

## Competition Information

### I. What are my kids doing on Saturdays?

Saturdays during the fall students will be performing the current year marching band music and drill program. Every Saturday a different high school hosts the competition, which are sponsored by US Bands. Every marching band performance is judged and receives a point score based upon many criteria. As the season progresses bands typically increase their score (practice makes perfect!). At the end of the season there is a regional competition. Mr. Wilson generally has the students report to the high school for practice first, and then the students are bussed to and from the competitions. Report time varies, and Mr. Wilson will inform the students. Plan for your children to be busy the entire day/night.

### II. Program Theme, Music and Drill

Mr. Wilson, our Band Director, arranges the music and picks the current year theme. A drill is a set of precise steps and movements coordinated to music and written specifically for our band. Kevin Serfass is contracted and works privately with Mr. Wilson to write the drills. Kevin has no contact with our students or parents, but you may hear his name mentioned. Erin Serfass is our Color Guard director and is responsible for coordinating the routines that the color guard will perform with the band. Mr. Wilson and Erin together decide on color guard costumes and flags/accessories.

### III. What is a Circuit?

There are a number of organizations that arrange competitions. The Raven Regiment is part of the USBands circuit. USBands exists to serve music programs of all shapes and sizes, to assist in their development, and to recognize excellence in student performance. The goal is to provide students the opportunity to perform in magnificent venues, with constructive, educational feedback from the very best adjudicators in marching music. Unlike other types of competitive athletic activities, high school marching band students tend to cheer on their competitors and will come out to support them after their own performance.

### IV. Classes of Bands

“**Festival Class**” is a non-competitive setting, in which bands receive commentary and feedback, but no scores/placements are announced.

“**A Class**” is generally for bands in the process of building or rebuilding a program, new to the competitive setting, or other circumstances impacting the program. A Class bands are adjudicated on a scale representing *fundamental to intermediate skills*.

“**Open Class**” is generally populated by seasoned bands that demonstrate expanded skill sets. Open bands are adjudicated on a scale supporting *intermediate to advanced skills*.

Raven Regiment is an “A Class” band.

## **V. Group Sizes**

In addition to splitting bands based on skill sets, USBands also separates bands into group sizes, based on the total number of performers on the field.

Group I (1-38)

Group II (39-53)

Group III (54-70)

Group IV (71-95)

Group V (96-130)

Group VI (131+)

Raven Regiment is a Group III Band. We currently have 65 students, which includes Pit, Band and Color Guard (including Drum Major, Color Guard Captains and Section Captains).

What is the pit? The pit (or front ensemble) is stationary in the front of the field. This is the portion of the band that does not march and is not color guard. This includes stationary instruments such as xylophone.

What is the battery? The battery consists of the snares, tenors, bass drums, and sometimes cymbals that march on the field.

## **VI. Types of Shows**

**Silver Star (Local Show)** is an event that utilizes 4 judges. The judging categories are Music Individual (field), Visual Performance (box), Overall Effect (box), Music Ensemble (box). These judges will either be on the field during the performance or up near the announcer box where they can get an overview.

**Gold Star (Local Show)** events occur when the Host school chooses to add Guard and Percussion judges to their event. The Guard and Percussion scores do NOT factor into the overall score; they are caption awards only. The judging categories are Music Individual (field), Visual Performance (box), Overall Effect (box), Music Ensemble (box), Color Guard (box), Percussion (box).

## **US BANDS Regional**

When deemed appropriate, USBands may choose to provide an additional OVERALL EFFECT judge to a large Regional event. In this instance, the average of the two Effect judges counts for the Effect score. For Raven Regiment this regional competition is the NJ Sate Championship held in Union NJ.

Rhapsody is a Gold Star competition event that RHS Raven Regiment hosts. While the Raven Regiment will perform, usually host schools are not scored. An announcement is made before every band performance. The announcement will state “school name take the filed *in competition*” or “school name take the filed *in exhibition*”. Exhibitions are not scored.

## **VII. How are the Scores Calculated?**

The USBands adjudication system places more emphasis on performance and musical repertoire, rather than design and visual components. While every aspect of a band’s performance is taken into consideration, this emphasis ensures that the performers are rewarded for their own achievement on the field. Judges record their observations and improvement suggestions, and the band director reviews this information. The band director will pass along this information to the band and use it to improve performance throughout the season.

USBands uses a 5-Box criteria system on all adjudication sheets. Each box includes a range of numbers that move upward during the season (sliding scale). For more information about scoring see <http://yea.org/docman/usbands/fall-1/18-adjudicator-guide/file> sliding scale section.

## **VIII. What are some of the details judges look for? (To be added...)**

Music Individual

Visual Performance

Overall Effect

Music Ensemble

Color Guard

Percussion

Trophy’s are awarded to 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> place bands for each class and group size.

## **IX. Where & When are the Competitions?**

Schedule information can be found on the Raven Regiment Website <http://ravenregiment.org/>. The US Bands website has a schedule of all fall events, which

schools are competing, the schedule so you can estimate when our school will be performing. Scoring results are also posted here. See <http://trigonroad.com/yea/bandInfo.cfm?id=3326> for the schedule of Raven Regiment competitions and locations. The link is also posted on the Raven regiment website [www.ravenregiment.org](http://www.ravenregiment.org).

Timing is often adjusted the week before the event. It's best to check step off times just before you head out. Step off time is what time the band steps onto the field to begin their program. It is best to arrive at least 30 - 40 minutes before step off to find parking and seats. **It is so impressive to watch these high school students perform! PLEASE consider going to as many competitions as possible!** Car pool with others to make the drive more enjoyable!

#### **X. Why is there a Fee for Admission?**

Every host school must pay US Bands a fee based upon the type of show and number of bands competing. This fee covers the judges required at the event. These competitions are also typically fundraisers for the host school. Fundraising comes from multiple sources: admission fees, concession food sales and miscellaneous product sales (t-shirts, etc.). For a minor fee (\$1-\$2) you may also send your student &/or the band an air gram or candy gram. An air gram is a short message read over the loud speaker while the band is taking the field. A candy gram is delivered to your student after their performance. Upon arriving at the competition you will see a table selling these items.

#### **XI. How can I get into the Competitions FREE?**

Easy...**Volunteer** to assist in moving the pit equipment onto & off the field. The pit equipment is on wheels and is manually pushed. Typically we require 4-5 adults for Pit Crew for each competition.

#### **XII. How do I find other Raven Regiment Parents at these Events?**

Text me 609-915-1912. I am at every competition. Please join us to cheer on our students together. Many people sitting together make a loud noise!

#### **XIII. What should I Bring to a Competition?**

Check the weather!! Sweatshirts, coats, gloves and/or raincoats may be needed. Seat cushions (available at stores like Five Below) can also help as those stainless steel bleachers can get cold and hard! You may want to bring money for entrance fee, air or candy grams and concessions.

Information obtained from: <https://yea.org/docman/usbands/fall-1/117-usbands-2016-fall-participant-guide/file>