

THE PRIDE OF THE DRIVE
ATHENS DRIVE
HIGH SCHOOL
BAND PROGRAM

CONCERT ENSEMBLES
BAND HANDBOOK
Spring 2026

Respect:

Each Other

The Space

The Staff

Yourself

Our Time

1) Communication

Communication for the class will come from three places - Email, the BAND App and athensdriveband.com. Email will be used for most individual communication. The BAND App or band.us will be our main tool for sharing group announcements, updates, reminders, videos, etc. It also includes the Band Calendar. Our band website has a wealth of information and will have sign-ups for events.

2) Music, Music Folders and PENCILS

All music will be provided to the students, including method/instructional books. The band leases a copy machine so that every student can have their own part. If the student has a COPY, he/she may write on the music in any way they wish—pencil, highlighter, in red, etc. If the student has an original part (often times 2 pages connected or on bigger/stronger paper), students may only use PENCIL to write on the music so that it can be erased. NEVER KEEP HOLD ON A PART MARKED “PROOF” IN RED INK. These parts are NEVER distributed (unless in an emergency) and are kept in our library.

“Foundations for Superior Performance” i.e. the Blue Book is a consistent resource for the group. Currently the band booster provides one copy to each student upon entry to the program. If you lose/damage yours, you can order a new one online (amazon) for \$7.99 (not including shipping). Having a “blue book” during rehearsal is an expectation and part of your daily assessments!

Please store your folders in your bookbags, or near your instrument on shelves. Percussion must store folders in slots under trophy shelves. Although we are able to copy music as needed for educational purposes, it is irresponsible to lose your music due to carelessness. Please exercise responsibility with your music!

Pencils are REQUIRED at all rehearsals. Directors will try and keep pencils stocked at the front of the room, but it is your responsibility to make sure you have one! Students not having a pencil in rehearsal can be required to purchase pencils for the program.

Also, please know that our library has many chamber pieces for small numbers of instrumentalists and method/etude books for private study. See a band director to access these resources.

3) Band Room Care

Athens Drive Band High School Expectations/Procedures| www.athensdriveband.com

Mr. Lucas Meade, Head Band Director | lmeade@wcpss.net

Ms. Lorena Schakel, Assistant Band Director | leschakel@wcpss.net

Our band room is more than just a rehearsal space, for many it is a “second-home.” It is also used by our school orchestra, our community orchestras (on Monday/Tuesday evenings), for band parent meetings, among other school uses. Please do a “look-back” following every visit to make certain that you do not leave anything behind (valuables/food) and that you leave your area cleaner than you found it. Straighten up stands and chairs, put away tuners and mutes, and just pick up what needs to be picked up so that everyone can enjoy our home. No gum during rehearsal. If there are extra chairs/stands in the set-up due to absences or chairs from a previous rehearsal, rack them on the wings.

4) **Cubbies/Storage Spaces**

In the first week of classes, students will be assigned a cubby to store their equipment in. Cubbies are for instruments, instrument accessories, backpacks (if size appropriate), music, **fully sealed** lunchboxes, etc. Cubbies are NOT for food, drink (other than water), snacks, clothes, or other personal items. Students should not touch items in other student’s cubbies without express permission from a director or the student in question. Cubbies are a privilege, not a right. After a first offense, any issues after will result in loss of cubby privileges for a duration of time set by the band directors.

5) **Room Entry**

When you come into the room, we will often have music playing from a speaker. If music is playing, please grab everything you need to start rehearsal (instrument, music and a pencil), then sit and listen to the music. If there is not music playing, go ahead and begin doing an individual warm up once you are seated and have everything to go. **Rehearsal will begin 4 minutes after the bell rings.** Also make sure that extra chairs and stands in your row are removed! A clean and organized rehearsal space makes a clean and organized rehearsal. Reminder - no gum.

6) **Lunch**

As our band room is a “home-away-from-home” for most of us—and to promote friendships/social bonding--we allow band students to eat lunch in the band room. Just like cubbies, this is a privilege, not a right. Most importantly, please keep the area around you clean and neat at all times. If an accident occurs (something spills etc.) do the right thing and clean it up! Failure to properly dispose of trash/food may result in the loss of privilege of eating lunch in the band room.

Also, only band members are invited in the band room during lunch. Due to the number of expensive instruments in the room, and the care that needs to be exercised around such instruments, it is not a room where we are comfortable hosting students that we do not know.

7) **Band Library**

The band library room is the area behind the director’s office where the copier is located, where we house our music library and other resources, where our orchestra stores their instruments, and where John Antonelli’s desk is positioned. Students should not congregate in this room unless permission is granted by one of our music staff. With the loss of some of our practice room space, we may allow students to practice in this area, but only at a director’s discretion. Students may use the band copier to copy band music as needed; however, the copier may not be used for copying other types of materials (other class notes, projects, etc.).

