



AMADOR VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Band & Color Guard

Program Handbook
2017-2018

"Power, Presence, Pride..."

FOREWORD

Amador Valley is a nationally recognized school of excellence in all areas of its instrumental music/pageantry arts program. Through almost 100 years of achievement in all performance arenas, members and ensembles of the Amador Valley High School band program continue to turn in exciting and award winning performances throughout the state and nation.

The main objective is to provide a balanced comprehensive music/arts education to each of the participants with additional emphasis placed on citizenship. Students with exposure to and involvement in the fine arts are productive, creative and integral members of our society and consistently score higher on standardized tests such as the SAT and ACT.

Our band members regularly earn top honors academically (AP Scholars, Top 10%, Salutatorian, Valedictorian, National Merit Finalists and Semi-Finalists) and have earned admission to some of the top universities in the country (Harvard, Duke, Yale, Columbia, Penn, Princeton, Cornell, NYU, Johns Hopkins, USC, Stanford as well as all of the UC's and CSU's).

The band provides a home away from home for its members. There is great pride and tradition in being a member of the Amador band.

ENSEMBLES

Marching band: At 300+ members this season, the marching band is a co-curricular class that combines the musical with the visual. The marching band is an outreach of the concert bands (Wind Ensemble I, II/Wind Symphony Purple/Wind Symphony Gold/Symphonic Band) and its success is directly correlated to the skills developed during concert band. After-school commitments include rehearsals, home football games and various competitions and parades held September through November. Members are required to practice individually at home to memorize music and choreography.

Concert band: Concert band consists of Wind Ensemble I, Wind Ensemble II, Wind Symphony Purple, Wind Symphony Gold, and Symphonic Band. These ensembles are the central focus of the band program at Amador Valley. All band students must be enrolled in one of the five groups. Placement is determined by audition, held in the spring of the previous year.

Color Guard/Winter Guard: This group is an integral part of the marching band during the fall, providing visual support and enhancement during each performance. At the end of the marching season, focus shifts to Winter Guard, in which the group rehearses independently from the band. Fall rehearsals and performances are in conjunction with the marching band schedule; the staff determines winter rehearsals and performances, with many dates already posted on-line.

Winter Percussion: Amador Valley has an indoor winter percussion ensemble. This is an extra-curricular performing group that meets outside of the school day and performs locally and regionally. The staff will determine practice and performance schedules. The season for this group is December through April.

Jazz ensembles: There are three jazz bands offered at Amador Valley: Jazz A (taught by Mr. Aubel), Jazz B (taught by Mr. Dandrea), and Jazz Workshop (taught by Mr. Grantham). All groups are open to members of the concert bands; placement is determined by audition in the spring of the previous year. Students who play bass, guitar and/or piano do not need to be enrolled in a concert band, as those instruments are not a part of the concert band but must audition for admittance into a jazz ensemble. Performances include concerts, festivals and special events.

GRADING

Grading will be outlined in the syllabus for each course. The syllabi will be discussed on the first day of school and posted on-line. Music is an academic subject; as such there are curricular expectations and skills that need to be demonstrated and assessed. Individual testing, attendance at all performances and practices as well as having all necessary materials are the components in factoring grades each quarter.

One time only emergency-credit is available to all students but will not raise the final quarter grade more than one-half letter. Grades are not rounded (i.e. if a student earns an 89.9% the grade is a B+)

ATTENDANCE

There is no greater factor in determining the achievement of the individual and the group than attendance. Music is a cumulative endeavor, meaning skills build on one another and new information is given at each rehearsal in preparation for the next performance. Furthermore, there is no “second string” in band. Every one is a starter. If someone is missing it affects many people as well as the absent student.

An emailed notice from a parent or guardian is required for an absence from an after-school rehearsal, sectional, or performance. **Please email Mr. Grantham with at least 1 week prior notification for any absence that is not health related.** Mr. Grantham must be the one notified in case of absence, not a coach, drum major or section leader.

