

The following policies are necessary to adhere to while participating in the Absegami Band Program. Please refer to this packet when you have any questions or concerns regarding policies and/or protocols in the program.

## ATTENDANCE

The most crucial part of making your commitment to the Absegami Marching Band Program is attending all rehearsals, competitions, and events. You are expected to be honest with us and with yourself about any issues that may come up during the season. When you are on the field, you are not only responsible for yourself, but for everyone around you. Marchers rely on the people around them for their positioning, spacing, and even playing. If you are not there, the band cannot rehearse or perform to their full potential and we are only wasting time at the next rehearsal playing 'catch up'

**If you are to miss a rehearsal, we require advanced notice from a parent.**

-A signed letter or email submitted to the Director BY A PARENT at least one day before the rehearsal

-If you are sick on the morning of a rehearsal, an email ([jporco@gehrhsd.net](mailto:jporco@gehrhsd.net)) or phone call ([609-404-2077](tel:609-404-2077)) to the band room.

Excusable absences are:

Religious Holiday

Illness

Wedding

Death/Emergency in the family

Drum Corp/Other Marching related activity

### **Unexcused Absences**

An unexcused absence is any absence not included on the list above or any absence, no matter what the excuse, that was not submitted to the band director before the rehearsal by a parent or guardian. After **3 unexcused absences**, you will attend a mandatory meeting with the Band Director, Assistant Band Director, and Student Leadership.

During this meeting we will discuss your commitment to the band and warn you that if you miss one more rehearsal you may be removed from band.

By signing up for band you are agreeing to be available for band camp (August 8-12) and our competitions that are almost every Saturday starting on September 10<sup>th</sup> and ending November 12<sup>th</sup>. Each football game is also a mandatory performance. Football game responsibilities run all the way to THANKSGIVING. **October 22<sup>nd</sup> and November 12<sup>th</sup> are the State Championship and National Championship Competitions.** Failure to attend any of these dates listed may result in becoming ineligible to participate in marching band.

\*ALL performances are mandatory

When you miss a band commitment, your dedication is not only in question by the staff, but by your peers as well. Think of the whole group before you make a decision for yourself.

## Conduct

**All school rules are in effect while you are with the marching band.** Every time you leave the school or are at an event with the band, you are representing Absegami High School. Being in the marching band requires much traveling. You must be respectful to everyone around you at all times. I trust that I will never hear a complaint about the conduct of Absegami students at a competition or event. No matter how well the band performs, poor behavior negates the quality of the performance of that night. This is unacceptable and may result in disciplinary action.

Staff – The staff is here to help you. They are professionals who are giving their time to work with this band and to make it the best it can be. If a staff member provides you with instruction, you are to respect what he/she is saying without defiance. No student in the band is above any staff member no matter in what section he/she normally works. If any unnecessary confrontation occurs with ANY staff member, disciplinary action will be taken upon the student(s). Rehearsal time will not be interrupted by a miscommunication or misunderstanding; any concerns can be addressed at the conclusion of rehearsal. Please remember, the staff is acting with your best interest in mind. They are here to maximize rehearsal time and improve the group as a whole.

Buses and Traveling – You are required to travel on the same bus to and from events. When on the bus, you are to listen to the bus driver, staff, or chaperones for any directions. The competition starts when you walk onto that bus; a focused bus ride will lead to a focused performance. When arriving at the events, you are to respect all facilities and persons. When leaving an event or exiting a bus, you will work quickly and diligently to assist in cleaning up and discarding all trash.

Dress Code – Your uniform, which includes your shoes, socks, gloves, and hat, should be clean and presentable for performances. Long hair must be tied back and pinned up above the collar, and no jewelry is to be worn. When changing in and out of uniforms on the bus, proper clothing must be worn as an “under layer”. When dressing to perform, no one should exit the bus unless in full uniform or otherwise directed. Before getting on the bus for performances, there will be inspections conducted to make sure you have everything and are following the performance dress code.

Instruments – All students are responsible for their own instrument. All school instruments are to be signed out by the Director. **You are responsible for the condition of the instrument. \*Instrument Care Information will be provided by your section leader.** Instruments are to be put away in their cases carefully and placed in their proper storage area. Students are responsible for remembering their instrument as well as loading and unloading it on and off the truck. **You are not to play anyone’s instrument** to avoid getting sick or breaking the instrument.

## Rehearsals

Having productive rehearsals is the key for us to be one of the top bands in the area. We need each member of the band to be at rehearsal both physically and mentally each time.

