



**WSMA State Marching Band Championships
Director and Adjudicator Handbook • Revised September 2017**

Please Note: WSMA regulates and sponsors only the State Marching Band Championships. The following rules and regulations apply to this annual event. Host schools sponsor their own independent marching band shows and may or may not adopt the following rules.

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I. Purpose of WSMA State Marching Band Championships

- A. Provide opportunity for performance by marching bands from WSMA-member schools.
- B. Recognize and support marching band as an important component of a comprehensive instrumental music program.

II. Eligibility

- A. The WSMA State Marching Band Championships is open to all bands from any WSMA-member school.
- B. All student members must be enrolled in the same WSMA-member school or affiliated middle/junior high member school. Students must regularly attend and participate in their school marching band program.
- C. Marching band is defined as all members of the participating unit including playing members, auxiliary personnel (flags, rifles, etc.) and command personnel (drum majors, color guard captains).
- D. Co-op Marching Bands are not allowed in the WSMA Marching Band Championships.
- E. If WSMA learns of an eligibility rule violation the day of or the days following the State Marching Band Championships, the scores; placement and awards will be expunged for that band. Their performance will be classified as “Exhibition Only.” The official recap sheet will be adjusted to reflect the new placement order.

III. Band Class

- A. Each participating band will be assigned a class based on their school’s total enrollment as reported to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction by the school. Class is determined by dividing the total number of participating bands into four approximately equal numbers of bands in Class A, AA, AAA, and AAAA. Classes will be determined in February and emailed to participating directors.

B. Competitive bands will be assigned to classes as illustrated in the table below:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Class AAAA | 7 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| Class AAA | 7 | 7 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| Class AA | 7 | 7 | 7 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 10 | 10 |
| Class A | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 10 |
| Total Bands | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 |

C. Bands participating in the State Marching Band Championships as Comment Only or Non-Competitive shall be placed in a class solely on the school size and placed at the beginning of the assigned class. Comment Only and Non-Competitive bands shall not be considered in dividing competitive bands into the four classes.

IV. Entry Options

- A. The following entry options are available to marching bands for participation in the WSMA State Marching Band Championships:
- i. Competitive - Ranking and rating are given and announced.
 - ii. Comments Only - No ranking or ratings are given or announced.
 - iii. Non-competitive - Numbered score will be given but not announced.
Non-competitive bands will not be ranked within their assigned class.
 - iv. Festival Class - Award Divisions given based on a Festival Format.

V. Scheduling

- A. The WSMA Marching Band Committee will create the schedule of participating bands in random order within their assigned class in accordance with the method agreed upon by the participating directors. The schedule will be posted on the WSMA web site by April 1.
- B. The State Marching Band Championships will be placed on the Saturday of Week 15 as determined by the National Federation of High Schools (WIAA) calendar.
- C. Any bands registering after April 1st will be assigned at the beginning of the assigned class.
- D. Novice Class is open to any eligible marching band that wishes to enter the WSMA State Marching Band Championships for the first time or with a new band director. Novice Class bands are not eligible for caption awards unless more than four Novice Class bands enter in one year. Novice Class bands are eligible for division awards.
- E. On the designated Saturday each year, the WSMA Marching Band Championships will begin at a mutually agreed upon time between directors, site hosts, Event Director and WSMA Program Director. The participating directors, Marching Band committee and WSMA Board of Directors determine the performance order of classes, placement of exhibition performances and the placement of awards ceremonies in the schedule.

VI. Facility

- A. The performance field will be a regulation-sized football field, 160 feet deep by 300 feet long. Field boundaries will be lined every five yards.
- B. NCAA and high school hash marks may be present on the field.
- i. NCAA inserts are aligned with the single yard hash mark and are 32 steps from the sidelines with 20 steps between.
 - ii. WIAA inserts are not aligned with the single yard hash marks and are 28 steps from the sidelines with 28 steps between.
- C. Visible markers will denote the corners of the field, and the front and back of the 50-yard line. Yard markers will be placed every 10 yards on the field.

- D. Field vehicles should be equipped with wide, air filled tires to move equipment to and from the football field. All wheeled equipment should use air filled tires whenever possible.
- E. Field Commanders may go anywhere on the field.

