

The Villages High School Bands Handbook

2026-2027



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Director of Bands

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July 2026

Parents, Students and Friends,

It's with great anticipation that we look forward to the start of another school year at The Villages High School!! Entering my fourth year at VHS, I'm thrilled to build off of last year's success and get started. It's my personal mission to provide a safe environment, where our young musicians can thrive and grow into responsible young people. After all, our motto is, "Great Band. Better People."

Together, the strong foundation we build this year will undoubtedly lead to future successes and growth. I invite you to join me in continuing to create and build a dynamic program that ALL will want to be a part of.

Our mission statement reads: "The mission of The Villages High School Band Program is to make a positive difference in the lives of its members through creating a family-like atmosphere while providing meaningful, musical experiences. Through showing kindness, having a positive outlook and exemplifying hard work, our members strive to achieve their full potential as musicians and people."

Kindness, a positive outlook AND hard work are the secret ingredients to building energetic, comprehensive band programs. As a foundation, these ideals help us develop other important life skills such as teamwork, time management, school spirit, artistry, and much more.

I'm pleased to highlight some exciting plans for the upcoming school year:

- We'll kick off the year with an immersive, fun, 1.5 week-long Summer band camp at the end of July. This jumpstart to the year will help our Marching Buffalo get ready to perform at football games, local competitions, and throughout the community.
- Continue to expect professional level concerts in The Tracy throughout the year (Oct, Dec, Feb, May).
- In November, we'll host both the District 19 Marching Music Performance Assessment on Saturday, November 7th and the FFCC 4A-6A Outdoor Championships on Saturday, November 14th!! With some of the largest and top marching bands in Florida heading to our campus, we'll need all hands on deck for our largest fundraisers of the year!
- In January, we'll once again be hosting the District 19 All-District Band! Highlighting the best student musicians from Sumter, Marion, and Lake Counties, this event and concert is a life-changing opportunity for all involved. I HIGHLY encourage our students to take a risk and audition.
- In February, we'll once again be hosting the District 19 Jazz Music Performance Assessment. For 2 days, the best jazz programs across Sumter, Marion, and Lake Counties will showcase their jazz bands in front of a professional panel of adjudicators.
- We'll continue and expand on our professional instruction initiative, bringing in local, professional educators and musicians to work with our students on a regular basis throughout the school year.
- Ensembles will perform at Concert, Marching, and Jazz Music Performance Assessments. Individuals will have multiple opportunities to audition for Honor Bands and perform at Solo & Ensemble.
- Like every year, we're in the process of planning an unforgettable band. Stay tuned! (location TBD!)

With much to look forward to, I invite us all to have an "ALL IN" approach. I'm confident that you will find the building process to be not only worthwhile, but quite rewarding. The opportunities you have for musical and personal growth this year are numerous. Take full advantage, have a blast, and create lifelong memories. Go Buffalo!!

Sincerely,



Colt W. Campbell
Director of Bands
The Villages High School

Mission Statement

The mission of The Villages High School Band Program is to make a positive difference in the lives of its members through creating a family-like atmosphere while providing meaningful, musical experiences. Through showing kindness, having a positive outlook and exemplifying hard work, our members strive to achieve their full potential as musicians and people.

Motto

“Great Band. Better People.”

