

## **McGill-Toolen Prep-Band Program**

The McGill-Toolen Prep Band program has a long and very successful history. The Prep Band program encompasses 5th grade beginners, 6th, 7th and 8th grade instrumental musicians. Each band member is part of a class at their school that meets and rehearses during the school day twice a week. The band rehearses outside of school 4 days/ year at McGill-Toolen Catholic High School and performs two concerts, during the school year.

**Teacher -**

**SCHOOL -**

**Director EMAIL -**

**Because we travel between schools, the best source of communication with us is via email. We send all information, reminders, and issues via email, so it is extremely important that we have your correct email address and that it is one that you check regularly. We do our best to reply within 24 hours of receiving an email.**

### **WHY SHOULD MY CHILD BE IN THE BAND?**

Research made between music and intelligence concluded that music training is far greater than computer instruction and athletics in improving children's abstract reasoning skills. Students with coursework/experience in music performance scored higher on the SAT: students in music performance scored 57 points higher on the verbal and 41 points higher on the math, and students in music appreciation scored 63 points higher on verbal and 44 points higher on the math, than did students with no arts participation in middle and through high school.

### **WHAT IF I WANT TO BE IN THE BAND AND PLAY A SPORT OR CHEERLEAD?**

The McGill-Toolen Prep Band and Directors understand the importance of a well-rounded education. Participation in one or multiple extra curricular activities can be a part of that education. Band rehearsals (not performances or tour band rehearsals) sometimes conflict with other school approved activities, CYO games (not practices or Club sports), tutoring, make-up tests. When these conflicts occur with a band rehearsal (not performances or tour band rehearsals) - The director will then meet with that CYO coach or CYO Office, sponsor, tutor, or teacher to work out an amicable solution. The CYO athletic office and coaches are aware of band and their rehearsals and will not hold it against your child's participation in that school/CYO athletic sport.

## **McT Prep Band - 6th through 8th Grade**

**Prep Band** includes all band students in 6th through 8th grade students who have completed their beginning band year in the program or have worked to meet the standards set by the directors. All of the basic techniques that were introduced in Beginning Band are further developed in Prep Band. Greater emphasis is placed upon performing band music of an intermediate level. Private lessons are a great help at this level since class size and performance commitments limit the amount of individual instruction a student receives. Students will have after school section rehearsals when necessary for concert preparation. There is a minimal requirement of after school rehearsals.

**Honor Band** is done by audition for 6th through 8th grades. In order to receive an invitation to audition, students must meet the required amount of practice minutes (80 minutes/week) and have no outstanding attendance, behavior issues, and paid band fees - or made arrangement prior to October. Auditions will be held twice a year. This group will also tour and perform at school at the conclusion of the fall and spring semesters. We will also be taking this group on a trip to Six Flags! ATTENDANCE AT AFTER SCHOOL REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES IS A REQUIREMENT OF HONOR BAND MEMBERSHIP. Students are allowed 2 excused absences from these rehearsals which must be approved by the director in advance.

**Tour Band** - is made up of the entire Honor Band and selected members of the overall Prep Band may be added. This band meets only 2 times a year and will travel and perform on two tours during the year. All rehearsals for tour band are mandatory. *If you miss a rehearsal for Tour Band you will not be allowed to participate in our tour.* The student also need to turn in a practice journal with at least 60 minutes/week documented and signed by a parent or guardian in order to be added. The students that meet these requirements and also auditioned for honor band will be given a spot before those students who did not audition for honor band. There are some circumstances that will preclude students from being added to the tour band. The configuration of the sections within the band must be balanced among each other. When/If we add students to the Honor band, we must do so in a balanced manner. For example: we can add 2 Flutes, 2 Saxophones, 2 Clarinets, 2 Trumpets, and 2 Trombones because we maintain balance. However, we could not add 10 Flutes because that would affect the sound of the music in an unfortunate way.

