

Poth High School Band

2024-2025

Student/Parent Handbook



Director of Bands- Chase Failing

(830) 484-3322 ext. 5401 - dfailing@pothisd.us

Junior High Band Director- Austin De La O

adelao@pothisd.us

Color Guard Director- Alyson Garza

agarza@pothisd.us

Contents

Welcome Letter	2
Poth High School Ensembles Offered	3
Marching Band	
Wind Ensemble	
Jazz Band	
Rehearsal and Performance Expectations	4
Marching Band	
Wind Ensemble/Jazz Band	
Solo & Ensemble	
Attendance Policy for All Groups	6
Grading Policy	6
Band Boosters	8
Instrument Information/Expectations	9
Required Supplies	
Instrument Care	
Uniform Information/Expectations	10
Parts of Uniform	
Care for Uniform	
Hair/Jewelry/Make up/etc.	
Trip Expectations/Procedures	12
Letter Jackets	13
Leadership Opportunities	14
Elected Positions	
Appointed Positions (Audition Required)	
Band Fees	14
Websites	15
Forms	15
Remind Instructions	20

Welcome Letter

Hello Mighty Pirate Band!

I would like to extend a warm welcome to all new and returning members to the program. A new and exciting year is upon us, and I am looking forward to the many great experiences and opportunities in the near future.

As we begin this exciting new school year, I want to assure you that I will continue to hold very high standards for this program, each student, and myself. My philosophy is that a teacher should aim to develop character through education. I will accept nothing less than the best efforts from my students, and therefore hope for my students to reciprocate the expectation. The Poth Band has a tradition of excellence, and I believe that our collective accountability will bring continued growth and achievement.

The Mighty Pirate Band has made significant progress the last few years. As a team, we have continued achieving sweepstakes in marching and concert and sight-reading evaluations, as well as making leaps and bounds in the competitive marching sphere. As we continue to progress, I want every member to remind themselves that to *be* a champion, you have to *rehearse like a champion*. We must all be ready to leave personal matters at the door in order for the collective program to improve. You are a vital part of this band, and as such will be held to a high moral standard at all times.

As your director, I promise to uphold these standards and expectations of myself, and to demonstrate the effort and sacrifice that I would expect from each member. I will never ask someone to do something that I would not do. I am sincerely looking forward to this upcoming year.

"There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure"- Colin Powell

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Chase Failing". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "D" and a cursive "Failing".

D. Chase Failing

Director of Bands

Poth High School Ensembles Offered

Students in the Mighty Pirate Band are part of a tradition of excellence that is a result of the efforts of our predecessors. It is up to you and your fellow band members to uphold that tradition which was established by those who came before you.

With this in mind, there are certain expectations that must be adhered to in order for us to continue on a successful path. This section contains a list of rules and guidelines that we will follow in our pursuit of excellence this year. Please note that ALL Poth High School Handbook guidelines apply. This section underscores and makes additions to established guidelines that are specifically for band. Please reference the Poth Student Handbook for clarification.

All students must be enrolled in their band class for a full year (2 semesters). We do not offer opportunities to be enrolled for only one semester. If you are enrolled in the class, it is expected that you will fulfill your yearlong obligation.

The Mighty Pirate Marching Band

Director: Chase Failing. Asst. Director: Austin De La O. Color Guard: Alyson Garza

The Poth High School Marching Band is made up of students in grades 8-12 and is the most publicly visible performing group in the Poth Band program. The marching band rehearses 6:00p-8:30p on Monday, and 4:00p-6:30p on Tuesday every week. The marching band performs at community and sporting events, as well as competing at various marching festivals in preparation for UIL Marching Contest. The Mighty Pirate Marching Band was a finalist at the 2020 UIL Area E Marching Competition, and since has participated in the Area marching contest every year.

Wind Ensemble

The Poth High School Wind Ensemble is the premier performing concert ensemble of the Poth ISD band program. After school rehearsal times and personnel may vary depending on the needs of the ensemble in preparation for the concert. The Wind Ensemble performs respected literature, presented with thoughtful programming. In 2023 the Wind Ensemble was invited to perform in the Tobin Center in San Antonio. In 2024, the Wind Ensemble gave a local premiere of Haley Woodrow's "Life Unto the Age" as a part of the "For the Love of Pets" Consortium. The Wind Ensemble has also advanced to Area in the ATSSB Outstanding Performance Series in both 2023 and 2024.

