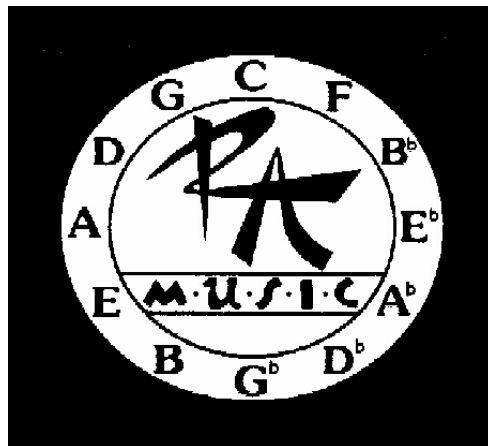


RIO AMERICANO BAND PROGRAM

HANDBOOK 2023-2024

www.rioband.net



Great Kids
High Expectations
World Class Music

Welcome to the world-renowned Rio Americano High School Band Program. Rio Band has a long history of fantastic music, pride, and top-notch education. That tradition will be furthered this year, as we continue to work together to bring our musical lives back to normal.

-Our Directors-

Josh Murray has been a tireless band teacher and musical mentor at Rio since 1998. Mr. Murray grew up in New York City and attended the New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music, learning from Reggie Workman, Jimmy Cobb, Ira Gitler, Kenny Werner, and Joanne Brackeen, among others. Mr. Murray's performing credits include shows with Phil Woods, Jimmy Smith, Peter Erskine, Bobby Shew, Gary Foster, Donny McCaslin, Wycliffe Gordon, the Jim Widner Big Band, and the Drifters. He plays alto saxophone in the Ron Cunha Big Band. Mr. Murray has a Bachelor's Degree in History from UC Davis and a Masters in Education from Chapman University. He is a contributing author to *Teaching Music Through Performance in Jazz, Vol. 2*.

Mitch Evett grew up in Vernon Hills, IL. During his school years he played bass trombone in concert band, jazz band and orchestra. He also sang tenor in choir. He then went on to St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN, where he earned a Bachelor of Music in Instrumental Music Education. After graduating Mitch taught high school and middle school band in Shakopee, MN for five years and was the assistant conductor for the City of Lakes Community Band and played with the Minnesota Symphonic Winds. Since moving to Sacramento in 2019, he has been teaching at Rio Americano High School and playing in the Sacramento Symphonic Winds and Camellia Symphony Orchestra. He is currently a candidate for a Masters in Music Education from American Band College.

Josh Murray- email: jomurray@sanjuan.edu (Cell) (916) 396-3453
Mitch Evett- email: mitch.evett@sanjuan.edu (Cell) (847) 207-9074

Director cell numbers are for emergency use only

PHILOSOPHY OF RIO BAND

Our goal is to provide the finest possible musical education while promoting character, kindness and excellence from all of our students. This is done in a positive and creative atmosphere that focuses on independent thought, self-esteem, maturity, creativity, respect, leadership, teamwork, work ethic and personal responsibility. We strive to use music as an opportunity to deal with important and difficult societal issues, such as race, gender and class. Music is our means to the end of creating successful, creative, kind and happy adults.

We strive to create opportunities and to open doors for our students. It is then up to them to do the work to take advantage of these opportunities. The sky is the limit. We approach every class, rehearsal and performance with passion and professionalism, and play our music with a deep respect for the history and cultures from which it springs.

It is important to remember that all the decisions we make are done for the good of the students and the overall good of the program. Implementation is done only after careful scrutiny and with virtual certainty that the change is for the better. Feel free to contact us with any questions.

