

LAGO VISTA HIGH SCHOOL

Band Handbook

2024-2025



Jennifer Vowles
Director of Bands

jvowles@lagovistaisd.net

Rene Hernandez
Assistant Director of Bands

rhernandez@lagovistaisd.net

Benjamin Russell
Percussion Coordinator, Assistant Director of Bands

brussell@lagovistaisd.net

Introduction to the Lago Vista High School Band

Purpose: The Lago Vista Band Handbook is created as a guide for students to gain the most from their time as a member of the band program, as well as to provide insight into the everyday practical experiences of participating in this organization.

Mission: The Lago Vista High School Band provides each student with a well-rounded musical experience that fosters learning, growth, and the development of practical life skills.

Membership: Membership in the Viking Band consists of all students in the high school band and color guard programs and select members from Lago Vista Middle School at the director's discretion. Students are required to have played an instrument for at least one year prior to attending Lago Vista High School in order to be a member of the Viking Band program.

An open letter to our Parents and Guardians

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Thank you for reading this handbook, for your support of its contents, and especially for the opportunity to work with your sons and daughters! Our organization can only attain its highest potential when we have your active support.

There are several ways you can provide encouragement for your child: attending performances, encouraging home practice, joining the Band Booster organization, and providing private lessons. Assisting in meeting responsibilities provides incentive for your son or daughter to do well and remain committed. In addition, it improves the quality of the band program. It is no secret that the success of our band program is due in part to the tremendous involvement of the parents. Your signature on the Handbook Contract is our indication that you are thoroughly familiar with the contents of this handbook. We hope that you will enjoy being a part of our organization!

Attendance and Grading

Attendance: The Lago Vista Band functions as a team and depends upon each member's presence at rehearsals and performances to accomplish the goals, prompt attendance at each and every band function is mandatory and a part of the commitment to a student's peers and the organization. For attendance purposes, a band function is defined as any rehearsal, sectional, performance, trip, or event scheduled by a director.

Each member is responsible to be at the required location, properly attired, with all necessary equipment before the appointed start time of the event. This often means students should arrive 10 or 15 minutes prior to the listed start time to allow enough room to assemble their equipment and for some performances dress into uniform.

Excused Absences and Tardiness are limited to:

1. Medical Emergency (Doctor's note required)
2. Death in the Family
3. Pre-Approved participation in other school activity
4. Special Circumstances pre-approved by a director through advanced notice
 - For advanced notice approval, parents/students must email their director no later than 48 hours prior to the missed rehearsal, performance, or event. Students who are continually ill should provide a Doctor's note and any special instructions we may need to follow to protect their health and wellbeing.

Examples of Unexcused Absences and Tardiness:

1. Work
2. Homework*
3. Oversleeping
4. Transportation unarranged
5. Anything campus administration does not recognize as excused for general attendance

* Without question, academics remain the number one priority for all students at LVHS. With that said, "I had a lot of homework last night" is not an excused absence or tardy. It is important that students learn to balance their time responsibly. We will help with this but planning is key!

Please note: The directors will consider the approval of absence notifications. *Sending a notification of an absence does not guarantee approval.*

Grading: Grades are earned in the Lago Vista Band based on student demonstration of skill in two main areas:

- 60% Performance/Assignments
- 40% Participation/Effort

Grades may include, but are not limited to the following:

Performance/Assignments: Full- and Small-Ensemble Performance Attendance, Playing tests, Music Pass-Offs, Written tests.

Participation/Effort: Rehearsal attendance, Preparation (having all necessary materials).

Unexcused Absences result in students earning a 0 (zero) for the rehearsal/performance/event.

An unexcused tardy will result in students earning less than 100 for the rehearsal/performance/event.

Eligibility

Many band activities are designated by the state as extra-curricular. Therefore, these activities are governed by state laws regulating participation. The state law is such that a student shall be suspended from participation in all extra-curricular activities sponsored or sanctioned by the school district during the six week period following a grade-reporting period in which the

student received a grade lower than seventy in one class. However, the student may not be suspended from participation during the period in which school is recessed for summer. Also, students are not suspended for practice or rehearsal of extra-curricular activities.

