

The Rockport-Fulton High School Fighting Pirate Band

HANDBOOK
2026 – 2027



“Start Here... Go Anywhere!”

INTRODUCTION

By accepting membership in the Rockport-Fulton High School Band, you agree to perform to the best of your abilities and work together with the director in making this year's band the finest musical organization that our combined efforts can produce. We do not expect every person in the band to be a virtuoso musician or performer. We do, however, expect mature, responsible attitudes and actions—and lots of hard work! Report *promptly* to all rehearsals, classes, and performances; practice sufficiently to be able to perform your part well; and give it your “best shot” every time—all the time!

The success of any organization is dependent on the spirit, pride, leadership, teamwork, dedication and cooperation of its members. Certain rules, policies and procedures are necessary so that the overall goals of the group are met and the welfare of each individual member is best served.

The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize each band member and his/her parents/guardians with (1) the general operation and procedures of the Rockport-Fulton High School Band, and (2) the standards by which all band members are expected to conduct themselves. The handbook is not intended to be all-inclusive, as every possible situation and question cannot be predicted in advance. A thorough knowledge of these materials is essential to the smooth operation and success of the band this year.

All stated regulations are for the purpose of maintaining adequate control to achieve the goals of the organization. Nothing will be asked of you as a part of this band that is not deemed reasonable or necessary by the director. We want you to work hard and enjoy your experience in band, however, we will *insist* that you conform to the rules and regulations that pertain to school and to the band (as set forth in this handbook), as well as those required of you by the district and the society in which we live.

We are *all* working together toward one goal—

WE WANT OUR GROUP TO BE THE FINEST WE CAN MAKE IT!

OBJECTIVES OF THE BAND PROGRAM

- To develop and enhance performance skills of the individual musician as well as the whole ensemble.
- To provide for the musical needs of the school and the community.
- To develop the ability to function as a responsible member of a group, and develop Esprit de Corps
- To foster leadership skills within each student

It is important that we have clear-cut expectations. With these high expectations come policies and procedures that help us become effective members of the team. The Law of Discipline versus Punishment states that discipline is strictly up to the student to administer intrinsically. Punishment does not exist if discipline is adhered to. This should be our mantra for success!

MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Rockport-Fulton Fightin' High School Band is open to all students who play wind or percussion instruments at a reasonable level of proficiency (to be determined by the director), or can contribute to the success of the band through color guard or management. Enrollment in the band is subject to the director's approval. Once enrolled in the Fightin' Pirate Band, the student is expected to remain a part of the band until the completion of his/her high school education. If any student's membership ceases for any reason other than class schedule conflicts, that student will not be allowed to re-enroll in the band program without the band director's approval. Membership in this elite organization is not a right, but rather a privilege. This privilege may, at any time, be revoked according to the guidelines set forth in this document.

STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITY TO THE BAND

As members of this organization, you have a great deal of responsibility. It is essential to any program that if certain expectations are to be met that they coordinate with the privileges, rewards, and duties of the band program.

TO OURSELVES

YOU have the primary responsibility of developing your own abilities. The benefits of good instrument and private instruction can never be underestimated. What you put into it is what you will get out of it. The director is ALWAYS available for your guidance and encouragement – just ask!

TO THE SCHOOL

RFISD provides us with the resources for rehearsals, performances, and equipment. The Band Booster Club also provides a support network, both financially and through volunteers. We have the responsibility to provide the best possible service to our community.

TO MUSIC

Music has always been a part of our culture. We must take what we have and use it for the betterment of that culture. No one expects virtuoso musicians, only your very best! The great composer Gustav Mahler once said that only 10% of a piece of music is on the page. If that is the case, then we as musicians have the duty of creating and producing the other 90%. The joy of music is not in everything that is apparent. It must be discovered and created.

TO EACH OTHER

We must always do what is best for the SUCCESS of the group. There can be no selfish acts solely for the benefit of the individual, but for all. Respect each other. If there are conflicts, find a way to resolve them. Never insult another band member's integrity. The word "band" means that we are banded together and that there is no separation or discourse. Sometimes, the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few.

8th grade membership: UIL does not have a rule preventing 8th graders from marching in the high school band. The level of performance of an 8th grader wishing to participate with the high school band must be at a Varsity High School level which will be determined by the high school band director. Any middle school student wishing to perform with or even assist with any aspect of the high school marching band will be held to the same expectations as the high school band students as outlined in this band handbook. Their conduct must reflect the high standards of the organization. Middle school students will face the additional challenge of not being able to rehearse during the school day with the high school band. All of their knowledge of the show will come from the rehearsals outside of school hours. Students involved in other activities like athletics (football/volleyball), cheer, etc that would prevent them from attending after school band rehearsals will not be able to participate with the high school band regardless of their musical ability. Missing rehearsals will prevent them from successfully learning the marching show. These students will not receive a grade for any practice or performance. If they can not maintain the standards of the music or marching performance, they may be asked to not perform in the show (same standard that the high school students are held to). This invitation to participate with the high school is for the marching season only (July-November). Participating with the high school in their Christmas Concert, Spring Concert and UIL Concert and Sight-reading is not included. Parents must agree to allow their child to participate and sign a contract showing understanding of these requirements.

