

**MURRIETA VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL**  
**CONCERT ATTIRE HANDOUT FOR THE WIND**  
**SYMPHONY AND SYMPHONIC BAND**  
**“THE DEFINITIVE DESCRIPTION”**

November 19, 2010

Dear Wind Symphony and Symphonic Band Students and Parents:

As the Director of Instrumental Music, I want to reaffirm the **STANDARDS OF DRESS** for all concerts. I take a great measure of pride in what we have and will continue to accomplish as a top-flight instrumental music program. By clearly defining what is acceptable dress, I strongly believe I am adding to the overall respect for this quality music program that represents not only our school, but our community. Concert dress **MUST** reflect the pride in our ensembles, our school, and in each other as musicians.

**ONLY** students wearing the proper attire will be invited to perform at any given concert. Concert attire is not open to discussion or negotiations at the time of any formal performance. Those students who *repeatedly* disregard the **STANDARDS OF DRESS** will be removed from the ensemble and eventually replaced by another qualified musician.

**MY PHILOSOPHY ABOUT CONCERT DRESS:** We have an outstanding music program at Murrieta Valley High School, and is home to several of the top high school musical ensembles in California. With that reputation comes pride in our ensemble, pride in our school, and pride in each other. When you perform in public, you must present the entire package to the audience and the people in contact with you. That means both playing well and looking and acting professionally. Think about it, you wouldn't think twice about deviating from the accepted/required dress for football players, cheerleaders, soccer players etc. They simply wouldn't allow you to participate. Why should gross dress deviations be accepted for musical performances?

High school instrumental music, particularly when it attains this high level, is an **artistic and conservative activity**. This is not the place for individualism in terms of concert dress. Dress needs to be conservative, and any make-up very lightly done. There are no accessories other than the accepted accessories used in formal attire. Our ensembles need to look uniform, professional, and dignified. The young men and women in our ensembles obviously have latitude to express themselves through their personal dress everyday of their lives. But for performances, the above are reasonable expectations.

**FORMAL WEAR, THE DEFINITIVE DESCRIPTION:** The formal wear used for concert performance (similar as the professional symphony orchestra) is listed below. It is a long accepted code of concert dress that conveys a serious attitude and respect about one's musical art. A performance is not the place to be individualistic.

**EVENING CONCERT DRESS for the men:**

1. A classic black tuxedo
2. White long sleeved tuxedo shirt with a wing tipped collar that buttons properly at the neck. Black "studs" in place of buttons are also needed. This is standard on most tuxedo shirts.
3. Plain black bow tie
4. Polished black shoes, and black shoes.

**Personal Test:** The jacket should have an arm length just slightly past your wrists. The jacket should feel comfortable when seated with your instrument held up (as if you were playing). You should be able to feel and see your white sleeves at the end of your jacket. Is your shirt too tight when you button the very top before putting on your bow tie? Your slacks should not be tight to the point of it grabbing uncomfortably at your midsection.

The dress requirements for men are obviously very clear-cut and without any ambiguity. Shop around; you will get a better deal that way. You might also want to get something a little bit on the larger side so that you can "grow into" the tuxedo. Music is not an inexpensive activity, and in many ways is similar to sports and cheerleading (in regards to attire and costs).

**EVENING CONCERT DRESS for the women:**

1. Black floor-length dress with either short or long sleeves, OR
2. Separate black-length skirt AND black blouse with either short or long sleeves, (Slacks are allowed – see guidelines below)
3. Dress should cover the knees when seated (sleeveless dresses are NOT allowed)
4. Dark hosiery, black shoes,
5. Make-up, light

**NOTE:** If you are wearing a blouse, it MUST be completely buttoned.

**Personal Test:** Can you sit in your seat with your instrument and NOT constantly squirm to "adjust" yourself so that your dress or skirt doesn't go above your knees. Can you sit there and not have to adjust your dress or blouse constantly?

The dress requirements for women are also obviously very clear-cut and without any ambiguity. The key phrase is conservative attire, and NOT drawing unwarranted attention from the audience for any reason other than musical. Music is not an inexpensive activity, and in many ways is similar to sports and cheerleading (in regards to attire and costs).

**DRESS NOT ACCEPTABLE FOR THE WIND SYMPHONY OR SYMPHONIC BAND:**

**MEN:**

1. White socks
2. Nonwhite shirts
3. Short sleeve white shirts
4. Black athletic socks
5. Non-Black shoes

**WOMEN**

1. No clothing that exposes cleavage, the midriff, or undergarments
2. Inappropriately short skirts that do not cover the knees when seated
3. Inappropriately short dresses that do not cover the knees when seated
4. Inappropriately tight skirts that are “body hugging and form fitting”
5. Inappropriate short blouses that do not cover your midriff when seated
6. Sleeveless dresses
7. Spaghetti strap dresses
8. Black slacks that are “body hugging and form fitting”
9. Black pants that are “body hugging and form fitting” with the rear pockets on the outside of the garment.
10. Anything else that is “body hugging and form fitting”
11. Black knee length pants (capris or sweatpants)
12. Black long athletic tights
13. Black short athletic tights
14. Black jeans
15. Blouses that are sleeveless
16. Black athletic shoes
17. Non-black shoes
18. Flip-flops

**THE TRUE TEST**

If you have a question whether or not your attire is acceptable and conforms to the information on this handout, ask Mr. Anderson. DO NOT wait until the last minute before asking about appropriateness or in purchasing your attire. This is the formula for disappointment.

Thank you for your cooperation with this dress code. Please feel free to email me at [nanderson@murrieta.k12.ca.us](mailto:nanderson@murrieta.k12.ca.us) if there are any questions.

Sincerely,

Neil Anderson  
Director of Instrumental Music