Ropes

Soarin' Eagle

Band

Handbook

2025 - 2026

Updated August 1, 2025

ROPES HIGH SCHOOL BAND POLICIES

The Ropes High School Band includes qualifying students in grades 8-12. Unless specific arrangements have been made, all students who are members of the band must participate in all marching band and concert band activities. Students may also be assigned to participate in solo/ensemble contest, all-region auditions, the all-state audition process, national anthem performances, or other activities.

USE OF BAND HALL FACILITIES

ONLY band students are allowed in the band hall. Students must ask their friends who are not in band to wait for them either in the school hallway or outside. All band members will treat the band hall facilities with respect and care. Supplies should be kept in band lockers/shelves, and areas should be neat and tidy. No food or drink (other than clear water) are allowed in the band room. Band students are not allowed to touch equipment that is not specifically assigned/checked out to them, and are liable for any damages.

LETTER JACKETS

Letter jackets can be earned by students in grades 9-12 only, and will be awarded at the discretion of the band directors. Band members who earn a letter jacket should not have unexcused absences from marching band rehearsals and have maintained exemplary behavior. With the approval of the directors, students may earn a letter jacket any one of the following ways:

- At least three consecutive years in the High School Band (fall and spring semesters)
- Perform with the group at an advancing-level competition

SENIOR BAND FIDELITY SCHOLARSHIP

Band members who are in band for all of their high school years (8th grade included) may be eligible to apply for the Senior Band Fidelity Scholarship.. All auditions, solo/ensemble participation, musical achievement, and above all LEADERSHIP, will be taken into consideration to determine the amount awarded. All awards must be approved by administration. Visit with Band Directors for more information.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Student leaders are appointed by the band directors based on student interest as well as a holistic overview of the student's musical and leadership skills. The following positions will be held during the year:

Drum Majors (1 junior and 1 senior)
Section Leaders
Mentor Groups
Quartermaster Crew
Water Crew

It is expected that all student leaders will display exemplary conduct in all band activities. Failure to perform the expected dues of your position may result in reassignment of your leadership role.

DISCIPLINE ISSUES - 3 STRIKES

The Ropes Band uses a 3 strike discipline policy, as in "3 strikes, you're out." A strike is when one of the following occurs **at any time** during a student's years in middle school or high school band:

- Any assignment to ISS - 1 strike
- Unexcused absence from a contest or performance (concerts, football games, etc.) - 1 strike
- Failing a class resulting in ineligibility for a contest - 1 strike
- Violation of rules of conduct while travelling with the band - 1 to 3 strikes
- Consistent lack of compliance, preparedness, promptness, or attendance - 3 strikes
- Expulsion from school for any period of time, or referral to DAEP - 3 strikes

Exemplary behavior is expected of Ropes band members at all times. If a student reaches 3 strikes, he may be suspended from the band program for one year. Renewed membership in the Ropes Band may be re-evaluated after the suspension period.

Any violation after renewal will result in permanent removal from the program.

USE of SCHOOL INSTRUMENTS

Ropes ISD provides school musical instruments for all sections. The school also provides reeds, mouthpieces, sticks, oils, cleaning supplies, etc. Please realize what a rare privilege it is to be a part of a program that does not require the student to purchase these items. All of these instruments are sent to the repair shop and reconditioned during the summer.

Band equipment is quite costly and must be treated with care. **Any damage or adjustment during the year is the responsibility of the band student who has signed for the instrument.**

NO HOME REPAIRS; school equipment must be cared for by school-designated professionals. Please bring any damaged equipment to the director(s) for assessment.

We expect the instrument to be returned in the same condition as when issued. Dings, dents, and other damage will be repaired at the student's expense.

If the instrument is lost or stolen while checked out to a student, it is the **parent's/guardian's responsibility** to replace the instrument.

All students will also be issued any necessary music or method book. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that these items are returned in good condition.

If the directors ascertain that a student is not properly taking care of the school's property, the equipment in question may be repossessed. The student will then be responsible to provide his own equipment. A meeting with the parents may also be called. The student's grades may suffer while he is unprepared for class.