Rio Band Calendar 2023/2024

Tentative and partial

- 8/23- RABB (Band Boosters) meetings: 6pm board, 7:15pm General. M1
- 9/27- Smamble Night. 7pm, PAC (Smamble Class)
- 10/11- Pops Concert. 7pm, PAC (All Concert Bands)
- 10/18- Jazz Concert. 7pm, PAC (AM/PM Jazz)
- 11/3- Playathon! All day, everywhere (Everyone!!)
- 11/14- Parent Information Night (8th grade families) (AM)
- 11/16- Band Photo Day. During school in PAC (Everyone)
- 12/9- CSUS Winter Jazz Festival (All Jazz Bands)
- 12/13- Smamble Night. 7pm, PAC (Smamble Class)
- 1/17- RABB meetings, 6pm board, 7:15pm General. M1
- 1/25- Kiwanis Jazz Festival @ Rio. 5-9pm. M1, M2 and PAC (All Jazz Ensembles)
- 2/7- Winter Concert. 7pm in PAC (All Concert Bands)
- 2/13- Smamble Night 7pm in PAC (Smamble Class)
- 3/2- Dinner Dance @ Scottish Rite Center (All Jazz Ensembles)
- 3/15,16- Santa Cruz Jazz Festival (Jazz Ensembles)
- 3/20- Chamber Group Night. 7pm in PAC (Honors Concert Band)
- 4/26,27- Jazz Festival in Folsom or Reno (tentative) (AM, PM, FM?)
- 5/1- Smamble Night. 7pm in PAC (Smamble Class)
- 5/3- Spring Concert. 5-10pm in PAC (Everyone!!)
- 5/21- Jazz Concert. 7pm, PAC (AM/PM Jazz)
- 5/?- Essentially Ellington, NYC (pending acceptance) (AM Jazz Ensemble)

MANY more events and dates will be added

All performances are mandatory for the students involved

Expectations, Policies and Requirements

How to be successful in Rio Band:

Work Hard

Always be on time

Treat others with kindness

Remain open to new musical styles and experiences

Be respectful and encouraging of differences

Stay positive and humble

Expect excellence, from yourself and others

Attendance Policy:

A musical group's success and cohesion depends upon full participation from all members. Tardies and absences should be avoided whenever possible. Students are expected to be on time **every day** and to have all absences excused, by a parent or guardian, through the main office. Due to the unique, participatory nature of band classes, missing or being unprepared for rehearsals without prior approval of the Director will affect the academic AND citizenship grades, and could cause students to sit out a performance or be removed from their band(s).

Students will receive a FAILING academic grade on the next grading period for missing a performance without prior notification of (and consent of) the Directors. If there is a problem on the day of a performance, you are expected to contact the Directors as soon as possible.

Grading:

Hard work and a positive attitude are necessary for musical and academic success in Band. Punctuality, cooperation, positivity and reliability are essential components of the curriculum in Rio Band. Due to the unique and collaborative nature of band classes, our grading system is a bit different than most other classes. Your academic grade is compiled from two **equal** parts:

1. **Quantitative:** such as scale, theory and ear-training tests, part-playing, etc.
2. **Qualitative:** such as attitude, cooperation, punctuality, attendance, teamwork.

Behavioral Expectations:

Rio Band has a hard-earned and well-deserved reputation for musical excellence and exemplary behavior. All Rio Band students are expected to behave in a way that will further that tradition, in band classes, all other classes, and beyond.

In addition to Rio Americano and SJUSD rules and policies, the following Rio Band policies will govern behavior and consequences for students at all times while representing Rio Band, Rio Americano Band Boosters OR Rio Americano High School. This includes **any time** a student is on the Rio campus or at **any** Rio event (band or non-band, on- or off-campus), **for any reason.**

Prohibited behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Violence, threatening, bullying or sexual harassment. This applies to direct interactions, as well as those on-line.
- Drug, alcohol or other illegal substance use OR possession
- Vaping of any kind
- Theft or vandalism
- Abuse of instruments
- Leaving campus or established (verbally or in writing) boundaries without explicit Director authorization at any time during any band classes or events
- Any inappropriate posts or on-line activity on any Rio- related web page, or while representing yourself as a Rio student
- Inappropriate, foul, sexually explicit or bigoted language
- Bullying or harassment

Any violations of the above guidelines, or any school suspension, may result in one or more of the following consequences:

- Parent conference
- Referral to school administration
- Class suspension: administrative or in-house
- Loss of performance privileges
- Loss of rehearsal privileges (alternate assignment given)
- Demotion from band placement or chairing
- Loss of travel privileges
- Recommendation for removal from one or more band classes
- Recommendation for permanent removal from the band program

Consequences implemented will depend on the severity of the infraction.

