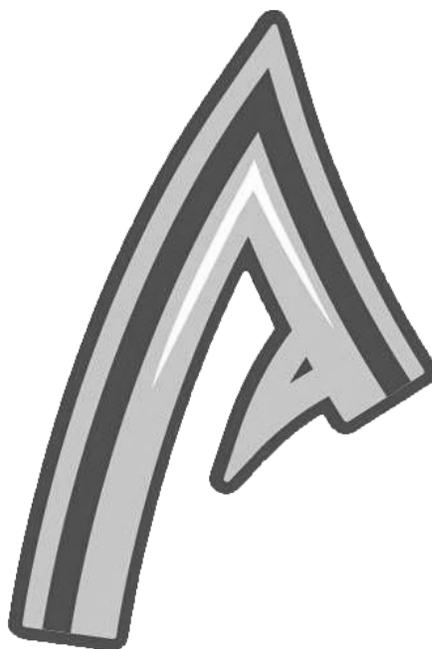


ALMA HIGH SCHOOL

The Pride of Alma

BAND HANDBOOK

2019-2020



Directors:

Mr. David Townsend

Mr. Kent Myers

Mr. Ricky Morrow

Ms. Carol Sikes

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed to give both student and parent ready access to information concerning the Alma Band Program. It is the goal of the Alma Band Staff to provide quality music instruction to all of its members. This can only be achieved with good communication between the directors, band members and parents.

Although learning to play an instrument is one of the primary objectives of band, another parallel goal is learning to work and produce in a group setting. It is this objective that has the most potential to influence a student's life. Through group participation, the student learns responsibility to the organization and all of its members. **It is vital that all band members place the needs of the group before the needs of the individual.**

Some of these responsibilities include attendance at all rehearsals, sectionals, performances, and regular practice on his or her instrument. With the students' diligent efforts in these areas, Alma will have a program second to none.

The following are some of the reasons for having a quality instrumental program in the Alma school system.

1. A developmental skill of playing a musical instrument carries into other skills of development.
2. Participation in a group with common goals fosters cooperative effort on the part of each member.
3. Knowledge and appreciation of the fine arts are gained by playing quality literature and participation in various ensemble groups.
4. Development of coordination, which is, needed when playing an instrument.
5. Quality instrumentalists are eligible to acquire music scholarships to various colleges and universities.
6. A quality instrumental program helps foster pride in the school and local community.

Band is a performance-oriented organization. Rehearsals before, during, and after school prepare the students for performances. These rehearsals, coupled with at home practice, will solidify a student's opportunity to increase his level of productivity and ultimately he will gain a higher appreciation for the activity.

Under this philosophy, the Alma Bands have enjoyed a fine tradition of excellence. With hard work from all participants, this tradition will continue.

Responsibilities

As members of this organization, we have many aspirations, activities, and responsibilities. It is essential to any program that if certain expectations are to be met, that they coordinate with the privileges, rewards and duties of that program.

To Ourselves

You have the primary responsibility of developing your own abilities. The benefit of a good playing instrument and private instruction can never be underestimated. **What you put into it is what you get out of it.** The directors are always available for your guidance and encouragement.

To the School

The Alma School District provides us with the resources for rehearsals, performances, and equipment. The Band Booster organization also provides a support network both financially and spiritually. We have the responsibility to provide the best possible services for our community.

To Music

Music has always been a part of our culture. We must take what we have and use it for the betterment of that culture. No one expects virtuoso musicians, but that contributions are made to society. The great composer Gustav Mahler once said that only 10% of a piece of music is on the page. If that is the case, then we as musicians have the duty of finding, learning, and producing the other 90%. The joy of music is not everything that is apparent. It must be discovered and created.

To Each Other

We must always do what is the best for the welfare of the group. There can be no selfish acts solely for the benefit of the individual, but for all. Respect each other. If there are conflicts, find a way to resolve them. Never insult another band member's integrity. Since we are all in this together, you would be insulting your own pride as well.

BE YOUR BEST!!!

The Total Effort

In order for the Alma Band to be the best in marching, concert band, or color guard we must forego the luxury of making excuses or letting problems go unresolved. Marching, playing, and performing problems are going to occur in every rehearsal. The manner in which they are corrected will radiate in our performance on the field and on the stage.