Students may regain eligibility under certain circumstances. If a student is suspended as a result of failing, he/she may regain eligibility by passing ALL courses in the third week of the affected grading period. Thus, they may regain eligibility at the conclusion of the fourth week of the suspension period. An eligibility calendar is provided at the beginning of each year with exact dates of grade checks and eligibility dates. A calendar is provided at the beginning of each year with dates of grade checks and eligibility dates.

General Conduct and Expectations

Band members will observe all policies set forth by **LVISD** and the School Code of Conduct in addition to the following as they pertain to the instrumental musical setting. Violation of these rules can result in loss of privileges, a work detail, student conference, parent conference, administrative referral, or expulsion from the band program:

1. All students are expected to conduct themselves properly at all times. Public displays of affection, use of profanity, uncontrollable tempers, flagrant violation of rules, etc. will not be tolerated. Individual behavior is reflective of the group, school, and our community.
2. Students will follow directors' instructions.
3. Students will be in their assigned rehearsal area ready to work at the set rehearsal time.
4. Students will bring all equipment and supplies necessary for rehearsal every day.
5. Students will keep hands, feet, and other objects to themselves.
6. Students will refrain from bringing food, drinks, candy, or gum into the Band Hall. Students are allowed and encouraged to have water at all times.
7. Students will not play on equipment they do not own or have permission from a director to use. Students will not touch, handle, or use anyone else's instrument, uniform, or personal belongings.
8. Students will raise their hands and wait to be called on when they have a question, comment, or concern. This will ensure a smooth flow of rehearsal as well as enable us to address content issues in a timely manner.
9. When allowed in the band hall, either before or after school, students will not disturb any rehearsal in progress.
10. Students will respect the property of others and return equipment to its proper storage place when not in use. Each student is responsible for keeping his or her storage area clean.
11. Students will not enter the directors' offices without permission. Always knock first.
12. Students will not deface or mark on music stands, cases, walls, chairs, etc.

13. Students are assigned a locker and lock at the beginning of the year and should only use their assigned storage area. Only band supplies should be stored in these lockers.
14. Personal items left in the band hall overnight will be reported to the lost and found in the school's main office.
15. Band hall chairs and stands may not be removed from the room unless requested by a director.
16. The library is off limits to all students except Librarians and Drum Majors.
17. No one may use the copy machine or audio/visual equipment without expressed permission from a director.
18. At no time should a student use a practice room or rehearsal space without permission from a director. Practice rooms are for practice, pass-offs, or private lessons only.
19. Any damage to school property must be repaired, item replaced, or a reimbursement made immediately.
20. The band department assumes no responsibility for personal items stored in the band hall.
21. Any behavior which does not represent good citizenship as perceived by the staff may result in the student's dismissal from the activity at hand as well as the band program.

Use of Band Hall, PAC, and other District Facilities: Students are welcome to use the band hall, practice rooms, or other approved spaces for practice either before or after school. Sometimes, however, the number of available places is limited, since other activities may also take place before and after school. Due to the many thousands of dollars-worth of musical instruments and equipment that are in the band hall, we do ask that ONLY band students come into the band hall during the school day and before or after school. Students must ask their friends who are not in the band to wait for them in the hallway or outside. The Band Hall is a “safe haven.” We stress that all band students be responsible and keep their equipment put up in their lockers or assigned storage space when not in use. Many times, “clean-up” duty is assigned to “untidy” band members to help develop orderly skills.

