Students will bring no food, drinks, candy or gum in the Band Hall area without permission from a band director.
9. Students will not play on equipment they do not own or have permission from a director to use. Students will not touch, handle, borrow, or use anyone else's instrument, uniform, or personal belongings.
10. Students should ask for permission to speak by raising your hand and waiting to be acknowledged. All rehearsals are expected to be extremely quiet so that our time will be utilized wisely.
11. When allowed in the band hall, either before or after school, students will not disturb any rehearsal in progress.

12. Students will respect the property of others, and return their equipment to its proper storage place when not in use. Each student is responsible for keeping their storage area clean.
13. Students will not enter the directors' offices without permission.
14. Students will not deface, damage or mark on music stands, walls, lockers, etc.
15. Students should keep their equipment in the designated storage area, and keep said storage area clean and neat in appearance. Students who demonstrate great difficulty with this may lose the privilege of having a storage area in the band hall.
16. Students will utilize their assigned storage slot / locker for instrument cases during rehearsals. Cases should not be brought into rehearsals unless requested by a director.
17. Any behavior, which is not representative of good citizenship, as perceived by the band staff, may result in the student's dismissal from the activity at hand as well as the band program. This includes unacceptable or illegal behaviors, or behaviors which threaten the safety or well-being of other students, at or away from school.

3.0 General Daily Supplies

- A. All issued music (including Fundamentals)
- B. Pencil
- C. Instrument
- D. All supplies relative to their instrument.
- E. All marching related equipment (during marching season):
 1. Drill / chart sheet
 2. Lyre / flip folder
 3. All issued music
 4. Other marching equipment as needed.
- F. Metronome (for home use). **ALL students are recommended to purchase the Tonal Energy app for Apple and Android products.**

Flutes

- * Tuning and cleaning rods
- * Cleaning cloth
- * Key oil
- * Approved type instrument
- * Screwdriver Set (Recommended)

Clarinets

- * Four good playable reeds. RICO Reserve is the approved reed.
- * Reed guard
- * Ligature
- * Approved mouthpiece with cap
- * Key oil (Case Storage)
- * Bore oil (Home Storage)
- * Cleaning swab
- * Approved type instrument
- * Cork grease

Saxes / Low Reeds as applicable

- * Four good playable reeds. Vandoren V-16 is the approved reed.
- * Reed guard
- * Ligature
- * Proper mouthpiece (Selmer C star or approved alternative)
- * Pad and neck saver
- * Approved type instrument

Trumpet

- * Valve oil (Al Cass or Blue Juice)
- * Polishing cloth
- * Approved Mouthpiece
- * Approved type instrument
- * Buzz-aid/BERP

French Horn

- * Rotary / Valve oil (Al Cass/Blue Juice - Marching Horn)(Holton Rotary - Concert Horn)
- * Polishing cloth
- * Approved mouthpiece
- * Approved type instrument
- * Buzz-aid/BERP

Trombone

- * Slide cream (Yamaha)
- * Polishing Cloth
- * Approved Mouthpiece
- * Approved type instrument
- * Buzz-aid/BERP

Baritone / Euphonium

- * Valve oil (Al Cass or Blue Juice)
- * Approved Mouthpiece
- * Polishing cloth
- * Approved type instrument
- * Buzz-aid/BERP

Tuba

- * Rotary / Valve Oil (Al Cass or Blue Juice -Valves / Holton - Rotors)
- * Approved Mouthpiece
- * Polishing cloth
- * Approved type instrument
- * Buzz-aid/BERP

Percussion

Personal Equipment

Every percussion student is required to own the following. It is wise to put your name on all of these items:

- A 3-ring binder with sheet protectors, a pencil pouch, and several working pencils
- A small spiral notebook for assignments and practice logs
- A metronome (Dr. Beat) or metronome app ('Tempo' by Frozen Ape)
- A black hand towel on which to rest mallets during rehearsal
- One pair of concert snare Sticks (Vic Firth SD1 or similar)
- Two pair of marimba mallets (Innovative IP240 or similar)
- One pair of xylophone mallets (Innovative IP902 or similar)
- One pair of timpani mallets (Innovative CT-3 or similar)
- One Kratt MK2 pitch pipe for tuning timpani
- One stick bag large enough to hold all of these items

Percussionists are required to obtain a locker at the beginning of each school year. Your personal gear must be stored in this locker when not in a rehearsal. **Do not leave your personal gear in a rehearsal space.**

Marching sticks

Bass drum and front ensemble mallets will be provided to all members of those sections. Snare and tenor drummers are expected to purchase and maintain their own marching sticks. It is recommended that these players purchase two sets so they have a backup pair when the first set breaks.

Snares – Innovative FS-PR Paul Rennick series

Tenors – Innovative TS-TJ Tim Jackson series

Drumline members will be responsible for having their sticks completely taped with 3M white electrical tape for every performance. It is the player's responsibility to replace lost or broken sticks as the season progresses. This applies to front ensemble as well.

4.0 School Owned / Issued Instruments

Round Rock Independent School District will provide a limited number of instruments for student use. These instruments include such highly expensive instruments as the Bassoon, Oboe, Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, French Horn, Euphonium, Tuba, and general Percussion equipment. This equipment is generally purchased by the school district for student use because of its extremely high value. ***Thus, all school owned equipment must be handled with optimum care. Students failing to care for, or take care of their school issued instrument will lose the privilege to use such instruments.*** The following is a list of general procedures for school owned instruments:

1. Round Rock Independent School District does not provide insurance for individually or school owned equipment. All students utilizing school owned instruments should provide insurance coverage for the said instrument. ***Students will be held responsible for school owned instruments issued to them. This responsibility will include fire, theft, accidental damage, abuse and general maintenance needed not caused by normal use.***
2. Students and parents must sign an instrument rental form before the instrument can be used by the student.
3. Each instrument will be issued in good playing condition. Students are expected to maintain their issued instruments accordingly.
4. The band member is financially responsible for all equipment and/or materials checked out to him or her.
5. All equipment and materials must be kept in their proper storage location when not in use.
6. Round Rock I.S.D. will assess a fee for rental of school district owned instruments. This will be \$50.00.

