



**Three Dimensional Marching Band:  
Techniques for Effective Musical and Visual  
Performance Through the Use of Staff  
Strengths to Maximize Efficiency**

*Clinicians:*

*Kathy Johnson and Michael Lemish*

*Featuring*

*Members of the Argyle Eagle Band*

*Sponsored by PyGraphics*

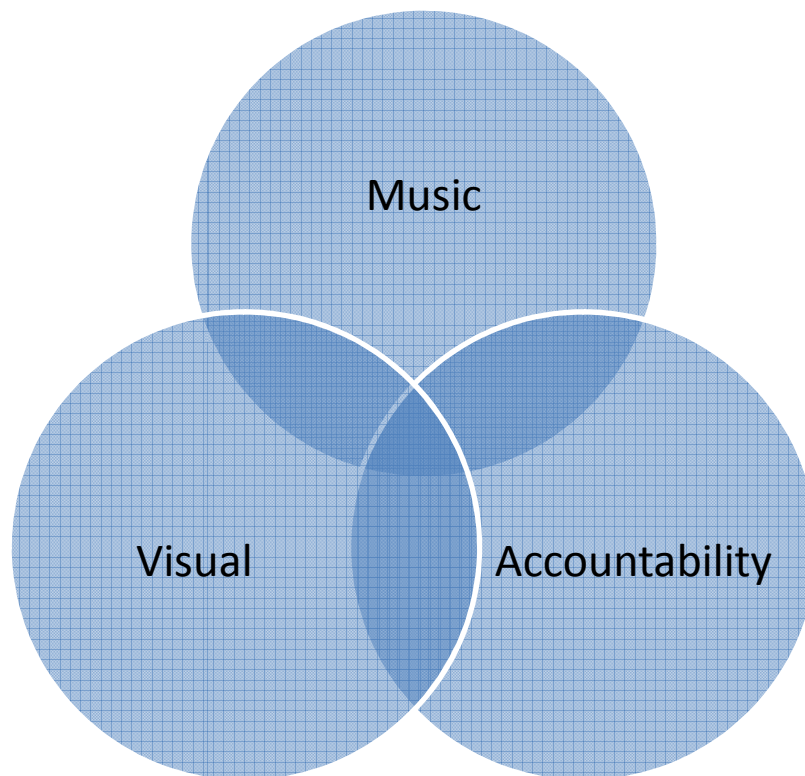
***Texas Bandmasters Association  
64<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention/Clinic***

***July 24-27, 2011***

***Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center  
San Antonio, Texas***

# Three Dimensional Marching Band: Techniques for Effective Musical and Visual Performance Through the Use of Staff Strengths to Maximize Efficiency.

---



## The Total Band Program

Good morning and thank you for getting up so early for this clinic! That's good conditioning for summer band! I'm Kathy Johnson and this is my assistant Michael Lemish.

Today we are going to focus on maximizing the efficiency of rehearsals by sharing the load so to speak. Everyone in the Argyle Band program has something unique to bring to the table. This includes staff, students, parents, and techs. We try to use everyone's strengths to get the most out of every rehearsal. We also try to be respectful of the time of our students, their parents, and our staff by coming to every rehearsal prepared and with a plan.

Each of the staff members have gravitated to their passions, however, we all contribute in every area.

- Adult Leadership
  - Individual strengths – mostly stay within captions, but everyone contributes in every area
    - Music/Student Leadership/Administrative – Kathy
    - Marching/Percussion – Michael
    - Guard/Drum Majors – Lucy
    - Micro Marching/Music – Ray

When choosing student leaders, we focus on "service leadership". All students interested in becoming a student leader, whether appointed or elected, have to write an essay and have to take a look within themselves to answer questions about their character, what it is they want to accomplish, and why they think they would do a good job.

- Student Leadership – Service
  - Strong Musicians
    - Drum Majors – by audition; Lucy Pascasio takes the drum majors under her wing and works with them throughout the audition process and during marching season.
    - Section Leaders – appointed - I appoint the section leaders based on my impressions from the moment they step in the door as a freshman. I consider character, musicianship, maturity, etc.
  - Strong Marchers - Michael talks about this
    - Marching Techs – appointed
      - Small groups
      - Assigned Rows and Rotate for better productivity
      - Field time for comments during learning drill

- Band Council - President, VP, Secretary, Class Reps, Historian; students fill out the paperwork, I put their names on a ballot and the band members vote on these.
  - Offices – Elected by band students

As stated later in the handout, we continue musical growth transitioning from the spring of the previous year into the fall and continue the cycle throughout the remainder of the year. We do not differentiate musically between "marching season" and "concert season" per se, but treat the fall during the time that we march a time for significant musical growth that will carry us into and through the spring. We strive for one sound, a balanced, blended, in tune, symphonic sound, throughout the year and in every venue. If you are wondering what a "symphonic sound" is, it is the ensemble sound that I hear in my head.