Other Band Relations and the Internet: How we treat our peers within the band and other organizations is a direct reflection of our program. Online is forever; what we publicize must be carefully thought out and only constructive to others. Please review the following guidelines for proper internet use:

1. Always have a positive attitude towards our band. Blaming individuals or sections is unacceptable.
2. Disrespect toward other organizations through the internet or other means of conversing is unacceptable. This includes social networking sites and forums.
3. At contests, respect and appreciate the time and effort other bands have put forth into their program. You can always congratulate the winner(s) for their success no matter what the competitive atmosphere is like.

4. Band members serve as representatives of LVISD. Polite and Courteous behavior is a credit to the band organization, to the school, and to the parents.
5. Rude or degrading comments made by other bands should be ignored and never responded to.
6. Reactions should be polite when band placements are announced.

Band Program Drug Policy:

The Viking Band maintains a zero-tolerance policy as it pertains to drug use, and student members are subject to the district random drug testing. The band program will follow the LVISD policy in regards to students who test positive for drugs. Additional consequences may also be assigned, up to and including removal from the band program.

Rehearsal, Performance, and Instrument Supplies

The following section includes lists of supplies pertinent to students and their participation. Please review carefully which items apply to your students.

Rehearsal Supplies:

1. All assigned music
2. Instrument and items necessary for it to play
3. Pencil
4. Tuner and Metronome
5. 1" Black binder
6. Sheet protectors
7. Pencil bag for binder
8. Color guard equipment
9. All marching related equipment
 - Coordinate sheet/Dot Book
 - Lyre
 - Flip Folder
 - ½ gallon insulated Water Cooler
 - Athletic shirt, shorts and shoes (sunglasses/hats strongly encouraged)

General Woodwind Supplies:

1. At least three good, playable reeds
2. Tuning and cleaning rods/cleaning swab
3. Reed guard
4. Proper mouthpiece cap
5. Cork Grease
6. Pad and neck strap
7. Pencil bag for binder

8. Reed water container
9. Precision screwdriver

General Brass Supplies:

1. Valve/Rotary Oil or slide cream and spray bottle
2. Polishing cloth
3. Any required mutes necessary for class music
4. Black hand towel

General Percussion Supply list provided to students by Mr. Russell.

General Color Guard Supply list provided to students by Coach Thornton.

Travel and Trip Guidelines

The band frequently travels on school and commercial buses. In addition to the general guidelines, students are expected to observe the following procedures and protocols:

1. When provided, students must travel to and return from events on the bus. Any student desiring to arrive or leave with a parent must notify a director in writing prior to the event to receive permission. A decision will be rendered based on the circumstances provided.
2. Students must have all necessary forms completed and returned to travel on any trip with the band.
3. While on the bus, students will:
 - Remain seated facing forward at all times
 - Keep the bus clean
 - Keep all body parts inside the bus at all times
 - Remain silent when addressed by the person in charge of the bus
 - Remain quiet while in the parking lot when loading to leave or upon arrival to the event location
 - Refrain from loud, boisterous talking, screaming, singing, whistling, profanity, etc.
 - Refrain from public displays of affection
 - No Coed or couples seating allowed

Serious trip violations may result in a loss of privileges, being sent home at your family's additional expense, and/or expulsion from the Lago Vista Band.

Cut Time Database and Communication System

Cut Time: Each student and parent of the Viking Band must have an active email account and be registered with our Cut-Time database system. Information sheets will be available on how to register for Cut-Time at the Mandatory Band Meeting. In order to receive emails from the directors, updated information, and to check account balances with the Booster Club and any trip and/or assessment fee payments, all students must have an active Cut-Time account.

A Cut-Time account is REQUIRED by all members of the Viking Band and must include working email addresses for all students and parents.

Communication: **The most important aspect of our program is communication.** Due to the size and continued growth of our program, communication is extremely important to ensure mutual understanding. The yearly calendar/schedule is available on our band website: www.lagovistabands.com. Additionally, a weekly update will be distributed to students and parents through the Cut Time Database and Communication System.

Concert Band

The official start to “concert season” begins immediately following the conclusion of the marching competition season. Although football playoffs may still be occurring, our focus as a band program shifts to concert season.

