



**Texas Bandmasters Association  
Convention/Clinic July 25-27, 2019**

**Excellence in the Small School Band  
Program**

**CLINICIANS:**

**Chris Clifton, Randy Jones, Jason Smith,  
Kristen Thompson**

**HENRY B. GONZALEZ CONVENTION CENTER  
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS**

# **Excellence in the Small School Band Program**

## **Texas Bandmasters Association Convention**

**Thursday, July 25, 2019**

**11:00 AM**

**CC 214CD**

### **Clinicians**

Chris Clifton  
Carlisle High School  
2A- Region 21

Randy Jones & Jason Smith  
North Lamar High School  
4A- Region 4

Kristen Thompson  
Atlanta Middle School  
C- Region 4

### **Clinic Overview**

A round table discussion of the things we do daily to help our students and programs be successful. Each panel member will be giving insight to techniques and concepts that they feel are important to their programs. The topics listed below will be discussed at today's clinic with time provided at the end of the clinic for questions from the audience.

**Topic # 1- Building Successful Student/Teacher Relationships**

**Topic # 2- Student Accountability and Music Passoff Systems**

**Topic # 3- Team Teaching and Staff Responsibilities**

**Topic # 4- Bridging the Gap from Junior High Band to High School**

**Topic # 5- Summary Round (Individual Topics)**

**Randy Jones- Intonation & Daily Drills**

**Jason Smith- Technique Sheets for Difficult Music**

**Chris Clifton- Efficiency of Rehearsal Time & Concert Prep**

**Kristen Thompson- Avoid Burnout for You and Your Students**

### **Clinician Contact Information**

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**Atlanta Middle School Symphonic Band, 2019 Class C Honor Band**

## **Kristen Thompson, Director**

### **Atlanta ISD:**

- Atlanta has a population of 5,675 people and is located in the Piney woods of East Texas.
- Atlanta ISD has an enrollment of 1,760 students grades K-12.
- Atlanta ISD is a low socioeconomic district and has 68% of our students are on free or reduced lunch.

### **Atlanta Band Program:**

- There are about 450 students in the Atlanta band program, grades 6-12. We have 80% of the middle school and 33% of the high school enrollment involved in our band program.
- Beginning band consists of mostly 6th graders and is taught in 3 homogenous classes everyday for 43 minutes. 6th graders are highly encouraged to participate in band and we have a 98% participation rate for beginning band.
- 7th and 8th graders are divided into Symphonic or Concert Bands, ability based. Symphonic Band averages 65 students and Concert Band averages 85 students.
- All band classes, middle and high school, are team taught and focus on characteristic tone production, range, rhythmic accuracy, comprehension, and performance, individual instrument technique, and ensemble skills. We find playable, non-complicated material (from a variety of exercises/method books) that best suits our program to aid in our success. We play long tones to begin every rehearsal.

### **Atlanta Middle School Band:**

#### **Beginning Band:**

- We use Standard of Excellence Book 1 to start the year, however, we skip around the book based on what lesson is being taught.
- We use SmartMusic for scale, sight-reading, finger technique, and ear training purposes. We will read in other method books on SmartMusic.
- Beginning band performs in 2 concerts a year; Christmas and Spring.
- Beginning band learns their ATSSB All-Region scales. These scales are used when they audition for a UIL performing band.

#### **Concert Band:**

- This is our non-varsity UIL group and consists of 7th and 8th grade students.
- This group performs in 4 middle school pep rallies, 1 middle school football game, 1 high school football game, 2 concerts; Christmas and Spring, UIL Concert and Sight-Reading Contest.
- This group is encouraged to audition for ATSSB All-Region.

#### **Symphonic Band:**

- This is our varsity UIL group and consists of 7th and 8th grade students.
- This group performs in 4 middle school pep rallies, 1 middle school football game, 1 high school football game, 2 concerts; Christmas and Spring, UIL Concert and Sight-Reading Contest, and 1 Music festival.
- This group is required to audition for ATSSB All-Region.

