

# Bandmasters Review



An Educational Publication of the Texas Bandmasters Association

December 2016 • Volume 18, Issue 2





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# Bandmasters Review

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*TBA publishes these educational articles for your use in the classroom and rehearsal hall and to share with your students as you wish. The opinions and teaching methods are those of the authors and not necessarily shared by all members of the TBA staff and Board of Directors.*

*BANDMASTERS REVIEW is an educational publication of the Texas Bandmasters Association. The magazine's purpose is to assist TBA members in achieving the highest standards of instrumental music education. BANDMASTERS REVIEW is a quarterly publication and is mailed to current Active/Retired and Business Members of TBA. If your address has changed, please contact the Texas Bandmasters Association office: 1002 Central Parkway South, San Antonio, TX 78232 Phone: (210) 492-8878 Fax: (210) 492-8996 www.texasbandmasters.org*

## Mission Statement

The purpose of the Texas Bandmasters Association, Inc. is to:

Continually assist its membership in achieving the highest standards of instrumental music education.



Promote the place and value of music education in our society and the important role instrumental music plays in our cultural, intellectual, and social lives.



Foster goodwill, fellowship and a collegial, fraternal spirit among its members.



Provide its membership with an annual Convention/Clinic which introduces new music, tried and proven teaching methods and materials as well as instruments and equipment.



Provide educational publications of instructional methods and materials for TBA members and aid them with their personal development and leadership.



Provide information for the university music student preparing to become a band director.

# Season of Hope

## Chico Portillo, 2016-17 TBA President Elect

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I hope that all of you are having a wonderful school year! As we approach the Holiday season, I hope that you will take the time to decompress and spend some quality time with your family and friends. I hope that you will count your blessings and reflect on what a great career you have chosen. I hope that you will take some time to thank those who have helped you in any small or large way and I hope that you will find peace. Peace of mind, peaceful rest and a piece of pie.

We are lucky to live in a place where music education is valued and I hope that we continue to provide a quality musical education to all of the school children in our state. Now, I do understand that hope is not a strategy and that actions are needed in order to reach what it is we hope for. But what I like best about hope is that it is an optimistic attitude that is based on an expectation of positive outcomes related to events and circumstances in one's life. So let's keep hope alive!

Happy Holidays!



# TBA News

## Michael Brashear, TBA Executive Director

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Greetings from the TBA office! I hope you have had a successful fall semester. Whether your focus is on high school marching band, middle school band, or beginners you are having a tremendous impact on many students. Thank you for all of your efforts to influence students through the beauty of making music. Enjoy the day to day process as you prepare for the big performance moments. Many times, some of the most memorable and important musical achievements are in rehearsals rather than in performances. In many respects, the performances are the “icing on the cake” in our lives as band directors.

I continue to be amazed and impressed with the quality of work displayed at the UIL State Marching Contest. I am thankful to live in a state which produces so many outstanding bands. I am happy to recognize all of these groups that qualified for state in this magazine (see pages 24-25) and congratulate these students and directors for the standard of excellence achieved. In addition to those on display at the Alamodome, there are many more wonderful bands that deserve congratulations on a job well done. Only you as a director can truly appreciate the progress your students have made this fall. Bravo to all!! The NAMMB contest winners and the many groups performing at The Midwest Clinic in Chicago are recognized on page 26.



## **NEW FOR TBA - COMPOSITION CONTEST FOR YOUR STUDENTS**

TBA is pleased to announce a composition contest that is being sponsored by KHS America Academic Alliance. Students in Texas who are in grades 6-12 are invited to compose a melody that will be used as thematic material for a new piece for concert band that will be premiered at the 2017 TBA Convention/Clinic by the Air Force Band of the West. The student, parent, and band director will receive round trip transportation and lodging in the Marriott Riverwalk to attend the 2017 convention. See the ad on the inside front for more information. Please encourage many of your students to participate!!

# Improving Your Teaching with “Why?”

**Phillip Clements, 2016-17 TBA Treasurer**

William Arthur Ward said, “*The mediocre teacher tells, the good teacher explains, the superior teacher demonstrates, the great teacher inspires.*” As we work to become better teachers, these are important words to remember.

I have noticed over the years that we spend a great deal of time in rehearsal discussing the “what” and “how” of music. We discuss “what” the dynamic should be, “how” the students should approach the articulation, “what” note they have in the chord and countless other details of music making. While all of this is vital, I have come to believe that the students need not only this information, but they also need to know “why”? Students are more engaged when they can understand why it is important to do something or the reason the composer wrote something a particular way.

I have observed that master teachers commonly relate new concepts and ideas to similar ideas or concepts the students already know. This is done through analogies, by illuminating relationships within the music, and by helping the students understand *why* it is important to play something a certain way.

Consider the following common statement in a rehearsal: *Please lower your dynamic from mf to mp.* This is efficient, effective and probably accomplishes the desired effect. However, according to William Arthur Ward, this is mediocre teaching. If we take it just one step further and simply say: *Your dynamic must be lowered from mf to mp so that the melody can be heard,* we have already made an

important distinction. We have described “why” and we have begun the discussion of melodic/accompaniment dynamic relationships. **We have begun to teach concepts instead of simply giving information.**

Concepts, once learned, can be transferred to other similar music or passages. The most effective concept teaching takes place when students are engaged in the rehearsal, and the easiest way to engage students is with questions. If we begin to incorporate questions into the rehearsal in order to have the students arrive at the “why” themselves, we will have added yet another level of communication, engagement, and comprehension. Although telling students the information may seem more efficient in the short-term, it does not promote long-term learning. Ask questions and allow the students to respond while you guide them to the correct answer. Be sure to call on students who may not be as engaged in the rehearsal as others and don’t give them the answer if they fail to respond immediately.

Listed on the next page are just a few of the countless examples of how we can change “what” and “how” to “why”.

(continued)



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## Improving Your Teaching with “Why?”

WHAT/HOW (Telling)	WHY (Explaining)	WHY (Leading Questioning)
Please lower the A natural in m. 14.	Please lower the A natural in m.14 since it is the major 3rd of the chord.	What part of the chord do you have in m. 14?
Listen to the trombones in m. 18 for tuning.	Be sure to listen to the trombones in m. 18 since they have the Bb concert before you enter in m. 19.	Do you hear someone in m. 18 that has the same note you have in m. 19?
Be sure to play with a firm “D” articulation on that accent.	Be sure to play with a firm “D” articulation on that accent so that we hear the clarity at the front of the note, but still maintain tone quality.	What kind of articulation do you think we should use on that accent?
Make sure you crescendo as written in m. 5.	Make sure you crescendo as written in m. 5 so that we arrive at the most important note of the phrase together at the downbeat of m. 6.	Where in m. 1-8 do you think is the most important note of the phrase? How should we emphasize it?

The “how” and “what” are still very important, but by adding the “why” we will have turned our rehearsals into discussions about music making rather than musical corrections. The students will begin to understand more about the composer’s intent, the reasons why we are asking them to do certain things, and will begin to understand larger concepts of music making. In learning these concepts they will be more engaged and able to transfer these ideas to each piece of music they encounter. We will be creating independent musicians; which after all is one of the primary goals of music education.



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# Developing a Successful Band Program in Title I Schools

Scott McAdow

Teaching band in a Title I school can be challenging—even overwhelming. However, not only is it possible for you to develop a successful program in a Title I setting—it can be most rewarding for all involved. A great band program requires a critical balance of certain concepts and ingredients—truly a recipe. When teaching band in a Title I setting, be willing to think outside of the box for the components and ingredients for this recipe. All parts, or concepts, are necessary to create a great band program. There also must be a balance or equality of these ingredients. Many band directors lose sight of this—thus not keeping track of the big picture. *Never doubt that band will change the lives of your students for the better!*

**Personal Relationships** must be developed between the student and the band director. Attend school events your students are involved in, such as athletics. Be a part of the school. Volunteer to help with various school events. Know your students. Show you are interested in who they are as people. Greet your students at the door daily and welcome them to class. Have social events and participate in them! As I heard Richard Floyd state in a clinic, “Kids don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care!” Be a good listener.

At the senior high school level, work to develop **Personal Relationships between students**—specifically older (leadership) and younger students.

This will be a great and effective recruiting tool. For example, create a buddy system between Freshmen students and older leadership.



**Make it a priority to develop Personal Relationships with the band parents.** Create opportunities to meet your band parents, starting with the beginner drives. Hire others for the instrument placement. Then you can personally meet and greet all potential band parents. To develop and maintain parent support, treat all band parents with respect and be consistent with student discipline and the calendar (no last minute changes).

**Effective parent communication** is a very important ingredient when developing a band program in a Title I setting. Prevent problems by practicing good communication skills. Use the rule that if a parent makes any kind of contact with you, that email or call must be returned by you within 24 hours. Same-day contact is best.

**Solve serious parent concerns either with a phone call or**

**conference.** Emails can be impersonal and leave the wrong impression. When talking to parents about their band student, always find something positive to say about their child! Regardless of the student offense, that student is his or her parent’s child! Create an atmosphere of openness, encouraging the parent to have a more receptive attitude toward helping correct whatever the behavior issues are with their child.

**Keep written communication to parents short and simple!** Often, many of the parents in a Title I setting, due to limited education opportunities, do not have the skills to understand a lengthy and complex document. Respect your band parents by printing letters that go home in a variety of languages. Require both the student and parent print their name and sign these. Then keep track of whether or not students return the signature portion of the letter. Follow-up getting these turned in. For example, send a letter home inviting parents to concerts. The letter should include positive information encouraging attendance at the concert and can be printed on colored paper. Make verbal contact as positive as possible!