VII. Performance Requirements

- A. The director and school are expected to abide by all Federal Copyright Law when preparing the fall marching band show.
- B. No band may use the competitive field for practice the day of the event.
Penalty: Disqualification.
- C. Bands will be assigned a warm-up area prior to performance. The designated warm-up area will be away from the aural range of the competitive field as much as the facility allows. Any band that warms up in an area other than the assigned destination within aural range of the competitive field will be penalized. Penalty: 5.0 points.
- D. Bands will be scheduled in 15-minute intervals. Each band must report to the field at its assigned time. Penalty: 0.5 points per minute or fraction thereof.
- E. All bands must be in performance for a minimum of 7 minutes. Performances lasting less than 7 minutes will be penalized. Penalty: 0.1 point per 5-second violation up to a maximum of 2 minutes.
- F. All bands, including equipment, must be off the field at the conclusion of the 15-minute interval. Penalty: 0.5 points per minute or fraction thereof.
- G. Directors may conduct an on field warm-up but must then exit the field.
- H. A standard pre-performance announcement will be read at the beginning of the show. The announcer will read the following statement when it appears that the drum major(s) are ready:
 - “Joining us from [Name of City] please welcome the [Name of Band]. Musical selections include [Insert Show Title & Music]. WSMA is proud to introduce [Names of Drum Majors] and the [Name of Band] in Championships Competition.”
- I. Drum major(s) should acknowledge the Press Box to signify the band is ready.
- J. Timing will begin with the first note of music or the first step by a performing member following the acknowledgement of the drum major(s).
- K. The Post-Performance Announcement may include previous band honors, all director and staff names, and thanks to parents/school administration. Post-Performance Announcements should last no longer than 90 seconds.
- L. Field entrance may be made from the left, back and/or right boundaries using the press box as the point of perspective. The band may form anywhere on or off the competitive field. Bands are free to conclude their performance on or off the competitive field as long as all other requirements are met.
- M. Adults or non-uniformed personnel may place props and grounded equipment while the preceding band is leaving the field.
- N. Adults and band staff are not allowed on the field or behind any props during the performance. Penalty: 2.0 points. All equipment must be removed immediately following the band’s performance while the band is exiting the field.
- O. The use of amplification/electronics is permitted as part of the marching band’s performance. Electricity will be provided at field level but bands must supply extension cords.
- P. The use of lights-out routines, live animals, pyrotechnics of any kind including fireworks, discharge of firearms or any other hazardous materials is not permitted. Penalty: Disqualification
- Q. Mechanized vehicles are not allowed on the competitive field at any time.
Penalty: 2.0 points.
- R. Drones or any remote-controlled helicopter, aircraft or similar items are not allowed. Penalty: Disqualification

- S. Use of the American Flag is optional. If used, it must be treated according to the American Legion Flag Code. Penalty: 0.1 point per violation.
- T. Any infraction or improper conduct by band or audience members for which no rule is given may be grounds for warning or penalty by the WSMA Program Director. Penalty: Minimum of 0.1 points to a maximum of disqualification.
- U. If distractions occur in the press box, on the field or a situation arises that could endanger or compromise the participants, the WSMA Program Director will delay the event until the situation is rectified.
- V. As much as the weather allows, the field must remain in the same condition for each band's performance. Effects such as streamers, confetti, environmental effects and other items that change the fields condition making it unsafe for future performers must be removed completely and immediately following the performance. Penalty: Minimum of 2.0 points to a maximum of disqualification as deemed appropriate by the WSMA Program Director.
- W. Bands must exit the field by the end of the 15-Minute interval. A penalty of 0.1 second per 5 seconds past the maximum time may be enforced, per the WSMA Program Director.

VIII. Adjudication

- A. WSMA State Marching Band Championships adjudicators are expected to follow these procedures using the provided evaluation forms:
 - i. Comments should be written on the front of the sheet while judging during the performance.
 - ii. Scores should be determined by using the rubric form for the assigned caption. Be certain your comments and point spreads can be justified using these descriptors.
 - iii. Use provided Tote Sheet.
 - iv. Judge the performance of the day.
 - v. Judge all units on the same scale regardless of class.
 - vi. Stay within caption in all written and verbal comments.
 - vii. Identify what you hear/see, explain why you feel it is happening, and provide constructive comments on how to fix the issue or how to reach the next level of excellence.
 - viii. All verbal and written comments should be appropriate for teachers to share with students, parents and school officials.
 - ix. Weather conditions may be considered when adjudicating.
- B. In addition to a written form, each judge will record verbal comments. The recording device will run continuously throughout the performance. Judges should remain within the assigned caption in both verbal and written comments.
- C. Judges will be assigned to evaluate the WSMA State Marching Band Championships as follows:

| Caption Area | Number of Judges | Points | Score is: |
|-----------------------|------------------|--------|-----------------------|
| Music Performance | 1 - in press box | 20.0 | Determined by 1 judge |
| Music General Effect | 2 - in press box | 25.0 | Average of 2 judges |
| Percussion | 1 - in press box | 5.0 | Determined by 1 judge |
| Visual Performance | 1 - in press box | 20.0 | Determined by 1 judge |
| Visual General Effect | 2 - in press box | 25.0 | Average of 2 judges |
| Auxiliary/Color Guard | 1 - in press box | 5.0 | Determined by 1 judge |

- D. Band directors are not permitted to contact judges at the event prior to their performance. Penalty: Disqualification. Directors may speak with the Event Director at the event. Directors may contact any judge following the competition.

- E. Judges, runners and State Marching Band officials are the only persons allowed in the press box during the event. All adjudication forms will be given to drum majors during the Awards Ceremony. Judges' verbal comments will be available in the school's dropbox shortly after their performance.

IX. Awards

- A. Each competing band will receive a division award based on the final score. Division awards are determined as follows:

| Class | 1 st Division | 2 nd Division | 3 rd Division |
|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Novice | 60 - 100 | 30 - 59.99 | 0 - 29.99 |
| All Other Classes | 72.50 - 100 | 35 - 72.49 | 0 - 34.99 |

- B. Caption Awards in each Class with more than four entries will be presented during the Awards Ceremony as follows:

| Caption Award | How the Award is Determined |
|---------------------------|---|
| Best Visual Presentation | Highest score in the class by adding the Visual Performance and Visual General Effect average scores. |
| Best Musical Presentation | Highest score in the class by adding the Music Performance and Music General Effect average scores. |
| Best Percussion | Highest percussion score in the class |
| Best Color Guard | Highest auxiliary/color guard score in the class |

- C. A representative drum major from each participating band is required to participate in the Awards Ceremony for their band class. After the collegiate Marching Band Exhibition, drum majors will be asked to form a line on the field.
- D. Drum majors and field personnel participating in the Awards Ceremony may wear attire appropriate to the weather.
- E. Drum majors are asked to please take at least one step forward when your school is announced. Award presenters will shake your hand and congratulate you. WSMA personnel may take photos during the Awards Ceremony. Other drum majors are permitted (but not required) to salute out of respect for the other band.
- F. Prior to the event, each band will receive a brochure in the mail from a professional photographer company specializing in marching band photos.
- G. The AAAA Best Visual Presentation Award honors the memory and contributions of Doug Greenhalgh, who served on the WSMA State Marching Band Committee for 11 years before his tragic death in October 2005.

X. Audience Information

- A. Tickets are required for entrance to the WSMA State Marching Band Championships. Performers in uniform (or partial uniform) do not need tickets for admission.
- B. Directors will receive a specified number of complimentary tickets for staff members. No more than this specified number would be given to each band.
- C. There are no reserved seats for this event. Spectators may not mark out their seats early in the day for evening performances. If a seat is unoccupied by a spectator for a long period of time, another spectator may use that seat.
- D. Audience members should remain seated during performances. Audience members are also asked to not enter or exit the stadium during a band's performance.

XI. Director Information

- A. The WSMA Program Director is the final authority on interpretation of WSMA State Marching Band Championships rules. If you are not sure about any issue, please contact the WSMA Program Director
- B. If you, one of your students, or fans is injured or suffers any health concern the day of the event, notify the press box immediately. Emergency personnel are present at the event. WSMA or the State Marching Band Championships Committee will not be held responsible for any injuries suffered by any band during the day's activities.
- C. Directors will receive marching band information from WSMA throughout the year.
- D. Event personnel will assist throughout the day. Be patient and know these individuals are providing the best possible service on a very long day.

XII. Weather Emergency Plan

This Weather Emergency Plan is designed for the safety and best interests of all participants at the WSMA State Marching Band Championships.

Before the Day of the Event:

- The WSMA Program Director will provide a cell phone number to all participating directors to be used the day of the event. Directors will also provide a contact cell phone number to WSMA to facilitate communication.
- The host site will reserve an indoor facility for use by the State Marching Band Championships each year.
- The Weather Emergency Plan will be posted on the Marching Band page of the WSMA website at www.wsmamusic.org. The home page of the WSMA website will also include information regarding the event on the day of the WSMA State Marching Band Championships if inclement weather is a consideration.
- If inclement weather is a concern, the WSMA Program Director will contact the National Weather Service and communicate information via e-mail with participating directors.

