

Foothill High School Band

2009-2010 Handbook



FOOTHILL HIGH SCHOOL SYMPHONIC BAND

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ABOUT THE HANDBOOK

This Handbook contains information on expectations, grades, behavior, performances, uniform, rehearsals, sectionals, tests, Boosters, and many other important items as they relate to Band II. Many of the topics in this handbook apply to all of the courses (Band II, Band I, Jazz A and Jazz B) in one way or another. There is specific information related to each of these courses in the back of this handbook. There are a few forms to sign in the back that need to be returned by Friday. I have also included our 2009-2010 Performance Calendar and several pages from the Boosters. Thank you in advance for taking the time to go through this handbook.

EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to maintain excellent discipline during rehearsal; following all Code of Conduct rules (the section below). Each student is expected to come prepared to rehearsal with a positive attitude and a willingness to learn. By enrolling in a band course, students have committed to attendance at *all* performances – See the Performance Calendar in the back of this packet.

CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Students are responsible to be in class on time ready to rehearse with their instrument, folder, music, *pencil*, and necessary equipment. (Parents, please make sure your student has equipment needed in order to maintain their instrument: valve oil, cork grease, slide oil, appropriate drum sticks, etc... If you don't know what your student needs, please E-Mail me or ask a local music retailer. These are covered in greater detail later on in this packet.
2. There is no food, candy, soda, or gum allowed in the band room. During rehearsals, bottled water is the only exception.
3. Students are not allowed to infringe on students' rights to learn, nor are they allowed to hinder the director's responsibility to teach. This means that students are not allowed to talk or play their instruments when the director is speaking. Respect has to be valued in this classroom: For the band room (trash, the kennel), your instrument/FHS instruments and equipment (well-maintained), your classmates, your director, and for yourself.
4. Musicianship is the ultimate objective. **Musicianship** is knowledge, skill, and artistic sensitivity (artistry) in performing music. **Artistry** is defined as a superior skill that you can learn by study, practice and observation. This class represents disciplines that, when applied, add value and substance to people's lives.
5. For everything else not covered, school rules and code of conduct apply at all activities, practices, rehearsals and performances. Students must work hard at all times to represent our school as best as we can; taking pride as Cougars and giving our best efforts at all times.

Discipline will be enforced as such: 1st – verbal warning and chair/stand duty for the day, 2nd – chair/stand duty for 3 days, 3rd – parent contact and room duty after school for a hour, 4th – In house-suspension and room duty for three hours, 5th – Removal from class.

PERFORMANCES

Band members are required to make all performances. A performance should be treated as an exam - It is the final product of the work that took place in the rehearsals.

There are three things every band member must bring to every performance:

1. All appropriate materials/clothing.
2. An enthusiastic, positive attitude.
3. A clear focus on the task at hand.

If you accept the responsibility of being a member of a performing group, you accept the responsibility of being present and on time to all performances. Excused absences from performances are granted

only by the director and in cases of severe personal illness or a death in the family. If you are absent from school on the day of a performance, you must call and notify the director personally at school that you are extremely ill or have a family emergency. A written note signed by parent/guardian is required when you return to school. Two weeks notice will be given for any performances that are added to the existing schedule. The following excuses do not justify your absence from a performance: Work, driving arrangements, or forgetfulness. The calendar is in your hands, so make the necessary arrangements now!

GRADES

Students' grades will be posted under the following categories: **Performance (50%)** - This includes attendance and conduct at all performances. **Rehearsal (40%)** - This includes all in-class assignments, inspections, sectionals and playing/memorization tests. **Communication (10%)** - This grade includes the timely return of letters to parents that are sent home. Any letter sent home will be on our band website: <http://www.foothillcougars.com/electives/band>.

Letter Grades/Aeries (Electronic Grade Program)

Okay, it is confessional time... In 13 years of teaching, I still have not figured out an effective way to use traditional grades/percentages to authentically show student progress! Aeries exists more as a communication tool for me than it does as an indication of your student's grade. Here's an example: Your student is in jazz band. So far, your student has not had any sectionals (group rehearsals) and they never turned in the letter about our upcoming performance. Their grade on Aeries actually says 0.00%...does that mean that they have an F in jazz band? No. In reality, if your student has attended all performances and has followed the Code of Conduct rules, your student has an A. What Aeries allows me to do is to let you know that certain things haven't been done yet. That 0.00% means, please get the letter turned in, and get a sectional (or two!) organized.

Now, if I spent tons of time awarding daily rehearsal points, and giving credit for amazing things these students do every day, parents would not even notice if an assignment or two were missing. That is why I keep things simple, and use Aeries to notify parents when things haven't been turned in, whether a sectional hasn't been done, etc...

