

Mackenzie Raider Band Handbook

PREFACE

Welcome to the Mackenzie Jr. High Raider Band program. This band handbook will attempt to clarify all expectations that go with being a member of what we call “*That Proud Crowd From Raider Country*”. Every attempt has been made to answer the most often-asked questions regarding the band program.

All band members and their parents should read this entire handbook, mark appropriately, sign, and return the acknowledgment page to the director by the due date. Please keep the remainder of the handbook as a reference.

INTRODUCTION

Being a member of the Raider Band can be one of the most enjoyable and rewarding experiences you will ever have. Just how much so depends on the effort that you, your fellow band members, and your directors are willing to give. It is more fun to be in a good band than in a poor one. It is more fun to play your instrument well than to consistently struggle.

Band members are constantly in the public eye, and because of such each band member must be aware of the importance of good behavior. Discipline must be strict, and each student and his/her parents must be willing to accept the goals, principles, and rules of the organization. You must remember that you represent your family, your band, your school, and your community when you perform in public. Any misconduct casts a negative reflection, not only upon you, but upon your family, your band, your school, and your community, and can undo the great work of hundreds of students before you.

You are in a band with a outstanding reputation. Have pride in it, and do your part to make it even better!

MAKING A COMMITMENT

In order to be a member of any successful group, a person must decide if he or she wants to make the commitment of time and dedication. A quality band program is built upon the consistent attendance of all band members at all rehearsals, performances, and other functions. In addition, practice and other factors which contribute to consistent improvement, of both the group and the individuals within the group, are of utmost importance.

The faculty and administration of MJHS works together to ensure that all students are able to participate in many school-sponsored activities. Non school-sponsored events, such as baby-sitting, after-school jobs, non-school athletic events, etc. should be scheduled as to not interfere with the few extracurricular practices and performances we have.

Your enrollment in band signifies your agreement to make this commitment.

BAND STRUCTURE

There are two performing ensembles in the Raider Band program. The top performing band is the Symphonic (or advanced) Band. This organization, made up of predominately 8-graders, performs at parent concerts, UIL Concert & Sightreading Contest, and various other events (including at least one non-UIL competition).

The other performing band in the program is the Beginning Band. This band is made up of first-year band members, and also performs at parent concerts and various other events (including at least one non-UIL competition).

GENERAL BAND HALL CONDUCT

Band discipline is extremely important. By the time students reach Jr. High School class time should not (and will not) be taken to teach them proper behavior. Failure to comply with the following rules will result in disciplinary action in accordance with policies in place at MJHS & LISD. Continued violations of rules can result in removal from the band program.

- 1) No food, drinks, candy, gum, etc., is allowed in the band hall at any time.
- 2) Students will be in their chairs (or place designated by the director in certain instances) on time, prepared for rehearsal or performance with all proper music and equipment. Proper equipment also includes a pencil. Any student not in place at the designated time will be counted as tardy.
- 3) If it's not yours, don't touch it. This applies to **ANYTHING** that isn't your own responsibility, such as other's music, instrument, and all school-owned materials not checked out to you.
- 4) Don't talk, pass notes, do homework, or engage in any form of behavior that would disrupt rehearsal and/or distract other students.
- 5) Listen carefully and follow all instructions of directors, sectional teachers, and sponsors..
- 6) Take proper care of your instrument. Instruments should be placed in their slots in the instrument room, with the cases **SHUT AND LATCHED**. Keep trash, books, and other items not related to band out of the instrument slot you are assigned. Students who play school-owned instruments will be responsible for their care. The school pays repair charges for school-owned instruments, **provided proper care is exercised**. Students who do not exercise proper care of their school-owned horn will be responsible for all repair and/or replacement charges. This also includes replacing lost music (\$1 per sheet), and repairing or replacing the personal tuner each Symphonic Band member receives (\$35-tuner, \$15-microphone).
- 7) Any music or book checked out to students should be written on in pencil only.

ATTENDANCE

Performance is the primary objective of being a band member. All of our rehearsal time, both during and outside of school hours, is geared toward a public performance of some type. Therefore, rehearsal attendance is equally as important as performance attendance. It is extremely important that every band member be at every rehearsal and every performance.

Absences fall into two categories...excused and unexcused. Since the vast majority of our rehearsals take place during school hours, normal school attendance policy will be adhered to for rehearsals.

