

2025-2026

Edition



**Policies and Procedures
6th Grade Beginning Band
Handbook**

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York School District One 6th Grade Band Handbook

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****Sign and Return Agreement - Friday, August 8th, 2025****

Band Students and Parents:

Welcome to one of the most exciting experiences that you can be part of – BAND! Now, more than ever, we have information to justify why participating in this demanding, yet rewarding, activity is so important! Experts have concluded that the study of music helps with spatial reasoning, test taking, and overall quality of life! Students who are in band develop social skills, experience emotional growth, leadership training, group interaction, music-making, and the discipline of hard work and practice! With all these aspects, it is no surprise that our band program in York School District 1 is highly successful and is growing! The goal of our program – district wide is to provide students with a lifelong understanding and appreciation for high-quality music and performing!

All parents AND students should read the information in the handbook. This is our “band member user manual” that keeps our program running smoothly and efficiently. Most questions can be answered by consulting this handbook. Policies will be adjusted from year to year as the need arises to clarify any issues. I hope the information in this handbook will inform and inspire both students and their parents!

Please read all the information and sign the form on the last page. I am honored to be your band director and am looking forward to an awesome year in beginning band!

Warmest Regards,

Ms. Bailes 

Student Handbook

Band Policy

To assist band members and parents in understanding areas of responsibility, a statement of band policy is set forth. Becoming familiar with this policy will enable everyone to make the most of this fantastic opportunity to be a member of the YDS1 beginning band program, becoming a better person and a better musician.

All YSD1 band directors believe each student should improve through regular practice. When the student does not improve him- or herself or make a better contribution to the band, he or she is wasting the time and effort of fellow members and the community by continuing in the program. The happiest student is one who improves through regular habits of practice and daily progress. Responsibility is the focus behind any level of achievement within our band program. Students should behave in a way that will facilitate their learning.

Objectives of the Band Program

- To teach music by its actual performance.
- To develop performance skills on various wind and percussion instruments.
- To provide for the musical needs of the school and the community.
- To provide students with music theory/history and how they relate to students' lives and musical experiences.
- To provide all students with the opportunity for worthy use of their time, a means for self-expression, and a healthy social experience.
- To foster leadership skills within each student.

Duties of the Band Member

- Be on time for all rehearsals and performances. **Early is on time – on time is late.**
- Upon entering the band room, get your instrument, and go directly to your seat.
- When the director or staff member steps on the podium or asks for your attention, all talking/playing should stop.
- Come to band class/rehearsal with a good attitude.
- There should be no excess playing (e.g., horsing around on the instrument.)
- Make your best effort to improve daily and establish a good practice routine.
- At the end of class, put all materials in their proper place.
- Maintain grades and turn in work for all classes.
- Become responsible for and assume responsibility for your own actions. Admit when you are wrong.

The Importance of Attitude

The greatest single factor that will determine the success of any individual or organization is **attitude**. The kind of person you are is an individual choice, and how you feel about something is one of the few actual independent choices you have in life. It takes intense dedication to reach goals. Students should learn to discipline themselves and practice their instruments daily. The right attitude must be present along with sincerity, concentration, and dedication as the basic foundations. Such an attitude makes an artistic performance inevitable and is the difference between a winning organization and a mediocre group. The band can do much for you. Make the most of it in every rehearsal and performance.

The Importance of Discipline

Because of the nature of the organization, band discipline must be strict! Band students and parents must believe in the ideals, principles, and philosophy of the organization. Each member must always be aware of good behavior and think for him- or herself. Any misconduct casts a bad light on the school, community, and the York Cougar band program. Students who disrupt the learning process regularly will receive disciplinary action and risk losing their spot in band.