Program Philosophy

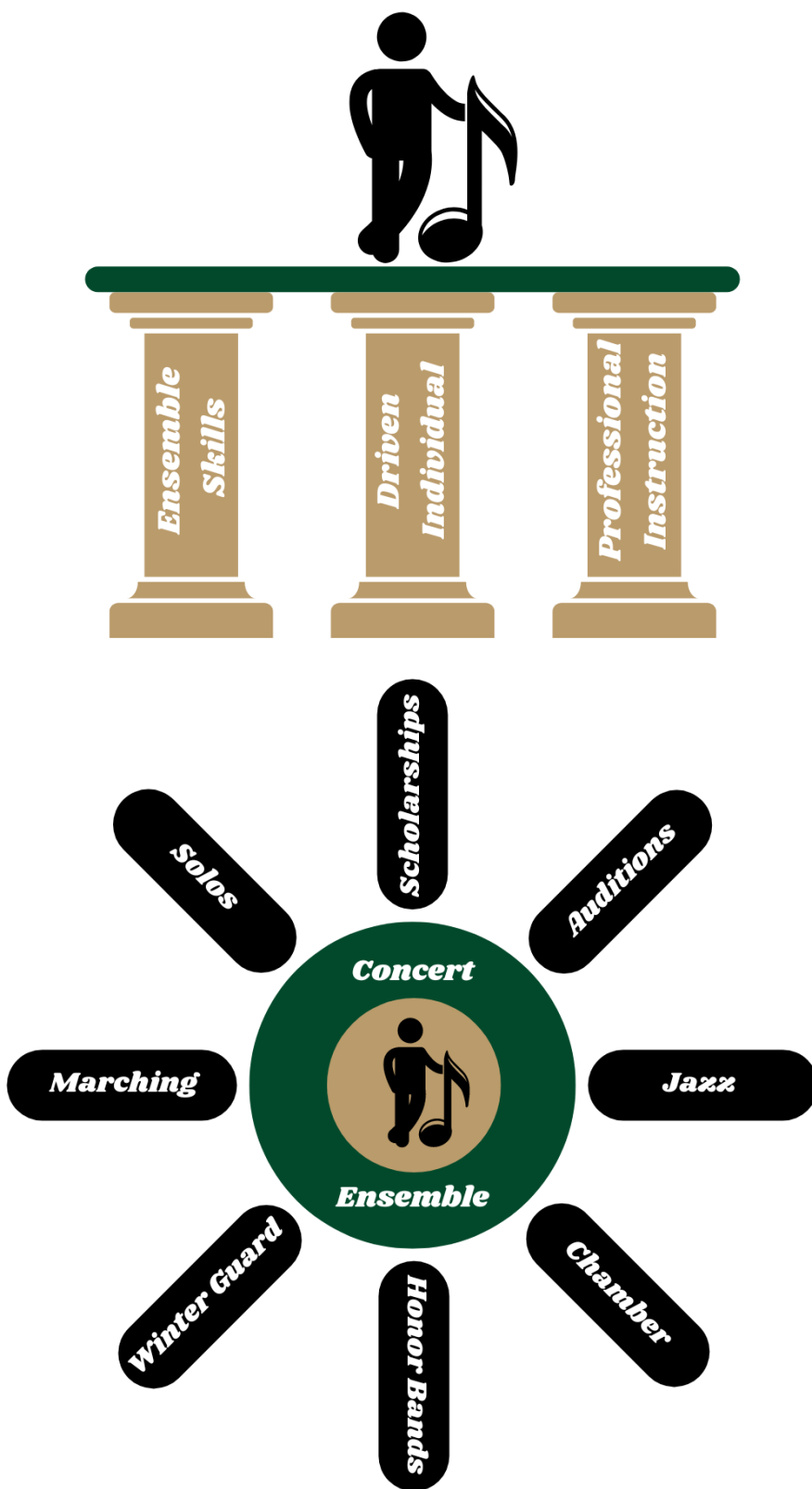
At VHS, we take a “conservatory approach” with our music education. Through individualized, rigorous curriculum, we expect students to reach their full potential. For our students who are interested in a music career, we’ll walk them through the process of auditioning and applying to universities. For our students who are interested in music scholarships (no matter their career choice), we’ll work together to seek out opportunities. For our students who want the tools to create music for a lifetime, we’ll make sure they are well equipped.

No matter the intended outcome, all of our students will find success on their individual journeys in band through creating a stable foundation, supported by work in 3 areas: Ensemble Skills, Individual Drive, Professional Instruction.

