

The Seneca Valley Band Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Seneca Valley Band Program. This is a high caliber, no fluff Band program, where learning and performing great musical literature is one of our primary goals. The most enjoyable part of performing music is playing it at the highest level possible. That is what we attempt to do each and every day. Along the musical journey here at Seneca Valley, students will have the opportunity to play in several different ensembles and perform really great music. We encourage each and every student to seize these opportunities for they may only occur once in your lifetime. You will make friends and acquaintances that will last a lifetime and will learn to work together as a successful team.

The Seneca Valley High School Band Program (Grades 9-12) consist of three levels of concert bands, two levels of jazz ensembles, the “Roaring Raider” Marching Band, and various chamber groups that are formed each year. The purpose of this handbook is to provide answers to questions that commonly arise regarding the activities of these groups.

DEFINITION OF A “BANDER”

One of the areas of greatest confusion over the years has been defining who is a part of the Seneca Valley Band program. A “Bander” is any student who is a member of any of the concert bands, jazz ensembles or the Marching Band, which consists of musicians, Pom Poms, and Color Guard. This may also include eighth grade musicians who are invited to participate in the marching band.

THE SENECA VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL BANDS

Members of the bands will be introduced to various styles of band literature appropriate to their level of ability. Private instrumental lessons outside the school are strongly encouraged. Banders may obtain names of qualified private teachers from the Band Directors. All members are required to perform in the concerts and adhere to the dress code.

Concert Bands

	Freshman Band	Symphonic Band	Wind Ensemble
Grade(s)	9 th	10 th – 12 th	10 th – 12 th
Classes/week	5	5	5
Credits	1 credit	1 credit	1 credit
Eligibility	No audition	No audition	Audition/Invitation
Music Level	3 – 3 ½	4	5 – 6

	Freshman Band	Symphonic Band	Wind Ensemble
Concert Wear Males	Black suit White dress shirt Long tie Black socks Dress shoes	Black suit White dress shirt Long tie Black socks Dress shoes	Black suit White dress shirt Black bow tie Black socks Dress shoes
Concert Wear Females	Long black dress or Long black skirt with a dress blouse Dress shoes	Long black dress or Long black skirt with a dress blouse Dress shoes	Long black dress or Long black skirt with a dress blouse Dress shoes

JAZZ ENSEMBLES (I AND II)

	Jazz Ensemble I & II
Grade(s)	9 th – 12 th
Classes/week	3
Credits	0.6 credit
Eligibility	Audition/Invitation
Placement	Based on ability
Emphasis	Improvisation
Concert Wear	Band Director discretion

CONCERT BAND PERFORMANCES

All members are required to perform in the concerts. Separate concerts will be held on different nights for the Jazz Ensembles and the concert bands including performances by the Freshman Band, Symphonic Band and the Wind Ensemble. A donation is collected at the door for the Jazz concert and tickets are sold at the door for the concert bands. Details on concert dates, times and locations will be available on the band web site and the School District calendar.

WINTER CONCERTS

These two concerts are typically held in early December.

SPRING CONCERTS

The spring concerts are held in late April or early May.

MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY

The current year Wind Ensemble members perform in a local community on Memorial Day. Concert wear for males is a suit, dress shirt, long tie, socks and dress shoes. For the females, the concert wear is a dress or skirt with a blouse and dress shoes.

COMMENCEMENT

All members of the incoming Wind Ensemble are expected to perform at the graduation ceremony at the end of the current school year. Concert wear for males is a suit, dress shirt, long tie, socks and dress shoes. For the females, the concert wear is a dress or skirt with a blouse and dress shoes.

PMEA BANDS

Banders may elect to audition for the District 5 Honors Band and Honors Jazz Band. Additional information about these opportunities will be available for the Band Directors. All participants in the Honors Band are required to wear a band uniform without the hat. If you are not in Marching Band you will be fitted for a uniform before the concert.

THE SENECA VALLEY “ROARING RAIDER” MARCHING BAND

The Marching Band is considered one of the finest marching bands in Western Pennsylvania. It consistently wins awards for its performances at local, regional, and national events. Participation in the Marching Band is an extracurricular activity which requires a significant commitment of time and effort, but which will provide great satisfaction for a job well done. Attendance at practices, band camp, and performances is mandatory. (See marching band commitment below)

The Marching Band consists of several units. In addition to the musicians, who are divided up into sections there are two auxiliary units: Pom Pons and Color Guard. Each unit participates in the Marching Band activities, but also has its own requirements.