Assignments

Students will complete weekly practice logs that will require a parent signature. This ensures that your student is practicing at least four times per week for 30 minutes. Students will also perform several playing tests in class on their instrument throughout the year. This allows Ms. Bailes to assess how each student is performing individually. Failure to turn in practice logs or take playing tests may result in your student receiving a "U" or unsatisfactory in band class. Practice logs are due every Friday but can be turned in late through the following Tuesday. All playing tests can be made up for students absent the day of the test. Students will have 5 school days after the playing test date to make up their test. Students who are not happy with a playing test score may replay their test for up to a 99%. This should also be done within 5 school days of the initial playing test.

Attendance

School attendance is CRUCIAL for your student's success in beginning band. We will be learning new music every day and it is very important that your student is in class! Students who are continuously absent and fall behind will become confused and frustrated because they are not advancing as quickly as their peers. Students with attendance problems who are unable to keep up with tests and playing assignments will be removed from band. Attendance is taken seriously for required after school combined rehearsals. Excused absences for REQUIRED after school rehearsals include sickness, family emergency, etc. Students who must miss a rehearsal should obtain a doctor's excuse or have a parent contact Ms. Bailes via phone call, email or Remind. Unexcused absences will result in removal of the concert or performance.

After School Rehearsal Requirements

All York 6th grade beginning band members are required to participate in 2-3 afterschool rehearsals in preparation for their Winter Showcase (January) and 2-3 after school rehearsals for their Spring Concert (April). These rehearsals will take place in the YIS Band Room after school until 4pm. Parents should arrange for their students to be picked up at the front of YIS in the car rider line at the conclusion of after school rehearsals. ****Dates To-Be-Announced****

Concert Performance Requirements

All York 6th grade beginning band members will participate in a Winter Showcase and a Spring Concert. Our Winter Showcase will occur on January 15th at 6:00 pm in the YIS gym. Our Spring Concert will be on Tuesday, March 17th at 6:00 pm in the YCHS Auditorium (dates tentative). Both performances will display all the hard work and progress that our beginning band students have accomplished during their first year of band. More information about these performances will be released closer to the performance dates.

Solo & Ensemble Performance Field Trip

Solo & Ensemble is a state level event hosted by the South Carolina Band Director's Association that provides student solo and small ensemble performance opportunities for a rating. Every year York 6th Grade Band members can perform! This event normally includes performances in the morning and a chaperoned trip to a "fun park" to celebrate the completion of the event. Every student is encouraged to participate in such an educational and fun day of events! This event will occur in late April/early May. More information about the field trip will be released closer to the trip date!

Before/After School Open Band Room Time

In mid/late November, Ms. Bailes will begin opening the band room every morning before school from 7:15 – 7:45 am and on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school until 3:00 pm. Students may come in to practice their instruments and receive help if needed. These times are meant for practicing ONLY. Any student who misbehaves before or after school during open band room time will be asked to pack up and go to class or will have a parent contacted to pick them up early (if staying after school). They will lose the privilege of participating in open band room time. The band room will be open in the mornings for band students ONLY. Band students should not invite other students to the band room who are not part of the program. Participation in open band room time is encouraged but not required.

Parents' Responsibility to the Band

It is the responsibility of every parent and guardian to see that the policies outlined in the handbook are followed and that the forms in the back are filled out, signed, and returned. This states that you understand the policies set within and that any questions are to be directed to the band director by making an appointment. Each parent is responsible for their child's attendance at all band rehearsals and performances. It is the responsibility of each parent to see that the child practices his or her instrument daily.

How Parents Can Help

- Show an interest in the musical study of your child.
- Arrange a regular time for your child to practice.
- Listen to performances of practice material when asked to do so.
- Help the student keep a daily record of practicing. (PRACTICE LOGS!!)
- Help your student keep their instrument safe and in good condition!
- Be extra careful with school owned instruments. Repair costs can be expensive!
- Teach your child to be prepared and on time for each rehearsal and lesson.
- Make attendance to school and all band events a priority!!
- Keep the handbook in a safe place and refer to it often.
- Notify the director if the student is to be absent for rehearsals.
- Double-check to make sure students have their instruments.
- Turn in fund-raising money on time.