When the dust settles on a grading term (quarter/semester), about 75% of our band students earn an A. I want to give each member of band an A, but they have to *earn* it. How do those 25%, get a B, C, D or F? Generally, a B student has done several of these things: Failed a memorization test, been late to a performance, not turned in communication papers. In jazz band, the main reason students receive a B is because they do not complete their sectionals. C students tend to not only do the things listed for a B student, but they also do come up short with a little attitude as well. Generally, they fail a memorization test because they didn't care, they blew off a sectional because they just didn't feel like showing up, etc. Problems like these are rare in our band. If your student exhibits these behaviors, you will know right away! A student who earns a D or an F in band has missed a performance(s). If a student blows off a mandatory performance (which are all of our performances), they lose 30% of their quarter/semester grade. This leads me back to my initial Aeries point; how do you account for that policy on a generic grading program?!?

Lastly, a student can lose a letter grade at semester by failing a semester final. Here is the information about our two performance finals that we will do this year:

1st Semester Final - Minute Club

Goal: All 12 Major Scales (memorized) in the following time:

- 2:00 Freshmen
- 1:45 Sophomores
- 1:30 Juniors
- 1:15 Seniors

*Each note error counts two seconds against the time.

Bonus: Try to complete all 12 Major Scales in 60 seconds! Students in the Minute Club will get their name on a classroom poster, will be taken out to dinner in January and will be recognized at our Awards Banquet in May.

Grades: A - Achieves timed goal, C - Short within 15 seconds, F - Short by more than 15 seconds (an F is the only grade that will affect a student's overall semester grade).

2nd Semester Final – Solo/Ensemble Performance

Task: All students will perform a solo/ensemble that is at the following difficulty grade level:

- Gr 2 Freshmen
- Gr 2/3 Sophomores
- Gr 3/4 Juniors
- Gr 4/5 Seniors

* Students may research and choose an appropriate piece, or Mr. Bahr will choose a piece.

Goal: To earn at least an Excellent Rating from your peers. Students will judge each solo on a rubric (similar to what we see at Festival).

Grades: A - Superior, B - Excellent, C - Good, D - Fair, F - Poor (a C will drop a student's grade by 5%, a D or F will be a full letter grade (10%) drop).

PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

For Band I and Band II, we have three different performance uniforms: Casual, Marching, and Concert Dress.

1. Casual: Football games, rallies, or feeder school concerts are examples of casual dress. We wear our FHS band t-shirts (and most of the time jeans) for these events. In the case of football games, students may purchase band hooded sweatshirts or they may choose to wear school colored jackets/sweatshirts for those cold fall nights!
2. Marching: Before Homecoming uniforms will be distributed. Three items of the uniform (hat, jacket and pants) will be provided. The uniform cleaning fee is waived (FHS Band Boosters is absorbing this cost for 2009-2010). However, if damage is caused to the band uniform through negligence, students will be liable for repair/replacement costs (you do not want to have to pay for a new band uniform, so take good care of your property!). The marching band shoe fee is collected through the Band Booster Treasurer. Students are required to wear **black socks** that should be purchased on your own. When students are in full uniform they are not allowed to wear jewelry, nail polish, and all hair must be put up in the hat. Students are also responsible for any damage to the uniform unless it is beyond normal wear and tear. For example, if you get a stain on your uniform, you must get it dry-cleaned before our next performance.
3. Concert: Concert attire is formal black and white dress. This is fully outlined in a letter from our Booster Treasurer in the back of this packet.

INSTRUMENTS AND EQUIPMENT

It is recommended that each musician owns a metronome and tuner for individual practice. Every brass player must furnish his/her own cleaning cloth, cleaning snake, mouthpiece brush, valve oil and slide grease/cream and pencil. Every woodwind player should provide his/her own cork grease, key oil, cleaning cloth, swab, mouthpiece brush, mouthpiece, ligature, and reeds. All percussionists must

furnish his/her own sticks, mallets, and stick bag. FHS provides band members with a lyre and flip folder (if you do not already have one). Please return these at the end of the year.

FHS/SUHSD Instruments: The FHS Instrumental Music Department owns a modest supply of band instruments. These instruments will be distributed to students according to the needs of the band department, under the discretion of the director. Students are not to play a school instrument unless the director has a current Instrument Rental Contract on file. Members are solely responsible for these instruments at all times. These instruments are offered free of charge to aspiring musicians, provided that students practice regularly and work diligently to keep their instruments in good working order. If a student does not practice or shows negligence to their instrument, the instrument will be reclaimed by the band director and, in the event of damage to an instrument (which included excessive wear and tear), repair costs will be assigned to the student.