The band staff (including student leadership, parents/ guardians, and instructors) will respond to all band members fairly and courteously. If things go wrong, *devote your efforts to trying to remedy the situation* rather than deciding who is at fault. Rehearsals will move smoothly and efficiently if we decide to work together toward that common goal.

Each band member is blessed with common sense and intelligence. Your suggestion on how to solve a problem might provide the exact insight needed to straighten out those problems. Do not hesitate to communicate with the staff! *Good communication* is a vital ingredient in the promotion of a good attitude among team members, so speak up! *We will listen*. However, communication is a two-way street, so be prepared to listen as well.

Direct your marching, playing, and performing problems to any of the teaching staff *during* rehearsals. This is the time to correct any problems. Any other problems can be resolved in the Band Office at another time. At that time you will receive our full-undivided attention.

Everything you do becomes a vital element in the success and character of our performances. The audience's attention is immediately drawn to any movement that is not absolutely uniform. Your *total* concentration during performances will insure precision marching and playing befitting our organization. You will begin each performance as well prepared as humanly possible. Always add that final touch of mental alertness that can make your performance great. Do not sell yourself short or insult the band's integrity by doing anything less. Remember that any chain is only as strong as its weakest link!!

“WE WILL NOT BE GREAT, UNTIL YOU ARE GREAT!”

Director Contact Information

If at any time you have questions or concerns we encourage you to contact any of the directors. We will be glad to answer any questions and assist you in any way possible.

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Grades

In determining the band grade for each nine weeks, two areas comprise the average:

1. Performance Grades – including class assignments, sectional assignments, objectives, chair tests, and pass-offs of performance music.
2. Participation Grades – including having music, instrument and pencil at all rehearsals, correct marking of music, care and maintenance of instruments, punctuality to rehearsals and performances, and attendance at rehearsals and performances. Instruments are expected to be taken home as often as possible.

Performances

An unexcused absence from a performance will result in a reduction of the total points possible for that performance, could result in a letter grade reduction, and/or will result in loss of position and/or chair placement. Acceptable reasons for an excused absence are: personal illness, a death in the immediate family, or a conflict with another school event that has been cleared with the directors in advance. **Work will not be considered as a reason for an excused absence.** If you question whether an absence will be excused, please check with a director prior to the absence.

Sectionals

Sectionals are held before or after school to check show music memorization and learn try-out material. Sectionals may continue during concert season on a once weekly basis prior to a major performance to prepare for.

Be ready for not later than 5 minutes prior to their starting time.

Playing Tests and Recorded Assignments

Playing tests of contest music and tryout material will be required as needed to adequately prepare for competitions. A student absent during a Playing Test will be required to make that test up via a Recorded Assignment within one week of the absence. Playing Tests are not optional. They are assignments as in any other class. Playing tests are judged using the “Music Performance Standards” available in the band office. **Students with excessive missing assignments may lose performance placement.**

Private Lessons

Lessons are highly encouraged. Students who want to rank high on chair try-outs, All-Region/State Try-outs, Solo-Ensemble, etc. are advised to take private lessons. The Alma Schools provide lessons at no cost to the student, as teachers are available. **Students are expected to prepare lesson materials in order to retain this privilege. A Private Lesson Contract** will be required from all students studying privately with Alma Lesson Staff. Students not fulfilling the stipulations of the contract will be dropped from the lesson program. Students missing scheduled lessons without prior notification will pay for the cost of the lesson. Lessons are scheduled before and after school. Some lessons by out of town teachers may be taught during the band period. **Part of the lesson contract will be the stipulation that the student will continue in band for the entirety of the next school year.**

Bad Weather Performances and Rehearsals

Always assume that the band **WILL** perform or rehearse outdoors. If a performance or rehearsal is canceled or moved indoors, the directors will make the decision as soon as is feasible. **Be prepared to rehearse/perform in light rain.** We will not rehearse or perform in heavy rain or lightning.

Old Shoes & Practice Clothes

Keep old shoes in lockers for marching practice on a wet field. We will be on the field daily most of the period during football season. Dress appropriately for outdoor activity. Keep a light jacket for cooler weather. You may also want to keep dry socks and a towel in the band room.