Special Note

School owned instruments are not to be treated as "free" instruments. Basic supplies must still be purchased and repairs must still be made just like personally owned instruments. Please strive to treat these instruments as if they were your own. Most school owned instruments exceed a \$3,000.00 value. ***Since the expense of purchasing, leasing or renting is removed, students using school owned instruments are strongly encouraged to participate in the private lesson program.***

5.0 Travel Guidelines

The band will frequently travel on both school and commercial busses. Student conduct is expected to be at the highest level on any trip.

1. Students must travel to events and return from events on the bus. Any student wishing to arrive or leave with his / her parent, must notify a director in writing prior to the event. Upon approval, the student must be accompanied by his / her parent when leaving the event.
2. Students must have all necessary forms completed and returned to travel on any trip with the band.
3. While on the bus students will:

- A. Remain seated at all times
- B. Keep the bus clear of food, drinks, and debris
- C. Keep all body parts inside the bus
- D. Use earbuds / headphones when listening to music
- E. Remain silent when an adult is addressing the bus
- F. Refrain from loud, boisterous talking, screaming, whistling, etc.
- G. Refrain from public displays of affection.

Special Note:

Students are reminded that all performances / concerts start and conclude at the band hall. As a member of the band, you are a representative of your school. Always be on your best behavior. If you are in doubt about an action, DO NOT DO IT! Your conduct must be such that at no time could it be considered a bad reflection on the school, the band, your home, yourself or the community.

Chaperones

Adult chaperones are a great asset for the band program. Proper respect will be shown to all adults associated with the band program at all times.

6.0 Marching Band

The McNeil High School Marching Band is the most visible organization of the instrumental music program. All band students in grades 9-12 will participate in the Marching Band. Students who participate in certain school sponsored varsity level events such as cheerleading, drill team, or football, etc. may be excused from participation at the discretion of the band director. Students involved in Swimming and Volleyball are also exempted from participating the Marching Band, but they are still a part of the band program. Please note different solutions will be presented for varying situations. Students may also be excused from participation in the marching band for other reasons such as medical complications or physical disabilities. Such exemptions will be at the discretion of the directors.

6.1 Marching Rehearsal Schedule

Tuesday	Full Band 4:45 - 7:15 P.M.
Wednesday	Full Band 4:45 - 7:15 P.M.
Thursday	Full Band 4:45 - 7:15 P.M.
Friday	Decision based on contest schedules and football games. Game days will have an 8:00 A.M. performance with the Majestics.

6.2 Marching Band Positions

Primary Marchers

Students will earn a primary marching position through an evaluation of their marching and playing abilities. Those who earn a position in the marching band will carry the designation of primary marcher. A primary marcher is a student who:

- 1. Successfully completes the memorization requirement for music by the appropriate time.
- 2. Demonstrates high quality marching skills.
- 3. Is punctual in report times.
- 4. Is present at all rehearsals and performances.
- 5. Maintains academic eligibility.

Secondary (formerly Non-Competitive Squad (NCS))

Alternates are students who share with certain primary marchers or march in the NCS drill. Alternates will meet the same requirements of primary marchers, and they will march in rehearsals and during half time. These are students who display difficulty in meeting the criteria of primary marchers. Students in NCS will be considered for primary roles when the need arises and if they have adequately improved their skill level.

6.3 Marching Band Student Leadership Positions

Color Guard/Percussion – Captains

Color guard and percussion captains will be selected through an interview and audition process. These positions will be utilized for specific needs as they pertain to the special needs of the color guard and percussion sections. *The jurisdiction of the color guard and percussion captains is not confined to their sections. They are leaders for the entire band.*

Section Leaders / WW and Brass Captains

Section Leaders will be selected by an application process and chosen on the basis of past examples of behavior that the directors deem suitable for a leadership role. Section Leaders will be used in the instruction of marching skills as well as the general marching drill. Section Leaders will serve the marching season for which they are selected. Woodwind and Brass Captains will be chosen by the Directors and they will serve as leaders of these leaders. They will also serve as drill instructors in marching rehearsals. *The jurisdiction of the woodwind and brass captains is not confined to their sections. They are leaders for the entire band.*

Drum Majors

Drum majors will be selected through the drum major audition process. Drum majors will be used in the instruction of marching skills as well as the general marching drill. The drum major will be the field commander and conductor for the marching ensemble. Drum majors will be selected by an audition process that will involve teaching, quality marching skills, use of vocal commands and conducting skills. Drum majors will serve the marching season for which they are selected. In the event an underclassman is selected as drum major, he/she must reenter the selection process the next school year.

Special Note :

Please see conduct expectation in all sections pertaining to general conduct of students as well as band leadership positions. ALL Leadership positions are required to attend Leadership Camp. Unavailability may result in loss of leadership position. Each case will be dealt with individually by the Directors.

6.4 General Attendance

In order to have and maintain a high quality marching band, attendance from all members is essential. The following guidelines outline the attendance procedures and policies for the marching band.

Roll Check

Roll check will be promptly at the start of rehearsal and in the attendance block.

Tardiness

Students not in the attendance block at the appropriate time will be marked tardy.