**You must sell your program!** Make the band program seem important to students, parents, administration, and the community. It truly is your job to toot your own horn. At a Title I campus, this is extremely important



as the parents are making a great financial sacrifice to provide their child with a quality instrument to play. **Showcase both individual and full band successes and achievements.**

**Display your awards** around the school, at concerts, and at beginner drives. **Make concert programs attractive**, easy to read, and a showcase of student achievement.

Presenting **successful concerts** that are well prepared and have good attendance will make your students feel proud about their band membership. Remember the old show business motto—leave them wanting more! Be well-organized and efficient so that setup changes are fast and minimal. Our average concert length with four bands was an hour to an hour and fifteen minutes. Have concert comments organized and planned. Type out a script in a large font so that your typed comments are easily read during the concert.

**Strive to have a large audience at your concerts.** Send a concert invitation and information letter home with a required parent signature. Create, as needed, **awards** to fit the recognition your students have earned such as most improved, spirit, leadership, etc.

**Be particular about uniform appearance!**



**Music programming has a great impact on the band program!** Program music that both challenges and satisfies, and that the students and parents will like and

enjoy. Regardless of the grade or skill level you teach, remember that the music you teach your students should challenge them. When you program music the band students are excited about, they will urge friends and parents to attend! On our holiday concert we often presented *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*. A favorite school teacher would be the narrator, and we invited the siblings and friends of our band students to

come to the stage. Band families love holiday tradition and it created an instant large concert attendance.

The band program, especially in a Title I setting, will grow and maintain a high percentage of members over the course of time only when the band students are receiving **quality musical instruction. Teaching every child in your program to play well must be a top priority.** Therefore, with limited funds, weigh the value of a handful of students receiving private lesson scholarships versus, for similar funding, **regular group instruction from area master teachers.** Utilize a master teacher or high quality private teacher to **teach your staff** as well as your students. Since private lessons either do not exist or are possible only for a very limited number of students, you and your staff must truly be capable of teaching kids how to play their instruments, both at the middle school and high school.

**Make it a priority to start your beginners correctly,** then there is no re-teaching the next year. When beginning band kids are setup to play correctly, learning to play is easier. Thus the student will feel more successful, and **successful students will stay in band!** At the high school level, the rule of success and retention applies as well;





## Developing a Successful Band Program in Title I Schools

thus you need to be both diligent and proficient when correcting bad playing habits. This is a very frequent scenario with move in students.

**The head director at both middle and high school levels has the absolute responsibility to oversee the successful instruction of the fundamentals of playing and then continuing musical development of your students.**

Even with limited resources, a major priority must be placing your students on reliable, **quality musical instruments that are in good working order!** Do everything possible to convince your parents not to purchase instruments from the internet. Seek out grants through corporations, area churches, and your school district. Appeal to your school's faculty to donate old family instruments or to sponsor a band student, and buy instruments from former students who no longer play. Modify music store rental packages; remove some accessories if needed. Stress to parents the advantages of renting or buying through a reputable music store so the instrument will be in good working condition. Emphasize to parents that used instruments not acquired through a reputable music store need to be brought to school for the director to evaluate.

Particularly in a Title I setting, you must **Recruit and Maintain band membership effectively.** If you are unable to take your band to the elementary schools, have a 5th grade night and advertise it! Play something brief and flashy, and have an attractive but short handout. Make your presentation short and organized, emphasizing how cool it is to be in band. If allowed, create a recruiting video. At the beginner drive, take a picture of the new band student with his selected instrument. Then take a poster to each feeder elementary school with the incoming beginner pictures, and have an individual picture in an envelope for each student. This helps keep kids stay excited about band over the summer!

In a Title I setting, administrative support is critical, so **develop a Personal Relationship with the school administration.** You are fortunate if you work for the rare

administrator, like my Campbell Principal Laura Perry, who visits your classroom on a regular basis. It is your job as band director to cultivate the personal relationship between you and the school administration.

**Carefully plan communication.** Know what will put the administrator in a receptive frame of mind. Written communication should be succinct and to the point, grammatically correct, organized and easy to read, and positive in nature. **Include justification that is real and fact based; real data speaks!** Clearly state the benefits for both the students and the entire school.

For oral communication, **find times that are convenient for your administrator to briefly chat that will not add time to their schedule,** such as lunch or hall duty. However, appointments are preferred. Certain busy times of the school year (first and last couple of weeks of school, Staar testing, etc.) are overwhelming to administrators and you should avoid making appointments at these times. Plan what you are going to say; it is acceptable to take written notes! Estimate how long you plan to meet, so that when you make the appointment you can request a specific amount of time. Do not meet with an administrator when you are extremely upset and emotional, as you are likely to say something you will eventually regret. Start your meeting by thanking the administrator for her support.

**Invite your principal to your concerts.** An organized and well-attended concert will instantly win administrative friends. **Invite administrators to observe specific classes.** Show off that smooth running beginner class where the kids are achieving great things! This will be particularly effective if that class includes students who are problems everywhere but band!

It is crucial for your band program to have success! This is a critical area requiring attention, especially in a Title I setting. Because many Title I students live in a less than ideal home situation, **you must gain their trust**—not necessarily an easy task! Remember that it is not the Title I child's fault that he or she has limited financial resources. This applies to behavior issues as well! It is so very important that you remember that "You Can't Fool Kids!"

## Developing a Successful Band Program in Title I Schools

**Specifically, always be honest. Do not patronize your students! Always show students respect,** even when they are rude to you.

As you teach your students to love playing, help them feel successful as young musicians. If guided carefully, these students will gradually learn to show you respect. Know that most beginning band students, especially Title I, joined band for a reason other than becoming a fine young musician. It's very likely they joined because their friends joined or the band trips sounded fun. **Work diligently to know every child in your program.** Students will love and appreciate your doing this! Particularly at the

beginning of the school year, make it your goal to build rapport with your students. Plan for appropriate times to socialize and get to know your students.

**Trips can have a big impact on Title I band students of all grade levels!** Make trips more affordable by using payment plans. Trips can positively expose students to things they have never seen before. Have a required parent/student trip meeting for overnight trips. Even if it is possible for only your top performing band to make the out of town trip, this can still be a great motivator for the entire band program.

*Scott McAdow is a magna cum laude graduate of the University of North Texas, graduating with a double major in instrumental and choral music. He holds a Master of Music degree from the University of Houston. McAdow retired June 30, 2016. His 39 years as a Texas public school band director include experience in Spring, Klein, Birdville, and Cy-Fair Independent School Districts. McAdow currently supervises student teachers for the University of Houston, and is extremely active across Texas as a clinician, adjudicator, consultant and inservice. He also is the Chancel Choir Director for Advent Lutheran Church in Houston. Mr. McAdow's bands were TMEA Honor Band winners three times and finalists an additional three times. His bands performed at The Midwest Clinic twice and his marching bands were finalists at the UIL State Marching Band Contest on five occasions. A three-time TMEA Leadership and Achievement Award recipient, McAdow has presented convention clinics for TMEA and TBA. His Campbell Symphonic Band is the recipient of the Foundation for Music Education 2015 National Wind Band Honors Commended Winner Award. McAdow has conducted All Region Bands in eight different TMEA regions. Both of his children, Allison and Blake, performed in his Langham Creek High School Bands.*



### *Donna Muslin*

TBA mourns the loss of long time Spouses' Division fashion show consultant Donna Muslin, who passed away on November 7, 2016, less than two weeks after she was diagnosed with acute leukemia. She was 78. Donna worked closely with the Spouses Board for the past 30 years to produce fashion shows and seminars that were centerpieces of the spouse activities at the annual conventions in San Antonio. She became a trusted friend to many, and a friendly face that inspired us with her poise, confidence and grace. Donna worked as the Southwest Regional PR Director for JC Penney, was a 25-year member of the University of the Incarnate Word Development Board, and was a spokesperson for The American Cancer Society. In 2011 she was named to San Antonio's Women's Hall of Fame and was honored for her activism in helping women with networking, career development and rejoining the job market. Her full obituary can be found at [missionparks.com](http://missionparks.com).

# How Do You Make the Most of Time?

## “The answer is right in front of our eyes!”

**Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser**

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The equalizer for everyone is TIME. We all have twenty-four hours a day; nobody has more or less. The success of our band programs is greatly based on how we use that TIME. It is rare to hear anyone in the profession say, “I don’t know what to do with all this extra TIME!” In fact, it is usually quite the contrary; “I am running out of TIME; if I only had some more TIME!”

While there is no way to s-t-r-e-t-c-h the clock, there are ways to prioritize the various responsibilities to make the best use of TIME in a positive fashion. What is the best use of your TIME?

1. Initially decide what is on the TO DO LIST that only YOU can do, and put them at the top of the agenda. (Score study, communication with administrators/parents/community leaders/colleagues, making budgetary decisions, choosing repertoire, communicating with students about their contribution to the musical environment, serving as the leader in making decision that impact the future director of the program, being the musical go-to person.)

2. De-select the various time-consumers that can be assigned to others. (Filing music, keeping the facilities in tip-top shape, taking roll, stuffing the folders, refreshing the bulletin board, taking inventory of the fund-raising products, collating papers, putting up notices announcing the upcoming concert.)

And the obvious inquiries are:

\* Who does all this work if it is not YOU?

\* Who comes to the rescue to make sure the daily chores are handled in a first-class fashion while YOU (the director) invests TIME in preparing to garner the most from the all-too-short rehearsal TIME?

\* Who can you TRUST to take on these various tasks, knowing they play a critical role in the outcome of the group’s success?

May I suggest it could well be the musicians who are the heart-and-soul of the ensemble? Herein lies an unlimited source of human potential eager to become involved in the entire blueprint of “their” band program. They want to contribute, they can contribute, and they have the TIME... thus unleashing TIME for you to do what ONLY you can do.