Individual Drive is the center pillar and the ultimate source of our success. More opportunities become available for students who are driven and work hard. The musical quality of our ensemble improves drastically as the quality of each individual increases. **Ensemble Skills** refers to the “team work” component. As students fulfill their individual responsibilities, they can focus more of their attention on effective communication within the ensemble, understanding the roles of both themselves and others. From marching band staff to masterclass and private instructors, we’re committed to providing **Professional Instruction**. Great instructors give our students the tools they need to be successful in every musical setting.

With the individual musician as our focus, we then work to develop ensemble skills in the “concert” setting. The skills developed here can be easily transferred to just about any musical ensemble or setting possible.

The Villages High School Band
“Conservatory Approach”



Expectations of a Buffalo Musician

Be Kind Be Positive Work Hard

- Practice! The HAPPIEST band student is one who is improving through regular practice. Make a real effort to improve and establish a productive practice routine.
- Be early and on time for all rehearsals/performances.
- Treat your rehearsal space with care. Leave a room better than you found it.
- Come to rehearsal with a good attitude... and a pencil!
- Remain focused and maintain a strong academic standing in all coursework.
- Use your cell phones responsibly as a tool for learning.
- Keep your instrument in good working order by completing routine maintenance.
- Assume responsibility for your actions.
- Respect yourself, others, and your equipment.
- Have a BLAST!



Course Offerings

To be considered a member of the VHS Band Program, all students MUST be enrolled in their appropriate CORE band class. This is where the “core” of our learning takes place.

- Wind Players (woodwinds & brass) → sign up for Instrumental Ensemble (Concert Band)
 - Instrumental Ensemble 1 - 1302460 - 9th Grade
 - Instrumental Ensemble 2 - 1302470 - 10th Grade
 - Instrumental Ensemble 3 - 1302480 - 11th Grade
 - Instrumental Ensemble 4 Honors - 1302490 - 12th Grade
- Percussionists → sign up for Instrumental Techniques (Percussion Class)
 - Instrumental Techniques 1 (P) - 1302420 - 9th Grade
 - Instrumental Techniques 2 (P) - 1302430 - 10th Grade
 - Instrumental Techniques 3 (P) - 1302440 - 11th Grade
 - Instrumental Techniques 4 (P) Honors - 1302450 - 12th Grade
- Piano, Bass, & Guitar Players → audition for Jazz Ensemble (Jazz Band)
 - Jazz Ensemble 1 - 1302500 - 9th Grade
 - Jazz Ensemble 2 - 1302510 - 10th Grade
 - Jazz Ensemble 3 - 1302520 - 11th Grade
 - Jazz Ensemble 4 Honors - 1302530 - 12th Grade

Fine Arts Academy

The Fine Arts Academy provides students a progressive pathway to study visual and performing arts. During the senior year, students may complete their two course fine arts concentration by blending courses from the different fine arts disciplines. Recommended music courses include Jazz Ensemble, Percussion Class, AP Music Theory, and/or Chorus.



Florida Seal of Fine Arts Program

Seniors who meet [this criteria](#) will receive a special seal on their diplomas when they graduate. Starting with the 2025-2026 school year, students who earn the seal will also earn a cord to wear at graduation.

Ensemble Descriptions

Concert Band

This is our primary performing ensemble. All wind players and percussionists are members by simply being enrolled in their core band class. Students are expected to prepare for and perform at Concert MPA and 4 concerts throughout the school year. Up to three after-school rehearsals will precede each concert. All rehearsals and performances are graded and required.

Students who play flute, clarinet, alto sax, trumpet, and trombone are expected to own or rent their instruments. Larger instruments (bass clarinet, tenor sax, bari sax, french horn, euphonium, tuba, & percussion) will be supplied by the school at no charge. All students must own supplies required to maintain and perform their instrument effectively (page 11).