CONDUCT

The band is judged in the eyes of others through the actions of its individual members and the group. Whenever you dress in a band uniform or wear other band identification (letter jacket, shirt, etc.), your actions reflect on the entire band.

The policies herein are in effect any time the band is gathered together. Not adhering to these policies may result in disciplinary actions and possible removal from events. This includes rehearsals, performances, social events, school sponsored events, community sponsored events and booster sponsored events.

Always conduct yourself in such a way that you bring only credit to yourself and the band. One thoughtless individual can destroy, in one instant, years of developing a good reputation. Also always conduct yourself with pride, not “arrogance.”

The use of profanity is strictly prohibited at all band functions. This includes rehearsals, performances, parties, during trips, etc.

All school rules and regulations as stated in the High School Student Handbook are in effect whenever we are together. Problems with conduct will be dealt with in a firm manner. Excessive or severe problems may result in the student not being allowed to participate with, perform with, or even remain a member of the band.

DISCIPLINE

1. All district and campus policies are in effect.
2. The director has the final decision whether a student participates in performances, and/or travels with the band. If a student has too many absences, has not prepared the music or cannot be trusted to behave – the director may decide to remove them from participation.
3. Bullying/Harassment is strictly not allowed and may result in removal from the band – district policy applies.
4. Possession or use of drugs/alcohol/Vaping devices is prohibited.
5. If a student becomes a danger to other students or the reputation of the band program then the director may seek to remove the student from the band or find an alternative placement.
6. Physical discipline such as running laps, push-ups, squats, etc. may be assigned as a result of tardiness, absences, foul language, or other minor infractions.

GRADING

Grades will be based on: (recorded and weighted according to board policy)

1. Playing tests, primarily performed in front of the class
2. Performances [concerts, sporting events, parades, etc.] as allowed by UIL/TEA Guidelines
3. Rehearsal attendance [full band, sectional, ensemble, and/or individual]
4. Daily effort (participation, having equipment, instrument, music, reeds, etc)

#1-3 are considered major test grades, #4 is considered daily/classwork

ELIGIBILITY

Students must maintain passing grades in all classes to be eligible to participate in competitions per UIL rules.

1. All students remain eligible during the first 6-weeks of school. If a student fails on the 6-week progress report they will lose eligibility the following Friday for 3 weeks. They will have an opportunity every three weeks to become eligible.
 - a. If a student becomes ineligible, the student **is still responsible** for attending all rehearsals unless director has changed the expectation.
 - b. If a student becomes ineligible, they cannot participate in football games, extra performances, pep rallies, parades, etc. They cannot travel with the band, sit with the band or participate in a non-performing duty.
 - c. When a student loses eligibility in a class. They must be passing **ALL** classes in 3 weeks to regain eligibility. If they regain eligibility, then they will be allowed to participate again one week after the grade period ended.
 - d. **IMPORTANT** – If a student loses eligibility too close to a competition, the student will likely be removed from the competing ensemble until after the competition.
2. Students must be eligible to compete in marching competitions, region band competitions and Solo/Ensemble competitions.
 - a. If a student is ineligible they are still allowed and expected to participate in school concerts (Christmas, Spring Concerts).
3. EXCEPTION TO THE RULE
 - a. If a student is ineligible but the competition, performance, event, etc. falls on a holiday longer than 5 days then they are allowed to participate. (example: a play-off game during Thanksgiving)

BASIC CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

Entering the classroom	Go directly to: Instrument/music/seat/ warm up
Beginning class	Director on the podium/ the class is silent
Leaving your seat	Raise your hand and ask for permission
Cell phone use	Prohibited
Class dismissal	The director dismisses, not the bell
Asking a question	Raise your hand
Instrument slots	Keep them clean
Listening to PA Announcements	Everyone Quiet
Fire Drill	Go to the assigned area and remain as a class
Announcements	Check the board at the beginning of class
Getting Help	Ask directors and they will set up a help session
Use of practice rooms	Used for instrumental practicing exclusively.
Use of Band Hall for practice	Students can not be in band facilities without adult supervision.
Filing Cabinets/Library/Instrument Closet	Only for use by directors and Librarians

CARE OF THE BAND HALL

1. **Refreshments** – No gum, food or drinks will be allowed in the band hall at anytime, except for special occasions approved by the Band Director.
2. **Litter** – All trash, including paper, water bottles, broken reeds, etc., is to thrown away in the trashcans provided.
3. **Vandalism** – While most band members are responsible, mature and law-abiding students who would never consider such action, there may exist a small percentage that would.

