



**Texas Bandmasters Association
Convention/Clinic July 20-22, 2023**

**Plant in the Fall, Harvest in the Spring:
Creating Superior High School Non-
Varsity Bands**

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**Plant in the Fall,
Harvest in the Spring:
Creating Superior
Non-Varsity Ensembles**



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Background

- Our Education:
- 3 Texas State University alumni split up into 3 drastically different areas of the state.
- Our Schools:
- School size
 - Band program size
 - Marching band
 - Director team
 - Class structure
 - Feeder situation



Why focus on the fall?

- Set standards in the fall
- Musically
 - Culturally
 - Organizationally
- New roles in the ensemble in the spring
- Retention- Integrate students into the program
- Get students ready for a higher band



Culture

Hold students accountable to standards/expectations

Focus on proficiency of fundamental concepts

Be consistent on classroom rules

Guiding their outlook

- Name of the ensemble
- Celebrate successes

Assign marching band mentors



Fundamentals

Develop a daily drill

Expose your students to these concepts weekly:

- Breathing exercises
- Longtones
- Singing
- Chromatic Exercises
- Articulation patterns
- Scales
- Intonation

- Brass
 - Mouthpiece vibrations
 - Lip Slurs
 - Double tonguing
- WW
 - Single tonguing
 - Register exercises
- Chorale
- Sight Reading
- Rhythmic literacy



Fundamentals (cont.)

Don't wait until concert season to develop ensemble skills.

Be detailed. Hold them accountable to playing well!

Clearly and consistently state goals for exercises.

Know the difference between teaching fundamentals vs. "warming up" (both are valuable!).

Individual skills vs. ensemble skills.



Fall Music

What musical concepts can students learn through the stands tunes and show music?

The Big 3

- SSB, School Song, Fight Song

Stands Tunes

- Teach literacy
- Sight reading approximation
- Avoid rote teaching... given time constraints



Fall Music (Cont.)

Marching show

- Modified parts so everyone can be successful
- Skill level peaks

Winter concert

- Low risk performance
- Use this music to improve weaknesses
- Another chance to inform you of where they're at



Spring Semester

What concerts do you have in the spring?

- New music at each one or recycle some
- Play chunks only
- Learn your march in December?
- When is UIL?
- When is solo and ensemble?

Set weekly/monthly goals for the ensemble

- Notes and rhythms learned by the end of January
- Tempos



Programming

You pick your rating when you pick your program!

Texasmusicforms.com

- Find programs similar to yours and see what they are playing successfully

Stats chart on your band

- Consider percussion

Composers that have worked for us:

- Sheldon, King/Swearigen, Wilds, Owens, Standridge, Balmages, Ticheli, Hall, Chambers, etc.
- Kids need to enjoy the music



What is success?

Superior ratings at UIL?

Excellent ratings at UIL?

Did everyone show up wearing the right attire?

Did the kids smile after they finished performing?

Did you learn and perform to the best of your ability?

A great performance at Fiesta - Battle of the Bands in April?

It's different for everyone!

Why we detail UIL music so much:

To show students the value of hard work and excellence.



Thank you for coming! Have a great TBA!

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