Jazz Band

The Poth High School Jazz Band offers students the opportunity to become familiar with what many argue is the quintessential American music. A variety of musical styles and playing techniques will be explored, including swing and solo improvisation.

Rehearsal and Performance Expectations

Marching Band

Rehearsals: Students are expected to report to marching band rehearsal 10 minutes before the posted start time, in order to be fully prepared to begin playing at the start time. Being fully prepared means having all necessary equipment, which includes, but is not limited to:

- Instrument or guard equipment
- Valve oil, reeds, etc.
- Music
- Drill
- Water
- Proper shoes
- Proper clothes for weather/filming

Professionalism: Members will be expected to uphold a professional attitude at rehearsals. Only directors and certain student leaders will be permitted to give instruction on the field, and therefore should be the only ones talking. All members are expected to reset with minimal talking and remain quiet at all times when called to attention or receiving (relaxed position of attention, instrument is at rest position, performer is looking at director that is giving instruction).

Music Mastery: All students will be expected to play off music *from memory with a grade of 90 or better* during marching band season. Music will be covered during summer band camp, during band class, and in after school rehearsals. A rubric will be provided prior to playing tests in order for students to be fully aware of the expectations to pass.

Football Games:

- a) Instrument/Equipment: Members are expected to report to the designated area at or before call time, with all necessary equipment as mentioned in the Rehearsals section.
- b) Uniform: Your uniform should remain intact at all times, jackets and pants zipped. Any alteration to how the uniform is worn will be decided by the director. We will all do it the same way, i.e., if one person is missing their band shirt, all members will wear the uniform jacket at all times to maintain uniformity.
- c) Stand Behavior: The entire time you are proudly wearing the band uniform, you are performing. Professionalism is expected at all times. Cheer when appropriate, in a manner which would not embarrass the band or your own family.
- d) Stand Logistics: Be prepared to play at any time: as you know, unexpected events during the game may require us to play in a moment's notice. Keep your horn in your hands and remain in your assigned seat in your section.

Wind Ensemble/Jazz Band

Students must report to class and be ready to play 5 minutes after the tardy bell. In the case of after school rehearsals, students are expected to report to rehearsal 10 minutes before the posted rehearsal time, in order for the group to play the first note at the posted start time. At the start time of class or after school rehearsal, students should have all necessary materials, including but not limited to:

Instrument, mouthpiece, breathing tube
Music
Pencil
Mutes, valve oil, at least 2 working reeds

Students are expected to exhibit professionalism during class and rehearsal. There should be no talking while the conductor is on the podium. Individuals should have their music prepared ahead of rehearsal and are expected to use rehearsal time to learn how their part fits with the rest of the instrument's parts. When an absence or tardy is unavoidable, it is considered professional to inform the directors ahead of time.

Solo & Ensemble

It is the firm belief of the director that learning and performing solos or works for small ensembles is one of the greatest ways to improve personal musicianship, teamwork, independence, and playing ability. Students are *required* to participate in Solo & Ensemble by either playing a solo or participating in a small ensemble. Regular coaching sessions with a director will be made available to those participating. If unable to attend the official UIL event,

students will play their solo or ensemble for Mr. Failing for a rating and a grade like UIL. Ratings will be graded as follows:

I – 100; II – 90; III – 75; IV – 50; V – 0

ATSSB Region/Area/All-State Bands

Students are highly encouraged to participate in the audition process for the ATSSB All-State band, which includes auditions and performances for the Region band and advancement to the Area level before reaching the All-State band. Participation in this process will enhance individual students' technical and musical ability on their instrument. Performances with these bands are unforgettable experiences, and provide the individual with chances to perform challenging music, and learn from a master educator during the rehearsal process.