Excused Tardiness

Tardiness will be excused at the discretion of the directors. Tutorials, appointments, etc. **will not** be an excuse for tardiness unless prior arrangements are made and approved. Please plan around the rehearsal schedule for these.

Unexcused Tardiness

Students who have more than one unexcused tardy shall be subject to one of the following consequences:

1. Loss of spot as a primary marcher.
2. Loss of marching privilege (for one game) at a football game.
3. Students who are tardy will be subject to a reprimand at the discretion of the directors.

* All consequences will be issued at the discretion of the band directors.

Absence

A tardy will be converted to a mark of "absence" 20 minutes after the rehearsal begins. *Any student with more than one absence in a week (excused or unexcused) will not perform at halftime of that week's game.*

Excused Absence

Absences will be excused at the discretion of the directors. Appointments, tutorials etc. will not be an excuse for absence. Personal illness requiring medical attention, death in the family, and serious problems will be considered as an excused absence. Students who are continually ill may need to provide a doctor's note releasing them for

participation in order to insure the well being of the child and to reduce band director concerns. If in doubt, an absence should be checked with a director. Special note: **Students have one afternoon and four mornings free per week during the marching band season. These days should be used for appointments and tutorials.**

Unexcused Absence

Students who have an unexcused absence will be subject to one of the following consequences:

1. Loss of spot as a primary marcher.
2. Loss of marching privilege for one game.
3. Loss of attendance privilege at one game.
4. Removal from the marching band and loss of physical education credit.
5. Making up the missed rehearsal time within the next five (5) school days.

6.5 Marching Band Performances

The primary performances of the marching band will be at the football games. The marching band will also perform at various competitive marching festivals and the U.I.L. Marching Contest.

6.6 General Performance Procedures

1. **Report Time** : this will be the designated time at which all members should be at the high school or set location. Students should have all attire and necessary items for the designated performance prior to the report time.
2. **Load Time** : this will be the designated time at which all members should be on the appropriate bus with all equipment loaded. (ALL EQUIPMENT IS CHECKED BY SECTION LEADERS. STUDENTS WITHOUT APPROPRIATE EQUIPMENT WILL BE SENT HOME AND AN UNEXCUSED ABSENCE RECORDED.)
3. **Return Time** : this will be the time of return to the band hall.

6.7 Inspection

Prior to student departure for a marching band performance, students must pass an inspection. In order to board the bus, students must have complete uniform, music, flip folder, water jug, and other components for the marching performance. **Students who do not pass the uniform inspection will risk not performing at the event.**

6.8 Instrument Loading / Unloading

Students who play large instruments such as Percussion, Tuba, Euphonium, Trombone, French Horn, Trumpet, Sax, Low Reeds etc. shall be allowed to transport their instrument on the instrument truck. All others will transport their instruments in the bus. Students will be responsible for getting their instrument in the proper location at the designated time stated by the loading crew captain. Students will also be responsible to see that their instrument is picked up and stored correctly upon the unloading of the instrument truck. **Students who display difficulty in following the loading and unloading procedures may lose the privilege of utilizing the instrument truck.**

Loading Procedures

The loading crew captain will designate the appropriate area for all instruments. Students should insure that their instrument is in the proper place. Cases should be closed and secure. Instruments in the wrong area may be overlooked and not loaded.

Unloading Procedures

The loading crew captain will designate the unloading area. Students should uncase the instrument and leave cases in the appropriate area. Unloading should be done in a timely, efficient manner.

7.0 Football Game Procedures

The football game is viewed as a performance of the band program. Such performance includes all aspects of the game from arrival to departure.

1. Students will load the buses with all equipment needed for the performance. The section leaders will inspect all students boarding buses prior to departure. Students not meeting uniform, music, and loading guidelines will receive a reasonable punishment at the discretion of the directors.
2. Upon arrival at the performance area, students will don all uniform components and prepare equipment for unloading. Students will unload busses when instructed to do so by a chaperone or director.
3. Students will report to the entrance formation for final inspection. Students will enter the stadium upon instruction from a drum major or director.
4. Students will report to seating area. Students will remain standing until all band members have arrived and are prepared to be seated. Students will sit when instructed by a drum major or director. (Students will sit in assigned section. Students will remain in that section at all times.)
5. Students will remain in the band seating section at all times during the game. Students will refrain from accepting food or drinks from parents, relatives, or friends.
6. Students should use the restroom before we leave for the game. There will be no restroom breaks and only students with emergencies will be allowed to go during the game. These students must proceed directly to the restroom and return quickly.
7. Students will be given water after the half time performance. No other food or drinks are acceptable during the game.
8. Students will be expected to listen for and watch the directors and drum majors during the game. Students will need to be prepared to perform at all times. All students must have their instrument / sticks in their hands at all times.
9. Students will refrain from playing their instruments on an individual basis. The band will perform as a group or with approved small ensembles.
10. At the appropriate time, the band will be dismissed from the stands for the half-time performance. At this time, the band must move quickly, quietly, and efficiently to the appropriate area. Students will need to be focused on the directors and drum majors instructions.
11. At the conclusion of the half-time performance, students will return to the stands and continue in the stand performance throughout the remainder of the game.
12. During the 3rd quarter, we will participate in the good sportsmanship procedures of officer meetings and introductions. The band president will create a schedule of which student leaders participate in this event.
13. At the conclusion of the game, students will load busses quickly and efficiently.
14. Upon return to the band hall, students will insure that all personal items, uniforms and instruments are placed in the proper storage areas.
15. Parents must pick up their child or arrange for a ride within 30 minutes of when the band returns to the school. The Directors will stay until that time and all students still waiting for a ride will wait indoors. Parents are urged to contact the Directors immediately via phone or email if there is a problem arranging a ride.

