



Stephen F. Austin High School  
Color Guard Handbook  
[www.sfaband.org](http://www.sfaband.org)

# **WELCOME TO THE STEPHEN F. AUSTIN HIGH SCHOOL COLOR GUARD!!**

On behalf of the Stephen F. Austin High School Band and Color Guard and the Band Booster organization, we extend a warm welcome to all color guard members. We are excited about your participation in the first ever Stephen F. Austin High School Color Guard. This document is to provide you the rules and policies of the Stephen F. Austin Color Guard which is a part of the Stephen F. Austin High School Marching Band. The directors reserve the right to edit, enhance or change items in this handbook as required for the benefit and safety of the entire organization.

## **HANDBOOK PURPOSE**

The purpose of this document is to set uniform guidelines and policies that focus on the proper implementation of membership requirements, tryouts, performance expectations, attendance, and general rules. The color guard member must abide by all guidelines and policies outlined in the membership Handbook and The Stephen F. Austin High School Student Handbook.

## **PHILOSOPHY / PURPOSE**

Being a SFAHS Guard Member is an honor and special privilege. The color guard exists first and foremost to represent Stephen F. Austin High School. The guard also exists to promote good sportsmanship, good citizenship, represent our school as an athletic and competitive fine arts unit, and wholesome and enthusiastic school spirit.

Members should exemplify both individual and group behavior suitable to their position and accordance with the rules stated in the Guard Handbook and SFAHS and FBISD Codes of Conduct.

Members of this group have a fundamental responsibility to play a leadership role in building teamwork and helping the school achieve its goals and objectives. Because of these responsibilities, members are expected to maintain a higher standard of behavior and academic achievement than that of their peers.

## **OBJECTIVES**

Members are expected to be physically and mentally skilled in learning and memorizing exercises and choreography with accuracy and technique at the standards set by the directors. They are also expected to be able to publicly demonstrate a skill level suitable for the team position and the timing necessary for group performance. Off the field, they are to enthusiastically support all SFAHS organizations through support, personal attitude and attendance at required events.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

- Prospective members must attend a mandatory tryout clinic and participate in the scheduled auditions before qualified judges.
- Members are expected to give their time to participate in required activities throughout the year. These activities include rehearsals, performances, parades, pep rallies, fundraisers, and other public events.

- Members should use discretion in their commitments to multiple extracurricular activities.
- Members must attend May rehearsals, June camp, and summer band. Vacation conflicts will be considered on a case by case basis.
- Members missing Spring and Summer rehearsals will be required to give extra time to catch up on training and information they miss, and may perform in less of the fall marching show.
- Members and their parents shall be aware of the responsibilities and the expenses of the organization.
- **Membership for The Stephen F. Austin High School Color Guard begins immediately upon notification of acceptance.**
- Members understand that until proven otherwise, the officers and chaperones will be considered 'right' in all instances. When a director is not in the room, officers and chaperones have full authority.
- Members must adhere to all guidelines and policies in this handbook. Parents are expected to support the member in complying with all guidelines and policies of the school and the organization.
- Members understand that our appearance and behavior is important in both rehearsal and on the performance floor, as well as on a daily basis and outside of rehearsal. Please see daily dress requirements for details.

## **ORGANIZATION**

- Membership consists of ninth through twelfth grade students.
- Members specialize in color guard as an art form and sport. These may include all forms of equipment, prop and dance choreography.
- Members develop qualities of leadership, organizational skills, proper conduct, and how to be a team player.
- Members will be split into two or more winter guard groups each November based on skill, maturity, and performance requirements.

## **What is Color Guard?**

Color Guard brings 'visual life and emotion' to music. The Color Guard uses dance, flags, sabers, rifles and props to bring the music of the marching band program to life.

## **Facts about music programs and color guard:**

- The college entrance examination board found that students involved in public school music programs scored an average of 107 points higher on the SAT's.
- Music programs assist in building a child's confidence and self-discipline.
- It has been proven that early music training dramatically enhances abstract reasoning skills.

- Students that have participated in fine arts were reported to have the lowest usage, both current and for life, of substances such as drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
- Music enhances higher brain functions required for math, science, and engineering.
- Music programs introduce children into a social environment in which they can feel safe.

## Color Guard FAQ's

Why should I join color guard?

- Support your school! Since the band program is the largest extracurricular activity, it is a very important organization at Stephen F. Austin High School.
- Make new friends and build relationships for a lifetime.
- Have fun! Not only do you get to go to all football games for free, you will also get to travel with the band to competitions across the state and country. The winter guard will be competing across the state and in future years traveling to Dayton, Ohio for the WGI World Championships.
- It fits in your schedule! All high school students are required to take fine arts and physical education. By participating in guard, you are earning **both** of the requirements in the same class.
- Become well-rounded! Color guard requires higher level thinking that translates into many other areas. Band and color guard have the highest percentage of honors students in the school.
- Colleges LOVE guard students. The leadership opportunities in band and color guard are extensive. Counselors are looking for extracurricular activities on college applications. Many colleges offer strong scholarships for band and color guard students.

Can a student only participate in one semester?

- No. Students must sign up for both semesters to receive full credit, to cover the state-mandated "Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for High School Band", and to receive a P.E. credit. Further, all of the concepts introduced and taught during the fall semester are prerequisites to the information taught in the spring semester. Exceptions for band members wishing to participate in winter guard will be made on a case by case basis. Marching band members wishing to participate in winter season MUST enroll in the guard class.

What is a typical year like?

- Color Guard is a year-long class. During the first semester, the guard performs with the marching band during football season. The guard performs at every football game and at marching contests during the fall. During the spring, the guard is a competitive unit in an activity called Winter Guard in the Texas Color Guard Circuit and the Winter Guard International circuit. Each show is created to support the selected music.

When does the guard practice?