Attendance Policy for All Groups

Rehearsals: All members must be present for every rehearsal, for the entirety of the rehearsal; leaving early will not be permitted. Implementation of this policy will begin on the first day of summer band camp. All absences will require a student to inform the directors *before the absence*. In case of emergency or unavoidable conflicts, it is the student's responsibility to inform the directors as soon as possible. Failure to effectively communicate absences may result in an unexcused absence which is counted as a "0" (see Grading Policy).

Excused absences: The following conditions will constitute an excused absence:

Illness or Medical Emergency (Doctor's Note Required)

Death in the Family (Phone call/email from parent or guardian)

Competition or athletic event (Provided that a schedule has been submitted)

Tutoring (Will require signed note or email from teacher)

Rehearsal/Practice with other groups (Provided that a schedule has been submitted and you, the band director, and the coaches all understand your commitments.)

Excessive absences from rehearsals (more than 2) may result in the student's inability to participate in a performance, consequently affecting the student's grade further.

Performances: Missing a performance is unacceptable. In the case of an emergency, a parent or guardian will need to contact the director. Performances are counted as test grades (see grading policy), for which an absence will result in a test grade of "0". A decision to consider a performance absence excused will be made on a case-by-case basis after the directors have spoken with a parent/guardian.

Grading Policy

Performances/Performance Assessments (40%)

Any type of performance will fall under this category. Football Games, Pre-UIL's, UIL, Solo & Ensemble, Pep Rallies, Parades, Concerts, etc. Since each performance is a unique experience, and may be a one-time performance, it is imperative that all students attend. Missing a performance, or concert is NOT an option. These events cannot be made up grade-wise. Refer to the "Attendance Policy" for handling a missed performance.

Tests/Quizzes (30%)

Tests/Quizzes include play offs, In-class grades for down the lines, Auditions, Marching Skills Evaluations, and any other evaluation of student performance and proficiency. There will be few exceptions that will be determined on a case-by-case basis. See the section on Attendance Policies for further details.

Individual Assessment/Rehearsal Attendance (20%)

Attendance will be taken for everything, before or after school. If it has been scheduled, it will be graded. Unexcused absences are unacceptable. If a student misses three unexcused rehearsals, unexcused performances, or is frequently tardy, that student may be removed from the UIL show and/or benched for the following performance. All members must pass all their classes to be eligible to participate with the marching band/colorguard. Students who have two unexcused absences within a week will not be taken to the game nor be allowed to perform. Two (2) tardies (excused or unexcused) after school constitutes an unexcused absence when it comes to band functions.

Daily Preparation/Materials (10%)

Worth 100 points each week, this can include participation, submitting paperwork, drill book checks, instruments polished and ready for performances, water jugs filled (with them for football games, rehearsals, performances), having your instrument, mouthpiece, reeds, instrument maintenance supplies, all music, having a pencil in order to mark music, and being in your seat contributing to the rehearsal.

Semester Exams

Semester exams are generally performance-based evaluations and can be used to determine chair/band/ensemble placement.

Any situation in which a student is requesting make up work, an opportunity to make up missed rehearsals, or who wishes to re-do a playing assignment will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Band Boosters

The purposes of the Band Boosters are to:

1. Promote the welfare and best interest of the entire student body of the Poth Pirate Bands, including both Junior High bands and the High School Band, in both school and community.
2. Lend support, both moral and financial, to the Poth Pirate Band Program by conducting fundraisers, serving as voluntary chaperones and to support any and all activities.
3. Work and coordinate with the Poth ISD band directors and its employees to the fullest extent for the best interest of the band program.
4. create and maintain an enthusiastic interest of both students and parents in various phases and activities of the Poth Pirate Band.
5. To help and provide support on all band trips and with band programs when called upon by the band director and/or school officials.
6. To operate and work the concession stands at all varsity home football games.
7. To leave complete jurisdiction of the school band and all band/music related activities in the hands of the band director and/or school officials.

Instrument Information/Expectations

Required Supplies: The following is a list of supplies each student is responsible for having in order to keep their instrument properly maintained. Recommended brands/models are notated by an asterisk (*).