### **Aligned Curriculum Middle to High School:**

- All 5 bands are required to Pass-Off music; UIL pieces, Marching show, fight song/alma mater.
- All 5 bands are required to learn/prepare ATSSB All-Region scales.
- All 5 bands will have after-school rehearsals/sectionals as needed.
- We use "section leaders" in all 5 bands to help with duties as assigned; including being a student mentor. This gives ALL of our students an opportunity to develop their leadership skills.
- We use the same verbiage and requirements from 6th-12th grade so our students will have the comprehension and understanding they need to be successful. This also allows our students to transition smoothly between grade level and from middle to high school band.

**North Lamar High School Band, 2019 Class 4A Honor Band  
Randy Jones & Jason Smith, Directors**

### ***MS Band – Grades 6-8***

- Beginning band is divided into homogeneous 45-minute classes that meet every day.
- 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders are divided into Honor Band, Symphonic Band or Concert Band - ability based
- Honor Band, Symphonic Band and Concert Band are all team taught (2 to 3 directors in each rehearsal)
- The focus of the bands are as follows:
  - Tone production, rhythmic comprehension and performance, technique and range development, ensemble skills
- Other activities
  - Beginning Class recitals – late October
  - Concert music work in fall semester for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders
  - Honor Band students are required to tryout in the All-Region process and students that are in the Symphonic Band & Concert Bands are encouraged to participate (Fall)
  - Honor Band students are required to participate in Solo & Ensemble (Spring); Symphonic and Concert Band students are encouraged to perform, as well.

### ***High School – Grades 9-12***

- Currently 150 students in high school band program
- Students are divided into one of 2 bands based upon ability
  - Symphonic Band (55-60)
  - Concert (70 – 85)
- School is on block schedule – classes are 90 minutes
  - A Day – Full Band - Band are team taught (2 to 4 directors in each rehearsal)
    - Symphonic Band – 3<sup>rd</sup> period
    - Concert Band – 4<sup>th</sup> period
  - B Day - Ensemble Classes
    - Percussion Class – 5<sup>th</sup> period
    - Woodwind Class – 7<sup>th</sup> period
    - Brass class – 8<sup>th</sup> period
- Musical focus -Continuing to develop the following from middle school
  - Tonal center, air efficiency and support
  - Air support is developed through the use of breathing exercises and the use of whisper mutes in the brass
  - Embouchure strength developed with the above and through additional exercises
  - Lip slurs – all instrument participate – Woodwinds included
  - Tonguing
  - Development of tonguing clarity and speed
  - Development of multiple tonguing
  - Finger technique: Scales, Clark Technical Studies, Technique exercises based on musical requirements of current literature
  - Tuning
  - Every student is required to have a Korg CA-40 tuner and mic
  - Teach students to know tendencies of their instrument
  - Teach students to know what part of the chord they are playing and the correct placement of that note within the chord
  - Matching of Sound, Tonguing, Styles, Individual matching, Section matching, Full ensemble matching
  - Percussion
    - Work with Percussion Teacher on various technical development
    - Use All-State Music, Solo & Ensemble repertoire and wind literature
    - Present a Percussion concert in spring for grades 6-12

### ***Marching Band***

- Learning drill
  - Use Pyware software
  - Each student is assigned a spot and given coordinate sheet for that spot.
  - Students are instructed how to read coordinate sheets for rehearsal efficiency.

- Field rules
  - The field is the classroom – there is no talking on the field during rehearsals.
  - Consequences for talking or other infractions.
  - Games
- Performance in the Stands
- Performance before halftime, during halftime, after halftime

***Other activities***

- TMEA All-State process
  - Symphonic Band – all students are required to participate
  - Concert Band – students are encouraged to tryout
  - Freshman – are required to try out for freshman region band
- Solo & Ensemble - everyone is encouraged to participate