- All members are required to participate in summer camp, summer band and all scheduled rehearsals, performances, and competitions. The guard has weekly rehearsals for most of the school year.
- The Stephen F. Austin Color Guard performs as part of the band during the summer and the fall. There will be a few rehearsals in May to prepare for our summer training. Summer band begins in July at the High School. There are daily practices during August through November or the end of football season. TYPICALLY the band rehearses Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, with a few minor changes over the season. There are some Saturday morning stadium rehearsals scheduled during marching season.
- During Winter Guard Season, the guard will have two weekly rehearsals. There are some Saturday camps involving designers and choreographers taking place during this time of year. Most winter guard rehearsals will take place at Stephen F. Austin High School. All competitions are on the weekends.

**All members must be flexible from time to time, There will be occasional changes in the rehearsal schedule due to weather issues or facilities. A change in the schedule does not excuse any student from rehearsal.**

How can I keep up with the rehearsal and performance schedules?

- [www.sfaband.org](http://www.sfaband.org) is our official web page. Members and parents may log into their individual Charms account to keep up with the updated calendar. Charms accounts will be set up for new members at the May open house meeting.

What is a typical practice for color guard?

- The guard will do daily body and equipment warm ups. There will be both indoor and outdoor rehearsals during football season. Winter season rehearsals and performances take place in gymnasiums.

Are grades and conduct important?

- Yes! FBISD's policy on UIL rules apply to band and color guard as well as athletes. No pass no play. Guard members may not fail two six weeks in a row if they wish to remain a member. If a member fails, there is no guarantee that they will have a performance spot in the specific show the guard is working on. They will be eligible for the next program if there is no spot available. All members must come to rehearsal even if they are not eligible to perform. The director will be checking the principal's office for disciplinary actions. Because SFAHS guard represents our school, it is important that each member displays responsibility, cooperation and respect for authority at all times. Any member or prospective member who has been suspended or received ALA or an ISS assignment will not be allowed to tryout or to continue membership. Directors enforce these student responsibilities. (EXCEPTION: a member may serve ONE, one-day assignment for dress code violations only.)

Is attendance important?

- **ABSOLUTELY.** Color Guard is a visual activity and therefore relies on all members to create that visual effect. Attendance is required for the success of the **entire** organization. **The SFAHS Band and Guard requires 100% attendance at all rehearsals, events, and performances.** Appointments should be made outside of rehearsal time. Please refer to the calendar for more details. The color guard class is like every other class. It is not to be missed for appointments. **Missing a rehearsal or performance may result in loss of the performance position.**
- If a member is going to be late or miss a rehearsal / performance, it is their responsibility to contact the director *and* the captain/squad leader in **advance** of being late.

Is there a Booster Club for color guard?

- Yes. It is recommended that all families join and participate in our SFAHS Band Booster Club. This is an organization that raises money for the band and color guard.

## **THE STEPHEN F. AUSTIN COLOR GUARD CHALLENGE**

Let this be your guide as you begin this new school year: when report card time rolls around or that three-week progress report is not what you would like it to be; when you have homework commitments piling up around you and every teacher needed it turned in yesterday; when October comes and the staff gets really demanding; when you hear the words “one more time”; when you are just really worn out with so much left to do, remember this simple phrase: “You got it!” It’s easy to work hard when something is new and exciting, but to be excited every day of the year is really hard. When you are experiencing tough times, reach deep into your heart and soul and do what it takes to get the job done. Remember how you want to feel walking onto the field or floor come performance time. This will give you a true sense of satisfaction. Knowing that you have done your very best, regardless of the circumstances, is the greatest reward you could ever receive. Welcome to a great new year of fun, different experiences, and lasting memories!

### **Color Guard Officers**

#### **Officers and the Roles of Office**

Officers will have direct, daily authority over the team as required by the director. They will have responsibility over the technical aspects of the organization and performance work as required.

**Captain** – This is the highest ranked officer of the organization. They report directly to the Director. When the director is away from the team, for any reason, the Captain is in charge and has authority that will be supported 100% by the director. Roles of the captain may include, but not be limited to:

- Keep a detailed officer notebook and officer list of duties performed.
- Required to attend all guard rehearsals and events

- Lead other officers in their responsibilities and tasks
- Lead squad leaders in their tasks
- Leading body warm-up and technique exercises when necessary
- Direct loading and unloading of equipment truck
- Lead motivator for the guard
- Hold weekly inspections
- Work with individuals to facilitate their individual success and full guard success
- Represent the color guard in school activities where student leaders are needed
- Attend leadership camp as directed by SFAHS Band and Color Guard
- Attend guard summer camp
- Manage attendance list for color guard
- Participate in and be eligible the full year prior to their audition
- Any other duties assigned by the directors

**Squad Leaders** - Additional squad leaders may be required to aid with communication outside of the captain. They will report to the captains and director, and will be responsible only for those in their assigned squad. The number of Squad leaders will be in direct relation to the number of guard members and number of officer candidates for any given year. The Directors have final say in the number of lieutenants regardless of the guard size. Roles of the squad leaders may include, but not be limited to:

- Keep a detailed officer notebook and officer list of duties performed
- Support Captains at all times
- Equipment Management – responsible for the upkeep of equipment (may be divided)
- Equipment Management – responsible for floors and carts (may be divided)
- Costume Management – responsible for check-out and turn-in of costumes (may be divided)
- Help captain with inspections when required
- Help captain to motivate the guard when required
- Work with individuals to facilitate their individual success and full guard success (assigned areas)
- Represent the color guard in school activities where student leaders are needed

- Attend leadership camp as directed by SFAHS Band and Color Guard
- Attend summer camp
- Attend full summer band
- Participate in and be eligible the full year prior to their audition
- Any other duties assigned by the directors

**\*\*Please note:** Officers are required to arrive for all rehearsals, performances and events at least ten (10) minutes before the rest of the guard and can expect to be finished about fifteen (15) minutes after rehearsals end to direct the team in all set ups and tear downs.

