

## The Academy Advanced Band

### Parent Guide

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Planning Time: Call for an appointment

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#### **The Academy Mission Statement**

Pursuing Truth, Wisdom, Excellence

The Academy's mission is to assist families in developing exemplary citizens by equipping students with core foundational knowledge enabling them to be culturally literate, prepared for college, and virtuous in character. We accomplish this through a rigorous curriculum of traditional content taught in a safe environment.

#### **Class Expectations:**

*Respect:* I will respect each one of you and expect the same in return. Music is a subject based on cooperation, and harassment of any kind, by any person, will not be tolerated.

*Food:* Food will not be allowed in the band room at any time. Not only does food damage instruments, but also it is impossible to play an instrument correctly while eating candy, gum, or any other food.

*Hats:* Students will not be allowed to wear hats inside the band room, as per the school handbook dress code. They can be distracting to others, and often prevent the amount of eye contact required to be successful in music.

*Mobile Phones and MP3 Players:* These are not allowed in the school, and students with these items will be asked to turn them off and put them away during class. They will be confiscated if students choose to use them during class time, and a parent will have to pick up the device.

*Tobacco/Drug Use:* The Academy is a drug and tobacco free entity, and this applies to any events students participate in either at school or on field trips, as per the district selected policies.

#### **Grade Weights:**

Performances	25% of Final Grade	<u>Letter Grade Scale:</u>
Playing Tests/Practice	25% of Final Grade	A = 90%-100%
Prepared/On Task	20% of Final Grade	B = 80%-89%
Study Guides	15% of Final Grade	C = 70%-79%
Studio Class Performance	15% of Final Grade	D = 60%-69%

**This year we will have a combination of practice records and weekly playing tests. The playing tests will be based on technical exercises, and the practice guides will be based on your actual music.**

#### **Required Supplies:**

- Instrument and Instrument Care Supplies
- Music Folder and Technique Book
- Pencil - Do not bring pens to class!
- You will be provided with a school lock for your instrument locker. Your locker must be locked whenever you are not using your instrument in class.

## Assignment Descriptions and the Colorado Model Content Standards

Several years ago the United States Department of Education adopted a series of standards to be achieved by students in each of the academic subjects. Music was included in these, and shortly after that the state of Colorado also adopted standards that are in line with those on the national level. My goal is to help students achieve these standards in an engaging, exciting, and challenging way. The standards are as follows:

1. Students sing or play on instruments a varied repertoire of music, alone or with others.
2. Students will read and notate music.
3. Students will create music.
4. Students will listen to, analyze, evaluate, and describe music.
5. Students will relate music to various historical and cultural traditions.

The excitement of learning to play an instrument will always be our main goal, but each of the following assignments will help us reach a deeper understanding of music as well as meeting the standards. Although it may seem like we have a lot to accomplish each quarter, it really isn't as much as it seems and each student should be able to maintain an "A" in the class.

Performances: As you know, music is a performance-based class... Everything we do is aimed at working together to make musical moments. If one person misses a performance it hurts the whole group in many ways. The sound will be thin, the absence of a part may make some students confused about where they fit in, and the missing student conveys the message that music, and the group, is not important. We need everybody! For grading purposes, students who come to perform at concerts receive full credit; while absent students receive no points at all. There are exceptions for family emergencies, serious illness, weddings (of which you are a participant, not just a guest), and other unavoidable conflicts. An absence due to illness will only be approved if accompanied by a doctor's note. If the absence is due to a previously scheduled event, I will need to be notified at least two weeks before the performance so that adjustments can be made. Students with approved absences will have to complete an alternative assignment to make up the missing points. Unapproved absences will result in a permanent loss of the concert grade.

### **Please Put These Dates In Your Calendar Now!**

<p><b><u>Concerts</u></b> October 15<sup>th</sup> 2009 December 10<sup>th</sup> 2009 March 18<sup>th</sup> 2010 May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010 <b>Graduation, May 29th</b></p>
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Participation: Music making requires the cooperation of many players. For our purposes, the daily participation grade will apply to whether or not a student has all of the materials in class required for them to make music. These include a pencil and music, as well as the student's instrument and all of the materials that it requires, such as reeds, mouthpiece, music, valve oil, etc... Points will only be awarded to students who come to class prepared. Exceptions will be made if a student's instrument is being repaired for a reasonable amount of time, although I will need a parent note to verify this. (Usually no longer than one week)

Playing Tests: Students will be required to play assigned selections of music and will be graded on these performances. Each student will play in front of the class, which will be positive and respectful to them. I will evaluate each student using the same standards, and provide them with written feedback and advice. Generally, I will only grant students a few attempts before calling upon another individual. This can easily be avoided by being prepared.... Students will always know what they will be tested over at least a week before the test.

Study Guides: Every few weeks I will assign a study guide relating to music that we are studying in class. This will be a short worksheet-style assignment that students will have one week to complete. The first page will generally ask students to define words and styles listed throughout the music, the second page will deal with other concepts in a game or puzzle format, and the third part of the assignment will offer students an

opportunity to choose from several mini-projects. Examples could be preparing a one page report on the composer's life, researching other arrangements of the same music, or making up meaningful lyrics to the song's main theme. Resources could be a music dictionary, encyclopedia, or the Internet.

**No-Parking Grade:** All students will be required to keep their instruments in an assigned instrument storage locker in the band room during the school day. Instruments need to be dropped off in the morning before school starts, and it will not be acceptable for students to keep their instruments in any other locker or classroom. Practice records will be required for each week, and students will be responsible for taking their instrument home for this purpose.

