

Alvarado High School Band Handbook

Alvarado High School
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Introduction

This handbook has been written for the Alvarado High School Golden Warrior Band members and their parents with the intent of providing information regarding the purpose, procedure, expectations, and activities of the AHS band program. All band students and parents are expected to read the entire handbook and be familiar with its contents. Communication between parties will be a major factor in our success and will also help to avoid conflicts with the policies stated herein.

AHS BAND PHILOSOPHY OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

A well-rounded education is enhanced by one of the most basic of all studies...the study of music. Music teaches discipline, develops self-confidence, and gives each student a feeling of pride and accomplishment. Playing in band teaches students the importance of working with others and helps them develop the social skills necessary to be a part of a performing organization. Instrumental music engages students in a group activity which allows them to use their free time constructively. Band instills values: responsibility, purpose and direction, devotion to duty, spirit of cooperation, and a sense of family. Not all band students become great musicians, but certainly all become more mature, cooperative, self-disciplined, hard-working members of society with an appreciation of the arts. Music is a subject which affects all sides of a student's personality. This includes the intellectual, physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual, and social aspects of a person.

Discipline, pride, and commitment to excellence are important elements of a quality organization. Every part of our students' participation must contain these three elements. We hope our students will have a desire to succeed in what they do and enjoy working towards a positive goal. Through mutual respect and pride in them-selves, we hope to give our students a firm footing on which they can be successful in band and in life.

SUMMER BAND

The AHS Golden Warrior Band practices in the summer before school begins. The practice time is known as "Summer Band". **ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED DURING SUMMER PRACTICES, THE BAND'S SUCCESS IS DIRECTLY TIED TO ATTENDANCE.** Absences from specific summer band dates due to family vacations, church camps, weddings, illness, AHS Football Team participation, etc. are to be excused **IN ADVANCE** and **IN WRITING** with the director of bands. These absences will be excused on a case by case basis and final judgement on these matters is the sole responsibility of the director of bands. Students who miss summer rehearsals are not guaranteed a spot in the contest show.

PERFORMING GROUPS

There are several performing groups under the umbrella of the Alvarado High School Band Program. All instrumental members of a concert band must participate in the marching band. All students who are members of the band program must be enrolled in a band class in the school day. All members of all Concert Bands for the spring semester are required to participate in the Marching Band for the semester prior to the concert season they want to enroll.

Marching Band – All members of all concert bands are required to participate in the marching band program. The band performs at all varsity football games, pep rallies, many marching festivals, the UIL Marching Contest, community events, trips, recruiting concerts, and parades. There are different components of the marching band, including the drum majors, wind section, drum line, percussion front ensemble, and color guard. The marching band is physically demanding. In the fall semester, marching band counts as “P.E. Equivalent.” Because of eligibility requirements and inevitable sickness or injury, it is important to have quite a few “alternates” or reserves. Alternates are selected based on the performance of music, performance of marching fundamental, past academic eligibility, and general abilities to comprehend and demonstrate marching band techniques. Even though a student may be an alternate for a particular performance, he/she is still expected to be in attendance. These students may change their alternate status and any time of the season by improving their skills and working their way into the marching show.

Symphonic Band – The Symphonic Band is the top performing group at AHS. Admission to the group shall be by live audition only. Students will be placed in this group by permission of the Band Director Only. A student’s past performance, past eligibility status, past behavior, and current performance ability will all be factors in the decision to place a student in this group.

Concert Band – This is the second of two concert groups. Our concert band will provide an opportunity for our younger and less advanced performers to receive more appropriate instruction based on their needs and abilities.

Drumline and Percussion Pit – Members of the drumline and percussion Pit will have rehearsals in addition to the normal marching band practices, including occasional rehearsals and a Mandatory drum camp in July. Auditions for the drumline will occur in the spring and students will be assigned to Snare Drum, Tenor Drum, Bass Drum, Cymbals or Front Ensemble.

