

Guide for Parents of New Members of the McAllen High School Band



Introduction

Welcome to the McHi (*pronounced MACK HIGH*) band.

If your child is a freshman or a student newly transferring to McAllen High School, this guide will introduce you to the McHi Band, to its directors, to its parent support organization, and to its activities. It will also show you how you can help to make the band experience an even better one for your child.

The band is a good way for your child to adapt to the high school environment. It is safe, it is fun, and your child will be in a group with which he or she already has something in common – music. Many of the other band members are kids that your son or daughter has known all through middle school. The McHi band staff are the same people who have been working with your kids ever since the sixth grade.

www.mchiband.com

The McHi Band Staff

There are a lot of people associated with the McHi band department. Many of them split their time between the high school and the middle schools. That is why you will recognize many of the names.

JIM EGGER	Head Director and Director of the Wind Ensemble
ADAN ROSA	Percussion instructor
DANIEL FERNANDEZ	Low brass instructor and Director of Symphonic Band
HENRY CASTILLO	Saxophone instructor and Jazz Band Director
LAURIE HOCHSTETLER	Flute instructor, Director of Concert Band, & A.P. Music Theory
FREDDIE GOMEZ	Visual Caption Head and Color Guard Designer
RENE GUZMAN	High Brass instructor (part time)
DAVID SMITH	Woodwind instructor (part time)
DENYSE CRUZ	Travis Assistant Band Director and Color Guard Instructor
ALLEN FREEMAN	Color Guard Instructor
SAUL REGALADO	Student Teacher



The Different Band Levels

With over two hundred kids in the marching band program at McAllen High, it is necessary to divide them up during the school day into several different band groups. There are three band groups:

- 1) **Wind Ensemble** –Membership is composed of the most outstanding musicians in the band program. These students are expected to represent McHi at the All-Valley Tryouts in November and December and to participate at the UIL Solo & Ensemble Contest in February. These students must place band as **top priority**, attend all rehearsals and practice an average of 5 hours per week.
- 2) **Symphonic Band** – These students are expected to average at least 3 hours per week in practice and will also study a variety of musical experiences. These students may tryout for All-Valley if they wish to and a prepared. These students

are also expected to participate at Solo & Ensemble Contest. Membership in this band will also include mandatory attendance at one section rehearsal per week after the football season.

- 3) **Concert Band** – Membership is for those students who would like to be in band and will study a variety of experiences. These students will learn, perform, and practice at least 3 hours per week and may tryout for All-Valley if they are prepared. These students should also enter Solo & Ensemble contest.

Marching

The first thing you hear about when your child starts marching is *Pigskin*. This is the high school band marching competition held every year in mid October for all high schools from Alamo to Roma.

The competition, known as Pigskin Jubilee, is held at either our McAllen Memorial Stadium or the La Joya ISD Stadium. It is the focal point of the fall season for every high school band in the area. All over the state of Texas, high school bands are preparing to participate in their own Pigskin Jubilee or equivalent marching contest. Every other year, bands that receive a Superior Rating at Pigskin advance to the Area G UIL Marching Contest.

Because of the need for constant practice to prepare for Pigskin, the band usually performs much of the same halftime show every week. Halftime shows inspire school spirit and are dress rehearsals for the big competition. The Pigskin performance is generally divided into three or four parts. When teaching the show to the students, Mr. Egger builds on to it a piece at a time. Every few weeks he will add a new segment to the show.

When you see kids practicing their show, you will notice a few things.

The first is that not all students march with the same instrument that they play during concert season. The tuba players use a sousaphone. The French Horn players march with mellophones and the baritone players often march with a marching baritone, which looks like an overgrown trumpet. Most marching bands also do not march with the double reed instruments – oboes and bassoons. These students usually march with another instrument during the show and pretend like they are playing. Another option for these students is to join the color guard.

The second item that may seem strange on first glance is that not everybody marches. There are many reasons for this:

- 1) Mr. Egger and his staff must be prepared for the state-mandated NO PASS, NO PLAY rule. The NO PASS, NO PLAY rule says that students cannot march if they have failed a class – any class. As a result, the pigskin show will have fewer students than the band enrollment.

- 2) Inexperience – the band uses the most experienced marchers and players on the field. The most inexperienced marchers are naturally the freshmen.
- 3) Ability - the closer that the band gets to Pigskin, we use the best marchers and players that we have. Those students who march and play the best should be the ones that march the most. The upperclassmen in most cases should march and play better than the freshmen. Freshmen should take heart and realize that as long as they are trying, they should improve at both marching and playing and be a regular that much sooner.
- 4) Dependability – Those students who have unexcused absences and tardies will often be replaced by alternates who are more dependable. These unexcused absences will affect the student’s band grade. Anytime a student is absent from any practice for any reason, they can lose their position.
- 5) Attitude – Students with a good attitude that practice correctly, march well, and can play their parts have a good chance of earning a marching spot.