### **Loss of Office**

If an officer becomes ineligible during their term, they will forfeit that officer position for the remainder of the school year. The position may be reassigned to another student at the director's discretion. If an officer does not display the proper work ethic geared towards the overall improvement of the guard, the band, or if an officer does not attend a rehearsal, performance, or major event, they will forfeit their position for the remainder of the school year. If an officer violates the contract or has un-excused absences, they will forfeit their office for the remainder of the year. All eligibility rules apply before they may audition for officer a second time.

### **Rehearsal, Performance, and Attendance Guidelines**

- During football season, the guard will follow the same rehearsal schedule as the band. Please understand that rehearsal times may be altered slightly to accommodate weather issues and possible stadium rehearsals.

#### **Flexibility is required.**

- During the rest of the year, the color guard will have a separate rehearsal schedule. That schedule will be dependent upon gym availability, contest schedule and other various activities. *Rehearsals begin when the last person arrives and is ready to rehearse. **The full time allotted will be used starting when all are ready to begin. A parent or ride with another student does not excuse tardiness at any time.***
- Since after school practice is co-curricular, all students are required to attend and participate in all after school rehearsals to receive credit. Failure to attend rehearsals and performances will result in a zero.
- If an absence is pre-approved and excused, the student will be allowed to make up the time missed at rehearsal to earn credit for that assignment. An appropriate amount of time to make up missed rehearsals will be determined by the directors. Any un-excused absence or non pre-approved excused absence will result in a zero and reduced performance role except for the case of extreme emergency (hospital visit, death in the family, etc.)
- **Any missed rehearsal time, regardless of excuse, is a safety issue for the entire group.** Rehearsal time must be made up to maintain a performance role in the SFAHS Guard productions.



- If a member is absent or tardy to a rehearsal, performance or work session, the member is held responsible for all announcements and information given during the missed activity. The directors will not be responsible for getting information to each individual member that is not in class or at rehearsal on time.
- Dressing out appropriately is part of each member's daily participation grade. Members must wear form-fitting dance/athletic clothing. Spandex must be worn under ALL shorts. Athletic running shoes or sneakers are to be worn at all marching season rehearsals. Slip-ons and chucks are a safety issue and are not to be worn. Additionally, each member's hair must be pulled back in to a tight pony tail or braided and should not be messed with during rehearsal. **No jewelry may be worn.**
- Members must come prepared to all marching rehearsals in dress code with the following items:
  - dot book and pencil
  - properly taped equipment
  - gallon water bottle
- Individual Practice is required for each member to learn the skills required for any given show. REHEARSALS AND INDIVIDUAL PRACTICE ARE TWO DIFFERENT THINGS. PRACTICE TAKES PLACE ON ONE'S OWN. REHEARSAL TAKES PLACE IN THE GROUP SETTING.
- Cell phones are a wonderful asset for each student and family. It allows strong communication opportunities between parents and students. However, during rehearsals (especially winter guard rehearsals), there will be no electronics in the rehearsal space or on the rehearsal field. Members will not be allowed to check their phones during water breaks, as there is a lot of time lost/wasted during our limited rehearsal time. Parents/guardians should contact the director in case of emergency.
- All rehearsals are closed to parents, family, friends, and guests until the final 20 minutes, unless specific permission is given by the directors. Please be on time to pick up your child outside of the band hall, or the ninth grade campus, at the end of each rehearsal. Please allow your child fifteen minutes (15) after the posted ending time of rehearsal to pick up your child. They will pick up and pack equipment after rehearsals.
- Rehearsals are scheduled to allow for tutoring. Mornings are recommended for days with after school rehearsal. It is recommended that students prepare their teachers for their arrival at all tutorials. Students needing to be late to rehearsal for tutoring must request permission **BEFORE REHEARSAL BEGINS.**
- MEMBERS MAY NOT MISS REHEARSAL TO STUDY/CATCH UP ON HOMEWORK.

### **Performances and Attendance Rules**

Performances are an important part of the program. ALL REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES ARE EQUALLY IMPORTANT. There is always the possibility of play-off games during football season that will require the color guard to rehearse both football routines and winter season's competitive programs. SFAHS Guard prepares the

majority of our winter competition season's programming on weekend/holiday 'camp' type of rehearsals. These may include the conclusion of the Thanksgiving holidays as well as the beginning or end of the Christmas holidays. It is also customary for us to have competitions the weekend spring break begins OR ends.

Performance Rules are not limited to, but will include the following: (directors reserve the right to create rules as needed for the safety, consistency and presentation of the organization.)

- A member must be present at **ALL REHEARSALS** in order to perform.
- Loss of a performance position may include but not be limited to: attendance, failure of daily or performance inspections, lack of memory of show, technique of skills required, projection, flexibility, coordination, strength and endurance. **No member is entitled to perform.**
- The director makes the final decision on who will perform for any given performance. The director's decision is final.
- Before each performance, the guard will go through an inspection of all costumes, packing and equipment prior to departure. Failure to be prepared will result in conditioning or loss of performance opportunities at the discretion of the directors.
- **Students and parents should not ask to miss any type of rehearsal or performance. Missing a performance will not be allowed and a skipped performance may set up your student for dismissal from the organization.**

## **SFAHS COLOR GUARD SUMMER CAMPS**

The SFAHS color guard may hold summer camps in June or July to further prepare for the upcoming season. Camps will be held at the SFAHS Campus. A camp clinician fee may be associated with these camps. Camp is required and part of the education and evaluation process of each student. If a student is allowed to miss color guard summer camp, (advance permission is required), the student will be significantly behind the rest of the organization and may not be eligible for a full performance spot during marching season.