- Winds and Percussion
  - Symphonic Sounds Indoors and Outdoors
  - Breathing exercises – major component - throughout the year and from 6-12 grade. This helps the development of tone quality and intonation both indoors and outdoors. I have found the same exercises that we do for tone also helps with endurance while the students are moving on the field.
    - Tone and Intonation
    - Marching Endurance
  - Instrumentation
    - Balanced Ensemble - Year round, we strive for the same ensemble sound, both indoors and outside. We spend time on our 4 levels of listening and students are responsible for that no matter what the venue. Much of the vocabulary we use to teach the musical ensemble, we also apply to the marching.

Which brings us to the marching and demonstration portion of our clinic today. The small group of students who are representing Argyle today are all fairly young marchers and should give a good representation of what we will all see from our students on August 1st. They have only gone over these exercises three times, so they are not the high school band that we all have in November, but the one that we will start with in August. Please help me in thanking members of the Argyle High School Eagle Band for giving up a portion of their summer vacation to be here today for this clinic and also for Bill Watson's clinic at 10:45.

- Marching
  - Vocabulary - use musical terms as much as possible
    - Levels of marching (listening)
      - Individual marching fundamentals and concepts (self)

- Responsibility between you and the people beside you (section)
- Responsibility within the overall form (ensemble)
- Fundamentals/Conditioning
  - Breathing
  - Core control
- Drills
  - Tempos preps
  - Forward to backward
  - Slides and relays
  - Zigzag
  - Flip-Flops
  - Triangle
  - 3 Point turn
  - Turn on the move

(Michael will set this up and I will discuss Accountability)

- Application
  - Teaching drill
    - Dotting sets
    - Pre-dotting
  - Cleaning drill

(Kids Sit Down)

- Accountability - something that I feel very strongly about is teaching my students to think for themselves and on their feet, so to speak. I want them to make sound musical judgments and decisions on the fly. Inside and outside we learn about .....
  - Musical Common Sense - these are ideas that we know are musically sound, we just have to use them. For example: if you can hear yourself, you are either playing with a poor sound, playing too loud, or you are out of tune. I expect them to listen for themselves and make adjustments instantaneously without me telling them. Another example would be knowing if you are sharp or flat if you are tuning within the ensemble and what to do about it and to make that adjustment immediately.
    - Students think for themselves
  - Musicians Instinct - another concept that I use is Musicians Instinct. This relates to musical ideas like shaping phrases, use of air and airspeed, texturing, and coloring within the music. I want my students to apply these concepts instinctually from piece to piece.
    - What you do
    - Why you do it

- When to do what you know

## Process Creates the Product - Michael

- Show Planning
  - Timeline
  - Full Concept - music and drill need to be complimentary; what story to tell visually and musically
    - As much as we would like for our audience to see our vision, they may not necessarily pick out the story line by just listening to the music or through the drill; but it does keep you on track with synergy of the show.
  - We design our shows to make sense musically; beginning, middle, and end
    - Tension
    - Release
    - Climax
    - Conclusion
    - Five types of exposure
      - Brass - pretty easy
      - Woodwind - one of the harder ones
        - soloists
        - small groups
        - brass bop
      - Front Ensemble
      - Battery
        - Small breaks tend to work better than longer features
      - Guard
        - Integrated in the design of the show and not an afterthought
  - Plan to strengths within the ensemble
    - The music dictates what sounds we want from the ensemble
    - Music always comes first
    - Marching needs to be the visual representation of the music
      - Getting from one set to the next - it's the journey!
    - Layers
      - Allow the show to evolve into the concept throughout the season
      - Everything has a purpose - nothing is done just for the sake of doing it

## Life After Marching - **Kathy**

- Musical development year round
  - Fall prepares for spring which prepares for fall, etc.....
- Marching planning continues year round

## Contact Info:

Kathy Johnson - [kjohnson@argyleisd.com](mailto:kjohnson@argyleisd.com); 940..262.777 x 2633  
Michael Lemish - [mlemish@argyleisd.com](mailto:mlemish@argyleisd.com); 940.262.7777 x 2641  
Ray Hilley - [rhilley@argyleisd.com](mailto:rhilley@argyleisd.com); 940.262.7777 x 2631  
Lucy Pascasio - [lpascasio@argyleisd.com](mailto:lpascasio@argyleisd.com); 940.262.7777 x 2632

A special thanks to our friends and sponsor Pyware, located at booth number