8.0 Band Uniform Guidelines

Students are expected to follow the listed uniform guidelines. No variations will be allowed.

GENERAL

1. Band uniforms will be issued during summer band camp. Band uniforms will be stored at school in the uniform storage area.
2. Students will be held financially responsible for the uniform and its components.

ISSUE AND RETURN

1. Students will pick up uniforms from the storage room by the designated time on game days. At this time the storage room will close.
2. Students should follow the posted pick up / return guidelines. Students who do not follow these guidelines will be sent to the end of the pick up / return line.
3. Students will be issued a uniform number. This number should be memorized or recorded in a readily accessible location. Students will use this number to pick up their uniform from the storage room.

DONNING THE UNIFORM

1. Always wear and treat your uniform with pride! The uniform should be worn as a complete unit at all times when in public. The only exception to this will be when a director instructs you that you may remove your hat and/or coat. The band t-shirt is to be worn under your uniform. The band shirt will be part of pre-performance inspections.
2. You must wear approved black band shoes and black socks (student purchases).
3. Jewelry, hair ribbons, and bright colored nail polish etc. is unacceptable while in uniform. These items hinder the uniform appearance of the band.
4. Band students with long hair will need to put it up under their hat during performances.
5. Consumption of food and / or drinks while in uniform without permission is prohibited.

ALTERATIONS and CARE

1. Never cut any material from the band uniform. Hem your pants so that the crease does not "break" when you are standing straight up with your band shoes on. The pant leg should come to the top of the band shoe.
2. Keep the collar hooked while hanging to retain the shape of the coat. Always hang the pants by the crease.
3. Keep snaps in pants and sleeves in proper place when taking off uniform in order to keep uniform at the proper length.

UNIFORM COSTS

1. Summer Uniform: The marching uniform for the first few weeks of the football season will consist of flat front black pants, a black belt, the green logo shirt, black socks, and black marching shoes. The logo shirt and marching shoes are purchased at Everything Day; the other items must be purchased separately.
2. If a school-issued uniform part is damaged beyond repair or lost, the student will be responsible for the replacement costs.

9.0 Concert Ensembles

Students in the band program will be placed in a concert ensemble by audition. The concert ensembles will be:

Wind Ensemble
Wind Symphony
Symphonic Band Blue
Symphonic Band Green

To be selected into the Wind Ensemble, Wind Symphony, and Symphonic Band students must:

1. Participate in the audition process.
2. Have successful participation in the marching band.

9.1 Performance / Rehearsal Requirements for the Concert Ensembles

Each of the concert ensembles will perform at various times throughout the school year. Students are expected to participate in the performances of their assigned ensemble. Failure to participate in either rehearsals or performances will definitely lower students' grades and will result in student removal from the organization at the discretion of the band directors. (See general attendance policies.) Performances of the concert ensembles will include but are not limited to the following:

- Winter Concert
- McNeil Solo Contest
- McNeil Ensemble Contest
- Spring Concert
- Band Festivals / Pre U.I.L. Contest
- U.I.L. Contest

9.2 Concerts / Performances

Concerts and performances are frequent with all bands. Students should consult their schedules for dates and times. Periodically, the schedule will change and updates will be sent home. Concerts are considered to have three parts: warm-up, performance, and listening. Punctuality is essential. A concert concludes when the last group performs and directors have given permission for students to be dismissed. A general report time will be given for all students.

1. All concerts are a group effort, thus, attendance is required.
2. All concerts are an extension of the classroom and will be graded accordingly.
3. Students should be punctual and prepared for each performance / concert.
4. In the event a performance causes a student to miss another class, the student is responsible to make up all missed work!
5. The appropriate dress for all concerts will be a dress uniform. (See Uniforms)
6. Students are expected to stay the entire concert.

9.3 General Attendance

In order to have and maintain high quality concert ensembles, attendance from all members is essential. **The following guidelines outline the attendance procedures and policies for concert ensembles as it relates to after school rehearsals and section rehearsals.**

Roll Check

Roll check will be promptly at the start of rehearsal.

Tardiness

Students not seated at the appropriate time will receive a mark of tardy.

Excused Tardiness

Tardiness will be excused at the discretion of the directors. Tutorials, appointments, etc. will not be an excuse for tardiness unless prior arrangements are made and approved.

Unexcused Tardiness

Students who have more than one unexcused tardy shall make up missed time at a time to be arranged by the director.

Absence

Students not seated at the appropriate time or those not tardy will be marked absent.

Excused Absence

Absences will be excused at the discretion of the directors. Appointments, tutorials, etc. will not be an excuse for absence. Personal illness, death in the family, and serious problems will be considered excused absences. Students who are continually ill, may need to provide a doctor's note in order to insure the well being of the child and to reduce band director concerns. If in doubt, this should be checked with a director.

Special Note : During the concert season, students will generally be responsible for only ONE weekly section rehearsal and group rehearsals as needed. Thus, students will have ample days available for tutorials and appointments.

Unexcused Absence

Students who have an unexcused absence will be expected to make missed time up at the discretion of the director. Also, a student may lose his/her position in the band for such absences.

9.4 Section Rehearsals

Students will have a weekly section rehearsal for the fundamentals of instrument technique, region music preparation, and solo and ensemble preparation. Section rehearsals will begin at the conclusion of the marching season. These are separate from all other rehearsals.

All students in the Wind Ensemble, Wind Symphony, and Symphonic Band will have a weekly section rehearsal. **Section rehearsals for concert ensembles will occur in the spring semester.** Students are expected to be punctual and prepared on a week by week basis. Absences from section rehearsals must be in accordance with the attendance policy. Students must make every effort to attend. Section rehearsals are an extension of the classroom and are graded accordingly.

