



Rockwall Independent School District
Band Handbook
Part I
2010-2011

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Campus specific handbooks

Attendance Policy – Student Absences

A tardy will be converted to a mark of “absence” after the rehearsal begins. Absences will be classified as excused for the following reasons ONLY:

- Student’s personal illness – must be documented or confirmed by a written note
- Out of town (Unavoidable conflict during Summer band ONLY)
- Death in family
- School-related conflicts cleared by the director PRIOR to the absence.
- **The “out of town” excuse will be accepted only during summer band practice and will be permitted only in cases of unavoidable conflicts and family vacations. School-related conflicts will be dealt with on an individual basis; however, excessive absences, regardless of reason, will result in the forfeiture of the marching position if it is determined to be in the best interest of the organization.**
- Unexcused sectional absences must be made up within ONE week of the original absence. Any sectional that is not made up will result in a zero being registered in the grade book.

Communication

Many problems can be easily avoided with communication. Students are expected to communicate to the band directors, IN ADVANCE, if a conflict arises. Any absence without official communication will be considered unexcused. An official rehearsal absence form may be obtained from the band office or the band website. This form MUST be completed and endorsed by a parent. Other factors to consider are:

- Never communicate through another student regarding attendance – only your parents.
- Please do not ask the band directors to contradict band policies by asking to be excused for a reason that has been clearly defined as unexcused.

Performances and Extreme Circumstances

If the band directors approve a student absence from a performance in advance, an alternate assignment will be designated. This may come in the form of a special performance for the student’s band class, a recital performance, and/or a significant written assignment. The student will be instructed regarding when the assignment is due and the resulting grade will be registered in place of the missed performance. This policy, however, **will be used ONLY in the most extreme circumstances and is totally up to the discretion of the director.**

Work, homework, babysitting, driver’s education classes, college classes, or transportation problems are never accepted as excuses for missing a rehearsal or a performance.

Care of School Owned Instruments

The student is responsible for maintenance and upkeep of the equipment. **It is recommended that families who use school-owned instruments either purchase instrument insurance or attach instrument serial number to their homeowners’ policies.** This will protect any liability that student and family may have in case of loss or damage of equipment. Please contact the band director right away if the instrument needs to be replaced.

School Owned Instrument Usage Fee

Beginning this year, all students who use a school-owned band instrument will be required to pay a usage fee. This fee is for the use of the instrument(s) only and will not be applied to any repair. The student will be responsible for any and all repair/maintenance charges for the instrument while in his/her possession. The charge for one instrument will be \$50.00 and \$75.00 for two instruments. All percussion students will also pay a \$75.00 instrument usage fee. More information will be sent regarding this policy in a separate letter.

Care of Band Facilities and Equipment

1. NO FOOD, GUM, CANDY, OR DRINKS ALLOWED IN THE BAND FACILITIES, EXCEPT AT TIMES DESIGNATED BY THE DIRECTORS.
2. Instrument storage areas must be kept clean and neat. Keep instruments in cases with **latches closed** in your assigned slot when not in use. Only instruments, music, and a zipped band bag are allowed in slots -**Books, clothes, and other items will be removed if found in the instrument storage areas.**
3. No items/trash should be left on the floor of the instrument room or band hall. Custodians are instructed to discard any items left on the band hall floor at night!
4. Band hall chairs and stands are not to be removed from the room unless requested by a director.
5. The Band Library is **off limits** to all band members, except librarians, officers, and staff (only to conduct band business).
6. No one is allowed to use the copy machine or audio/visual equipment without permission.
7. Practice rooms are for practice, recording assignments, playoffs, or private lessons only.
8. Periodic inspections will be made of school-owned instruments. Each student is financially responsible for any damage that occurs during the time it has been issued to him or her.
9. Any damage of school property or equipment must be repaired, the item replaced, or a reimbursement made immediately.

Care of Music

1. You must have your music for every rehearsal and performance.
2. Do not lose or destroy your music. If your music is lost, you must pay for the replacement copies.
3. Replacement cost is \$1.00 for a single piece of music and \$10.00 for an entire music folder
4. Music must always be in a flip folder (marching band) or a 1" binder (concert band).