8) **Director’s Office**

Please note that the director's office is a space where many private conversations happen. If the door is open, you are welcome to come in, talk or ask questions. If the door is closed, please knock and WAIT for someone to let you in or verbally/visually invite you in. If you are not invited in, you will need to wait.

9) **Cell Phones**

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Mr. Lucas Meade, Head Band Director | lmeade@wcpss.net

Ms. Lorena Schakel, Assistant Band Director | leschakel@wcpss.net

Cell phones are a huge part of our society and provide access to a wealth of information. They also can be highly addictive and a huge distraction from being present in the moment together. It's also healthy and important for your creativity to be bored sometimes. Unless directed so by a director (generally for a tuner or a metronome) you will get one warning per semester and after that we will take your phone for the remainder of rehearsal any time we see it out. If there is a personal or family event/issue that is going on that necessitates the need to be checking your phone, communicate before rehearsal begins!!

10) Earbuds

Please make sure that you are not using ear buds/headphones during class - you will need to hear everything going on around you to be effective in rehearsal! General tip - never have more than one earbud in at a time in public.

11) Restroom Policy

You can go to the bathroom whenever it's not a disruption to class and no one else is in the bathroom. Only one student can go at a time. When you need to go, come up and put your cell phone on the conductor stand, sign out on the sign out sheet, then take care of your business. When you come back, make sure you sign back in and then grab your phone. You'll know if a student is out already because there will be a phone on the conductor stand.

12) After-School Behavior/Supervision

While the majority of our school population leaves our campus at 2:18pm, it is the performing arts students who often need to remain at school. For your safety, please stay in the immediate area and preferably in a group. Please refrain from behaving in a manner which is not appropriate at school (e.g., playing indoor football, etc.). If a director is not present, we usually have a hired instructor or chaperone in the area where a student can get assistance.

13) Instrument Repair

School owned instruments

Please let a band director know about the problem ASAP. We will do our best to get the instrument repaired ASAP. If the problem is the result of an accident or fault of the student, just "own-up." If the problem is relatively minor, there is a good possibility that no student expense will be incurred. If major, something will be worked out to the satisfaction of both the student's family and the school.

Student owned instruments

Although sometimes a band director can help with the transportation of your instrument to and from a repair shop, it is best if the student can take care of this on their own. Often, a replacement instrument can be provided for the instrument while the instrument is in the shop. Please consider going to these venues for repairs (both are about 15 minutes from Athens Drive H.S.):

Woodwinds:

Flying Squirrel Music

2828 Capital Blvd., Raleigh

flyingsquirrelmusicnc.com 919-615-3117

Brass:

Sweeney Brass

1520-1 Brookside Drive, Raleigh

scott@sweeneybrass.com 919-617-6340

15) Instrument maintenance

Reeds

Students are strongly encouraged to purchase reeds by the BOX for their instruments. Please consider going to Music & Arts in Crossroads (near Michaels) for this purchase or purchase the reeds online. SANDPAPER new reeds so that they will last longer and play better. Get a reed case or at least make certain you do not leave the reed on the mouthpiece after playing. Rotate your reeds everyday—and even during rehearsals so that they last longer. Make sure you have at least 4 working reeds at all times.

Ligatures and Mouthpieces

Recommendations will be made by a band director or by the visiting teachers to make certain students are using the best quality mouthpiece/ligature. Sometimes we will be able to “loan” the students these accessories with the student option to purchase. Please note that a quality mouthpiece/ligature can have a surprisingly significant effect on the tone of the instrument and the way the instrument plays.

Daily care

Brass--Please keep all valves and slides oiled. It is also a good idea to wipe down the instrument after use with a soft cloth. A special quality cloth can be purchased from Music & Arts for this purpose. Never attempt to loosen valves with pliers; instead, ask band director to loosen with a rawhide hammer. Avoid over-pulling slides. ...if the slide does not loosen with a few tugs using a rope-like cloth, have it professionally repaired. Stuck mouthpieces are easy to remove—ask a band director. Please disinfect your mouthpiece regularly by spraying with alcohol and/or washing with warm/hot water. You may use the sink in the band office for this purpose before/after rehearsal if the door is open. Finally, your instrument should get a “bath” once or twice a year.

Woodwinds—Because of all the rods, screws, pads, etc., woodwinds are much more temperamental than brass instruments so the #1 way to keep these instruments in good repair is to handle them carefully! SWAB out the instruments after every time you play. Please disinfect mouthpiece regularly by spraying with alcohol and/or washing with warm/hot water. You may use sink in the band office for this purpose before/after rehearsal if the door is open. It is a good idea to make certain that the rods/screws on your instrument are oiled at least once a year. Finally, it is strongly encouraged that your instrument is taken to the shop once a year for an annual adjustment. (See Flying Squirrel info above.)

Storage

Please fully close all cases and secure them carefully on shelves. Do not store music, folders, cups, drill folders, flip folders, etc. in the cases as these items may press against the instrument and cause immediate/gradual damage.