Students must purchase required performance attire. Unless otherwise noted, this will be worn at all performances. Once purchased, attire is student-owned and may be used year after year as long as it remains in good condition.

Jazz Band

Jazz Band is an auditioned ensemble that students may take in addition to their core band class. Designed to be an intensive study of all jazz styles (swing, rock, funk, and latin), students can expect to learn and develop advanced techniques on their instruments including improvisation. Students can expect to perform at Jazz MPA, concerts, and pop-up gigs throughout the year. All rehearsals and performances are graded and required. Unless otherwise noted, performance attire will mirror concert band attire.

Marching Buffalo

Performing throughout the community, our Marching Buffalo serve as the face of our band program. All band students are expected to fully participate unless they are involved in a Fall sport, activity, or extraneous circumstance that directly conflicts. These students must submit a [Marching Band Opt-Out Form](#) for approval. If approved, full marching band participation is waived, but students are still expected to participate in events when their schedule allows. The marching band season is equivalent to a Fall Sport, running from mid-July to the beginning of November and is 100% extra-curricular. See [Master Calendar](#) for detailed schedule. Students are expected to attend Summer Band Camp and all rehearsals and events.

The marching band participation fee for the 2026-2027 school year is \$75. In addition, the purchase of spirit packs is required and includes items/attire that will be worn throughout the season. Sports physicals must also be obtained and submitted prior to participation.

Winter Guard

Winter Guard is a competitive, performance-based activity available to students during the winter months and first part of the 2nd semester. Participation is 100% extra curricular. While this activity falls under the “band” umbrella, our Color Guard Instructor, Ms. Jessica Taylor, oversees all aspects of the program.

Attendance Policy

Members of The Villages High School Band are expected to attend **ALL** required rehearsals, masterclasses, field trips, and performances for their respective ensembles. Every member of each ensemble plays an important role in our overall success.

Planning ahead and communication are expected. Please review our VHS Bands Calendar that can be found on [Mr. Campbell's VHS Teacher Connection Page](#). At least a 2-weeks notice will be given for any calendar changes. In respect to family planning, any calendar changes within 14 days of an event will not be considered mandatory.

As soon as you are aware of an upcoming absence, please notify Mr. Campbell via email. Email MUST come from a parent OR from the student with a parent CC'd to the email.

Unexcused absences or “no shows” are not permitted. If a student attends school, it's expected that they attend an after-school music event that day. If a student is absent from school, communication is still expected. **Work conflicts are not excusable.** Unexcused or excessive absences may result in poor grades, removal from performances, and/or dismissal from the program.

Grading Policy

Practice - 30% - Students will receive one “rehearsal skills” grade each week. To earn a 100%, students must show up to class/rehearsal prepared and consistently meet the expectations outlined on page 6.

Mastery - 70% - Grades in this category include, but are not limited to, playing assignments, written assignments, major rehearsals, and performances.

Each quarter includes at least 1 major performance grade:

- Q1 - Fall Concert
- Q2 - Winter Concert
- Q3 - Pre-MPA Concert & MPA
- Q4 - Spring Concert

Missed Assignment - In the event of a missed assignment, rehearsal, or performance (excused or unexcused), a grade of “0” will be given. The grade may be changed once the assignment has been completed. Mr. Campbell will handle the requests for make-up assignments on a case-by-case basis.

Band Room Procedures

The use of band facilities is a privilege.

- Students are to only be in the band room when a director or staff is present.
- No horseplay in or around the room.
- All equipment is off limits to anyone not trained to use them.
- Instrument lockers are for instruments and accessories only. During the marching band season, a small bag of athletic clothing and water bottle/jug may be kept in your locker during the school day. No personal belongings are to be left overnight.
- No food in the band room! Bottled water is permitted during rehearsals.
- Students may not open up exterior doors to let anyone in, period!
- Students are welcome to use the band room and practice room facilities before or after-school as long as the band room is open. On days the band room is closed after-school, students still remaining on campus must report to after care or another school activity no later than 2:50pm.

