

Yoakum Bulldog Band Student/Parent Handbook 2023-2024



Yoakum High School Band
100 Poth St.
Yoakum, TX 77995
(361) 293-2191

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FORWARD

Congratulations on your decision to be a part of the AWARD WINNING BULLDOG BAND! This handbook is designed as a guide for both parents and students to give specific details and answer any questions you may have about the band program. If at any time you have additional questions, please feel free to contact the band office by phone or email.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Band Hall Phone: (361) 293-2191

Director of Bands: Dr. Jennifer Voges, E-mail: jvoges@yoakumisd.net

JH Director/Assistant Band Director: Lacy Orsak, E-mail: lorsak@yoakumisd.net

Percussion Director/Assistant Band Director: Aaron Villarreal, E-mail: avillarreal@yoakumisd.net

Mailing Address:

Yoakum Band
PO Box 737
Yoakum, TX 77995

or

Yoakum Band Boosters
PO Box 107
Yoakum, TX 77995

BAND ORGANIZATIONS

Band is a full year course with two distinct seasons or semesters. The first semester is primarily made up of the marching band season, while the second semester is concert band season. Students must participate in both semesters of band.

MARCHING BAND

The “Proud and Spirited” Bulldog Band is the most visible organization within our band program. The marching band performs at all YHS Pep-Rallies, all home and away YHS Varsity Football Games, and marching band competitions. Marching band students are eligible to receive a physical education waiver for participation in marching band.

2023 Marching Band Schedule:

Monday and Tuesday: 8:25AM through the end of first period at the practice field

Wednesday, Thursday: 7:00AM through the end of first period at the practice field

Monday evenings: 5:30PM – 9:00PM at the stadium

Friday: 8:25AM through the end of first period at the practice field

CONCERT BAND

The YHS Band may be divided into two groups during concert season based on playing ability, attitude, participation, and instrumentation needs. Students may move from band to band as deemed necessary or appropriate.

Silver: The Silver Band is the top performing concert band at YHS. These students will be required to attend Monday night rehearsals each week during January and February. These students will also be strongly encouraged to participate in All-Region Band, All-Region Jazz Band, and Solo and Ensemble. The Silver Band performs at all YHS Band concerts, UIL Concert and Sight-reading Contest, and other band festivals.

Blue: The Blue Band has minimal outside of class requirements. The Blue Band will perform on all YHS Band concerts and may perform at the UIL Concert and Sight-reading Contest. Blue Band students will attend all festivals and trips and will be combined with the Silver Band if the group is too small to perform on their own.

JAZZ BAND

The YHS Jazz Band is an optional organization that will meet after school and/or before school depending on member and director availability. The YHS Jazz Band will perform multiple concerts during the year throughout the community. They may also perform on all YHS Band concerts and attend a Jazz Band Festival in the spring.

PARTICIPATION/ABSENCES

A yearly band calendar is included with this handbook so that you and your family can begin making arrangements to attend all required activities. In order for the Bulldog Band to continue to be successful, we must have 100% participation at all rehearsals and performances from ALL band students. If an EMERGENCY arises, a parent or guardian must contact the band hall before the absence occurs. Other family commitments (wedding, graduation, etc.) will be dealt with on an individual basis and must be communicate well in advance of the absence.

If a student is ill and must miss a rehearsal, the absence will only be considered excused after the directors receive documentation from a parent or guardian. All absences should be communicated in advance whenever possible.

Student job commitments and non-school athletic teams are not considered excused absences from required band rehearsals or performances. Be sure to communicate ALL band dates to your employer or coach well in advance. **Students who miss the Monday**

night rehearsal and all morning practices in the same week, will not be allowed to participate in that week's football game.

GRADING POLICY

Band grades are based on student participation and other written and playing assignments throughout the year. Students will receive a participation grade for every performance and rehearsal both inside and outside of the school day. In addition to their attendance, students are expected to have all necessary equipment and supplies at every rehearsal and performance.

