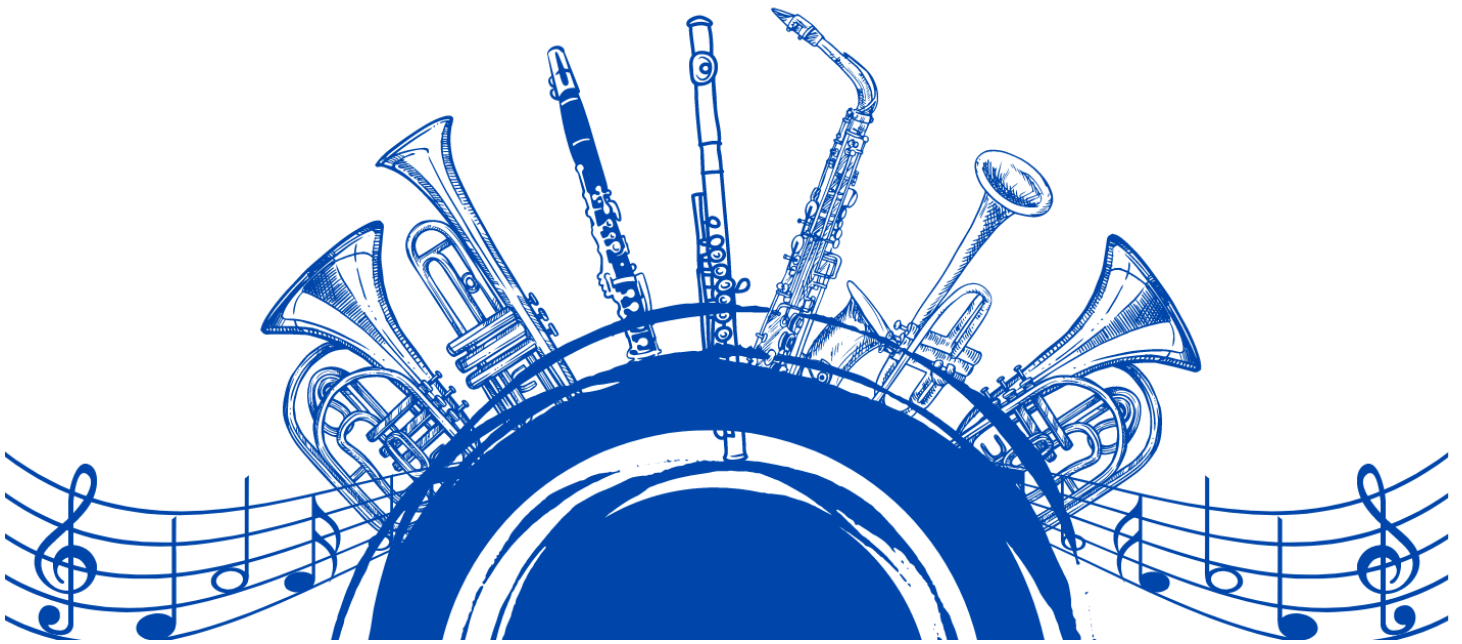


ACS

2025-2026

4th-8th Grade

Band Handbook



Note From the Band Director

Welcome to band! I am very excited to be the Band Director at ACS and lead you through a wonderful year of music and fun. I put this handbook together to help explain policies and to share with students and parents the expectations for band this school year.

This is a working document and if changes are needed throughout the year the handbook will be revised. I will send an email clarifying the change.

If you ever have questions, please reach out to me. I am here to help your students succeed in band.

Ms. Surdyka
Band Director
Academy Charter School
303-660-4881
surdykak@academycharter.org

Important Links

[Band Calendar](#)

(Once signed up for band you will receive access to this calendar.)

[Band Google Classroom](#)

[Band Resource Folder](#)

Band Sign Up

Sign up on the Google form that is **due September 5th**.

If you need an instrument and want to rent one, please check out [Music Makers](#)

If you do not sign up by the deadline, you will not be able to rehearse. All of our continued communication will be sent to those who sign up.

Instrument Options for Grades 4-5

Oboe Flute Bb Clarinet Alto Saxophone
French Horn in F Bb Trumpet Baritone/Euphonium Trombone Percussion

Instrument Options for Grades 6-8

Oboe Flute Bb Clarinet Bass Clarinet Alto, Tenor or Baritone Saxophone
French Horn in F Bb Trumpet Baritone/Euphonium Trombone Percussion

Interested in Purchasing Instead of Renting and Instrument

If you need an instrument and want to buy one but don't know where to start please email the Band Director. They can help guide you to a good purchase or even test it out for you to make sure that it works properly. It is highly recommended to buy in person and not online. Pictures are great but you don't know how an instrument plays from a picture. Buying online without play-testing could end up costing you several hundred dollars extra.