Students should realize that all such acts of vandalism or the willful misuse of school property shall be dealt with severely and appropriately, with the possible expulsion from the band program. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of every band member to help the director monitor and control vandalism, which includes (but is not limited to) writing on walls and equipment, destroying music provided by the school, or the intentional breakage of band or school property. In summary, if you use it – put it back where and how you found it, and if it is not yours – **do not touch it!**

4. *All instruments, music, equipment, etc are expected to be stored appropriately every day.*
5. *No outside students are permitted in the bandhall!* – This is for the safety of the students and the equipment.
6. *No Horseplay!(No throwing anything, no running, etc)*

BULLETIN/CHALK/DRY-ERASE BOARDS

Make a habit to check the bulletin boards and dry-erase boards daily. Many announcements, up-coming events and news items for your attention and information will be posted there.

SUMMER BAND CAMP

Probably one of the single most important events of the year! This camp starts in the last week of July and depending on the school calendar, the rehearsal times may vary. In an average school week the band may rehearse 3-5 hours (in-class and limited afterschool rehearsals). During our Band Camp and the weeks leading up to the first day of school we may rehearse around 45-50 hours. This is the equivalent of 8-10 weeks of “school week” rehearsals. It is absolutely essential to the success of the band.

- Medical Forms and Physicals must be completed before the first day of camp
- Attendance is essential (Same as attending athletic practices before the first game, but the biggest difference is that our performance is based on the WHOLE of our organization. The band can’t choose a Varsity/JV or have those that start and those that are benched – Any student that does not attend, slows the progress of the entire band.
- Students that miss Band Camp without prior approval risk being unenrolled from the band.
- Vacations must be scheduled around these dates – plan in advance
- These dates must also be taken into consideration when scheduling parental visitations.

Details will be provided prior to Summer Band, but students and parents need to be prepared for hot weather. Plan in advance to have light clothing, hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, water bottles/camelback, and tennis shoes.

During summer band all color guard essentials, band fundamentals, and percussion camp will happen. Be financially prepared to purchase marching shoes and band t-shirt.

Expenses: Shoes \$50 (but once you own a pair they can last for years), Band Polo \$25, Band Show Shirt \$15

1/3 – 1/2 of the marching show and nearly all of the music used at football games will be taught so that the 3-5 hours of “school week” rehearsal can be utilized for finishing the show and preparing for competitions.

Most importantly – if the work is completed during the summer, it makes the school year less stressful for both the parents and the students. They enjoy themselves more and don't have to rehearse as much outside of class which allows them to be in multiple activities like theater, ROTC, athletics, etc. or in some cases – have a job.

Please help make summer band effective by planning in advance. Thank you.

REHEARSALS

Rehearsal time is short and valuable. Every possible moment must be used for rehearsal purposes. The following regulations are used in all GOOD musical organizations:

1. **Attendance** – All band members are expected to attend every rehearsal in which they are involved, unless they are excused *in advance* by the director. Failure to attend any rehearsal(s) may result in the student not being allowed to perform with or remain a member of the band.

(The Band calendar needs to be considered when scheduling vacations, family events, and even parental visitations)

No Shows to Rehearsal

A "no show" is defined as an absent student that cannot be accounted for due to lack of a phone call, email or simply cutting rehearsal. For marching band, an alternate may be placed in the empty spot. This decision will be made by the director based on what is best for the entire group. This will also result in a failing grade for that rehearsal. *The Director is responsible for the interpretation of the attendance policy, and consequently, may hold a student out of a performance.*

For ALL absences whether it is a rehearsal or a performance, the following procedure must be followed by all students and parents:

- a. Director must be notified in advance
 - b. Use the band calendar to avoid scheduling vacations, family events, doctor/dentist appt, and even parental visitations (when possible).
 - c. For illness, a parent note or doctor's excuse must be submitted. Parents, please NOTE: *Scheduling conflicting outside events against band performances does not relieve students from the academic and ethical responsibility of being present at a concert or performance.* Help your child be organized and honor their commitments and schedule as several other students and staff are relying on their presence. We do our very best to make sure you have all band related dates/times well in advance to accomplish this.
2. **Promptness** – All band members are expected to be in the designated place with all the necessary equipment at least five minutes before the scheduled time. Remember:

*To be early is to be on time,
To be on time is to be late,
To be late is to be... don't be late.*
 3. **Warm-up** – Instruments should be warmed up before each rehearsal begins. Softly play long tones, scales, flexibility exercises, etc
 4. **Rehearsals are part of their grade.** exceptions considered when other RFISD events conflict with a rehearsal, a student has a disciplinary placement (ISS, DAEP), emergencies or religious conflicts.
 5. **Rehearsal Discipline** – When a director steps on the podium, all music, talking, and noise should stop immediately. Your full attention should be given to the director, and nothing should be allowed to distract your attention. At no time during rehearsal will noise making of any kind be allowed. Uncooperative students will be suspended from rehearsal and appropriate disciplinary measures taken. Excessive suspensions may result in the student not being allowed to perform with or remain a member of the band.

