



ST. AMANT BANDS

2015-2016

GENERAL INFORMATION HANDBOOK

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Preface

This manual is to be distributed to every member of the St. Amant High School Band. Its purpose is to give parents and students a clear and concise understanding of the workings of our band department and to provide a guide which covers most aspects of the function and requirements of participation. All members are to be thoroughly familiar with the contents herein, for they will have a direct bearing on the success or failure as members of the St. Amant High School Band.

It is our sincere hope that you enjoy the many benefits and rewards that a music education brings.

Marching Band

The St. Amant High School Marching Band is the most visible and recognizable group in the St. Amant Band Program. Membership is required of all students who are members of performing band ensembles unless their services are required as football players, cheerleaders, Gatorettes, or Color Guard members during the football season. Membership in the marching band is not necessarily permanent, and students may be subject to challenges, re-auditions, and/or demotion to a non-performing group. In no way does participation in Marching Band one year guarantee participation the following year.

The Marching Band performs at all St. Amant High School football games, pep rallies, marching festivals and competitions, the Gonzales Christmas Parade, and all other scheduled events. The marching band rehearses after school every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 3:00-4:45 PM. Attendance at all scheduled performances and rehearsals is required. Additionally, all students enrolled in any band course in the Fall semester are required to attend all performances, contests, festivals, and events regardless of their performing status. This includes Spirit Band members, Gatorettes, Cheerleaders, Color Guard members, athletes, and any other student who may not regularly perform with the marching band, with the exception of students who are in service of their respective group or organization during the time of the marching band event.

Occasionally, when the entire band is not needed, or when space or funds prohibit, a smaller band will be used for certain events. The “pep band” will be chosen by the Band Director and may be based on instrumentation requirements, section rank, or seniority.

Spirit Marching Band

The “Spirit Band” is comprised of every student enrolled in the band classes at St. Amant High School in grades 9-12. The Spirit Band performs at all home football games, selected away games, pep rallies, the Gonzales Christmas Parade, and all other scheduled events. All members of the Spirit Band are required to attend all marching band festivals and contests regardless of their performance status.

Competition Marching Band

The “Competition Band” is comprised of every student enrolled in the band classes at St. Amant High School in grades 10-12, and all percussionists in grade 9-12. The Competition Band performs at all home football games, selected away games, pep rallies, the Gonzales Christmas Parade, and all other scheduled events. All members of the Competition Band are required to attend all marching band festivals and contests regardless of their performance status.

Wind Symphony

Made up of students who are determined, through audition and daily observation, to be in the upper third of their respective sections, our Wind Symphony has been extremely successful. This group performs music at the AAAA level and its record has so far been unmatched by any other school band in the state! The Wind Symphony is designed to provide advanced training for those students who qualify. Students who graduate as Wind Symphony Members are in high demand in the university bands of their choice and always qualify for large music and band scholarships. Membership in the Wind Symphony is not necessarily permanent and students may be subject to challenges, re-auditions, and/or demotion to a lower group or a non-performing group.

Regular performances by the Wind Symphony include District and State Band Festivals, Christmas Concert, Spring Concert, Awards Night, Graduation Ceremonies, and all other scheduled events. Wind Symphony Members are also required to audition for the All-District Honor Band. The Wind Symphony rehearses regularly before and after school. The rehearsal schedules vary from year to year, and are subject to change. Students will be notified in a timely manner of all extra rehearsals. Attendance at all scheduled performances and rehearsals is required.

Symphonic Band

The St. Amant High School Symphonic Band is a group of musicians selected by audition in the Fall of each school year. The Symphonic band is designed to meet the needs of students in transition to the Wind Symphony, and generally performs music at the AAA level. The

Symphonic Band is among the finest ensembles in the state, and has earned Sweepstakes ratings at both the district and state levels.