That means:

**Get a good night's sleep...** Being awake and alert allows you to understand information faster, march through the show with more intensity, and play through the music with confidence.

**Eat properly...** Going a whole day without eating will not only affect your marching and playing, but it is extremely unhealthy. Make sure you eat smart before rehearsals so you have the energy to push yourself through the night. (Try eating food other than just sugar!)

**Dress appropriately...** Marching band rehearsal is not a fashion show. Wear proper clothing that allows you to march comfortably and is weather-appropriate, **NO JEANS. FOOTWEAR SHOULD BE LIMITED TO SUPPORTED SNEAKERS.** This provides the best support and tread for the physical aspect of this activity and reduces injury.

**Show up on time... If you arrive at 6 you are late!** When rehearsal starts at 6, you are to be on the field with your instrument at 6. There will be no "hangs" going on in the band room when the rest of the students are out ready to work. Depending on the number of students that are late, time will be added to the next rehearsal at the beginning or end.

**Don't forget...** your instrument, your drill, your dot book and your music. Even though you will have everything memorized these three items are to be at every rehearsal in the event we make any changes or need to double check parts or spots. Water should be brought to every rehearsal. If it is hot and sunny outside, bring sunscreen, bug spray, and anything else you may need to make your time at rehearsal more comfortable for you.

**Leave it outside of rehearsal...** Absolutely no cell phones are permitted on your person during rehearsal. I was in high school once and I know you have a lot of important drama to handle, but it can wait until 9:00. Resolve or put on hold any personal issues or concerns before rehearsals or performances. You must be focused in order for us to perform successfully and bringing in outside drama only hurts the group.

When everyone in the band follows the above rules, rehearsals can then feel more relaxed and fun. A focused and productive rehearsal will lead to less distractions and greater accomplishments. You are a member of the band because you love music, and the less time we spend redirecting the band, the more time we have to perform.

## Performances

We will attend Football games on Fridays and Competitions on Saturdays this year. We will also rehearse leading up to each of these events throughout the year. Unless we are providing food, be sure to bring the necessary meal(s) that you will need.

### **FOOTBALL GAMES**

We perform at all home football games and selected away games. For home football games, we play in the stands, perform the national anthem, and do a half-time performance of our show (the battery will, as usual, lead the team to the field).

You will be in full uniform for HOME GAMES and shakos will remain on unless we are in the stands. When entering or exiting the field or stands we will be marching; think of every moment that you are in the public eye as a performance.

When in the stands, your number one job is to play for the team and the fans; therefore it is important to pay close attention to the staff for instructions as to when and what to play. Nothing is more embarrassing than just two clarinets and a tuba playing after our team scores.

You will be given some time off during the game, but remember that throughout the whole night you are a direct representation of the Absegami Band. You are to be back in the stands, ready to play, by the time you were told. Otherwise, you may lose your break for the next game.

\*Away games will have selected members of the band only (Pit and guard are excused but welcomed) Dress attire will be consistent but we will not wear uniforms. We will still march into the stands and play during the game, but we will not perform our show at away games.

Please enjoy the game while we are there, but remember that we have a job to do.

### **COMPETITIONS**

Arrival times and day schedules will be provided to you the week of a competition. You are expected to be ready to rehearse at the school by 9:00 AM on Saturdays unless told otherwise. If we have night competitions, expect a full day of rehearsal (with a lunch break) before leaving the school.

Before entering the bus, there will be an inspection to see if you have your uniform, gloves, hat, shoes, socks, instrument, and any other equipment that is your responsibility. Make sure you look sharp and every aspect of your uniform is neat. Some of your uniform will be on before entering the bus for some trips, but we will inform you, on the ride, when you should start changing. After we perform you will have time to change out of your uniform before we head into the stands to watch the other bands perform. (This will not happen at every competition)

Throughout the day you will be accompanied by staff and/or chaperones who will inform you of what we are doing. They are there to make sure we get in and out of the competitions efficiently. Remember, the staff and chaperones are there to help and support you. Band members should be respectful at all times. Any issues should be brought to my attention before you try to handle it on your own.

Competitions are fun and exciting and they are a true reward for the hours of practice we put in leading up to them. Always remember this when we rehearse and prepare because nothing comes without hard work. Please remember that YOU are not the only one putting in the time; your peers are out their everyday with you along with the staff and the band parents. In order for this group to continue to enjoy success, we ALL have to work for it.