

Riesel Junior High Band Handbook

We are so excited to get started playing again!

Please read to the end and return with the back portion of this letter signed by student and parent by August 15.

Our main mode of communication is ParentSquare, and we will use email occasionally. Please make sure you have access to ParentSquare and make sure there is a working email address in Skyward. We encourage students to have StudentSquare if possible.

Now that's out of the way, we can talk about getting started! You need to bring the following the first or second day:

1. Last year's band binder if you were with us (if you can't find it don't worry too much... if you turned it in, we have it). If you're new we'll get you a binder.
2. Your instrument! If you use a school instrument, please return your checkout form we will give you on the first day.

Academic Eligibility is a must. Complete and turn in all assignments according to the policies laid out by each teacher you have. Ask when you need help. Use tutorials as needed. Remember that participation in all things like athletics, band, art, drama, cheer, and ag is a privilege. Keep up with your work so that you will be UIL No Pass/No Play eligible when it's time to go to contest or play in a game.

Backpacks are welcome in the band hall, as long as they are around the sides of the room, never at your chair in the setup or in the instrument room. Backpacks will be placed on or under the table before class, and will be left there until dismissal. Chromebooks should stay in their cases with a student's backpack, and phones should remain on silent in backpacks.

Band Boosters are a vital part of our organization. They help us accomplish our performance trip goals, provide scholarships, and a host of other things. You can join the booster club by filling out the membership form on the band booster part of the school website, and you can get more information by joining the **booster remind by texting the message @c8g7e4b to the number 81010**.

Band Shirts are still available and will be needed to perform in pep rallies, will be our uniform for contest. They are \$15, checks made out to Riesel ISD Bands or cash. They are the same as last year so if last year's shirt fits, you're good! 7th graders will all need to order a shirt.

Behavior Expectations are simple. Respect the directors, each other, all instruments and equipment, and our facilities. Participate in rehearsal by playing and speaking at appropriate times, treat others with respect and kindness as you enter the band hall, get your instrument out and put it away, and exit the band hall. Touch only your own equipment unless instructed to

help carry for another student or to help a director. Remember where you are and what's appropriate. Running is 100% appropriate in a gym or outside, but in the band hall, that's almost never the case.

Outside the band hall, as you proceed through your day, be sure to treat others with respect and kindness. This includes but is not limited to other teachers, staff, cafeteria and custodial staff, drivers, substitute teachers, and other students. Keep in mind that your behavior in all areas of your school day as well as your effort and performance in other classes could keep you from doing the fun stuff in band. Be sure you are familiar with and in compliance with the guidelines and policies in the RISD Student Handbook and you will be fine.

Calendar of Events can be accessed by going to the RISD web page, clicking on the departments tab, then clicking on RJH Bands. This will stay updated as the year progresses. There is a preliminary schedule attached. We will try to hold to this, but changes are likely.

Cell Phones along with earbuds or other headphones, smartwatches, etc. do not have a place at school. We will follow RISD policy should we see or hear your phone.

Facilities including but not limited to the band hall, instrument room, and other spaces will be kept clean, neat, and free of trash and other unnecessary items. Music will be kept in the folder slots, instruments in closed cases in cubbies in the instrument room, and the band hall bathrooms will be kept neat and clean. Should you see something that needs attention, please notify the director who is not currently teaching so that we can address the issue. Water bottles are allowed in class, but no food, candy, other drinks, or gum.

Grades for this class will come from active daily participation in class, as well as playing quizzes, passing off music, and performances. Basically if you show up, participate in class, and treat your directors, classmates, and our facilities and equipment with respect, you will do very well!

Passing off Music is the best way to make sure we know our parts to the best of our abilities. Passoffs can be done for a director, and at times this year will be done by MakeMusic on your Chromebook. Passoffs will be done before contest. Afraid to make a mistake? Good news! Helping with your musical struggles is what passoffs do.

Pep Rallies are some of our most fun performances! We perform at every pep rally. We play the Fight Song, School Song, and whatever fun feature Mr. Pointer has chosen in addition to fun shorts. All students are required to participate. Any students in other pep rally participating school organizations such as football or cheer will be with the team, but will come play with the band during a designated feature time.

Performances are required events for all RISD band students. See the calendar of events for all the important dates! More information will be sent through Remind and the website closer to

each performance. We will have the Christmas Concert December 17, will have a contest or clinic performance in the spring during the school week, and will have the Spring Concert on April 23. All pep rally dates, individual contest dates, and all other information will be posted to the RJH Band Events page.