## **SUMMER BAND**

The SFAHS Band and Color Guard hold rehearsals each summer before the beginning of the fall semester. The purpose of the rehearsals is to allow the band to adequately prepare for the upcoming marching season. This is also an important time for the students to meet and greet each other. In a group as large as the SFAHS Band and Color Guard, students need to have time to establish bonds of friendship and a strong work ethic. Students build a true "esprit de corps" during summer rehearsals. This relationship with each other and the group as a whole makes summer band the most important time of the year for the whole organization. No grades are assigned during summer band; however, these rehearsals are required to continue membership in SFAHS Band and Color Guard; attendance is checked and marching positions in the contest competition show are assigned based on attendance, work habits and development of skills taught during the summer rehearsals. Students who miss all or part of

summer band are immediately behind the rest of the group, and may fight the rest of the season just to “catch up” instead of striving to excel. Parents wishing to see their child excel in SFAHS Band and Color Guard organization should make travel and vacation plans with this schedule in mind. Generally, summer band begins at the end of July or beginning of August, regardless of the date for the beginning of the FBISD school year. Summer band will conclude with a parent preview performance. Check charms and sfaband.org for updates and changes to the schedules.

## **SFAHS COLOR GUARD CLASS**

Color guard is a mandatory class period for all members. It is held daily during the last class period. Members must come to class prepared and ready to dress out each day. Class is an integral part of the success of the SFAHS color guard, and must be treated as an important rehearsal each day.

## **PASS-OFFS**

Pass-offs are the color guard equivalent to proficiency tests. Each member will be expected to pass-off skill sets, technique exercises, and choreography. While there will be no grade given for pass-offs, failure to perform proficiently may result in a reduction of performance role.

## **FOOTBALL GAMES**

- The group will have a one-hour rehearsal of the halftime performance right after school. The band and guard will be performing a portion of their competition show each VARSITY football game.
- After rehearsal, members will load their equipment and have the rest of the time to eat and dress before departure.
- Members may not leave the campus between rehearsal and game departure.
- Members may not buy or be brought concessions at the game.  
Members must be dressed and ready to go prior to arrival. Hair and makeup may done on the bus, time permitting. Officers will do a physical inspection before unloading the bus.
- Football games typically begin around 7:00 or 7:30. The band will leave shortly after the game ends. Departure and arrival times for all games will be given to students when itineraries are made.
- Guard students MAY NOT drive themselves to home games. All members must ride the bus.
- Home games are played at Mercer Stadium. Away games can be close or 2+ hours away. Because it is impossible to predict how long games will last, return times are only an estimate. Members are expected to help with the unloading process when they return to the school.

**Stands Etiquette** – The SFAHS Band and Color Guard are there to support the school and football team. The color guard will sit in an area/seating pattern that will look nice and organized from all areas of the stadium. Being in the stands is a form of performance in itself. Members are to stay in their seats.

- When the band plays the fight song, the color guard stands and supports the school each and every time the song is played.
- Cheering the team on should be done with dignity and pride. Members want to make sure their cheers are heard, but not interpreted as rude or unruly.
- When an officer or director asks the team to sit and be quite, it must be done immediately.
- If an injury occurs to a player, the color guard will stand silently with hands behind the back until the player is removed from the field. This shows respect and pride.
- Everyone will stand silently for the Star Spangled Banner.
- Members will not be going in and out of the stands. Once in the stands, members will be there to stay for the duration of the game. No guard member is to go to the restroom alone. A chaperone or squad leader must escort members at all times when not in the stands or with the rest of the group.
- **There will be absolutely no eating or leaving the stands to get concessions.**
- The color guard will go down to warm up during the first quarter of every game. Members may be required to spin during the third quarter if expectations are not met during the performance. Guard members are there to do a job, and remaining focused is a skill that sets the SFAHS guard apart from others.

PARENT NOTE: While with the guard at games, performances and competition, your child is there to be part of the team. Visits from parents in the stands, on the buses, etc. are prohibited. If an emergency message needs to get to your student, then do this through the directors. There will be appropriate times for parent visits at many of our events, but not all of them. You and your student will be advised in advance of these opportunities. Please do not put your student in an uncomfortable situation by approaching them when they know you should not. Furthermore, public events and competitions are NOT the time to have a private discussion with any director.

## **MARCHING CONTESTS**

- There will be a rehearsal before each competition. The time and duration of this rehearsal will vary from contest to contest. This may also alter the weekly schedule to accommodate the time needed to prepare for a large competition. Itineraries for each contest will be given out as early as they are available.
- Members must be dressed and ready before unloading the bus. A detailed packing list will be distributed by officers before each event.
- Competitions are all day events. Expect members to be busy from early morning to midnight or later for some shows. Members may not come and go during events.
- There will be one UIL event that takes place during the week. All Bands of America events have preliminary and finals events.
- Contest sites are generally in Houston and San Antonio during non-travel years.

## **WINTER GUARD COMPETITIONS**

- There will be a rehearsal before each competition. After rehearsal, the guard will load their floor, props, and equipment on their trailer and get ready for the performance at the school. Members may not leave campus during this time.
- Members are responsible for meals before departure to the competition (breakfast or lunch).
- Competitions are all day events. Expect the team to be busy from early morning to late evening.
- A complete calendar of competitions will be finalized in November.
- The guard will compete locally in the Texas Color Guard Circuit and nationally through Winter Guard International. Contests sites vary all over the Houston, Austin, and San Antonio areas.

### **Packing List for Performances (Example list only)**

This list is a guide for members to pack their materials for all performances. Items will be added and deleted from the list as required by the event. Below are staple items. A specific list will be handed out prior to the first show.

Band Aids  
Bobby Pins that match your hair (not barrettes)  
Warm ups  
Feminine products as needed  
Hair Products  
Hand Sanitizer  
Handy wipes  
Jazz shoes  
Make Up and Eye Lashes  
Pony Tail Bands  
Q-tips  
Safety Pins  
Show Shirts  
Small Mirror  
Spanx  
Appropriate under garments for all costumes  
Guard shirt  
Other items as outlined on weekly schedule  
Black and white tape  
Show Make-up

## **TRAVEL GUIDELINES**

### **BUS RULES**

For each performance, the Band and Color Guard moves over 150 students, their instruments, and equipment. It is necessary that each student understands and abides by the rules to facilitate this enormous task in the safest, most efficient way possible.