Music Makers sells used instruments that you can shop online or in store.

[Music Makers Used Instrument Online Marketplace](#)

Switching Instruments

Students are highly encouraged to attend the instrument tryout night on August 28th from 4-5 p.m. At this event, the students will have the opportunity to test play every instrument which is vital to them picking the right instrument for them. There will be no second or third choices, only first choices in hopes that students will find an instrument that they love and not think to switch halfway through the year.

Students will not switch instruments during a concert season. When students switch instruments they are starting from scratch and this can be very defeating. Having missed valuable instructional time, the student may learn poor habits and struggle to learn the concert music in time. A good time to switch instruments is over the summer or the next school year. At any point during the year if a student is unhappy with their instrument choice talk to the Band Director to make a game plan.

Activity Fee

There will be a **\$100 activity fee** for each student. Look for an email from MySchoolBucks. Activity fees will be used to buy equipment and music. No child will be turned away from this program. If there is any problem with the \$100 fee, please contact the business manager, Katie DeMaria demariak@academycharter.org about possible scholarship opportunities. All payments must be made by credit/debit card through My School Bucks.

ACS Eagle Band

If the student decides to quit band during the first week the activity fee will be refunded. If the student decides to quit band after the first week the activity fee will not be refunded.

ACS Beginning Band

If the student decides to quit band after two rehearsals the activity fee will be refunded. If the student decides to quit after three rehearsals the activity fee will not be refunded.

Schedule

ACS Eagle Band 2:45-3:35 Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

ACS Eagle Band has the very special privilege of rehearsing during intervention at the end of the day. Middle School students (6-8) who have been in band for at least one year can participate in Eagle Band as long as their grades are kept up. Academics are a top priority at ACS.

ACS Beginning Band 3:40-4:30 Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

ACS Beginning Band is intended to build up strong fundamentals. Students in Beginning Band are from any grade within 4th-8th grade. Fourth and Fifth grade students who join band are required to be in beginning band. Middle school students who are new to band must complete one year in beginning band.

EARLY PICKUP

If you need to pick your child up early please email me at surdykak@academcyharter.org and the attendance office at attendance@academycharter.org. This will help us get your child out on time to you. All other students will be released at the normal time of 3:35 pm, Eagle Band and 4:30 pm, Beginning Band.

ACS Eagle Band Eligibility

Academics are a top priority at Academy Charter School. If a student cannot get the work done in the classroom, they are not going to have the privilege of participating in band. Each Monday, the Band Director will have a list of ineligible students. A student is considered ineligible if the average grade is a "D" in 2 classes, or an "F" in one class. If a student has 2 "D's" or 1 "F", then he/she will be ineligible for all rehearsals for the week (Monday to Monday). An email will be sent to the parents on Monday informing them of the situation. A student may also become ineligible due to behavior. This is at the School Leader's discretion. An ineligible student may not sit on the side during rehearsals.

If the student has brought the grades up to a C or above by the next Monday, he/she will be eligible once again. If a student is ineligible three times during a quarter he/she will no longer be able to participate for the remainder of the quarter (including concerts), and activity fees will not be refunded.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all rehearsals and concerts. We realize students are involved in many different activities; however, if a student misses a rehearsal, they will miss instruction regarding their instrument. When a student gets behind, it affects the whole ensemble when they return.

To participate in any after-school activity, rehearsal, practice, game, or performance, students must be present for at least 50% of the school day. *Exceptions or special circumstances may be considered at the discretion of the School Leader. Requests should be made in advance whenever possible.*

If the student receives a disciplinary referral, he/she will not be eligible to participate in the next scheduled rehearsal. If discipline problems continue, that student may lose the privilege of playing in Band for the remainder of the concert season.

Expectations of Students

- Maintain a "C" or above average in your classes to remain eligible; 2 "D's" or 1 "F" will make you ineligible
- Communicate (always and early)
- Attend all rehearsals and concerts

- Students are responsible for any damage to music and/or instruments
- Respect yourself, bandmates, equipment, and Band Director at all times
- Show good sportsmanship at all times
- Execute all rehearsal procedures
- Improve your skills
- Positively represent ACS, on and off the stage
- Be a TEAM player; the priority of the band often outweighs the needs of the individual
- Do not talk or pack up unless asked to do so
- Come prepared having practiced the music
- Mark the music with a pencil after the Band Director comments on a specific section- the first time
- No gum, candy, other food, or drinks other than water in the music room. This is to prevent choking and also protect our carpet and floor.
- Have fun!