Color Guard – The color guard is a selected group that performs with a variety of equipment including flags, props, and rifles. The group is strongly oriented toward dance. Auditions for this group will occur in the spring and are open to any student that will be enrolled in Alvarado High School for the coming school year. The color guard has many extra responsibilities including additional rehearsals, additional expense, standards of appearance, etc. The color guard is very physically demanding.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Rules – There are four basic rules that must be adhered to by all students during regular band class. They are:

1. **Look at the director when he/she is talking:** the director must know he/she has your sincere, undivided attention.
2. **Do not talk during rehearsal:** if you have any questions that need to be asked, you should raise your hand and be called upon.
3. **Do not play your instrument unless instructed to do so.**
4. **Be prepared for each rehearsal** by bringing the proper equipment and supplies and be prepared to perform your music to the best of your abilities.
5. **Maintain a Positive Attitude and portray good behavior**

Attendance – Due to the participatory nature of band, attendance is mandatory at all rehearsals and performance, both during and outside school time. Absences mar the effectiveness of the entire band. In most academic courses, absence from class only hurts the individual; in band, the entire group is affected. It is hoped that the commitment to being at each and every band rehearsal will develop the band student into a useful member of society. Outside of school rehearsals are an extension of classroom and numerical grades and citizenship grades are taken based on student participation in rehearsals.

All absences must be approved in advance. Absences will be excused by similar criteria established by the Alvarado High School attendance policy. Absences outside of school policy may be excused at the discretion of a director, provided a written request by a parent or guardian has been submitted and approved in advance. An unexcused absence from any rehearsal or performance may result in a student's reduction of grade, citizenship, chair, or their being reassigned a different role in rehearsal and performance and possible removal from the band program.

The following guidelines should be used for any absence:

1. In the event of sickness or emergency, the student should call the band director prior to the absence at 817-783-6840 ext. 2093. Leave a voicemail if the director is not available.
2. A note signed by a parent should be brought to the director on the next day in order for the absence to be excused and in order to keep a record of absence on file.
3. Upon return, the student should meet with the director and see if any makeup work is in order.
4. Once the official calendar of events is given to each student, the student should organize his own personal calendar and check for any calendar conflicts. If a student has a schedule conflict, he should talk with the appropriate director as early as possible and ask for permission to be tardy, leave early, or miss the event. Permission may or

may not be granted; each situation will be evaluated on its own merit. In the past, we have allowed students to miss for other school functions, family weddings, etc.

5. Medical and dental appointments are to be scheduled around band activities unless an emergency occurs.
6. Work is never a valid excuse for missing band rehearsals or Performances!

Please understand that the quality of our band program is in direct proportion to your attendance. You cannot learn if you are not present and we are not successful without you here.

Punctuality – Students should be prompt (at least ten minutes early) for all band functions. This allows the students to be ready (have their instrument and supplies and be in the proper place on time for rehearsal or performance.

Grading Policy

Part of each student's band grade is awarded for participation in during school and outside of school rehearsals and performances. Missing rehearsals and performances with an unexcused absence will result in the lowering of a student's grade for the grading period.

Supplies and Equipment

Instruments – Each student must have an acceptable instrument in proper working condition. The school provides some instruments for use these are generally the larger more expensive instruments. The student will be held responsible for any repairs needed to keep the instrument in good working condition and the instrument should be returned in the same condition in which it is received. The student will also be held responsible for vandalism, theft, and other damages incurred while the instrument was checked out to him. We strongly encourage all students to insure their instruments. Be sure that you have a written record at home of the make, model, and serial number. This information is necessary if the instrument should be lost or stolen. Do not let anyone hold, play, or borrow your instrument; this often leads to needless damage. If in the opinion of a AISD band director, a school owned instrument in not being properly maintained or cared for at any time of the school year, it is the director's prerogative to remove the instrument from the student's care.

Step-Up Instrument – The instrument sold to students for use as a beginner is not always suitable for advanced playing in high school. Parents are encouraged to buy their child a new instrument of higher quality if their child has shown promise and success. Before buying a new instrument, please check with one of the directors. Often a better brand or better price can be located.

