

The Yaak School Parent and Student Handbook



2024-2025

29893 Yaak River Rd, Troy, MT 59935

Clerk's OFFICE 406.295.9311

Classroom 406.295.4805

Revised May 2024

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year at Yaak School District! Whether you are joining us for the first time or returning, our staff and school board are delighted to have you as part of our educational community. Our goal is to ensure that each student has a rewarding and enriching experience in a safe, supportive learning environment. We are committed to preparing students for success in post-secondary education and future careers, and we value the partnership of our parents and the support of our community in this endeavor.

Included in this handbook is an overview of essential information for both parents and students. It is important to note that this handbook does not encompass all school policies. A comprehensive listing of all policies is available for public review at the school office.

This handbook is structured to clearly communicate our expectations for student behavior and conduct within the Yaak School District. We encourage you to review this handbook thoroughly with your child to ensure you are both familiar with our school's policies and procedures. Understanding and adhering to these guidelines will help create an environment conducive to superior academic achievement.

Should you have any questions, concerns, or positive feedback to share, please do not hesitate to contact the school. We are eager to assist and support you throughout the school year.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Sabre'

Sabre' Alderete, M.Ed.
Head Teacher/Principal
Email: yaakteacher@yaakschool.org
Website: yaakschool.org
406-295-4805

Section 504 Coordinator:

- **Name:** Sabre' Alderete, Head Teacher/Principal
- **Address:** 29893 Yaak River Rd, Troy, MT 59935
- **Email:** yaakteacher@yaakschool.org
- **Phone:** 406-295-4805

For discrimination based on disability or accommodation requests, contact the Section 504 Coordinator.

Board of Trustees The Board of Trustees manages the hiring of personnel and overall school operations. Regular meetings are held monthly and are open to the public. Agendas are posted locally and detail the time, date, and location of meetings.

- **Contact:** 406-295-9311
- **Address:** Yaak School District Board of Trustees, 29893 Yaak River Rd, Troy, MT 59935

All school policies are available for review at the District Clerk's office.

Praises, Concerns, and Complaints

For classroom-related praises, concerns, or complaints, please first speak directly with the teacher. If the issue remains unresolved, it should be escalated in accordance with the Uniform Complaint Procedure outlined in YS Policy 1700. Subsequent steps include discussing the matter with the supervising teacher, if applicable, and then appealing to the Board.

Board meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month. Meeting dates and locations may change as per the protocol for Special Meetings. Public participation is encouraged, and meeting minutes are available for public inspection under YS Policy 1420.

The agenda includes a public comment period where community members can discuss non-agenda public matters, subject to time limits set by the Board Chair to ensure efficient operations. The Board does not act on discussed matters unless they are officially noticed on the agenda.

Equal Educational Opportunity

YS 3210 The District is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for all students, irrespective of their race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, ethnicity, language, religion, physical/mental disability, economic/social status, marital/parental status, gender identity, sexual orientation, or adherence to traditional gender roles. Access to all programs and activities shall be without discrimination.

Contact Information for Title IX and Section 504 Coordinators

Title IX Coordinator:

- **Name:** Pam Fuqua, Board Member
- **Address:** 29893 Yaak River Rd, Troy, MT 59935
- **Email:** pfuqua@yaakschool.org
- **Phone:** 406-295-6007

Address inquiries regarding sexual harassment, discrimination, or intimidation to the Title IX Coordinator or the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the Department of Education.

Montana School Law indicated MCA and Numbers.

Yaak School Polices indicated by YS and Policy Number.

MCA 20-5-101 Kindergarten students must be five years of age or older on or before September 10th of the year in which the child is to enroll.

First grade students must be six years of age or older on or before September 10th of the year in which the child is to be enrolled in first grade.

SCHOOL DAY

HOURS:

Kindergarten:

MCA 20-1-301 School days for half-time Kindergarten programs requires the students to attend 360 hours a school year. Our half-time Kindergarten program allows the students to attend 533.3 hours this school year.

- ◆ **8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Tuesday- Friday with an occasional Monday.**

1st grade to 8th grade:

School days for 1st grade to 8th grade hours are 8:00am to 3:30 Tuesday-Friday with an occasional Monday.

TARDIES:

Children can arrive to school no earlier than 15 minutes prior to class time (7:45am) and picked up no later than 10 minutes after school ends (3:40 p.m.). Class starts at 8:00 prompt. If a child arrives at 8:00 they will be considered tardy.

IMMUNIZATION

MCA 20-5-403 Montana State Law requires that all children must have proof of immunization prior to enrollment in school. An affidavit of exemptions on religious grounds are provided in your registration packages. It must be notarized, and the school will have a day scheduled with a notary to make this happen if anyone needs it. If you are not available on the day scheduled it will be your responsibility to get it completed.