**Although any day will work for practice time, I will be checking the instrument storage lockers at 4:00 PM every Friday. An empty locker will earn a 100% for the Study Guide category, but a locker that still has an instrument in it will earn a 0% for that week's grade.** Students who do not take their instruments home on Friday will find a "Parking Ticket" on the door on the following class day.

I realize that there are a few students that have a different instrument for home and for school. If this is the case, a parent note will suffice for an exception. Percussionists will be graded on the presence of their sticks and other materials. Of course, excused absences will also be taken into account.

### All State Band Auditions

The Academy Band Program has been making steady gains for several years now, and it is easy to hear the improvement. One of the benchmarks of a truly great program, though, is whether or not it can produce All-State caliber musicians. Schools with great programs place several people in those bands every year, and we should strive to reach that same level. We began approaching this goal with our first audition in 2004, and will continue to pursue it every year. It is a goal that can only be reached by individual hard work, perseverance, and a good plan for reaching it. I am providing the plan; much of the rest is up to you.

**I realize that pursuing this goal to the ultimate audition may not be something all of you are interested in doing, but it is my goal that each of you will reach a position where you would be ready for it when the time comes to decide.** You will not be required to audition, but you will be required to reach the following benchmarks along the path. Private lessons are not a requirement to make the band, but the task is very much more difficult without them. I am willing to schedule weekly lessons with you after school if you are motivated to go that extra distance, but the most helpful instruction would come from a private instructor that specializes in your instrument.

You will be tested before or after school during the week of November 17<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> on the following requirements.

8 <sup>th</sup> Grade:	1 Major Scale of your choice, MEMORIZED, <u>2 Octaves</u> , 16 <sup>th</sup> notes at metronome = 112 1 Harmonic Minor Scale of your choice, MEMORIZED, <u>2 Octaves</u> , 8 <sup>th</sup> notes at metronome = 120
9 <sup>th</sup> Grade:	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Requirements Plus... Chromatic Scale of your choice, MEMORIZED, <u>2 Octaves</u> , 8 <sup>th</sup> notes at metronome = 80
10 <sup>th</sup> Grade:	8 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade Requirements Plus... Half of one of the required etude sections at the indicated tempo
11 <sup>th</sup> Grade:	8 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade Requirements Plus... One of the required etude sections in its entirety and half of the other one at their indicated tempos

12th Grade: 8 <sup>th</sup> and 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade Requirements Plus... Both of the required etude sections at the indicated tempo (Audition upon recommendation)
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**Actual Audition Dates: November 30<sup>th</sup>-December 4th**

**School Material Replacement Fines**

Every piece of music that is handed out to you needs to be taken care of. It should be returned in exactly the same condition that it was handed out in. This music belongs to the school, and will be treated the same as library books or classroom books. **Therefore, you will be charged a minimum of \$5.00 for each piece of music that is not returned to Mr. Kemp at the end of the semester during which it was used.** This price may seem high, but it is not easy to obtain individual parts from a publisher. Some music may be more expensive than that, depending on how much the publisher charges to replace the individual parts. We need to replace this music so that more students can use it in the future. Take care of your parts!

Do not allow your parts to become ripped, folded, crumpled, or wet!

**High School Awards Criteria**

Awards will be presented at the music banquet, and will be earned by completing the following criteria:

Band Pin: Awarded upon completion of a student's *first four* concerts at The Academy.

Bronze Star Pin: Awarded upon completion of *eight* concerts at The Academy.

Silver Star Pin: Awarded upon completion of *twelve* concerts at The Academy.

Academy Letter: Awarded upon completion of sixteen concerts at The Academy, along with any scheduled contest festival or graduation performances.

Gold Star Pin: Awarded at the increments of *twenty* and *twenty-four* concerts at The Academy.

Most Improved Trophy: Awarded to the musician that has shown the most growth in performance skills, work ethic, or positive attitude. There will only be one of these each year.

Character Trophy: Awarded to the musician that has shown the best overall character throughout the entire year. I will be looking for someone who is always positive, is always ready to do their part, is interested in improving the entire ensemble by being a positive influence, and someone who does not make negative comments towards the other musicians.

John Philip Sousa Award: This nationally recognized award can only be earned by one junior or senior per year. It recognizes outstanding leadership and contributions to the band program at The Academy.

Graduation Honor Cord: A pink graduation honors cord will be awarded to any senior that receives a major award during their tenure in the band program. Seniors must be current members of the band to be eligible.

### Discipline Ladder Clause

Participating in the band program at The Academy is a privilege. Our success as an ensemble is dependent on our ability to work together towards a common goal, and this requires a safe and comfortable environment for all of our members. Anyone who causes disruptions in class or displays a negative attitude through insults or defiance is effectively creating speed bumps for our success. **Therefore, any person that reaches five discipline referrals and/or a “Strike” and suspension for behavior in band will be required to have a meeting with his/her parents, Mr. Kemp, and the assistant secondary director to review whether they should be allowed to return to band.** This policy is in place to protect our common goal of building the sense of teamwork required for a successful ensemble.

- ✓ Parents: please sign and return the following form with your child, which indicates that you have read and understand these policies. This will be your child’s first grade! Please keep the first four pages of this packet for your reference copy.

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#### Band Policies Acknowledgement Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby acknowledge that I have read and  
(Parent name, printed)  
understand the expectations and grading policy for band classes at The Academy.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_