9.5 Region Band / Orchestra Guidelines *

1. All Wind Ensemble and Wind Symphony students will audition for All - Region Band. Extra credit will be given to Symphonic Band students for auditioning. The student will prepare the music and then the directors will listen to the student and determine if the preparation is at a level high enough to audition and receive the extra credit.
2. All Symphonic Band students are strongly encouraged to audition. The Directors definitely notice if a student works hard and prepares for this audition and they will remember this when band placement auditions occur in the spring semester.
3. Wind Ensemble and Wind Symphony students will be graded on preparation for this event.
4. Any person who is fortunate to be selected will attend all rehearsals and the performance.

It is quite an honor to be selected to the All Region Band. Hundreds of students throughout the region will audition. Even if you are not selected, the experience you receive by preparing will enhance your musical ability and education!

10.0 Solo and Ensemble *

1. All musicians will prepare and perform at **both** the McNeil Ensemble and Solo Contests.
2. Students will be allowed to perform at the UIL Solo and Ensemble Contest *only if they are attempting to advance to the Texas State Solo and Ensemble Contest in May.* They must plan with their private teacher when choosing a solo and finding a piano accompanist.
3. Grades will be issued throughout the preparation and participation in these performances.
4. Students must use an approved accompanist. The school accompanist fee is \$45.00 but students are allowed to find their own accompanist and negotiate their own rate.

** See Appendices I, II, and III for rehearsal suggestions.*

11.0 Eligibility

1. Many band activities are designated by the state as extra-curricular. These activities are therefore governed by the state laws regarding participation. The state law is such that a student shall be suspended from participation in all extra-curricular activities sponsored or sanctioned by the school district during the three-week period following a grade reporting period, following a one-week grace period, in which the student received a grade lower than seventy in any one class. However, the student may not be suspended from participation during the period in which school is recessed for the summer. Also, students are not suspended from practice or rehearsal of extra-curricular activities.
2. Students may regain eligibility under certain circumstances. If a student has been suspended as a result of failing, he / she may regain eligibility by passing **ALL** courses in the third week of the affected grading period. Thus, he / she may regain eligibility at the conclusion of the 4th week of the suspension period.
3. A few band activities are designated by the state as co-curricular. These activities are those which occur on campus, and are a natural extension of the learning taken place in the classroom. Examples of this type of activity are the public concerts which are presented at McNeil High School or the RRISD Performing Arts Center. These activities are not governed by the state eligibility law.

12.0 General Grading Policy

Students will be graded on the following scale:

** Daily/ Participation* **30%**

Includes: Instrument, Music Supplies, Concentration, Class work, Section rehearsals, etc.

** Performance* **30%**

Includes: Curricular events such as concerts and section rehearsals, Evidence of practice, improvement shown, evidence of personal initiative in seeking to improve skills, etc.

** Tests/Assessments* **40%**

Includes: Taped playing tests, playing tests in sectionals/class, hearings, written assignments, special projects, evaluations of other performances, etc. **Note: There are no chair tests. Individual parts will be assigned by the directors at their discretion of what is in the band's best interest.**

** Extra Credit* (All-Region, solo/ensemble (if applicable), orchestra, etc.)

12.1 Performance Grading Rubric

MUSIC SKILLS ASSESSMENT	
Student: _____ Class: _____ Grade: _____ Instrument: _____ Selection: _____ Date: _____ _____ Scale(s) _____ Etude _____ Excerpt _____ Solo _____ Ensemble _____ Sight-reading	
A) MELODIC ACCURACY 10 all pitches/notes accurate 8 most pitches/notes accurate 6 many pitches accurate 4 numerous inaccurate pitches/notes 2 mostly inaccurate notes/pitches	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"> SCORE (Total A through G) _____ x 2 = _____ </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; min-height: 150px;"> <u>COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS:</u> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;"> _____ Teacher signature </div>
B) RHYTHMIC ACCURACY 10 accurate rhythms throughout 8 nearly accurate, but lacks precision 6 many rhythmic patterns accurate, but lacks precision 4 many rhythmic patterns incorrect/inconsistent 2 most rhythmic patterns inaccurate/incorrect	
C) TECHNIQUE/ARTICULATION 1 2 appropriate and accurate articulation 1 2 appropriate slurs as marked 1 2 appropriate accents as marked 1 2 appropriate ornamentation as marked 1 2 appropriate note lengths (markings, styles)	
D) TONE 5 full, rich in all ranges and registers all of the time 4 good in most ranges, is not optimal all of the time 3 some flaws in production (thin, unfocused, forced, etc.) 2 several major flaws in production 1 no characteristic tone production	
E) INTONATION 5 accurate throughout in all ranges/registers 4 accurate, but some minimal adjustment problems 3 mostly accurate, but no adjustment on problem notes 2 some sense of pitch, but no attempt to adjust 1 no awareness of pitch or intonation	
F) TEMPO 5 is accurate and consistent with markings/requirements 4 near the marked/required tempos, with consistency 3 not as marked/required, but consistent 2 inconsistent (rushing, dragging, inaccurate) 1 not inaccurate or consistent	
G) INTERPRETATION 5 highest level of musicality/expression 4 high level of musicality, but some inconsistencies 3 moderate level of musicality/understanding 2 limited musicality, limited understanding 1 lacks musicality or understanding	

13.0 General School Conduct

As a band member, you are expected to display above average conduct at all times! This is not limited to band activities, but encompasses daily classroom and campus behavior. This can include anything from your daily interactions with students and teachers to your behavior at concerts and performances. Failure to maintain good conduct will result in disciplinary action at the discretion of the band director.

