

# Mac percussion section doesn't miss a beat

While the campus was largely focused on preparing for the Taco Shack Bowl, the percussion section also put in some time to prepare for its first percussion competition of the school year. On Tuesday after school, the percussion section rehearsed for the Dripping Springs Contest, which will take place on Sept. 21.

Percussion section director Matt Ehlers said that his crew had a great rehearsal on Tuesday getting through the first half of the show all in one rehearsal. Ehlers said that preparing for a percussion only competition is difficult because without the rest of the band, the percussion section has to add some choreography and modify their music so it sounds good without the rest of the band.



“Some parts are just winds, so we figure out what we need to cut, or if we add some percussion stuff to fill in the space,” Ehlers said.

He also told MacJournalism why he was up in the band tower during the rehearsal session.

“We set up like that so I can hear the group from the judge’s perspective. There are two judges on the field with the kids and two up top near the press box of the football stadium. It took me a few years to think of moving the kids to the center of our practice field so our tower is similar to the press box if the kids were at the front sideline.”

When you talk to Ehlers for any length of time, you realize that he is a primary reason why our percussion section is so strong.

The Mac percussion section is one of two percussion ensembles that the Midwest Clinic has invited to at the 73rd Annual Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic held every December in Chicago.

The purpose of the convention, Ehlers told the faculty in an email is “to showcase new music and to demonstrate the highest of student achievement in the art form.”

The convention dates are Dec. 18-21, and the percussion section will perform on Dec. 18. They will have to take their finals early to make the trip.

If you’d like to see and hear the songs they performed at the audition that led to the invitation, click the links below.

In the email to faculty, Ehlers described his students’ audition performance as amazing.

Cloud Folk by John Psathas

Doors by Dave Hall