FHS/SUHSD Equipment: The FHS Instrumental Music Department has been blessed with a substantial supply of quality music equipment. Extreme measures are taken to ensure that this equipment will stay in top working order for as long as possible. I have specific rules I share with the students about our equipment in order to protect our inventory. If rules are broken, equipment will get damaged. These costs will be passed on to individuals that violate the rules.

BAND BOOSTERS

The Foothill High School Band Boosters is an organization of parents and other interested parties. The purpose of Boosters is two-fold: #1 To promote and facilitate the interaction, education, cooperation, and well being of our students, school and community through support of the FHS band department. #2 To conduct fund-raising activities that will help the department supplement its operating budget.

Membership is open to anyone with a sincere interest in the welfare and success of our band. Meetings are held the first Monday of each month at 6:30 PM in the school band room. All of the Band Booster meetings are included in the performance calendar. We have a huge year planned with lofty goals...we need your support and involvement! Come join us in support of our outstanding young musicians.

STUDENT ACCOUNTS

The Foothill High School Band Boosters provide a student account for your band student. Our Band Boosters Treasurer, Becky Hansen, works very hard to keep student records current. You may E-Mail Mrs. Hansen to inquire about the amount of money available for any trips or supplies at pbsphansen@frontiernet.net.

Money earned by the student is not to be treated as a personal savings account. Money will not be "withdrawn" to a student/parent when a student decides to leave the band program. Any money that remains in a student's account after that student has graduated high school is transferred into the Band Booster's Scholarship Fund.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Each year, the Foothill High School Band Boosters set aside \$2,500 to be given to deserving graduating seniors (maximum scholarship per senior is \$500). Scholarship Applications will be available in the FHS counseling office on April 16, 2010. Applications are due into the counseling office on Wednesday, May 5, 2010, by 3:15pm.

TRAVEL

The band will travel to many different locations this year. It is important that we have "SUHSD District Approved Parent Drivers" that can transport students locally. (I will explain more about this at

our first Booster Meeting.) When we do not travel locally, students must travel to and from the event on a bus. If a parent chooses to take their OWN CHILD home from a performance, they must do the following: 1. Submit a note to the director at least 24 hours before departure (note must be co-signed by the principal). 2. The parent must sign the student out through Mr. Bahr only before the student can be released from the band director's supervision.

Chaperones are selected jointly by the Band Booster Board and the director. If you would like to chaperone an event, you may inform the Board at a Band Booster meeting. You must be present to notify the Board of your desire to chaperone a specific trip.

If you are a parent who chooses to drive to an event on your own, you are welcome to join us, and cheer us on in all band-related events and performances...*we genuinely appreciate your support!* But, keep in mind, your child is not on a family vacation. They are a part of a SUHSD-sanctioned field trip, under the supervision of the band director. At all times, students are expected to remain together, following the rules and itinerary of the trip. Students are not allowed, under any circumstances outside of a medical emergency, to leave with a parent in the middle of a field trip. Also, the FHS Band Boosters are not responsible for providing hotel accommodations, meals, tickets to performance venues, or tickets to any other event/activity.

Band Council

The Band Council exists to: Provide fun, team-building activities for the band, to provide a positive atmosphere in the band room, and to assist the director.

The Band Council consists of 8 officers (president, drum major, vice president/librarian, assistant drum major/secretary, treasurer/social chair, uniform manager, equipment manager and the photo/video historian). The drum major and assistant drum major are appointed by the director, while the other 6 offices are elected by the members of the band.

Nominations and voting will take place during the first week of school. Student Leadership will meet alone in the Kennel two lunches a month during the football season. After that, they will meet once a month. The officers will preside over the FHS Band Club, and will assist the director in decisions throughout the year. Officers will support the band at all times by fulfilling the roles they are elected to perform. Any officer may be replaced at any time if they do not do their job, or if they are a negative influence in the band in any way.

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

The Foothill High School Concert and Jazz Band courses correlate with the National Arts Standards for Music Education, as well as the California Department of Education State Standards:

- 1.0 - Artistic Perception: Students read, notate, listen to, and analyze music and other aural information, using the terminology of music.
- 2.0 - Creative Expression: Students apply instrumental musical skills in performing a varied repertoire of music.
- 3.0 - Historical and Cultural Context: Students analyze the role of music in past and present cultures throughout the world.
- 4.0 - Aesthetic Valuing: Students critically assess and derive meaning from works of music and the performance of musicians in a cultural context.
- 5.0 - Connections, Relationships, Applications: Students apply what they learn in music across subject areas.