Personal instruments may be stored in the instrument room of the band hall. All personal instruments will be given a luggage tag for the student's name. The band hall will be locked when the directors leave, but instruments are always safer at home (and happier when they're being used). If repairs are needed for student instruments, please alert a director not currently on the podium. If it needs repair that we cannot perform, we'll make sure parents are communicated with before any repairs are made. Repairs can be costly, and this is why we insist everyone care for their instruments in the best way possible.

Practice Time is the best way to get ahead! If you would like to practice in the band hall outside school, you are welcome to do so at an appropriate time. There may be times during the school day outside of band class that are available for practice as well, but these will hinge upon your academic status in your classes, availability of the band hall, and permission from other teachers. As you practice whether at home or at school, keep in mind that practice makes permanent. Whatever you're doing needs to be your best. If you need help from a director, ASK! Helping you is what we do.

Reward Trip

To earn your reward trip, each student must:

- Perform at both concerts, all pep rallies, and if in 8th grade, 8th grade band night
- Pass off contest music, play all your MakeMusic assessments
- Complete the individual playing contest requirement.
 - **7th** Grade must complete **one** or more of the following: ATSSB All-Region, CENTEX Honor Band, Riesel Solo and Ensemble.
 - **8th** Grade must complete at least **two** of the following: ATSSB All-Region, CENTEX Honor Band, Riesel Solo and Ensemble.
- *It is important to note that academic eligibility applies to all contests. You must remain eligible according to the UIL eligibility rules in order to participate in both individual and group contests.*
- *Behavioral eligibility applies to all qualifying experiences as well as the reward trip itself. If you are in ISS, suspended, in DAEP, or serving another form of consequences you could be disqualified from any or all of the above privileges.*

School-Owned Instruments are available on a limited basis. We own and can lend mostly the larger instruments. RISD will pay for **normal wear and tear** type of repair on these instruments when they are checked out to students, but any repairs due to misuse, abuse, or negligent conduct will be the responsibility of the student. If repair is needed, the student should simply make directors aware and we can get the ball rolling on making that happen. Each student borrowing a school instrument will need to have a signed check out form on file before playing.

Please see the checkout form for more information. Students using school instruments are permitted to take instruments home to practice as long as the check out form has been signed and returned.

Supplies for instrument maintenance including valve oil and trombone slide cream are made available free of charge for students to use and share as long as they are being used appropriately. If you would like to purchase your own valve oil, slide cream, reeds, etc. please email a director for the best place to obtain these things, and to make sure you get the right thing. For reed instruments, reeds will be provided free of charge, but only one every two weeks. If you need reeds more often than that, they will be available from the school for \$3 each for clarinet and alto saxophone, or \$4 each for larger woodwinds. In the event that you would like to purchase reeds on your own, we use Vandoren reeds in a strength no lower than 3 for quality of sound and consistency. If you stray from this, you'll likely find that you're out of tune and blend.

RJH Band Handbook Agreement

Now that you've read the startup letter for the RJH band, please sign and return. Please keep the handbook itself for reference, or take snapshots of the pages with your phone. This letter must be signed by both parties and returned by Friday, August 15, 2025. Failure to do so could result in a schedule change.

STUDENT:

I understand what is expected of me as a part of the RJH band and promise to abide by the guidelines in the handbook. I also understand that membership in Riesel ISD bands at any level is a privilege.

Printed Student Name: _____

Student Sign: _____

Initial beside an option below:

_____ I need to order a shirt.

- Shirts are \$15, cash or check payable to Riesel ISD Bands.
- Circle Shirt Size (adult sizes only) S M L XL XXL

_____ I still have a maroon band shirt, so I'm good. (usually only 8th grade checks this one)

PARENT:

I understand what is expected of my child as part of the RJH band and will encourage him/her to follow these guidelines. I also understand that information will be shared through ParentSquare and by notes home, and that an email to my child's director or a ParentSquare message are welcome for any questions that may arise. I have also seen and understand the attached events calendar, and know I can access that live calendar at any time on [Rieselisd.org](https://rieselisd.org) or by scanning the QR on the attached calendar.

Parent Sign: _____

Remember to join the Band Booster Remind! Text the message @c8g7e4b to the number 81010.

Mrs. Senzig's email: csenzig@rieselisd.org

- Mrs. Senzig teaches the 7th grade band; assists with 8th grade

Mr. Pointer's email: kpointer@rieselisd.org

- Mr. Pointer teaches the 8th grade band; assists with 7th grade