

Norco High School
Instrumental Music Program

Student and Parent Handbook

2018-2019

Marching Band and Colorguard (Blue Diamond Brigade)
Concert Band
Symphonic Band
Jazz Band

Dr. Richard Mora, Director

Introduction

The Norco High School Instrumental Music Program provides an opportunity for students to cultivate the skills of music performance and appreciation within a framework of self-discipline, teamwork, and individual character.

The music program consists of the Jazz Band, Concert Band, Symphonic Band, and Marching Band classes. Colorguard members enroll in second period Concert Band. The performance groups associated with these classes are the Marching Band, Concert Band, and Jazz Band. As a member of the music program at Norco High School students represent the school by performing at concerts, football games, pep-rallies, concert festivals, and band review/parade competitions.

Behavior Expectations: All Classes

The following details the conduct expected of all students:

Please be the best person you can be each day by:

1. Being POLITE to teachers and students.
2. Having RESPECT for school property.
3. Being RESPONSIBLE by bringing materials and practicing.
4. Being HONEST and TRUSTWORTHY.
5. Leaving food and beverages outside or in a backpack.
6. Knowing and exemplifying Norco High School ESLR's.

The following are the increasing negative consequences for students who do not abide by these expectations (students may receive one or more of these and some behavior may require immediate action where no warning will be given). I will call security in situations that are excessive, disruptive, abusive or dangerous.

1. Verbal Warning
2. Detention - 30 minutes
3. Detention - 60 minutes
4. Office referral and a call home.
5. Office referral, call home, and a Saturday school
6. Drop with fail and/removal from the program

The following are positive consequences or rewards that students may receive for following these rules (students may receive one or more).

1. Special luncheons - Pizza/Ice Cream, etc.
2. Praise daily
3. Outstanding citizenship grades
4. Positive phone calls home

5. May be nominated for various awards
6. Learn more music
7. Get better on your instrument

Rehearsal Expectations: Classroom

Entering the Classroom:

Each student will enter the room quietly, immediately assemble their instrument, and put their music on the stand, leaving their case in their locker. Students that play percussion instruments will make sure all of the proper equipment needed is set up correctly for the rehearsal.

Remember to do this quickly and quietly. You must be sitting in your chair with your instrument, music, and a pencil when the tardy bell rings. Once set-up you are expected to warm-up and practice until the director begins the rehearsal.

Backpacks and other belongings will be placed in your locker or around your chair. To protect the instruments, equipment, and our room, there is absolutely NO FOOD, DRINKS, or GUM allowed in the band room at any time. This will be strictly enforced.

Depending on enrollment, every student will have space in a locker to keep only their instrument and appropriate supplies. Students may not keep any other items on the shelves and should take their instrument home daily to practice. Personal items found in storage lockers will be removed at the end of the week if unclaimed. Only locks purchased from the band director should be used on assigned lockers.

During Rehearsal:

Once the tardy bell rings, rehearsal will begin. Usually, the agenda will be given verbally and may also be written on the whiteboard. Please be prepared to play only what is scheduled for that day. The following procedures will help to ensure a great rehearsal:

1. Be in your seat with your instrument, music, and a pencil when the tardy bell rings. If you are not in your seat and ready to play you will be marked Tardy. Three tardies results in an automatic 30-minute detention.
2. Be quiet during announcements.
3. Listen to directions and follow them quickly and quietly the first time.
4. Be silent during tuning.
5. Raise your hand to ask a question or give a constructive comment, only when the band has stopped playing.
6. When it is time to play your instrument, get ready quickly and quietly.
7. Only play when Dr. Mora instructs you to.
8. When you are given directions to change songs, change quickly and quietly.
9. When Dr. Mora stops the band, stop playing your instrument right away, be quiet, listen to instructions, and quickly get ready to play again.
10. If Dr. Mora is rehearsing a group separate from yours, please stay quiet and pay attention so you can learn from what is happening and be ready to play immediately.

11. Please plan to use the restroom before school, after school, at lunch, or during passing periods. Please plan on not leaving during class time, unless it is an absolute emergency.

Occasionally, Dr. Mora will check that you have required materials. Please be responsible by making sure you keep your music in order and bring your instrument, music, and materials with you everyday to class. You should always have a pencil with your materials. Be sure to only write on music or printed materials with pencil only.

At the end of the period, Dr. Mora will give you permission to put away your instruments. Please be polite by not packing up earlier, as it is distracting. When given permission, please quietly clean out your instrument, return it to the case, and place your instrument back on the shelf. Please clean around your chair and straighten the chairs and stands. Once the bell rings, Dr. Mora will dismiss you. Please quietly exit the classroom.

