

Marching Band Calendar

October-December

Keep your eyes and ears open – UIL, BOA, DCI
It is never too soon to think about next year
Brainstorm with your entire staff
 Do not let your ego block creativity
 Listen and consider all input
Look for new band/orchestra music at Midwest/TMEA

January-February

Work on possible concepts – have several options
Brainstorm with staff – narrow down choices

March-April

Decide concept – check to see if it can be done
 Published arrangements or not
 Check copyright availability
 Begin to make cuts
 Make it fit your instrumentation and players – Grade 2-3?
Get initial music arranged
 Have the top band read it
 If your top players cannot sight read it then it is too hard
 Use Finale to change keys or instrumentation
 Have 2/3 options on each phrase such as pit only/wws, etc..
 Things to look for
 Playability by your students
 Have range, technical restrictions for younger
 players (Horn, 2 Cl. 2/3. Fl 2Tr 2/3. Tb2.)
 Make use the key signatures work – avoid bad keys/
 bad notes on the instruments
Have an 8th grade marching clinic on a Saturday morning
 Do it inside (gym)
 Invite 8th graders and 9-11th graders interested in leadership
 Bring your metronome and ipod
 Have your juniors help out
 Move to metronome, then to music
 Present a marching style, but don't be too picky yet
 See which 8th graders are getting it for future reference

May

Have a mini-camp after your final concert and banquet for future band
 Friday afternoon/Saturday morning-afternoon
 Usually the week before finals
 Learn fundamental marching and playing exercises
 Learn excerpts from show or spirit music

Use future leaders/seniors
Make it positive for all
A lot of group playing – make everyone feel successful
Observe student competency for future reference

June

Have a four day camp for all fall participants
Marching in the morning
Sectionals in the afternoon
Social activities in the evening
Learn school song, fight song, a couple of stand tunes, opener.
Have a mentoring program for the 9th graders – big brother/big sister.
Do a playing/marching audition during the camp.
Allow students to re-audition during the summer to improve status.
Do a performance the evening of Day 4 for the parents/alumni.
Use data to plan numbers for the drill design. Take into account student skills, prior grades, attendance and character.
Have a plan for the extra students, possibly doubling spots.

Summer

Have a 6-9pm music rehearsal once a week.
Students attend if they are in town.
Work on show music and one or two stand/drill team tunes each week.
We will cover all “extra” music before August camp.
The marching band will not sound like August in August.
Relate it to the weight room during the summer for athletes.

August

Because of your June camp, you can learn sets rather quickly.
You have learned Parts 1 and 2 by memory over the summer.
Have a specific guideline for learning your show.
Aug. 13-24: Parts 1 and 2
Aug. 27-Sept. 7: Part 3 – clean and review 1-2
Learning procedure
Hands only with set books/chalk
Instruments – drums only play
Everyone play/march
Build one set at a time – connect.
Set 0, Set 1, Sets 0-1, Set 2, Sets 0-2, etc...
Begin marching music playoffs by memory in small groups.
Edit/modify parts that are too difficult at this time.
Post stickers on a chart for those who pass off.
Begin TMEA Band/Jazz All-State etudes in sectionals.
Monitor grades

September

Sept. 10-18: Part 4 – clean and review 1-3

Sept. 20-28: Part 5 – clean and review 1-4

Start to produce visuals and big effect moments.

Perform fragments of the show combined with RHS spell-out at games until the show is too long to include the RHS.

Evaluate shared marching spots based on attendance, music playoffs, visual competency, and academics.

Monitor TMEA All-State etudes weekly in sectionals.

October

Establish final marching positions and establish a stage crew from the alternates. Make sure that they understand that they are part of the production just as they are in a one act play.

Oct. 4-5: Have clinicians view the band – give feedback.

Oct. 6: March at BISD contest in exhibition – get judges comments.

Oct. 13: BOA Arlington – 1st competition.