Uniform Policy

Any uniform part that is lost or damaged is your responsibility to replace. Replacement costs are provided for each student in writing at uniform sizing.

When Wearing Your Uniform:

1. There will be no variation from the proper wearing of the uniform unless designated by the directors. Sunglasses are not appropriate.
2. Never wear a cap (except the official MHB cap) anything other than the marching hat when in uniform.
3. Marching uniforms will be issued to students prior to each performance. Uniforms do NOT go home. Time will always be worked into the schedule so that students will have enough time to check out their marching uniform, put it on, and change and return their uniform at the end of the day's activities.
4. The uniform MUST be returned to the uniform room after every performance. Uniforms will never be taken home. They will be issued to each student prior to each performance.
5. Memorize your uniform numbers. **Do not exchange parts of your uniform with another band member.** You must turn in all uniform parts with the exact numbers issued to you.
6. Do not wear jewelry of any kind with your marching uniform. There can be no visible body/face piercing allowed.
7. If you lose, damage, or have a problem with any part of your uniform at any time, notify your director immediately!
8. Concert uniforms will be turned in at the end of each season in the plastic cover from the cleaners. No uniform will be accepted without a cleaning receipt.
9. Hats & shoes should not be kept in your bag, as they will tear the bag.

Student Conduct

Students will be expected to maintain the following behaviors during rehearsals, performances, on all trips and at all band functions. Remember that you are a very visible representative of this community and if we follow these rules of conduct, it reflects well on all of us!

Rules of Conduct:

1. All members are expected to conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen at all times.
2. Profanity will not be tolerated.
3. Only water is permitted in the band hall.
4. Maintain calm, relaxed, respectful behavior in the band hall at all times.
5. Stay in your seat during rehearsal unless given permission to leave.
6. Remain quiet during rehearsals.
7. While fingering your parts is encouraged, you may not play your instrument during instructional periods without being instructed to do so.
8. If you have a question during rehearsal, raise your hand and the directors will be glad to help you. Do not, however, discuss the problem with your neighbor. This causes much distraction and wasted time during rehearsals.
9. **Treat all fellow band members with respect (hazing will not be tolerated)! Treat the equipment you use with care!**
10. Public Displays of Affection (PDA's) will not be permitted in the band hall, on busses, or at official band functions.
11. The use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco is strictly forbidden. RISD's district policy will be referenced in respect to discipline for violating this rule. District Policy FNCF (LOCAL) states:

"No students shall possess, use, transmit, or attempt to possess, use, or transmit or be under the influence of any of the following substances on school premises during any school term, or off school premises at a school related activity, function, or event." The following apply:

- Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law, without regard to amount, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate.
- Alcohol or any alcoholic beverage
- Any abusable glue, aerosol paint, or any other chemical substance for inhalations.
- Any other intoxicant, or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drugs.

"Use' means a student has smoked, ingested, injected, imbibed, inhaled, drunk, or otherwise taken internally a prohibited substance recently enough that it is detectable by the student's physical appearance, actions, breath, or speech."

"Under the influence' means a student's faculties are noticeably impaired, but the student need not be legally intoxicated."

"The transmittal, sale, or attempted sale of what is represented to be any of the above listed substances is also prohibited under the rule"

"A student who used a drug authorized by a licensed physician through a prescription specifically for the student's use shall not be considered to have violated this rule."

"Students in violation of this policy will be referred for drug/alcohol counseling and shall be subject to disciplinary action to include suspension, police contact, and placement at the alternative school. Repeat violators will face expulsion from school."