The Symphonic Band performs at all school concerts, District and State Festivals, and all other scheduled events. The Symphonic Band rehearses regularly after school. The rehearsal schedules vary from year to year, and are subject to change. Students will be notified in a timely manner of all extra rehearsals. Attendance at all scheduled performances and rehearsals is required. Attendance at all scheduled events is required. Membership in the Symphonic Band is not necessarily permanent and students may be subject to challenges, re-auditions, and/or demotion to a non-performing group.

Concert Band

The St. Amant High School Concert Band is made up of students who, through audition and daily observation, are determined to have mastered musical and maturational skills to a point where they are ready for membership in a performing high school band. The purpose of the Concert Band is to provide its members with the training and/or maturational development necessary for future membership in the Symphonic Band and Wind Symphony. Our Concert Band has had a fine record and tradition which has equaled or surpassed the records of the top bands in many high schools. The group has generally performed music at the A and AA levels and has received Superior Ratings at District and State Band Festivals. The Concert Band also performs at all school concerts, District and State Festivals, and all other scheduled events. Membership in the Concert Band is not necessarily permanent and students may be subject to challenges, re-auditions, and/or demotion to a non-performing group.

Applied Music

Our Applied Music classes are the lifeline of our band program. Aside from private lessons, Applied Music classes provide the best opportunity for individual help and instruction. Time is also made available for supervised practice and training in fundamentals and performance practices as they apply to specific instruments and instrumental ensembles. Grading is based on the percentage of time a student is actively involved in practice, individual study, or another approved musical pursuit.

Rehearsals

In order to insure a successful band program, it is often necessary to hold rehearsals outside of the school day. Attendance at all rehearsals is mandatory. Excuses from rehearsals are rare, and except in the case of illness or emergency, a written excuse must be presented in advance of the absence. A written excuse, however, does not necessarily excuse a student. Decision of whether a student is excused will be the band director's or the principal's. Each absence from an extra rehearsal will result in the lowering of the student's final grade one letter for each occurrence. The accumulation of three unexcused tardies or early departures from rehearsal will be the equivalent of one absence, and will result in the lowering of the student's final grade one letter on the date of the third infraction. (See section on grading for more information.)

Performances

We are fortunate to have a band that is in demand to perform at numerous functions and activities both at school, and across the state and country. It is, however, impossible to perform without an entire group. The absence of one player from a group will cause the entire ensemble to suffer. For this reason, it is mandatory that all students attend and participate in all performances pertaining to their particular group or ensemble.

All students will be issued a schedule of the current year's performance schedule. Please use this schedule to plan vacations, trips, and appointments. While some events are subject to last-minute changes, it is a rare occurrence. In the event of a change, students and parents will be notified as soon as possible so that accommodations may be made. Because these events provide a unique educational function outside of the classroom, missed performances cannot be made up. Exceptions are rare, and are subject to review by the principal. (See section on grading for more information.)

Every student enrolled in band classes will be required to attend all band performances regardless of their level of participation in that particular event or in any previous or future event. Special attention to this requirement should be paid by all athletes, cheerleaders, color guard members, gatorettes, and any other student who may not regularly perform at football games, pep rallies, or other band events. Failure to participate in all events will affect the student's final grade in the course.

Dismissal from the Band Program

While every attempt will be made to retain students in the band program, there are times when removal is in the best interest of the student and/or the band program in general. Students may be removed for any of the following reasons:

1. Excessive unexcused absences from rehearsals or performances.
2. Abuse or neglect of school-owned instruments, equipment, property, or uniforms.

3. Serious behavioral or discipline infractions.
4. Other reasons as determined by band faculty and/or school administration.

Building Use

The maintenance of a facility like our band room is quite a large task. The manner in which it is maintained is a reflection of our pride in our organization. Observance of the following rules will insure a well-kept room, and will lighten the burden on everyone involved:

1. No gum, candy, or food allowed in the band room.
2. All trash should be placed in the trash cans located at both doors. This includes gum, candy wrappers, broken reeds, reed cases, paper, broken pens and pencils, etc.
3. Do not move chairs or stands from the band setup.
4. Replace all chairs in neat, orderly rows and push all stands down and to the chair in front of them at the end of rehearsal.
5. Do not write on the stands or chairs, or otherwise deface school property.
6. Do not write on the carpet on the walls, or place unapproved messages or signs on the bulletin boards.
7. Do not remove or disturb items placed on the bulletin board.
8. Store your instrument in the shelves provided. Do not leave instruments on the floor or outside overnight. Because of the liability of a damaged or lost instrument, instruments left on the floor or outside overnight will be locked in the office, and will only be released to a parent.
9. Do not play on any instrument that does not belong to you. This includes percussion equipment, mallets, and sticks.
10. The storage rooms, offices, and director's podium, are off limits to students.