Grading regarding ineligible students: All students must attend all rehearsals and concerts regardless of eligibility status. Failure to attend will result in a zero for that rehearsal or performance. Ineligible students will be given a make-up assignment for any performances missed because IF they are not eligible to participate.

Major Grades: Performance = 1 major grade each
 Music Pass-off = 1 major grade each
Daily Grades: Evening rehearsals = 1 daily grade each
 1 week of morning rehearsals = 1 daily grade each (fall only)
 1 week of participation = 1 daily grade (spring only)

ELIGIBILITY

The Yoakum ISD band programs will follow all rules and regulations outlined by the Texas Education Agency and the University Interscholastic League regarding a student's eligibility in an extra-curricular activity. According to the TEA and UIL Side-by-side, "A student who receives, at the end of any grading period (after the first six weeks of the school year), a grade below 70 in any class may not participate in extracurricular activities for three school weeks. An ineligible student may practice or rehearse, however. The student regains eligibility after the seven calendar day waiting period has ended following a grading period or the three school week evaluation period when the principal and teachers determine that he or she has earned a passing grade (70 or above) in all classes." In order to be eligible for the first 6-weeks of school, students must have accumulated the following number of HS credits:

- Freshman – be promoted from JH
- Sophomore – 5 or more credits
- Junior – 10 or more credits
- Senior – 15 or more credits

Extra-curricular Events affected by Ineligibility:

- Pep rallies
- Football games
- Individual or full band contests
- Band trips

Co-curricular Events NOT affecting Ineligibility:

- Concerts
- Daily participation in class
- Class assignments
- Before or after school rehearsals
- Parades

Students who are ineligible will continue to rehearse during their band class and any before or after school rehearsals. They will also participate in curricular performances to earn their band grade unless alternate academic tutorials are assigned. Ineligible students may not travel with the band or participate in extracurricular performances. Any student assigned DAEP (District Alternative Education Placement) or ISS (In School Suspension) for any reason may not participate in ANY activities, including both graded and non-graded band rehearsals and events during their assignment. This includes after school activities on the day when the student is assigned to DAEP. If the placement spans a weekend, the student may not participate in band activities over the weekend.

INSTRUMENTS & SUPPLIES

Personal Instruments: It is strongly recommended that all personal instruments be insured through your homeowner's policy or a private company. Please ask a band director if you would like information on insuring an instrument through a private company. The school district will not assume liability for maintenance, loss, repair, or damage of personal instruments, supplies, or personal items. All instruments should be labeled with the student's name and Yoakum High School at all times.

School Owned Instruments: Yoakum ISD furnishes the following instruments for students use: Oboe, Bassoon, Bass Clarinet, Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, French Horn, Euphonium, Tuba, and all Marching and Concert Percussion instruments – THIS DOES NOT include sticks/mallets. A limited number of other instruments are available for student use. Yoakum ISD does NOT provide supplies such as mouthpieces, reeds, valve oil, slide grease, etc. These items are the responsibility of the student. Students will be given the opportunity to purchase these items through the school. All students using a school owned instrument will be required to pay a \$20 Instrument Usage Fee each year to help offset the cost of repairs for normal wear on the instrument. Damages to school owned instruments beyond normal wear will be the responsibility of the student. All instruments should be labeled with the student's name and Yoakum High School at all times.

Instrument Lockers: All band students will be assigned a locker in the band room for storage of his/her instrument. Students are expected to keep their locker neat and tidy and free of dirty clothes. Each locker is equipped with a lock assigned to that specific band locker. Students must use the lock provided – no exceptions. If a lock is misplaced, the student will be charged a lock replacement fee of five dollars (\$5.00). Band students are expected to keep their instrument in their assigned locker or with them at all times.

Supplies: Students will be expected to obtain all the supplies on the Yoakum ISD Supply list by the first week of school. Many of these supplies are kept “in stock” in the band hall and are available for purchase. Students will also be expected to purchase the current year show T-shirt, the blue Bulldog Band t-shirt, Drill Master marching band shoes, gloves and a flip folder/lyre.