14.0 Private Lesson Program

This is a district wide program that provides a high quality enhancement to classroom instruction. Teachers are all specialists on their instrument. Most of our teachers are professional musicians in the Austin area, and many have advanced degrees in the performance of their instruments. Lessons are extremely valuable to the individual student and are highly encouraged.

1. All students in the Wind Ensemble must be enrolled in private lessons, and ALL other students are highly encouraged to do the same. Any student wishing to excel musically must be enrolled in lessons. The Band Boosters provide financial assistance for families who cannot afford the full cost of private lessons. The success of the program hinges on the overall enrollment in the private lesson program.
2. Teachers are provided by the district and they all have had a background check and have been fingerprinted by RRISD and the State of Texas.
3. Lessons will be given weekly, most of them during the student's band class.

15.0 Financial

Everything Day

Everything Day will be held on one of the Saturdays during Summer Band Camp. This is the day when all students are fitted for marching uniforms and band fees are assessed.

Required Fees

Shoes: All marching band students must have the approved shoes-no exceptions.

Gloves: To be worn with marching uniform (excluding percussionists). .

Band Shirt: Will be worn at all games.

Show Shirt: To be worn underneath the marching uniform at contests that is decorated with this year's show theme.

Instructional Fees: The directors must hire music and marching technicians, color guard technicians, consultants, master class teachers, concert band clinicians, etc. in order to provide the best experience for the students.

Uniform Fee: Covers dry cleaning of marching and concert uniforms for the entire school year, any alterations needs to uniforms, and offsetting the cost of color guard uniforms for the marching show.

Transportation and Entry Fees: This covers bus and truck transportation to marching contests, as well as their entry fees.

Instrument Rental Fee: All students who play on district owned instruments must pay an annual fee to RRISD for the use of the instrument(s).

Misc. Supplies: These will be such supplies as reeds, lyres, flip folders, etc. Costs will vary from year to year.

Optional Fees

Game Day Meals:

Catered meals provided for students on marching band performance days.

Tote and Garment Bags:

Used to store and protect uniform and belongings when traveling. While these are optional to purchase, students must have a garment bag for their uniform.

Buzz-aids / BERPS (Brass only):

Buzz-aids are brass contraptions that wrap around the mouthpiece shank and aid the player buzzing in the mouthpiece while holding their instrument.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POLICY

It is the policy of the McNeil High School Band that no student should be denied the privilege of band membership due to financial hardship. A portion of fees will be waived for families who have multiple children concurrently in band and for families with students on free and reduced lunch. Financial arrangements can be made with Mr. Dimiceli for those students who are in need of such considerations. **Families who receive financial assistance are especially encouraged to volunteer with the Band Boosters in fund raising ventures.**

16.0 Band Leadership

Band leadership elections will be held during the last six weeks of the school year. Band leadership positions are open to all students in the band program. The band leadership shall serve as an advisory / action body for numerous band functions. The leadership shall assist the band directors and band students in planning, preparing, and operating band functions, most notably **planning all aspects of the Band Banquet**. The band leadership will meet as needed. The following is a list of offices with included responsibilities. **Leadership positions will be removed from students at the discretion of the directors. Leadership who lose eligibility will automatically have their position taken away!**

President

The president shall be charged with ensuring proper operations of the band leadership. The president shall prepare a weekly meeting agenda and preside over all band leadership meetings. The president shall be responsible for assisting other leadership members in their areas. The president will have numerous special assignments and should be an extremely dedicated band member.

VP of Administration

The VP of Admin will be responsible for many areas. The secretary will assist the band directors in collecting fund raising materials, data entry, assisting in the band library, maintaining bulletin boards, and numerous special assignments. The VP of Admin will assist the president in the execution of his/her duties.

VP of Media

The VP of Media will be responsible for keeping an accurate record, both written and pictorial, of all band events. The historian should have a good camera and possess excellent writing skills. The historian will present a scrapbook to the band at the end of the school year.

VP of Social

The VP of Social will plan on social events, such as DCI Finals Watch Party, Movie Nights, Band Olympics, Holiday Party, etc. They will be assisted by the Upper and Underclassmen Representatives.

Upper and Underclassmen Representatives

The class representatives will be the voting voice of their class membership at band officer meetings.

Appointed Band Leadership Positions

Librarian(s)

The librarians will be responsible for the operations of the band library. The librarians will copy and distribute parts to all members of the band. There will be at least one librarian for each band class.

Uniform Managers

The uniform managers will be responsible for the efficient and effective operations of the uniform room in all events requiring the use of band uniforms. The uniform managers will supervise uniform inspection of the band members.

Instrument Managers

Instrument managers will be responsible for assisting with the checking out of district owned instruments. Instrument managers will also assist in recording inventory of all district owned instruments at McNeil HS.

Special Positions

Drum Majors and Section Leaders will be considered part of the band leadership on an advisory basis.

17.0 Letter Jacket Award System

A student must earn a grand total of 50 points in one school year to qualify for a letter jacket from the McNeil High School Band. Points may be earned in the following manner:

25 Points (Non-cumulative)

- Selection into and performance with the TMEA All Region Band or Orchestra.
- Selection into the TMEA All Area Band or Orchestra.