Appropriate footwear for marching rehearsal is required (Athletic shoes with laces). Unapproved shoes include: “Toms,” Flip-flops, sandals, boots of any type, “five finger” toe shoes, skate-shoes, or any non athletic type shoe. Keep performance shoes for performances. If you are unsure of what will work, check with a director.

Personal Belongings

The Band rehearsal areas are not to be used for storage of personal belongings. Keep personal items in your locker. Items left unattended/unclaimed may be disposed of at the discretion of the directors. Valuables, including cell phones, purses, wallets, etc. must be secured in your **LOCKED** locker.

Uniforms

The district provides uniforms for marching and concert performances. Great care must be taken when wearing the uniforms.

- Keep all uniforms off the ground/floor.
- Hang all items correctly on the provided hangar.
- Keep non-uniform items out of the uniform bag.

Uniforms will be checked in and out for each performance. Students are to provide their own black shoes and mid calf or high solid black socks for each performance.

Uniform Rules and Policies

1. When the band is in uniform all uniform part must be worn in the proper manner. No open marching coats, dangling suspenders, etc. are allowed at any time.
2. No hats, ball caps, scarves, etc. are to be worn with the uniform.
3. No jewelry should be worn with the marching uniform.
4. No face paint or hair coloring is allowed when in uniform.
5. During marching performances all long hair must be up and inside the marching hat.
6. Students are responsible for keeping their uniforms clean. In the event the uniform becomes soiled inform a uniform officer so that the uniform may be cleaned.
7. **NO** alterations should be done by student and/or parents at anytime.
8. Jeans or sweat pants may **NOT** be worn under the uniform.
9. Current year band shirts and black band shorts are required for all marching performances.

Inspection

Before all marching performances the band will undergo uniform and equipment inspection. Band members must be in the full uniform with all necessary equipment (instruments, music when allowed, etc.) Uniforms should be clean and shoes shined. Instruments should be clean and in good working order.

Failure to pass inspection will result in either the loss of 3rd quarter privileges, bus seating, assignment of extra duties (work details, cleaning, etc.) or loss of position in the performing unit. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that he/she is in the proper uniform with all required equipment at every performance.

Guard and Non-percussion Pit (Front Ensemble)

Members of the Color Guard and students playing percussion whose regular instrument is different are under this category. Keep your instrument in the band room or bring it from home each day. Play when inside, in assemblies, and in the stands at games. **During football season it is the students' responsibility to maintain their playing skills. Guard members not playing in the stands may forfeit their marching position.**

Marching Alternates

During the pre-school marching band practices students will be evaluated in regard to:

- coordination,
- ability to accept instruction,
- attitude,
- cooperation with student leaders and adult staff,
- ability to execute the demands of the drill and music.
- attendance

Occasionally there are those students who for one reason or another have not scored well on the above-listed criteria for placement in the marching drill. Those students will receive an alternate position in the marching band. Directors designate alternates during the pre-school band sessions. The selection is based on marching and playing ability. A student may also be considered an alternate if they missed rehearsal days during pre-school band and have not caught up, or students who may have transferred to Alma High School after pre-school band started. Additionally, any student who “no shows” to a performance will become an alternate.

Alternates are expected to participate in **ALL** activities as well as rehearsals and performances, and are regarded as full members of the Alma Band. Alternates will have position for half-time performances. Alternates will also perform at all Pre-Game Ceremonies, and parades. Each band member is periodically evaluated at rehearsals and performances. Competition performance assignments will be based upon the alternate's performance at rehearsals prior to the event. Alternates will replace marchers with attendance, grade, and discipline problems.

An alternate may win a starting position for the week by:

1. Passing off their music **on** or **before** the deadline and a starter **has not**.
2. If a starter does not have their show music, coordinate cards, or proper footwear, or has excessive absences or tardies to rehearsals.
3. Marching a starter's position that has an **unexcused absence from school** or has been absent for two consecutive days during the week.

4. If a starter has to **miss a performance** for any reason, the alternate will march their position for two consecutive weeks. Thus the starter must sit out two performances (including the week before and/or the week after the scheduled miss). Students missing a performance will need a note from their parents/guardians no later than two weeks prior to the event.