- Follow the FBISD bus rules posted at the front of each bus and use common sense (pick up trash, do not sit in the aisles, do not stand while the bus is in motion, only sit two to a seat, etc.)
- Upon arrival at destination, remain seated until the director or designated adult chaperon has given instructions.
- Directors, drivers, and chaperones have the authority to assign seating to any student on the bus in the event of disciplinary problems or failure to abide by bus rules by any individual(s).
- Leave all buses clean of trash and personal belongings upon return. Each bus will have assigned officers. The officers will check to see if the bus has been cleared of all trash. If not, the officers will select students to clean the bus. If selected, the students should work quickly and efficiently to maximize their time to complete the task successfully.
- Music must be played with headphones on. If one person is allowed to play their music loudly, so is everyone else, which becomes distracting to the rest of the bus. If needed, please plan ahead to bring necessary splitters to share with the person next to you. The district, school, directors and band boosters are not responsible in the event of loss or theft. The directors will approve movies brought by students. Music and headphones may not be used during the first and final 10 minutes of travel to the contest/performance site.
- Use common sense. Do not sit in the aisles, sit more than two to a seat, stand while the bus in motion, etc. In addition, do not use flash photography during night time hours. This is a safety issue with the bus driver that can potentially cause an accident. Flash photography during daytime hours will be allowed.
- Any traveling misconduct will be referred to the SFAHS Directors. If needed, the entire bus convoy will stop to address any misconduct by any student. Please do not be THAT student.
- Remember, have a positive attitude and we will always have a GREAT trip.

### **TRIPS**

The Color Guard will attend performances/ competitions and educational events outside the Houston area. This can be an overnight trip usually consisting of multiple nights. Each student is excused from classes for one or two school day(s). Each academically eligible student (See no pass, no play for eligibility rules) is required to participate on this trip if it will be a competition. If a student becomes ineligible during a period of a trip/competition, the parents understand that they are required to reimburse the Band Boosters and/or SFAHS for the cost of the entire trip for

the individual student. Prior to the trip, an itinerary is made available to all members and parents, which will give all pertinent information concerning the trip. The cost of the trip is determined on a yearly basis.

## TRIP REGULATIONS

- Students are not to be outside of their rooms after curfew unless accompanied by an adult chaperone. Students will be given a chaperone's telephone number to call in case of emergency. **Any student in violation of this policy will be sent home.**
- Members are to stay with the SFAHS Band and Color Guard for the duration of the trip. Members may not leave with parents until after the conclusion of the event's awards ceremony. This includes events where the group does not advance to finals competition.
- Public displays of affection are strictly prohibited at band and guard events.
- The possession or use of any tobacco products, alcohol products, drugs, chemicals, inhalants or any other intoxicants or mood-altering drugs is prohibited. **For any violation of this policy, directors will contact the local police department to file a police report, contact the student's parents, and the student will be sent home and referred to his/her campus administrator. The student will be removed from band or color guard.**
- Students will turn in all medications to designated chaperone and/or nurse. No medications will be carried by students unless approved, according to FBISD Student Code of Conduct.
- Any property damage will be paid for by the student(s) involved.
- Students are not to leave an assigned area for any reason or get into any vehicle other than school designated transportation.
- Any student in violation of local or state laws will be turned over to the local law enforcement authorities. **If the student is returned to the organization, he/she will be sent home.**
- **Any student, who excessively violates trip guidelines, will be sent home.**
- Students will follow all policies set forth in the SFAHS Handbook and follow common sense and good judgment guidelines. **A student may be sent home for failure to use good judgment.**
- Violation of any of the rules listed above may result in permanent removal from the SFAHS Band.
- Stephen F. Austin High School, the employees of Fort Bend ISD and the SFAHS Band Boosters are not responsible for any lost or stolen items.

## Equipment Responsibilities

Color guard equipment (flags, sabers, rifles, props, floor, etc.) as well as other equipment (costumes, carts, electronics, etc.) is to be well-maintained. Members agree to:

- Roll flags when not using them and placing gently them on the floor.
- Keep equipment properly taped using the correct color.
- **Not allow anyone not in color guard to use or handle any equipment.**
- Repair equipment as needed. All equipment repairs should be done **before or after** rehearsal. Do not put it off.  
**POORLY TAPED EQUIPMENT IS A SAFETY ISSUE.**
- Take responsibility for any equipment taken off campus. All equipment is needed for all classes, rehearsals, performances and competitions.

## ELIGIBILITY – NO PASS, NO PLAY

All band and guard members must pass every class (subject) in order to be eligible for extra-curricular activities. This includes all football games, music contests, and performances that are of a competitive nature. If a member fails one (1) subject (below 70) he/she is ineligible for the following three weeks reporting period. (See FBISD policy below for exempt classes.) This causes frustration, disappointment, and tends to lead toward discouragement in other areas. Please keep a close check on all grades and strive to maintain a good academic standing in all subject areas. Students must be passing all classes at the end of the next three weeks to regain eligibility.

Activities not affected by eligibility rule include sectionals, rehearsals, and public performances not related to competitive events. **ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY AT THESE ACTIVITIES!**

A guard member desiring to audition for color guard officer must have been eligible each grading period for the entire school year prior to their audition.

If a student becomes ineligible during a period of a trip/competition, the parents understand that they responsible for all fees to be paid in full. Grades, registration for the next school year and/or diploma will be held until the balance is paid in full. No exceptions.

Any member that would like to be considered for an officer or weapons position must have been eligible at all times the previous year. If a weapon becomes ineligible during the year, they may be removed from the weapon line and may not be eligible for the weapon line. The director's decision is final.



## **GRADE OF INCOMPLETE**

A student with an "Incomplete" grade at the end of a grading period is ineligible at the end of the seven-day grace period unless the "Incomplete" was replaced with a passing grade prior to the end of the seven day grace period.