In order to maintain the security of every student's possessions and safeguard against theft during afterschool band rehearsals, we must require that all students store their personal property in their locker or vehicle, or bring it with them to the band practice field. All of the school's hallways will be unlocked at the conclusion of rehearsal so that everyone may access their locker.

Band Uniform

The St. Amant High School Band uniform represents much more than the sum of its component parts. It is symbolic of a tradition of pride and excellence of all those who have been a part of the development of our fine program. These alumni feel a renewed sense of pride every time they observe you continuing the tradition, just as many of you will in the future. When in uniform, remember that you represent the entire St. Amant High School Band, especially when you are apart from the group. What you do and the manner in which you do it will reflect on your band, school, and community.

All members will be issued a uniform at the beginning of each marching and concert season. It is each student's responsibility to maintain the uniform in the condition in which it was received. Under no circumstance should any alterations be made to any band uniform without the prior consent of one of the band directors. Failure to follow this may result in the replacement of the uniform at the student's expense. Marching band uniforms will be issued to students each week. In the event of a home game, students will be issued uniforms at the St. Amant Middle Gym, and in the event of an away game, at the band room just prior to departure. Students must wear shorts and a T-shirt under the uniform at all times. At the conclusion of the game, the uniforms will be picked up at the place where they were distributed. Failure to return a uniform will result in disciplinary action, and the assessment of a fine equal to cost of cleaning the uniform.

The marching uniform includes black *Drill Master* shoes, black socks, black gloves, uniform pants, and uniform coat. Excessive makeup, face painting, jewelry, or extreme hair styles are not acceptable. During hot weather, and at all other designated performances, students will wear the black St. Amant Band polo shirt with solid black pants, *Drill Master** shoes, and black socks.

Concert uniforms will consist of a black tuxedo, black *Drill Master* shoes, black socks, white tuxedo shirt, and white bow tie. Girls may wear a tuxedo if desired, but are encouraged to wear a solid black dress, blouse/skirt outfit, or other acceptable solid black attire (concert black).

Inspections

At a designated time before performances, inspections will be held to determine the appearance and readiness of each band member to perform. Items to be checked during inspection include:

1. Student is in place in formation at the designated time.
2. Uniform is properly worn.
3. Shoes are regulation, *Drill Masters*, and are cleaned. Socks are black.

4. Student has the proper music, accessories and equipment.
5. Mouthpiece is clean. Reed instruments have good clean reeds.
6. Instrument is shined and in good working order.
7. Student remains properly in line.
8. Student stands and remains properly at ready, attention, etc.

Failure to successfully pass all of the above items will result in the student being dismissed from the game or performance until proper standards are met. Students who are asked to leave will receive an “F” if they do not return.

Guidelines for Game Behavior

The primary function of the St. Amant High School Band during football season, aside from performing at pre-game and halftime, is to provide support for the football team from the stands in conjunction with the Gatorettes, cheerleaders, and color guard. Toward the accomplishment of this task, it is necessary to set forth the following rules and regulations:

1. After roll call and inspection at the designated time and place, we will march to the stadium in single file to a drum cadence. Students are to remain standing until all lines are straight and the signal has been given to sit.
2. Once you have been assigned a seat, you must stay there until moved by the director. All lines are to be kept straight.
3. Unless specifically stated by the director, nothing is to be brought into the bleachers except music and your instrument. This includes radios, noisemakers, blankets, flags, coolers, etc.
4. Decoration of instruments is prohibited unless approved by the director.
5. Eating, drinking, or chewing gum, is not allowed in the set-up except during half time and the third quarter.
6. The band set-up is off limits to non-band members. Former students may be allowed to visit or sit in.
7. Do not play your instrument in the stands unless the entire band or an entire section is performing.
8. Do not watch the game while the band is playing. Concentrate on the task at hand.
9. Sit up straight and place your feet flat on the space provided for that purpose. Do not lean back on the seat behind you.
10. Take pride in the sound, appearance, and discipline of your band.
11. At the conclusion of the game, remain seated until instructed to move. We will exit by rows for dismissal. (Most orderly rows leave first.)
12. All performances are considered academic commitments. Therefore, all school rules are in effect for the entire performance. Any student suspected to be under the influence, or in possession of, alcohol or any controlled substance will be dealt with strictly in accordance with school board policy.

Travel Information

The operation of the St. Amant High School Band requires that the band travel many times during the year. All members are required to travel with the band. Exceptions to this are very rare, and permission to travel separately can only be given after a travel consent form is completed and approved by the band director or principal.

Any trip with the band is considered an Academic Commitment. As with any school activity, all school rules are in effect. Any student found in violation will be dealt with according to school policy. In severe cases, students will be referred to the school administration, and will be dealt with according to school board policy. Chaperones and bus drivers are to be treated with the utmost respect. Remember, we cannot travel without them. Please show your appreciation for the service they are providing.

Prior to every trip, a bus list will be posted for students to sign. Never remove or change anyone’s name. Doing so will result in the offender being assigned a seat on the bus. Once everyone has signed, the list will be removed and typed for use in roll call. Once the list has been removed, no changes will be made. The seat you sign for is your assigned seat!

Students are responsible for the loading of their own instrument and equipment. All instruments with the exception of percussion and sousaphones must be transported to home games by each student. For away games, large instruments will be given priority on the trailers, and all others will be carried on the bus.

Grading Policy

In computing grades for each four and one half week grading period, several factors will account for the final grade. Each of these factors takes in to account the elements necessary to produce a successful band program. All grades are computed on a percentage basis and comply with the school/parish grading system. The grading categories are as follows:

In Class Work
40%

After School Rehearsals
40%

Exams
20%

In Class Work - This category will derive its grades from playing tests, written tests, alertness in rehearsal, participation in class activities and discussion, marching fundamentals, and instrument and folder inspections.

After School Rehearsals - In order to insure a successful band program, it is necessary to hold after school rehearsals. During marching season, we will have after school rehearsals on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 3:00 - 4:45 PM. In concert season, the Concert Band and Symphonic Band will rehearse one day per week after school. The Wind Symphony will rehearse two days per week after school. In this category, each ***un-excused*** absence will result in a loss of 10 percentage points.

Exams - Since band is a performance-oriented class, the exam for this class will be the performance/s we give. In the event there is no performance within the grading period, the exam will consist of a large-scope performance exam. An example might include the student performing the prescribed audition music, scales, and or performance music. Due to the nature of performances outside of the school day, no performance may be "made up." Any ***un-excused*** absence will result in the loss of all 20 percentage points.

An **excused absence** is one that is documented by a doctor, obituary, or family emergency. An excused absence for a family emergency must be approved by one of the directors and must be verified by a parental note and phone call. All excuses must be turned in with in five days of returning to school.

Band Fee

While the band department receives a certain amount of money from the school board budget, most of this money is earmarked for certain expenditures which must be paid each year. Included in the budget is money for band music and drill, money for maintenance, and money to pay for District and State Band Festival expenses. In addition, this budgeted money is most frequently inadequate to cover the expenses for which it is allotted.

Each band member is required to pay a \$200.00 fee. This fee covers the cost of all uniform cleaning and storage, rental and maintenance of school-owned instruments, travel, meals, band camp, marching band and concert band staff, items in connection with the Band Awards Banquet, Senior Jackets, and other budgetary necessities.