AUXILIARIES

- **Tryouts** – Both the Color Guard and Pom Pons try-outs are held in May for the next year’s squad. Additional information can be found in the Auxiliary Information Packet found on the band website.
- **Summer Sessions** – Throughout the summer two practices are held each week for the auxiliaries.

MARCHING BAND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

As an extracurricular activity, all Banders must meet all eligibility requirements for participation as outlined in the Student Athletic Manual established by the district.

- **School Attendance** – Banders must be in school on the day of the performance or if the performance is on a Saturday it would be the previous school day by 10:53 a.m. If the Bander has early dismissal, they must return with a signed doctor’s note in order to participate. Any Bander that is absent for a total of 20 days or more during a single semester is not eligible to participate in extracurricular activities until they have attendance for 60 days following their last absence. Summer school does not count towards attendance. Banders who have been suspended from school or who are serving in-school suspension are not eligible to participate in practices or events.
- **QPA** – A 1.3 QPA must be maintained in order to participate.
- **Musicians** – Any instrumentalist in Grades 9 through 12 may be a member of the Marching Band. Eighth grade musicians may also be invited to participate by the Band Directors based on ability and need for specific instruments. They must also participate in a curricular instrumental ensemble. (unless they are in Vo-Tech)
- **Auxiliaries** – All members are required to audition each year in May.

MARCHING BAND COMMITMENT

All members of the Marching Band (musicians and auxiliaries) are expected to attend every practice and every even. Students may not miss any band function unless it is a pre approved "once in a lifetime" event, serious illness or death in the family. Work, Dr. Appointments, and other activities are NOT valid excuses and may result in dismissal from the band..

- **Drug Testing** – The district has mandatory drug testing for anyone involved in extracurricular activities. Students MUST be drug tested prior to the start of Band Camp in August. Drug testing dates are published on the district website.
- **Pay to Participate** – There is a fee payable to the district for participating in extracurricular activities. Students MUST be pay this fee prior to the start of Band Camp in August. The payment can be made during the drug testing times.
- **Summer Sectional Rehearsals/Practices** – Instrumentalists may be required to attend an evening session for their section. The auxiliaries have two weekly practices throughout the summer.
- **Band Camp** – begins approximately 2 weeks before the start of school. Exact dates are announced by the Band Directors and are put on the Band Calendar found on the website. Percussionists report one week earlier so they are prepared to provide a solid foundation for the rest of the band.
 - Music is distributed at the end of the previous school year and all musicians are expected to be able to play their music well prior to the start of camp.
 - Auxiliaries should have learned their routines during the summer.
 - Band camp runs from 7:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. each day. Any deviation will be announced by the Band Directors. You may not leave Band Camp for any reason (including lunch).
 - Items to bring to Band Camp (if applicable to their function)
 1. Completed health (turned in no later than the first day of camp.)
 2. Refillable wide-mouth water bottle with your name and section. Bring filled each morning. It can be refilled throughout the day.
 3. Sunscreen and hat to avoid sunburn
 4. Comfortable clothes and tennis shoes (NO sandals)
 5. Inhalers and/or other medications (must be listed on the health form).
 6. Instrument, lyre, flip folder, music and pencil.
 7. Lunch
 8. Poker chips for field markers

- **Band Pictures** – Professional photographers will be present one day during Band Camp to take pictures of each individual Bander, the Band Sections, the Bands by grade, and a full Band pictures. SENIORS MUST HAVE THEIR PICTURE TAKEN FOR THE FOOTBALL PROGRAM. Purchasing pictures is optional. Many Band parents order a pin. These are typically available for Pie Fest. Pictures will be in full uniform without the hat.
- **In-Season Band Rehearsals** – The Marching Band rehearses every Tuesday and Thursday throughout the football season. Practices start at 2:40 p.m. and end in time for the Banders to ride the activity bus home. Additional practices or longer practices may be scheduled and announced at the discretion of the Band Directors. All members are expected to attend all rehearsals. (See marching band commitment above)

PERFORMANCES

- **Pie Fest** – The Band Boosters sponsor a Pie Festival at NexTier Stadium (weather permitting) during the second week of Band Camp. This is a fundraiser for the Boosters and also serves as an opportunity for the Marching Band to perform its pre-game and halftime show before an audience. Tickets will be sold at the door. Additional details will be available on the Band Booster website.
- **Football games** – The Marching Band performs at all home and away varsity football games throughout the regular season and playoffs. Most football games take place on Friday evenings but certain away games (and make-up games) may be on Thursday or Saturday. Report times will be announced by the Band Directors and posted on the band website.
- **Butler County Band Festival** – This event is held on a weekday evening in mid-September, usually at the Butler Area High School football stadium. Marching bands from all over Butler County perform. Tickets may be purchased in advance or at the event. Parents are encouraged to purchase tickets in advance because the proceeds go to the Seneca Valley Band Program. Tickets purchased at the gate benefit the Butler Area High School.
- **Homecoming Parade** –The Marching Band marches in the Homecoming Parade and then takes the field to perform their halftime show. This event is the Thursday before the Homecoming Football Game.
- **Community Holiday Parades** – The Marching Band typically attends the Grove City Homecoming Parade, the Evans City Halloween Parade and the Zelianople Christmas Parade. The Band Directors will provide information in advance regarding which parades will be attended.