[District policy FNCF (LOCAL)]

Any infraction of conduct, attitude, or responsibility will result in one or more of the following:

- A. Conference with student
- B. Grade deduction
- C. Parent notification and/or conference with parent
- D. Loss of performance status
- E. Conference / disciplinary action with vice-principal
- F. Expulsion from band program

Game Night and Routine and Contest Performances

Report:

1. We will have a comprehensive student inspection prior to departing for every performance.
2. Arrive at the designated report site on or before the designated report time
3. Arrive in full uniform (if applicable). HAVE ALL UNIFORM NUMBERS MEMORIZED
4. When indicated, quickly “fall-in” the inspection block with music and equipment, or follow other instructions given by directors or drum major if applicable
5. Tardiness will be reflected in the inspection grade

Inspection:

1. Proper wear, fit and condition of complete uniform with all parts (see Uniform Policy)
2. Condition of equipment
 - i. Brass instruments: horns polished, valves and slides working freely, mouthpiece clean, lyre attached
 - ii. Woodwinds: reeds clean and in good shape, instrument clean with good pads, springs, and corks, and music lyre attached (except flutes and piccolos)
 - iii. Percussion: drum heads clean, drum shells polished, carriers in working order, cymbals polished, sticks and mallets properly taped in good condition
3. Flip folder must be in good condition, properly labeled, and must contain necessary music (flip folder must be held by a lyre attached to the instrument)
4. Inspection grades will be taken prior to each performance and will factor into the nine-weeks grade.

Upon Arrival at Game Site:

1. Unload the bus and quickly “fall in” in block formation at designated site
2. Maintain “attention,” “parade rest,” or “at ease,” as instructed until stadium entrance
3. Enter stands with your section upon director’s instructions
4. Quickly and quietly get seated and prepare for warm up and school song

During the Game:

1. Remain in full uniform during the entire game.
2. Play your instrument only when the entire band is performing
3. Percussion is to play only with full band, or during drum features authorized by the directors or percussion instructor
4. Remain seated unless otherwise instructed by the staff.
5. You are not allowed to use cell phones or other electronic items at performances. These items will be taken up if visible.
6. Absolutely no eating or drinking (except water) in uniform at games. **Students will refrain from accepting food or drinks from parents, relatives, or friends.**
7. Students are to remain in the band seating section at all times during the game. Water will be provided by the band booster organization.
8. Pay attention and be ready to play at all times *especially* after a significant play by our team.
9. Hold **your instrument at all times...** (Exceptions: sousaphones and percussion)
10. Students may for use of one of the bathroom passes during the game if necessary.

After the Game:

1. After the playing of the school song, we will load buses by sections
2. All band students are to return to RHHS on the bus
3. Students should be prepared to help unload the band truck each week
4. Students are to take their personal equipment and belongings home after each performance.

Bus Procedures

1. All band members will ride the bus going to and coming from the event. Exceptions to this rule require a need cause by extreme extenuating circumstances. Even then, the final decision is left to the director. Should a request be granted, the student must report to the director accompanied by the parent before traveling and an alternate transportation form must be completed and submitted prior to the event.
2. For football games, students may be assigned to a specific bus prior to departure. Riding on a bus other than the one to which you are assigned is not permitted. Students are required to obey the driver, chaperon, and bus captain in charge.
3. Rockwall I.S.D. prohibits loud talking, foul or abusive language, standing in aisles, or sitting on the back of the seats while on the busses. Nothing (or no one for that matter) is allowed to hang out of or be thrown from the windows.
4. No food or drinks are allowed on the bus unless approved by the directors.
5. PDA's are not permitted on the bus. (see rules of conduct)
6. Instruments and other equipment will be carried on the bus and/or band truck. A loading crew will be designated for each trip. This loading crew is responsible for loading the equipment, which is placed near the bus, or in the loading area. The crew is not responsible for any equipment not placed in the loading areas. **In short, every band member is responsible for his/her own instrument and equipment.**

PDA'S AND SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

Any complaint that is brought to our attention regarding a band student, regardless of whether it is considered consensual or forced in nature will be immediately reported to a campus administrator. Unwanted physical or emotional advances or threats of this kind will not be tolerated at any time. All complaints will be documented.