15 Points

- One complete year of successful participation in both concert and marching band. Loss of eligibility will remove point credit for this portion. **(Cumulative)**
- Superior (First Division) rating at the McNeil Solo Contest. (Non-Cumulative)
- Superior (First Division) rating of a solo at the UIL State S / E Contest. (Non-Cumulative)
- Superior (First Division) rating of an ensemble at the UIL State S / E Contest. (Non-Cumulative)

10 Points (Non-Cumulative)

- Superior (First Division) rating at the McNeil Ensemble Contest.
- Superior (First Division) rating of a Class ONE or TWO solo at the UIL Solo Contest.
- Superior (First Division) rating of a Class ONE or TWO ensemble at the UIL S / E Contest.
- Excellent (Second Division) rating at the McNeil Solo Contest.
- Excellent (Second Division) rating of a solo at the UIL State Solo / Ensemble Contest.
- Participation in UIL Full Orchestra
- Participation in Jazz Band

5 Points (Non-Cumulative)

- Excellent (Second Division) rating at the McNeil Ensemble Contest.
- Excellent (Second Division) rating of a Class ONE or TWO solo at the UIL Solo Contest.

Recognition points for independent public performances and for students going above and beyond are given at the discretion of the Directors.

17.1 Color Guard Letter Jacket Award System:

A color guard member needs to accumulate **30 points** to earn a letter jacket. Color Guard can accumulate points toward letter jacket in the following manner:

7.5 points (Cumulative) Marching Guard (Fall semester)
(Loss of eligibility may remove point credit for this portion.)

7.5 points (Cumulative) Indoor Guard (Spring semester)
(Loss of eligibility may remove point credit for this portion.)

Appendix I

Guide to Region Band and Solo Preparation

When you play a solo or region music, **you must understand that it is classified as serious music literature**. Further, you must perform and practice the music accurately and precisely. By following the steps listed below, you **can** achieve a high level of performance.

* **Play all the notes in the music correctly.** Make sure that each note has a clear and good sound. Good sound is achieved by maintaining good air support and a firm embouchure. Strive to keep your facial muscles still as you play. Make the best possible sound every time you play your horn!

* **Play all the rhythms accurately.** Make sure that each rhythm is counted correctly. Make sure that you maintain a steady slow tempo when learning your solo. ***USE A METRONOME!***

* **Play the entire selection at a slow pace.** One half of the correct tempo is a good starting tempo. For instance, if a selection is marked 120 beats per minute, then a good beginning tempo is 60. Once you can accurately play all notes and rhythms at half the tempo, the tempo should be increased by 10 beats per minute, per week. If the tempo is not marked, a director or private teacher will be glad to give you a tempo marking. ***PRACTICE SLOW, LEARN FAST!***

* **Play the music with the correct style.** For instance, make sure you are aware of accented notes, staccato notes, legato notes, slurs, and non-slurred notes. Articulation and achieving the correct style go hand in hand.

* **Play the music with all dynamic markings in place.** Make sure that you are aware of crescendos, diminuendos, volume marking (*f, ff, p, mp*, etc.), and any other listed change in volume. It is a good idea to highlight dynamic markings with a color that will catch your attention as you play.

* ***Lastly, it is important that your music be practiced daily with all of the above items in place.*** You must play with the best possible sound on your instrument each and every time that you perform or practice!! High level work is difficult!! A little hard work will go a long way. Remember, hard work guarantees nothing, but without it, you do not stand a chance for top performance!

Appendix II

Practice Schedule

An organized approach to practicing makes the most efficient use your practice time. **Having a plan and/or daily goals is crucial.** Always have the tools you need with you: metronome, tuner, pencil. Practice in a good environment-one that will encourage concentration.

3 sessions daily (frequent breaks are important)

Session 1 Fundamentals - should be done in the morning (15-20 minutes)

- Long Tones – develops steady sound, air
- Lip Slurs (Brass) – VERY IMPORTANT! Lip vibration has to be constant. Develops flexibility, dynamic control, range.
- Articulation – Back of tongue very important: must be down and relaxed to get enough air and relaxed air. Effects tone quality.
- Technique
- Scales – Foundation of all tonal music. Develops range, consistency, technique. Work on all forms (major, minor, modes, whole tone, etc.)

Session 2 Etudes / Excerpts (Also sight-reading and transposition) (30+ minutes)

- Work on lessons assignments or elements of your playing that need improvement.
- Do not just “play” – this is the time to really work to improve your playing.
- Chunking (BIG – small – BIG)
- Work backwards
- Sing smaller passages. Play short passages on mouthpiece w/ buzz-aid (Brass). Helps isolate lip pitch vibration and to center the notes.
- Excerpts – work on them the same way, but LISTEN to the pieces before you start so you know how they are supposed to sound.

Session 3 Music (30+ minutes)

- This is your reward for putting in the work in the previous 2 sessions.
- This is also the reason for all the work on fundamentals and etudes. You must have the technique, facility, and ability to be able to music.
- Don’t just “play” – keep working on fundamentals so that the music comes through, not your playing problems.
- Have a plan – know what you want to hear.
- Be expressive. Work on really saying something through your playing.
- Exaggerate your musical ideas to get them across.
- Allow yourself to enjoy what you are playing.

It is better to practice 1-2 hours every day than it is to practice 2-4 hours every other day. However, a smart, though-out 20 minute practice session can still be very productive. Regular, daily practice produces better, more consistent results. It is extremely important to break up your practicing into multiple sessions to maximize productivity. This works great in the evenings when doing homework.

Appendix III

General Guide to Daily Practice

Practicing!!

by Mike Fischer

Baylor University School of Music

Playing any musical instrument well takes work. You must practice daily and develop a sense of pride in your musical endeavors. Studying with a qualified private teacher will certainly be to your advantage. So, ask your band director about the Private Lesson Program in your school.

I. Warm-up

Warming up correctly prepares our entire body for a productive practice session. It especially relaxes and stretches our embouchure muscles for the upcoming session.

Exercises

1. Breathing (We play **wind** instruments, so we must practice taking deep and relaxed breaths.)
2. Mouthpiece Buzzing (5 - 10 minutes of buzzing before you play the instrument)
3. Long Tones
4. (Woodwinds) - Embouchure exercises, register slurs, altissimo, etc.