Rehearsal Expectations: Field

Blue Diamond Brigade

The marching band at Norco High School is called the Blue Diamond Brigade (abbreviated BDB) and has a special relationship to the school and the other music classes. The BDB is the musical face of Norco High School that we show to the students on campus, at athletic and school functions, and the community at large. This relationship does not exist to the same degree with the other music classes, primarily because none are as active or visible as the BDB.

All students participating in the music programs at Norco High must be enrolled in the Blue Diamond Brigade (Marching Band and Pageantry) in the fall and the Marching Auxiliary class in the spring. Seventh period occurs during our scheduled after school rehearsals and appears as seventh period in the class schedule.

In addition to the unique nature of this ensemble as cited above, the great fun and camaraderie generated through participation in the numerous competitions, excursions, and performances is a driving force for our music program.

On the Field

For marching rehearsals students should arrive at the field at least ten minutes prior to rehearsal. All necessary items specific to marching band should be brought out including water, coordinate sheets, instruments, and essential clothing (hats, sunglasses, etc.). Students will stretch and then proceed to work on basics, learn drill, or practice the parade routine. The following procedures will help to ensure a great rehearsal:

1. Be quiet during rehearsal.
2. Listen to directions and follow them quickly and quietly the first time.

3. Raise your hand to ask a question or give a constructive comment, only when the band has stopped playing or marching.
4. When it is time to play your instrument or march, get ready quickly and quietly.
5. Only play or move when Dr. Mora instructs you to.
6. When Dr. Mora stops the band please stop playing or marching right away, be quiet, and listen to instructions.
7. If Dr. Mora is working with a group separate from yours, please stay quiet and at parade rest so you can learn from what is happening and be ready to work immediately.

A superior ensemble, whether it be a marching band or concert ensemble derives its essential strength from the quality of the musical sounds (and/or movements) it produces. This quality does not occur by accident but is the result of a commitment by each individual member to enhance their own abilities **proactively**. To present themselves professionally and represent our school with superior artistry, students should remember to do the following:

- 1) Be punctual and have consistent attendance at all meetings, rehearsals, performances, fundraisers, and band events.
- 2) Exercise consistent and focused practice on their instrument for as long as possible on a daily basis.
- 3) Be respectful and follow proper classroom and performance etiquette.
- 4) Display and cultivate a positive attitude that focuses on group achievement through striving for personal performance excellence.
- 5) Hustle!

Excellence will be achieved when our groups approach a 100% achievement rate by individual members among **all five** areas above. This expectation is not unattainable. It is what **every** sweepstakes, first place, and superior earning ensemble and marching band does as an accepted daily routine. Not to mention, these groups look and sound exceptional!

Individual Practice

Students are expected to take their instrument home as often as possible and to practice regularly. This helps students stay up to date on their daily assignments and weekly tests and is considered their homework. Students should be practicing 5-6 days per week for 20 or more minutes each day. They should be reviewing concepts addressed in their music during class. If a student is not practicing, their grade may ultimately suffer and music will not be a positive experience. If a student is passing off performance exams and learning concert songs in a timely manner, they are probably practicing enough.

Please monitor your child's practice time to ensure their success. Students succeed in practicing when they are in a quiet area and free from distractions. Music stands, chromatic tuners, and metronomes are also very helpful.

Grading: Classroom

All students will be given an academic grade based on the completion of assignments, performance tests, and rehearsal/performance attendance. In addition, students will also receive a citizenship grade based on their individual behavior in class, completion of homework and their level of preparation for rehearsals.

Academic Grade:

Students will be tested in class on a variety of music including field show music, concert music, pep tunes, orchestral excerpts, technical exercises, scales, and rhythms. Students will need to prepare for these tests by practicing daily at home.

Each student will have one opportunity to pass off a playing test during class. If a student needs to make-up a test due to absence or lack of preparation they can make an appointment to play for Dr. Mora during lunch or, on rare cases, after school. Students will be given as many opportunities to test during lunch (once per day) as needed during each quarter to pass a test on **certain** repertoire. Students should be proactive in making up a test however, because a large amount of last minute make-ups will most likely be impossible to accommodate as the semester ends. Students must play each exam with 90-100% accuracy in order to pass. A test rubric has been included in this handbook.