Whether you label these people as student leaders, band staff, music aids, etc., it creates a new paradigm for the entire band culture. Plus, it postures YOU to truly be the musical guide as well as the program visionary. This is where your value is most wanted and needed.

It all sounds so simple, doesn’t it?

Select a group of dedicated students, create a menu of responsibilities, describe your expectations, and then go about your merry way. Unfortunately it requires far more than a mere,

“Here’s what you need to do, now go do it,” assignment. Developing a team of first-class student leaders warrants an ongoing learning-growing-becoming communication from YOU. While it seems we simply added more to your already overloaded work schedule, it is quite the opposite. Recall the adage, “Feed a man a fish...” Meta-

phorically we are “teaching our students how to fish.” We are giving them the tools to THINK FOR THEMSELVES, and discover the countless ways they can personally contribute and take ownership of the ongoing success of THEIR band.

Having spent four decades helping develop student leaders, it has become ever-apparent there are certain steps to be taken in the development of these wonderful hearts and minds. In addition to putting together a team of caring-sharing band assistants, you are also developing the leaders of tomorrow

**What is the best use of your TIME? Who does all this work if it is not YOU? Who can you TRUST to take on these various tasks, knowing they play a critical role in the outcome of the group’s success? May I suggest it could well be the musicians who are the heart-and-soul of the ensemble?**

## How Do You Make the Most of Time? “The answer is right in front of our eyes!”

by creating habits of success they can transfer to each and every aspect of their personal and professional lives.

Before jumping on the student leadership bandwagon, be aware of some of the pitfalls certain to be experienced:

- Their initial enthusiasm gives way to tedious and time-consuming work to be done; they simply give up.
- They fall short of the standards you have for your own work.
- They take on more than they can accomplish. When they fail to meet their goals, frustration and disappointment sets in.
- Time management is an ongoing challenge. They start too late, then they are out of time to complete the tasks.
- One has to extend constant reassurance to fuel the forward motion.
- The work ethic gives way to the teenage logic, etc., etc., etc.

It would seem far easier to simply DO IT YOURSELF and avoid all the potential conflicts. Also, you then know things will be done exactly the way you want them to be

done! However, you have gone in a circle and using your valuable TIME in a less than wise fashion.

**Developing a team of first-class student leaders warrants an ongoing learning-growing-becoming communication from YOU. We are giving them the tools to THINK FOR THEMSELVES, and discover the countless ways they can personally contribute and take ownership of the ongoing success of THEIR band.**

Student leadership is a never-ending journey of personal understanding. It's not a quick-fix formula, but rather a way of being, a style of thinking, a personal choice to go the extra mile on behalf of all those who are part of the band family. There is no absolute template of success, or magic potion, or a fail-safe set of instructions that can guarantee the participating student will end up a worthy contributing leader. However, there are leadership skills that can be learned via a sequential curriculum designed to open the awareness of the eager young candidate to the understanding of “what student leadership is all about.”

Above all, it gives OWNERSHIP to the students; they now have a vested interest in everything from the appearance of the band hall to the recruitment of new members. It reaffirms your confidence in their contribution and it demonstrates the fact it is THEIR BAND.

Everyone wins. IT'S ABOUT TIME!

*Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser is a trusted friend to anyone interested in working with young people in developing a desire for excellence and a passion for high level achievement. His career involves ten years of successful college band directing at Northern Michigan University, the University of Missouri, and New Mexico State University. Following his tenure at the university level, he spent three years with McCormick's Enterprises working as Executive Director of Bands of America. In 1981, he created Attitude Concepts for Today, Inc., an organization designed to manage the many requests for workshops, seminars, and convention speaking engagements focusing on the area of positive attitude and effective leadership training. Over two million students have experienced his acclaimed student leadership workshops over the last three decades. Dr. Tim presently serves as Vice President of Education for Conn-Selmer, Inc., Senior Educational Advisor for Music for All and NAMM (The International Music Products Association) and is an adjunct faculty member at Ball State University (Earl Dunn Distinguished Lecturer), Indiana-Purdue/Ft. Wayne University, and Butler University. In addition, he serves on The Midwest Clinic Board of Directors and the Western International Band Clinic/American Band College Board of Directors.*

# Choosing Literature for Success at Contest

Corey L. Graves, Rylon Guidry, Darcy Potter Williams

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As we finish the fall semester and prepare for the next, we are quickly reminded that “contest season” will soon be upon us! While the entire year’s repertoire is not solely centered around our UIL performances, it is important that thoughtful, purposeful consideration is given to the music we choose to showcase our ensembles. Planning with the end goal in mind is the key to ensuring student success. However, before starting to organize a plan, recognizing the attainable potential of our students and making ourselves aware of time constraints is crucial.

Keeping these ideas in mind, what will you be able to play with your students? If you do not have a copy of your school’s calendar, get one immediately. In constructing a rehearsal timeline, the dates of school-wide exams, bad weather holidays, dances, and field trips are important to know. Once these dates are solidified, and if you have the means to do so, you can begin planning regularly scheduled sectionals and rehearsals. This is where the magic really happens.

## Does the Music Fit Your Band?

When selecting literature to perform, leave all egos aside! The performance of the music you select will be adjudicated with the same UIL rubric, no matter the age of your students. A Grade IV has to sound like a Grade IV. While it is encouraged to push them to excel at

high levels, be honest and realistic about what is achievable in your time frame. Knowing your students and what skills they possess are important in finding the right music. We should strive to prepare our students for their future in music without inundating them with too much too soon. There are volumes and volumes of great publications for all grade levels.

Before selecting music for the ensemble, there are a ton of factors to consider: What is your instrumentation? Do you know the strengths and weaknesses of every section? Will these pieces challenge the strongest players and develop the less experienced ones? Are there soloists to showcase? How much endurance will my students need? Are these pieces written in a range that will show off their best sounds? What are the rhythmic concerns?

As you talk yourself through these questions, the answers to what is playable becomes more evident. The most successful literature for contest will allow for musical success while remaining just challenging enough to require continued development. Remember that UIL evaluations are not set up to expose the weaknesses of your band, but rather highlight all the great things they are doing. Every teacher, especially those with limited teaching experience, is highly advised to seek out the counsel of experienced mentors who are willing to lead you down the path to choosing the best

program. Never underestimate the expertise of those who have already been through the trenches and can provide invaluable commentary on the “dos and don’ts” of programming.

## Programming Considerations

Expose your students to music whose “juice is worth the squeeze.” While there are many wonderful pieces out there, there are also many others that are written with almost insurmountable pitfalls. Find quality music that is written well. These are pieces that are based on academic ideas that can be played! Avoid music that is trite in content, lacks proper orchestration, or does not exhibit a high degree of compositional craft. The music you select to perform at contest should showcase your strengths, and not highlight the areas that you are attempting to improve over a long period of time.

One of the biggest misconceptions is that bands must play a slow piece to demonstrate the many abilities involved in executing lyricism. There is no written rule that a lyrical piece should be played at contest. Take great caution when selecting slow pieces that expose small sections, tone quality, and intonation difficulties.

Contemporary pieces are a great opportunity for students and directors to interact with a living composer. Performing new music is also part of a comprehensive music education and important to forwarding our

## Choosing Literature for Success at Contest

repertoire and supporting composers attempting to do so. Multicultural pieces can expose students to new, less familiar harmonies and rhythms. There are many opportunities for community involvement into how music relates to culture and society, and applying TEKS that cross over into other curriculums.

Multi-movement works have a positive and negative aspect. Younger bands may benefit from performing a multi-movement work that has short movements. This gives young players a time to rest both mentally and physically as well as have a “reset” moment. More advanced multi-movement works involve more time if each movement has a different style. These works have to be treated as separate pieces. Pieces that are through composed but have difficult transitions can prove to be just as challenging as a multi-movement work.

Marches are the single-celled organisms of band. They are our history and our beginning! Traditional military marches come in many different styles and flavors, and teach important fundamental ensemble skills of balance and style. The traditional march form is also part of our band heritage that should be kept alive in our band halls. Concert marches pair great with other traditional pieces from the PML and offer variations of style. Furthermore, pasodobles, processionals, and circus marches—not to mention marches from other countries—can be great additions to your program as well.

It's important to keep the entire program in mind. Avoid the same styles and key signatures for all contest pieces. It is always best to select music that will make a young, small or inexperienced band sound their best, even if all pieces are similar.

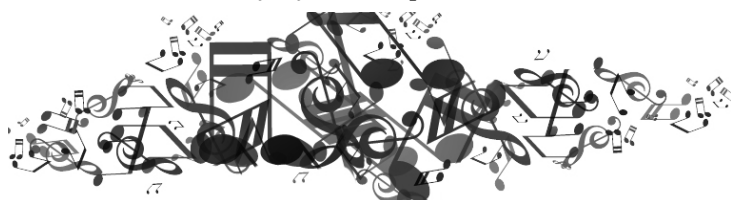
Keep in mind that a quality performance with superior aspects in tone, technique, and musicianship is best. *Reference the Concert & Sight-Reading Adjudication Rubric on the UIL website for further explanation.*

## What is the Point of the Concerts Throughout the Year?

Another factor to keep in mind is the purpose of the concert at hand, each with a different goal. If your program gives a Fall Concert, it is important to remember that this is the time of year to build/train ensemble skills, as well as build the skills of the individual. Your new band must learn to play together as a unit, learning balance and blend with its new members (for some of your kids, like seventh graders, for the first time), ensemble fundamentals and exercises, and simply how to function as a band. It is also the season of District and Region Band auditions which requires much of your students' home practice time. With that in mind, selecting Fall Concert music requires finding a balance of readily attainable music that supports the ensemble skills you are teaching while not taking away from their audition music.