TRAVEL

Families are responsible for transportation to and from all band events.

Off-Campus Rio Band activities may include, but are not limited to:

School visitations- local elementary and middle schools, **Middle School tour**

SJUSD Concerts/ joint concerts

Honor Bands- American River College, All-State Ensembles, CMEA Capitol Section, CBDA Nor-Cal, Grammy Band, Young Arts

Student-run Gigs- District events, Charity events, Private events

Media events- Radio/TV/Web interviews and/ or performances

Festivals: Charles Mingus (NYC), Essentially Ellington Festival (NYC), Folsom Jazz Festival, Monterey Jazz Festival, Santa Cruz Jazz Festival, Sacramento State University Winter Jazz Festival, Sonoma State Wind Band Festival, SacJef Traditional Jazz Festival, Golden Empire Solo, Ensemble and Band Festivals, Woodcreek Jazz Festival, and others as announced.

Some Rio bands travel for performances locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. These trips are a privilege, based on hard work, talent and character. Any students with behavioral issues (as determined by the Directors) will not be allowed to travel with Rio Band, and refunds for payments made may not be available. This determination will be made solely by the Directors.

Financial assistance and scholarships are available for most travel opportunities. Recipients must be in good standing, academically and behaviorally to receive assistance. See the Directors for information or an application. Scholarship funds come from RABB's general fund, and are awarded entirely on the basis of need, rather than musical merit.

Our international travel is not sponsored by San Juan Unified School District. RABB is the sponsoring organization for these trips. Students in (or eligible for) Honors Concert Band may be eligible to travel internationally, at the discretion of the Directors.

We run a very tight ship during our travel, and all of our students are expected to be cooperative, on time, and positive at all times. Failure to abide by stated or written guidelines may result in the student being excluded from selected activities, and in extreme cases, being sent home at parent expense, with no refund.

Past travel has brought us across California, as well as to New York City (roughly 20 times), Japan (twice), China, Australia, Argentina, Uruguay, Spain, Italy, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Austria and the Czech Republic.

CONCERT BAND

Our Concert Bands are the heart of the Rio Band Program. All band students participate in a Concert Band for at least two years, and these groups are where most of our theory and ear training are taught. Additionally, the large group setting of Concert Bands is ideal for creating band bonding and the spirit of family for which Rio Band is known.

Virtually all new students to the Rio Band program will be enrolled in our 3rd period Concert Band class. All returning students will have been auditioned the previous spring to determine their preliminary placement for the current year. They are assigned to the band that most appropriately fits their ability and need, without consideration of grade level. Once placed, students may re-audition at the Directors' discretion.

Concert Band Curriculum

Concert Band (CB)

Grade 1-4 literature

Selected scales in all 12 keys- Chromatic, Major, Minor, Modes, etc.

Ear training- rhythmic and melodic dictation, intervals and triads

Theory- Scales and key signatures, intervals, relative and parallel modes, transposition

Performances- Pep Band, Pops Concert, Playathon, Winter Concert, Spring Concert

Honors Concert Band (HCB)

See Concert Band curriculum

Grade 3-6 literature

All scales in all 12 keys

Chamber music, harmonic analysis, chord progressions, Piano proficiency, conducting

Community service AND service to Rio Band

Additional performances- Chamber Night, Graduation, Golden Empire Festival @ Sac State

JAZZ ENSEMBLE

Students must be concurrently enrolled in a Concert Band or Small Ensemble (if eligible) to participate in a Jazz Band. There are many reasons for this rule-

- Small jazz band classes must be offset by large concert band classes.
- Essential theory and ear training concepts are only taught in concert bands.
- Concert bands are the heart of Rio Band. Everyone's presence is essential.