<u>Flute</u> Tuning Rod Cleaning Swab Polishing cloth Pencil	<u>Trumpet</u> Valve oil Slide grease Mouthpiece Bach 3C,5B,1.5C* Polishing cloth Pencil	<u>Euphonium</u> Valve oil Slide grease Polishing cloth Towel (for lap) Mouthpiece Schilke 51D* Pencil
<u>Clarinet</u> Mouthpiece Vandoren BD 5* Ligature Rovner Dark Ligature* Reeds Legere 3.25* (marching) Vandoren* Cork grease Cleaning Swab Pencil	<u>French Horn</u> Rotor oil Valve oil for Mellophone Slide grease Mouthpiece Schilke 29, 31B* Polishing cloth Pencil	<u>Tuba</u> Rotor oil Valve oil for Sousaphone Cork grease Mouthpiece Perrantucci PT-90* Pencil
<u>Saxophone</u> Mouthpiece Vandoren AL5/TL5* Selmer C* Ligature Rovner Dark Ligature* Reeds Legere 3.25* (marching) Vandoren* Cork grease Cleaning Swab Neck strap Pencil	<u>Trombone</u> Spray bottle Slide-O-Mix Rapid Comfort Tuning Slide grease Polishing Cloth Rotor oil Mouthpiece Bach 5G/3G* Schilke 51D* Pencil	<u>Percussion</u> 3 Ring Binder Black Towel (1') Pair of drumsticks Pair of mallets Practice Pad Pencil

Instrument Care:

Flute: Keep instrument free of moisture. Swab out instrument after playing starting with the foot joint, followed by the body, then head joint. Store swab outside of case.

Clarinet: Keep instrument free of moisture. After playing swab out each section of the instrument, except the mouthpiece, as you disassemble the clarinet. Blow air through the tone holes to clear any moisture. If there is more moisture in a tone hole, use a piece of cigarette paper to soak up the moisture. To clean the mouthpiece, remove the ligature and reed and store the appropriately. Use the swab to clean the inside of the mouthpiece. Do not use the weighted end of the swab on the mouthpiece.

Saxophone: Keep instrument free of moisture. After playing swab out the neck and body of the instrument with the appropriate swab, a pull through swab for the body, and a neck swab for the neck. Avoid swabs with bristles. Remove ligature and reed from mouthpiece and store appropriately. Use a soft cloth to clean out the mouthpiece. Apply light key oil to rods and posts as needed in order to avoid sticky/noisy keys.

Trumpet/Mellophone/Euphonium/Tuba: Apply valve oil as needed by removing the valve and applying a couple of drops. Do not apply valve oil through the hole in the bottom of the valve casing. Always use the same type of valve oil. Combining synthetic oil with petroleum-based oil will result in the valves sticking. Keep all slides lubricated so they are easy to move. Apply slide grease to each end of the slide, insert one end at a time and move it around inside to lubricate both sides of the tuning slide.

French Horn/Rotary Valves on Trombone/Tuba: Apply rotor oil as needed by removing end cap of rotor valve and applying a single drop to the center of the valve. Do not oil valve by dropping oil through the slides, this will damage the valves. If a valve needs to be restrung, come to a director for help.

Percussion: Store sticks and mallets in stick bags. Yarn and felt mallet heads should be covered with plastic wrap while being stored. Cover all keyboards when not in use. Return timpani pedals to the heels down position and cover the timpani. All auxiliary percussion should be place in the appropriate case and stored carefully. Do not place anything on top of any percussion instrument at any time.

Instrument specific maintenance strategies are expected to be followed by each student. Any questions or concerns should be brought to the band directors, *DO NOT EVER DO ANYTHING TO THE INSTRUMENT THAT YOU ARE NOT COMFORTABLE WITH*. **Excessive damage caused by negligence will result in the student covering the cost of the repair.**

UNIFORMS

The uniform, once issued, is the responsibility of the student. Uniforms will be stored in the band hall for you when not in use, but it is your sole responsibility to ensure that it is placed correctly on the hangars and stored properly following directions of the Uniform Officers.