Jazz A - While Symphonic Band (Band II) is the foundation of our band program, Jazz A operates as our premier performance ensemble. This band plays several valuable roles in our music department, and I want to communicate a few important “equations” to you as we prepare for 2009-2010! We are in a unique position: while we have a quality Jazz A (our advanced jazz band), we also have a very solid Jazz B; full of students who would love the opportunity to be in the advanced band. This letter is designed to both educate parents on what is required of the jazz band, and to remind Jazz A musicians not to be passive in their obligations to the program.

Jazz A = Club Cougar Orchestra: Our band’s primary function is to serve as the Club Cougar Orchestra in February. Students who are a part of Jazz A are required to be at all Club Cougar rehearsals and performances. Much like the demands on the pit in Shasta’s musical or the pressure on the band with Enterprise’s Starship, we have a power-packed two-week show. The uniqueness of the show is that the “auditions” for our part of the cast have already taken place, because Jazz A = Club Cougar Orchestra! If you auditioned for the pit of the Shasta Musical, but couldn’t attend the musical performances, why audition? If a student loves jazz but cannot commit to Club Cougar, they should enroll in Jazz B.

Jazz A = Commitment: Students in Jazz A ought to be self-motivated when it comes to attendance, practice, priorities, and commitment. It is assumed that the students in this band represent the cream of the crop. They are the students who are the leaders, role models and cornerstones of our entire band program. FHS zero-period attendance policies are in place, and if students cannot get to class on time, Foothill requires me to move them to another section of the same class (in this case, that would be Jazz B). In addition, all sections need to have at least 3 sectionals a quarter. Students should view jazz band as a course which demands practice, and parts must be practiced on a frequent basis at home. A student in Jazz A should be in an environment where parents allow, encourage, (dare I say) *demand* consistent practice time. Thank you parents, in advance, for helping with this!

Jazz A = Co-Enrollment: Students in Jazz A must be co-enrolled in Band I or (preferably) Band II. The concert band is the backbone of our comprehensive program, and serves the needs of the entire instrumental music department. Students who are co-enrolled are sacrificing a lot...it does not go unnoticed, or unappreciated! For years, students and parents alike have made these sacrifices because they value the music education at Foothill High School. However, students have to plan out their courses for graduation, have to be leaders in the department, have to be high achievers in their other courses on campus, and need to be the best at what they do. If students cannot handle the workload, they should opt out of the jazz program. It is a tall order, but these expectations are what keep our students polished and achieving at a high level – frankly, these requirements help students be successful in life.

Jazz B - Our secondary jazz band is known as “Instrumental Ensemble” in our course catalog, “Jazz B” to our school, and “The Figs” to our music department. This class has made tremendous progress in the last three years of existence. Students must be co-enrolled to be in this class, so please review the previous paragraph. Students in Jazz B will function much like Jazz A with the exception of Club Cougar, so a full review of learn the foundational concepts of improvisation, swing and several other styles of music.

While Jazz B does not take an active musical role in Club Cougar, this band performs at almost every other event with Jazz A. Therefore, students need to be responsible to learn the music in their folders so that we can keep our fantastic reputation growing.

Frosh Band (Band I) - Hi! If you are enrolled in Freshman Band you may be a bit overwhelmed with the amount of stuff here in this handbook. Relax! Most of the items covered here represent things that don’t concern you; and for those that do, we will learn how to deal with those along the way. There is a lot I need to teach you – and a lot you must learn. Freshman Band is a band that eases you into our program a bit more gently than just throwing you right into the fire of Band II. Parents, you can learn exponentially about our program and how to get involved by coming to our Booster Meetings.

I hope that helps you. Now, in the meantime, I hope you view this handbook as what you can look forward to when you are a part of our award-winning Symphonic Band!

This page is due to Mr. Bahr by Friday, August 21st

I have read this handbook. In signing this, I am in agreement with Mr. Bahr's policies regarding the FHS Instrumental Music Department in 2009-2010.

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Parent of (Student's Name): _____

Instrument Information

Type of Instrument: _____

Make of Instrument: _____

Serial Number: _____

Is this instrument owned by FHS? No __ Yes __ *If yes, please turn in a rental agreement ASAP.

Medical Emergency Information

In case of emergency, I give permission for Mr. Bahr, the supervising staff member, to authorize medical treatment by a licensed physician. I understand that I am responsible for any expense incurred as a result of obtaining the necessary medical care.

Student Name: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cel or Work Phone: _____
(circle choice)

Alternate Contact Person: _____ Phone # _____

Insurance Company: _____

Policy/Group No: _____ Family Doctor: _____

Indicate Specific Medical Problems or Allergies: _____

