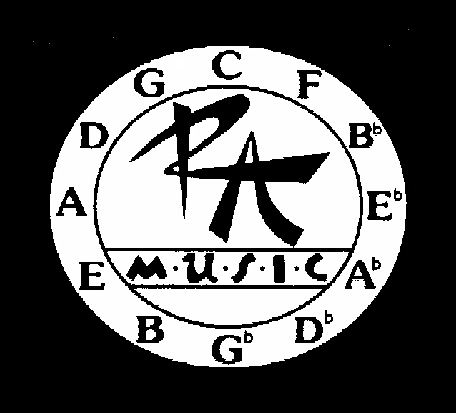
**RIO AMERICANO MUSIC PROGRAM**

**HANDBOOK**

**2025–2026**

[www.rioband.net](http://www.rioband.net)

Great Kids

High Expectations

World Class Music

**PHILOSOPHY OF RIO MUSIC**

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.**

***-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.* In 2024 he was the recipient of the California Music Educators Association’s Jazz Award and the Sacramento Arts Foundation’s “Hero of the Arts” award.

**Mitch Evett** grew up in Vernon Hills IL, a suburb of Chicago with a storied high school music program.  He holds a Bachelor of Music Degree in Instrumental Music Education from St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN and a Master of Music Education degree from American Band College.   Previously, Mitch taught high school and middle school band in Shakopee, Minnesota and was the assistant conductor for the City of Lakes Community Band.  Mr. Evett began teaching at Rio Americano in 2019. He has a passion for instrumental conducting and continues to play trombone and sing in the Sacramento area. Mitch spends his free time staying active, playing video games, and spending quality time with his wife Britta and their two cats Loki and Astrid.

**Victor San Pedro**is a Canadian-born, Sacramento-raised musician and educator with a wide range of experiences in the music industry including international and national touring, recording, videography, producing, songwriting, performing, and teaching. Some of his recording and performing credits include Benny Golson, John Legend, Jhene Aiko, Tia Carrere, Katisse Buckingham, Tierney Sutton, and Julian Le. He holds a Master’s of Music Education from the University of Florida, a Bachelor's of Arts in Jazz Performance from CSU Northridge, and is a proud alumni of Rio Band. Since moving back to Sacramento in 2021, he has fully invested himself in music education and is committed to upholding the excellence of Rio Band.

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***Director cell numbers are for emergency use only***

Rio Music Calendar 2025/2026

\*\*Tentative and partial\*\*

* 8/27- RABB (Band Boosters) meetings: 6pm Board, 7:15pm General. M1
* 9/19- Pep Band at Home Football Game @ El Camino HS (Everyone!)
* 9/24- HCB & Orchestra Concert. 7pm in the PAC (HCB, Orch)
* 10/3- Pep Band at Home Football Game @ El Camino HS (Everyone!)
* 10/8- AM/PM Jazz Concert, with guest artists (All Jazz students)
* 10/15- Smamble Night. 7pm, PAC (Smamble Class)
* 10/24- Playathon! All Day, everywhere (Everyone!)
* 11/20- Band Photo Day (Everyone, in PAC)
* 12/4- Piano Recital. 7pm in the PAC (Piano Class)
* 12/6- CSUS Winter Jazz Festival (All Jazz Bands)
* 12/10- HCB & Orchestra Concert. 7pm in the PAC (HCB, Orch)
* 12/11- Smamble Night. 7pm, PAC (Smamble Class)
* 1/14- RABB meetings, 6pm board, 7:15pm General. M1
* 1/29- Reimers Jazz Festival @ Rio. 5-9pm. M1, M2 and PAC (All Jazz)
* 1/31- Folsom Jazz Festival (tentative) (AM, Combo)
* 2/4- Winter Concert. 7pm in PAC (All Concert Bands)
* 2/7- Trad Jazz Fest @ CSUS (Trad Combos TBD)
* 2/11- Smamble Night 7pm in PAC (Smamble Class)
* ??? Mingus Festival, NYC (pending acceptance) (Combo, AM?)
* 3/7- Dinner Dance @ Elks Lodge, Riverside Blvd (All Jazz & ORCH)
* 3/11- Chamber Group Night. 7pm in PAC (Honors Concert Band)
* 3/20-22- Santa Cruz Jazz Festival (Jazz Ensembles)
* 4/15- Smamble Night. 7pm in PAC (Smamble Class)
* 4/24- Spring Concert. 5-10pm in PAC (Everyone!!)
* ??? Essentially Ellington (NYC, pending acceptance) (AM)
* 5/19- Guitar Recital (Guitar Classes)
* 5/20- Jazz Concert. 7pm, PAC (AM/PM Jazz)
* 5/21- Piano Recital. 7pm in the PAC (Piano Class)

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 Music:**

* Work Hard
* Always be on time or early
* 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
* Remain present in rehearsal/class. Stay off your phones

**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 music ensemble 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.**

**Missing a performance should be avoided whenever possible, and is only acceptable under these circumstances (AND with the consent of the Director):**

* **Death in the family**
* **Hospitalization of the student, or medical problem preventing performance (doctor’s note will be required)**
* **Positive Covid test (proof required)**

**Grading:** Hard work and a positive attitude are necessary for musical and academic success. Punctuality, cooperation, positivity and reliability are essential components of the curriculum in Rio Music. Due to the unique and collaborative nature of performing ensemble classes, our grading system is 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.