Marching uniform parts provided by the school include:

1. Coat
2. Bibbers
3. Shako (with hat box)
4. Shako Wrap
5. Plume
6. Spear
7. Side Drop (attaches to coat)
8. Stirrups (attaches to pants)
9. Rain Coat

Marching uniform parts you are to provide:

1. Super Drill Master Marching Shoes – Purchased through the Band.
2. Gloves – Purchased through the band.
3. Official Poth Band Show Shirt - Purchased through the band
4. Official MPB Shirt – Purchased through the band
5. Official MPB Shorts – Purchased through the band
6. Black socks (NO ankle socks) – Purchase on your own
7. Blue jeans – Provide your own

Proper wearing of the marching uniform

Proper wearing of our uniform is a subject that will be constantly emphasized. Pride in performance starts with the wearing of the uniform. If the uniform is not placed on the hangar correctly, the student will be responsible for the cost to have the uniform pressed.

1. Pants are always worn with suspenders up and coats are fully zipped if worn.
2. Only lightweight shorts may be worn under bibs. Shorts may not extend past the knee, and they must be appropriate for wear in public when the bibs are removed. Shorts must be school dress code approved. **ABSOLUTELY NO JEANS OR CARGO SHORTS!**
3. The MPB or current show shirt is to be worn under the uniform so that we may take off our jackets during warmer games and still remain uniform.
4. Gloves will only need to be worn during uniform inspections, entry into stadiums, and our performance. **Please keep your gloves clean by washing them every week.**
5. Hats must be worn at the proper angle with the chin strap under the chin. Girls' hair must be up off the shoulders of the uniform, pinned and inside the hat. Hair Fasteners should preferably be a dark color and no large bows should be worn while in uniform.
6. Shoes are to be cleaned and polished.
7. Black socks (NO ankle length socks) must be worn with the uniform.

8. No jewelry, with the exception of earring studs (non-jeweled), may be worn with the uniform.
9. Girls may wear “light” make-up as judged by the band director.
10. Nail polish should be muted colors only, please.

Consequences for Being Out of Uniform

Students will be checked for proper uniform wear before each performance. If the student doesn't comply with the guidelines listed above, they will receive a deduction in their performance grade for the event. If the problem continues, the student will be subject to further disciplinary action, including their removal from the performance group. The severity of the infraction will be taken into consideration.

Uniform Cleaning

All uniforms will be cleaned by the band. Uniforms cannot be washed in a home washing machine. They can only be cleaned by professional cleaners that have the directions from the manufacturer.

Concert Uniform

Our concert uniform is referred to as “pit black.” Men should wear black shoes, long black socks, black slacks, and a black button-down shirt. A coat and/or vest is optional, but must also be entirely black. Women should wear black shoes, a black dress that covers the shoulders and is longer than knee length, or black slacks and a black blouse. Minimal jewelry is acceptable so long as it is not a visual distraction (i.e. stud earrings, short necklace, etc.). Students are responsible for acquiring their own garments that fit these parameters.

Travel Expectations/Procedures

Transportation will be provided by Poth Independent School District. We will be traveling on school buses for the sole purpose of transport to and from an event. The following rules will be followed any time we are on a bus and transporting equipment.

1. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that his/her instrument is loaded on the bus or truck. Do not depend on anyone else to do your packing for you.
2. Bus trips will be chaperoned, and instruction given by chaperones and drivers must be obeyed at once, without question.
3. Enter and exit from the front door only. The bus emergency door should not be used for loading or unloading a bus. The bus driver is the only person who can operate this door in a “non-emergency” situation.
4. While the bus is in motion, remain in your seat with all body parts inside the bus.
5. Do not throw or shoot objects, yell, or make loud noise, use profanity, or tell/sing off-colored jokes or songs.

6. After reaching the destination, remain on the bus for instructions from the director.
7. All regulations for games, rehearsals, public appearances, and school policy are in effect for all trips.
8. Electronic devices may be used on the buses, but the district is not responsible for lost or stolen devices.

The following procedure will be in place for travel for the Pirate Band. The high school principal must agree to any changes.

- a) All students must ride on school transportation to each event.
- b) To check a student out at the conclusion of the event, the parent will need to sign out the student(s) with the director.
- c) If a student is not going with their parent, written notice must be given before leaving for an event. The responsible party must sign the student out with the director before leaving the event.

Excerpt from the district Student Handbook:

“A bus driver may refer a student to the principal’s office to maintain effective discipline on the bus. The principal must employ additional discipline management techniques, as appropriate, which can include restricting or revoking a student’s bus riding privileges.