6. **Equipment** – Each band member is responsible for having all necessary equipment ready at the beginning of rehearsal. This includes instrument, music, mutes, reeds, chair, music stand, and a sharpened pencil.

PERFORMANCES

1. **Attendance** – Every member of the band is required to attend all band performances. This is an integral part of band membership. The only acceptable excuses for missing a performance are: (1) personal illness, (2) immediate family emergency, and/or (3) failure to meet state minimum grade requirements (for UIL performances only). These circumstances must be discussed with the band director *in advance* of the performance. In other rare, emergency situations, fair and just consideration will be given. Unexcused absences will result in a failing grade for the event. An unexcused absence from a required performance will result in the possible suspension from future band activities, or removal from the RFHS Band program. (**Even though the Commencement Ceremony takes place after the school year has ended, it is still a performance for all members of the band who maintained membership throughout the correlating year.**)
2. **Calendar** – Students will be notified frequently and well in advance of all anticipated band performances. Pay attention to the performance dates and plan other activities around them. If a conflict arises with a specific date, it is the student's responsibility to notify the band director, as well as all other sponsors involved, immediately! Conflicts with school-sponsored activities are the only circumstances that will be considered for reconciliation. In the event of a non-school-sponsored conflict, the student is expected to participate with the band. A district meet would overrule a practice; a region competition would overrule a district game; an area competition would overrule a region competition: etc. We do our best to avoid as many conflicts as we can.
3. **Advancement**—In the event that the band advances to the next level of a competitive event (ie. Region, Area, State, etc.), those performances and all rehearsals and/or auditions associated with them are to be considered required (See “1. **Attendance**” above). In the event a member of the band advances to the next level of a competitive event (District, Region, Area, State, etc.), those performances and all rehearsals and/or auditions associated with them are to be considered required (See “1. **Attendance**” above). However, in a situation concerning individual advancement (ie. solo, ensemble, region band, etc.) the student may have 24 hours from notification of advancement to cancel participation in the next level with the director. The cancellation must be in the form of a letter signed by both the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s). This will allow ample time for the next alternate to be notified and given the opportunity to participate.

PRACTICING

With any activity, you get out of it what you put into it. **Band will not be as rewarding unless you practice!** There are many values in the study of music as a discipline that transfer to other areas of life. Although this will not immediately happen, persistent practice will lead to enthusiastic, driven practice. Remember: “Perfect Practice makes Perfect!” Here is a suggested plan of study:

- Pick a set time each day
- Have a set place to practice
- Stretch and do breathing exercises prior to warm-up
- Use our daily warm-up & think “tone”
- Play some form of scales at every practice session
- Take a break every 20 minutes
- Work on technique (articulations, accents, etc.)

- Practice sight-reading " Be musical and use the tuner for part of your practice session
- Increase your dynamic range (work pianissimo to fortissimo)
- Increase your endurance (15 minutes of FULL TONE playing)
- Increase your range (highest note with a good tone)
- Use a metronome for a specific portion of your practice session
- "I will start with _____ minutes and increase to _____minutes ..."

PRIVATE LESSONS –

Lessons are highly recommended because these lessons are personalized to the needs of the student. Private lessons are provided by members of the community and surrounding areas. Some are even offered on-line. Private lessons are not a requirement for membership in any RFISD musical organization.

TRIPS

Any time the band travels as a group, the following rules must be observed:

1. **Conduct** – Since school-sponsored trips are considered to be extensions of the school day, all school regulations are in effect for the duration of the trip. No alcohol, tobacco, or controlled substances of any kind will be permitted on any bus trip or at any band function.
2. **Bus Procedures** – All bus procedures as set forth by the RFISD Board of Trustees will be adhered to on all band trips. All band members will travel to and from each event with the band via designated transportation. If another arrangement for return travel is necessary, it must be approved by the director and he has to physically see the student with the parent before they will be released and a release form is signed. It is vital that the band leave at the scheduled times in order to arrive at the designated locations with enough time to properly unload equipment and warm-up before the performance. To this end, the buses will leave at the scheduled time regardless of who is or is not there. Failure to show up at a game will be considered an unexcused absence at a required performance, and will be dealt with accordingly (see Performance).