SUPPLIES and REHEARSAL ATTIRE

It is imperative that band students be **prepared** for every rehearsal. All students are expected to have the following supplies at every rehearsal:

- Instrument (in good working condition)
- Mouthpiece, reeds, neck strap, ligature, sticks (as applicable)
- Pencil
- Sheet music, drill/coordinate sheets, flip folder, lyre (marching band only)
- Water bottle (marching band only)
- Closed-toed athletic shoes (marching shoes can be worn if needed)

Lighter clothing is recommended for all outdoor marching rehearsals (must comply with dress code)

Rehearsal attire: Closed-toed athletic shoes (not boots or dress shoes) are required for all marching rehearsals. NO SANDALS OR FLIP-FLOPS! Shorts/light clothing is recommended.

As with any classroom, **cell phones and other electronic devices are not to be used during class** unless permission is obtained in advance.

BAND UNIFORMS

Each student will be checked out a band uniform including garment bag, pants, jacket, shoes, and hat/beret. Students will also be issued a band t-shirt, black socks, and black gloves (as needed). Each student will receive one of each item; any item that is lost will be replaced at cost to the student.

Students should wear the band t-shirt and a pair of shorts under the uniform.

Here are some Do's and Don'ts about your uniform:
DO: remember your band t-shirt, shorts, full length plain black socks, and marching shoes (Athletic shoes or dress shoes are not acceptable) each time you will be wearing your uniform.
DO NOT: remove any material from the uniform if alterations are necessary.
DO: Make sure to keep your uniform clean. Stay clear of messy foods and drinks, and be careful where you sit.
DO NOT: Attempt to wash and/or dry your uniform at home.
DO: Transport your uniform in the garment bag, your hat in the hatbox, and your plume in the plume box.
DO NOT: Leave a sweaty or otherwise damp uniform zipped in the bag. The trapped moisture could cause it to mildew. This odor will never leave the garment.
DO: Always HANG UP your uniform correctly on the hanger. Pants hang folded on the crease, not the seat.

Garment bags are subject to random checks. Correctly hanging uniforms get a 100! Grades drop from there.

All students will report, in full-uniform, for inspection by their section leader and/or uniform manager prior to each home game and prior to departure for all away games. Additional jackets and layers may be worn in the stands at the discretion of the director, but must be either solid black or a school hoodie. Pep Rally attire is jeans and the band t-shirt. The only exception to this is if you are dressed according to the pep rally theme or a part of another participating organization (cheer, football, etc.).

OFF-CAMPUS TRAVEL POLICIES

Students must sign and return the Travel Contract before being considered for travel privileges. Any violation of the contract may revoke permission to travel with the band.

Students who represent Ropes ISD on off-campus trips are expected to maintain very high standards of conduct at all times. **This includes behavior while in-transit (via any vehicle).** They are expected to attend and be on time for all sessions and activities scheduled for them. In the event of overnight trips, they are expected to be in their rooms at the times designated by their sponsors.
Each student will be responsible to one or more faculty or parent sponsor(s) who will supervise the activities of the student for the trip. **Negligence in attending sessions, reporting on time, meeting curfew requirements, or failing to maintain our standards of conduct may result in disciplinary action and/or make it necessary for the sponsor to send the student home at the parent or guardian's expense.**

Student conduct on school-related trips:
Self-discipline is the key element for a pleasant experience for both the sponsor and the student when the student is on a school-related trip. Students who are involved in a serious disciplinary offense on a school-related trip, such as the use, possession of, or being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol, any type of smoking/vaping, stealing, fighting, display of affection with anyone (whether public or private), being in the hotel room or bus seat of a member of the opposite sex, or some other serious offense will face disciplinary action which may include one or more of the following:

1. The student will be sent home from the trip at the parents' expense.
2. The student will be held liable for damages to property.
3. The student may be removed from the Ropes Band.
4. The student may be referred to campus administration for further disciplinary action.

