

**O'Connor High School  
2023-2024**



**Panther Band  
Band Handbook**

*“Hustle beats talent when talent doesn’t hustle”-Ross Simmons*

## **WELCOME TO THE PANTHER BAND FAMILY!**

The purpose of our band handbook is to outline and guide you through the expectations for our band program. Following our handbook will ensure that our school year will be successful for all of our band students. It is important that everyone read the information in the handbook, even returning students and parents. The information can change slightly from year to year so it's important for everyone to be familiar with this year's handbook. For those new to the program, this is the official band handbook of policies and procedures that keeps us running smoothly and efficiently. Most questions can be answered by consulting the handbook and policies that will be adjusted from year to year as the need arises to clarify issues within the program.

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### **Philosophy of the O'Connor HS Band Program**

Students of the O'Connor HS Band Program are expected to perform at the highest level of achievement through musical performance. Through various competitions and performances, the ultimate goal set for the band students is to rigorously challenge them to become superior musicians in concert, jazz, percussion studies, color guard artistry, community band, and individual performance. Students of the O'Connor High School Band program not only become superb musicians but also better students, who will be challenged to become successful and responsible citizens for our community.

### **Expectations**

- Be in attendance and account for all absences.
- Become responsible for and expect to assume the consequences of your behavior.
- Respect those in authority in the band, in the district and when visiting other campuses.
- Follow all classroom rules, school regulations and all travel instructions given for band activities.
- Be honest and fair with others concerning equipment, music and school life in general.
- Cooperate with fellow band members and share with them the responsibilities and privileges that are part of the program.
- Band is family!
- Improper care of band equipment will prevent you from participating with the band. Fees WILL BE assessed to any student who damages school or private property.
- All students are expected to conduct themselves properly at EVERY band function. Display of profanity, temper, flagrant violation of rules, PDA, will not be tolerated.
- Only band members/students are allowed in the music building.
- No food or drink during performances unless it has been provided to you by the directors. No food or drink allowed in band hall unless approved by directors. Directors make all decisions for marching/concert positions based on the need of the program.
- Uniforms will be worn properly at all times.
- A student will lose his chair or position to an alternate if he/she misses too many rehearsals.
- There is no excuse for missing a performance.
- All rules established by the school will apply.
- No talking while someone is on the podium.
- Failure to conduct yourself as a proud Panther Band member will be grounds for dismissal.
- Do not “hang out” in areas like dressing rooms, restrooms, or stairways.
- Students will only play instruments they are assigned.
- Students must follow uniform policy set by the directors.
- Cell phones are prohibited during games and performances.

### **Grading Procedures**

The following is a grade scale that will be used for band students:

50%- formative (daily participation, daily run-throughs,)

50%- summative (music playoffs contests, chair tests, semester exam, football games, concerts)

### **Class Attendance**

Students are expected to be in present in class, at rehearsals, games, and performances. Extra rehearsals will be considered as part of the class assignment to make up any loss classroom time. Students who are not in their assigned place when the class bell rings are considered tardy to class. Policy for class tardiness is established in the student handbook. Rehearsals, games, and contests are an extension of the classroom. Communication is important so absences are excused if applicable.

### **General Rehearsal Attendance**

Students may be excused when both the home and the school approve the absence. These absences include illness, death in the immediate family, religious holidays and school business. Those absences approved by the home but not excused by the school, such as staying home to study, participate in non-school contests and other activities or family trips or outings will not be excused. Whenever an absence is anticipated, the student must inform the director to secure an excused absence. Students must email a director to communicate all missed absences. 3 or more absences will result in losing varsity spot or dual spot.

Accountability actions- 1<sup>st</sup> unexcused absence- Director/Student conference  
2<sup>nd</sup> unexcused absence- Director/Parent conference  
3<sup>rd</sup> unexcused- Subject to performance removal

Students that attend tutoring sessions will be expected to balance out their course load and still actively participate with the band after the tutorial sessions. Students are expected to bring documentation from the teacher administering the session. Flex time is the BEST time to get tutoring done so you won't miss before/after school instruction.

### **Rehearsal Schedule**

Band rehearsals will occur from 7:30am- 8:30am, Tuesday-Friday and 5pm-7:30pm on Tuesday and Thursday. Additional time may be needed but will not exceed the eight (8) hour rule. Students who miss more than 3 rehearsals will lose his/her eligibility to perform on various band trips or community-based events. Students without their instrument or equipment will be given a 50 as a daily grade, unless the director has given prior approval. Afternoon rehearsals before game day CANNOT be missed. Rehearsal run throughs are mandatory. If missed, student may not be able to attend the game that week. (*Subject to director approval*)

Marching Band-Varsity marching band spots are awarded to students based on the student's performing ability, marching ability, and attendance. JV spots are also available for students as well. JV students will attend all rehearsals, football games. JV students will not march their spots at contests but can attend and assist with props.

Concert Band- Students will be scheduled in one of four concert ensembles throughout the year. Students audition twice, in late fall and in late spring for placement/chair order. Auditions will consist of etudes, scales, attendance and ability. Students are expected to actively participate in TMEA Region Band auditions as well as UIL Solo and Ensemble Contest.

*\*\*\*An effective band program requires all students to participate and carry their "load." Attendance and active participation are important for a superior performance. \*\*\**

### **Masterclass Program/Private lessons**

All students will participate and are required to attend the masterclasses. Students will study with experts and classes will be done during their band class on an assigned day. This is a service that is provided through the school district and boosters. Students are also encouraged to take private lessons. A list of teachers can be found on the band website. These teachers do set their own prices and schedules. For additional assistance, please see a director.