All students will remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion. All body parts are to remain inside the bus, and at no time will anything be thrown from the bus windows. Students will refrain from screaming, using flashlights, taking pictures with flash, etc. because these activities are distracting to the drivers. Band officers will be given bus responsibilities that include helping to maintain discipline, policing trash pick-up, etc. When roll is being called, everyone is to be seated and silent. Students will be respectful of bus drivers, all adult sponsors, and *anyone else* in a position of authority. Upon arrival at our destination, the band members will load/unload in an orderly manner as stated by the director. Students are not to get off the bus until instructed to do so by the director.

FOOTBALL GAMES

The appearance that the band makes at football games is very important (at ALL TIMES – not just on the field). The community sees the band a handful of times during the year and the impression they receive has a great deal to do with the spirit, pride and reputation of the band. The band, drill team, cheerleaders, etc. reflect the image of Rockport-Fulton High School. The following procedures will be followed for every football game:

1. Meet at the band hall at the designated time. BE EARLY.

2. Each person is responsible for his/her equipment at all times.
3. Be in the proper uniform at all times.
4. Sit in assigned seats and do not move about during the game.
5. You can not take additional food and drinks into the stands or have food brought to you unless given permission by the band director.
6. No one but band personnel is allowed to be in the band section without the prior permission of the Band Director. This includes Rockport-Fulton High School Alumni.
7. Play only when the entire band is playing. No “doodling” is allowed. Percussion are to play only with the full band, during chants and cheers led by the cheerleaders, and on rehearsed cadences which were pre-approved by the Band Director.
8. Watch the Band Director or drum major at all times when he/she is standing in front of the band. Get music up rapidly when it is called. Watch closely for cutoffs, etc. when play resumes on the field. Remember: We are there to do a job, and we must remain alert at all times.
9. File orderly from the stands to the designated formation before halftime. Do not play on your instrument. If the weather is cold, blow warm air through the instrument. Do not loiter out of formation.
10. Cheer with the cheerleaders and support the team.
11. Treat visitors, other directors, other band members, and guests politely at all times.
12. Take into the stands only the equipment you need for the performance. During cold weather, you may take blankets into the stands.
13. Always play in a musical way. Even outside you can play in tune, with a good tone, good attacks, good releases, etc. Our band is first and foremost a *musical* organization!
14. Band Students travel together. If a trip to the restroom, concessions or the bandhall is allowed, then it will be in groups. Students are not allowed to travel anywhere outside of the band section alone. Students are not allowed to go into the student/general admission/visitor sections of the stadium.
15. Cell Phone usage is extremely limited! It can be used to make calls to be picked up at the end of the night. It is not to be out in the stands – messages, calls, etc can wait. Even if we are not playing, it is not an opportunity to be on your phone. We are at the game to perform and when we aren’t performing we are supporting the team or engaging with other members of the band. There is a time and place for cell phone use and games/performances are not it.

Flip Folders and lyres– Each member of the band will need to have a flip folder and a way to hold it at the beginning of marching season. (If taken care of, a single folder could last all four years!) All music used at marching performances will be kept in the flip folder.

Marching Alternates – During marching season, not all students march. This is because students are needed to fill marching spots that are vacated due to emergencies, illnesses, ineligibility, or other reasons. Some students struggle with the coordination of marching and playing memorized music at the same time. Students are also needed to assist

with the equipment necessary to produce a quality halftime performance. Alternates are an integral part of any band program. If our band is to be successful, it is certainly due in large part to the contributions made by this group of students. Alternates that want to march, almost never go an entire season without the opportunity to earn a marching spot.

Alternates usually “shadow” marching students when not performing other assignments.

Alternates earn marching positions based on several factors. These factors include, but are not limited to, audition, previous marching experience, amount of time before the next performance, level of responsibility, coordination, music memory and attitude. They may earn a “like-instrument” marching position under the following conditions:

- A. Someone misses a rehearsal or performance at which the Alternate is in attendance, and the rehearsal or performance absence is unexcused.
- B. A marching spot is vacated due to ineligibility.
- C. A marching spot is vacated due to disciplinary reasons.

Except in very rare cases, once an Alternate earns a marching spot, it is theirs to keep unless they lose it due to conditions cited above. Again, this is not intended to be an all-inclusive listing, but rather an explanation of the general guidelines used in administrating Marching Alternates.

UNIFORMS

Your uniform is a symbol of your school pride. At football games, as well as other performances, the quality of your appearance is just as important as the quality of your marching and/or playing. So, it is important that you do your utmost to keep the uniform in excellent condition.