BAND UNIFORMS

The YHS Band uniform is a symbol of pride and should be worn accordingly. You must wear ALL of the uniform (minus the hat) or none of the uniform. Any students caught wearing the uniform incorrectly will be given an immediate consequence. You may not eat greasy/messy foods or drink colored drinks while in uniform. The YHS Band uniforms are expensive, please treat them like they are your most prized possession. Replacement of any uniform part that is damaged or lost is the responsibility of the band member. Each uniform has a replacement cost of over \$400! If alterations to the uniform are required, please ask a band director for assistance. Under no circumstances should any material or accessory be cut off of the uniform.

Uniform Accessories:

- Blue Bulldog Band T-shirt (purchased from Band Boosters)
- Show T-shirt (purchased from Band Boosters)
- BLACK Drillmaster Band shoes (purchased from Band Boosters)
- BLACK gloves (purchased from Band Boosters)
- Long BLACK socks - no ankle socks (provided by student)

FOOTBALL GAMES

Football games are an exciting time to support the Yoakum Bulldogs and share our spirit with the community. Students are expected to be the most spirited group in the stands – after all, we are the “Proud and SPIRITED” Bulldog Band! Even though students may cheer and have a good time, students must always remain alert and in their “spot.” It is also important remain alert to all of the expensive equipment around you in the stands. Band members must be ready to play at a moment’s notice. **Only band members are allowed in the band section.** We love our Band alumni, but they will only be allowed in the band section during Homecoming!

BAND LETTER JACKETS

Band students will have the opportunity to earn a Yoakum Band Letter Jacket through their activities in band. The student must be in good standing with the band for the entire year in which the award is earned and must be in band during the time of the letter jacket fittings to qualify for a jacket. A total of **20 points** will be necessary to earn a jacket. The point system shall be as follows and will be carried over from year to year:

Membership

Freshman - 2
Sophomore - 2
Junior - 2
Senior - 4

Large Band Events

March at UIL Marching Contest - 1
Perform at State Marching Cont. - 20
Perform at UIL C & SR - 1
Jazz Ensemble Member - 2
Little Christmas Band Member - 2
Perform at Jazz Festival - 1
Work Bulldog Band Invitational - 1

Leadership Position

Officer - 2
Captain - 5
Drum major - 20

ATSSB Auditions -

All Region Band or Jazz Band

Tryout - 2
Make All-Region - 15
Make All-Area - 20

UIL Solo and Ensemble Contest

Class I Solo or Ensemble
Attend - 3
1st Division - 10
2nd Division - 5
Class II Solo or Ensemble
Attend - 2
1st Division - 2
Class III Solo or Ensemble
Attend - 1
1st Division - 1

FUNDRAISING

Students involved in the Yoakum ISD Bands are very fortunate to have the support of a wonderful parent organization called the Band Boosters. The Yoakum Band Boosters offer support throughout the year through service and fundraising. Yoakum Band students have many opportunities available to them, including the end of the year trips, at no cost to the student because of the Yoakum Band Boosters. This organization is vital to our bands, and therefore participation from every band family is a must. The band boosters hold two major fundraisers a year, and all band students/families are required to contribute to both fundraisers in some way to earn their spring trip.

Concession Stand Fundraiser: All parents (or high school students) are asked to work a shift in the Band Booster Concession stand at jr. high and/or high school football games. Watch for a letter from the Band Booster Officers for more information on how you can help.

Bar-B-Cue Chicken Dinner: All students will be required to sell tickets for the annual plate sale. Cash prizes will be awarded for the top sellers! All parents and high school students are asked to help on the night of the plate sale as well. Stay tuned for information.