Students desiring to participate in any part of the Lago Vista Band program must be enrolled in the concert band class. This group performs at UIL sanctioned events, campus concerts, , and other off campus events designated by the directors. For all formal performances, the attire will be designated by the directors as either Concert Black or Pit Black.

Concert Black:

1. Young men are required to wear the following:
 - White Tuxedo shirt provided by the student
 - Solid black dress/tuxedo pants provided by the student
 - Solid black, close-toed dress shoes provided by the student
 - Solid, long black socks provided by the student
 - School-issued Tuxedo Jacket
 - School-issued black bow tie
 - Refrain from flashy jewelry-any jewelry must be modest and not distract from the musical performance
2. Young ladies are required to wear the following:
 - Dark, opaque hose or black socks provided by the student

- Solid black, close-toed dress shoes/flats provided by the student
- School-issued Black dress
- Dark, opaque hose or black socks and solid black closed-toe shoes
- Refrain from flashy jewelry-any jewelry must be modest and not distract from the musical performance

Pit Black (all members):

- Black shoes
- Long black socks
- Black pants
- Black shirt

Marching Band

Membership in the marching band is required of all high school band and color guard students. The Viking Marching Band performs at all LVHS pep rallies, LV varsity football games, marching contests and exhibitions, and other events throughout the year. The marching band generally rehearses each school day morning, 2 evenings per week, and select Saturday mornings. Marching band members in grades 9-12 who complete the season and fall semester are eligible to earn physical education credit on their transcript.

For the marching show production, students will be assigned as either a primary marcher or shared marcher. Due to unforeseen circumstances, such as eligibility issues, illness, attendance, or other various factors, it is a necessity that we design our show with shared marching spots included.

Students must maintain the quality of their work in order to retain their positions – both on and off the field. Positions will not be held open.

- All part/marching assignments are subject to change for the benefit of the band and individual.
- Marchers must be able to play and march simultaneously with correct style and tempo.
- Losing eligibility can affect performance status for competitions and games.
- A primary marcher or shared marcher who misses multiple rehearsals and or practices may be subject to replacement at the discretion of the directors.
- A primary or shared marcher who falls behind or struggles to perform either the music or marching routine may be replaced at the discretion of the directors.
- Members who exhibit a negative attitude or disciplinary problems may be replaced or removed at the discretion of the directors.

Cell Phone Policy at Games and Contests: while students are allowed to have their phones with them, we encourage them to be familiar with and follow the protocols and procedures listed below during our performances at games and contests.

1. Only use your phone for pictures/short videos or an emergency call to your parent/guardian. At games and performances, students should not be texting, using apps, or playing games. We are performers first and cannot allow our phones to be a distraction at these events.
2. Media Permission is important. Although this is an issue beyond the stands, band members should not take photos or videos of other students without their consent or wishes.
3. We are not responsible for any lost or damaged phones. We also do not provide a safe space for phones during our halftime performances. It is at each student's own risk they bring their phones into the stands.
4. "Put it away." If at any time in the game a chaperone or director asks a student or the entire band to put their phones away students must immediately honor the command or be removed from the event. We do not expect this to happen often. A good example is if a player is down or injured on the field, there will be no photography/videos at that time.

Game Day and Contest Procedures: These guidelines are essential to an organized, successful marching band performance at any event.

1. Upon arrival to an event, unload busses and quickly build a block.
2. There is no variation from properly wearing the uniform.
3. No food, drink, or gum is allowed when in the bleachers during a game or at any point the band is in full or half uniform. Exceptions will be communicated by the directors.
4. Only play your instrument when instructed to do so.
5. At games, be prepared to play at a moment's notice as we support our team.
6. Hold your instrument at all times. NEVER set your instrument on the ground or on the bleachers at a game or contest (some exceptions for tubas and percussion).
7. When performing choreography in the stands, only perform the approved routines.
8. When moving to warm up at a game or contest, go quickly and quietly to maximize our time.
9. While watching other groups perform, remain silent and be a supportive audience. When in the stands at a contest, this includes staying seated during an entire show before leaving the stands to get water or use a restroom.