Since the district’s primary responsibility in transporting students in district vehicles is to do so as safely as possible, the operator of the vehicle must focus on driving and not have his or her attention distracted by student misbehavior. Therefore, when appropriate disciplinary management techniques fail to improve student behavior or when specific misconduct warrants immediate removal, the principal may restrict or revoke a student’s transportation privileges, in accordance with law.”

Letter Jackets

Band members may earn a letter jacket by earning 8 points. Points will begin being tracked on June 1 of the year a student enters the high school band. Point totals will be posted at the end of each semester. Each of these achievements earns a band member 1 point.

- Performance at UIL Region Marching Band.
- Performance at UIL Concert and Sight-Reading Evaluation.
- Performance in the ATSSB Region Band.
- Advancement to the ATSSB Area Band.
- Earn a rating of a 1 at Solo & Ensemble with either a solo or small ensemble performance.

Other conditions that may earn a student their letter jacket include:

- The band advances to the state marching contest. A student must have performed at Area and at State to qualify.
- A student makes the ATSSB All-State Band.
- A student receives a rating of 1 at the Texas State Solo & Ensemble Contests with either a solo or small ensemble performance.

Leadership Opportunities

The Mighty Pirate Band Officers represents the best interests, honor, and respect of the Poth High School Band Program. To be considered for an Officer position, a student must have been in the marching band for at least 1 year, maintained eligibility for the entire year and interview with the band directors before being appointed. The Band Directors reserve the right to revoke any leadership positions.

Elected Positions

President
Vice President
Librarian
Historian
Quartermasters
Uniform Officers

Appointed Positions

Drum Major
Captains – Woodwind, Brass, Percussion, Color Guard

Band Fees

Each member of the band is required to pay a \$50 band fee annually. This fee covers the instrument rental, instrument supplies, and cleaning of the school issued uniform. Repairs are also covered by this fee as long as damage is not caused by neglect. Students are required to reimburse the school district for repairs that are not “normal wear and tear.” This includes dents due to mishandling. Also, students will have to reimburse district for any loss of instrument while it is checked out to them.

The band fee of \$50.00 does not cover all expenses of band members.

WEBSITES

Please refer to the district website and Academic Calendar for important dates and events.
<http://www.pothisd.us> > District Calendar (link at bottom right)

Stay up to date with band-specific events on the band calendar found on our website.
<http://www.pothisd.us> > Departments > Band

Sign up on Remind for important updates/messages from the directors. Signing up for Remind is **required**. A link is available on the band website

Parents are encouraged to check the status of their child's band fees and other information on My Music Office. <https://www.mymusicoffice.com/>



Poth High School Band

STUDENT CONTRACT AND HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

Poth ISD | 510 TITCOMB, POTH, TX 78147 | PHONE: (830)-484-3330

This page must be signed and returned to acknowledge your receipt of this handbook and your agreement to abide by the rules set forth in the handbook.

By signing this form, you agree to be a responsible member of the Poth High School Band and contribute in a positive manner with the best interests of the Band Program in mind.

I have received a copy of the Poth High School Band Handbook:

☐ as a hard copy. ☐ as a digital file (.pdf).

I understand that, as a member of this organization, I have committed myself to participate and fulfill all necessary obligations and that I am bound by all rules, regulations, and procedures as defined.

I understand that if I violate any of these rules, I will be subject to the consequences defined.

I have read and agree to abide by the rules of the Poth High School Band Handbook and any future revisions.

I also understand that it is the intent of the Band Directors to make the best decisions for the Band Program and all decisions made by the Band Directors are final.

Student name	Student Signature	Date
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Parent/Legal Guardian Name Print	Parent/Legal Guardian Signature	Date
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By accepting membership in the Poth High School Band Program, you are agreeing to perform to the best of your abilities and work together with the band staff in making this band the finest musical and performance organization that our combined efforts can produce. In order for this to occur, students will need to be responsible, attentive, and respectful, have a positive attitude, and follow the Poth ISD Student Code of Conduct. Rules and regulations specific to the Band Program are detailed in this handbook and serve as extensions of PISD policy.