TRANSPORTATION

Itineraries will be distributed for all YHS Band events. Parents, please pick up your band members at the scheduled time. When picking up a student, use the Band hall parking lot located at YHS. As specified by the itinerary, all band members travel together to events by bus. Any parent wishing to take their student home after an event must sign them out with Dr. Voges at the end of the event. No students will be permitted to leave before the end of a football game or before the completion of a performance. A student may only be released to his or her own parent or guardian. Relatives, siblings, neighbors, etc. may not take your son or daughter home from an off campus activity unless you have prior, written administrative approval.

PRACTICE

It is important to develop consistent practice habits. Parent support and guidance are the key factors in establishing a regular practice schedule. The most effective home practice is based on the following:

1. Set daily, weekly & monthly GOALS.
2. 20-30 minutes of QUALITY practice time daily.
3. Parent/student MUTUALLY agreed daily practice time.
4. Parent/student MUTUALLY agreed special practice area in your home.
5. Positive reinforcement from parents and siblings.

AUDITION PROCEDURES

Students are required to audition for performance ensembles. The Band Director determines audition requirements (usually consisting of prepared music, scales, and sight-reading). Directors will serve as evaluator during auditions. Student participation will be re-evaluated periodically in select performance ensembles. Auditions may be live or recorded at the director's discretion. Audition material will reflect the director's anticipated performance level for the students and will be based on prior learning. There will be one audition at the end of the fall semester for the performing ensembles. Other chair tests may be held throughout the year, as well as a possible "re-audition" if necessary. A student may be moved to a different band/class based on attendance, participation, proficiency and/or attitude at the director's discretion.

All-Region Band: The All-Region Band auditions are a multi-step process that can lead to a student earning a spot in the nationally recognized Texas All-State Band. It is an individual competition in which the students in Yoakum and the surrounding area compete for membership in a highly select musical ensemble. By learning the scales and tryout music required, each student gains audition experience and advanced musical skills. Students who are fortunate enough to earn membership in the All-Region bands will participate in rehearsals and a special concert with a guest conductor. Students participating must reach an acceptable performance level determined by the director. The entry fee will be paid by the district for any student that attends the audition.

Solo/Ensemble: This event is a very important part of the student's musical education. The experience of playing a solo or in a small ensemble is much different than playing in a band. It gives the student an opportunity to do individual work on a solo and ensemble work with a small group of students (trio, quartet, and quintet). This contest increases the students' musical knowledge and skill, and develops self-confidence, persistence, and teamwork. Participation in an ensemble requires a commitment of each ensemble member to learn their music both as an individual and with the group. Students playing solos or ensembles are encouraged to meet with the director for assistance. An acceptable performance level, as determined by the director, must be met by both solos and ensembles. The entry fee will be paid by the district for any student that attends the contest.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Student leaders are a vital part of the success of the Bulldog Band program. Any student auditioning for, or elected to a leadership position accepts the additional responsibilities of the leadership position. All leaders, elected or appointed, will be expected to attend all rehearsals and performances, attend scheduled leadership meetings, and be a role model of Bulldog Band attitude, preparedness, and behavior.

Captain: Captains are the “teachers” of the band. These leaders are responsible for the look and sound of the Bulldog Band. These leaders will be chosen by a competitive audition each year. All captains will be required to attend a leadership camp during the summer.

Officers: Officers for the Bulldog Band will be re-elected each year.

Elected officer positions include:

- President
- Vice-president
- Historian
- Freshman Representative

Appointed officer positions include:

- Librarian
- Quartermaster
- Loading Crew Captain

Auditioned officer positions include:

- Drum Major
- Color guard Captain

Special requirements for drum majors: Drum Majors will serve for a term of one year and must audition again each year.

