

Welcome to the 2024-25 McLean Middle School Band! We are so happy that you are joining our band family!



McLEAN BAND

The McLean Band believes in creating a sense of family and a place to belong through individual and team growth and by providing a safe environment for students to explore and be creative in music.

We seek to educate and empower our students with the skills they need to have a lifelong appreciation for music, and to become future leaders in our society and our community.

This guide answers some of the most frequently asked questions about middle school band, and will help get your student ready and EXCITED about band at McLean Middle School!

Please feel to reach out to a director at any time with questions.

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Communication

Website: www.mcleanmsband.com



Join us on the Band App:

Charms: Make sure your email address is up to date!

School code: mcleanmsband

Password: *Student ID without S (ex: 123456)*

If this doesn't work, email a director to reset your password

Facebook/ Instagram: Follow @mcleanbands on Facebook and Instagram for announcements, pictures and more!

Band Newsletter: Watch your email for our Band Newsletter, published every 6 weeks with important dates and announcements!

Director Contact Information:

Mrs. Christa Martien, MMS Head Band Director: christa.white@fwisd.org

Mr. Gandy, MMS Assistant Band Director: jacob.gandy@fwisd.org

Mrs. Lauren Bolton, Pyramid Percussion Director: lauren.bolton@fwisd.org

Want to know more about your band directors? Visit our website!

<http://www.mcleanmsband.com/contact-our-directors>

Important Links

Pay Band Fee: <https://mclean-band-booster-club.square.site>

Pay Instrument Rental Fee: \$40 in July/August to the front office, \$40 in January

Booster Information: www.mcleanmsband.com/boosters

Private Lesson Information: <http://www.mcleanmsband.com/private-lessons>

Purchase Supplies: Contact Tarpley Music

Intro to Middle School Band

Important Terms to Know

Sectionals: Band Practice (once a week, with the other people who play your instrument)

Ensemble: A fancy word for ‘the whole band or group’

Woodwind: Flute, oboe, bassoon, clarinet, bass clarinet, alto sax, tenor sax, bari sax

Brass: Trumpet, French horn, trombone, euphonium, tuba

Percussion: Snare drum, bass drum, marimba, xylophone, timpani, triangle, etc.

Wind Ensemble: Advanced or Varsity Band

Symphonic Band: Intermediate Band

Concert Band: On level band/ Split into 2 classes: brass and woodwind

Band Dues: The \$90 fee that all band students owe to cover food, clinicians, travel, contests, band shirt, binder and other items throughout the school year.

Instrument Rental Fee: The \$80 yearly fee (paid in two \$40 payments) that covers using a district owned instrument. *Percussion, tuba, euphonium, French horn, tenor/bari sax, bass clarinet, oboe and bassoon must rent from the school. Flute, clarinet, alto sax, trumpet, and trombone owe this fee if they do not have a personal instrument or music store rental, and choose to rent through FWISD.*

How do you decide band class placement?

We have 3 bands (Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, and Concert Band). We also have a Jazz Band and Beginner Band. Each class has both 7th and 8th graders, and are ability based. We decide based on playing ability, work ethic, responsibility, teacher input and a playing audition (on normal years).

How many people will be in each band class?

Band ensemble classes have 20 to 60 students, depending on the level and type of group. Every class has all instruments- woodwind, brass and percussion- in each class period instead of homogenous classes like in 6th grade band. Any students that play an instrument can sign up for Jazz Band, and any 7th or 8th graders that did not do 6th grade band, but would like to be in band, can join the beginner band class.

When is Band Camp?

Band Camp this year will be in the evenings August 5-9th from 4:30pm-7:00pm (this schedule is set for approval from admin, we will confirm the times officially in April/May. This is our “band orientation”. We have so much fun and can’t wait to see you there!

Rehearsals, Contests and Concerts

What is the sectional rehearsal schedule like?

Students in Wind Ensemble will have 1 rehearsal (called a sectional) per week for 90 minutes outside of school, and Symphonic Band meets for 1 hour. We meet with students of the same instrument to go over instrument-specific fundamentals (similar to 6th grade band).

How do I balance band sectionals with athletics/JCC/other school practices?

The band directors, coaches, and other teachers at McLean communicate ahead of time to be sure that you will have as few schedule conflicts as possible. It is our goal to make sure that teachers work out these conflicts so that students do not have to be 'in the middle' of two school events that they love. Sometimes, a student may need to leave one practice a few minutes early and be a few minutes late to another practice, but this will not result in a penalty of any kind for either activity.

What concerts and contests do students participate in?

All students will participate in at least 3 concerts per year: Fall Concert, Winter Concert, and Spring Concert. There are 3 individual competitions: All District auditions, All Region auditions, and Solo Contest. There are 4-5 group competitions: UIL Contest, FWISD Benchmark, and Ensemble Contest, Honor Band Recordings, and the North Texas Festival of Distinction.

What is Band UIL?

Band UIL takes place in April and happens in 2 parts on the same day: Concert and Sightreading. Students complete as a full band and perform 3 pieces of music on stage for a set of judges. We then transition to the sightreading room and have 10 minutes to learn a brand new piece of music in order to demonstrate our tone quality, musicality, and music reading skills. The highest rating a band can receive is a "1st Division" and the lowest is a "5th Division". McLean has historically made 1st Divisions at this competition.

What are All Region and All District auditions?