Acceptable reasons for missing a practice or sectional: *illness, death in the family, emergency, etc. Every effort is made to keep a consistent schedule for your convenience. A great deal of new information is dispensed at each rehearsal. Attendance is critical; missing a rehearsal in band cannot be made up. Thank you in advance for your assistance in adhering to the given schedule.*

- For those students with after school employment: work is not an excused reason for missing any band event.
- Your academic success in the classroom is the most important responsibility you have at school. That being said, each member has homework, projects and group work to complete. Missing band practice in order to study or catch up on homework is not an acceptable excuse. Everyone would enjoy an extra four hours for homework. No one should be given special privilege. Manage your time wisely.

An unexcused absence from a practice or sectional will result in lowering of a full letter grade at the end of the quarter in which the absence occurred.

Acceptable reasons for missing a performance: *illness, death in the family, etc. Each performance in band is weighted like a test in any other class. This is the outcome-based portion of the curriculum. Failure to attend a performance is like skipping an exam that cannot be made up and will result in a lowered grade. Other situations will be dealt with on an individual basis. The bands performance and score/rating suffer if people are missing. An unexcused absence from a performance will result in lowering of two full letter grades at the end of the quarter in which the absence occurred. An excused absence will result in the student receiving zero points for the missed performance.*

Determination of what constitutes an excused absence is at the discretion of the directors.

If a student chooses to participate in optional activities (solo & ensemble, honor bands, chamber music) it is expected that the student will follow through on their commitment. If a student earns a spot in an honor band it is expected that they will attend the event. If a student does not attend the honor band, they will not be allowed to participate in any honor groups for 1 year.

SPECIAL NOTE TO STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN OTHER EXTRA-CURRICULARS:

As band students comprise over 12% of the student population, it is no surprise that you are among the most active on campus, participating in almost every sport as well as many other non-athletic activities. It is part of the philosophy of this program that students are supported and encouraged to balance their band obligations with other activities in order to fully be a part of the Amador community.

It is important that thought be given to your responsibilities in all of your activities. Please plan ahead in working out known conflicts. As a general rule, if there is a band practice scheduled opposite a sports/activity practice then time missed should be equal in both activities. If there is a band practice scheduled opposite a game/tournament then the game/tournament will be given priority. If there is a conflict with a band performance and a game/tournament, then the parents, coaches and student should discuss with Mr. Grantham immediately to resolve the issue. Typically, students will not be excused from band performances for conflicts with other extra-curricular activities.

In the event of an emergency, please have a PARENT call the band room at 461-6196 and leave a message.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

Academic probation is a serious matter for all students. When any student is placed on academic probation, a student's participation in band as a co-curricular activity could be limited. The band adheres to the outlined district policy on academic probation. Members of the band are expected to balance schoolwork with band responsibilities. This is especially important for students who intend to participate in winter percussion and winter guard.

In order to be eligible for participation in extra-/co-curricular activities, a pupil in grades 6-12 shall have earned a minimum of 2.0 (or “C”) grade point average with no contributing grade to be less than a 1.0 (or “D”) grade during the preceding grading period. Pupils academically ineligible may seek a period of probationary eligibility... immediately following the grading period in which ineligibility occurs-provided the pupil’s grade point average falls in the 1.75 to 1.99 range, and that the pupil has no more than one contributing grade of “F.” Any pupil below this standard is not eligible for probation.

Copies of the full district eligibility policy are available in the school office.

UNIFORM GUIDELINES

The uniform for each facet of our organization is a visual representation of the musical excellence that we represent. It is important that guidelines are followed in order to maintain the reputation of the band.

It is critical that the uniform be handled with proper care and respect. Further, your uniform will readily identify you as a member of the Amador Valley High School Marching Band and Color Guard.

You have a great obligation to the school and the band to wear it with dignity and pride. Once dressed in uniform, all members are expected to exhibit disciplined behavior, as you are a very visible example of the quality, tradition and excellence of this band.

