

What is a Festival?

With all of the performances coming up in the month of March, we thought this would be a handy guide on what festivals are and the structures of these concerts.

So....what is a band or choir festival?

A Festival is:

- a gathering of several school music groups (band, orchestras, choirs) at one venue over a period of one to three days.
- These groups perform music from a pre-approved list which has been prepared in advance during their regular class rehearsal time.
- Judges are hired by the host of the festival and are there to listen to the groups and to give them feedback on their performance in accordance with a set of state and national music standards.
- Performing groups are competing against the standards, not each other.
- Basically standardized testing for music programs
- Open to the public and free of charge to watch

How does SEMS conduct festivals/festival trips?

- The festival season starts in late January/early February with the majority of concerts in March and April.
- Our district high schools host an SMUSD Festival, which works as a “pre-festival” for schools that perform in several festivals during the season.
- We have 3 upper bands and 1 upper choir group at SEMS that participate in adjudicated festivals. These groups are Concert Band, Golden Eagle Band, Wind Symphony, and Advanced Golden Eagle Choir.
- Due to the scheduling of festivals during the school day and to be respectful of drop off and pick up times at ours and other school sites, each group goes on a fun activity after their performance which includes food. These activities generally wrap up by 4:30-5pm.
- The activities are optional and if students have other conflicts, they are welcome to be picked up by a parent/guardian early.
- Some festivals are also competitions like the ones through Music in the Parks and Forum Festivals. Students compete against the standards, but also each other.

What do students wear to these festivals?

- Students wear their concert attire for the performance and then their band or choir shirt and comfortable bottoms and shoes for the fun activity.
 - Concert attire for band includes the white wing tip tuxedo shirt, black bottoms, black socks, black shoes and the appropriate color bow tie for their performing group.
 - Concert attire for choir includes the black dress with black shoes or the all black shirt and pants with the gold long tie.
- If it is a jazz festival, students wear their jazz band attire
- Students must be in their concert attire prior to boarding the bus to the festival.