Classroom/Rehearsal Procedures

- Be in your seat, with instrument, music, pencil, and accessories no later than 3 minutes after the tardy bell rings.
- Be engaged. Allow learning to take place without disrupting the process (no talking).
- We play together. No playing out of turn or during instruction.
- The main purpose of rehearsals is learning how our roles fit in with others. Individual preparation takes place outside of class.
- Daily announcements are made at the beginning and end of rehearsals.

Equipment Use

Large or specialty instruments (oboe, bass clarinet, tenor sax, bari sax, french horn, euphonium, tuba, marching brass, and percussion) are provided for students to use at no charge. A very limited amount of smaller or lower cost instruments (flute, clarinet, alto sax, trumpet, trombone) are available, but these are really designed to be used as spares or for students who financially aren't able to rent/purchase their own. Students are expected to respect and maintain school-owned equipment at all times. Families should expect to cover repair/replacement costs due to mistreatment. An [Instrument Rental Agreement](#) must be signed by the student and parent/guardian prior to issue. Students are to return all equipment and school-owned classroom materials such as original music and method books at the end of the school year.

Supplies/Materials

Students are expected to have the following accessories in addition to their instrument:

- Flutes
 - Tuning rod
 - [Swab](#)
 - [Soft polishing cloth](#)
 - [Precision screwdriver set](#)
- Clarinets & Saxophones
 - Min. of 4 working reeds (Vandoren 3 strength)
 - Reed guard/case
 - Neck strap (optional for clarinet)
 - Swab
 - [Soft polishing cloth](#)
 - Mouthpiece brush
 - Cork grease
 - [Precision screwdriver set](#)
- Brass Instruments
 - Valve oil (trumpets, euphoniums, tubas)
 - Rotor oil (horns, f-attachment trombones)
 - Slide-O-Mix slide lubricant (trombones)
 - Tuning slide grease
 - Mouthpiece brush
 - Cleaning snake
 - [Soft polishing cloth](#)
 - Straight Mute (trumpets, trombones)
- Percussionists
 - Vic Firth SD1 General Drumsticks
 - Practice pad
 - Stick bag

Instrument Rentals

For students who play flute, clarinet, alto sax, trumpet, or trombone, renting is a great option until you're ready to purchase your own. [Music & Arts](#) is a great resource for rentals!

Mouthpiece & Instrument Upgrades - Recommendations

It's no secret that the quality and specs of equipment matters. Most high school players quickly outgrow beginner student level instruments to the point they can actually hold them back. Beginning level instruments are built to be tough and give students quick success with minimal effort. The primary purpose of intermediate and professional instruments is to sound great... period.

If you're interested in upgrading your sound, but don't want to spend lots of money, consider upgrading your mouthpiece. An upgraded mouthpiece can do wonders, even on a beginner level instrument. If you have the opportunity, try before you buy!

Mouthpieces

- Clarinets - Vandoren 5RV Lyre, Rovner Versa Ligature
- Bass Clarinet - Clark W Fobes Basso NOVA, Rovner Versa Ligature
- Saxophones - Selmer Paris S80 C*, Rovner Dark Ligature
- Trumpets - Bach 3C
- Horns - Holton Farkus MDC
- Trombones - Schilke 51C4 (know the difference between small and large shank)
- Euphoniums - Schilke 51D (know the difference between small and large shank)
- Tubas - Conn Helleberg Standard

