

EL DORADO GOLDEN HAWKS BAND & COLORGUARD

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~ PARENT GUIDE – BAND ~

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Welcome to the El Dorado Band and Colorguard program! This program has demonstrated consistent excellence throughout its 30+ year history. We are considered one of the top programs in all of Southern California. Many of the top students at El Dorado participate in this program and consider it a highlight of their high school experience. This guide is designed to give parents of incoming band students an overview of the program. For additional information please check our web site at www.eldoradoband.com.

Basics

Band is open to all interested students who play a band instrument, including brass, woodwind, and percussion. Students are expected to play at a good level of proficiency, as the program is focused on learning to play as an ensemble, not on learning basic music skills. Taking private lessons outside of school is strongly encouraged.

Marching Season - August through November

All band students participate in **Marching Band** during this season. There are two performance “events” to marching band, which are the **street march** (parade) and **field show** (football halftime show). During the marching season, the marching band is focused on learning the music and marching for these two events. These are performed during official competitions on weekends, and also non-competitive events such as football halftime shows and band pageants. Marching band is much like a sport, and very exciting for the students and parent spectators alike!

- Both street and field marching involve precision marching and maneuvering, in addition to playing music! Much of the instruction during the marching season focuses on this aspect.
- For some of the street marching competitions, only the “competition block” of students will be marching. This block is selected prior to the initial competition based on proficiency with both music and marching skills.
- If the street competition is part of a larger parade (i.e. Placentia Parade), the balance of the band members will “fall in” to the parade block after passing by the judging stand.
- A “call sheet” listing the day’s schedule will be available before each event.

Concert Season - December through June

During Concert Season all students will be placed into one of these three groups, based on auditions:

Wind Ensemble – This is the top group during the concert season. It consists of a set number of each type of instrument.

Symphonic Band – This is the secondary group during the concert season.

Concert Band – This is the entry-level group during the concert season.

Concert season events consist of a number of school concerts plus one main judged competition, which is the SCSBOA festival (Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association).

In addition, there is a special group called Symphonic Orchestra which is a combination of instruments from the band and the orchestra. This group practices only on certain days during the concert season.

Schedule Commitments for Students

*All competitions and practices are **MANDATORY** and count towards the student’s grade. In this “sport” every member is “first string” and missing students greatly impact the ability of the group to perform.*

- Band Camp is held the two weeks before school starts at El Dorado from 8am-1pm each day. Colorguard and drumline start band camp a week earlier, and incoming freshmen start two days earlier.
- When enrolled in band, your student will have band for zero period and 1st period. If your student is in jazz band, they will have a jazz band period instead of 1st period.
- During marching season there are additional rehearsals as follows:
 - Full band and colorguard rehearsal each Monday night at Bradford Stadium (Valencia High School)
 - Predetermined after-school sectionals each week (each instrument section – e.g. trumpets – practicing together)
 - Occasional special rehearsals as required
- There will be various competitive street marching and field show competitions almost every Saturday in October and November. Locations will be throughout Southern California, including the San Diego area. The time commitment for competition days ranges from a few hours to an entire day – for example 7am to 11pm.

- The band and colorguard also perform at Bradford Stadium for each El Dorado home football game, including CIF playoffs. There is also an optional pep band that plays at away games.
- At the end of the marching season the Band and Colorguard march down Main Street USA at Disneyland, and get to visit the park for the day!
- Schedule commitments are reduced during the concert season.

Parent Involvement

The El Dorado Band and Colorguard has very strong parent support through the El Dorado Band Boosters. It is important to realize the value of parent help -- it would be extremely difficult to achieve the high standard that is expected of the El Dorado Band and Color Guard without the commitment from parents throughout the year. There are many committees to get involved with, check the website and contact the chairperson if you'd like to help out. The main committees are:

- **Uniforms** – They are responsible for maintaining the band uniforms, assisting students to “suit up” for competitions, and making sure the students follow the competition dress code.
- **Food** – They provide meals to students on certain event days. Meals are planned and prepared in advance, and transported to the event site. The meals are served to students in the staging area for the event. Note that all parents will be asked to donate dessert items at specified times during the marching season.
- **Transportation**, Famously known as the “**MIB**” – **Men In Black** – They are responsible for transporting instruments and equipment to and from events using the booster-owned trailers. They also maintain the trailers and construct show props as requested by the directors. Each member receives a free shirt and hat to be worn on event days. There is an event during the late summer to clean and prepare our trailers for the new year and is a great opportunity to come out and join the MIB.
- **Competition Attendance** - Parents are strongly encouraged to attend, and MANY do! We are famous for our large cheering section.

Money Matters

Checks for fees and other payments are made out to “El Dorado Band Boosters”, and can be left in the drop box (“black box”) outside of the band director’s office.

Band fees are due during registration which is the first day of band camp. The staff and booster board are strongly committed to keeping fees as low as possible, and as a result the fees are consistently lower than other programs in the area, including other band programs as well as sports. In order to keep this high-quality program running, we also have various fund-raising programs throughout the year. While these vary somewhat from year to year the main ones are:

- Cow Chip Bingo, generally held in late September
- Holiday Wrap Booth (or similar)
- Gift Basket Raffle, held during the holiday concert
- 50-50 drawing held at football games

In addition to the band fees and fundraising activities, other costs associated with band include, but are not limited to:

- Field show competitions charge admission for spectators (note these are fundraisers for the host schools)
- Money for meals at all-day events (note these are fundraisers for the host schools)
- Entry to football games
- Musical instruments, supplies, and maintenance
- DVDs and CDs of the band, which are sold at certain times during the year
- The end-of-year Band Banquet

Odds and Ends

- Fall semester of band (the marching season) counts as PE credit. So a student taking 4 years of band will satisfy their full high school PE requirement of 4 semesters.
- Students are transported both TO and FROM all competitions, football games, etc. by school bus. Parents must arrange their own transportation separately.
- Some instruments are provided by the school, check with the staff for details.
- We compete in what is known as the Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association, or SCSBOA, which is the organization that administers the competition events and sets the judging rules.
- Marching competitions are arranged by various “classes” or categories. El Dorado generally competes in class 6A, which is the highest.
- There is an awards ceremony at the end of the competition events. Our band and colorguard leaders accept the awards on behalf of the groups and you can see prior awards displayed in the band room.
- The top award of any marching competition (street or field) across ALL classes is called “Sweepstakes”. Generally this is won by a band in the top category (i.e. 6A) and so the “1st place” winner in 6A is really like 2nd place.