The Winter Concert is all about audience buy-in. Most often, this is the most attended concert of the year, and considering the musical tastes of grandparents is always appreciated. While holiday music is on many of our programs, it is by no means required, which can also open up another opportunity to play any of the great pieces not on the PML. A number of band programs use the Winter Concert as the debut of their UIL march, mentally preparing the students for the focus and attention to detail that comes with preparing a UIL concert program. If your band program does not follow this pattern, the Winter Concert is a chance to test the waters as to how far you can push your band (before choosing your UIL program) and which sections will rise to the occasion and deserve the spotlight.

When it does come time for UIL, the points for consideration vary based on your band. For a sub non-varsity level group, it is most important to choose music that is easy enough that they can achieve a really high level of performance. Even a sub non-varsity should sound amazing on their music...you just have to choose music on the appropriate level to allow that quality of playing. Non-varsity band members should be working on music that



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is initially just above their heads to allow for the most growth, pushing them towards potentially moving up to the varsity level. As for your top band, depending on the goals for your organization, this is the time to play The Midwest Clinic or TMEA Honor Band level pieces. However, remember to be honest about the actual level of your band and where you want the students to be.

For the Spring Concert, GO FOR IT! There are no judges, and your kids have worked hard all year! Bring out the pieces you are too nervous to perform at UIL, and push your kids as hard as they will let you push them. With your sub non-varsity it is often helpful to purposely program fun and catchy pieces so that your kids who will be placed there the following year (and those who will have a repeat placement) have something cool and positive to look forward to. With your non-varsity band, choose music that pushes your 7th graders to be next year's leaders. Also, consider giving your 7th graders 1st parts to help them with that transition (even if that seems scary). For your top band, go for flash! The Spring Concert is the perfect time to let your kids learn their limits by pushing them.

As you plan your curriculum, keep in mind that you have an entire year to expose your students to quality literature. Never feel pressured to play beyond what your band can perform at a high level at UIL. Take the necessary time to research and plan to offer the each student the best opportunity to grow musically throughout both semesters.

*Corey Graves, a native of Henderson, is the head band director at Roma Middle School and the Roma ISD low reed instructor. He received his Bachelor of Music Education degree as a summa cum laude graduate from Stephen F. Austin State University, and earned a Master of Music in Euphonium Performance as a graduate fellow from The Ohio State University. Mr. Graves is a Bill and Melinda Gates Millennium Scholar, the Region XV Middle School Coordinator, and in his eighth year as a music educator. Bands under his direction have consistently received superior sweepstakes ratings at UIL Concert and Sightreading Contest, in addition to winning Best in Class and Grand Champion at a long list of contests and festivals. Students at Roma MS are well represented within the three Region XV All-Region bands each year. In 2013, 2014, and 2015, the RMS Symphonic Winds earned the distinction as a National Wind Band Class A winner. In 2011, 2013, and 2015, these students were selected as finalists in the TMEA CC Honor Band Competition, placing 11th, 4th, and 2nd respectively. Mr. Graves was chosen as Roma ISD's 2013 Secondary Teacher of the Year. He is an active clinician, adjudicator, guest euphoniumist, and holds membership in TMEA, TBA, and Pi Kappa Lambda National Music Honor Society.*

*Mr. Rylon Guidry is the Head Band Director at Arbor Creek Middle School in Lewisville ISD where he teaches the beginner woodwind classes, the Honors Band & Jazz Band and assists with the Symphonic Band. Mr. Guidry previously was head director at Lake Highlands Junior High School in Richardson ISD and Associate Band Director at McKinney Boyd High School in McKinney ISD. Under his direction, the Arbor Creek Honors Band received consistent first division ratings at UIL Concert & Sight-Reading Contests and local festivals as well as Best in Class awards. The Honors Band has been selected by the Foundation for Music Education as a National Winner in the Mark of Excellence National Wind Band Honors Project two consecutive years—2014 & 2015. Most recently, the Honors Band placed 4th in the 2014-2015 TMEA CC State Honor Band Contest. While at Lake Highlands JH, the band program grew from under 200 to over 300 students. The Concert Band (2nd band) received Sweepstakes at UIL for the first time in over 20 years and the Symphonic Band (top band) received only unanimous first divisions at UIL and other local festivals. The McKinney Boyd Symphonic Band I was awarded 1st divisions in numerous music festivals and UIL Concert and Sight-reading competitions. The marching band received only unanimous first division ratings at UIL and was a finalist in many festivals including UIL Area contest. Mr. Guidry is a magna cum laude graduate of the University of Houston Moores School of Music where he studied instrumental methods with John Benzer and saxophone with Dr. Karen Wylie. He also served as Principal Saxophonist in the University of Houston Wind Ensemble under the direction of Mr. Tom Bennett. Mr. Guidry was also a four-year member of the Spirit of Houston Cougar Marching Band under the direction of David Bertman. Before graduating, Mr. Guidry student taught at Aragon MS and Langham Creek HS in the Cypress Fairbanks ISD. His professional affiliations include the TMEA, TBA and TMAA.*

*Darcy Potter Williams is the head band director at Stiles Middle School. Born to parents who met in their beginner trombone class, Darcy is 100% a product of the Texas music system. Her own musical education began in her father's band hall in Harper, Texas, where she spent her afternoons learning to play any instrument she could find in the storage closet while waiting to go home. In middle school and high school, she studied flute with Mr. Paige Brooke, a 36-year former flautist with the New York Philharmonic. Darcy received her Bachelor of Music in 2004 from West Texas A&M University where she studied with Gary Garner, Don Lefevre, Russ Teweleit, and Sally Turk. Darcy is in her 12th year of teaching. She began her teaching career at Burnet Middle School where she taught for 6 years. In 2009, her band won the Texas Outstanding Performance Series. After moving to Deep Park Middle School in Austin her band was selected to perform at the Western International Band Clinic (WIBC) in 2011. Most recently, Darcy and associate director Jenna Yee opened Stiles Middle School in 2012. In July 2015 they placed 3rd in the TMEA CC Honor Band Contest. In December 2015, they performed at The Midwest Clinic in Chicago. In addition to directing Honors Band, Darcy teaches beginner flute, double reeds, clarinet, saxophone, and trombone as well as assisting with Symphonic and Concert Bands.*



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# Creating Your Environment. Creating Your Success.

**Tom Harrington**

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Results. There are many days when it seems like the results are the only thing that's really important. We have great expectations on us. Each one of us feels the pressure to create a successful program at our school and success always seems to be the driving force for how we shape our environment.

The experiences we have over the years help make us a bit wiser and hopefully better. I have had the good fortune to open two schools as a head director. Each time I was able to avoid mistakes because of my past experiences. Then in 2012 we re-opened my current school because of a massive boundary shift. This created an opportunity to try out some new ideas I had for improving the environment in my band, and see what impact it would have on our success. It was time to put people first and see what would happen.

## **Have a Plan**

Remember when you were in college and your professors talked about having a philosophy? Well, if you haven't created one, now is a great time to do so. Here is mine.

***I want my kids to:***

- ***be excited and happy to be in band***
- ***love music***
- ***like playing well***

For me, this came from a deliberate plan to create a specific environment in my band hall. What do I want my band to look like? How do I want my students to treat each other? How do I want it to sound?

Your philosophy should also have a plan on how to interact with

your administration, school faculty, parents, and students, as well as for your personal growth.

## **Administration and Faculty**

I don't think any one thing can lead to a successful environment, so allow me to begin with building your relationship with your boss. Do your best to be knowledgeable of the operation of your school. Understand the master schedule and be ready to help problem solve if your principal asks for help. Create trust with your principal and administrative team, and foster a relationship with them. Know the names of their children and be interested in them as people. Learn what is important to them and keep that in mind when making requests. Don't just go to them when you have a problem; and when you do, have possible solutions ready to go. Be deliberate about creating a positive opinion others have of you in the building. Also, brag on your band kids. Invite faculty to the band hall to be an audience when you have a success to celebrate. Your kids will love the attention, and so will your principal. Above all, they must know you are in it for the right reason. You can focus on being successful as long as your administrators understand you are working to make kids successful and not resume building.

## **Band Staff**

Your job is to keep your staff on the same page, but it's also to nurture a positive work environment for them as well. Start the year with social time before the first day. Once the year gets going, it's hard to create a relationship

that wasn't there to begin with. The better the work environment for your staff, the better their attitude will be in front of the kids, and the more they will stay on message.

Lead and be a solid person. Be someone they can count on to do the right thing. Be first to work if possible and model how you want them to treat students. Encourage their loyalty to the program. Ask their opinion and listen to them. Support them, especially in front of others. Be their mentor and do your best to treat them like you want your principal to treat you and your program.

## **Parents**

Winning over parents is actually very easy. Appreciate their time, treat their children well, and communicate what is going on in your band to them. In my situation, we have limited opportunity for face time with 5th grade students, and there are six outstanding elective choices for them to choose from. When parents are waiting at soccer practice or after church youth night, they talk about school. Parents of younger students are constantly picking the brains of other parents to find out what quality activities there are in middle school to choose from. Parents sign their kids up for band because they want their child to be in an activity and get some music along the way. But above all, they want their child to feel successful, accepted, happy, and to be around good kids. Be deliberate in how you treat parents as well as how you treat their children. One frustrated parent on Facebook can do lasting damage

## **Creating Your Environment. Creating Your Success.**

to your reputation. Conversely, happy parents can be great ambassadors for your program.