Instruments

- Flutes - Open holes
 - Brands: Yamaha, Gemeinhardt, Pearl, Haynes, Powell
- Clarinets - Wooden
 - Brands: Yamaha, Buffet, Backun, Selmer
 - Models: Buffet R13
- Saxophones
 - Brands: Yamaha, Yanigasawa, Selmer
 - Models: Yamaha YAS-62
- Trumpet - Medium-large - large bore
 - Brands: Bach, Shires, Yamaha, B&S, Schilke
 - Models: Bach Stradivarius or S.E. Shires Q-Series
- Horn
 - Brands: Yamaha, Holton, Conn, Yamaha, Hans Hoyer
 - Models: Holton 179 or Conn 8D
- Trombones - F-attachment large bore
 - Brands: Yamaha, S.E. Shires, Conn, Bach, Getzen
 - Models: Conn 88H, Bach 42BO, or S.E. Shires Q-Series
- Euphoniums - Large bore, compensating
 - Brands: Yamaha, S.E. Shires, Besson, Miraphone
- Tuba - 4 valves

- Brands: Yamaha, Miraphone, Meinl Weston,

Fees/Cost

Concert Attire

High school band students are required to purchase and maintain their own performance attire through Southeastern Performance Apparel. In an effort to help families save money, we put in one large group order at the beginning of each school year. Once purchased, attire is student-owned and may be used year after year as long as it fits and remains in good condition. Please note that attire arrives unhemmed and may need to be altered.

Women's Options (jumpsuit or dress):

- Nico Jumpsuit (\$76) - <https://sepapparel.com/nico-concert-choir-jumpsuit.html>
- Everett Dress (\$85) - <https://sepapparel.com/everett-concert-choir-dress.html>

Men's Tuxedo Ensemble (\$103):

- <https://sepapparel.com/full-tuxedo-ensemble-with-bow-tie-cummerbund.html>
- Notch tuxedo coat, wing collar tuxedo shirt, flat front pants, satin tie, & cummerbund

Footwear & Socks

- All footwear must appear dressy black and must be all black. No tennis shoes, converse, or casual shoes are permitted. Drillmasters (marching band shoes) may be worn as long as they are clean and in good condition.
- Long black socks are required for those wearing tuxes.

Marching Band Participation Fee

The marching band participation fee for the 2026-2027 school year is \$75. This fee mirrors athletics, helping to offset the cost of travel and food costs.

Spirit Packs

Band students will be required to purchase a spirit pack that includes required attire items that may be worn for certain events throughout the school year and marching band season.

Required items may include an Under Armour polo, athletic shorts, a show shirt (t-shirt), and marching band shoes. To help save money, we'll put in one large group order during the Summer or at the very beginning of each school year. Optional items such as hats, backpacks, and hoodies will also be available for purchase.

Trips

Any special band trips, including the annual overnight Spring Trip, are student funded. That being said, we are fortunate enough to be able to use a portion from concert ticket sales to greatly bring down student cost. Students may also use Buffalo Discount Card proceeds to bring down individual costs for the Spring Trip (see next page).

Financial Aid

It's important that every student who has the desire to be a contributing member in our band program has the opportunity to do so. Below are some available ways for students to earn funding to participate. To request Financial Aid, please reach out to Mr. Campbell.

Buffalo Discount Cards

The Athletics Department graciously allows us to participate in their Buffalo Discount Card fundraiser. All of our band students are encouraged (not required) to participate. Proceeds help our program and also have the opportunity to help you.

Priced at \$15 each, profit (50% or \$7.50) from the first 10 cards you sell goes to help our band program. Profit for every card (\$7.50) sold beyond the first 10 is earmarked for the student to help bring down individual costs for upcoming/future band trips.

Financial Aid Application

A Financial Aid Request Form is available upon request. Please reach out to Mr. Campbell directly. Financial aid will be considered based on need and available funds.

Uniform Policy

During school hours, unless otherwise noted, students are expected to adhere to Uniform policy guidelines outlined by VHS while in the band room and involved in band activities.

Itineraries for each band event will specify attire requirements for that specific event. In events where formal concert attire or marching band uniforms aren't appropriate, we will use some combination of the items from the spirit pack and/or school attire.