Football Games:

Students are expected to follow and uphold all rules, regulations, and guidelines set forth by Lago Vista ISD and the LVHS Student Code of Conduct.

In addition, students are responsible for the following:

1. Stay in your assigned seats at all times – do not move around during games.
2. Do not purchase or receive any unauthorized food or refreshments during the game – eating is NOT ALLOWED in the stands.
Parents: Please do not bring your student snacks or drinks during the game.
3. Do not play your instrument unless the entire band is playing.
4. No one but band personnel is allowed in the band section or along the edges of the band during games. (Permission from the director is necessary for any exceptions).
5. Watch the director/drum major at all times.
6. Watch closely for cut-offs during the game.
7. Stand and sit when you are assigned.
8. Listen to directions given by the director prior to halftime. File out in an orderly fashion for pre-show setup.
9. Treat other guests and directors politely at all times.
10. Restroom breaks will be given at appropriate times. Always check with a drum major before going to the restroom.

Marching Band Uniforms: Marching Uniforms are provided by LVISD and the LV Band Boosters for all marching band students. These are kept at the school between events. Student musicians will be issued a top, bibs, and shako. Color guard members will have a custom uniform designed specifically for each season. The guidelines listed below are intended to help make clear the expectations for proper care and wear of the uniform.

1. No visible jewelry may be worn during performances. For new piercings or gauged piercings, nude studs must be worn. Any bracelet or necklace that is visible while in uniform is not allowed.
2. Make-up may be worn in the formal uniform at the discretion of a band director (color guard will be given specific shades and instructions based on the show and their uniform each year).
3. Black marching shoes and long, solid black socks are worn with the uniform.
4. Shakos are worn straight on top of the head with the strap snugly under the chin.
5. Hair may not touch the collar at any time. If a student has long hair it must be worn up and secured in an appropriate sock/braid bun at all times. It is the performer's responsibility to secure the hair tight enough to fit inside the shako.
6. Plumes will be issued immediately before each marching performance and collected promptly afterwards.

Do's for the Uniform: a helpful guide for proper uniform maintenance.

1. Do inspect your uniform completely. Report any torn seams, hems, or broken snaps immediately to the parent volunteers.

2. Do keep track of all uniform parts. Report missing parts immediately, students are liable to replace any lost items at their own additional expense.
3. Do always check you are putting on your uniform.
4. Do hang your uniform up properly and completely after every performance upon dismissal.
5. Do put your name or initials in your marching shoes with permanent ink.
6. Do remember your marching shoes and black socks for every performance.
7. Do wear under armor or spandex compression shorts under your uniform. Basketball shorts or other loose-fitting clothing will give you the appearance of a diaper in your bibs.
8. Do wear your gloves for every performance. We will announce the time to put those on.
9. Do wear the shirt assigned to the event. This can be found in the online calendar event itinerary.
10. When instructed, do wear half uniform correctly. This includes the assigned under shirt, bibs, black socks, and black shoes. Jackets must remain carefully stored in a garment bag at this time.
11. Do clean out your hatbox. Never store anything but your gloves, gauntlets, and shako in the box.
12. Respectfully wear the uniform. Our decorum is very important as a performing group! Any variation to the issued uniform MUST be approved by a director.

Don'ts for the Uniform: a sad collection of experiences we all want to avoid.

1. Do not drag your uniform on the ground.
2. Do not alter your uniform. This includes anything that is to be worn under the uniform pants/shirt.
3. Do not wad your uniform and stuff it into your bag or locker.
4. Do not put on or take off your bibbers while wearing shoes.
5. Do not switch uniform parts with a peer. You are responsible for your issued uniform parts and will be held accountable for any damage.
6. Do not eat in uniform. The only acceptable beverage in uniform is water. Exceptions to this rule will be communicated by the directors.
7. Do not chew gum in uniform.
8. Do not run in uniform.
9. Do not wear any headgear other than the school issued shako/beret or LV Band cap.
10. Do not wear sunglasses in uniform. Exceptions will be communicated by the directors.
11. Do not engage in public displays of affection or use of vulgar language. All rules in the handbook and LVISD code of conduct still apply.