***Other thoughts***

- Sharing of students
  - Must be willing to give and take – band is not the only activity in our students lives
  - Do you care and show interest in the students other activities?
  - What is your relationship with other teachers and coaches in the school district?
- What is the atmosphere of your rehearsals and discipline in your rehearsals?
  - What are your rules?
  - What are the consequences?
  - Who came up with the consequences?
  - Do you follow through with the consequences?
  - Is praise and encouragement given along with critique and evaluation?
  - What is the atmosphere of the band hall when not in rehearsal?
  - Is it a “hangout” place for the students?
  - Is there a “family” atmosphere and feeling of security?
- Student Leadership
  - Is the band program student led?
  - Is there opportunity for the students to take “ownership” of the band program
  - Is there an effort made to give students the opportunity to lead and / or be responsible for some aspect of the band program?
- Staff
  - Role and philosophy of the “head director”
  - What is your philosophy, thoughts and/or ideas of how your staff / team should operate, communicate, create a positive team atmosphere
  - Responsible to make sure that each individual staff has the necessary tools to be successful
  - What does each of the staff members need to continue to grow and mature as a director, and as an individual?
  - Is it all about you or is it about the “team”?
  - Are you willing to mentor that team member that needs help or direction?
  - Can you make the decision to release a staff member that refuses to fulfill their role / responsibility?
  - Role of the associate directors
  - How do you fit into the team?
  - Are you willing to do the work necessary for your role?

Suggested reading: “The Ideal Team Player: How to Recognize and Cultivate the Three Essential Virtues” By Patrick Lencioni

**Carlisle High School Band, 2019 Class 2A Honor Band**

**Chris Clifton, Director**

**Carlisle ISD**

- Carlisle ISD is located in Price and has a population of 300 people. Price is located about 8 miles west of Henderson and 30 miles southwest of Tyler.
- Carlisle ISD has 650 students K-12 and an enrollment of 195 students at Carlisle High School
- Carlisle ISD is a low socioeconomic school district and has 71 percent of students on free or reduced lunch program

## **Carlisle Band Program**

- Carlisle High School Band has 74 students, grade 8-12
- 7th Grade Band has 33 students
- 6th Grade Beginner Band has 53 students (all students enrolled in band- most years average around 40-45)
- 5th Grade Music Class- divided into two classes & rotated to meet twice a week
- All instruments are provided to students by school district, band fee \$15 per year

### **Directors**

#### **Mr. Chris Clifton**

Carlisle High School Band  
Assists 7th Grade Band  
Beginning Trumpet  
Beginning Trombone  
Beginning Tuba  
Teaches Marching Band  
Applied Music Classes

#### **Ms. Gabrielle Guidry**

Assists H.S. Band  
Carlisle 7th Grade Band  
Beginning Flute  
Beginning Clarinet  
Beginning Alto Saxophone  
Assists Marching Band  
Applied Music Classes

#### **Ms. Allison Girt**

Assists H.S. Band  
Assists 7th Grade Band  
Beginning French Horn  
Beginning Baritone  
Beginning Percussion  
Assists Marching Band  
5th Grade Music Class

### **Beginning Band**

- All 6th grade students are required to take band for their first year of Junior High
- Each beginning class is 45 minutes long and split into 3 homogeneous class periods: Flute/Trumpet/Horn, Clarinet/Tuba/Percussion, and Saxophone/Trombone/Baritone
- We use both Ed Sueta and Essential Elements 2000 beginner books during the year
- Supplemental Materials: Musical Mastery Book, ATSSB All Region Scales, rhythm studies, & instrument specific developmental exercises.

### **7th Grade Band**

- Band performs four concerts (Halloween, Christmas, Winter & Spring) during the year and is designed to help bridge the gap between beginning band and high school band.
- Band competes at Soundpost Music Festival and does not compete at UIL contest
- Students compete at ATSSB All Region Contest & Region 21 Junior High Solo & Ensemble Contest.
- Class is split into woodwind & brass sectionals for the first portion of rehearsal 4 days a week to work on instrument specific pedagogy. Third director pulls students individually to work all region & solos.
- Supplemental Materials: Essential Elements 2000 Book Two, Musical Mastery, ATSSB All-Region Scales & Music, Foundations for Superior Performance, rhythm exercises, other instrument specific exercises.

### **High School Band**

- Students in grades 8-12, performs at all football games & two concerts during year
- Named a TMEA Honor Band Five times- 2001, 2005, 2009, 2012, 2019
- Marched at UIL State Marching Contest- 2003, 2007, 2009, 2013, 2015 Bronze Medalist, 2018
- Consist Sweepstakes Award Winning Band