

An Exemplary Junior High School Band Nimitz Junior High - Odessa, Texas

Cindy Bulloch, Director; Emily Moran, Assistant Director

The success of the Nimitz Junior High School Band in Odessa can largely be attributed to students achieving many short-term goals throughout their career. Pep-rally music (yes!), etudes and scales, concert music, and solos are all used as motivation to improve the individual student as well as the performing ensemble. Fall section rehearsals are specifically designed to improve tone, scale technique, and All City/All Region Band audition etudes. Each student performs weekly for a grade in the section rehearsal. Besides preparing for several performances at pep-rallies and football games, fall band rehearsals focus on improving ensemble skills, and individual sightreading skills.

Confronting individual performance anxiety is also a goal during fall band rehearsals. Students are often prepared for auditions physically but not mentally. At least the last 10 to 15 minutes of rehearsal is set aside to draw names to perform a mini-mock audition. At the onset students are asked to play a required scale—a simple task all students can accomplish successfully. After several weeks

of drawing names, students are confident in performing in front of their peers and look forward to “winning the lottery.” The next step is performing a portion of the All City/All Region etudes. Most students enthusiastically anticipate daily performances and appreciate the encouragement and feedback from their friends and band directors. Mentally and emotionally, students are prepared for and look forward to the All City band auditions in mid-November and All Region band auditions in December.

Second semester section rehearsals begin with each student attending one 15-minute rehearsal a week for a director. The primary goal is preparation for the solo/ensemble contest in February.

All students learn and perform a solo and percussionists learn both snare and mallet solos. Traditionally, all woodwinds are members of a woodwind choir and all brasses are members of a brass choir, prepared during a weekly one-hour rehearsal.

After solo/ensemble contest, five weeks remain until the UIL concert/sightreading contest. Contest music is then prepared in only five section rehearsals; however, the tremendous

improvement achieved from the previous performances yields the reward of time invested.

It is important to recognize the absolute necessity for the guidance of a mentor. It has been the honor of the Nimitz Band

to have Mr. J.R. McEntyre as their honorary director every Wednesday afternoon. His skill, guidance and advice over the years has been priceless!



Directors Randy Storie (Lee High School) and Cindy Bulloch (Nimitz Junior High) will share more insight about their exemplary band programs in their clinic presentation at the TBA Convention/Clinic on Saturday, July 21 at 5:00 p.m.