GUIDELINES

1. The uniforms will be required for all performances. When the band and color guard dress in uniform, we are to be in FULL uniform. Do not walk around with your jacket open, hat on backwards or with personal shoes on while in uniform. You are in FULL uniform or not at all.
2. Uniforms will be cleaned through arrangements made by AFM. Students are expected to exercise great care in keeping them clean.
3. Uniforms are the responsibility of each member. Each member will be checked out a jacket, pants, and shoes. The gauntlets, gloves, shako and plume will not be checked out and will remain at school. Color Guard uniforms should be kept at home, not in the color guard room.
4. Prior to each competition, the band members will travel in the bib pants, marching shoes, black socks and band t-shirt. Jackets will be carried in the garment bag on the bus.
5. After each performance, each member will carefully hang the uniform in the garment bag after changing out of the uniform completely. You will take great care in how you store and handle the uniform when you aren’t wearing it. Your uniform should never be stored in your band locker.

6. Hair is to be secured and pinned neatly under the hat. No straggly ends. Hair must be set in advance as instructed. Hair restraints and fasteners should be simple and unobtrusive. Hair should be done in such a fashion that the shako can be taken on and off without additional help from an R.A.
7. Jewelry and sunglasses **ARE NOT ALLOWED (including color guard)**. Sunglasses, earrings, wristwatches, chains, rings, pendants, etc. should all be left home the day of the performance. **THE BAND DIRECTOR MAKES ALL EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE.** Any piercing that cannot be removed must be covered with a bandage.
8. Excessive make-up is not permitted. No lipstick is to be worn at all with the exception of the color guard (which will match). No make-up should be worn at all on the neck as this will discolor and damage the jacket.
9. The shako is to be treated with the utmost respect at all times. When being worn, there should be approximately 2 fingers distance between the underneath of the brim and the bridge of the nose. The shako is to sit level and not ride back on the head. When not being worn it should be carried in the traditional manner on either forearm.
10. No public displays of affection (PDA) while in uniform.
11. Absolutely NO EATING is allowed while dressed in full uniform. Only water may be taken and if there is an occasion when an exception must be made and some flexibility is necessary, it will only be at the discretion and with the approval of the BAND DIRECTOR.
12. If your uniform becomes noticeably soiled, please inform an R.A. immediately.
13. All neck straps should be black.
14. Garment bags, jackets, pants, shoes and socks are to be taken home after each performance and hung in your closet. **If you leave any part of your uniform behind, your grade for that performance will be lowered one-half letter grade.**

It is an honor to wear the uniform. Band and color guard members must display the proper attitude to convey the discipline and pride that comes with being a member of this band and color guard. It only takes one person misbehaving to tarnish the reputation of the entire band.

CONCERT UNIFORMS

New members of Wind Ensemble I and Wind Ensemble II will be fitted for concert uniforms; they are required by all members at all performances.

Wind Symphony and Symphonic Band members provide their own concert uniforms.

Option 1 in both groups: wear all black dress-clothes with a dressy sleeved top and slacks/pants. No jeans, no short skirts and no sleeveless tops. Jewelry should be minimal (if at all) and hair should be neat and styled. Shoes should be dressy-preferably a heel; no sandals please.

Option 2 in Wind Symphony: wear black dress shoes (marching shoes are ok), black socks, black dress pants, a long-sleeve black dress shirt and a black necktie.

Option 2 in Symphonic Band: wear black dress shoes (marching shoes are ok), black socks, black dress pants, a long-sleeve white dress shirt and a black necktie.

PERFORMANCE ETIQUETTE

Any performance is a venue where the public will view and judge the Amador Valley High School Band and Color Guard. As representatives of our school, proper behavior and etiquette are vital and expected at all times.

PERFORMANCE POLICY: Students may be asked to sit out of a performance with a loss of points for any of the following:

- Wearing an incomplete uniform (missing black socks, incorrect footwear).
- Wearing uniform in a disrespectful manner.
- Uniform soiled, wrinkled or unkempt.
- Hair and jewelry guidelines are not followed.
- Behavior infractions the day of the show (may result in further disciplinary action according to the school discipline policy).