Concert Attire

Students are expected to purchase and maintain their own concert attire. Attire that fits and is in good condition may be used year after year. It is the students' responsibility to take care of and clean attire between performances. Attire must be worn appropriately, appearing clean and wrinkle-free for all events and performances. Black dress shoes must be worn with formal performance attire with long black socks when appropriate.

Marching Band Uniforms

Marching Band uniforms are provided by the school. These will be kept at school and maintained and cleaned by the band program. Appropriate athletic attire (spirit pack items) must be worn underneath the uniform as specified. Marching band shoes and long black socks are a part of the full uniform. Unless direction is given by Mr. Campbell to modify the uniform, the full uniform must be worn at all times. Students must have hair pulled back and out of their face when in full uniform.

Individual Opportunities

Any student enrolled in band has the opportunity to participate in certain individual events. While participation is not required, it is highly recommended as students are encouraged to build their “musical resume” to open up doors for scholarships and future opportunities.

Florida State University Tri-State Band Festival

Taking place each year towards the end of November/early December on the FSU campus, this intensive musical experience brings in upwards to 250 top band students from all over the Southeastern United States. Open to 11th & 12th grade students. Students are selected through director nomination. Chances for selection improve as music resumes develop.

All-District Band & All-District Jazz Band

In November, our students will have the opportunity to audition for All-District Band (Concert Band) & All-District Jazz Band. Through the audition process, the top musicians from Sumter, Marion, and Lake counties will be ranked and selected to participate in their respective multi-day event, giving a public concert at the end. All-District Band takes place in January. All-District Jazz Band takes place in April.

All-State Band

Our top students have the opportunity to audition for the Florida All-State Band in September. This event represents the pinnacle of all individual band events in Florida. Students earning All-State status earn a free overnight trip to Tampa in January to participate in the All-State Band event and concert as part of the FMEA Conference.

Florida Music Educators Association Conference

In addition to All-State Band, there are also a few other opportunities for students at the FMEA Conference in January. The FBA Honor Band & Student Conference Experience are available to students through director nomination. Chances for selection improve as music resumes develop.

Solo & Ensemble

Solo & Ensemble is an MPA event for students and small groups that takes place in April. This event presents a great opportunity for students to further their musical skills. Students first choose a group (if applicable) and then a piece of music from a list. They'll work to prepare and refine the musical selection before performing it at the S&E event for an adjudicator who awards a rating.

... and More!

There are MANY opportunities for musical growth that take place year-round including camps and workshops both near and far. Do your research and find something that interests you!

Travel Expectations

There are many opportunities to travel throughout the school year in Band. In March, expect to go on an overnight Spring trip! Our students involved in Marching Band will especially travel often to away games, competitions, etc...

To be eligible to travel, students must maintain a good academic standing in all of their coursework and meet attendance requirements. In addition, students must not have received out-of-school suspension or excessive disciplinary action while at school. The director reserves the right to prohibit students from traveling based on the criteria mentioned above.

Parent Involvement Time

Parents, we are happy to help you earn your required P.I. Time! We depend on great parents to serve as everything from concert ushers to chaperones. Look out for lists that will be sent out throughout the school year when volunteer needs arise.

After volunteering, attending a meeting, or making a donation, parents are responsible for logging their time by submitting the [P.I. Time for Band!](#) Form

Stay Informed

Band Blasts

Email communication sent out periodically to parents and students. These Band Blasts are archived on Mr. Campbell's Teacher Connection Page for review. Please reach out to Mr. Campbell if you are not receiving Band Blasts!

[Mr. Campbell's Teacher Connection Page](#)

Miss a Band Blast or need to access the Master Calendar or an important form through the VHS Bands Hub? This is your one-stop shop!

[Band App](#)

This is our main communication for students to stay in the know. Parents are encouraged to join too!!

Social Media

Be sure to follow us on social media!

- [Facebook](#) - The Villages Buffalo Bands
- [Instagram](#) - The Villages Buffalo Bands