### **Students**

All decisions for your program must begin and end with keeping the well-being of your students in mind. They are the purpose for the program. The reason we reach for success is to provide it for the students. Treat your students well. In my community, there are many awesome activities besides band where kids can get involved. Many parents have their children hopping from one activity to another. Band can be seen as too involved, too time consuming, too rigorous, and too expensive. We will lose them to something else if we are not providing enough engaging moments. Middle school directors remember: our number one job is to get our students to the high school band. This however, does not mean your goal is to make band easy, but rather a rich activity in their lives. Band is most effective for its students when it is done well. Every part of your program should be at a high level, inside and out. They should see value in being a part of the band. This is a critical key to retention.

### **Individual musicianship should be the backbone of your program**

“To have a better band, develop better players”. These wise words are from my friend Brian Merrill and while this may seem obvious, it is as underappreciated as it is true. All great band programs encourage the individual musician. Never miss an opportunity to celebrate a student’s success publicly. Encourage students to play in front of each other often and define your expectations of how they should respond to each other positively. I believe a person fundamentally changes for the better in the process of learning how to practice and achieve musically. Students become invested in the program and are more likely to behave better and work harder. We know that success encourages success, so they motivate others to play well. They will rehearse better and probably march better also. They even may become better students in school. So besides the obvious benefit of playing well and helping the band sound better, you are helping to create outstanding young people while improving your environment.

Appreciate their time and be appropriate in all areas of your life with students. Never use innuendo with anyone

and avoid sarcasm even with your older students. You are trying to establish a positive environment in your band hall where students feel safe. When you foster a positive environment students from all demographics will thrive.

### **Keeping yourself on track**

I think it is important to remember this: I will have a better band if I am a better teacher, and I am responsible for what my band sounds like. Spend some time identifying your deficiencies then work to fill those gaps. Go to conventions and go to the clinics. Put yourself in the company of other positive, success-minded teachers. Have a mentor. Have clinicians whom you respect come to your school, and listen to them. Visit other schools when possible and keep a notebook of what you learn. Do your best to become the best musician possible. Get excited about learning to teach and in the process your job will become much more fun.

So yes, success is important. But it’s important how you define success to your community. As we just saw at the area and state marching contests, there are a lot of great bands in Texas. Success happens every day. Remind them how fun it is to learn drill or music, and doing it together. Speak in terms of playing for your audience more than you talk about pleasing judges. Program music they will like and talk about how fun it is to play for each other and celebrate small successes. Art doesn’t only happen in performance; it’s just as fulfilling when it happens at home in your band hall. When you take care of the individuals in your band and nurture the student musician, you are fostering an environment where students are happy to achieve. They are ready for success.

*Tom Harrington has been the band director at Spillane Middle School in the Cypress-Fairbanks ISD since it opened in the fall of 2005. He started teaching in the Spring ISD in 1990 as the assistant at Twin Creeks Middle School. In 1997, he moved to Cypress-Fairbanks where he became the band director at Dean Middle School until 2005. While at Dean, he was named the 2003 Teacher of the Year and again at Spillane in 2011. In 2012, he was added to the CFISD Wall of Fame. Mr. Harrington’s bands have earned numerous UIL Sweepstakes and Festival Awards. In 2009 and 2015, the Symphonic Band at Spillane advanced to the area level of the state CCC honor band competition as well as being named as a Commended Winner in the National Wind Band Honors Competition in 2014 and 2015. In 2006, he was named as a member of the TBA Board of Directors serving as president in 2011-12. In addition, he has been a conductor at the Sam Houston State University Band Camp since 1998. He has been a member of both TBA and the TMEA since 1986 and is a member of the Alpha Chapter of Phi Beta Mu as well as TMAA.*

# A Learning Approach to Marimba Performance

Brian Zator

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Several long-term and short-term goals can be applied to the process of learning a new piece of music: sound quality, technique, correct notes/rhythms, dynamics, phrasing, and performance presence. The order listed does not denote level of importance, but rather the order at which musicians learn a new piece of music. The first two aspects, however, are part of a long-term process spanning the course of one's career. Sound quality and proper technique should become natural characteristics of everyone's playing, regardless of the music. The other four aspects are short-term goals related to the specific piece of music being prepared at a particular moment.

## Sound Quality

Sound quality is one of the most important aspects of playing any instrument. In regards to the marimba, several salient aspects include playing areas, mallet selection, and technique. Percussionists need to train their ears to hear a good marimba sound and to understand how and why that is different from a bad marimba sound. Once this is achieved, players must train their hands to execute a good sound on a consistent basis.

Poor sound quality on the marimba is usually thin, dull, and choked; therefore, a full, rich, and resonant sound is optimal. There are three general playing areas on a keyboard. First, the center of bar has the most fundamental, not as much

overtone resonance, and a poignant attack. Secondly, just off-center has the largest gamut of overtones and a strong fundamental tone. Playing just off center also has a slightly warmer attack than playing in the center. The node, or point at which the string runs through the bar, has almost no resonance or fundamental tone. This area is most often used for special effects. In regards to the upper manual, the edge of the bar has a similar sound quality to hitting just off-center; however, there is a slightly different sound quality between the edge and just off center.

Factors such as desired sound quality, tempo, range, and physical motion will determine whether or not you can play just off-center or on the edges of the accidentals. I prefer to aim for off-center, regardless of range, in order to achieve a consistent sound. Overall, marimbists must practice to achieve consistency with their playing areas. Train your ear by listening for changes in sound quality, and strive for consistency that can be applied in your exercises, warm-ups, sight-reading, and ultimately, your performances.

Mallet selection also affects the sound. There are many brands and types of mallets on the market, so experimenting and finding what you are comfortable with, both in feel and sound production, is important. Mallets should have enough weight to create the rich sounds desired, as the mallets should do most of the work

for you in regards to producing that full, rich sound.

## Technique

There are many different schools of thought in regards to technique. Overall, whatever technique you use, the end result should allow you to *always* produce a good sound without having to think about it. Your technical motions should encompass *relaxed* and *natural* movements and should not hinder achievement in the other aspects of playing.

As previously mentioned, technique can directly affect sound quality. An exercise I use with my students is to have them play a scale exercise using different amounts of pressure. They first play with a tight fulcrum and no wrist motion, and then they play with a relaxed fulcrum, wrist motion, and added arm weight. Instantly, they can hear and feel the difference between the two methods. I also have them stand on one end of the room with their eyes closed as I demonstrate these two methods. With their eyes closed, their sense of hearing is heightened and they are able to detect aural differences between the two.

Without discussing specific techniques, there are important technical building blocks applicable to four-mallet and two-mallet performance. These fundamentals are the rudiments of mallet playing. Isolating, practicing, and developing the following techniques will allow you to learn music easier and much faster.

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Four-mallet rudiments/sticking patterns include double vertical, single alternating, single independent, double lateral, and triple lateral stroke types (names adopted from Leigh Howard Stevens' *Method of Movement for Marimba*, Keyboard Publications Productions).

Two-mallet rudiments include techniques found in standard keyboard literature. The patterns include scales (step-wise motion), intervals (thirds/fourths/fifths/etc.), arpeggios (chord patterns), double stops (used at different intervals), and double strokes (used with step-wise or larger interval patterns).

Applying these fundamental stroke types in different warm-up and exercise patterns in different key areas will improve motion between the upper and lower manuals and knowledge of all scales. Breaking down two-mallet playing to the basics helps build stronger technique. This allows one to concentrate on making music while playing with relaxed and natural motions.

These two and four-mallet patterns and exercises can be found in my method book, "Keyboard Fundamentals, with Play-Along Tracks", published by Innovative Percussion. The play-along tracks contain a wide variety of musical styles and tempos to allow students of all ages to enjoy practicing the fundamentals. Large posters containing the two and four-mallet fundamentals (similar to the drum rudiment posters) are also included with every book.

### Correct Notes/Rhythms

One must learn the notes accurately and be able to play them correctly on a consistent basis. Although this is stating the obvious, this assertion is extremely important. When first learning a new piece of music, the tendency is to learn the notes and rhythms at too fast a pace, which leads to inconsistent accuracy. If a foundation of the correct notes and rhythms is not present, the application process of the other aspects discussed here is more time-consuming and frustrating.

Keep the tempo slow until the notes and rhythms can be performed correctly. The final tempo will be much easier to perform and will feel more comfortable if the notes and rhythms are part of your natural kinesthetic motions.

Whatever the final tempo is desired for a performance, one must progress naturally and not force things; the correct notes and rhythms, and music, will suffer if a faster tempo is the player's primary goal.

### Dynamics

Dynamics are very important for expressing the composer's ideas in greater detail. Without dynamics, music is lifeless. While dynamics are usually clearly marked by the composer and editor, it is the performers' discretionary decisions that will determine the final result. Since you can't always ask composers about specific details of their music, you need to interpret what they wanted.

As musicians, we also want and need to be able to express the music the way we hear it in our own mind. This is a fine line between "what the composer wants" and "what the performer wants." Although there is flexibility, it is the performer's responsibility to fully express the composer's intentions in his or her own way.

To fully communicate the musical thoughts, ideas, and expressions within a piece of music, one needs a wide dynamic spectrum and must demonstrate a clear difference between each dynamic marking. Exaggerating the dynamics will help deliver the music to the audience. First, play the dynamics exactly how the composer has written. Then, experiment with some of your own ideas and make notes in the music to ensure consistency regarding musical sections you would like to adjust and certain dynamic relationships you would like to portray. Ask yourself the following questions. "What relationships do I want to provide between a *mezzo-forte* and a *mezzo-piano* marking?" "What is the form of the piece, and how do the different sections differ in terms of dynamic expression?" "How should the stylistic differences between one section marked *forte* and a different section also marked *forte* be related or not related?"

Listen to professional recordings to gain ideas from the experts. I recommend listening to the recording to see if you enjoy the piece, then putting it away until you have learned the notes yourself. Once you have lived with the piece on your own, then go back and listen to the recording again.