Oct. 15-19: Implement changes if necessary. Continue to produce all parts of the show musically and visually.

Oct. 23: UIL Region 5 Marching Contest

Oct.24-31: Implement changes if necessary and continue to produce all musical and visual moments.

Monitor TMEA All-State etudes weekly in sectionals.

November

Nov. 3: BOA San Antonio Super Regional

Nov. 4: Sea World – we need a break

Nov. 5-12: Make final adjustments before BOA Grand Nationals.

Nov. 9: Final football game.

Nov. 14-18: BOA Grand Nationals

Nov. 19: Concert Season

Monitor TMEA All-State etudes weekly in sectionals.

Planning the Show

Show Design

Is the show about something?

Is there a thread that links the concept throughout?

Can your concept contain music/visual coordination

Musically related themes

“The Godfather” – Blue Devils

“The Planets” – Cavaliers and numerous others

“West Side Story” – many people

Visually related themes

“Bounce” - Lafayette, Ky.

“Push”- Avon, In.

“Four Corners”- Cavaliers

Be careful of these types of themes that have been used

Disasters – 9/11, OKC Bombing, Holocaust, Katrina etc...

Political causes

Wars

Depressing subjects – mental illness, suicide

Instrumentation – what is an asset, what do we need to hide?

Brass

Woodwinds

Percussion

Color Guard or auxiliary

Alternative musical options

Electronics

Synthesizer

Effects Processor

Rhythm Section instead of battery

Amplification

Pit instruments – could be an asset for touch, sensitivity or a nightmare with balance and extraneous noise pickup.

Soloists – careful of microphone placement, settings

Be careful of balance – loss of acoustical quality.

Have a professional setup so it will work – generator?

Voice

Classical

Contemporary

Make sure the kid can sing, rap, beat-box, etc...

Narration

Do we need it to convey the show concept?

Who is going to do it – how do they sound?

Careful of the music-narrative mix – focus issues.

Pacing

How does the music/visual flow?

Is there a variety of colors, textures, tempos to hold the attention of the audience ?

Does one production lead to the next?

Is there a unifying theme or thread?

Do we rely on one performer or section too much?

Effect

Does the musical and visual program contain intellectual, aesthetic and emotional properties?

Is the show entertaining?

What feeling do you want the audience to feel at the end of the production?

Visually

What visual vocabulary do we have?

Can we produce and incorporate movement?

Is the color guard an asset or a liability?

Props

If funding and personnel are an issue, consider seeing if you can get the Theatre Dept. involved in building, painting, being roadies (stage crew)

Stages/Ramps

For music or visual soloists/ensembles

Footing concerns in wet or humid weather.

Flats

To hide performers, guard equipment

Can have a tie-in to the theme

Should look professional

Make sure they are safe

Color Guard

Funding – where is it coming from and how much

Instructor – technical abilities, dance background,, salary

Student personnel -use winds as guard members or not (double reeds, etc..)

Marching Style

Staging –if your guard is small avoid clumping in a box

Use negative space – integrate into winds/percussion

Avoid unison work except for big moments – use sequentially, contagions, turn to the 45 degree or backfield

Swing flags are easier to teach than 5-6 foot poles

They can “flutter” to their next set or move in time

Avoid work on the move

Weapons – only if they are good; we prefer not to see them bent over picking up fallen equipment

Wind/weather: have a plan – take out tosses above xxx mph wind

Writing You Own Drill

Please always use the grid for linear forms (2,4,on) and for certain curved form checkpoints

Put color guard the grid unless fitting into negative spaces such as a circle

Standard spacing for guard would be 6 steps – no cover downs, mostly windows

If you stage the battery percussion in front of the winds at any time expect phasing issues – on the field we regulate timing from the furthest element back

Is this show something the students can relate to? Look at it from their angle or even send out a questionnaire about what the subject matter means to them.

Richland 2007 – iShow – students were given a survey about Generation Y, their generation. We read all 220 responses and came up with a few tidbits to use. The students felt a part of the process therefore they are very much on-board with our show concept.