At-Home Practice Expectations

Video Practice

Students may be asked to submit weekly practice assignments. Students will be given a task like a scale, or a section of music to practice and they will need to record themselves performing it once through on a video submitted to Google Classroom. These will take no more than 5 minutes to record. This is in place of a traditional paper practice log.

Practice Habits

- You do not need to practice a lot if you practice SMART.
- Practice on the evening that you have band rehearsal.
- Always warm up.
- Review what was learned that day. Run through it 3 times for understanding.
- After a quick review, do some repetitions on the material requested for the upcoming rehearsal.
- Complete the video assignment if there is one.
- If you get tired of playing school music, don't be afraid to play something fun you found online.

Expectations of Parents/Guardians

- Provide or arrange transportation to and from all rehearsals and concerts
- Ensure your child will be picked up promptly from all rehearsals and concerts
- Support your child by providing positive support
- Follow proper procedures regarding any type of questions or concerns of the music staff or music program

- I agree to contact the Band Director directly with questions and concerns
- Enjoy your child's experience

Pick up/Drop off

Students will be released no sooner than 4:30 pm. Please email the band director any time before the start of a rehearsal if you need to pick them up early. This helps the office and band director coordinate to get them out on time.

Please remember to promptly pick up your child after rehearsals and concerts. We understand things happen, so please call another parent to pick up your child, or make other arrangements if for some reason you can't make it on time.

If parents are more than 15 minutes late to pick up their child from rehearsals, staff has been instructed to take the child to our Homework Club. When picking up your child from Homework Club, you will need to pay for their services.

Concert Dress

- All performers wear black pants.
- All performers wear a plain white top.
 - Boys wear oxford-style button-down shirt
 - Girls wear a plain white blouse or sweater
- All students wear black socks/tights (girls) and black shoes
- No Makeup. Please follow school dress code.

*Girls may wear a solid black dress with black tights or white blouse with a black skirt with black tights. *The dress/skirt must be knee-length or longer.*

What is needed at each rehearsal

All Musicians: Supplied by Parents

Instrument Pencil (First one provided) Black 1 inch Binder Pack of Binder Dividers

Woodwinds:

Oboe: Will need a condensation swab (click [HERE](#)) and cork grease (click [HERE](#)). Silk is best for condensation swabs.

Will also need 3-6 working reeds at all times. Music Makers keeps a supply for purchase in store of handmade oboe reeds. These are great because they were made at altitude which does effect the double reeds playability, and quality.

Chartier's Traditional style reeds are recommended. The recommended reed strength for your first 2-4 years of playing is medium soft. Intermediate students having played 3-4 years may prefer an American or Artist Scrape style reed with a strength of medium soft or medium hard. These are harder to play but produce a better sound quality. You may need to play around with different strengths to see what works best for you.

Flute: Will need a condensation swab (click [HERE](#)) and a cleaning rod if purchasing a flute (click [HERE](#)). Silk is best for condensation swabs. Optional: Flute finger cushion rest (click [HERE](#)).

Bb Clarinet: Will need cork grease (click [HERE](#)) and a condensation swab (click [HERE](#)). Silk is best for these. Optional: Mouthpiece pad (click [HERE](#)).

For the best success, I highly recommend using a Behn Overture mouthpiece ([click HERE](#)). This can be purchased either through Music Makers or North Country Winds.

Will also need 3-6 working reeds at all times. Rico/D'Addario, Vandoren, and Juno are recommended. The recommended reed strength is 2 or 2.5 for beginners and 2.5 or 3 for intermediate.

Juno strength 1.5-3 click [HERE](#)

Vandoren strength 1.5-4 click [HERE](#)

Royal by D'Addario strength 2-3.5 click [HERE](#)

Plastic Reed technology has grown a lot in the past few years and they are now producing very high-quality playable plastic reeds. These plastic reeds are much less likely to break (it can still happen!) and they last longer than a traditional cane reed.

Please do not purchase other plastic reeds, especially from Amazon. You never know what you will get! Stick to this brand and style, they are one of the best out there.

Choose a ½ strength LESS than what you usually play on. Plastic reeds tend to play harder than traditional cane.

Plastic reed strength 2-3.5 click [HERE](#)

The Band Director reserves the right to dispose of any chipped or damaged reed at any time. A chipped or damaged reed hurts not only the student but the entire ensemble.

Bass Clarinet: Will need cork grease (click [HERE](#)) and a condensation swab (click [HERE](#)). Silk is best for these. Optional: Mouthpiece pad (click [HERE](#)).

For the best success, I highly recommend using a Behn Overture mouthpiece ([click HERE](#)). This can be purchased either through Music Makers or North Country Winds.

