

Alamance County Home School Band

Alamance County, North Carolina

Director

Steve Morris

2009-2010 Band Handbook

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Forward This handbook will cover material not only for this year, but also for years beyond.

This will allow both student and parents an insight on what to expect, as they become more involved with a band program. This will not cover everything, as things will change from year to year. If you have questions that are not covered in this handbook, please address them to me and I will try to answer quickly and to your satisfaction.

Steve Morris

Welcome to the Alamance County Home School Band. There are few organizations of any kind that include so many real-world experiences for student and booster alike. The Alamance County Home School Band provides musical activities that encompass a wide scope and allows everyone a chance to reach the highest level of success.

While the musical activities are the core of our program, the total band experience provides the student far more opportunities. During the year, the student will be able to participate in leadership development programs; learn and apply planning, financial budgeting, and team building skills; and spend time with other students and adults who have direction and goals as an integral part of their lives.

My desire for the Alamance County Home School Band program is to strive for excellence through dedication, learning, experience, and a team effort from students, boosters, and parents. The 2009-2010 year will be exciting, filled with new opportunities for you and your parents. It is also important to note that one side benefit to the total band experience is the fun and lasting relationships and memories that are developed by both student and parents.

Hard-working students, dedicated staff, involved and active parents, and a supportive community will all combine to make it possible for the band program to offer an outstanding array of musical opportunities. The students will be expected to set and reach goals for themselves and their program, and the rewards of meeting those expectations are immeasurable. Members of a band develop musically, emotionally, mentally, and socially.

This handbook is intended to be used by students, parents, and director as a convenient source of information regarding the varied aspects of the band. I have tried to cover as thoroughly as possible every facet of the program. Students and parents should read this handbook carefully and must sign and return the agreement(s) on the last pages upon becoming a member of the band each year. This handbook will develop more as we advance over the years. Band members will be expected to understand and abide by all rules and regulations set forth in this handbook.

Sincerely,

Steven D. Morris

Steven D. Morris, Director

Organization Membership Requirements

Beginner Band

To be a member you must be 10 years old (5th grade) and have access to an instrument. (large instruments excluded) You will need a music stand and a beginner book, which you will be required to purchase. The book will be announced during your first class.

Advanced Band

Open to all students with prior band experience. This class will concentrate on developing basic playing skills such as tone production, rhythmic proficiency, intonation, and technical ability, as well as preparation and performance of fine concert band literature. This ensemble will perform on several concert programs and other special occasions. They will learn the basics of marching, putting together a show, and the teamwork involved in performing as a unit. They will perform during the Christmas season in parades and when other opportunities arise.

Jazz Band

Students will be selected by the director from the Advanced Band. This class will concentrate on developing basic jazz skills such as phrasing, reading chord structures, playing solos and the study of jazz music. This ensemble will perform on several concert programs and other special occasions.

Classroom Procedures

All students are to be on time for all rehearsals. Each student is expected to be in their seat, with stand, music, and necessary materials (especially your pencil). There should be **silence** in the rehearsal room when the director steps up to the podium.

Brass players should have all necessary mutes and both valve and slide oil.

Advanced band – straight and cup mutes

Reed players should have at least one spare reed at their seat during rehearsal. Ideally, you should have four or five that you rotate using from day to day. Your reeds will last longer and you will get better play from them.

Percussionist should each have a pair of concert snare drum sticks. Percussion equipment is to be put away at the conclusion of rehearsals. Tympani and keyboards for which there are covers should be covered. Small equipment, including cymbals, tambourines, bells, and concert snare drums, should be put in cases (if available) or returned to the appropriate storage area.

For all students

Cases should be left in a designated storage area within the band room. At the end of rehearsal make sure you put all of your equipment away.

Problems of an individual nature (music missing, problems with instrument, etc.) should not take class time. These issues should be dealt with either before or after class.

Talking during rehearsals **must** be kept to a minimum. Talking should always be about music we are studying and should never be a distraction to the director or other students.

DO NOT leave your money, purses, wallets, or other valuables UNATTENDED during rehearsals. I cannot be responsible for valuables left in unsecured areas.

Commitment to Excellency

Band is an unique course. It has curricular requirements, just as any other academic discipline, but it also might require out-of-class requirements. The strength of our band program is the consolidation of these requirements into one performance based, academic course of study. The level of commitment from each individual is the driving force behind the organization and is reflected in the level of achievement reached by the individual and the program.

Band is a learning activity. Rehearsals are the means by which students learn, and by their very nature cannot be reproduced or made-up. Therefore, it is imperative that students be present unless the absence is absolutely unavoidable. Excessive rehearsal absences will undoubtedly affect a student's performance. Although I frequently function as a conductor, I am primarily a teacher responsible for the musical and aesthetic education of each student in the band program. This is the reason I am absolutely insistent upon each student's daily participation. **Rehearsals** are not optional, and are reflected in the student's daily performance.