JAZZ BAND

The Lago Vista High School Jazz Band is an auditioned performance ensemble studying the jazz music style. We will perform at several events throughout the year, including concerts, community events, and a jazz festival in the spring. Rehearsals will be held primarily during the school day, with a few after school rehearsals scheduled throughout the spring as needed. All students are expected to abide by the LVHS Band Attendance Policy. Any conflicts are to be communicated at least two weeks in advance.

Performance Dress Code:

- For Gentlemen, black pants, long black socks, black shirt, black shoes.
- For Ladies, black pants/shirt or long black dress, black shoes/socks.

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

Percussion Ensemble is our percussion performance ensemble for all percussion students at LVHS and LVMS. We will perform at several events throughout the year, including concerts, community events, and Solo and Ensemble Contest. Rehearsals will be held primarily during the school day, with a few after school rehearsals scheduled throughout the spring. All Percussion Students are expected to abide by the LVHS Band Attendance Policy. Any conflicts are to be communicated at least two weeks in advance.

Performance Dress Code:

- For Gentlemen, black pants, long black socks, black shirt, black shoes.
- For Ladies, black pants/shirt or long black dress, black shoes/socks.

Private Lessons

In order to achieve a high level of excellence, the Lago Vista Band ACTIVELY ENCOURAGES (but does not require) all students to secure private instruction from a specialist on their instrument. Rehearsals during the school day provide students with broad goals on their instrument, concepts to improve upon, and train each member to listen in an ensemble setting. However, we cannot stress enough the importance of one-on-one private instruction with a qualified specialist to aid each student in his or her quest for musical excellence. A weekly lesson with a private instructor will provide students with individual attention on all state music, band music, and fundamental skills, all of which will serve to improve their performance and the overall level of the Lago Vista Band.

School Owned Instruments

Lago Vista ISD provides some school owned instruments in the double reed, low woodwind, selected low brass, and percussion sections. These instruments are quite costly and are not normally owned by individuals. All of these instruments are sent to the repair shop and

reconditioned during the summer. We expect the instrument to be returned in the same condition as when issued. Dings, dents, and other damage will be repaired at the student's expense. If the instrument is stolen while checked out to a student, it is the **student's responsibility** to replace the instrument. Many parents carry an insurance rider to cover a checked-out school musical instrument.

Lago Vista High School Band

Letter Jacket Tracking Form

HIGH SCHOOL BAND & COLOR GUARD

10 points for high school marching & concert participation

10 points for being on the leadership team

10 points for Jazz Ensemble participation

10 points for Winter guard participation

HS REGION BAND

10 points for making the All-Region Band

20 points for making All-Region Band and All-Area Band

40 points for making All-Region, All-Area, and All-State Band

SOLO AND ENSEMBLE

10 points for receiving a superior rating on a solo or an ensemble

20 points for receiving a superior rating on a solo AND an ensemble.

10 points for receiving a superior rating at State Solo and Ensemble on a solo or ensemble.

Letter Jacket Eligibility = 50 points TOTAL

If at any time, a student becomes academically ineligible, he/she will not earn points for that season/event.

	8 th Grade	9 th Grade	10 th Grade	11 th Grade	12 th Grade
BAND					
GUARD					
LEADERSHIP					
REGION					
S & E					
TOTAL					

LAGO VISTA HIGH SCHOOL BAND

Handbook Contract

By signing below, all parties agree that they have read, understand, and will comply with the 2024-2025 Viking Band Handbook and all of its policies and procedures.

Student Name

Student Signature

Parent Name

Parent Signature

Date