- **Special Events** – The Marching Band may be invited to participate in special events. Examples are college football games or special parades. These will be announced by the Band Directors.

RULES

1. Be on time every time.
2. All Banders are to stay in sections in the stands.
3. Non-banders are not permitted to sit with Banders in the stands.
4. Travel release forms must be given to the bus chaperones if the Bander is not taking the bus back to the school after the performance.
5. Banders must obey chaperones and listen for special instructions.
6. Banders must meet their rides outside the band room immediately after each performance.
7. Musicians with hair below their hat must have it neatly tucked inside their hat during all performances.
8. Neither food nor gum is permitted while in uniform unless provided by the Boosters.
9. When boarding the bus, musicians must be dressed with band pants, black shoes, high black socks and black t-shirt.
10. Auxiliary units must be dressed in their uniforms prior to boarding the bus.
11. All Banders must obey bus drivers' instructions regarding noise levels.
12. All Banders must be seated on the bus while it is in motion. No standing is permitted for your safety.
13. All bus windows are to be closed before leaving the bus.
14. All trash is to be picked up and discarded before leaving the bus.
15. Check buses for items left behind. Bring all items into the band room.
16. No hairspray is to be used on the buses at any time.
17. No media devices are permitted without earphones.
18. No PDA's (public displays of affection) allowed.

SPRING BAND TRIP

Each year the Band participates in a Band trip. The timing, destination, activities and which bands will participate will be decided upon by the Band Directors with approval from the School Board. A Band Booster will serve as a Trip Coordinator.

- **Payment** – Each bander going on the trip is expected to pay the full assigned cost. A non-refundable deposit, which is applied to the cost of the trip is required to reserve a spot. Additional payments into the individual Bander's trip accounts are required as announced each year. It is critical that these payments are made on a timely basis so the Band Boosters can make timely payments to the travel agency assisting with the trip. Fundraising opportunities are available.
- **Chaperones** – The Band Directors and Trip Coordinator will select the trip chaperones. Online applications are accepted in late fall. Chaperones are selected based on their level of participation in the Band Booster organization.

- **Code of conduct**- The trip is considered a school event and all Banders must adhere to all school rules at all times. Failure to follow school rules may result in disciplinary action including parents being contacted to pick up their Bander immediately and notification of the school administration.
- **Family attendance** – families are encouraged to attend the trip; however, during the trip, the Banders are the responsibility of the Band Directors and Chaperones. They must remain with the group at all times and must participate in all activities. Families are welcome to visit with the Banders at the events when the Bander is not participating but they may not remove them from the group. Families are encouraged to stay at a different hotel from the Band.

MARCHING BAND ATTIRE

- **Uniform Fittings**
 - Returning members are given the opportunity to keep their uniform from the previous marching season when they complete the band database forms at the end of the school year. They must be tried on during the fitting
 - ALL BANDERS MUST ATTEND A SCHEDULED UNIFORM FITTING. Typically the instrumentalist fittings occur on a drug testing date. These dates will be on the band calendar and emailed out along with more details regarding the fittings.
 - Auxiliaries will have their own fitting schedule.
 - Musicians will need to purchase a pair of dinkles (the only shoe allowed for musicians). Payment will be collected during the uniform fittings but the shoes will be ordered during Band Camp.
 - Banders are given the opportunity to purchase wool outer band jackets. This is the only time these can be ordered. No other jacket is permitted to be worn over the band uniform in the cold weather.
 - During cold weather, Banders are permitted to wear plain black gloves and black earmuffs while in the stands.
 - New Banders will need to purchase a band duffle bag. This can be used every year they participate in the marching band. This will be taken to every performance.