Virtually all new Jazz students will be enrolled in FM Jazz Ensemble. Returning jazz students will audition in the spring to determine their preliminary placement for the fall, and they will be placed in either 0 period (AM and PM) or FM jazz. Some shifting may occur in the fall due to specific band needs and changing student abilities. Auditions may include any or all of the following: an assigned excerpt, sight reading and improvisation. Drummers are required to play swing, bebop, bossa, samba and other styles as requested. Students placed in zero period jazz will re-audition during the first week of school and then be placed into either the AM or PM or FM Jazz Ensemble. Re-auditions may occur at the discretion of the directors.

Jazz Ensemble Curriculum

FM Jazz Ensemble (FM)-

Open to all Rio Band students, with Director approval

Soloing and Improvisation, Sight Reading, Jazz Styles and phrasing, Jazz history

Aural skills and transcription, Theory and Harmony, Ensemble rehearsal and arranging

Grade 1-3 literature

Regional travel is required

PM Jazz Ensemble (PM)- 0 period

Open to 10th-12th grade **returning** students, pending audition **and** Director approval

See FM, plus: Grade 2-5 literature

Regional and National travel may be required

AM Jazz Ensemble (AM)- 0 period

See FM and PM, plus: Grade 2-6 literature

Regional and National travel may be required

SMALL ENSEMBLE (Smamble)

This “only at Rio” course is for the advanced student who is interested in working independently or in small groups on self-selected music projects. Students may build combos or small ensembles of any style or instrumentation. They may work on composition or arranging. They may woodshed a special presentation or develop a second or third instrument. The possibilities are limited only by one’s musical imagination. There are numerous ‘Smamble Nights’ throughout the year, where the students show off their creativity and hard work.

Who is eligible?

Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors who are taking a Concert band class or have already completed Honors Concert Band may be eligible for Smamble, **with approval of the Directors. Smamble is designed only to be a second or third band class for students, taken concurrently with a concert band. Seniors may be eligible for Smamble without a concert band, provided they are enrolled in a Jazz Ensemble AND have completed Honors Concert Band.**

Expectations:

Smamble students are expected to work on musical projects every class period, and will have numerous projects in development at all times, so that there is always something to work on. It is the responsibility of each student to design their own musical path, and to work creatively and collaboratively. Small Ensemble is a student-centered class, and members will be working independently, without direct supervision from the instructor. As a result, they must be self-motivated, responsible, trustworthy and mature.

Students failing to work consistently and seriously, who leave campus or stated boundaries during class or who engage in behavior displaying a lack of responsibility or maturity may be removed from the class, and egregious instances may result in removal from the band program entirely.

PEP BAND

The Rio Americano Pep Band provides an opportunity for ALL members of the band program to perform fun, exciting music while supporting the school community and athletic events. Pep Band will perform at selected home Varsity Boys & Girls Basketball games. Game dates will be released later in the year.

Pep Band members should wear a Rio Americano shirt to each event; a green/gold colored shirt is an acceptable substitute.

Behavioral Expectations:

- Represent RIO BAND with pride, provide positive support and have fun!
- Always check with the directors before leaving the group for any reason.
- Be responsible for all of the music; memorize or bring sheet music
- No music during game play
- All students are expected to help with set up and tear down of equipment

Attendance Policy:

- All scheduled events are required performances
- A substitute player is required for absences
- Arrive 1 hour before each event for setup and roll call
- Plan to stay for the full duration of the event, including tear-down

Transportation to and from games is the responsibility of parents

Combos and Gigs

Combos are student-organized and student-run groups. There is no limit to the number of combos at Rio. Some combos will perform at selected jazz festivals, and some will be hired out for paying or charity gigs in the community. Clients frequently call us for small groups to play music for an event. 25% of the money goes to RABB and the rest is divided among the players. To become a certified combo eligible for gigs, the students need to develop appropriate repertoire and demonstrate professionalism in handling organizational details regarding the client and the gig. Gigs are distributed at the discretion of the Directors. Here are important guidelines for playing a student gig:

Before the gig:

1. Always return phone messages or emails within 24 hours.
2. Don't make promises you can't keep. If you aren't sure about any part of the gig (time, date, personnel), let the client know that you will find out more information and get back to them quickly. Then do so. Do not procrastinate.
3. Agree on date, times, fee, and specific needs of the client beforehand.
3. Get firm commitments from sidepeople (players other than the leader).
4. Use and maintain a personal calendar. Time management is an essential skill.
5. Once you have accepted a gig (as leader or sideperson), you are responsible for it! If you are unable to play the gig, you must find a suitable replacement (someone who is as good or better than you). If necessary, you may need to pay someone to cover for you. Have contact information for other players on the gig, in case of emergency.

At the gig:

1. Always arrive early. Figure out the time it will take to be ready to play, then add 15-30 minutes. You don't want to be rushed. It will affect your playing. NEVER be late!
2. Dress appropriately for the gig. Your audience judges you by your appearance.
3. Always be over-prepared. Bring anything you might need (mic & cord, music stand, stand light, amp, fake books), and extras of your staples (reeds, oil, strings, cords, etc.)
4. Set up quietly. Don't play unless you must. No practicing.
5. Play tunes that you know, and are comfortable with. Keep solos brief.
6. Keep the time between tunes to a minimum. Try to call two or three tunes at once, or call the next one when a tune is winding down. Don't argue on stage, ever.
7. Watch your volume. Most bands are too loud for the gig.
8. Be accommodating and gracious at all times.

After the gig:

1. Pack up quickly, and thank the client for hiring you.
2. All checks should be made out to RABB. Fill out the gig reimbursement form, and submit it, along with the check, to the RABB treasurer for disbursement.

Helpful Information

Chairing and Placement: Our goal is to place every student in the band which will best serve them, while preserving the necessary instrumentation of each group. Chairing and placement are 100% the decisions of the Directors, and no outside input will be considered.

Things affecting placement and chairing: Sight-reading, tone, time, theory, scales, improvisation (in jazz), attitude, punctuality and cooperation.

Things NOT affecting placement and chairing: previous placement, private teacher recommendations, grade level (except freshmen), parental involvement in or donations to RABB, parental pressure, or ANYTHING else not mentioned above.

Assistant Directors/Band Representatives: These student leaders are elected by the band members to represent them, occasionally conduct them, and assist the band directors with a variety of activities and responsibilities. It is an important leadership role and liaison for all band news, decisions, and communications.

Awards: Awards are handed out at the Spring Concert each year. These awards are voted on by the members of each band, and approved by the Directors.

Within each band, individual students are recognized as:

Most Improved, Most spirited, Hardest Working and M.V.P.

Selected seniors are recognized with established national awards:

James Brown Award (excellence in Pop music)

Patrick S. Gilmore Award (most versatile, omnipresent)

Louis Armstrong Award (excellence in jazz)

John Philip Sousa Award (excellence in concert band music, leadership)

Directors' Award goes to the student(s) who has made the greatest impact on Rio Band.

Band Room Hours: The band rooms are usually open from 7:10 AM to 4:30 PM (3:30pm on Thursdays) and are generally accessible for your needs.

Dress Code: be prepared with appropriate dress for some events:

Dark Dress Shoes. No tennis shoes, vans, sandals, etc.

Black, dark brown or dark blue suits:

Bottoms (dress slacks or skirts), white tops, ties (any color). Jackets may be required.

OR

Dark dresses, skirts or slacks with blouses. Dresses must be WELL below the knee. Shoulders must be covered.

Dark Dress Shoes. No tennis shoes, vans, sandals, etc.

Instrument Storage: Nearly all instruments will be stored in lockers, within our instrument storage room. Students and their families assume all responsibility for the safety and security of their instruments. Students must provide their own locks.

Online Communication and Activity: Student-run groups and forums on social media are used for communicating information regarding band events and bonding activities. The activity within these groups must adhere to the behavioral policies explained in this handbook. Students will be held accountable for any activity deemed inappropriate by these or any other school guidelines. The Directors and RABB are not responsible for the content of these forums.