Performances are viewed as major assessment: A performance is a learning experience that cannot be duplicated in a rehearsal hall or practice room; the level of concentration required in a public performance assists each student in developing an insight into their own level of performance. A performance is an important evaluative tool, allowing comparison of a student's performance in relation to classroom objectives presented and with past performances.

Absences from performances are only excused in the event of an extreme emergency: serious illness or hospitalization of the student, death in the family, religious holiday, or other reasons deemed excusable by the director. All absences from performances must be in writing and approved by the band director in advance!

Finally, I take my job as band director seriously. The band as an organization provides a medium through which students progress academically, musically, and socially. Musicianship, attitude, attendance, punctuality, conduct, and a desire for excellence are absolutely expected from each member of the band. Therefore, individual practice and preparation are essential. No other discipline in education requires the high level of achievement from all participants, as does musical performance. Through the level of commitment required I hope to better prepare my students for the responsibilities encountered throughout their lives.

Attitude

Those students who have a positive mental attitude, regardless of their individual skills, will always have a place in the band. Regardless of your ability, if your attitude is not positive and you are doing your personal best to make the group successful, you should not be a part of this organization. In fact, students who do not project an attitude that is positive and cooperative will be given the opportunity to change their personal perspective or else leave the organization.

Characteristics of a positive mental attitude include a generally cheerful outlook toward rehearsals and performances, cooperation in the preparation and maintenance of equipment and facilities, and an eagerness to do what is necessary to be successful. In short, the total band member is someone who is always willing to give their best for the good of the organization.

Instrument Care

Band-owned instruments become the responsibility of the student to whom they are issued. (Contracts to be signed by director, student, and parent). Any damage other than normal wear and tear will be repaired at the student's expense.

Individual instruments must always be maintained in top playing condition. Remember that horseplay can cause damage to instruments and equipment. Be careful with your own instrument, place it out of harm's way if it is necessary for you to put it down, and never play around with or play on anyone else's instrument.

General Rules

1. No food or drinks in the band room, unless for a band function.
2. All band members are expected to follow the instructions of any staff member or chaperone without question unless said instruction is a violation of civil law or moral standards.
3. **No gum** in the band room or other rehearsals at any time.
4. All band members are to remain until the band is dismissed.
5. No t-shirts, hats, or any type clothing with alcoholic beverages, drugs, or other vice advertisements are to be worn during any band activity.
6. Visible, pierced jewelry is not acceptable. This includes nose, lips, eyebrows, tongue, or any other visible part of the anatomy.
7. Do what chaperones ask. They are here to help.
8. Keep your language clean! You never know who might be listening.
9. NO SCREAMING!!!!
10. Remember you are a CLASS act. Don't do anything that would have to be explained. Always conduct yourselves as ladies and gentlemen.

Student Leaders (Advanced Band)

The Band Council is a group of students who serve as advisors for the band program. Four members of the band are elected each spring as officers for the coming year. To be eligible for office, candidates must be full participants in the band program, exemplary in attitude, loyalty, and dedication, and willing to give of their personal time for the betterment of the band. One of the primary assignments of all officers will be the band's morale.

Specific offices, qualifications and responsibilities are:

Band Captain: A Junior or Senior. The primary liaison between the band students and the director. Responsible for organizing activities of the council. Chief contact for the band director, staff, and parents whenever student input or assistance is required. Asked to meet with the Band Boosters at times to share student's viewpoint. Also responsible for assisting director when needed.

Lieutenant: Junior or Senior. Primary responsibility is that of equipment and materials manager. Arranges student workers for loading and unloading of equipment for transport, moving equipment within rehearsal area or to other performance locations, and procurement of any equipment or supplies that might be needed.

Librarian: Sophomore, Junior, or Senior. Responsibilities includes the preparation and distribution of printed materials as needed, as well as organization of the music library. This includes copying music and distributing parts.

Secretary: Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, or Senior. Responsible for communicating with newspapers and other media outlets regarding band activities, including upcoming events and awards received. To insure that the band receives maximum publicity whenever possible. Will maintain a bulletin board in the band room detailing upcoming events, band member accomplishments (musical and otherwise), and news clippings regarding the band and its members. An emphasis should be placed on elevating the band's image. Will also be responsible for compiling a yearly scrapbook for the band,

Section Leaders

We can only continue to build on the successes of the past if we continue to have outstanding student leaders. Section leaders are selected based on musical accomplishment, service, dedication, and loyalty. These appointments are made by the director and are not a popularity contest.

Student leaders are expected to be the first students to arrive and the last to leave. Good leaders look for jobs that need doing. They don't wait to be asked. Good leaders know that respect comes from peers only when it is earned. Therefore, the leadership team should strive to always set an example by their behavior.

It is the obligation of the leadership team to keep the director and staff informed about any situation that might hinder the progress of the band program. Members of the leadership team never ask a member of their section to do anything they are not prepared to do. You should be the first to rehearsal, the first to learn you music,,in short, you should be first at everything.