**Honor Band Percussion** is open to to all percussionists in beginning band year through 8th grade. These students attend percussion classes on Tuesday afternoons in the McGill Toolen Band Room. In this class they will more intensely work on percussion fundamentals and concert music. By participating in these classes, percussionists would be able to be a part of Honor Band and Tour Band - even as beginners. The student is also required to turn in a practice journal with at least 60 minutes/week documented and signed by a parent or guardian in order to participate.

**Master Musician White Shirt** - Prep Band members can earn their white shirt in the band program. This is a prestigious honor. In order to earn your white shirt, students must perform all 12 major scales and arpeggios plus full chromatic scale, 6 page rhythm packet, 3 longer lyrical rhythm studies 2 weeks before the Christmas Festival or Spring Concert. These students must be in tour band, honor band, not miss more than the excused absences, and perform in solo and ensemble. Students who do not continue to maintain their membership in good standing can have their white shirt taken away. Students who are able to maintain their white shirt are granted privileges while on tour and will automatically be accepted in the McGill-Toolen CHS Band Program.

## **Rehearsal and Performance Attendance Policy**

Band is Co-Curricular, meaning a portion of the required participation is after-school activities that include concerts, rehearsals, etc. Performances are essential to the success of the band program. Even one student being absent can turn a potentially fine performance into a mediocre event. Absences from rehearsals must be approved by the director in advance. It is the responsibility of the parent to make the band director aware and request to miss a rehearsal THREE WEEKS in advance. The director will then meet with that CYO coach or CYO Office, sponsor, tutor, or teacher to work out an amicable solution.

The band director will inform the student and parent of the solution – NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.

Each student will be granted two excused absences per year from rehearsals (not the mandatory rehearsals) or they will not be able to participate in performances.

### **Excused Absences (with three weeks notice to your director):**

School Trips

CYO Games - that you/your child participates in

High School Games - that you/your child participates in

School Play/Event Performance ONLY

McT Athletic Tryouts

NOTE - In the case of when there is a CYO practice or school event practice only - band students will split time between the two events 50% at band and 50% at the practice. Mr. Noah has already established this with all the high school coaches, CYO Office, and CYO coaches.

### **Unexcused Absences**

Club Athletic Practices/Games/ Tryouts

Dance Practices/Recitals

Vacations

*Students who are excessively absent from rehearsals and or class will be removed from Honor Band, Prep Band, and possibly the entire band program. We want to ensure that your investment of time and money is being protected.*

**The only exception to this rule is extreme personal illness - with a doctor's note - and/or death in the immediate family.**

### **Fees/Charges**

As much as we would like to say band is free - unfortunately it is not. These fees help cover school instruments, instructors, teachers, music, cost of tour band, performances, and music supplies. Your school values the importance of band and music in your child's' life and part of their education. Your school helps every band student by paying a portion of their band fees. Your portion of the band fee is:

**\$ Band Fees - Due October 5**  
**Please make checks payable to**

We understand that fees can be burdensome. If you need to make alternate plans for payment please contact your director before **October 5th**.

Students whose parents have not made arrangements with your director or paid band fees by **October 5th** will be removed from the band program until fees are made current.

### **SECRETS TO A GREAT BAND EXPERIENCE!!!**

1. Parents are responsible for damages caused by student's neglect or abuse to school instruments.
2. Students are required to have an instrument and music at every school practice and rehearsal.
4. Reed players should have THREE good reeds at ALL times and a proper reed holder.
5. KNOW THE THREE WEEKS RULE - ATTENDANCE AT AFTER SCHOOL REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES ARE A REQUIREMENT AND MANDATORY OF BAND MEMBERSHIP.
6. Students who do not make adequate progress, do not meet the required standards of behavior, or do not display responsibility in meeting their obligations will receive one warning and placed on probation or be removed from the band program.
7. Each student should learn to LISTEN: to his own playing, to others around him/her, and to the director's instructions.
8. Communication - Director, to and from Student; Student, to and from Parent; and Director, to and from Parent. This handbook is an effort to help us all communicate and protect your investment.
9. Practice
10. Early is on time. On time is late.