## **S.A.T. / A.C.T. TESTING**

The SAT and ACT College entrance exams are critical portions of a high school student's academic regiment. Much research has been done that proves students studying music are much more successful at these exams than students not studying music. The testing agencies that administer these exams set the dates these tests will be given at least a year in advance and publicize these dates to allow students to plan. The band and color guard directors at Stephen F. Austin High School understand the importance of these tests and encourage students to take these exams. The directors plan rehearsals and performances throughout the school year to allow students to take these exams at least twice in the year without a conflict. **It is the responsibility of the student and parent to make sure to sign up for these exams only on the days that have no scheduled event.**

## **CONDUCT GUIDELINES**

### **GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS**

The goal of The Stephen F. Austin Color Guard is to achieve excellence in performance while maintaining the highest level of integrity. In order to reach this goal, students are expected to show strong character and disciplined habits during class, rehearsals, performances, all trips off campus, during free time in the Band Hall, and any time while representing the Band and SFAHS. Pride, self-discipline, teamwork, and respect are the foundation of every great organization.

### **CONDUCT GUIDELINES FOR COLOR GUARD MEMBERS**

- Note: Parents are expected to be aware of these guidelines and help reinforce them at all times.
- Students will follow all rules and policies stated in the FBISD Student Handbook and Code of Conduct, as well as in the SFAHS Student Handbook.  
Students will show respect for:
  - All fellow students and officers
  - Directors and staff
  - Any chaperones and volunteers
  - Contest staff and administrators
  - Any hotel or restaurant staff and patrons
  - All property of The Stephen F. Austin High School Band and Color Guard, as well as that of fellow students.

- Students will follow instructions from directors, student leaders, and designated band chaperones.
- Instructions will be followed the FIRST time they are given.
- Students will not disrupt instruction at any time.
- Students will be on time (which means 15 minutes early!) for all rehearsals, performances, and activities.
- Students will have appropriate equipment, attire and supplies at all times.
- Students will be prepared to contribute to rehearsals and performances by fulfilling individual practice obligations and working to improve their skills.
- Students will have a willing and positive attitude.
- Students will use appropriate language at all times.
- Students will refrain from inappropriate public displays of affection.
- Students will not lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate anyone who does.
- Students will not eat or drink in the Band Hall. Food, drink, and gum are not allowed in any rehearsal or performance area.
- Students will follow all bus riding rules and travel policies set forth by Fort Bend ISD, as well as SFAHS Band and Color Guard.
- All students are expected to conduct themselves properly in public at all times. Display of profanity, temper, flagrant violation of rules, etc. will not be tolerated. Individual behavior during a band function is a reflection of the group.
- Students will be in their assigned rehearsal area ready to work at the set rehearsal time.
- Students will wear appropriate, school approved clothing at all times. Rehearsal dress code will be followed at all times.
- Students should ask for permission to speak by raising their hand and waiting to be acknowledged. All rehearsals are expected to be **silent** so everyone's time will be utilized wisely. Members will ask for permission if they need to leave the block or rehearsal space.
- When allowed in the band hall, either before or after school, students will not disturb any rehearsal in progress.
- Students should keep their equipment in the designated storage area, and keep said storage area clean and neat in appearance. Students who demonstrate great difficulty with this may lose the privilege of having a storage area in the band hall.
- Students will utilize their assigned storage slot / locker for personal items/guard bags during rehearsals.

## POSSIBLE MEMBERSHIP INFRACTIONS

<b>Attendance and Tardies</b>	<b>Consequence</b>
Unexcused absence from performance	Immediate loss of membership
Unexcused absence from rehearsal	First offense - probation Second offense - loss of performance spot Third offense - loss of membership
Tardy to game, run through, roll call, or trip <b>without</b> director notification	Squad and full guard Physical Conditioning
Tardy to game, run through, roll call, or trip <b>with</b> director notification	Individual Physical Conditioning
Tardy to rehearsal for any reason not excused at director's discretion	Physical conditioning, loss of membership
<b>Dress Out, Costumes</b>	
Failure to wear proper uniform or uniform undergarments	No performance, physical conditioning
Chewing gum, eating, drinking, nail polish, jewelry in costume	Physical Conditioning
Failure to pass performance inspection	Physical Conditioning
Failure to pass equipment inspection	Physical Conditioning
Incorrect dress for stadium rehearsals to include clothing, hair and jewelry	Physical Conditioning
<b>Conduct</b>	
Public displays of affection	Probation, Parent Meeting, loss of membership
Unsportsmanlike conduct	Probation, loss of membership
Profanity in public	Physical conditioning, loss of membership
Letting a non-member in the band hall/ rehearsal facility without director approval	Physical Conditioning
Failure to keep clean the following areas: guard room, dressing areas, performance areas, gyms, dance room, locker rooms, etc.	Physical Conditioning, loss of privilege/ use of area

<b>Insubordination</b>	
Talking back to an officer or Director	Physical Conditioning, Parent Meeting, Loss of performance spot, loss of membership
Failure to obey commands/ follow instructions	Physical Conditioning - full guard
Leaving practice early for any reason without permission	Physical conditioning, loss of performance spot
Skiping a rehearsal	Loss of Membership - ZERO tolerance
Talking or moving while set	Physical Conditioning
Talking during rehearsals when asked not to speak	Physical Conditioning
Talking to non members during a rehearsal	Physical Conditioning
Failure to respect any teacher, administrator or FBISD staff member	Parent Meeting, Loss of performance spot, loss of membership
<b>Other</b>	
<b>Use of cell phone, ipod or other electronics when not permitted</b>	Removal of item

## Physical Conditioning

Physical conditioning may consist of any of the following assignments:

- Stair runs
- 2-3 laps around football field or 4-8 laps around gym floor
- 2-4 passes of lunges
- Plank holds
- 500 spins

Members that fail to take care of their conditioning after practice work off double the amount the following day. Officers that fail to have a member work off their conditioning will condition with that member.