Payment of the band fee is due at registration, and report cards will be held for those students who have not paid. In the event that a student has still not paid his/her fees by the beginning of the following year, he/she will not be allowed to register until all obligations have been settled. In addition, we will not assign a uniform to a student who has not paid his/her fees. We do not, however, wish to cause a financial burden for any family, so if you are unable to pay the fee, simply check with your directors. Our band booster club has been very good about helping out families who cannot afford to pay the band fee.

Instruments and Equipment

It is highly recommended that you consult with your band director before buying a new instrument or mouthpiece. Likewise, any used instrument that you plan to buy should also be examined. It is quite possible that you could save a great deal of money, and possibly avoid the purchase of a lesser-quality instrument at too high of a price. It is also recommended that all instruments be inspected by your director before bringing it to the shop for repairs. Most often, the problem can be fixed in a matter of minutes free of charge.

Students who play on high quality instruments are able to do everything much more easily and produce a much finer sound than students who play lesser-quality instruments. Often a good, professional instrument can be purchased for the price of a student model. Again, consultation with the director is crucial.

Additional Equipment

Every brass player must furnish his/her own mouthpiece, valve oil and slide grease.

Every woodwind player should provide his/her own reeds and cork grease.

All percussionists must furnish their own sticks and mallets.

All band members must have a lyre and flip folder with enough pages to hold all marching music.

School-Owned Instruments and Equipment

School-owned instruments and equipment are assigned to students who play very expensive instruments such as oboe, bassoon, bass and contra clarinets, tenor and baritone saxophones, French horns, large bore trombones, euphoniums, and tubas. These instruments will be distributed to students according to the needs of the band department.

Members are responsible for these instruments at all times. Any damage to these instruments or equipment will be the student's burden. Never should a student or parent attempt to repair a school-owned instrument, and these instruments should NEVER be brought to the repair

shop without the consent of the director. Many times, a family's homeowner's policy will cover these instruments. Check with your agent to see if this is a possibility.

Band Letterman Jackets

All students enrolled in their Senior year of band will be eligible to receive a band letterman's jacket. Jackets will be ordered in the Spring of the Junior year and presented in the Fall of the Senior year. Additionally, any student who is selected into the LMEA All-State Band or Orchestra will receive their letterman jacket in the Spring of the same school year. The band department pays for the cost of the jacket and letter only. Students are responsible for all other items and customization which is due at the time of ordering.

Electronic Communication

Because of the amount of time required of students and directors outside of the regular class day, and because of the need to contact students and parents in a variety of situations and locations (football games, concerts, field trips, etc.), it may sometimes be necessary that band directors, staff, or instructors communicate with students electronically by means other than school telephones or email. These communications may include cell phone calls, text messages, social media, website postings, communication through applications (apps), or other electronic media as yet to be determined. All communication will be limited to business directly connected with band operations. Parents may opt out of having their child contacted in this manner at any time by submitting a written request to the band directors and principal.

Band Booster Club

The St. Amant High School Band Booster Club is an organization of parents and other interested parties. The purpose of the club is to provide financial support and help to promote band spirit.

Committees are formed to provide necessary services to the band. Among these services are providing chaperons for trips, helping with fund-raising projects, speaking to school and school board officials on behalf of the band, aiding with public relations, and serving on telephone committees. Membership is open to anyone with a sincere interest in the welfare and success of our band. Meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM in the school band room.

St. Amant High School Band

Agreement

This manual has been designed to provide you with the rules and requirements for participation in the St. Amant High School Band. Its purpose is to give parents and students a clear and concise understanding of the workings of our band department and to provide a guide which covers most aspects of the function and requirements of participation.

We, the undersigned:

1. Have read and thoroughly understand and agree to comply with the contents of this manual.
2. Understand that this manual is to serve as a reference for student participation.
3. Understand that this document must be returned within one week of receiving this handbook.
4. Understand that no student will be allowed to participate in any band function who has not returned this document.
5. Understand that sanctions will be given by the teacher or administration for any infraction after considerations have been given to all extenuating circumstances.

Student's Signature

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date

Date