We know some of this may seem daunting at first. The McT Prep Band Program is the most successful and longest running school program of The Archdiocese of Mobile. Learning to make and perform music is the most rewarding endeavor you will ever be a part of. We are so very happy you have decided to join the McT Prep Band Program.

Please thoroughly read and fill out the online agreement form **on or before September 14th, 2018.**

The Prep Band Agreement Form can be found at:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe5YQFoHKnSTXsktgD54yvF8BSe8qhgl9OuF-sBufDXhDSSuw/viewform>

It you can go to:

[www.mctband.org](http://www.mctband.org) and click on the McT Prep Band tab. **Both the handbook and the prep band agreement can be found there.**

**FEES DUE Oct. 5th**

## Schedule

### September

10-14- Start checking practice journals for Honor Band. 80min./week

14–Eighth Grade Night-Attend H.S .Football Game

### October

#### **5 - Band Fees Due**

9 - Percussion Rehearsal 4pm-5pm

16 - Percussion Rehearsal 4pm- 5pm;

16 - Honor Band Tryouts (location TBA)

23 - Honor Band and Honor Band Percussion Rehearsal 4pm - 5:30pm

30 - Honor Band and Honor Band Percussion Rehearsal 4pm - 5:30pm

### November

6 - Honor Band and Honor Band Percussion Rehearsal 4pm - 5:30pm

**13 - Honor Band and Honor Band Percussion Rehearsal 4pm - 6:00pm;**

**13 - Full Prep Band Rehearsal 4pm-5pm**

19 – MONDAY Honor Band and Honor Band Percussion Rehearsal 4pm - 5:30pm

27 - Honor Band and Honor Band Percussion Rehearsal 4pm - 5:30pm

### December

4 - Honor Band, and Honor Band Percussion Rehearsal 4pm - 5:30pm

7- FRIDAY - **MANDATORY** Full Prep Band Rehearsal 5pm - 6pm

**8 - Christmas Festival Performance for High School Band, Beginner Band, Prep Band, and Honor Band 2pm in McT Gym. Report at 1:15**

10 - MONDAY- Tour Band Rehearsal 4pm - 5:30pm

11 - Tour Band Performances (During entire school day)

### January

4-8 -Start checking practice journals for Honor Band Tryouts. 80min./week

### February

19 - TUE- Solo and Ensemble 4pm - 6pm Location TBA

20 - WED - Solo and Ensemble 4pm - 6pm Location TBA

### March

12 - Honor Band Tryouts (location TBA)3:30-6:00

19 - Honor Band and Honor Band Percussion Rehearsal 4pm - 5:30pm

26 - Honor Band and Honor Band Percussion Rehearsal 4pm - 5:30pm

### April

2 - Honor Band and Honor Band Percussion Rehearsal 4pm - 5:30pm

9 - Honor Band and Honor Band Percussion Rehearsal 4pm - 5:30pm

**16 - Honor Band and Honor Band Percussion Rehearsal 4pm - 6:00pm**

**16 - Full Prep Band Rehearsal 4pm-5pm**

30 - Honor Band and Honor Band Percussion Rehearsal 4pm - 5:30pm

### May

7- Honor Band and Honor Band Percussion Rehearsal 4pm - 5:30pm

10 - FRIDAY - **MANDATORY** Full Prep Band Rehearsal 5pm - 6pm in McT Gym

**11- Spring Concert for Beginner Band, Prep Band, and Honor Band 2 pm in McT Gym. Report at 1:15**

13 - MONDAY - Tour Band Rehearsal 4pm - 5:30pm

14 - Tour Band Performances (During entire school day)

\*\*\*All Rehearsals will be held in the McT bandroom unless otherwise notated.\*\*\*

SUMMER BAND CAMP FOR PREP BAND JUNE 17-20 AND JUNE 24-27

PLEASE PUT THESE DATES ON YOUR FAMILY CALENDAR. WE HOPE THAT BY  
GIVING YOU THESE DATES IN ADVANCE, CONFLICTS CAN BE AVOIDED.