**For certain pieces there will not be a make-up opportunity as music must be memorized for a field show/concert by a certain date to perform it successfully.
Please note this so you are prepared to play well when these types of tests occur.**

At the beginning of each semester, Dr. Mora usually distributes music and exercises that will be tested during that semester. Students are encouraged to use the band room during lunch to practice their instrument and prepare for exams and performances. Dr. Mora reserves the right to add or delete tests as the semester unfolds. Below is the grading rubric for playing tests:

Playing Test Grading Rubric

NAME: _____

<u>Test/Quiz</u>	Note Accuracy	Rhythm	Tone/Pitch	Articulation	Phrasing	<u>Total Points</u>

Rubric Scoring

Note Accuracy - *accuracy of printed pitches and intonation within appropriate range*

- 5 - All the right notes were played
- 4 - Most of the right notes were played
- 3 - Some of the right notes were played
- 2 - A few of the right notes were played
- 1 - Hardly any of the right notes were played

Rhythm - *accuracy of values, duration, pulse, steadiness, meter*

- 5 - All the right rhythms were played
- 4 - Most of the right rhythms were played
- 3 - Some of the right rhythms were played
- 2 - A few of the right rhythms were played
- 1 - Hardly any of the right rhythms were played

Tone Quality - *resonance, control, clarity, focus, consistency, timbre, breathing, and support*

- 5 - Tone quality is clear and focused for all notes
- 4 - Tone quality is clear and focused for most notes
- 3 - Tone quality is clear and focused for some notes
- 2 - Tone quality is clear and focused for a few notes
- 1 - Tone quality is not correct for the instrument being played

Articulation - *accuracy and fluency of attacks and releases, adherence to printed indications*

- 5 - Articulation is accurate for all notes
- 4 - Articulation is accurate for most notes
- 3 - Articulation is accurate for some notes
- 2 - Articulation is accurate for a few notes
- 1 - Articulation is accurate for hardly any notes

Musicianship - *expressive elements, tempo, dynamics, posture, playing position*

- 5 - Musicianship is present throughout entire song
- 4 - Musicianship is present throughout most of the song
- 3 - Musicianship is present throughout some of the song
- 2 - Musicianship is present throughout a few parts of the song
- 1 - Musicianship is not present

Total Points

25 - 22 = A

21 - 19 = B

18 - 16 = C

15 - 13 = D

12 - 0 = F

Citizenship Grade:

A student with OUTSTANDING (O) citizenship **meets all the standards of satisfactory citizenship and** works independently, is a positive role model, helps others, solves problems, and **always** follows class rules.

A student with SATISFACTORY (S) citizenship respects others, has a positive attitude, pays attention, is cooperative, is on time, dresses appropriately, and regularly follows class rules.

A student who NEEDS to IMPROVE (N) citizenship will display one or more of the following: talks excessively, is disrespectful to others, is uncooperative, uses inappropriate language, has a poor attitude, displays disruptive behavior, has four or more tardies to class, is off task, and/or dresses inappropriately.

A student with UNSATISFACTORY (U) citizenship will display one or more of the following: is defiant to school authority, violates school ethics code, intimidates others, has five or more tardies to class, is frequently truant, is consistently disruptive, fails to follow class rules, and/or commits a suspendable act.

Performance Grading Policy (As part of Academic Grade):

Numerous performances and rehearsals are scheduled for the music program throughout the year. **Attendance at all rehearsals and performances is mandatory.** In addition to a schedule of competitive and non-competitive band activities, a substantial number of performances are expected of the group in support of athletic and school activities. A schedule of performances is published giving dates and times of all rehearsals and performances. Additions to the schedule are announced at least two weeks before the event. Students that have a job or conflicting event should plan their schedule accordingly. Teachers and employers are usually good at helping students schedule and coordinate activities, provided that students plan ahead proactively and show them the courtesy of letting them know their situation in **advance.**

Rehearsals are essential to a quality performance. Band members in every ensemble should be aware that rehearsals are mandatory because of their critical relationship to performance quality. After school rehearsals will be impacted by the citizenship, work habits, and attendance components explained in the daily classroom expectations/grading section.

All performances should be viewed as the equivalent of a test in an academic class, and much like a critical athletic game, cannot be made up. Students that are a no-show for a performance will lose the credit towards their grade as if it were the equivalent of a test. Also, students with chronic attendance issues in 7th period marching band may be placed in the alternate parade block for their safety and the safety of others.

Also remember that a parent e-mail or note (while appreciated) stating your absence does not clear you from points lost for activity during the missed period. Parents should follow up with attendance to clear absences at afterschool rehearsals (7th period) in the same fashion as regular-day classes.