### **Instrumental Music Courses Offered at O'Connor High School**

- *Marching Band I-IV*: This is the ensemble that performs at football games, and UIL performances as well as area parades.
- *1<sup>st</sup> Period Wind Ensemble I-IV*- Varsity band that performs advanced musical selections. Students demonstrate independence in interpreting music through the performance of selected literature. They analyze musical performances, intervals, music notation, chord structure, rhythm/meter, and harmonic texture using standard terminology. They also analyze the musical forms of their performance and listening repertoires.
- *2<sup>nd</sup> Period Symphonic Band I-IV*- Ensemble that is for intermediate players. This ensemble will be competing at Pre –UIL and UIL. Musical selections are grade 3 to grade 5.

Students continue to develop and refine technical skills and increase their music knowledge with performance and listening literature. These listening experiences refine melodic and harmonic pitch.

- *3<sup>rd</sup> Period Symphonic Concert Band I-IV*- Ensemble that is for intermediate players. This ensemble will be competing at Pre –UIL and UIL. Musical selections are grade 3 to grade 4. Students continue to develop and refine technical skills and increase their music knowledge with performance and listening literature. These listening experiences refine melodic and harmonic pitch.
- *4<sup>th</sup> Period Concert Band*- Ensemble that is for all freshmen players. This ensemble will be competing at Pre –UIL and UIL. Musical selections are grade 2 to grade 3. Students continue to develop and refine technical skills and increase their music knowledge with performance and listening literature. These listening experiences refine melodic and harmonic pitch.
- *Color Guard I-IV*- Students learn the artistry of color guard. Students learn yoga, dance, marching, and fundamentals of body control. Students learn individual solos as well as perform as an ensemble. Student may perform and compete at various competitions.
- *Jazz Band I-IV*-Students learn the chord symbols, advanced rhythms, articulations, and terminology necessary to prepare and perform various styles of jazz literature. They analyze the musical forms of their performance and listening repertoires and demonstrate independence in interpreting music through the performance of selected literature.

#### Bus Policies

- Each band member must have a physical, medical release form, and permission slip on file before leaving on any trip.
- Each student must ride back on his or her assigned bus unless permission has been secured from the Band Director.
- Students may only be released to their parents.
- Each student must ride on the bus or will not participate with the band.
- All rules established by the school will apply.
- Chaperones will be treated as school officials and respected at all times.
- Students who fail to comply with these bus rules will not be able to participate with the band in any future bus trips.

#### Instrument/Band Locker Requirements

- Instruments are to be locked up while stored in the band hall. Lock combinations must be given to the directors as a backup. Any unauthorized lock will be removed.
- All instruments should be put away in a case or proper storage area after use.
- School owned instruments and cases will be returned to the school in the same condition as it was checked out. Any negligence caused to school district or personal property will be paid for by the student. All students are required to check out instruments using the NISD instrument checkout form.
- All instruments are the responsibility of the student and not the band boosters, friends, chaperones or directors.
- Student owned instruments should be insured (check your homeowner's insurance or renter's insurance).
- Students are to care for issued materials or instruments (placed in proper place, etc.). Failure to do so will result in loss of use of the materials or instrument.
- All students will be assigned a locker. Lockers will be used to store instrument, school related items, music, and change of clothes. **NO FOOD OR DRINK IS ALLOWED IN LOCKERS!** **Lockers are to be kept clean!** Students need to store cases in lockers at all times. Students must also inform directors of what their combination numbers are in case of emergency.

### **Band Fair Share**

Every year, the students of the O'Connor High School Band are required and expected to pay a band fair share to help offset costs that may occur throughout the school year. The Band Fair Share must be paid during that current academic school year. Payments options are always available for students. Band Fair Share is a service provided to our students where additional resources are needed. The Fair Share is a service that provides financial support that the school may not be able to cover. *Failure to pay Band Fair Share can result in not being able to attend special band events such as spring trips, Band Banquet, etc.*

### **Fundraisers**

All band students may have the opportunity to help the Panther Band through fundraising. Various fundraisers occur throughout the year. Students can also receive community service hours for assisting with this.

### **Social Media**

Students are prohibited from sending, posting, or possessing electronic messages that discuss the band program in a negative way. Students are expected to maintain pride and integrity when discussing the Sandra Day O'Connor Band on social media sites. All students, especially section leaders and drum majors, are expected to discuss the program in a positive manner. Students who do not follow policy are subject to consequences from parent conferences/suspensions to removal from the program. Discipline will follow according to the severity of the violation.

### **Eligibility**

Students must be eligible in order to participate in any extra-curricular activities. It is extremely important to maintain eligibility throughout the entire school year. All events in the fall and spring require students to be eligible. If the event is co-curricular, then under the discretion of the Head Band Director, may an ineligible student participate. This includes and is not limited to any NISD event, UIL event, TMEA event, or community-based event (i.e. parades). Students that receive less than the minimal grade requirement for UIL participation or less than a satisfactory remark on attitude may not participate in any band performances. Students who lose eligibility can regain after the next 3<sup>rd</sup> grading period.

### **Uniforms**

Students participating in the band program will receive and be issued a uniform. Each student is responsible for keeping the uniform neat and in good condition. If the uniform is damaged or altered in any way that renders it unusable by future students, you will be expected to replace it. No material may be cut off when altering the uniform for your use. A garment bag must be used to secure the uniform when not in use and hung up properly. Uniforms will be used only for school related activities. Students who fail to care for the uniform properly will lose the right to be issued one for their use

**2022-2023 O'Connor High School Band Program  
Handbook Acknowledgment Form**

*I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge I have read the handbook. I understand the policies and procedures that are stated and will meet all expectations. I understand that if expectations and policies are not followed and disregarded can result in the student's removal of a performance and possibly the band program.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Student Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date:*