

WELCOME TO THE ALBEMARLE HS BAND!

Gregory P. Thomas, Director 975-9300 x60079

Gthomas@k12albemarle.org

ahsband.net

Welcome students and parents to the 2014-15 AHS Bands. The AHS Band has a long tradition of musical excellence. We are excited that you have chosen to be part of this joyful musical enterprise. This document should provide clarification on some of our policies.

Philosophy

Our philosophy is that the students will gain in the following three areas:

1. The students will gain knowledge, understanding, and skills that will enable them to perform individually and in a musical ensemble that achieves at a high level and aspires to the next level.
2. The students will gain knowledge, understanding, and skills that will enable them to appreciate music as an art form, and as a vital part of their lives.
3. The students will acquire self-discipline, group responsibility, punctuality, dependability, flexibility, and open-mindedness and will employ these skills in other areas of their lives.

Classroom Procedures

1. Before class:

- a) When entering the music area, students should enter on time with the intent to learn.
- b) Students should retrieve their instrument from their locker, along with a pencil, extra reeds, valve oil, etc.
- c) Students should then place the case back in the locker with personal belongings, close the locker door, and either lock their lock, or keep it with them.
- d) Students should then proceed to their seat and individually warm-up
- e) Students should leave food and drink (other than water) off the band stand and should dispose of their GUM before entering the rehearsal.
- f) Upon entering the band room, students should consult relevant announcement boards.
- g) Students are expected to be in the classroom when the bell rings for the beginning of the period, and in their seats ready to warm-up within two minutes of the start of class bell. The tardy policy as enforced by Albemarle High School will apply.

2. During class:

- a) When entering the band room, students should prepare their immediate area (music stand is in place, chair is in place, music on stand, instrument ready to play). Students should also consult the board for the rehearsal's agenda.
- b) When the director is on the podium, students are to remain attentive and involved in the rehearsal.
- c) While playing instruments, students should sit (or stand) straight up with proper musical instrument posture.
- d) When given instruction, students should use their pencils to write in their music reminders of given instruction.
- e) Students are required to be excellent rehearsers by being attentive, quiet, considerate and musical at all times.
- f) Any student not able to play an instrument during class (i.e. injury, forgot the instrument at home, etc.) will be expected to remain in class and follow along in their music throughout the rehearsal unless the director has some substitute activity for that student.
- g) Please do not ask to do other school work during band rehearsal. Rehearsal time is sacred!

4. After Class:

- a) Students will collect all belongings from their area and bring them to their locker.
- b) Students will straighten their immediate area so it is ready for the next group.
- c) Students are not allowed to play any other instruments without the director's permission.

Smart Music

All band students will be required to subscribe to Smart Music, an online music library and teaching tool that makes practicing much more directed and has the potential to **greatly** enhance the classroom experience. It also provides an excellent assessment tool for teachers and helps monitor student progress. Students must subscribe to Smart Music during the first week of school. Assignments will begin in the second week. Subscriptions can be purchased or renewed on line for approximately \$40. Students should specify that they are part of the Albemarle High School group.

Seating in Band Class

The Bands, with the exception of Marching Band will be seated competitively based on auditions early in the school year. The Director will have final say on all evaluations.

1. You may challenge for the seat ahead of you by stating your challenge, getting music from the director for both parties, and playing the challenge for the director within 2 days.
2. You may not challenge the same person twice in a seven-day span.
3. If you miss or are late for your challenge, you automatically lose.
4. Seating will not automatically determine part selection. It is sometimes necessary to distribute the stronger players among all the parts in order to achieve a symphonic sound.
5. Solos automatically go to the First Chair Player unless otherwise designated by the director.
6. Section leaders will be selected and may not always be the first chair player. Leadership qualities will also be evaluated. You may not challenge for section leadership. This designation will be determined by the director.
7. Sectional rehearsals will be conducted by the section leader
8. **Challenges are intended to be educational, fun, and to boost our level of performance as a group.** Win or lose, the object is to improve and good sportsmanship is a requirement. The director reserves the right to suspend challenges if the competition becomes destructive, bitter or weird.

Grading

Grades in Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, Concert Band, Percussion Class and Jazz Ensemble are based upon criteria that are distributed every 9 weeks. In general there are 100 available points each grading period and it is the student's responsibility to accumulate enough points to earn their grade. The typical grading period will resemble this model:

60 points - class participation, preparation, and attitude

20 points – attendance at required events and rehearsals

20 points – **Smart Music assignments**

Extra Credit - Students receive extra credit for such things as private lessons, performances outside the school program, service to the band, musical accomplishments, additional assignments, seating challenges, student leadership roles etc. The Director must approve extra credit in advance.

Instruments

Students are expected to maintain their instruments in proper working condition. Students using school instruments will be expected to maintain those instruments and participate in a cleaning session at the conclusion of the school year. Any damage to a school instrument while checked-out to a student will result in repair costs to the student/parents. Students are expected to supply their own accessories. will not have extra reeds, valve oil, mutes, etc. on hand, so please purchase your own to have available for class. The yearly fee of 75 dollars is required for the use of all school owned instruments. Rental for Marching Specific instruments is covered in the marching band fee.

Band Boosters

As a family member of a AHS Band Student, you are automatically a Band Booster! The Band Boosters exist for the purpose of assisting the Band Department with non-musical needs: fund raising, distributing uniforms, chaperoning, etc. We encourage ALL parents and/or guardians to participate in this organization. Please check our website and emails for opportunities to get involved! Our Board, headed by President Peter Doby are always looking for ways to get more people involved. You make us strong!!

Uniforms

Students are required to be in full performance attire at all performance events. Ladies will wear AHS performance dresses which are rented to each student. Please see the fee schedule at the end of this document. Dress shoes are required. Jewelry is optional. Gentlemen need a wing collar tuxedo shirt, black dress pants, black socks and black dress shoes. Tennis shoes are not allowed. The boosters supplies a tie and cummerbund set to each male student for the price of 10 dollars. This should last for the entire High School Band career.

Spring Trip

Our Spring Band Trip this year takes us to... Chicago, one of the greatest arts towns in America. This trip will take place April 1-5. Details on this trip will be distributed soon. This is an amazing opportunity to see another part of the world and experience amazing culture and artistic community. **Various fundraisers will provide opportunities to earn money toward this trip.** Our best estimate for the cost of the trip is \$675 per student. Below is an outline of the AHS band boosters financial policy as it pertains to spring trip issues.

- ✓ **Students who are planning on participating in the travel must make the first payment deadline and notify on time.**
- ✓ **A payment schedule will follow.**
- ✓ **A penalty of \$10 will be attached to late payments. We have two excellent bookkeepers doing our records, but they are doing it for free and it is not fair to overburden them with late payments and the extra work it creates!! Everyone should be prompt!**
- ✓ **It is the policy of the AHS Band Boosters to allow refunds up to 30 days after each published payment deadline only for the most recent payment amount only.**
- ✓ **It is illegal for money accrued through fundraising to be reimbursed to the student.**
- ✓ **Students whose accounts are not up to date are presumed to be not participating in the travel activities. Please contact the band director if you have a special circumstance that is impacting your ability to make timely payments.**

Communication

Good Communication is essential to our success!! Check our Web-site at ahsband.net for schedule updates, results, fundraising information, and policies. This year, we will also be using Blackboard, Facebook and Smart Music to disseminate important information. Reach the band director by email at gthomas@k12albemarle.org, or call 434 975-9300 extension 60079.