Of course life presents us with emergencies and issues that on rare occasion prevent a student from participating. In the event that a student has a documented illness or emergency half credit (50%) will be issued to the student when the following criteria are met in regard to absences. No alternative assignments will be given for missed rehearsals or performances

- 1) A **timely** notification of absence that is prior to, or in the case of severe emergency, closely follows a performance.
- 2) Notification by written letter, e-mail, or phone from the parent regarding their student's inability to attend the event.
- 3) A doctor's note or other form of documentation that substantiates the need for a student to be absent.

NOTE: Timely information for performances and events is given daily to students starting several weeks before performances. The posting of itineraries, website schedules, and e-mails home is a courtesy by the director to help communication. It is recommended that you talk to your student about relaying information since lack of receiving an e-mail or website posting is not an acceptable reason for students to miss performances and they will receive no credit in these cases.

Information for Alternates

Our program has currently grown to a level of quality and competitive standing that makes it necessary to use alternates for our competitive band review/parade engagements. This is comparable to both the football team's varsity "travel team," and the cheer team's "competition team." Our competition parade block will essentially be the equivalent of the varsity football and varsity cheer teams.

Students that fall in the alternate category typically have difficulty in the following areas: marching in step, playing the music, marching while playing, or attendance issues. Students will have the opportunity to demonstrate the skills they have developed at our first parade, the Norco Labor Day Parade on September 3rd, 2018. This will be the "audition" that will allow me to set a tentative competitive block.

Students selected as alternates will still march and participate at football games, pep rallies during and before school, and all marching band performances. They will travel with us to our 4-5 competitive engagements as well and fill any holes by unexpected emergency absences. They will of course be issued all the same equipment, uniforms etc., and be held to the same grading standard.

During rehearsals alternates will train with the band as usual and will be constantly assessed for improvement and possible integration into the parade block. We will be pushing hard for all students to excel and meet the minimum criteria to be in the parade block.

Please talk with your student about their role in band especially if they are chosen as an alternate. Feel free to e-mail the director at rk mora@cnusd.k12.ca.us if you have any further questions.

Student Leaders:

Student leaders are one of our most valuable resources. Student leaders act as section leaders and role models by helping their sections and band members complete objectives given to them by the director. They are exemplary role models and strive to emulate positive behavior and attitudes. They also strive to participate at every fundraising event and school function attended by the band. Students interested in becoming a leader can get more information from Dr. Mora.

Parent Volunteers:

Parent Volunteers are needed for many band events and activities. This is a fun and rewarding way to participate in our program. Announcements for chaperones will be made in class or via e-mail. All chaperones will work at the discretion of the director and should be processed and cleared as a volunteer through CNUSD. The following is a list of duties for our parent chaperones:

- Man snack-bar and concession stands.
- Make sure students are safe at all times.
- Make sure students abide by school and performance venue rules and regulations at all times.
- Chaperone students at competitions, games and performances.
- Help with uniform inspection before competitions and games.
- Help with moving equipment and assisting with props.
- Take head counts on trips.
- Help distribute water at events.
- Assist with sick or injured students.

Uniforms and Materials:

Uniforms are provided for all marching band and colorguard students. A good portion of our budget goes to the maintenance of the uniforms (which includes cleaning). When in uniform, there are certain rules that each student needs to follow. They include:

- Wear a black athletic undershirt under the uniform
- Wear athletic shorts of light material (no denim) under the uniform. PE shorts are great.
- Wear solid black calf-high socks (no insignias or logos)
- Shoes must be cleaned and polished (including the soles; no dirt or mud on the soles)
- Black gloves must be clean
- No jewelry or piercings may be worn
- Hair must be cut or styled to wear under shako and be a naturally occurring color.
- No makeup may be worn
- Hair should not fall below the collar-line (long hair should be tied or pinned up) and must be an acceptable color.
- Shakos are to be worn correctly at all times, not backwards.
- Members may not lean or sit on areas not covered by our own bench covers.
- No signs of affection with other members while in uniform. (Hugging, kissing, etc.)
- Please carefully remove uniform from hangers, and hang uniform back onto hangers after performances, just as they were hung when you received them. Pay attention to creases.
- **No eating or drinking** (except for water or ice) is allowed while in uniform
- All parts of the uniform must be worn unless instructed by the director

Marching band members use a member t-shirt or black undershirt, a pair of athletic shorts, black gloves, and black band shoes. Guard members use a t-shirt, and the appropriate shoes, nylons, make-up and performance attire.

