

Welcome, and thank you for your interest in the Aliso Niguel High School music program. This page is designed to answer some of the most common questions by new members (and parents). Please contact Dean McElroy for further clarification and/or e-mail some parents through the booster link for a parent's perspective on the program. If you would like to print this page, please open the pdf version here (adobe acrobat required)

REGISTRATION

Registration for all musicians:

All wind players should sign up for BOTH concert band and marching band. Both classes combine to give the student a comprehensive musical experience. Students who enroll in both advance at a significantly higher rate than those signed up for only one class. If you are unsure, you should try them both your Freshman year and make changes your Sophomore year if you disagree with that assertion. Here are some important facts regarding registration regardless of what you decide to take:

This is a confusing process. Most conflicts with foreign language, sports, or other issues can be resolved. Make sure to discuss all conflicts with all of the parties involved including Mr. McElroy. It is rare for a student to not be able to take concert band and marching band.

If you take both classes, Marching band is counted as PE, and concert band is counted as fine arts. As a result, you don't sign up for PE (unless you are playing a sport). If you sign up for either one only, it will be counted as fine arts credit (regardless of the group you choose) and you will need to sign up for PE.

Marching band meets 3rd period as your PE class (assuming you're also in concert band). It is a 1 semester course. In the 2nd semester, you will take one of the other Freshman year semester courses during 3rd period (CECA, health, geography).

To eliminate possible conflicts, it is a good idea to take CECA, health, and/or geography during the summer. You can enroll for summer school through CUSD or through independent colleges. [Click here for a list of CUSD approved online courses.](#)

If you registered for and band classes, there is a great possibility that you will not be added to my roster until after you pass summer school classes. If so, I cannot give you information about the program and let your student know about summer rehearsals. This is a big deal! Call Dean McElroy at 831-0824 or send an e-mail to director@alisoband.com and confirm your intention to join - even if you think I know (because I probably don't)!

Special instructions for drumline members:

Those playing any percussion instrument (battery or pit, including piano, guitar, xylophones, etc.) MUST also sign up for drumline. This is a drum class where the students learn their music outside of the band rehearsals. It meets twice a week from 2:30-5:00 as a 7th period, so it doesn't affect your class schedule. To sum up, all percussion students should sign up for:

1st period Concert Band (or orchestra if you are a string player) for fine arts credit
3rd period Marching Band for PE credit
7th period drumline for fine arts credit

Registration for colorguard members:

Colorguard members MUST sign up for both marching band and auxiliary group. You will receive fine arts credit for marching band and PE credit for auxiliary group. Since auxiliary group meets from 2:30 - 5:00 as a 7th period, it doesn't affect your class schedule.

CLASSES

For a complete description of classes, please visit each groups' web page to the left. Here I will highlight the common questions regarding the classes. Please read the philosophy statement under [wind ensembles](#) so you can understand my educational philosophy. (please note, concert band, wind ensemble, AP music theory, and stage band - though unlikely - may switch periods depending on conflict with other subjects)

0 period Wind Ensemble:

This is an auditioned group that meets 0 period. It is closed to Freshman. If there is a need in a particular instrument, however, Freshman may audition 2nd semester.

1st period Concert Band:

With so many Freshman entering with varying musical backgrounds, this is the ensemble that lays the foundation for what will be expected of the students musically for the next 4 years. It is similar to what they experienced in 8th grade band regarding concerts, festivals, etc. Non-Freshmen who didn't audition into wind ensemble and those learning new instruments also enroll for concert band.

5th period AP music theory:

This class is designed to prepare future music majors for their 1st year of college music theory. It is an intensive class that focuses on ear-training, analysis, and composition. It is only offered if there are enough students enrolled and may or may not be offered in '03/'04.

7th period drumline and 7th period colorguard:

Please read the description on the registration process above for these groups. They are year-round classes as both groups compete independently of the marching band during the Spring semester.

3rd period marching band:

The following answers the most common questions. Please contact me if I did not address you issue here.

Why Should I Sign Up For Marching Band:

- You receive PE credit
- Everyone should to marching band for one year. Students have the most fun in this group, learn more about music (because they are playing with older students), get involved with the school, and learn life skills including work ethic, fair competition, teamwork, responsibility, and much more.
- Marching band students are generally more prepared for college and the workforce because of the life experiences learned in this group. Colleges look fondly on marching band students, and scholarships are available to play in a university's marching band.
- You will never be bored and will begin high school with around 100 friends from all grade levels.
- You receive PE credit
- We have consistently been one of the most successful groups on campus in terms of our competitive standing throughout California.
- Students who enroll in marching band rarely drop the next year. Students who don't enroll, usually enroll their sophomore year. Most students who are unsure about the activity and are persuaded to try if for one year become hooked and can't believe they actually thought of not signing up.
- You receive PE credit

Registration and class credit:

Please read above

Time commitment:

- We perform at 5 home football games on Friday evenings and 6 Saturday band competitions with the season ending the week before Thanksgiving.
- There will be 5-9 evening practices on Thursdays (possibly Tuesdays - we're still working out field issues with the grounds crew) and one or two Saturday rehearsals in September.
- There will be once per week rehearsals throughout the summer that students will be allowed to miss if they are on vacation. There **may** be (another unknown due to the budget crisis) a band camp that will begin on Aug. 20th that will be mandatory. Please make sure you contact Mr. McElroy before June to make sure you are on the list to receive summer information.
- Though the schedule seems intensive during the Fall (though it is less intensive than most groups because of the 3rd period scheduling), please remember that the season ends the week before Thanksgiving and the semester runs to the end of February. All weekday night rehearsals, football games, and competitions do not continue after Thanksgiving. Also, 3rd period turns into a study hall where students can meet in groups to work on their classes and semester finals after the season is over.

Costs:

The costs vary from year to year depending on size of group and budget decisions made by the school. Our decisions regarding costs have been compared with other programs at our level and are constantly scrutinized to give the best experience for the smallest sacrifice. **Please note - no student has, or ever will, be disqualified due to financial restraints.**

- The marching program's budget costs roughly \$500 per year. This includes coaching, equipment transportation, music arrangement, T-shirts, sweatshirts, uniforms, food at competitions, and more. You have the option to meet the \$500 obligation through payment or fundraising. It is your choice as to how to balance paying and fundraising. Some families pay a check and do no fundraising, and several families fundraise thousands of dollars a year and build up an account to pay for occasional trips. If you have financial issues, you may fundraise vigorously and never pay a dime.
- Because most of our costs are front-loaded in September, a good portion of the fees are needed when the season starts. Obviously, that is too soon to fundraise. Most Freshman parents pay the first year and fundraise for future years. However, if you contact booster president, Rande Shaffer at president@alisoband.com, he can get you in touch with parents who organize the

different fundraisers and you can begin to build you account **NOW!** Please take advantage of this.

- We often take one trip per year. This year, the state championships will be held in Northern California (site still to be determined). This should cost roughly \$150 to \$200 in addition to the marching band fees and may be fundraised.

Before making a decision, look at the marching band page link at www.alisoband.com and discuss the registration process with Mr. McElroy. This is the largest and one of the most successful groups at Aliso Niguel High School. You will have a rewarding experience that you will remember for the rest of your life! Regardless of what you choose to sign up for, however, make sure to contact Mr. McElroy NOW to make sure you're on the list. Thank you for reading,

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