1. All uniforms will be passed out by the uniform staff and properly checked in on Monday after every game. The uniform staff will inspect each uniform on Monday after every game.
2. Band members are responsible for hanging up their uniforms properly, and for keeping up with their hat.
3. Shoes are to be kept clean
4. Band members are to make NO alterations to the uniforms. If the uniform does not fit properly, bring it to the attention of the uniform staff.
5. Cleaning the uniform is the responsibility of the uniform staff. Please bring any stains to the attention of the uniform staff so that it may be taken care of. Improper cleaning could ruin the uniform.
6. If a band member loses any part of their uniform, he/she will be required to pay the replacement cost of the missing part. (Marching or concert jacket \$200, Bibbers \$100, marching band shirt if not using formal uniforms - \$60)
7. All students are required to wear long black socks with the uniform. Failure to do so may result in removal from that performance.
8. Uniform inspections and checks will be made weekly (prior to each game) by the uniform staff and band director to insure proper handling and completeness of uniforms. Any taking

or switching, of uniform parts without the approval of the uniform staff will be handled by the director.

9. No jewelry or face paint is to be worn with the uniform (unless allowed by the director)
10. Hair is not allowed to touch the collar of the uniform and must be inside the hat. This may require some students to plan in advance to have a way to tie up, pin, braid, etc. so that they can successfully get all of their hair into the hat.
11. Only black, marching shoes will be allowed. Proper shoes will be purchased by the student, from the vendor designated by the director. Tennis shoes, boots, etc. will not be permitted. The term “uniform” indicates that everyone is dressed *exactly* the same. (shoes \$50)
12. Members must purchase a band t-shirt. Band shirts will be worn every game day during marching season, and for various social/spirit events/days. (*Depending on care and use of the shirt, it may become necessary to replace the shirt from time to time. This will be the student’s financial responsibility, and will be at the discretion of the Band Director.) (shirt \$25)
13. There may be times when, instead of official uniforms, Band members will be required to dress professionally (for example: solo and ensemble contest) Young ladies will need an appropriate dress (or skirt & blouse) or slacks, dress shoes, hose, etc. and young men will need dress slacks, dress shoes or boots, a long-sleeved dress shirt, and a tie. (Coats/Blazers are optional) These items must be provided by the students.

EQUIPMENT CARE & INSTRUMENT REPAIR

Proper care and maintenance of school and personal equipment is vital to the success of any band program. All equipment must be kept in good repair so that proper individual, as well as group progress can be achieved.

1. School owned equipment is expensive and usually unreasonable to expect individual students to purchase. Many school districts charge rental fees for the use of school instruments, but here in RFISD we do not. Instead, we expect our band members to treat all school instruments with respect and to take care of them as they would if they personally owned them.
2. All school equipment has been properly serviced/repared, and should be in good working conditions. Any student checking out a school instrument should carefully inspect it and notify the director immediately if there are any problems. Otherwise, the student to whom the instrument is issued will be held (financially) responsible for the instrument’s condition if it needs repair.
3. When checking out school equipment, the student will read the serial number of the instrument and show the instrument to the Band Director. Be sure that all information is correctly given and recorded.
4. When a school instrument needs to be repaired, the student must notify the director immediately. Instructions will be given for having it repaired. If a personal instrument needs repair, also notify the director. All instruments must be in proper working condition at all rehearsals/performances.
5. When school instruments are checked in, they must be clean and in acceptable

playing condition and working order, just as they were when they were when they were checked out.

6. The cost of any repairs, other than those due to normal use and wear, will be the responsibility of the student to whom the instrument is issued.

*A word of caution: NEVER allow another person to handle your instrument. The student to whom the instrument is issued will be held responsible for all damages that may occur! This includes percussion.

DUAL MEMBERSHIP

It is allowed, and common, for members of the band to also be members of other “spirit” groups. However, those students are expected to give equally of themselves to all the organizations to which they belong. The Band Director and sponsors of other groups will jointly determine the appropriate schedule to be observed by the student, and the student will adhere to that schedule. If students are cheerleaders, dance team, ROTC etc. we will find a way to balance their participation in both groups.

Color Guard – The Color guard is an integrated entity of the band program. They are a very important part of adding color, movement, dance and theater to the marching show. Although membership is made up of primarily band students, it can have members that are not instrument players or even enrolled in the class. However, they will be held to the same standards and expectations/policies that are stated in the band handbook. They will be expected to attend all rehearsals and contests.

Students trying out for color guard will sign a contract stating that they understand the obligations of the organization. It also states that they understand that there is a financial obligation. Members that earn placement on the team will need to purchase a color guard uniform and attend a summer camp. The uniform will be selected by the color guard instructor and the band director to reflect the theme of the show.

The Color Guard Team may fundraise to help offset the cost of uniforms, camp or even prepare for a possible Winter Guard team.

Color Guard will also have their own Handbook that reflects rules and regulations specific to their craft.