Concert Dress:

Boys: Tuxedo or a combination of: Black blazer, black slacks, black belt, black socks, black dress shoes, white collared shirt, and black bow tie. No jeans or athletic shoes.

Girls: Black formal gown/dress, knee-length or lower. Or: Black blouse and black pants and black dress shoes. No open back, sleeveless, heels longer than 1 inch, low necklines. Please limit jewelry and do not wear jeans or athletic shoes.

***Please note that as a performing ensemble, any event the band engages in requires specific and uniform dress criteria. These are given before the event. Students that do not dress appropriately to represent the band at any band function will be asked to change. If they cannot or will not change into appropriate attire, administrative staff will be alerted and parents will be called to pick up the student from the event.**

Instrument Loan and Storage:

Norco High School has a limited supply of instruments available for student use. Students that are enrolled in the music program and are in good standing may check out an instrument by having a parent sign an instrument check-out form to acknowledge parental financial liability for

any damage that occurs to the instrument that is above and beyond normal wear and tear while checked out. Parents or students that do not want to be liable for their use of district owned property loaned to them may rent or buy their own instrument privately.

While the band room is supervised during school hours and alarmed when unoccupied after school hours, the Band Program and Norco High School will not be held responsible for student-owned instruments that are stolen or damaged. It is strongly recommended that all privately-owned instruments be taken home daily. Since our new facility has lockable storage cases, there may be the opportunity for students to purchase district issued locks. Non-district locks are unacceptable and will be removed. It is up to students to be aware of their instruments and report any issues they may have immediately.

Fundraising:

The costs associated with an active high school music program are numerous. Currently, all of our activities are funded by the income produced through band club activities such as snack bars, candy sales, car washes, as well as direct donations from band parents and private donors. In previous years funds collected from parents were designated as a “shared cost.” We have replaced what was previously called shared cost with “donations.” Please remember that we still have the same costs associated with maintaining an active music program regardless of what we label the financial help we receive.

Donations:

Donations are a significant way that the Blue Diamond Brigade can afford to pay the costs associated with a highly active music program. These expenditures include staff pay, props, spirit wear, printed music, transportation expenses, tournament fees, music arranging, winter guard, and drill writing. Funds for these activities are not covered fully through the school or district. Again, the primary means to achieve this funding is through extensive participation in fundraising and from donations which we gladly accept at any time and for any and all amounts.

**Please note that donors may write-off donations to the Norco High School Band and Pageantry from your taxes as a donation.*

Fundraiser Participation:

Participation in all band fundraisers is expected for all members. Participation in fundraisers will determine if a student is in good standing. Students that are not in good standing may not be allowed to participate in certain activities above and beyond the scope of classroom instruction.

Because all of our activities are subsidized directly by the funds generated through fundraisers and collected through donations, these amounts directly impact the activities we are able to realistically undertake. Lack of funds raised will reduce or eliminate our participation in activities like parade competitions, festivals, performances, and trips.

Staying in Touch:

There are many ways that parents and families can receive information. Currently the Norco High School Website is under construction and will be updated with a band area that includes schedules and other information. In addition, you can stay in touch through the following:

- E-mails sent out by the director
- Written information given to your child
- Information from your student
- Direct contact with the director (Phone 951-736-3241 x25405)
E-mail: rkmora@cnusd.k12.ca.us
- Band Website: www.bluediamondbrigade.com
- Remind.Com

All district and school rules will be enforced during all activities including rehearsals and performances. Violation of these rules may result in disciplinary action from the school and possible removal from the band program.

Norco Band Handbook Agreement Form

Please return this sheet and revisit the handbook during the school year.

I have read the Norco High School Blue Diamond Brigade Handbook 2018-2019 at www.bluediamondbrigade.com. I understand band program expectations and my responsibility as a band member in regards to attendance, conduct, and grading.

Student's Name

Student's Signature

Date

I have read the Norco High School Blue Diamond Brigade Handbook 2018-2019 and have discussed the contents with my band student. Specifically, I understand that **all performances and rehearsals are mandatory** and that missing or being late to any of them will negatively impact my student's grade and in some cases their ability to participate fully in band activities.

Parent's Name

Parent/Guardian's Signature Date

****Parents, please provide your best e-mail address so that I may contact you regarding upcoming performances, schedule changes, and other band activities. Also see directions below to sign up for Remind App communication.**

Parent Name Best E-mail Text Number

To sign up for Remind App communications please text **@bandfolks to 81010**. If this does not work for you, please email bandfolks@mail.remind.com to sign up. If all else fails, I can add you via your e-mail above.