The following requirements must be fulfilled to be eligible for drum major try-outs:

- Be a member of the Bulldog Band and be in 9th grade or higher at the time of try-outs
- Have a yearly average, at the time of try-outs, of at least 80% in each class
- Have not received a failing six weeks grade in ANY class during the year in which he or she tries out

All Bulldog Band Drum Majors will be required to:

- Enroll in the YHS band class
- Attend all marching band rehearsals and performances
- Attend a band auxiliary or drum major camp at the Band Booster’s expense
- Participate in the UIL Solo and Ensemble Contest on a band instrument
- Participate in the ATSSB All-Region Band or Jazz Band Auditions on a band instrument

AUXILIARIES

The YHS Band Directors reserve the right to have NO twirlers and/or color guard depending on the needs of the band at that time.

Twirlers: Twirlers will serve for a term of one school year and will try-out again each year.

The following requirements must be fulfilled to be eligible for twirler try-outs:

- Be a member of the Bulldog/Bullpup Band and be in 8th grade or higher at the time of try-outs. (Private school students without a band program will be given special consideration on a case by case basis.)
- Have a yearly average, at the time of try-outs, of at least 70% in each class.
- Have not received a failing six weeks grade in band during the year in which he or she tries out.

All Bulldog Band Twirlers will be required to:

- Enroll in the YHS band class
- Attend all marching band rehearsals and performances
- Perform at all pep-rallies and selected football games (as decided by the directors)
- Obtain a director approved twirling uniform at the student's expense
- Attend a band auxiliary or twirling camp at the student's expense
- Participate in the UIL Twirling Solo and Ensemble Contest

Color guard: Color guard members will serve for a term of one school year and will try-out again each year.

The following requirements must be fulfilled to be eligible for color guard try-outs:

- Be a member of the Bulldog/Bullpup Band and be in 8th grade or higher at the time of try-outs. (Private school students without a band program will be given special consideration on a case by case basis.)
- Have a yearly average, at the time of try-outs, of at least 70% in each class.
- Have not received a failing six weeks grade in band during the year in which he or she tries out.

All Bulldog Band Color guard members will be required to:

- Enroll in the YHS band class
- Attend all marching band rehearsals and performances
- Perform at pep-rallies, football games, and contests (as decided by the directors)
- Obtain a sponsor assigned uniform at the student's expense
- Attend a band auxiliary/color guard camp during the summer at the student's expense

CONDUCT

Any organization that has high performance standards must also have high disciplinary standards. Students enrolled in the band program are expected to display exemplary behavior at all times. At every performance as a band member, you represent your family, Yoakum High School, YISD and Yoakum, Texas. Make sure that your actions prove that the YHS Bands are a “class act” in every way. Band members are expected to be respectful of all students, teachers, and other adults at all times. Students are expected to follow all school and district policies regarding both behavior and illegal substances on and off the field. Any student violating any section of the Code of Conduct will be disciplined and a parent consultation may be required. In severe circumstances, the violation may result in the student’s removal from the Yoakum Band organization.

Band students are allowed in the Band Hall only while a director is present. Do not disturb anyone if there is a class or section rehearsal in progress. Show every courtesy to the director and students involved. Students will not be permitted to use any rehearsal area or school equipment without the director’s permission. The Band Hall is available for use anytime the directors are on campus. Students must have director approval to use the Band Office phone. Students are not allowed in the Band Offices unless a director is present. Only band members are allowed in the Band Hall facilities.

Rehearsal Guidelines

- Be on the field or seated inside with instrument, music, pencil, and supplies BEFORE the bell rings.
- Show good rehearsal etiquette by being a good team player – study your part quietly while the director works with another section. Remain on task at all times; do not talk or interrupt the focus of a rehearsal.
- Maintain proper posture at all times, which is important for all players.
- Follow director procedures in the placement of your instrument & supplies in the rehearsal areas.
- Do not leave purses or other valuables unlocked in the band hall.
- No food, gum or drink is allowed in the band hall or during other rehearsals. We all take pride in keeping our band hall clean and organized.
- All instruments remain in cases with latches closed inside a locker when not in use.
- Disorderly behavior and abusive language will not be tolerated.
- Please be considerate of directors’ requests for assistance and/or performance of tasks around the band hall.
- Instruments must be well maintained and in good, working order at all times.