**The Directors reserve the right to make alternate decisions to preserve the performance quality of the group.*

Daily Rehearsal Schedule

While the regular school day begins at 8:16 a.m., the demands of preparation/storage of marching and concert equipment and having adequate rehearsal time dictate that we begin our regular class rehearsals somewhat earlier. The Alma High School Band begins **rehearsal** each day at 8:00 a.m.

Remember: “Early is on time-On time is late!”

- Students should be 5-10 minutes early for rehearsals, they are to have their instruments put together and their instrument cases locked in their lockers and be in position on the field at the starting time. Students will be given 5-10 minutes to lock their instruments away, clean up the band room, and gather their items.
- **Front Ensemble** members should be 15 minutes early for rehearsals due to the requirements of moving and placing their equipment.

Football Games

The Pride of Alma Marching Band attends and performs at all football games. We march into the stadium together, sit together and perform at half-time.

Stadium Bleacher Procedures

1. Band students will sit in a designated order during the entire game. Students may not move from one seat to another during the game.
2. Do not, at any time, leave your area to talk to anyone else unless it is a director or an assigned chaperone. Do not ask to visit friends or parents/guardians while in the stands.
3. No food in the band bleachers at any time. All food must be eaten before returning from third quarter.
4. Non-band equipment (noise makers, etc.) are not allowed in the band bleachers at any time. Don't ask.
5. Uniforms are to be worn in the correct manner while in the bleachers.
6. Even if you do not enjoy the game of football, keep in mind that you have a job to do.
7. All band members are expected to play stand music using their own music. This is not a time to visit your neighbor or take a break.
8. Be ready to play the Fight Song after a touchdown or a short pep tune after an “outstanding play” on the field.
9. During visiting officer introductions, please respond in a courteous manner. Only 5-6 student representatives will be allowed to go across to the visiting band. This will consist of the Drum Majors, Guard Captain, and 2-3 seniors. Seniors representatives will go on a rotating basis so that all interested seniors will have the opportunity.
10. If given the third quarter off, keep the uniform on correctly. Do not be late returning to the bleachers. Expect to play the Fight Song at the beginning of the fourth quarter. Students that are late will not be dismissed for the third quarter the next week and may be assigned extra clean up duties. A long line at the concession stand is not a reason for being late!
11. Continue to support Alma High School in all aspects of the game. Be spirited and show support for your team and school, but remain orderly. Football games are meant to be fun – controlled fun.

Instrument Storage Rooms

1. Keep out -- except to get and put up equipment. **Keep your lock locked.**
2. DO NOT tamper with other student's equipment.
3. **Do not bring food or drinks into the instrument rooms.**
4. Tag instruments with your name.
5. Keep all storage areas clean and tidy.

Practice Rooms

1. Practice rooms are to be used for practice and lessons. They are not lounges or personal storage rooms.
2. No food or drinks at any time.

Instrument Repair

Generally the directors can have an instrument repaired sooner than can be done by students or parents. If your instrument needs repair, give it to the directors to take to the repair shop. **YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COST OF REPAIRING YOUR INSTRUMENT IF IT'S BEEN DAMAGED DUE TO NEGLIGENCE OR MALICIOUS INTENT.** The directors do **occasionally** have minor work done at no charge.

Cell Phones

Cell Phones **MUST** be turned off during all rehearsals and performances. School policies are in effect during all rehearsals and performances.

Students may not use the Band Office phone during the school day. Pre-arrange for a ride to be waiting when we return from events at night. While cell phones are not permitted during class time or during performances, students may have cell phones while traveling with the band and are encouraged to call home to arrange to be met upon arrival back at the high school.

Band Social Media/Charms/Google Classroom

The band department uses Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and our band software program, Charms, to communicate information to students and parents. Daily, weekly, and yearly calendars are available on Charms. Many of the forms needed (including this handbook) are available on Charms and the marching band Google Classroom. Students and parents should check the Charms calendar regularly.

Facebook: Alma High School Band

Twitter: @AlmaHSBand

Instagram: almahsband

Student Conduct

Because the band is a performing organization and is in the public eye, we are often called upon to represent the school system, our community, and even the state of Arkansas. Therefore, the conduct of each member must at all times be a credit to the bands, the schools, and the community. **At all functions a bandsman's conduct is expected to reflect quiet, orderly and courteous behavior. It is the responsibility of each member to hold his/her behavior above reproach.** Unsatisfactory conduct may result in dismissal from the organization.