Mr. Egger tells us that upper classmen have an advantage over most freshmen for marching spots because of their playing and marching experience. However, the band staff tries to make sure that everyone has a chance to march on the field at some point during the season. Mr. Egger has a goal that every student appears on the field by the second or third game..

One last word about Pigskin Competition. There are so many schools in the state competing for marching competition honors, only half of the areas are eligible to go to regional competition during a given year. As a result, 5A schools from South Texas only go to regional competition every other year. **The 2009-2010 school year is not a state competition year for McHi band.** During a state competition year, if the band earns a first division rating at the Pigskin competition, the band will advance to the next level of competition, Area G Marching Contest. If the band places high enough at this competition, the band then advances to the UIL State Marching Contest.

Marching Band Replaces P.E.

Did you know that students who participate in the marching band are exempt from physical education classes? Well, it’s true. All qualifying members of the McHi Marching Band receive credit for physical education classes!



The Band Boosters

The boosters are a parent support organization whose goal is to help the students in the band to have the best possible experience. The boosters are the people that provide the much-appreciated lemonade and ice water after the halftime presentation. They are the chaperones who maintain order in the back of the bus on away games. They organize fund-raisers to help the students participate in various activities such as an annual band banquet and trips at the end of the year.

Who are the Band Boosters? They are you and I and the person sitting next to you. The only thing needed for membership is love for a child in the band. If you love your child, you are a band booster.

Of course, we would like you to become an active participant in the organization. But don't feel that you have to become a "band groupie" in order to do so. If the only thing that you do is chaperone one out of town game or help man the concession stands a single time, which would be more than enough to earn the gratitude of the entire band organization – students, directors, and parents alike.

One of the main fundraising activities of the Boosters is operating the concession stand on the visitor's side of the stadium. The McHi, Memorial, and Rowe band parents share this duty and share a large portion of the proceeds. To keep the parents from missing their child's performance because they are slinging nachos to the halftime crowd under the stands, we never work the concession stand at our own home games. Whenever McHi has a home game, parents of the Memorial and Nikki Rowe bands operate the visitors concession stand. Likewise, when Memorial has a home game, Rowe and McHi boosters handle the concessions. Even though we pay general admission to the games, the boosters can sit in a special section just underneath the band on the north side of the stadium.

We welcome you to join us and promise that if you do, you can do as little or as much as you like. You can come to all the meetings or only one. We appreciate any amount of involvement. We have found our involvement with our young musicians to be encouraging and supportive for them, and exciting and rewarding for us as parents. This is what the boosters are really about.

We invite you to become an active member of the McHi band boosters. There are different committees where help is needed. Your time, effort and support are greatly appreciated. At the first band booster meeting, a sign up form will be made available for you to volunteer your services. Please consider participating in as few or as many committees as you can. This is a great way to meet other parents and be involved in a fun and rewarding organization.



Band Booster Dues

\$10.00 per voting member

Committees

Water Committee
Phone Committee
Sectional Parent(s)

Chaperone Committee
Concessions Committee

Band Banquet
Senior Football Night Committee

Websites

www.region15band.com

www.mcallenisd.org

<http://mchi.mcallenisd.org>

www.uil.utexas.edu

www.tmea.org



Information and Assistance

If you would like more information or have any questions, please call any booster officer listed below.

Board Members

President

Mark A. Kent
C: 566-4484

Vice Presidents

Albert Lopez
C: 821-8799

Bonifacio Raymundo
C: 467-7505

Secretary

Jan Thompson
C: 648-2294

Treasurer

Tami Devine
H: 240-6043

Parliamentarian

C:



McHi Band Booster Meetings



2009 – 2010

(subject to change)

MONTH	DATE	DAY	TIME	EVENT
August	20, 2009	Thursday	7pm – 7:30 pm 7:30pm – 8 pm 8 p.m. – 9 p.m. 9 pm-12 am	Freshman Parent Meeting Band Booster Meeting Band Show (with parents) Pool Party
September	14, 2009	Monday	7pm – 8pm	Booster Meeting
October	5, 2009	Monday	7pm – 8pm	Booster Meeting
November	2, 2009	Monday	7pm-8pm	Booster Meeting
December	7, 2009	Monday	7pm – 8pm	Booster Meeting
February	8, 2010	Monday	7pm-8pm	Booster Meeting
March	1, 2010	Monday	7pm-8pm	Booster Meeting
April	5, 2010	Monday	7pm-8pm	Booster Meeting
May	3, 2010	Monday	7pm – 8pm	Booster Meeting