COMPETITIONS/FESTIVALS

- Good sportsmanship should be practiced at all times. Show courtesy and respect to other people and bands in and out of the stands. **It is our intent that we maintain our reputation as a band that is first class on and off the field. Disrespect of band members, staff members, adult volunteers or other bands will not be tolerated and may result in removal from the program.**
- Always remember that you never know who is around you at a competition. You may be standing in line behind parents or members from another band. It is NEVER appropriate to say anything disrespectful about another group.

A FEW WORDS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Almost all of us have a strong presence online. Whether it is YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, or Instagram, you are a representative of the Amador band program. A few guidelines:

- If you post a video of an Amador group on YouTube, please disable comments.
- If you comment on other groups, make sure you are supportive and positive. Don't say anything about another band that you wouldn't want said about ours.
- You are certainly entitled to your opinion, but understand that when you are a part of a group, you represent the opinions of the entire group. Act appropriately in how you carry yourself when you are discussing things related to our band program. Do not be overly proud or boastful. No one likes a braggart.
- Treat fellow band members with respect online. If you wouldn't say it to their face, don't say it over social media.

PERFORMANCE AND REHEARSAL DISMISSAL

At the conclusion of each performance and rehearsal, students will have adult supervision guaranteed for no longer than 20 minutes following the announced ending time (or actual ending time, whichever is later). After that 20-minute period, no guaranteed adult supervision will be provided. Please plan transportation accordingly.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Through the course of a school year each band member must hold his or herself to the highest standards as a part of this organization; being a world class organization includes behaving and acting in an ethical and moral manner on and off the field.

Failure to follow policies while under the supervision of the director, staff or chaperones may result in dismissal from the entire band/color guard program. This includes, but is not limited to: drug/alcohol use, smoking, theft, vandalism, harassment (**including online**), lying and truancy from band events.

Furthermore, school discipline which may occur outside of band may also result in dismissal from the band/color guard program. Your involvement here is a privilege, not a right. Make decisions accordingly.

Please note that if any member is caught on a band trip in possession of alcohol or drugs there will be a one-year suspension for the ENTIRE band/color guard on all travel out of area, including Bands Of America regionals, WBA championships, and other over-night outings.

It is in the best interest of the entire band that all members can be trusted to make safe, sound choices while in the care of the band program.

LOCKER ROOM

You are fortunate that you have a locker in which to keep your instrument. Please observe the following guidelines:

- Stay in your assigned locker.
- Always keep your instrument in your locker.
- Store your case in your locker, even when you are using your instrument.
- Keep a lock on your locker at all times. Keep it locked.
- Do not stand on the locker doors to get to other things. They are not ladders.
- Do not kick, deface, or “rough house” the locker doors. They break easily.
- Do not store food in your locker. This attracts ants.
- The school is not responsible for theft or damage as a result of your failure to keep a lock on your personal belongings.
- The locker room is not an extension of your bedroom. Keep it clean.

TRANSPORTATION

American Stage Tours provides charter buses for our band trips. Please observe the following guidelines when traveling with the band:

- Once you have signed up for a bus, you will remain on that bus for the rest of the season.
- All band members must sign up for a seat before each competition and must travel with the band to each performance.
- Private transportation is allowed for return trips only during marching band season. Please provide 2-day advance notice and use the form provided on the music web page.
- All personal electronic devices must have headphones.
- All instruments and personal equipment will be transported on the buses (except percussion).
- Aisles must be kept clear at all times.
- At night there will be one overhead light on at all times in each row.
- Your uniform is to be stored carefully in the overhead compartment.
- DVD's may be watched on the bus, but they must be less than a PG-13 rating with the final approval of the R.A.
- Bus captains for attendance, trash and loading will be assigned by Mr. Grantham.

There are some approved events where transportation is not provided (CMEA band festival, honor bands, solo & ensemble, concerts) and rides must be arranged. Carpools are strongly encouraged and at no time are students allowed to drive to and from performances. The band is not responsible for arranging car pools.