A good general rule for a band member is:

**BE AT THE RIGHT PLACE, AT THE RIGHT TIME
WITH THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT, WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDE
READY TO CONCENTRATE AND WORK!**

Band Fees

There is no cost to be a member of the Alma High School Band. We will provide all uniforms and equipment. Reeds will be provided on a limited basis. For example: Clarinets will receive a box of 10 reeds for each semester. Students using over their allotment will need to purchase reeds. Reeds will be available in the band office at a discounted price.

	<i>Approximate amount*</i>
Band Shoes (Soph.-Senior replacement pair)	\$40.00* (due upon receipt of shoes)
Trip Fee (during a Spring Trip year)	TBA

Alma Band Student Awards

Each year Alma Band students receive numerous awards, some locally based and some of national recognition. In order to be eligible to receive an award, students must:

- Have no unexcused absences from rehearsals or performances,
- Audition for the All-Region Band unless excused by the Directors,
- Not have a record of disciplinary problems.

Band Letters

A lettering award will be presented to any Band student who fulfills the following four criteria:

TBA – currently updating our current system of lettering. Requirements will be posted once the band staff has them finalized.

End of the Year Trips

To qualify for end of the year trips the following requirements must be met:

- Have no unexcused absences from any required rehearsals or performances for the entire school year.
- Have no more than 5 rehearsal tardies for the entire school year.
- Have no more than 1 day of in-school suspension (SDC).
- Must be academically eligible.
- Must be in good standing with the band.
- Must have passed off all music for both semesters - marching and concert music.
- Zero tolerance for any drug, alcohol, or tobacco/vape violations

Band Travel

Code Of Conduct

- As members of the Alma Band you will be highly visible, not only as a musical organization, but as representatives of our school, community, and state. That responsibility and opportunity carries with it an obligation to project and maintain the absolute highest moral and musical integrity. Many of those who come into contact with us as we perform and travel will form their opinions of Alma based upon the impressions we create, both in close proximity and from a distance.
- Therefore, the rules of the Alma Public School District and individual campus program rules and regulations apply at all times. As in any situation, good judgment must always prevail.
- All rules and expectations are set forth to help you enjoy your trips to the fullest and to avoid the embarrassment and inconvenience which momentary lapses in judgment may bring about. It is the goal of the Alma Band program, that upon our return home to Alma, you will have acquired an even greater sense of pride as an Alma band member and as an Alma Public School musical ambassador.
- Punctuality is essential in adhering to our busy trip schedule. Be early for everything and help each other stay organized. When enjoying free time and during sightseeing excursions, always stay in groups of three or more members. This is for your safety. There will not be any deviation.
- School dress code is required on all trips. In swimming pool areas, keep attire modest. When in concert attire or full marching band attire, remain completely in that attire until told otherwise by a director. It is unprofessional to have shirttails out, to wear athletic shoes while in formal attire, to chew gum, etc. The loading of equipment may necessitate adjustments to these expectations. Follow the instructions of the directors.
- Mixed company in hotel rooms is prohibited.
- While staying in hotels we will share facilities with other student groups and individuals from

other schools and programs. Some of these groups and individuals may be unsupervised at times and may engage in behavior that would violate this Code of Conduct.

- Do not be influenced nor persuaded to engage in any behavior that is in conflict with the spirit of this Code of Conduct.
- Members must remain reasonably quiet at all times when in hotel facilities. Curfews will be strictly observed. Any personal needs, which might require leaving your room after curfew, must be arranged in advance with a chaperone or director. Generally, most needs can be taken care of BEFORE curfew begins.
- Band members are responsible for all their own equipment and personal items (triple check for uniform parts, extra reeds, valve oil, mutes, music, etc.) However, we all must share in the logistical responsibilities of the trip. We will all participate as equipment movers, sanitation engineers, loading crews, stagehands, etc. Please perform the duties asked of you. The more helpers we have, the easier the work becomes.
- There will be times when changes to our plans become necessary. Look for solutions to problems and avoid complaining.
- Concerns should be expressed at an appropriate time and in an appropriate manner. Suggestion: Never complain to anyone who cannot solve your problem. See a director.
- Be respectful and courteous to all bus drivers, parent chaperones, band directors, band helpers, and anyone else you come in contact with while you are with the Alma Band.