Students individually learn 8 scales and 2 pieces of music, called etudes, and then perform them in 2 auditions in October and November. The top students earn a spot in the All Region or FWISD All District Honor Bands and give a concert with the best musicians from all over Fort Worth, Arlington, Mansfield, Grand Prairie, Midlothian, and Cedar Hill in December and/or January. Wind Ensemble students and any other interested students typically compete in these two events.

What is Solo and Ensemble Contest?

Ensemble Contest occurs in February, and allows students to learn a piece of music in small groups of 10 or less to perform for a judge. Solo Contest occurs in May, and allows students to learn their very own solo to perform individually for a judge. Students may earn a gold, silver, or bronze medal at both contests for their performance.

Band Fee and Instrument Rental Fee

How much does band cost?

Our band dues are \$90 per year, and cover your t-shirt, food and drinks for the year, cost of trips, contest entries, and other items such as new music. If you choose to rent your instrument from the school district, the cost is \$80 per year. We offer payment plans for anyone who is

interested, and just ask that you pay as much of your dues/fees as you are able to support the band program. ***Money is NEVER a reason to quit band—we make any situation work so that ALL students at McLean can pursue music!!!***

How do I get a band scholarship?

We will send out a scholarship application form at the beginning of the year. This can be applied to the yearly instrument rental fees (\$80), band dues (\$90), or even private lessons (\$20/lesson). If you have more questions, just contact Mrs. Martien at christa.white@fwisd.org.

How do I know if I should rent a school instrument vs from a music store?

These instruments MUST rent from school and will pay the \$80 yearly rental fee: Oboe, bassoon, bass clarinet, tenor sax, bari sax, French horn, euphonium, tuba, percussion

We encourage these instruments to rent from the music store if at all possible, but do have a limited quantity available to rent from the school if the music store is not an option: Flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone

All students (except percussion) should own their own mouthpiece. We do NOT recommend borrowing or using a used mouthpiece, for sanitary reasons. Percussionists should own their own sticks, mallets and drum pad, but will use school percussion instruments such as marimba, bass drum, timpani, and more.

What/where do I purchase band supplies?

All band supplies are available for purchase from Tarpley Music. All students will need:

1. Korg Tuner **mic clip** \$20
2. Tonal Energy App on a phone or other device at home \$5
3. A full supply list will be provided separately

These supplies will last your student from 7th grade through the end of high school, and only need to be purchased once. If you choose to purchase these from a site such as Amazon, we recommend emailing one of the band directors to make sure you are purchasing the correct items. Please let us know if you have any concerns with purchasing these 2 supplies, and we can help!

Band Boosters

www.mcleanmsband.com/boosters

Officer Positions

President: Samantha Soto mcleanbandpresident@gmail.com

VP Fundraising: Kelli Keith

Treasurer: Krista Hubmer mcleanbandtreasurer@gmail.com

Assistant Treasurer

Secretary

Spring Trip

Band Banquet

Spirit

Concert Chair

Candygrams

6th Grade Liaison

Volunteers

How do I volunteer with boosters?

Just email our President, Samantha Soto (mcleanbandpresident@gmail.com) or Volunteer Coordinator, for more information about volunteer opportunities. We always need chaperones for field trips and events, as well as donations of water and individually packaged snacks (chips, cookies, bars, etc) at the start of the year.

When are the booster meetings?

A small general booster meeting will be held in conjunction with band concerts. Please contact our President, Samantha Soto for further information.

How do I join the booster club?

Family & friends of the band can join our booster club at different levels with incentives at each level.

Go to <http://www.mcleanmsband.com/boosters> for more information.

What fundraisers will happen this year?

Band boosters will have 3 main fundraisers this year: FanPledge, Candygrams (December & February), and Booster Membership Levels. With these new initiatives, we will no longer hold a Write a Check campaign. Check our website for more information!

www.mcleanmsband.com/boosters

Other Frequently Asked Questions

What kind of tests or assignments will band students have?

We recommend that students practice at least 3 days per week for 20-30 minutes outside of class.

There are NO practice journals in 7th and 8th grade. Students receive an Objective Sheet every Six Weeks with 5 to 8 musical goals to work towards over the course of the entire grading

period. These items can typically be played for your teacher in class or a sectional, OR recorded on our online music website called Charms.

What kind of band trips or social events do we do?

We typically have 4 major events each year: Fall Band Lock In; Bass Hall field trip; Band Banquet; and a Spring Trip to an amusement park. The Spring Trip is a reward for everyone's hard work throughout the year! The location changes year to year so that students get to go to a variety of fun places with the band. We also include several smaller social events that are announced throughout the year (movie nights, game nights, etc).

Where do I store my instrument when I'm at school?

Every student will receive their very own band locker, located in the band hall. Large instruments, such as euphonium or tuba, will have a shelf or room to store their instrument in. We encourage students to bring a lock for their band locker if you wish.

How do I enroll in band private lessons?

We highly encourage all students to enroll in private lessons. This is a great way to receive individual help from a professional musician on your chair tests and playing assignments, become more competitive at auditions and contests, and play even more fun and challenging music!

Many of our private lesson teachers are offering lessons over the summer. For the summer, we recommend contacting the teachers directly. Check the band website (<http://www.mcleanmsband.com/private-lessons>) for the most up to date contact information for these teachers. Once the school year starts, we will have a formal Private Lesson Sign Up process.

What if my question hasn't been answered here?

Feel free to email Mrs. Martien at christa.white@fwisd.org with any questions that you still have. We are here to help and make it as smooth of a transition as possible!

We can't wait to have you in the McLean Band this year! Keep practicing!