**Expectations of Parents/Families:**

* Assume good will on the part of the Directors and other students.
* Communicate with the Directors in a polite, respectful way
* Volunteer to help with events when possible- especially Playathon and Dinner Dance
* Understand that high expectations for our students are a large reason for the sustained excellence and success of Rio Music, and support the Directors when students, including your own are held to those those expectations.

**Behavioral Expectations:**

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

In addition to Rio Americano and SJUSD rules and policies, the following Rio Music policies will govern behavior and consequences for students at all times while representing Rio Music, 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, 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 ensemble placement or chairing
* Loss of travel privileges
* Recommendation for removal from one or more music classes
* Recommendation for permanent removal from the music program

Consequences implemented will depend on the severity of the infraction.

**TRAVEL**

Families are responsible for transportation to and from all Rio Music events.

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

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

**SJUSD Concerts/ joint concerts**

**Honor Groups-** All-State Ensembles, CMEA Capitol Section, Grammy Band, Young Arts, etc.

**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, 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, and others as announced.

**Some Rio ensembles and RABB-sponsored groups 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 Music, and refunds for payments made may not be available. This determination will be made solely by the Directors.

Financial assistance and scholarships are available from RABB 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 seen Rio Music perform across California, as well as New York City (over 20 times), Japan (twice), China, Australia, Argentina, Uruguay, Spain, Italy, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Austria, the Czech Republic and South Korea.

**CONCERT BAND**

Our Concert Bands are the heart of the Rio Music 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 Music 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**

**Intermediate Concert Band (ICB)**

Grade 1-3 literature

Scales in 8 keys- Chromatic, Major, Minor (Natural, Harmonic, Melodic), Modal

Ear training- rhythmic, melodic and interval dictation

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

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

**Advanced Concert Band (ACB)**

Same as ICB, plus: Grade 2-4 literature

Selected scales in all 12 keys, additional ear training and theory

Performances- same as ICB

**Honors Concert Band (HCB)**

Same as ICB and ACB, plus: Grade 3-5 literature

All scales in all 12 keys

Piano proficiency and chamber requirement and conducting

Community service AND service to Rio Band. 5 hours of each.

Additional performances- Fall concert, December concert, Chamber Music Night, Golden Empire Festival, Graduation

**ORCHESTRA**

This will be the second year of the Rio Orchestra program. It is currently run alongside the band program as part of the larger music program. This class is for all musicians with experience on a string instrument. Violin, viola, cello, and double bass.

Orchestra is offered 5th period and is a strings only class. Occasionally, the class collaborates with woodwind, brass, and percussion musicians as the repertoire requires. We study a diverse range of styles and composers, from baroque music to modern arrangements of pop tunes. This class is for all string players in grades 9-12 and has many performances. Participation in all performances is mandatory and a requirement for passing the class. All students are encourage to host and attend Pledge Parties, we participated in Playathon and Dinner Dance. Orchestra students are not required to attend Football Pep Bands (because they are outside) but are required at basketball and volleyball pep bands.

The expectations of students and families is the same in Orchestra as the other band classes. Students are strongly encouraged to study their string instrument privately outside of school to strengthen fundamentals and maintain steady progress.

**Orchestra Curriculum**

**String Orchestra**

Grade 1-4 literature

Scales in all 12 keys- Chromatic, Major, Minor (Natural, Harmonic, Melodic)

Ear training- rhythmic, melodic dictation, interval and triad identification

Theory- Major and Minor Scales and key signatures, intervals, transposition

History – Students will be tested on basic music history facts.

Performances- Basketball Pep Bands, Fall Concert, Playathon, Winter Concert, Chamber Night, Dinner Dance, Spring Concert

**JAZZ ENSEMBLE**

Students must be concurrently enrolled in a Concert Band, Orchestra 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 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?**

Juniors and Seniors who are taking a Concert band class 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 Music program to perform fun, exciting music while supporting the school community at athletic events. Pep Band will perform at selected home Varsity Football (at El Camino HS) and Varsity Boys & Girls Basketball games. Basketball games 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 MUSIC 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 from basketball games

- 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 group which will best serve them, while preserving the necessary instrumentation of each ensemble. 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, ear-training, 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**: These student leaders are elected by their peers to represent them, occasionally conduct them, and assist the band directors with a variety of responsibilities. It is an important leadership role and liaison for all music 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 group, and approved by the Directors.

Within each group, 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)

**National School Orchestra** Award (excellence in orchestra)

**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.

**Classroom Hours:** The music rooms are usually open from 6:45 AM to 4:30 PM (3:15pm on Thursdays) and are generally accessible for your needs.

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

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

Black bottoms (dress slacks or skirts), black tops, ties (any color). Dress jackets may be required.

**OR**

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

**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 music 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 Music 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.

**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 Music should be hampered by financial constraints. If any of the expenses of daily participation in Rio Music 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 Music.  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 and their family.

**String Basses:** Upright Basses 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 Music 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, October 24th**

**Playathon** is a Rio Music 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 Rio Music to continue as a first-rate program. Basically, it’s a blast for all!

**All** Rio Band and Orchestra students participate in Playathon, and it is a mandatory event. It is an important bonding experience for the students, and a major concert. 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.

Absence is not an option. 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 Orchestra, 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 RIO MUSIC STUDENTS,*** and all attendees have a marvelous time. This is a required event for all Jazz and Orchestra students. All band families are encouraged to participate, and the community at large is invited to attend.