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This will allow you to make your own musical decisions and not merely emulate the other performer.

### Phrasing

The phrasing aspects of a piece deal with “big-picture” ideas. When performing music, one must know the overall form and the structure of the different melodic and rhythmic motives that give shape to the piece. Knowing where the “peaks” and “valleys” occur in the music will help you accurately communicate the music to an audience.

The overall form of the music (e.g., sonata, theme/variations, ternary, etc.) should be analyzed and then used to break down the smaller sections to find similarities and contrasting elements. Mark primary cadences and determine their importance in the overall form. In regards to phrases, use your own musical judgment to determine where phrases exist and what to do with those phrases. Experiment with different ways of phrasing a section of the music. Because of harmonic and motivic elements, the musical motion is constantly moving forward, and it is the performer’s duty to determine where arrival points exist within phrases and sections of music. These phrasing aspects could be applied in the early learning stages, but should be clearer once the piece becomes performance-ready.

Understanding the form and phrase structure, along with motivic and harmonic elements, allows you to create a clear musical direction and generate interest and unity throughout the piece. Determine what works best for the music and write it down, although a good piece will oftentimes speak for itself; sometimes the performer just needs to get out of the way and let the music speak.

### Performance Presence

The previous five aspects apply foremost to learning a piece of music. This last aspect deals with delivering your

interpretation of a composer’s musical ideas to an audience. Musicians have a great opportunity when they perform, as they can express their emotions and feelings about

a piece to effectively communicate their ideas. But one aspect that gives a performance that certain “spark” is the performer’s stage presence.

Your presence will help engage the audience at a much higher level. Percussionists have a great advantage over other musicians because our instruments provide us the opportunity to be extremely visual. In regards to marimba, we have about nine feet of space on a five-octave marimba to move back and forth, and we are holding two, four, or even six mallets at a time. The added visual stimuli our natural motions create are also bigger than other instrumentalists that move a



bow, depress keys/valves, or “tickle the ivories.”

There are two categories of stage presence: what you can do on stage and what not to do on stage. If you haven’t worked on the following aspects, it might take some time to feel comfortable instilling these into your performance; therefore, using a mirror or video-taping yourself will aid in your improvements.

Facial expressions and body movements can help engage the audience as well as communicate your ideas to the audience. When playing a fun and light piece, don’t be afraid to enjoy the music (smiling is okay); if the audience sees you enjoying playing the piece, they will likely enjoy listening to it. Without over-exaggerating your facial expressions, small differences will make mood changes flow from one to the next. Elation and anxiety have two different contexts, as well as two different facial expressions. Instead of forcing or over-planning these actions, become immersed in the music and let your natural facial and body motions perform as well.

## A Learning Approach to Marimba Performance

Particular body movements can help various aspects of the music. They can set the mood for the opening of the piece and should communicate the differences before the first note is ever played. For example, the beginning of “Time for Marimba” by Minoru Miki has a different energy than “Two Movements for Marimba” by Toshimitsu Tanaka. Your body movements can also help to denote phrases and provide seamless transitions. For instance, if there is a sudden half cadence preceded by a rise in musical intensity, the audience will probably be holding its breath until the resolution. Bring the intensity to a higher level by not moving a muscle, and hold your breath before resolving the chord. You can consciously engage the audience by utilizing the other five aspects and also by your presentation of the music.

Regarding what *not* to do on stage, don’t “tell” the audience that you missed a note. Some will know that you made a mistake, but most will not. To the audience, everything you are doing should seem effortless and intentional. Never let the audience know something didn’t go as planned, as this will only deter from your overall performance. No matter what happens, stay calm, forget about what went wrong, and move on.

Overall, you should display confidence. Most likely you worked on the music for a long time and spent countless hours preparing for that particular performance. Be assured of yourself and focus on the positive aspects of your playing.

### Conclusion

As musicians, we are constantly striving to achieve performance perfection. While this is nearly impossible, there are ways we can continue to pursue a higher level of performance. By combining long-term goals of sound quality and technique with short-term goals associated with a particular piece of music, we can attain an approach towards a more complete performance.

*Dr. Brian Zator is the Percussion Area Coordinator at Texas A&M University-Commerce, having joined the faculty in 2001. He has performed as a soloist on five continents, at Carnegie Hall, and recently released two marimba CD’s on Equilibrium Records: Zamiki: Music for Solo Marimba, and Zoomorphs: Chamber Music with Marimba and Percussion. Dr. Zator is currently President-Elect of the Percussive Arts Society, and will be President from 2017-2018. Within Texas, he is the Chair of the Percussion PML Selection Committee, given multiple clinics at TMEA and TBA, judged the Texas State Solo and Ensemble Contest, and has selected the TMEA All-State percussion etudes three times.*

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# T-TESS: Showcasing What We Do As Music Educators (Part 2 of a 4-part series)

Monica Ruiz-Mills

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As you read this, it is my hope you have had a successful first semester with your music programs. By now, at a minimum you have submitted your goal setting for the year. Possibly, you may have made revisions due to outcomes or assessments from the fall. The purpose of this article is to analyze the first three domains within the T-TESS System: Planning, Instruction and Learning Environment. As music educators, we know first-hand the necessity of a planned lesson if we are to attain student success. So what does planning look like in the music world? This is a valid question, as the T-TESS model rates the lesson and the activities, not the instructor (T-TESS Rubric, 2016, February). Remember, it is essential to collect artifacts (programs, recordings, contest critique sheets, music scores, etc.) to capture what is said by the director and accomplished by the students. The T-TESS rubric is based on a preponderance of evidence and no longer determined by percentages, meaning we must now demonstrate what we do and how our students will accomplish the objectives and demonstrate understanding instead of quantifying the percentage of students on task. In essence, it is what we do on a daily basis as we reflect and prepare our lessons to improve our students' musicianship. It is important that your lesson is clear and performance objectives are identifiable to your appraiser, clarifying any questions in the Pre-Conference.

## Domain 1 – Planning

The Planning Domain consists of four dimensions: Standards and Alignment, Data and Assessments, Knowledge of Students, and Activities. This portion of the evaluation system involves time reviewing the music standards in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as the domain is scored on alignment to the TEKS, formal and informal methods to measure and analyze student progress, and ensuring high levels of learning, achievement, and the social-emotional development of all students. As we teach, we scaffold instruction for all students because of the various ability levels within the ensemble. But how do you explain that to an administrator without a fine arts or music background? I always refer to Stephen Covey's phrase, "begin with the end in mind" (*7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, 1989). What is it that you are trying to accomplish and how are you going to help the students understand and attain it? Starting from this premise will give you the tools necessary to explain your lesson.

First, identify which TEKS will be covered throughout your lesson and how activities and assessments are aligned to the TEKS. As music educators, we are constantly showcasing student work through performances and receiving feedback. Document how this collaborative culture informs your practice. Areas to address during the Pre-Conference

as you discuss planning: lesson sequence, relevance to students' prior understanding and integrating other content areas. Identify how you utilize data for your class throughout the planning process. What benchmarks determine which areas to address? We think of data as numbers; instead, refer to data as observables. What do you observe when you hear and watch your student musicians and how are those factors addressed? Utilize critique sheets from adjudicators or evaluations from music software programs. Time spent on planning will assist administrators in understanding how lessons are prepared and will lead to knowing how to evaluate and rate Domains 2 and 3.

## Instruction and Learning Environment (2 & 3)

One way to ensure that your lesson is understood by administrators (and students) is to begin the practice of framing your lessons. One approach that lends itself to all contents, is based on *The Fundamental Five* (Cain & Laird, 2011). As you refer to your planning document to prepare a clear beginning, middle and closing of the lesson, develop a lesson frame.

- **What is a Lesson Frame:**

A Content Objective, TEKS and Closing Task.

- **Where is a Lesson Frame:**

The Lesson Frame should be posted prominently in the room *throughout* the lesson, either on the board or digitally posted.

## T-TESS: Showcasing What We Do As Music Educators (Part 2 of a 4-part series)

• **How is a Lesson Frame Used:** Review the Lesson Frame at the *beginning* and *end* of class (at a minimum). If you were addressing articulation and accents, continually make reference and have students identify the objective throughout the lesson. It's also a great tool to use at *transition* points to keep students oriented to the learning.

• **Why is a Lesson Frame Important:** A well-written lesson frame builds context and relevance for students. These are exactly the tools our most struggling students need to be successful. This is how we demonstrate differentiated instruction for the diverse learning groups in our music programs. Framing the lesson sets the academic expectations that challenge all students and provides evidence of student mastery and understanding. The level of rigor in your closing task, exit activity, or measure of student success may not accurately reflect the rigor in your instruction, but it will demonstrate the level of rigor students reached in their learning!

As the lesson continues, it is important to know that Domain 2 centers on Content Knowledge and Expertise and Domain 3 focuses on the Classroom Environment, Routines and Procedures. There are strategies that we use while rehearsing our ensembles—but may not consistently implement—that indicate student understanding and address the key areas in T-TESS. For example, strategies on how the teacher uses content and pedagogical expertise to design and execute lessons are aligned to the TEKS and student needs. Referring back to *The Fundamental Five*, integrate a system that is student-centered and actively engaging using some of these suggested methods:

• **Frequency** - Stop for 30 seconds to 3 minutes of student interaction, asking students to demonstrate or provide feedback on the objective.

• **Group Size** - Have students/sections model the objective/task.

• **Seed Question** - Strategic, preplanned questions keep students focused and help teachers determine students' varying levels of understanding.

• **Power Zone** - Move among students as they interact for monitoring and management. Do not just stand at the podium, be interactive within the ensemble.

