

# Everything you need & want to know about VCHS Marching Band & Color Guard

The Valley Christian High School Marching Band and Color Guard is an award-winning competitive field show band that competes in the Western Band Association. The band has taken top awards in their division over the past several years. In 2009, we were the AA Champions! In 2010 we were the AAA Champions! We have nearly 90 marching band/color guard students each year. **We need to hear from you by ASAP if you are interested in joining band or guard.**

Students (and parents!) who join the Marching Band & Color Guard make life-long friendships and have a lot of fun in rehearsals, competitions, and travels. They enjoy being a part of our wonderful and supportive band family. Many of our band students are taking AP and honors courses, and have high GPAs. We're proud of them and know they will be a wonderful peer group for you. They're friendly and welcoming of new students. Incoming students will have lots of friends by the time the first day of school rolls around! They'll also have a healthy activity to keep them motivated and challenged.

Here's what you can expect if you join Marching Band & Color Guard:

- All Marching Band students must enroll in either Symphonic Band class or Wind Ensemble (audition required for Wind Ensemble only.) No experience in marching or guard is required. We'll teach you! Instrumental music experience is required for instrumentalists. A love of dance or movement is great for color guard members.
- Piano and percussion students may participate in the percussion "pit" or front percussion ensemble. No marching for those students, just moving equipment onto the field and playing percussion instruments. Piano and percussion students must enroll in the Percussion class to be in the marching band "pit."
- Dancers (girls AND boys) may participate in the band as a "Color Guard" member. These students perform dance and athletic movements using flags, rifles and sabers. They provide visual interest to the field show. Color Guard rehearsals start in June. In January through March, the Color Guard members participate in "Winter Guard International," a series of competitions with recorded music rather than instrumentalists. No class enrollment required.
- Rehearsals for the band and color guard start in the summer. Students get to know each other and the instructors, and most importantly learn the music and the drill steps for the show's theme. Each August, there is a mandatory "Summer Band Camp" for all marching band and color guard students. Students will be at school from 9 am to 9 pm on the days of this camp. Students will need to bring their lunch, but dinner will be provided by the Band Parent Boosters. It's hot, tiring, and incredibly fun! A mandatory parent meeting will be held that same week. You will receive a flyer detailing more information on the August 2011 Summer Band Camp is scheduled for **August 1 – 5, 2011.**

After school starts, there are mandatory band and color guard rehearsals until after Championships in November. Students and parents must be willing to commit to these mandatory rehearsals. When one student is missing from the drill, it can be difficult for the other students to march accurately. A detailed calendar is posted and updated frequently at [www.vchsband.net](http://www.vchsband.net).

## **Fall Rehearsal Schedule**

The rehearsals will be Thursdays from 3:00-8:30pm, and Saturdays 9am to 4pm.

How does this benefit students and families? More efficient use of your time to focus on academics, family and down time.

- Boosters will provide dinner on Thursdays. **SAVE MONEY!**
- Fewer trips up the hill as there are fewer rehearsals AND students will stay afterschool to rehearse on Thursdays. **SAVE TIME, MONEY and GAS!**
- Thursday homework will not be due until Monday, giving you the weekend to complete your work. **BE EFFICIENT!**
- The band will only need to warm up and stretch ONCE during Thursdays rehearsals allowing us to maximize our rehearsal time. **BE EFFICIENT!**
- We are structuring our rehearsal schedule to be modeled after highly successful WBA bands (Logan, Homestead and more). **BE SMART!**
- Mr. Gunter, Mr. Wilson and the rest of the staff LOVE MARCHING BAND and are 100% confident this will improve the QUALITY, ENJOYMENT and the NUMBER of students involved in our program. **BE HAPPY!**

- “Band Season” for competitive marching bands runs from August band camp through Championships (the weekend before Thanksgiving.) After Thanksgiving, students will still meet in their Symphonic Band class and Wind Ensemble class to work on other music, performing at the Christmas at the California Theatre, Festival of the Arts, and other school concerts and events. But the competitive field show season will be over by Thanksgiving.
- Another mandatory overnight band training camp is held in September. Students receive music basics training, spiritual emphasis, and a fun, overnight bonding experience. Parents provide food service and help with other projects. More information will be sent about this camp.
- Starting in October, there are approximately 7 mandatory competitions *nearly* every weekend on Saturdays. Most of are within the local area or a long day trip. There may be an overnight trip or two. Bus transportation is provided for students. The two-day Championship competition is held the weekend before Thanksgiving, with a possible overnight stay.
- Parents are sent a complete competition schedule and weekly updates on the band rehearsal and travel schedule. Communications are frequently made by email, so it’s important to **keep up with your email during band season**. A great source of information is the band’s website [www.vchsband.net](http://www.vchsband.net).
- There is no audition for marching band. Students interested in participating should contact Mrs. Maribeth Wiens at [mwiens@vcs.net](mailto:mwiens@vcs.net), 513-2415 to get on the mailing list for band information.
- There is a fee for Marching Band (2010 fee was \$250) that covers student meals at rehearsals and competitions, student travel expenses, a t-shirt designed for the year’s field show, and other expenses as necessary for travel. There are fundraising opportunities for students and parents to earn money for this fee.
- The marching band takes a performance trip at least every two years. These trips are budgeted separately. Trip cost will be announced early, and fundraising opportunities are available for students to help pay for their trip. The band has traveled to Disney World, Hawaii, Thailand, Cambodia, Hong Kong & Singapore. More information on a possible 2012 trip will be available soon.
- When a student joins marching band, the parents and sometimes the whole family joins! We are extremely dependent on our Band Parent Boosters – both moms and dads – to help provide support to the students in the form of cooked meals, uniform assistance, prop creation, transportation of equipment, fundraising, and prayer. If your student is in the band, you are automatically a Band Booster!! We’ll let you know how you can join in the fun as a parent booster volunteer.
- A key event organized and run by the Parent Boosters is our very own field show competition in November, “The Quest Classic.” Our fifth annual event will be held at Diablo Valley College in Pleasant Hill on Saturday, October 15, 2011.
- Another big event the marching band students and booster parents create is the Ladies’ Tea, the main fundraiser for the band, held in the spring of each year. Parents coordinate the event and students help set up, clean up, serve food and perform music. It is a well-loved tradition in the Valley Christian School community. More information to follow.
- Go to [www.vchsband.net](http://www.vchsband.net) to see the band website, and videos of previous field shows.
- We hope you will consider joining the award-winning Valley Christian High School Marching Band and Color Guard! We’re creating our list of who’s in the band, so please give us a call or email ASAP!

Contact: Mrs. Wiens [mwiens@vcs.net](mailto:mwiens@vcs.net) 408-513-2415  
 Band Directors: Mr. Wilson [jwilson@vcs.net](mailto:jwilson@vcs.net) Mr. Gunter [tgunter@vcs.net](mailto:tgunter@vcs.net)

May, 2011