Travel

1. Our band takes trips annually that may last three or more days. At the beginning of the year, information regarding the costs, methods of payment, fund raising, etc. is made available to the parents.
2. Just prior to the trip, parents and students are given copies of the itinerary, special guidelines, medical releases, etc. which must be signed and returned.
3. See Bus Procedures for travel guidelines.
4. As per R.I.S.D. policy high school bands may travel in the Spring months for competitions in other areas. The travel will be limited to traveling out of state every two years and in state on alternate years. International travel will not take place without prior approval of the R.I.S.D. and only be allowed in a very special instance. The band may go to out of state competitions every two years with approval of the director, principal, and superintendent. (District Policy[FMG(Local)])

Fund Raising

During the year each member will be asked to participate in fundraising activities. These events are planned well in advance and hopefully provide a value to our band patrons, as well as help the students raise money for trips and other activities. Monies raised by students are to be used for **band activities only. If the student does not use the monies raised (i.e. they do not go on the band spring trip) they will not receive that money at the end of the year.** When a fundraising product is sold, band students shall not be forced to participate if the parents prefer to pay the student's cost. **Band parents will not be obligated to "buy out" unsold product.** Only if a student fails to meet predetermined deadlines in returning fundraising products, then he or she may be responsible for appropriate replacement costs.

U.I.L. Solo and Ensemble Contest

Beginning in January each year, all band members of the bands prepare for U.I.L. Solo and Ensemble competition, which is held in February. **Each band member is required to perform a solo. Participation in the regional competition is required and serves as a major project grade for the first nine weeks of the spring semester!**

Texas State Solo and Ensemble Contest (TSSEC)

The U.I.L. Texas State Solo and Ensemble contest is held at the University of Texas (Austin, Texas) in late May. Students may qualify for state solo and ensemble by receiving a 1st division rating on a memorized class 1 solo. There is a list of “special,” very difficult solos that are on the “non-memorization” list that also may be performed.

Solos:

Soloists are required to perform with a piano accompanist (according to the U.I.L. Prescribed Music List) will be responsible for the accompanist fees. The band department will have accompanists available.

Ensembles:

To qualify for U.I.L. Texas State Solo and Ensemble Contest, the ensemble must perform a Class I ensemble. Ensembles are optional, however, in order for an ensemble to be approved to go to state, at least 70% of the individual members of the ensemble must also earn a 1st division on their UIL solo. Students will not be permitted to take an ensemble to state (regardless of their rating at UIL) if the majority of its members make less than a 1st division on their UIL solos.

TMEA All-Region Auditions Depending on which band you are in, you may be REQUIRED to audition for all-region. Your director will make it clear to you if you are in one of these ensembles. Members of all bands are strongly encouraged to participate.

Homecoming Parade

All marching band members are expected to march in the homecoming parade. The only exceptions will be those students who have been chosen “Sweethearts.” Senior, male students may request to serve as an escort **at least 3 weeks in advance of the parade.**

Letter Jackets:

All students who complete four full years of membership in the MHB will have the opportunity to receive a band jacket during their senior year. A jacket will be awarded in any year for a student who makes a **first division on a memorized class 1 solo**, or who is selected to participate in All-State Band, Orchestra, or Jazz Band. **A band jacket should be viewed as something you earn and not something that you are entitled to.**

Private Lessons

It is the goal of the Rockwall High School Band Department to provide the very best learning experiences for each band student. One of these learning experiences is the opportunity for a student to study privately with a professional instrumentalist.

1. Private teachers are selected by the Rockwall Band Directors.
2. Private lessons are strongly encouraged.
3. Students are taught once per week during their band period, before school or after school.
4. The cost of the lesson is determined by the school district/band program (\$16.00 per lesson).
5. Band directors and lesson teachers will establish criteria for entrance into the private lesson program.
6. If a student is absent from school or in school but cannot attend the lesson, prior notification must be given in order for fees to be adjusted or a makeup lesson to be scheduled.
7. If the student is in school and misses a lesson without prior notification to the teacher, the student will be charged for that lesson.
8. Students will be excused from lessons for band trips, concerts, etc., if the teacher is notified in advance.
9. Scholarships are available on a need basis. Applications are available from the band directors and on the band website.
10. Scholarships are available for students who take from RISD private teachers only.