



**Texas Bandmasters Association
Convention/Clinic July 26-28, 2018**

**A Team Approach to Teaching a
Successful Marching Band**

**CLINICIANS:
Steve Wessels, Evan VanDoren,
Christopher Yee**

Demonstration Group: Cedar Park HS Band

A Team Approach to Successful Marching Band

Featuring the Cedar Park High School Band

Steve Wessels, Evan VanDoren, Christopher Yee, Kendall Stevenson & Justin Sullivan

The Cedar Park High School Band Staff will discuss and showcase rehearsal techniques focused on improving high school musicians during the marching band season. From movement to music, the entire staff will break down strategies to affect change in student performance and simplify your daily routine.

VISUAL FUNDAMENTALS (classroom setup)

• **CIRCLE**

- Provides clear line of sight between every student and teacher
- Great for use in classes and smaller groups
- Cedar Park HS practice field:



• **BLOCK**

- Students feel less individual accountability (less risk)
- Great for large groups and learning new material

MOVEMENT

• **BASIC DANCE VOCABULARY**

- Relevé
- Plié
- Lunges
- Ronde de jambe
- Passé

• **POSTURE (the foundation of quality marching & movement programs)**

• **"S Curve" Exercise**

- 5 Points of Alignment: Ankles, Knees, Hips, Shoulders, and Ears
- Allows for clear & tangible discussion of posture and how to improve
- Equal/even motion through space & time

For additional information on the Cedar Park HS Band, please visit: <http://www.cedarparkbands.org>

For questions on this clinic, please email: Steve.Wessels@leanderisd.org

A Team Approach to Successful Marching Band

• LEG SHAPE & WEIGHT TRANSFER

• Pointe Exercise (leg shape)

- Focuses on maintaining the length of the leg and moving from the hip
- Works to maintain posture (top three points of alignment) throughout

• 50/50 Exercise (weight transfer)

- All motion is based upon 50/50 weight distribution
- Applies leg motion learned in pointe exercise while layering in new responsibility of weight transfer
- This exercise results in students taking their first step

• MARK TIME

- Recreates the sensation of moving as much as possible
- Works on feet timing and musical relationship to feet in all rehearsals

• STEP OUTS

- Applies all previously discussed movement concepts in a very short exercise
- Helps to create a more realistic performance scenario
- Use step outs as often as possible, especially during "off the field" rehearsals

• ACROSS THE FLOORS

- Used for marching and body movement
- Individuals have more individual accountability to perform
- Great medium to use student leaders to teach

Video Supplement

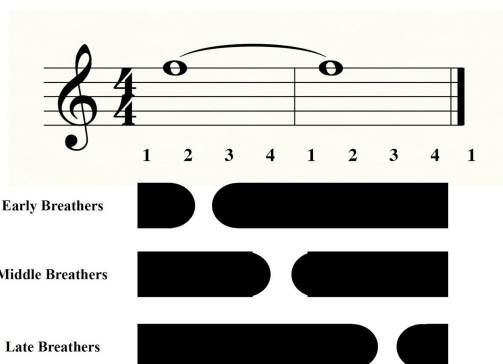
Tutorials breaking down each visual exercise below!

<http://bit.ly/cphsvisual>

MUSIC FUNDAMENTALS

• BREATHING (remembering to breathe)

- Sync the breath with the step
- Breathing tubes
- Stagger breathing
 - Very detailed definitions for where students should breathe
 - Using early, middle, and late breathing assignments for staggering



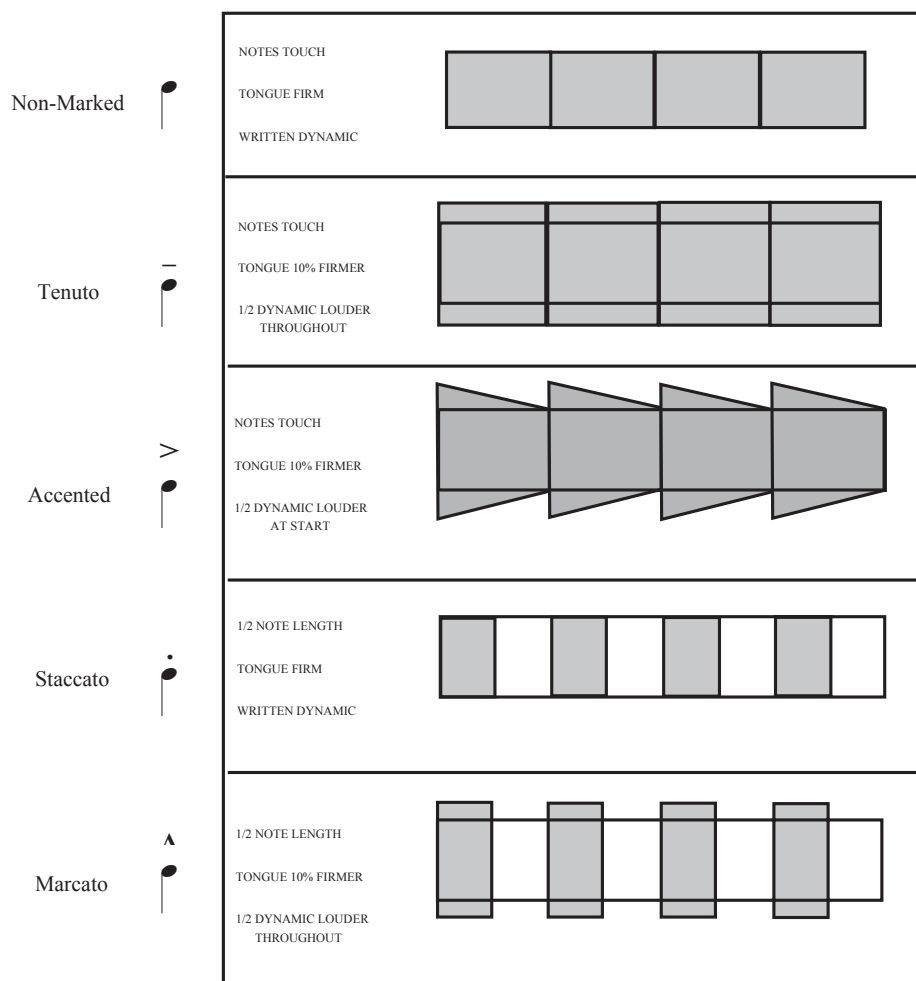
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A Team Approach to Successful Marching Band

- **LONG TONES** (synchronizing the feet with the three parts of sound)
 - **Synchronizing the feet with the breath**
 - 2 count breath (Breathe, Push, 1)
 - **Three Parts of Sound** (how they are affected)
 - Start
 - Sustain
 - Release
- **ARTICULATION** (defining note shape & length vs. developing ability to articulate as a skill)

Cedar Park Timberwolf Band Articulation Visualization



A Team Approach to Successful Marching Band

- **FLEXIBILITY/LIP SLURS**
 - **Purpose** (brass vs woodwinds)
 - Brass – Increase flexibility and develop embouchure
 - Woodwinds – Improve hand position and develop proper finger technique
 - **Unison vs Woodwind technique**
 - Performing in unison increases students' awareness of "ensemble noise"
 - **Brass Pedagogy**
 - Simplifies concepts
 - Improves students' understanding of how to move through/between all registers
- **SHOW ARTICULATIONS** (applying it all to the music)
 - **Purpose**
 - Based upon problematic show excerpts and composed of single pitches
 - Students are able to focus on fundamental concepts
 - Students can directly apply concepts to show excerpt
 - Process allows for an increased repetition of the most challenging components