LETTERING AWARDS

As a reward for participation in the Rockport-Fulton High School Band, students will be awarded lettering awards based on each student’s individual performance in band during the course of the school year. Letters are awarded in the good faith that the student will remain a part of the band program until his/her completion of high school. (A letter is a representation of hard work and dedication to the band, however all points for the year are forfeit if a student poorly represents the band by being caught doing drugs/alcohol and/or sent to DAEP for poor conduct.) These situations will be dealt with on a case by case basis, but students need to be aware that removal of points is a possible punishment as well.

For a student to earn a Letterman’s Jacket in band, the student must meet the following guidelines:

Students must earn a total of 15 points to receive a letter jacket. All points must be earned in one calendar year. Students moving into RFISD will be assigned points on a case by case basis pending verification from previous school(s).

A. Grade-level points: Students will automatically receive the following points:

Freshman= 1 point Junior= 3 points

Sophomore= 2 points Senior= 4 points

B. Participation points: Students will receive (1) point for each full band concert/performance (does not include football games/pep rallies/special events)

C. UIL/ATSSB Events:

1. ATSSB (Region) All-State Band and/or Jazz Band Auditions:

a. Participation in ATSSB, Region auditions=(2) points

b. Selection and performance in a Region Band= (3) points

c. Selection for Wind Ensemble and/or Area auditions=(5) points

d. Selection and Participation in the ATSSB ALL-STATE Band =

Automatic letter for RFHS Band

2. UIL Region Solo & Ensemble Contest:

a. Participation in Solo/Ensemble = 1 point per event

b. Class 3 Solo/Ensemble First Division Superior= (1) point

c. Class 2 Solo/Ensemble First Division Superior= (2) points

d. Class 1 Solo/Ensemble First Division Superior= (3) points

3. UIL State Solo/Ensemble Contest:

a. Participation in the State UIL Contest = (1) point

b. Earning a Division II on an Ensemble – No medal = (2) points

c. Earning a Division II Solo (Silver Medal) = (4) points

c. Earning a Division I on an Ensemble (Gold Medal) = 4 points

c. Earning a Division I on a Solo (Gold Medal) = **Automatic Letter for**

RFHS

D. Serve as Band Officer = 1 points

E. Drum Major = 3 points

If a student has not earned a letter jacket by the beginning of his/her senior year, the director will give special consideration to awarding a jacket based on the student/s service and dedication to the band.

BAND OFFICERS

This group of band students will work with the band director in planning and preparing for events and activities. These positions make up the core of the student leadership team within the band organization. If a student is unable to fulfill the role in which they have been elected or represents the band in a negative manner, the band director has the authority to replace the student. These positions are elected positions. The responsibilities and prerequisites of each office are as follows:

1. ***President*** –The President will preside at any student led meeting of the band and be the voice of the band members to the band director.
2. ***Vice-President*** –The Vice-President will serve in the President’s absence and will serve a dual role as also the Secretary and Treasurer as needed.
3. ***Historian*** - The Historian will clip articles and retain photographs that pertain to the Rockport-Fulton.Band. The goal of the historian is to create a visual accounting of the band activities for the year. Creating a scrapbook, photo album or video yearbook would be appropriate activities for the historian. The historian should be taking photos at all band events and making sure to include all members of the band. At the end of the year, the historian should be able to organize photos and videos for the band banquet. The band will reimburse the Historian for the cost of necessary supplies (with prior approval by the director).

4. **Uniform Manager**– This office is for an individual who is very organized and somewhat strict in their expectations. The Uniform Manager position will be in charge of the distribution and assignment of nearly \$100,000 worth of uniforms. The uniform manager can appoint a uniform team to help with the uniform duties with the band directors approval.
5. **Librarian** –The Librarian is also a job for a very organized person. They will be in charge of making, distributing and organizing copies. They will also be in charge of the Library inventory and making sure the inventory stays up to date. The Librarian can appoint an assistant.
6. **Quartermaster** – The Quartermaster is in charge of equipment and instrument inventory. This person is also the person in charge of loading equipment for away games and making sure all equipment/instruments travel safely. The Quartermaster will need to create a loading crew and manage them accordingly at competitions and away games so that the band can move efficiently and allow the band directors to tend to other matters.
7. **Medic** – The Medic is a student who will make sure that students are sufficiently cared for. The Medic will make sure that the AED and water is at every rehearsal. He/she will monitor the band for signs of student fatigue and/or illness. This position helps the directors to have an extra set of eyes on the field and to have someone to run for supplies in an emergency.
8. **Social Officer** – This officer’s job is to make sure that there are events/activities in addition to the rehearsals. This student will look for opportunities for the band to provide community service or have a fun night of games/movies/etc.
9. **Tech Officer**: The Tech Officer is responsible for maintaining our digital /online usage. Including but not limited to Band app, online presence, website, on-line calendar, etc.
10. **Drum Majors** – Are the top student leadership position in the band during marching season and during parades.