II. Daily Routines

Daily routines allow the musician to focus his attention on proper breathing, tone production, and articulations needed for playing.

Exercises

1. **Listen**
2. Lip Slurs
3. Upper/Lower Registers
4. Scales
5. (Woodwinds) - Finger coordination exercises

Specific needs of individual

1. Tonguing, multiple tonguing, slurring, range, tone, breathing, etc.
2. **Listen**

III. Fix-it Now

This portion of your practice time is aimed at fixing specific problems in your band music, solos, private lesson materials, etc.

Achieving Results

1. **Listen**
2. Have a reasonable goal to achieve each day.
3. Work on the sections that you are having problems playing. Practice a difficult measure until you can play it correctly several times in a row. Then add another measure until you can play both measures correctly several times in a row. Continue this routine until you have worked out the difficult parts.
4. Slow down.
5. **Listen**
6. Use a metronome.
7. Use a tuner.
8. Be patient.
9. **Listen**

Technique Development

1. The metronome is a very important tool for playing fast.

2. Begin very slowly and learn the notes. **BUT USE THE METRONOME!**
3. Don't be afraid to **SLOW** the metronome **DOWN**. (You must be able to walk before you run.)
4. Practice the difficult passages away from the instrument by fingering the notes and tonguing the rhythms. **USE THE METRONOME!** Alternate the fingering and tonguing technique with practicing the music on the instrument. **AFTER** you can play the passage two or three times in a row without any mistakes, increase the tempo by three to five beats. Then, work on the passage again until you can play it two or three times in a row without any mistakes. Continue this method every day until you can play the passages at the desired speed.
5. **Have a reasonable goal every day.** Learning and playing two to four measures correctly is a much smarter method of developing fast technique than playing eight to sixteen measures incorrectly.

Ear Training

Sit at a piano or electronic keyboard with your instrument and music. Play music on the piano and try it on your instrument. **SING THE MUSIC! BUZZ THE MUSIC ON THE MOUTHPIECE!**

Range Development (Brass)

A. Playing Higher and Higher

Practice Scales: Start on a lower scale and play it up and down. Then, play the next higher scale. Continue ascending through the scales until you reach your limit. Then, when you think you can't go any higher, try one or two more scales. You may surprise yourself and play a higher scale. Eventually, you **will** increase your high register.

B. Playing Lower and Lower

Do the opposite of Playing Higher and Higher: Start on a higher scale and play it down and up. Then, play the next lower scale. Continue descending through the scales until you reach your limit. Then, when you think you can't go any lower, try one or two more scales.

IV. Perform Your Music

Performing your music from beginning to end without stopping builds the physical endurance required for playing that particular piece. It also enables you to become familiar with the complete work and see how the phrases fit together.

V. Fun-time

Play music you enjoy playing.

We spend a lot of time and effort learning to how play our instruments and it is enjoyable to play, so take time to have fun.

VI. Stage Fright - Solo Performances

How to overcome stage fright-BE MORE PREPARED THAN YOU EVER HAVE BEFORE!

1. Breathe slowly and deeply two or three times before you begin.
2. Perform your music for family and friends.
3. Perform your music for the band directors and private teachers.
4. Practice performing in similar situations.
 - A. If you will be performing on stage with hot lights, practice in a hot room or wear a heavy coat while practicing.
 - B. Wear your performance attire during a practice session.
5. Eliminate unnecessary worries.
 - A. Empty all tuning slides before entering stage
 - B. Oil the valves regularly
 - C. Have **four good** reeds available
 - D. Make sure all pads and keys are in good and working order.

I, _____, understand and agree to adhere to the following rules and expectations:

- I will attend every scheduled rehearsal from beginning to end. Failure to do so will affect my grade and status in the ensemble.
- I will schedule appointments and attend tutorials around the rehearsal/performance schedule.
- I will treat all band members, directors, staff, and parent volunteers respectfully or else risk punishment from directors and/or campus administration.
- I will follow all rules and expectations regarding wearing my uniform or else risk forfeiting my opportunity to perform in the ensemble.
- I will remain academically eligible or else risk my status in the ensemble.
- I understand that I am always representing the band while at school or at school related functions. This includes in my other classes and failure to meet expectations could result in punishment from directors and/or campus administration.
- I will not use inappropriate or profane language while representing the band.
- I agree to attend all required performances as scheduled on the Charms calendar. Failure to do so will affect my grade and status in the ensemble.
- I will practice outside of rehearsal in order to meet performance expectations or else risk my status in the ensemble.
- I understand interdependence and how it relates to the success of the band. My preparation and performance level affect the success of the entire program.
- I will communicate with the band directors immediately when I realize I cannot fulfill an expectation, regardless of whether they will be upset with me, because it is the responsible thing to do and not doing so could negatively affect the program.

Student Name (Print)

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

From the directors:

Please understand that the band's success is dependent on every member's success. We must all do our part in order to be our absolute best. Prior communication is imperative if you cannot make a rehearsal, sectional, concert, etc. We have a better chance of working with you when you give us more time. Last minute information makes it difficult to negotiate a resolution.

BAND HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE

Please return this page to your band director.

I have received, reviewed and understand the policies and guidelines in the McNeil High School Band Handbook and the Instrumental Music Code. I further agree to abide by the procedures set forth.

Student Name: _____
(print)

Student Signature: _____

Grade: _____

Student ID: _____

I have received and reviewed the 2017 / 2018 Instrumental Music Code and Band Handbook, and I agree to assist the directors in helping my child meet expectations.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____
(print)

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____