Percussionists' Equipment: Percussionists are required to have their own tools for performance in band. **Every** percussionist should have their own sticks, brushes (if in jazz), yarn mallets, plastic mallets, and timpani mallets. These items are available at most music stores. Shared instruments provided by RIO BAND must be stored and cared for by the members of the percussion section. Any damaged or broken instruments should be brought to the attention of the Directors for repair or replacement.

Photos of Students/Opt Out Requests: Unless notified in writing of an objection by a parent, legal guardian, or student of age 18, photographs and videos of students and/or names may be posted in school, in RABB produced materials and by local and national media. Please be aware that opt-out requests are valid for the current school year and must be renewed at the start of the next school year.

Band Picnics (Bicnics): Student leaders sometimes organize informal get-togethers, for wholesome fun featuring food and games. These events are not attended or sponsored by the Directors or RABB.

Rental Instruments:

A limited number of school instruments are available for student use, free of charge. An Instrument Rental Agreement form must be completed and returned before beginning use. Instruments are to be returned thoroughly cleaned and repaired, with the cases free of personal items. Please review proper care instructions for your instrument and/or have it handled by a professional. All repairs and cleaning costs are to be assumed by the individual in possession of the instrument. An encumbrance will be placed on the student account for the estimated value of lost, stolen or unreturned instruments.

Scholarships: No student's education in Rio Band should be hampered by financial constraints. If any of the expenses of daily participation in Rio Band prove to be a hardship, contact a Director, and RABB will do what we can to help out. RABB also has limited need-based financial aid available for travel assistance.

Sheet Music: Sheet music distributed in each class is the property of Rio Band. Use the disposable music folders to keep your music clean and neat; please keep school music in these folders only. Students will return all sheet music to the directors during in-class collection days. Replacement of lost or damaged sheet music will be the financial responsibility of the student.

String Bases: Upright Bases will be provided for students' in-school use. Each individual is responsible for having his/her own bow, proper daily storage, cleaning wood surfaces, swabbing and detuning strings before long-term storage.

Website: On-line Rio Band information: EVERYTHING you want or need to know, including the RABB Handbook, RABB bylaws... PLUS *recordings, photos and fun, interesting* stuff! Check it out: rioband.net

PLAYATHON!

This year's Playathon is scheduled for Friday, November 3rd.

Playathon is a Rio Band tradition dating to 1981. It is our main fundraiser, a concert featuring all of our groups and a major community event. We perform for the public and reach out to our feeder elementary and middle schools. The money we raise buys music, instruments, supplies, provides travel opportunities, and generally allows the Rio Band to continue as a first-rate program. Basically, it's a blast for all!

All Rio Band students participate in Playathon, and it is a mandatory event. It is an important bonding experience for the students, and a major concert. If a student has to be away for any amount of time, please obtain the directors' permission at least one week in advance (preferably MUCH earlier) and **bring a note from home** stating the reason for and times of absence so we know where everyone is at all times.

Feeder elementary and middle school band students are invited to play along with the Rio bands in the afternoon. Parents are encouraged to attend the evening concert, featuring all of Rio's concert and jazz bands. Food is provided for band students, and parent chaperones supervise the students throughout the entire Playathon. Specific themes and activities are developed year-to-year so that every year's event is unique.

If a student has to be away for any amount of time, please obtain the directors' permission at least one week in advance (preferably MUCH earlier) and **bring a note from home** stating the reason for and times of absence so we know where everyone is at all times.

DINNER DANCE

Arden's Jazz Band, Rio's Jazz Ensembles, and Combo groups from both schools play their hearts out for the dining and dancing enjoyment of all in attendance. There is often a raffle and a silent auction. **PROCEEDS FROM THIS EVENT BENEFIT ALL BAND STUDENTS**, and all attendees have a marvelous time. This is a required event for all Jazz students. All band families are encouraged to participate, and the community at large is invited to attend.