The man at the top of the mountain did not fall there. Leaders must set the right example every day. Immaturity will often encourage us not to push ourselves to achieve our personal best until the week of a major performance, unfortunately, that is too late. Success is built a piece at a time, every day. Lead your sections this way.

Students who wish to have leadership roles, should act and set their goals accordingly. Remember, director and staff are watching for future band leaders throughout the year.

Band Boosters

Parents are an important part of the band, and have a vital role to play. Without the assistance and cooperation of band parents, there would be no chance for the level of success we want the band to reach. There are many things parents can do.

- 1 Attend Band Booster Meeting (at least 2 per semester)
- 2 Volunteer for parent's committees. There are many different tasks with which we need your assistance, and everyone can find the niche that suits them best: Chaperone, uniform, transportation, equipment handling, sewing, meals, and publicity are just a few of the areas we need filled.
- 3 Be supportive of the band program and your child's participation by:
 - a. Assisting your child to be prepared and punctual for every rehearsal and performance.
 - b. **Notifying director if your child is to be absent or late for performance or rehearsal.** This should be done in advance unless in absolute emergency.
 - c. Encouraging your child to practice at home and help them find a quiet place to do so.
 - d. Showing your interest and support in your child's music study by enthusiastically attending every performance possible.
 - e. Discussing with the director anything that will help them understand and better serve your child.
- 4 I welcome visitors to rehearsals but request they remain quiet so as not to disturb the focus of the students or myself.

2009-2010 Band Booster Club Officers

President – George Filyaw

Vice President –Joanna Horner

Secretary – Ruth Buslinger

Treasurer – Carolyn Dix

The Ten Rules of Concert Etiquette

1. Refrain from talking.

This is the first and greatest rule.

This rule includes whispering to or disciplining your other children.

2. Refrain from unwrapping noisy candy wrappers during the performance.

If the composer wanted to include crinkle paper noises to the music, he/she would have written it into the parts.

3. Turn off pagers, cell phones, and watch alarms.

While many phones and pagers now have very symphonic-like rings, they don't always fit into the musical score, nor do they provide pleasant sounds for your neighbors.

4. Do not wave to your child during the concert.

After all, they do know who you are already and they know you are there; you most likely brought them to the concert.

5. Do not take flash photography.

You don't want your child to walk off the edge of the stage from flash blindness, do you?

6. Please do not walk around the concert hall during the performance.

Nor let children walk around. If they need to stretch their legs, take them outside. Do not disrespect the hours of practice these students have put in for this performance. If you are late, please don't enter during a performance, wait in the lobby until it has been completed. If you must leave, do so between songs or at intermission.

7. Do not leave as soon as your child's portion on the concert is over.

All of the students deserve a full audience for their performances. Remember, the next time your child's song could be last!

8. Applaud at appropriate times

Some music has several sections. Remember, it's not over until all of the sections have been performed. Watch conductor's hands.

9. Do not leave the auditorium during the music.

Wait for a break in the concert to visit the restrooms, unless you are carrying a screaming child, in which case you should leave quietly and quickly, PLEASE!

10. Go to the concert expecting the best.

You just might be surprised how good your student sounds when the other students joinin!

Alamance County Home School Band/

Mr. Morris

Instrument Rental Agreement

Care: Instruments are issued in playing condition. Students are responsible for routine maintenance; for example, oiling valves or slides, swabbing out flute, clarinet, or saxophones. The student’s family will be obligated to pay for any damage caused by accidents and /or abuse. Do not let anyone else touch, play, or carry the band/Mr,Morris owned instrument. This is how accidents happen.

Commitment: Band instruments are purchased at considerable expense to the band program. It has taken years to establish our inventory, and more instruments are needed. The band boosters agree to perform regular maintenance and repairs due to age of the instrument to include re-pads, sanitation, replacing worn corks, soldering, replacing broken springs, etc. Usual and customary upkeep on the student’s part shall include keeping the instrument clean, lubricated, free of dents, bent keys and in general good playing condition.

Cost: \$10.00 per instrument per semester. Checks made payable to “ACHSB”.

Marching Instrument_____ Concert Instrument_____

Brand_____ Brand_____

Serial Number_____ Serial Number_____

I agree to take proper care of this instrument and to return it undamaged. In case of loss or damage to this instrument, ordinary wear expected (Band Director has final decision not renter), I agree to replace or to repair such loss of damage.

Student’s Signature_____

Parent’s Signature_____

Band Director_____

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Alamance County Home School Band Agreement 2009-2010

In becoming a member of the band, I agree to do my best to carry on the tradition of excellence and success both musically and personally. I realize that conscientious attendance and preparation for rehearsals and performances are essential for the band to operate successfully. I fully understand the conditions set forth in this handbook and agree to abide by them.

Student's Name (Please Print)

Student's Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

This agreement and the medical consent form must be signed by both student and the parent/guardian and turned in to the director.