- Payment must be made at the uniform fittings. Pricing will be announced before the fittings.
 1. Uniform fee of \$15
 2. Dinkles (if needed)
 3. Duffle bag (if needed)
 4. Wool jacket – Auxiliaries must order jackets with the flap
- **Uniform Responsibilities**
 - Marching Band uniforms are expensive. You will be required to help pay for any parts that are lost or damaged.
 - Musicians must get their uniforms dry cleaned throughout the season. Any uniform returned prior to the spring band trip must be dry cleaned. All uniforms should be dry cleaned prior to your participation in the spring trip.
 - All parts of the uniform are to be brought to each event, regardless of weather conditions (including the raincoat). Plumes will be store by the Band and distributed and collected at each performance.

TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM EVENTS

The Band provides transportation from the school to and from most away events (exceptions are the local parades and the Wind Ensemble's Memorial Day Concert).

- **Arrival and Pick-up at school** – Parents/guardians are responsible for getting their Bander to school and picking them up afterwards. Please be on time to avoid having everyone wait for you.
- **Parent Transportation from an Event** – Parents/guardians may provide transportation home from an event as long as they provide a Seneca Valley Travel Release form to their bus attendance person. Parents must meet their Bander at the bus to sign them out with the bus chaperon. Banders cannot be released to siblings or a friend's parent/guardian. **THE BUSES WILL LEAVE ONCE ALL EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN LOADED AND BANDERS ARE PRESENT EVEN IF THERE IS A TRAVEL RELEASE FORM. PARENTS MUST BE ON TIME TO PICK UP THEIR BANDER.**

MARCHING BAND STUDENT LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Banders selected for leadership roles will set an example for the Band through their professional behavior, work ethic and positive attitude. They will assist the Band Directors and Chaperones as requested. These leadership roles are selected by the Band Directors.

- **Field Directors** –They lead the Marching Band in all shows and parades, conducting all music and teaching music and marching to new Banders. The Field Directors are responsible for leading the Band delegation during visits with other bands at football games. Field Directors are selected by audition in the spring of their junior year.
- **Band Captains**– They are responsible for organizing the Marching Band leadership meetings and for working with Section Captains to assist other Banders in learning their music and marching. They are expect to provide encouragement through motivational pep talks.
- **Section Captains** – They provide musical leadership to their individual musical sections. The captains are expected to lead sectional rehearsals. They assist members of their section in learning their music and marching and ensuring that all members of the section follow instructions. They are to provide encouragement through motivational pep talks.
- **Color Guard Captains** – are extensions of the Color Guard sponsor and assist the sponsor in choreographing, teaching and critiquing of the routines.
- **Pom Pon Captains** – are extensions of the Pom Pon sponsor and assist the sponsor in choreographing, teaching and critiquing of the routines.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

As the District has stated, it is a privilege to participate in interscholastic activities and with that privilege comes certain responsibilities. As an advocate for technology, the District also recognizes the role social media plays in communication and outreach. It is the expectation that Seneca Valley Marching Band students will use social media platforms in a positive and respectful manner to engage with family, friends, and the community at large. Disrespectful, insulting, abusive, and/or threatening content—be it original or “re-tweeted” or “liked”—has no place in Seneca Valley Marching Band and will not be tolerated. Students who post content or offensive commentary aimed at peers, teachers, other marching band members, and/or directors will be subject to disciplinary action which may include suspension from all marching band activities. Remember: it is a privilege to represent the Seneca Valley Marching Band and we hold our students to the highest standards for integrity and ethical decisions.

SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS/REMINDERS:

- Nothing is really private! Even though you may utilize privacy tools, everything you post is public information.
- Your content is your thumbprint! Once you post it, it is forever and it is you.
- Your audience is global. Consider the appropriateness as your audience is young, old, and everywhere. And they are watching.
- Who is watching? Colleges and prospective employers often review social media sites to gauge the character of the student.

THE ROBERT K. MATCHETT II SCHOLARSHIPS

The Band Boosters sponsor a scholarship program for Banders who will be pursuing further education in music or dance after graduation. The Scholarship program is named for Mr. Matchett who retired in 1999 after serving as the Band Director at Seneca Valley for 37 years. Banders may apply in the spring of their senior year after they have been accepted into an appropriate program. Details are available from the Band Directors.

THE SENECA VALLEY BAND BOOSTERS

The Seneca Valley Band Boosters is a volunteer organization sanctioned by the School District and comprised of the parents and legal guardians of Banders. It functions under a set of by-laws (which are available to members on the booster website) and is led by an Executive Board that is comprised of officers elected by the membership. A variety of committees chaired by Band Booster members help to carry the various functions to support the Band program. The organization works in cooperation with the Band Directors and the auxiliary sponsors to improve the instrumental music and auxiliary programs of the school through a better understanding of the goals and purpose of the Bands by providing moral support and financial assistance whenever possible.