Students' attire during school activities outside the school day should be in good taste and conform to the student code of conduct. If there is any question of taste, the director's decision is final.

**Students are not guaranteed to travel off-campus with the band. The band directors will not risk the quality or safety of an outing by travelling with a student who does not comply with rules. Violation of any portion of the "3 Strikes" or travel policies may revoke that student's travel privileges.*

Ineligibility or unexcused absence from any UIL contest means the student is not eligible to attend the end of year trip.

FOOTBALL GAME POLICIES

School policy dictates that band students will ride to and return from all off-campus performances as a group, using transportation provided by the district. **Good behavior (including respecting bus sponsors) is required for continued travel rights on the bus.** If a student rides home with their parent after a game, the student and parent will see a director in advance to provide a written release. This protects both the parents and the school. The student is to either secure a friend to unload his uniform and equipment, or take everything with them. (i.e. all parts of the uniform, garment bag, hanger, instrument, music, clothes, food, etc…) **NO ONE IS TO LEAVE THE STANDS WITHOUT CLEANING UP YOUR AREA.**

Football games are fun and we are there to support the team. However, we must maintain a class act at all times. Band members should stand up to tastefully YELL and SCREAM in support of the team throughout the game, but should always remain in his/her "spot." It is important to remain alert concerning all of the expensive equipment around you as well as the need to be ready to play at a moment's notice. **Only band students are allowed in the band section.**

Do not use your cell phone or other electronic devices during the game. Cell phones will be taken up if they are out or being used and will be returned to the student after the game.

Band students will sit in the band section for the duration of the game and may not leave that area without permission. Students will receive a break during the 3rd quarter at each football game. During the 3rd quarter, students may visit concession stands and use electronic devices. Students must be back in their places in the stands by the end of the 3rd quarter (0:00 on the clock). Students who are not on time for the 4th quarter will lose their 3rd quarter break at the next game. Students should finish all food and drink prior to 4th quarter and wind players should rinse their mouth with water prior to playing. **Students are not allowed to have food or drinks in the stands EXCEPT for water.**

In the event of late starts to the 3rd quarter break (homecoming, etc), the directors may specify an alternate return me. All other policies will still apply.

All students will help **clean and unload** the bus and/or trailer at the end of any off-campus event as determined by the directors and the loading crew manager. Failure to help unload may result in a lower course grade and/or reassignment.

GRADING POLICY

In order to develop musicianship and the best band experience possible, rehearsals must be orderly, timely, and well attended. Therefore, grades will be based on the following factors:

- Attendance
- Preparedness
- Timeliness
- Rehearsal etiquette
- Proficiency
- Effort

Students will receive a weekly participation grade. Grades will also be assessed for playing tests and written work. In addition, a grade will also be given for each before school, after school, evening, and summer rehearsal. Performances and contests will count as test grades. See the Attendance Policy for more information.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Band is a team activity; the success of the ensemble depends on each individual performance. If a student signs up for Band, he is agreeing to be reliable in attendance and to prioritize the band schedule for the sake of the group.

Simply put, if the student is able to attend an event, he/she is expected to be there.

Attendance at rehearsals during the regular school day will be subject to the school attendance policy as outlined in the student handbook. Attendance is required for all *before school*, *after school, evening*, and *summer rehearsals*. Contests and performances are also required events.

Excused absences

Every effort is made to allow students to be involved in a wide variety of school sponsored activities. When there is an unavoidable conflict, UIL designation will take precedence. Absences related to illness must be reported by a parent, in writing, before the event, and as soon as possible to a Band Director.

Unexcused absences

Vacations, appointments, non UIL-related activities, work schedules, illnesses not reported beforehand by a parent, etc. are unexcused absences and are subject to corresponding grading policies. Extenuating circumstances are left to Band Director discretion.

Excessive absences or tardies may also result in the following:

- Loss of halftime performance privilege
- Loss of 3rd quarter break
- Loss of band travel privileges
- Removal from the band program (*extreme situations only*)

Ineligibility or unexcused absence from any UIL contest means the student is not eligible to attend the end of year trip.