## **SEVERE INFRACTIONS**

Students who demonstrate severe violations of the guidelines as stated above will be subject to discipline by the administration of Stephen F. Austin High School. Punishment may include permanent removal from the SFAHS Band and Color Guard program.

### **Dismissal from SFAHS Color Guard**

- These offenses may result in forfeiture of membership in SFAHS Color Guard. All decisions are by the directors and are final. Guard members are leaders and role models in FBISD and must choose to behave accordingly.
- Member who has been suspended or received an ISS or ALA assignment will forfeit membership. (Exception: a student may serve a one-day assignment for dress code or tardies...only one opportunity given each year).  
Member who becomes ineligible twice during a school year.
- Student found possessing, using, transmitting or to be under the influence of drugs, alcohol, etc while at school, in costume or member wardrobe, while representing the organization.
- Smoking tobacco in any member clothing or while representing SFAHS.
- Excessive absences
- Any member that receives an MIP, DUI, DWI, or other drug or alcohol related offense will automatically forfeit their membership.
- Theft of team or individual property.
- Hazing or initiation of any student by another student.
- Members who assault or harass directors or team members
- Members involved in creating, leading, or participating in an initiation process
- Any student unable to meet the physical requirements will not be allowed to participate as a team member and will automatically forfeit their position on the team
- Any offense not covered in this handbook, but which is clearly and logically an offense shall be declared appropriate for dismissal by the directors.

## **EXPENSES TO EXPECT/ITEMS REQUIRED**

As with all extra-curricular activities, there will be expenses incurred with The Stephen F. Austin High School Color Guard and Band. There are a number of items that students/parents will be expected to provide for successful participation in the color guard. Most of the items to be purchased will be ordered on or before the end of June. New members are required to purchase all personal items the first year. There is no need to "repurchase" any of these items unless they need replacement. Returning members must have all items listed. If they have lost or damaged an item, a new one needs to be ordered. Returning members may order additional items if they would like more than one of any item. This will not include basic essentials for traveling to shows, personal monies for trips, etc. The following are some of the EXPECTED expenses for the school year.

ITEM	USE/DESCRIPTION - ORDERED THROUGH SFAHS COLOR GUARD	APPROXIMATE AMOUNT Includes shipping/Tax
Jazz Shoes	Used during marching season	\$35
Rifle	All members will be trained on rifle. Only white 36" Elite style will be permitted. (Black strap and Bolt)	\$36
Gloves	One Pair. Extras may be ordered	\$16.00
Black Guard Bag	Official bag used all year	\$40.00
Show Shirts	One for marching season and one for winter season	\$30.00
Red Guard Spirit Tee	Used for game days and travel	\$15.00
Warm ups	Custom Designed logo jacket and pants	\$80.00
Tights	Worn under costume	\$16
<b>ADDITIONAL ITEMS</b>	<b>PURCHASED ON YOUR OWN</b>	
Dot Book	Index card spiral used for marching rehearsals	\$5.00
Tennis Shoes	Athletic or running shoes are required for all marching season classes and rehearsals. Keds, vans, Toms, and other forms of slip-ons will not be permitted for safety reasons.	Two pairs are recommended.
Stadium rehearsal attire	All members should own a black fitted shirt or tank top, black shorts and black leggings or thick tights to be worn at designated rehearsals throughout the year. None of the above items should have any logo or markings.	Varies
Undergarments	Members will need: Seamless Underwear and bra - skin tone/nude with clear straps	Spanx.com Target Wal-Mart (approx. \$18)
Water Jug	Each student will need a <b>red 1-gallon Coleman</b> water cooler to drink from at rehearsals. There is NO SHARING of containers for health reasons	Walmart, Target, Academy, etc.
Bag Supply Items	You will receive a specific list of items that need to be in your guard bag each week.	Attached List

Show make-up	Each season will have designated show make-up to be purchased on your own.	Varies
<b>Fee Items, Trips</b>	<b>Use/Description</b>	<b>APPROXIMATE AMOUNT</b>
Uniform Fee	Per season. Required for all members.	\$200 include in total fees
Color Guard and Band Marching Fees	Covers membership and in-state travel fees for SFAHS Marching season	Approx. \$200 included in total fees
Winter Guard Fees	Covers membership and travel fees for SFAHS Winter Guard Season	Approx. \$100 included in total fees

\*\*\*Total fees for the 2018-2019 Stephen F. Austin High School Color Guard will be approximately \$500 not including the cost of personal items, undergarments, shoes, show shirts, rehearsal clothing, dot books, water jug and show make-up.

Please note that if your child has the privilege of being a SFAHS Color Guard Member, they are committed to the fees required for participation. All personal items and fee items are committed, ordered and spent before the end of May each year. **If your child leaves the organization, is removed for any reasons, or forfeits her position on the team, the full amount of the fee commitment is due.** Your child may not be exempt from finals, may not be able to register the following school year and perhaps may not be able to graduate until all monies owed FBISD are paid. Please do not take this commitment lightly. **Please note that no refunds will be given.**

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

### **Fundraising**

Parents have many options available to raise money for their child's fees. Start fundraising early! Attend booster meetings for up to date information on fundraisers.

### **Chaperoning**

The SFAHS Band and Guard takes 5-11 buses on all marching season trips and 1-2 buses for all winter guard season trips. Multiple chaperones are required for each bus to ensure the safety and smooth sailing for all games, events, and competitions. **This is a great and easy way to be involved during both seasons!**

# BAND and COLOR GUARD PARENT “DO’S” AND “DON’TS”

According to a band and color guard parent!

