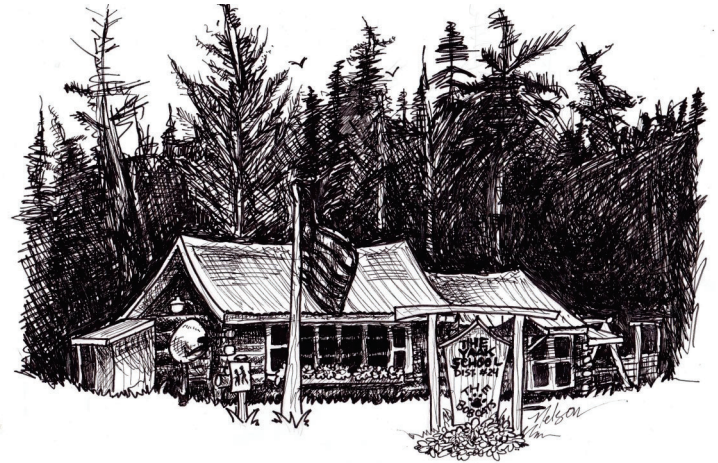




# **The Yaak School Parent and Student Handbook**

**2026-2027**

**29893 Yaak River Rd, Troy, MT 59935**

**Clerk's OFFICE 406.295.9311**

**Classroom 406.295.4805**

Revised July 2026

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the 2026-2027 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 on our website at <https://yaakschool.org/>

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,

School Board

and

Head Teacher

Email: [yaakteacher@yaakschool.org](mailto:yaakteacher@yaakschool.org)

Website: [yaakschool.org](https://yaakschool.org)

406-295-4805

### Section 504 Coordinator:

- **Name:** Head Teacher, TBD
- **Address:** 29893 Yaak River Rd, Troy, MT 59935
- **Email:** [yaakteacher@yaakschool.org](mailto: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 and recorded board meeting minutes are available for review on our school website <https://yaakschool.org>.**

## **Praises, Concerns, and Complaints-Policy 1700 Uniform Complaint Procedure**

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. Subsequent steps include discussing the matter with the supervising teacher, if applicable, and then appealing to the Board.

## **Board Meetings: Policy 1400 and 1420 School Board Meetings**

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 online at [yaakschool.org](https://yaakschool.org/).

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– Policy 3210: Equal Education opportunity, Nondiscrimination and Sex Equity**

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:** Board Member, Bob Zaccheo
- **Address:** 29893 Yaak River Rd, Troy, MT 59935
- **Email:** [BZaccheo@yaakschool.org](mailto:BZaccheo@yaakschool.org)
- **Phone:** 406-295-7328

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**

**Policy**—indicates policy can be found on our website <https://yaakschool.org/>

**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, or by 7:45a.m. They must be picked up no later than 10 minutes after school ends, or by 3:40 p.m.*

Class starts promptly at 8:00a.m. If a child arrives *at* 8:00 or later, they will be considered tardy.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

**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 and medical grounds are provided in your registration packages. It must be notarized, and the school can provide a notary if needed.

## Morning Snack Break

Students will have a 15-minute snack break each morning at approximately 10:15. 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

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—Policy 3417: Communicable Diseases

Students who complain of illness at school may be referred to a school nurse or other responsible person designated by the Board and may be sent home as soon as a parent or person designated on a student's emergency medical authorization form has been notified. The District reserves the right to require a statement from a student's primary care provider authorizing a student's return to school.

## Library Policy— Policy 2310: Selection of Library Material

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. The provision of a wide variety of library materials at all reading levels supports the District's basic principle that the school in a free society assists all students to develop their talents fully so that they become capable of contributing to the further good of that society.

## Family Engagement Activities Plan SY 2025-2026 cont'd

### January 2026, Curriculum Committee Meeting:

Third Thursday of January and before January's board meeting for families and the community at 3:45.

### February 2026, Family Project: TBD

Families are assigned STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) projects to complete at home. Must be turned in by end of month.

### March 2026, Family Presentation:

Presentation of February's home projects.

### April 2026, 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 2026, Policy Review and Approval:

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

### **Bullying Prevention and Education: Policy 3226**

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

### **Parent and Family Engagement– Policy 2158**

- 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](http://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. Student Records and Confidentiality – Policy 3600

### **Family Engagement Activities Plan SY 2026-2027**

**September 16, 2026, Welcome All Families:** (to be conducted at the first board meeting SY 2025-2026) Objective:

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

#### **October 2026, Parent Compact Agreement Objective:**

Meet with and discuss expectations for students reading journals with parents and students at 3:45.

#### **November 2026, Parent/Teacher Conferences:**

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

#### **December 2026, 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.

### **Closed Campus**

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—Policy 4301: Visitors to School**

Visits from board members, parents, and community members are welcome. If possible, 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. School liability insurance only covers injury due to district negligence.

### **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.

## Attendance Policy—Policy 3123 Attendance Procedure/Truancy

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. "Truant" or Truancy" means persistent non-attendance without excuse, as defined by this policy, for all or any part of a school day.

The Yaak School District's definition of non-attendance without excuse is s  
ed in the student handbook.

### 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. Teachers are not required to prepare schoolwork ahead of time for vacations.**

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

### Bullying/Harassment/Intimidation/Hazing Policy: 3226

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.

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—2332**

In keeping with the United States and Montana Constitutions and judicial decisions, the District may not support any religion or endorse religious activity. At the same time, the District may not prohibit private religious expression by students. This policy provides direction to students and staff members about the application of these principles to student religious activity at school.

### **Religion in the Curriculum—Policy 2332 Religion and Religious Activities**

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—Policy 2332 Religion and Religious Activities**

Staff members may teach students about religion in history, art, music, literature, and other subjects in which religious influence has been and continues to be felt. However, staff members may not teach religion or advocate religious doctrine or practice. The prohibition against teaching religion extends to curricular decisions which promote religion or religious beliefs.

### **Property Damage—Policy 4332: Conduct on School Property**

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.

### **Classwork and Homework**

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 at a minimum 20 minutes each evening and practice math fluency on their assigned level.

### **Chaperones— Policy 5430: Volunteers**

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 4332 Conduct on School Property**

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—Policy 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/Pick Up From School**

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.