

On Saturday, January 7, 2012, over 700 students from Southeast Iowa arrived at Fairfield High School in hopes of being accepted to attend the SEIBA Honor Band Festival. Each year, the Southeast Iowa Bandmasters Association sponsors the auditions in Fairfield. This year, there were 24 audition centers, with approximately 400 students auditioning for two junior high bands; nearly 300 students auditioning for the high school concert band; and about 75 students auditioning for the high school jazz band.

The SEIBA festival will be held at Iowa City West High School on Saturday, January 21st. The students rehearse with guest conductors during the day, and give an evening concert. The junior high bands will be conducted by Mr. Guy Blair, retired band director of Pella; and Bard Mackey, director at Hansen Elementary School in Cedar Falls. Guest conductors for the other bands include: jazz band – Victor Goines, Northwestern College in Evanston, IL as well as education consultant for Jazz at Lincoln Center; and high school concert band – Michael Galemo, Iowa State University Director of Bands in Ames.

Students in junior high are expected to prepare chromatic and nine major scales, and two assigned etudes. High school students prepare two assigned etudes, chromatic and all major scales, and a solo excerpt of their choice. Competition is tough, as only about half of the students auditioning are accepted.