Morning Snack Break

Students will have a 15-minute snack break each morning. Please be aware that snacks are not provided by Yaak School. Parents are welcome to send snacks with their child either daily or for the entire week. **To facilitate a quick and efficient snack time, we request that any necessary preparation of snacks, such as slicing apples or peeling oranges, be done at home.** This will help ensure that all students can enjoy their snack time promptly and return to their learning activities without delay.

Lunch Policy

Yaak School does not offer a lunch program. Students are encouraged to bring their lunches from home. We provide access to microwaves for students who bring hot lunches. Please ensure that any hot food sent with your child is in a microwave-safe container. Containers can be left at school if preferred. As with snacks, you may choose to send lunches daily or provide a week's worth at a time.

Sick Children Policy

Our teaching staff is authorized to check student temperatures. If a temperature above 99 degrees Fahrenheit is detected, it will be rechecked after 5 minutes to confirm accuracy. Students with a confirmed fever of 99 degrees or higher, or who show other signs of illness, will be sent home. It is crucial to keep your emergency contact information updated.

YS 3417 Students reporting illness may be assessed by a school nurse or designated staff member. If deemed necessary, students will be sent home once a parent or emergency contact is notified. The district may require a doctor's note for the student to return to school.

Library Policy

Library and classroom books are primarily for the use of district students and staff, though district residents and non-resident student guardians may also gain access at the head teacher's discretion. All users are expected to care for and return borrowed materials promptly. Fines may be assessed for damaged or unreturned books. Challenges to the suitability of library materials are addressed through the Uniform Complaint Procedure.

Family Engagement Activities Plan SY 2024-2025 cont'd

December 18, 2024, Student Presentation and Community Engagement :

Includes an invitation to families for the December board meeting and a preview of the upcoming curriculum meeting in January.

January 15, 2025, Curriculum Committee Meeting:

Annual meeting for families and the community.

February 11, 2025, Family Project:

Families are assigned STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) projects to complete at home.

February 19, 2025, Family Presentation:

Presentation of February's home projects.

April 16, 2025, Annual Parent and Family Engagement Policy Development:

Discussion at the April board meeting on how the policy supports academic progress, barriers to parental participation, and strategies for strengthening school-family relationships.

May 21, 2025, Policy Review and Approval:

Review and approve any changes to the Parent and Family Engagement Policy.

Parent and Family Engagement:

Yaak School values collaboration with parents and guardians to support student achievement. For detailed information on parental rights and engagement opportunities, please visit yaakschool.org and access the District Policy Manual under the "District Policy Manual" link at the top of the page. Printed copies are available upon request. Refer to the following policies for ways to actively participate in your student's education:

- Student and Family Privacy Rights – Policy 2132
- Parent/Family Engagement and Involvement in Education – Policy 2158
- Student Health Instruction – Policy 2335
- School Activities and Clubs – Policy 3233 and Policy 3510
- Student Health – Policy 3410
- Student Immunization – Policy 3413
- Student Records and Confidentiality – Policy 3600

Family Engagement Activities Plan SY 2024-2025

September 18, 2024, Welcome All Families: (to be conducted at the first board meeting SY 2024-2025) Objective:

Build a Community of Belonging: Engage families in school life and foster connections among families, staff, and students.

October 3, 2024, Parent Compact Agreement Objective:

Discuss expectations for student reading journals with parents and students.

November 6, 2024, Parent/Teacher Conferences:

Discuss first-quarter report cards, student achievements, and areas for improvement.

Campus Policy

Yaak School maintains a closed campus policy. Students cannot leave campus during school hours, including lunch, without written permission from their legal guardian. Lunch/Recess is from 12:00 PM to 12:25 PM; students returning late will be marked tardy.

Playground

The playground is reserved for registered Yaak Elementary students during school hours to ensure safety.

Visitors

Visits from board members, parents, and community members are welcome. Please arrange classroom visits in advance with the Head Teacher. To minimize disruptions, visitors should not bring additional children. Classroom visits and meetings should be scheduled outside of instructional hours to avoid disrupting learning. Emergencies are exceptions.

Insurance

Yaak School's insurance does not cover accidental injuries to students or staff. If a child is injured on school grounds or during a school event, contact the teacher or clerk immediately. Parents are advised to verify their private insurance covers school-related activities.

Dress Code

Students must dress appropriately for the weather, including gloves, hats, and snow gear as needed. General clothing rules are as follows:

- **Tops:** Shirts with sleeves are required; no tank tops.
- **Bottoms:** Shorts should reach at least the fingertips when arms are held at the student's sides.
- **Footwear:** Shoes appropriate for school and weather conditions are necessary. Students must also bring P.E. shoes daily.