Facilities

Band Hall – The appearance of our band hall reflects the Alvarado Band Program. This includes the rehearsal hall, all ensemble rooms, storage areas, practice rooms, and the director's office. Please help keep it neat and clean. Please pick up any trash, pick up any music stands that have fallen over, and try not to change the arrangement of the chairs. The equipment in the band hall is very expensive. **Do not touch any percussion equipment, any electrical equipment, or any instrument that is not your own, including the colorguard equipment. The band hall is off limits for students who are not in band because of the expensive equipment.**

Instrument Storage – The instrument storage (slots) area located in the band hall is where students leave their instruments during the school day. At the beginning of each year, each student will be assigned a slot. Students will be required to have a combination Master lock. These locks are provided by the band department, it is each student's responsibility to use them. Your lock should always be locked when you are not present at your locker.

Marching Band

Summer Band – The Golden Warrior Band season begins with summer marching band practice at the end of July. During this time, we train the freshman in marching techniques while the upperclassmen review and perfect their marching skills. We also begin rehearsing our marching show music as a group and in sectionals and start learning the marching show. Attendance is mandatory at all summer band rehearsals.

Football Games/Pep Rallies – The Golden Warrior Band supports the football team each Friday night in the fall by playing in the stands and performing a half-time show. There will be pep rallies at AHS during football season as well. Attendance at pep rallies by all band members is required. Our uniform for pep rallies will be our band t-shirt or show shirt.

Marching Contest and Festivals – The Golden Warrior Band will compete in several contests throughout the fall. Our biggest is the region VII UIL Marching Contest held in October. This contest is the single most important event in the Fall that the band participates in.

Uniforms

Marching Uniforms – The band uniform began as a traditional military uniform. When in uniform, wear it with pride and dignity. Your personal appearance and your actions represent not only you, but also your band, your school, and your community. The uniform is to be worn as a total ensemble and should not be worn halfway; the jacket should be zipped with the collar buttoned, and the hat should not be removed unless told so. A uniform is issued to each band member at the beginning of each school year. Students must supply their own marching shoes,

black socks, and band shirt. After each performance uniforms are to be hung on a hanger and placed in their appropriate place. The uniforms are expensive and special care should be given to them.

Band Travel

Medical Release – Students must have an AISD medical release form on file with the band directors before they are allowed to travel with the band. This form gives us necessary information in case of a medical emergency.

We expect all students to travel as a group both to and from the performance site. There are two exceptions to this rule:

1. A band member may be released to a parent after a game/event provided that these conditions are met:
 - a. The parent must sign out the student at the event (The band directors will carry the sign out sheet with them)
 - b. The Band Director will only release a student to their Parent. (No exceptions will be made)
 - c. Band members must travel with the band to the original destination. (exception only for athletes in specific situations and if a student has a prior educational commitment)
2. In Case of an emergency, a director may approve other means of transportation. These types of situations will be handled on a case by case basis and will have to be discussed in advance of the event.

Letter Jacket (Point System)

It takes 100 points to receive a letter jacket (Do not count the year that your in)

Selected as Drum Major	100 points
Earning a place in the All State Band	100 points
Each year of membership in the High School Band	25 points
Each time the band makes a 1 st Division at UIL Contest	15 points
Earning a 1 st Division on a Class I UIL Solo or Ensemble	15 points
Earning a 1 st Division on a Class II UIL Solo or Ensemble	10 points
Earning a 1 st Division on a Class III UIL Solo or Ensemble	5 points
Earning a position in the All-District Band or All/Region Band	10 points
Trying out for the All-District or All-Region Band	5 points
Participating in UIL Solo and Ensemble Contest	5 points
Advancing to the Area level of All-State Competition	5 points
Earning a 2 nd Division on a Class 1 UIL Solo and Ensemble	5 points

Detach this Page and return to band director

Alvarado High School Band Handbook Student and Parent Signatures

This is to certify that I have received the attached handbook regarding the Alvarado Golden Warrior Band.

Date _____

Student Name print _____

Student Signature _____

Parent Name print _____

Parent Name signature _____