Will also need 3-6 working reeds at all times. Rico/D'Addario, Vandoren, and Juno are recommended. The recommended reed strength is 2 or 2.5 for beginners and 2.5 or 3 for intermediate.

Juno strength 2-3 click [HERE](#)

Vandoren strength 2-4 click [HERE](#)

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Alto Saxophone: Will need cork grease (click [HERE](#)) and a condensation swab (click [HERE](#)). Silk is best for these. Optional: Mouthpiece pad (click [HERE](#)).

For the best success, I highly recommend using a Behn Overture mouthpiece ([click HERE](#)). This can be purchased either through Music Makers or North Country Winds.

3-6 working reeds at all times. Rico/D'Addario, Vandoren, and Juno are recommended. The recommended reed strength is 2 or 2.5 for beginners and 2.5 or 3 for intermediate.

Juno strength 1.5-3 click [HERE](#)

Royal by D'Addario strength 1.5-3 click [HERE](#)

Vandoren strength 1.5-4 click [HERE](#)

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Plastic reed strength 2.0 click [HERE](#)

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Tenor Saxophone: Will need cork grease (click [HERE](#)) and a condensation swab (click [HERE](#)). Silk is best for these. Optional: Mouthpiece pad (click [HERE](#)).

For the best success, I highly recommend using a Behn Overture mouthpiece ([click HERE](#)). This can be purchased either through Music Makers or North Country Winds.

3-6 working reeds at all times. Rico/D'Addario, Vandoren, and Juno are recommended. The recommended reed strength is 2 or 2.5 for beginners and 2.5 or 3 for intermediate.

Juno strength 2-3 click [HERE](#)

Royal by D'Addario strength 2-3 click [HERE](#)

Vandoren strength 2-3.5 click [HERE](#)

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Choose a ½ strength LESS than what you usually play on. Plastic reeds tend to play harder than traditional cane.

Plastic reed strength 2.0 click [HERE](#)

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Baritone Saxophone: Will need cork grease (click [HERE](#)) and a condensation swab (click [HERE](#)). Silk is best for these. Optional: Mouthpiece pad (click [HERE](#)).

3-6 working reeds at all times. Rico/D'Addario, and Vandoren are recommended. The recommended reed strength is 1.5 or 2 for beginners and 2.5 or 3 for intermediate.

Royal by D'Addario strength 1.5-3.5 click [HERE](#)

Vandoren strength 2-3.5 click [HERE](#)

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Plastic reed strength 2-3.5 click [HERE](#)

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ALL Brass: Will need a black towel to empty their condensation on (click [HERE](#)). This is to protect the carpet and floors in the music room for a long life. It will be the student's responsibility to wash the towel when needed and to purchase another one if the student loses or damages theirs beyond use.

Trumpets: Will need valve oil (click [HERE](#)), tuning slide oil (click [HERE](#)), and tuning slide gel (click [HERE](#)).

French Horn: Will need rotary oil and needle cap (click [HERE](#) and needle click [HERE](#)), bearing and linkage oil (click [HERE](#)), and tuning slide gel (click [HERE](#))

Euphonium/Baritone: Will need valve oil (click [HERE](#)), and tuning slide gel (click [HERE](#))

Trombone: Will need slide cream (click [HERE](#)), tuning slide gel (click [HERE](#)), and an empty spray bottle (click [HERE](#)).

If you used something else last year, please clean off your slide or valve with water before applying a new product.

Percussion: Will need a percussion kit to practice with at home and 5B Snare sticks [Click HERE](#) for snare sticks.

Band Section Leaders

A section leader(s) may be picked and rotated to help the efficiency of rehearsals and bring attention to student's needs.

Responsibilities to their section only include:

- Passing out paper
- Monitoring the cleanliness of the rehearsal space
- Provide fingerings for difficult passages to their sections
- Answering general music questions
- Helping with instrument maintenance

Additional Playing Opportunities

Throughout the school year, there may be opportunities to play with students from other schools in festivals. These will be advertised as information is gathered. Students are highly encouraged to participate but are not required to. The more they play and participate in musical opportunities the quicker they will develop their musicianship skills.

Proper Procedures Regarding Questions or Concerns

If you would like to talk to the Band Director about a concern, please set up an appointment at an agreeable time for both parties. Do not approach the Band Director with a concern before or after a rehearsal, or concert. Use the 24-hour rule.

When communicating with the Band Director speak respectfully and professionally. Please listen and get both sides of the story before making a decision. Be courteous, keeping in mind we all want what is best for our students.

If more resolution is needed, the Band Director will contact the Administration. Remember, this is an activity for the students and they are our priority.