REGULATIONS

1. **Students are expected to attend all required activities.** Required activities include: Rehearsals, concerts, half-time performances, basketball pep band, parades, contests (marching, concert, All-Region tryouts). A portion of the student's grade is based upon attendance and participation in these activities.
2. It is the responsibility of the student and/or parent to notify the director of their personal illness or special circumstances that will prevent attendance. This must be done prior to the event taking place. Students should complete a REQUEST FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE FORM.
3. All assigned music and material must be prepared adequately according to student ability. Each member should practice at home a minimum of 150 minutes per week.
4. All members are to conduct themselves in a manner, which credits the Alma Bands, Schools, and community. School rules are in effect at all band functions whether at school or out of town.
5. Misbehavior and improper attitude will not be tolerated.
6. Instruments and uniforms must be kept in good condition at all times. All uniforms are to be left at school unless permission is given by a director to take them home.
7. Students should keep personal materials in their proper place. Lockers in the band hall are for storage of instruments and are not to be used as a school locker. All band instruments should be labeled with the student's name. All other materials will be discarded by school personnel.
8. Food, drink or gum is NOT allowed in the band hall during rehearsal times. Food and drink will only be allowed during specific times. If this privilege is abused it may be lost. Throw away ALL TRASH and clean all spills.
9. Students must be in the band the full year to be eligible to go on the spring trip in May. Students with unexcused performance absences will not be eligible for the spring trip.
10. Non-band students are not permitted in the band room without special permission from the band directors. STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE BAND ROOM AT ANYTIME THE DIRECTORS ARE NOT PRESENT.
11. **Students are not to park in the church parking lot at any time.** Students may only park in school designated student-parking areas. The bus loading area outside the band building is not to be used for parking by students or parents at any time.
12. There is to be no horseplay in the Band Hall. Horseplay is considered running, throwing balls, wrestling, etc.

BUS RULES

1. Students should sit in their assigned seats during all roll checks. Do not sit on seat arms.
2. Music players, DVD players, laptops or mp3 players with headphones are permitted. Devices are not to be played using speakers. The school is not responsible for the theft, loss or damage of these devices while on a trip. Bring them at your own risk.
3. Buses will be left clean after every trip. Be responsible for your own instrument and personal property and anything else that someone may have missed or forgotten.
4. Chaperones and drivers are to be given respect at all times. Follow their directions as you would the director's.
5. There will be complete silence when the roll is called. Roll will be called anytime the bus is reloaded.
6. There will be no loud talking, laughing, **singing**, or shouting.
7. The aisle of the bus should be kept clear of instruments or luggage that would be an obstacle during an emergency. Do not lay in the aisle at any time.
9. Students may not leave from an event with anyone other than their parent or legal guardian. Notes from home are not acceptable. Parents must check students out in person.

Failure to follow these rules will result in the band director assigning seats to the students for the remainder of the trips instead of allowing them to sign the bus list themselves.

Being Signed Out after a Performance

Per Alma High School Student handbook page 25, #46

46. TRIPS - FIELD & EXTRA-CURRICULAR All students who make trips under school supervision will return by the same means of transportation used to get to the destination. The only exception to this will be when **parents check with the sponsor** at the trip destination for permission for the student to ride home with the parent.

BAND HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

(YOU MUST PRINT THIS PAGE AND IT IS TO BE SIGNED AND RETURNED TO THE DIRECTORS BY FRIDAY, AUGUST 23rd, 2019.)

The Alma High School Band Handbook is published online on our Charms page. Please take the time to read through then sign the required Acknowledge Form and Internet Release. Copies of the Handbook are also available from your directors upon request.

“We have read the AHS Band Handbook and our student has our permission to participate in the Band activities stated in this handbook within the guidelines described. We understand that Band is a full-year commitment for the 2019-2020 school year.”

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

“I have read the AHS Band Handbook and agree to abide by the policies stated. I realize that failure to follow policies or directions will result in disciplinary action that could lead to dismissal from the Band and Band classes.”

Student Signature _____ Date _____