MUSIC AND INSTRUMENT CARE

A great deal of money is invested in the music and instruments purchased for the Amador band program. Students are expected to care for this property so that it may be used in excellent condition for years to come.

- Each student is provided a music folder for concert band. If this folder is lost or damaged the student will have to replace it.
- Each student is responsible for providing a black binder with clear plastic folio pages for marching band.
- Any music that is handed out to the student is considered school property and should be treated with the necessary care and respect; the student will replace music that is lost or damaged.
- Students that are using school instruments will be responsible for maintaining the instrument in at least the same care in which it was given. Any repairs of the instrument will be the responsibility of the student, including wear and tear. There is no rental fee assessed for the use of these instruments; as such, basic care of the instrument is a reasonable financial responsibility. If there is a financial difficulty in paying for the basic maintenance of the instrument, AFM will cover that repair.
- Students are responsible for turning in ALL school owned music and equipment before the last day of school.

- Only percussionists should be using percussion instruments.
- Only color guard members should be using color guard equipment.

CELL PHONES

Students cannot be fully engaged in the learning process when distracted by cell phones and other electronic devices (iPods, iPads, etc.). During class time and in rehearsal, phones should not be on the student for use and should be off. Phones are NEVER acceptable to have on the student during a performance.

Students who use cell phones during class time (after-school events are considered class time) when not permitted will:

- Be given a verbal warning for the first infraction.
- Have the phone taken away for the second infraction, to be picked up in the office after school if during the school day or from the director's office after practice.
- Have the phone taken away and be given a detention for each additional infraction.

FUNDRAISING

Our organization would not exist in its present form without the proceeds from fundraising. To that end, efforts are made to ensure that students are not selling items or continually asking friends and family to buy things to support the band. In turn, we host several fundraising events and the students are asked to volunteer 3-4 hours at one of the events. This is each student's contribution to the fundraising efforts of the band.

CONCLUSION

We are a family about to embark on an amazing journey together. Our ability to work together respectfully and maturely as well as the intensity of our work ethic will determine the success of our year. Competition is not the focus of our work, but it is a part of our work. We compete not to win, but to better ourselves towards achieving goals we never thought possible. We define the word champion for ourselves.

PARENTAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

By signing the signature page you are agreeing to the following two disclosure statements.

CHARMS

I understand that access to the Charms program is voluntary for students and families and offers a benefit to participants in the band program at Amador Valley High School.

I also understand the language currently present on the Charms website is not an accurate reflection of the position of AFM or PUSD regarding donations. All donations are voluntary, as is participation in fundraising activities.

No child's participation in band activities will be conditioned upon the payment of a fee or donation or upon participation in fundraising activities.

CONFIDENTIAL HANDLING OF STUDENT HEALTH INFORMATION

Parents/Guardians are asked to provide health information for their student at the beginning of each school year to assist us in caring for students while participating in Amador Valley High School Music Programs and Events.

Our organization has taken reasonable precautions to supervise usage and to restrict unsupervised access to all such student health information. In the event of any immediate medical or physical needs of the student, the health information may be made available to District Cleared Volunteers responsible for the student. These District Cleared Volunteers have agreed to hold the personal and medical information of students and families confidential.

I understand that my student's health information may be available to District Cleared individuals who have responsibilities for my child and I hereby consent to the release of such information.

BAND HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE:

PARENT/GUARDIAN: *I have read the handbook and understand my responsibilities and those of my student to the Amador Valley High School Music Department.*

STUDENT: *I have read the handbook and understand my responsibilities to the Amador Valley High School Music Department.*

TEACHER: *I, the teacher of this student, will do my part to provide a safe and sound musical education and learning environment for this member of the Amador Valley High School Music Department.*

PLEASE TURN IN AT BAND REGISTRATION.

Parent/Guardian Signature DATE

Parent/Guardian Name PRINTED

Student Signature DATE

Student Name PRINTED

If you have a sibling in the Amador band program you may submit one form for the family.

Student Signature (sibling) DATE

Student Name PRINTED (sibling)