Students' Responsibility to the Band

As members of this organization, you have a great deal of responsibility. Not just to yourself, but to the rest of your team. Band students should continuously strive to become better musicians through daily practice and completion of assignments. These expectations coordinate with the privileges, rewards, and duties of the band program. As you are out in the community, you should carry yourself in a decent and respectful manner. You represent the entire York Cougar Band program – even as a beginning band member!

To Yourself

YOU have the primary responsibility of developing your own abilities. It is important that you have a quality instrument that is in good working condition and that you practice regularly. What you put into it is what you will get out of it. Ms. Bailes is always available for guidance and encouragement – just ask! 😊

To York School District 1

YSD1 provides us with the resources for rehearsals, performances, and quality equipment. We are responsible for providing the best performances for our school and community.

To Each Other

We must always do what is best for the entirety of the band. There may be other band members that you do not get along with. Find the maturity to coexist with others. The people you begin band with will be some of the same people that you will be in high school band with. Respect each other. If there are conflicts, find a way to resolve them. Never insult another band member's integrity. The word "band" implies that we are banded together without divisions.

Band Room Rules

1. Be on Time, on Task, and Prepared to learn every day.
2. Keep all electronics put away.
3. Be responsible for your own learning.
4. Respect: the director, the band room, and other band members.
5. Trash goes in the trashcan.

Required Concert Attire

ALL 6th grade band members will be required to participate in “concert black” for all performance opportunities. This provides our ensemble with a uniform and professional appearance like many professional ensembles. Concert black includes the following:

- Black dress shirt
- Black dress pants
- Black dress for ladies (if preferred)
- Black belt
- Black socks
- Black dress shoes/flats (no sandals or open-toed shoes)

Communication

For our band to be the best that it can be, we cannot allow ourselves the luxury of making excuses or letting problems go unresolved. Good communication is vital if we are to maintain our Superior tradition!

Forms of Communication

- Emails - The band sends emails with news and reminders once and up to several times a week. *Email Ms. Bailes at mabailes@york.k12.sc.us to be registered for the email list!
- Remind – District Information to follow.

Classroom Fee

Your \$25 classroom fee includes the following items/materials:

- Cougar Band T-shirt
- Black 1 inch 3 ring binder
- 10 heavy duty sheet protectors
- 3-ringed zipper pouch
- 4 pre-sharpened pencils

****Important Note:** Please check the box on the handbook agreement form (last page) or contact Ms. Bailes if you need assistance to cover your student’s classroom fee. This will NOT prevent your student from being in band.

Needed Equipment and Supplies

ALL students need the following daily:

- ✓ Band Binder
- ✓ Red Book
- ✓ Metronome/Tuner
- ✓ Assigned Instrument in working order
- ✓ Cleaning/Care materials for specific instrument
- ✓ Reeds, mouthpieces, mallets/sticks, etc.
 - Reeds may be purchased from Ms. Bailes as needed (\$3 each)

Rental of School Owned Instruments

Parents with students that are playing Oboe, Bassoon, Bass Clarinet, Tenor Sax, Bari Sax, French Horn, Euphonium, or Tuba will rent a school owned instrument to use for the school year for a District determined fee. Students are required to purchase their own mouthpiece for their rented instrument.

***Please refer to the District Band Instrument Rental agreement for details and fees. ***

BAND HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

York 6th Grade Band

PLEASE SIGN BELOW, REMOVE AND RETURN THIS PAGE TO MS. BAILES on Friday, August 8th, 2025

My student and I have read the York 6th Grade Band Handbook and understand all expectations regarding behavior, investments/expenses, and positive participation.

We also understand that part of my student's band grade depends on the signing and returning of this agreement, and specifically affirm our understanding that the failure to follow and abide by the rules of this handbook may result in the removal of my child from the band program.

As a parent, I understand I can call the Band Director with any questions pertaining to information I do not understand fully in this handbook.

I have read and understand the York 6th Grade Band Handbook Agreement:

Parent Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date