Use this simple chart from *The Fundamental Five* to plan effective questions in advance. Questions may need to be altered for the ensemble rehearsal, but the end result is the same: student engagement and understanding of the lesson. Remember, students should have a precise question to answer or specific objective to demonstrate and a narrow window of time to do it before transitioning back to instruction.

Smart Questions	Smarter Questions	Smartest Questions
Who is it that...	How would you use...	What would happen if...
Tell why...	How is this similar to...	Develop a plan to...
Give an example of...	Contrast/compare this to...	Find a better solution to...
What do you think will happen next...	What is the relationship between...	What is the most important...

Incorporating your daily drill or warm-up into an authentic sequenced scaffold lesson will demonstrate your ability in differentiating instruction, monitoring and adjusting for all students, effectively communicating and creating an environment that is established, engaging, and maintaining high expectations in a collaborative setting. As we have purposeful conversations with school appraisers, we expose them to an organic process that is based on the scope and sequence of the TEKS. We also demonstrate how through music, all students are capable of attaining high academic and social-emotional expectations for themselves through an autonomous setting that is positive and encouraging. Providing opportunities for students to apply their strengths, knowledge and experiences to enhance each other's learning.



## T-TESS: Showcasing What We Do As Music Educators (Part 2 of a 4-part series)

One last thought, I leave you with this quote:

Our most effective teachers show that great teaching is leadership...In every highly effective classroom we find a teacher who, like any great leader, rallies team members (in this case, students and their families) around an ambitious vision of success. We find a teacher who plans purposefully and executes effectively to make sure students reach that vision, even as that teacher also continues to learn and improve. Without exception, these teachers define their role as doing whatever it takes to ensure their students' success.

—Steven Farr (*The Effective Educator*, 2010)

Music Educators are leaders who rally students to success through great preparation and dedication.

The next segment of this series (*Bandmasters Review*, April 2017) will focus on the post conference, preparing for the summative and professional practices and responsibilities.

Monica Ruiz-Mills holds a Bachelor of Music Education and a Master of Music from The University of Texas at San Antonio and earned the Principal Certification through Region 20, Cohort XIII. She is currently the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching, Learning and Assessments in the San Marcos C.I.S.D. She has served as a Fine Arts Coordinator in the Harlandale I.S.D. and as an Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Instruction in North East I.S.D. Mrs. Ruiz-Mills was a Band Director for 22 years, holding positions at the middle school and high school level. Mrs. Ruiz-Mills is pursuing a PhD in School Improvement at Texas State University (Cohort 15). Professional affiliations include: Texas Bandmasters Association, Texas Music Educators Association, Texas Association of School Administrators, Texas Association of Secondary School Principals and American Association of University Women. She is married to Gary Mills and has 2 puppies (Bandit and Jackie O) and a cat (Cupcake).

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# Congratulations to the U.I.L. Marching Contest State Champs



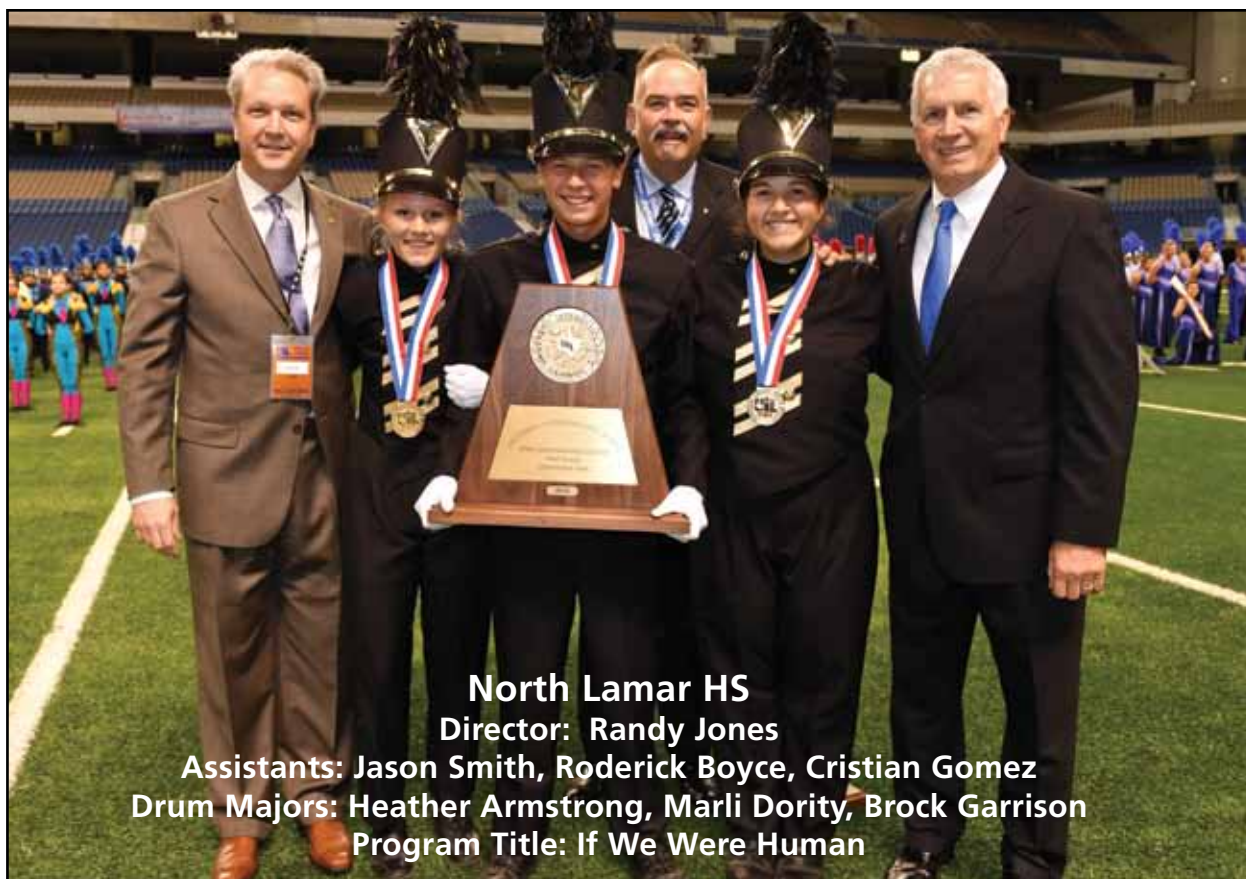
Congratulations to all who qualified to participate in the 2016 U.I.L. State Marching Band Contest. All of the bands who performed at State deserve special recognition. These bands have been practicing since last summer, working hard on their marching program. All have made their schools and community proud!

The U.I.L. marching competition started in October with hundreds of bands competing at the Region level. The top bands were then chosen to compete at the Area level. Finally, the top 4A and 6A bands were chosen to compete for the coveted state title in November. Congratulations to these students and directors for their commitment to excellence.



## Congratulations to all the 4A Bands and Directors who competed in the state competition:

Abilene Wylie HS .....Mike Lunney	Greenwood HS.....Suzanne Rhynes	Paris HS .....Charles Grissom
Argyle HS .....Kathy Johnson	Grulla HS .....Oscar Gonzalez	Pecos HS .....Aaron Sanderson
Atlanta HS.....Keith Sanders	Hidalgo Early College HS..Jorge Lozano	Port Isabel HS.....Scott Hartsfield
Canton HS.....Mike Bartley	Kennedale HS.....Erol Oktay	Princeton HS .....Brandon Brewer
Castleberry HS .....Stephanie Ballaro	La Feria HS.....Eddie Benitez	Rio Hondo HS .....Benjamin Keltner
China Spring HS .....Pam Hyatt	Little Cypress Mauriceville HS	Spring Hill HS .....Randy Kiser
Crystal City HS.....Jose Honstein	.....Jose Ochoa	Springtown HS.....Chris McLellan
Fredericksburg HS....John Rauschuber	North Lamar HS.....Randy Jones	Wills Point HS.....John Young



**North Lamar HS**  
**Director: Randy Jones**  
**Assistants: Jason Smith, Roderick Boyce, Cristian Gomez**  
**Drum Majors: Heather Armstrong, Marli Dority, Brock Garrison**  
**Program Title: If We Were Human**