Musical and Visual Fundamentals

Brass/Woodwind fundamental vocabulary

- Breathing
- Posture
- Carriage
- Long tones
- Slurs
- Articulation – multiple tonguing
- Volume/Dynamics
- Technique – Clarke studies, scales, thirds, chromatics, etc.
- Do only what you feel you would need – not too many

Visual Vocabulary

- Have a stretch program
 - Have a proper and quick stretch available
 - Consult guard or dance instructor
 - Let the drum majors or dance teacher run it
 - Put the drums in the front, flutes in back
- Marching posture/marching carriage
 - Horn angles – level, box, etc..
 - Mouthpiece position
 - Check, parade rest, attention, horns up
 - Horn manuals – 1,2,3 count
 - Initiation – te or ta count, squeeze/freeze
 - Use mirror room if possible at first.
- Foot positions
 - 1st position open
 - 1st position closed
 - 2nd, 3rd, 4th as needed
 - Point/flex (for fm, bm)
- Style
 - Straight leg - Devils
 - Bent leg – Cavaliers
- Forward Step – straight leg
 - Initiation – 8 te ta 1
 - Push with “off” foot
 - Lead with the heel, not the knee
 - Movement - low heel, flexed foot
 - Foot pass on te counts
 - Feet in parallel position
 - Halt in open position – out/out
- Back Step – straight leg
 - Initiation – 8 te ta 1

Push with “off” foot
Move the foot straight back from the hop
Land on ball/toe area
Stay on “platform”
Foot pass on te counts.
Feet in parallel position
Halt in open position

Direction changes

Back to front

Straight leg

Bent leg

Front to back

Straight or bent

Replant

Touch and Go

Flanks

Roll through

Toe first stab

Preps

Dance vocabulary

Turn-out

Plié - bend

Relevé – elevate

Passé – toe down – heel to knee

Exercises

8/hold8s forward and backward

Use no instruments

Add horn manuals

1,2,3 cts.

Add forward and backward slides

Hips turn ½way

Shoulders turn all the way

Start with easy (45 degrees)

Go to 90 degrees (hardest)

There are 4 variations of step offs and halts

Large marching segments

32/hold 8 or more

fm, fm, fsl, bsl

Teach dress and cover awareness

Step size exercises

16,12,10,6,5 to 5 forward

16,12,10,8,6 to 5 backward

Mix and match with or without halts

2 of each with 8 count holds

2 of each with no holds

Do them with slides

Direction changes and flanks

fm8, bm8, halt

Establish forward to backward style

Roll or stab

bm8, fm8, halt

Establish backward to forward style

Lock on 8 – flex left foot

fm16, bm8, fm16, bm8, etc

Works on both types of direction changes

bm16, fm8, etc...

Zig-Zags – using all forward slides

fm8, rsl8, fm8, lsl8, fm8, rsl8, fm8, lsl8, halt

fm8, lsl8, fm8, rsl8, fm8, lsl8, fm8, rsl8, halt

Zig-Zags – using all backward slides

fm8, rsl8, fm8, lsl8, fm8, rsl8, fm8, lsl8, halt

fm8, lsl8, fm8, rsl8, fm8, lsl8, fm8, rsl8, halt

Flip Flops

fm8, hip switch on 8, bm8, etc...

Box drill

Box 1 (left) fm8, fsl8, bm8, bsl8 to starting point

Box 2 (right) fm8, fsl8, bm8, bsl8 to starting point

Box 3 (left) fm8 bsl8, bm8, fsl8 to starting point

Box 4 (right) fm8, bsl8, bm8, fsl8 to starting point

Combine boxes

Talk about preps

Left boxes preps 45 to left

Right boxes prep 45 to right

Turns

Stationary

3 ct turn – LT close – 45, 45, around

Turns on the move

45,45, around usually on L,R,L