DO —	Bring or make sure your student is <b>early to rehearsals</b> - - not just on time. To be early is to be on time, to be on time is to be late.	DON'T —	Cause your student to do push-ups for being late unless you believe that they need the added exercise.
DO —	Come early to watch a marching rehearsal	DON'T —	Miss out on knowing that hard work lies beneath a winning performance.
DO —	Interact with other parents - - find out what grade their child is in.... what instrument he or she plays....	DON'T —	Stay to yourself and later complain that there are too many parent <b>cliques</b> .
DO —	Attend Band Booster Meetings - - yes, there are meetings outside of marching season, and <b>check the band website for changes</b> .	DON'T —	Assume that your student is going to remember to tell you everything that is going on, or assume that someone in the communications committee is going to call or e-mail you to give you the highlights of the meeting.
DO —	Wear your band booster shirt – or school colors - - to the football games or competitions or other events where the band is appearing	DON'T —	Wear blue, purple, or PINK, colors - - ESPECIALLY when we are competing against them!!
DO —	Come to the football games and find the other band parents and sit in the stadium with them.	DON'T —	Stay at home watching 20/20 or Dateline on Friday nights. Set your DVR!
DO —	Support the organization at all football games and performances	DON'T —	Approach the kids or staff while they are working/ performing.
DO —	Volunteer for Band events, committees, fund- raisers, etc.	DON'T —	Let a few carry the load. The more the merrier and the quicker the job.
DO —	Holler and yell for the football team at games	DON'T —	Sit quietly and frown at the fools hollering and yelling their heads off!
DO —	Find out where your student is going after the football games. Get a group of parents together – go to the same place. Make an after-the-game wind-down part of your fun	DON'T —	Go home and worry about where your student is and what time they will be home that night.



<b>DO</b> —	Come and support your student and band directors at marching competitions	<b>DON'T</b> —	Assume that the kids aren't nervous and don't need any moral support. They do! – in spite of what they might say.
<b>DO</b> —	Stand up, yell and holler when the <b>SFAHS BAND</b> is introduced	<b>DON'T</b> —	Be embarrassed to show pride in your child's school and band, and what he or she is doing.
<b>DO</b> —	Applaud politely for the other bands and give opinions when back on your own turf.	<b>DON'T</b> —	Boo and hiss and make snide remarks. Chances are another band parent is within hearing distance!!
<b>DO</b> —	Pick up your student <b>on time</b> after rehearsals, games, competitions etc.	<b>DON'T</b> —	Expect the Band Directors to stay any later than necessary – remember they've had a long day too and want to go home also.
<b>DO</b> —	Ask your student to perform their equipment work for you	<b>DON'T</b> —	Assume that the guard looks as good as it does just by practicing at school.
<b>DO</b> —	Submit to the Band website your pictures, ideas and video.	<b>DON'T</b> —	Be shy. We do not want any student to be upset if they are inadvertently left off of the website.
<b>DO</b> —	Treat the other parents and all of the students as family – because that is what we are - - a Band Family.	<b>DON'T</b> —	Miss out. Participate in all of our functions – games, concerts, contests, fund raisers, and social events ! ! <b>REMEMBER we are here for our kids and band and not to glorify ourselves.</b>
<b>DO</b> —	Applaud for the color guard when they release and catch their equipment.	<b>DON'T</b> —	Just sit there in amazement...let the team hear you!

## **Social Media Contract**

### ***Exhibiting Leadership through Proper Digital Citizenship***

#### **Respect Yourself**

I will show respect for myself through my actions. I will select online names that are appropriate. I will consider the information and images I post online. I will not post personal information about my life or relationships that can be deemed inappropriate. I will not post or repost content that may include profanity, drugs, alcohol, or that is derogatory and/or sexual in nature.

#### **Protect Yourself**

I will ensure that the information I post online will not put me at risk. I will not publish my personal details, contact details or a schedule of my activities. I will report any inappropriate behavior directed at me. I will protect passwords, accounts and resources.

#### **Respect Others**

I will show respect to others. I will not use electronic mediums to bully or harass other people. I will not respond to any negative or inappropriate messages. I will be respectful, credible, and truthful.

#### **Protect Others**

I will protect others by reporting abuse and not forwarding inappropriate materials or communications. I will be an advocate for my teammates and realize that defamation of others is illegal.

#### **Honor My Uniform**

I will ensure that all images of my uniforms are suitable and reflect the team in a positive light. Uniforms are to be worn properly at all times in all digital posts (buttoned, zipped, and worn correctly). Posting of non-team members in uniform is not permitted.

#### **Protect My Team**

I understand that everything I post is a reflection of my team and I will keep in mind that my use of technology has an effect on others. Content I post will be positive and support the goals of the team. I will not use digital media to express my negative emotions. I will contact my coach/director to mediate conflict. I will not post anything that could hurt or jeopardize the reputation of the team.

*By signing this agreement, I understand to always act in a manner that is respectful to myself and others, and to act appropriately, and in a moral and ethical manner.*

*I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to follow the principles of digital citizenship outlined in this agreement and accept that failing to follow these tenets will result in consequences as outlined by the director, SFAHS Color Guard Handbook, and FBISD Student Code of Conduct.*

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

2018 – 2019

## HANDBOOK, POLICY, and FINANCIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Parents and/or guardians are to initial each statement below

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read the entire SFAHS Color Guard Student/Parent Handbook and I am responsible for being aware of all of its contents. In particular, I have read the Conduct Guidelines, Course Requirements, Eligibility - No Pass, No Play, Travel Guidelines, Expenses to Expect, and Rehearsal Expectations.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the directors may adjust the rules, regulations, policy and procedures listed in this handbook for the betterment, safety, growth and needs of the entire organization. I understand that the decisions of the directors are final.

I understand that if my child has the privilege of being a SFAHS Color Guard Member, they are committed to the fees required for participation. (marching and winter fees, personal items fees, trip fees, WGI trip fees, etc.) If my child leaves the organization, is removed for any reason, or forfeits her position on the team, the full amount of the fee commitment is due which may include an any all trip fees, extra fees based upon purchased items or contracts for services that include your child. Your child may not be exempt from finals, may not be able to register the following school year and perhaps may not be able to graduate until all monies owed FBISD are paid.

***Please note that no refunds of any kind will be given.***

Please initial above and sign below.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_