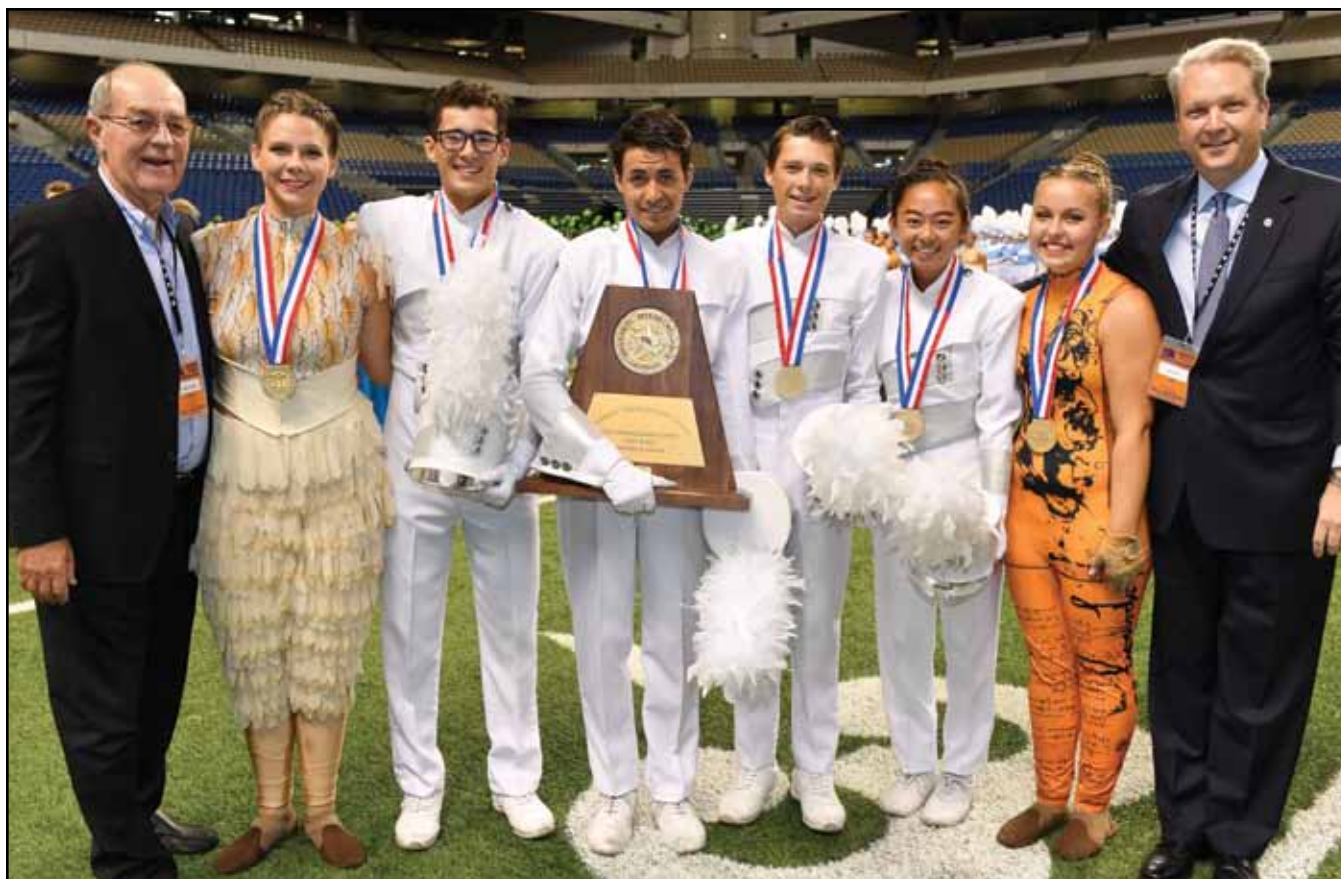


## Congratulations to all the 6A Bands and Directors who competed in the state competition:

Americas HS.....Henry Vega  
 Berkner HS.....Jason Schayot  
 Brazoswood HS .....Martin Montoya  
 Cedar Ridge HS.....Nolan Loyde  
 Clear Brook HS .....Brad Hughes  
 Clements HS .....Daniel Galloway  
 College Park HS .....Charlotte Royall  
 Coppell HS.....Gerry Miller  
 Coronado HS .....Mark Saenz  
 Cy-Fair HS .....Mark Veenstra  
 Cypress Falls HS .....Shawn McAnear  
 Dawson HS .....Ryan Agard  
 Duncanville HS .....David Brandon  
 Flower Mound HS....Brent Biskup

Franklin HS.....Bruce Beach  
 Friendswood HS .....Gregory Dick  
 Harlingen HS .....Ronnie Rios  
 Harlingen South HS..Shane Shinsato  
 Hebron HS .....Andy Sealy  
 Hendrickson HS.....Garth Gundersen  
 Homer Hanna HS.....Dennis Ewing  
 James Bowie HS .....Ryan Thomas  
 Keller HS.....Mark McGahey  
 L. D. Bell HS .....Van Mathews  
 Langham Creek HS ..Gloria Ramirez  
 Leander HS .....Robert Selaiden  
 Marcus HS.....Amanda Drinkwater

North Shore Senior HS  
 .....Shane Goforth  
 Permian HS.....Jeff Whitaker  
 Plano East Senior HS.Evelio Villarreal  
 Ronald Reagan HS....Dan Morrison  
 Round Rock HS.....David Mobley  
 Spring HS.....Terri Risinger  
 Stephen F. Austin HS.Bob Chreste  
 The Woodlands HS ..Joni Perez  
 United HS .....John Mallon  
 Vandegrift HS.....Mike Howard  
 Vista Ridge HS .....Bryan Christian  
 Westlake HS.....Kerry Taylor  
 Wylie HS.....Todd Dixon



**Flower Mound HS**  
**Director: Brent Biskup**  
**Assistants: Jana Harvey, Zach Sherbern, Darrin Hicks, William Martin**  
**Drum Majors: Marshall Cahill, Alex Palma, Jacob Stiller, Nicole Zhang**  
**Program Title: Leonardo's Dream**

# 2016 The Midwest Clinic Performances

Congratulations to these Texas schools who were selected to perform at The Midwest Clinic in Chicago.

## BANDS

Hebron High School Wind Symphony  
Andy Sealy  
Carrollton, TX

Spring High School Wind Ensemble  
Gabe Musella  
Spring, TX

Creek Valley Honor Winds  
Kimberly Cooley  
Carrollton, TX

Artie Henry Middle School Honors  
Band  
Robert T. Herrings, III  
Cedar Park, TX

Roma Middle School Symphonic  
Winds  
Corey L. Graves  
Roma, TX

Cockrill Middle School Honors Band  
Gary Williams  
McKinney, TX

## CHAMBER ENSEMBLES

Round Rock High School  
Trombone Choir  
Zach Shoepe and David Mobley  
Round Rock, TX

Ridgeview Middle School  
Percussion Ensemble  
Megan Wike  
Round Rock, TX

## JAZZ ENSEMBLES

Caliente  
Jose Antonio Diaz  
Houston, TX

## ORCHESTRAS

L. V. Berkner High School  
Symphony Orchestra  
Craig Needham  
Richardson, TX

Dulles High School Honors Orchestra  
Michael Alan Isadore  
Sugar Land, TX

Lady Bird Johnson High School  
Forza String Orchestra  
Karen George  
San Antonio, TX

Faubion Middle School  
Honors Orchestra  
Kari Zamora  
McKinney, TX

Dulles Middle School  
Symphony Orchestra  
Sally Kirk  
Sugar Land, TX

# NAMMB Contest Awards

Congratulations to these bands and directors who had outstanding performances at the 2016 National Association of Military Marching Band Contest:

## CLASS 2A

1st Place Carlisle High School  
2nd Place Union Grove High School  
3rd Place Timpson High School

## CLASS 3A

1st Place New Diana High School  
2nd Place West Rusk High School  
3rd Place New Boston High School

## CLASS 4A

1st Place Spring Hill High School  
2nd Place Carthage High School  
3rd Place Cleveland High School

## CLASS 5A

1st Place Lindale High School  
2nd Place Hallsville High School  
3rd Place Jacksonville High School

## CLASS 6A

1st Place Lufkin High School

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## FRETTED – MATT SMITH

### Reading Chord Charts and “Shorthand”

For many years I have taught students heading into Jazz Ensembles how to read Chord charts and the “shorthand” used in the Real Book and other jazz notation.

For example, a small triangle signifies Major, a minus sign signifying minor, a “degree” signifies diminished and a plus sign signifies augmented.

For example: C-7 = C minor7, C+7 = C augmented7, etc.

Chords tell a student exactly what they contain. It's important to note that every chord contains information from the Major scale of the letter root of the chord. Chord formulas are as follows:

**Major** = 1, 3 and 5, referring to the first, third and fifth notes of the major scale of the root of the chord.

**Minor** = 1, b3 and 5

**Diminished** = 1, b3 and b5

**Augmented** = 1, 3 and #5

From there, 7th chords are

**Maj 7** = 1,3,5,7

**Min7** = 1,b3,5,b7

**Dominant7** = 1,3,5,b7

**Min7b5** = 1,b3,b5,b7. Here we have an example of how a chord explains itself. It's simply a minor 7 chord as described above with the 5th flatted.

From here, a student should be informed that since 8 is the octave of 1, 9 is the octave of 2, 11 is the octave of 4 and 13 is the octave of 6.

So, Amaj(triangle)7#11 would simply be Amaj7 (1,3,5,7) with an added #11 ( an octave above #4)

Using this logic, C7#9b5 would be described as C dominant 7 with a raised 9 (2) and a lowered 5

1,3,b5,b7,#9

This is also important for bass line construction, as it tells the player the component notes of the chord. It's all about understanding the Major scale, and then the chord name gives you all you need to know!

Matt Smith is a New York-raised, Austin-based musician who has over 30 years of experience performing, producing, instructing, writing, and leading clinics. Matt is a lifelong musical performer. He's performed with, opened for, or recorded with B.B. King, Sheryl Crow, Trey Anastasio, Al DiMeola, Greg Allman, Los Lobos, Johnny Winter, Buddy Guy, Adrian Legg, Ed Gerhard, Portishead and many others. A born troubadour, Matt has performed at numerous international guitar festivals including the Bath International Guitar Festival and the Montreal Guitar Festival. His family history of bands includes The Matt Smith Band, The Monstas, Matt Smith's World, Chop Shop, and The Hot Nut Riveters. Matt is excited to be working on a new album of his own.



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# Bandmasters Review

## Texas Bandmasters Association

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TBA will be celebrating our 70th Anniversary at the convention next summer! In recognition of this milestone, we have commissioned our Featured Composer, Brian Balmages, to write a grade 3 piece which will be premiered at the convention. We are pleased to invite schools to join in a consortium to support this project. Each school and director will be recognized in the cover of the score and will have exclusive performance rights during the fall semester after the convention. The piece will be published by The FJH Music Company in the spring of 2018. The cost is only \$500 per school and a limited number of applications will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. Contact the TBA office, a board member, or visit our website for more information.