

McMATH MIDDLE SCHOOL

McMath jazz band wins prestigious national honor

McMath Middle School's Tiger Jazz Band has been named a 2014 National Jazz Honors recipient by the Foundation for Music Education, the organization's highest honor for an ensemble type for the second time in three years.

Only two middle school bands – the McMath Tiger Jazz Band and Miami's Glades Middle School Concert Jazz Band – received the foundation's highest honor for a jazz ensemble this year. McMath was also the sole recipient of the foundation's 2012 National Jazz Honors award.

To be considered for the award, schools had to submit recorded music, which was judged by a panel for its overall quality. McMath's entry for 2014 consisted of two songs, "A Foggy Day" and "Rain at a Water Park." The latter song was an original composition written specifically for the Tiger Jazz Band by University of North Texas graduate Tyler Mire.

The Foundation for Music Education annually honors ensembles in five categories with awards, including the National Jazz Honors. With its other four award categories, the foundation honors wind, orchestra, choral and percussion ensembles. McMath's 2013-14 Tiger Jazz Band was comprised of the following students:

Saxaphones – Colin Davis, Malik Bajunaid, Nick Curtis, Ricky Vasquez, Ellie Halbert;

Trombones – Jonathan Bennett, Matthew Iaia, Jake Kelley, Jacob Dean;

Trumpets – Jamie Cervantes, Justin Kolba, Connor Roche, Aidan Worlton, Chase Rodriguez;

Rhythm Section – Gabe Aponte, Angelo Acogido, Hannah Guerrero, Michael Steward, Casey Stratton, and Karissa Chesky.

Travis Harris is the band director at McMath. He is assisted by Kelsey Gaskill, associate band director.

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Reading teacher recognized with Educator Spotlight video

Chelsey Ellis, a seventh-grade reaching teacher at McMath Middle School, was recognized with an Educator Spotlight video. Ms. Ellis incorporated a lesson plan on the events surrounding the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks into her reading curriculum.

Educator Spotlights provide a showcase for the Board and community members to see the impact teachers across the district are having in and out of the classroom.