Responsibilities of a Drum Major include:

- Providing a good example for students to follow.
- Maintaining order and assist directors
- Conduct the band on the field in rehearsal and during performances.
- Assist Section Leaders with their duties.
- Various administrative duties such as rehearsal attendance records, uniform checks, etc.
- Be a representative for the band to the high school.
- The Drum Majors serve on the band council as a floater position. Their responsibilities will be to assist any other position as needed. They will serve on the committee with the equipment managers to ensure the field is ready to go for rehearsal prior to start time. The Drum Majors will alert the Band Directors of any incidents throughout the band, be responsible for ensuring the entire band is on task, and exemplifying the best qualities of being a member of the band.

The drum major will be selected through a rigorous audition process that will include but is not limited to: Marching Fundamentals, Directing beat patterns, Vocal Commands, and an interview.

The tryouts will be held after school with an independent panel of at least three judges that have musical/marching/leadership experience. Judges are to be selected by the band director. (The judges are usually former band directors, DCI marchers, or other music teachers)

Drum Major candidates and their parents will sign a contract showing that they understand what is expected of the role of the drum major. They will be required to attend a Drum Major Camp during the summer with the team of Drum Majors. They will be financially responsible for half of the camp expenses. The Band Boosters will cover the other half. This expense is typically \$300. Drum Majors are also financially responsible for their Drum Major Uniform. It is custom tailored to the drum majors and will remain in the custody of the drum major after the season. Approximately \$150. If a Drum Major is unable to fulfill these requirements or represents the band in a negative way the band director has the authority to remove the title from the student.

BAND BOOSTERS

Every parent of a band student is already a band booster. There is not a financial requirement to be a member of the band boosters. This is a support organization that helps with the success of the band. One of its biggest responsibilities is to raise money to aid the program where the school budget becomes insufficient. The Boosters provide financial support for meals, trips, renting the pool for parties, catering the band banquet, and much more. The Boosters have also purchased big items like the band equipment trailer and concession stand equipment. The more parents that are involved in the activities of the boosters, then the more that we can provide to the students and it allows for smooth operation of this organization. Please be an active member of the boosters.

As we progress through the year remember the following quotes, and use them as a guideline in practice, rehearsal, and performance (both competitive and non-competitive):

“When mediocrity becomes your acceptable standard, something is lost. And that something is self-respect.”

-Dr. James Dobson

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”

-Aristotle

Please feel free to contact me at any time.

BAND HALL PHONE:

(361) 790-2220 ext. 2410

(Available 24 hours a day, with voice mail!)

Email:

Mr. Thornberry – rthornberry@rfisd.us

RELEASE OF LIABILITY, HANDBOOK AGREEMENT, AND MEDICAL RELEASE FORM

I, _____ the parent/legal guardian of my child, _____ do hereby agree to allow my child to travel with a group or individual associated with the Rockport-Fulton Independent School District (RFISD), and agree to assume any and all liability and hold the RFISD, its Trustees, employees, and agents harmless from all claims or actions which my child or I have had, now have, or may have in the future or any liability for injuries or damages which occur to my child or to me as a result of his/her participation in these trips. I expressly waive all claims for medical expenses, loss of services, or other claims to which I may otherwise be entitled and I agree to indemnify and hold harmless RFISD, its Trustees, employees, and agents from all claims made against it or them on behalf of my child, and I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the RFISD, its Trustees, employees, and agents from all claims made by third parties against it or them which result from my child's actions on the trip.

I also give permission for RFISD, its employees, or agents to take my child to the nearest doctor, clinic, or hospital for medical treatment while at a school sponsored or authorized activity if, in the opinion of RFISD, its employees, or agents, the situation warrants such action. I further authorize any attending physician to medically treat this child as deemed appropriate. This medical permission shall remain in effect from the date signed until June 15, 2027 unless revoked in writing.

I understand that the District, its Trustees, employees and agents are not waiving any sovereign or governmental immunity which it or they have under Texas law.

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the “Rockport-Fulton High School Band Handbook 2026-2027”. I agree to abide by all the regulations, as well as the decisions made by the Director or Officers that are guided by them.

We have read and understand this release and sign it voluntarily and with full knowledge of its significance. This release applies to all functions of the **Rockport-Fulton High School Band** for the **School Year 2026-2027**.

Parent Signature
Student Signature
Date

Parent/Guardian Names

E-mail addresses: _____

Home Address	Street	city	zip
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(Mom) Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

(Dad) Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Emergency Contact

Emergency Contact Phone	Other Phone
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Please list any necessary medical information for this student (daily medication, allergies, health problems, etc.) on the back.