Performance attendance must be more strictly regulated. Excused absences include anything that would count as an excused absence during the school day (such as illness, death in the family, emergencies, etc.). Other absences will be termed excused or unexcused solely at the discretion of the director, and will be considered only if I am notified at least one week prior to the absence.

An unexcused absence from a performance will result in the substantial reduction in the student's 6-weeks grade, including possible failure (see testing and grades).

HOME PRACTICE

All band students are expected to practice regularly at home. I don't require massive amounts of practice time, but I do insist on consistent daily practice for shorter amounts of time. My suggestion for all band students is a mere 15-20 minutes per day. Students will make much more remarkable strides in their own individual musical abilities through consistent practice than they will by practicing for a long, yet less frequent, time.

SUPPLIES

Band students, like in other classes, must have the proper supplies and materials for class. Most supplies are available at **Jent's House Of Music** (2646-34th, 795-5579) and **Tarpley Music Co.** (50th & Memphis, 797-5833). All students will be given a list of the recommended reeds, oils, mouthpieces, etc., for their instrument. It is your job (and that of your parent), to make sure you have what is needed for class.

TESTING AND GRADES

The majority of band playing tests for beginners are done in the classroom, in the presence of other students. The majority of tests for the Symphonic Band will take place during section rehearsals also in the presence of other students. This helps students work through any shyness and lack of confidence they may have about playing in front of others. Tests are generally assigned well in advance, and the material will be worked on in rehearsal. Symphonic Band members are tested on an average of once per week, while Beginning Band members are tested much more often, sometimes five times per week. Tests will be graded on the UIL "Division" system (Division I, II, III, IV, & V). The numerical equivalencies are as follows:

I+ = 100	III = 70
I = 95	IV = 60
I- = 90	V = 0 (student did not take test, or didn't complete enough to qualify for a grade)
II = 80	

Because of the relatively short nature of these tests, they are considered as a part of the student's daily grade average.

The second component of the 6-weeks average is based on performance & participation. Students who are on time and participate fully and enthusiastically will receive a grade of 100 for each performance. Reductions of the performance-participation grade are at the sole discretion of the director. All students should have no problem earning a grade of 100 in this area, however. Each performance grade is "weighted" four times that of a normal "daily" grade. Band is all about performances. We ARE a performing organization. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that students attend ALL performances. If conflicts arise, it is the student's responsibility to make sure his/her attendance is secure.

Symphonic Band members also have a second participation element to be accountable for, in the area of weekly section rehearsals. This grade is either a 100 or a 0, and is based entirely upon attendance to each week's required sectional.

FEES

Activity Fee \$20.00

Instrument Rental Fee \$12.00

The Activity Fee is used to pay for each child's band shirt, as well as other incidental expenses needed throughout the school. The Instrument Rental Fee is only for those kids using a school-owned instrument. Payment of these fees is due by **Friday, August 25th**. Please make checks to "**MJHS Band Activity Fund**".

UNIFORMS

The vast majority of the time, the band's uniform consists of a band shirt (purchased through the activity fee), blue jeans, and tennis shoes. This is worn on "spirit days", and for other selected activities. Members of the Symphonic Band also wear a "dress" uniform, that will be checked out to each student, for UIL Contest, and to the annual All-Region Band concert (for those who qualify for the All-Region Band).

CONCERTS & PERFORMANCES

The Raider Band performs several times per year. Both bands will perform at parent concerts (2-3 per year), band booster meetings, and Elementary "Recruiting" Concerts. In addition, both bands will compete in at least one competition. The Symphonic Band also performs at pep rallies and football games.

SPONSORS

Adult sponsors are needed every time the band(s) take a bus ride, regardless of the distance. Parents are encouraged to volunteer for this duty. Due to new LISD regulations, a Criminal Background Check must be completed for anyone who wishes to sponsor a band trip. If you are interested in doing this, please check the appropriate blank on the acknowledgments page.

ELIGIBILITY

As with any extracurricular activity, band students' participation in certain events is governed by the state's "No Pass-No Play" rule. UIL Events, as well as performances and practices connected to UIL events, are included in this, as performances not on the student's "home" campus, as well as any performance where an admission fee is charged. Parent concerts, pep rallies, and performances held on the MJHS campus are not subject to "No Pass-No Play". All students must participate in these events.