Student Attendance

Attendance Policy

YS 3120 If your child is ill, please notify the school as soon as possible if they will be absent. Regular attendance is essential for achieving maximum educational benefits. Continuous instruction, classroom participation, and engaging learning experiences are crucial for educational success. Student interaction and participation in instructional activities guided by qualified teachers are fundamental to the educational process. This principle supports compulsory education laws nationwide. Regular attendance not only enhances learning but also contributes to a student's dependability as reflected in their permanent record.

Excused Absences

The Yaak School recognizes the following reasons as valid for excused absences:

- **Student or Family Illness:** Absence due to illness of the student or immediate family member.
- **Death in the Family:** Absence due to the death of an immediate family member.
- **Medical/Dental Appointments:** Absence for medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled outside school hours.
- **Religious Holidays:** Absence for observance of major religious holidays.

Absent students are expected to make up all schoolwork missed.

A student will have two days to make-up time for every one day missed up to a period of five (5) school days. If the absence exceeds one week, the teacher will determine on a case-by-case basis when all up to a period of five (5) school days. If the absence exceeds one week, the teacher will determine on a case-by-case basis as to when the work is due.

YS 3226: Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation/Hazing Policy

Bullying, harassment, intimidation, and hazing are prohibited in our district. These acts negatively impact the school environment by undermining student safety and well-being.

Definitions:

- **Bullying:** Repeated aggressive behavior with the intent to hurt another person physically or emotionally. It involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim.
- **Harassment:** Unwanted conduct related to any distinguishing characteristic that interferes with an individual's safety or comfort in the educational setting.
- **Intimidation:** Actions intended to frighten or coerce someone into doing something or deter them from doing it.
- **Hazing:** Engaging in any act that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers a person regardless of the person's willingness to participate.

Key Points:

- All incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation, and hazing must be reported to school authorities immediately.
- The school will investigate all reports thoroughly and confidentially.
- Disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to, suspension, expulsion, or mandatory counseling.
- The school is committed to promoting a safe environment and will provide educational programs to teach students about respect, empathy, and the importance of positive interpersonal relationships.

Prevention and Education:

- The curriculum will include components that foster an understanding of diversity, inclusion, and the importance of treating all individuals with dignity.

This policy ensures that all students feel safe, respected, and valued while at school and during all school-related activities.

Religion and Religious Activities Policy

YS 2332 The District upholds the constitutional standards by neither supporting nor opposing any religion. Students are permitted to express their religious beliefs privately and pray individually or in groups, provided their actions are not disruptive or coercive. Staff are required to remain neutral and may neither facilitate nor obstruct religious activities.

Religion in the Curriculum

YS 2332 Religious topics may be included in teaching about history, art, music, literature, and other areas where religion has influenced culture. However, teaching religious doctrine directly or promoting religious views is prohibited. Educational content that includes religious elements must serve a secular educational purpose and be part of the approved curriculum.

Religious Holidays

YS 2332 Staff may address the historical and cultural significance of religious holidays and may use related symbols, music, and art strictly for educational purposes. The focus must remain on education rather than religious observance.

Vandalism and Property Damage

Students are responsible for caring for school property, including buildings, materials, and equipment, funded by taxpayers. Any student who damages or vandalizes school property will be liable for repairs or replacement costs. Serious offenses may lead to suspension or expulsion. Students must also pay for the replacement of lost or carelessly damaged school items, including textbooks. Damaged materials must be reported immediately to the teacher.

Not Allowed

Students are not allowed to bring the following items to school:

Prohibited Items -Firearms, Alcohol, Knives, Tobacco products, Drugs, or Any item considered unlawful or dangerous

Classwork and Homework Policy

Students who do not finish their classwork during the day are required to complete it at home and submit it the next school day. Incomplete assignments will be graded as is. Additionally, all students are expected to read for 20 minutes each evening and practice math fluency on their assigned level.

Activity Trips Policy

YS 8132 We value our chaperones and prioritize safety on school-sponsored activities. All drivers transporting students must comply with school policies, maintaining insurance coverage that meets minimum requirements and holding a valid driver's license as per state standards. It is advisable for drivers to verify coverage for transporting students with their private auto insurer.

Chaperones can not bring non-school age children on school-sponsored trips. All chaperones and guests must adhere to the same behavioral standards as school personnel, outlined in Policy 5226. The use of intoxicating substances during school trips or on school property is strictly prohibited.

Drug and Alcohol Abuse Policy

Students found possessing, using, or under the influence of narcotics, alcohol, controlled substances (not prescribed by a physician), or any intoxicants on school grounds or during school activities will face suspension or expulsion.

Tobacco-Free Policy

YS 8225 The use of tobacco or nicotine products is prohibited on school property and within school buildings, except as part of an approved educational demonstration on the risks of tobacco use.

Transportation Policy

Inform the teacher if someone other than yourself is picking up your child. This individual must be pre-authorized on your child's transportation and release form.