On the Day of the Event:

- If inclement weather (especially lightning) is a consideration before or during the event, the WSMA Program Director, Event Director, Site Manager and Public Safety will meet. Based on the conditions, site protocol and the information available a decision to remain outdoors or move to the inside facility will be made.
- Any decisions made will be communicated to the directors using all available means including cell phone, webpage postings and the public address system.
- If a delay of the show is necessary, approximate performance times will be announced using all available means.
- The WSMA Program Director, Event Director, Site Manager and Public Safety will continue to monitor the situation as needed as long as the inclement weather continues.
- Every effort will be made to finish a class of bands prior to moving the event indoors.

Facilities:

- If the indoor facility is large enough to accommodate a full performance including drill for all participating bands, the event will be adjudicated utilizing all captions.
- If the indoor facility is not large enough to accommodate drill, all bands will perform a standstill. The Visual Execution caption will not be adjudicated nor included in the final score.
- Whenever possible, the indoor facility will be operated in the same manner as the outdoor facility as it relates to performance, equipment, seating and adjudication.

Audience:

- The selling of tickets may or may not be eliminated at the discretion of the WSMA Program Director.
- Priority seating will be given to the class in performance. Other spectators will be seated as availability and public safety officers allow. If it is necessary to clear the performance area to assist in this process, Public Safety officers will follow internal procedures to assist.
- An Awards Ceremony will be held at the conclusion of each class if the event is held indoors.
- Ticket refunds will only be issued for those who have purchased tickets and have not been able to see any bands perform. Refunds will be issued the day of the event only.

XIII. WSMA State Marching Band Championships Committee

A. The Marching Band Committee shall consist of the following membership:

- i. WSMA Program Director
- ii. WSMA Event Director
- iii. Four directors appointed by WSMA
 - a. Two northern directors
 - b. Two southern directors
- iv. Three at-large directors as voted on by statewide vote, serving a two-year term.

B. Election and Term

- i. The WSMA Program Director and Event Director are committee members at all times and without term limits.
- ii. The four appointments will be determined by the WSMA Program Director, with approval from the WSMA Executive Director. Directors chosen through this process must be leaders in the activity statewide, and must be fully dedicated committee members with 100% attendance at all meetings, including committee and statewide director meetings. Statewide travel is required. Committee appointments will be maintained at the discretion of the WSMA Program Director. Two appointments will be northern directors, and two will be southern directors. Directors interested in an appointed position will notify the WSMA Program Director.
- iii. The three at-large directors will be determined by statewide electronic vote, with two positions elected in even years and one position elected in odd years. These members will serve a two-year term.
- iv. Committee members may serve more than one term.
- v. Ex-Officio or Advisory Members may be appointed to the committee as deemed necessary by the WSMA Program Director and/or elected committee members. These people will have no voting rights.
- vi. Two scheduled meetings are held in Fall and Spring at the convenience of committee members. Other meetings may be called as necessary and at the convenience of the committee.

C. Voting Rights

- i. Each member of the marching band committee will have one vote on all agenda items.
- ii. The WSMA Program Director will not have a vote on agenda items.
- iii. Any member of the marching band committee may abstain from voting on any agenda item.
- iv. No proxy options are possible.
- v. Voting on agenda items may be done during committee meetings.
- vi. When deemed necessary by the Program Director, voting may also be done using mail or e-mail options.
- vii. The marching band committee is deemed as an advisory committee to the WSMA Board of Directors.

D. Elections

- i. Elections for the three at-large positions will take place in October and the committee member's term begins on November 1, running for two years.
- ii. An elected committee member's term will end on October 31.
- iii. Election ballots will be sent and returned via e-mail.
- iv. Directors will self-nominate, submitting a short statement about their candidacy to be shared on the ballot.
- v. If a committee member's band chooses to no longer participate in the marching band championships or if a committee member resigns, that seat on the committee will remain vacant until the following election. The vacancy will be filled for the remainder of the term either by election or appointment, depending on the position that was vacated.

WSMA - Challenging youth to achieve excellence through music.

Wisconsin School Music Association

Located in the Wisconsin Center for Music Education

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