Individual events, such as All-Region band activities and Solo & Ensemble contests, are also subject to this rule.

A student's eligibility is determined by the grades from the previous 6-weeks grading period. A student must pass (grade of 70 or better) all of his/her classes at the end of a 6-weeks period to be eligible under the state's rules. A student who passes all classes is eligible for the entire next 6-weeks period.

A student who fails one or more classes becomes ineligible. The length of the "suspension period" is three weeks, beginning with the SECOND week of the new six weeks. Ineligible students' grades are checked again at the end of the THIRD week. If he/she is passing all classes at that time, they become eligible to compete/perform at the end of school the following Friday (end of fourth week).

I know this is confusing, so I am asking parents to rely on me to keep you and your child informed if there is a problem in this area. Band students tend to be at the top of the academic ladder, so eligibility issues are not common.

BAND BOOSTERS

Band Booster membership is open to any parent of a band student, as well as any other person interested in the promotion and success of the Raider Band. Volunteers are always needed to help with the various projects the booster club is involved in. If you are interested in becoming a more involved member of the band boosters, please contact Mr. Parker or a booster officer. There is a band booster information sheet attached to end of this document. Please fill it out and return to Mr. Parker by Monday, August 21st. .

CONTACT INFORMATION

MJHS Band Office 766-0784

Email rparker@lubbockisd.org

WEB SITE

As you have by now found out, the Raider Band is in the fledgling stages of establishing its own presence on the World Wide Web. The site is always “under construction”, and is constantly being updated so that parents and students have access to dates and other important information. The URL for the website is

<http://members.cox.net/mackraiderband>

Things to be found on the website include contact information, a calendar of events for the school year, specific reminders of upcoming events, group pictures, announcements, and general news of what’s happening with the Raider Bands. **NO INDIVIDUAL STUDENT PICTURES OR NAMES WILL EVER BE POSTED ON THE WEB SITE WITHOUT PARENT’S EXPRESSED WRITTEN PERMISSION.** Please check the site often to keep up-to-date. If you do not have internet access, please mark the appropriate box on the acknowledgement page (last page of this document).

NOTE: Your child is ultimately responsible for keeping you informed, but you can make it easier for yourself by using the web site. If you have difficulties accessing that site, please contact Mr. Parker.

EMAIL

Email is the preferred method of communication for contact with the band director. I check my email hourly while at school, and it is therefore your best way to get a timely answer on a question. I also use email for all major announcements, newsletters, etc. While participation in the email program is optional, I encourage it for the simple reason that the communication will be direct, and not have to be “relayed”.

There are two ways to “opt in” to the email program...

- 1) Send a blank email to rparker@lubbockisd.org, with “subscribe <your name>” in the subject Line
- 2) Click the link that says “Opt-in to the email program” on the band home page, located at: **<http://members.cox.net/mackraiderband>** Type in “subscribe <your name>” in the subject Line and send.

If you do not have email access, or prefer to not opt-in, check the appropriate blank on the acknowledgement page. Once again, your student is responsible for keeping you informed. Parents of returning students need to “opt-in” again, just to make sure the email database is kept up to date.

RAIDER BAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This agreement must be signed by each band student and his/her parent or legal guardian, and must be returned to the director by Wednesday, August 16, 2006.

STATEMENT OF STUDENT

I have read and understand the **Mackenzie Raider Band Handbook** in it's entirety. I agree to abide by all rules, policies, and procedures described therein.

(Student's signature)

(date)

STATEMENT OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

I have read and understand the **Mackenzie Raider Band Handbook** in it's entirety. I give my son/daughter permission to participate in the Raider Band, and I agree to abide by all rules, policies, and procedures described therein.

(Parent's signature)

(date)

Website & Email Acknowledgment

_____ I have email/internet access, and have chosen to opt-in via the Raider Band Web Site

_____ I don't have email/internet access. Please send all communications home with my child. I understand that my child is totally responsible for getting all communications to me.

BAND BOOSTER INFORMATION (to be given to Booster President) (please fill out and return ONLY if you didn't give this information at Open House)

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Child's Name: _____ Child's Grade: _____

_____ I would be interested in serving as a sponsor when possible.