

# Marching Band Judging

## Reason for this document

- This document is intended to explain how marching band judges adjudicate and evaluate bands.
- My intent is to help the event be seen through an adjudicator's eyes and ears.

## Marching Band Judging Rubric & Scoring Values:

- Judging is broken down into the following areas

|                       | California State Band Championship (CSBC) | Bands of America (BOA)          |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Music Performance     | 20%                                       | 28% (14% indiv. / 14% ensemble) |
| Visual Performance    | 20%                                       | 28% (14% indiv. / 14% ensemble) |
| Music General Effect  | 20%                                       | 30%                             |
| Visual General Effect | 20%                                       | 14%                             |
| Percussion            | 10%                                       | -                               |
| Color Guard           | 10%                                       | -                               |

- Music is weighted the heaviest and is broken into 2 areas: performance and effect
  - Performance is how the students execute (musical excellence)
  - Effect is impact
- Visual performance is how the students execute the drill.
- A head judge oversees the process and looks for anomalies in scoring that would need to be addressed prior to reconciling numbers.

## Things to consider:

- Music is the main driver of the scoring rubric - representing 50% of the score in CSBC and 60% of the score in BOA
- Drill and visual effect are given a smaller weight value.
- Different circuits give more or less weight to certain categories. For instance - there are no separate percussion or guard categories or judges in BOA, their performance is part of the overall music, visual, and effect categories.
- Larger bands often score better as they have more depth and better instrumentation (balance of woodwinds/brass/perc).

### **CSBC Division Breakdown:**

- Divisions are broken down based on total number of student performers. There are 6 Divisions in CSBC with **1A** representing the smallest bands and **6A** representing the largest bands. Divisions are determined by the following performer count. (1-35, 36-50, 51-70, 71-100, 101-140, 141 and above).
- Division 6A has no cap, so a band of 141 winds could be competing against a band with 250 or more members.

### **Bands of America Division Breakdown:**

- Divisions are broken down based on 10th-12th grade school enrollment numbers, not band size. There are 4 Divisions in BOA with **A** representing the smallest schools and **AAAA** representing the largest schools. Divisions are determined by the following school enrollment numbers. (less than 600, 601-1325, 1326-1850, 1851 and above).
- Divisions have no band numbers cap, so a band of 10 winds could be competing against a band with 200 or more.

### **Basics of Judging:**

- Judges assess achievement, not growth.
  - You are rewarded for what is on the field, not how much better you are than the week before.
- There is no multiplier for difficulty - meaning, you are rewarded for doing something well (clean) not for doing something difficult.
- Scores from week to week have no correlation.
- Effect (music and visual effect) are “impact” categories. To use an old band teacher phrase, “Music effect is a volume category and general effect is a color guard category.” The bigger the volume the bigger the impact and score. The bigger the guard, the bigger the impact and score.

### **Things to consider:**

- In music effect, it is hard to create the same impact as a wind block that has fifty more musicians and is brass heavy.
- In visual effect, it is hard to create the same impact with fifty less marchers and thirty fewer guard members.
- Even though we are in the same division, we compete against very different size bands and guards.

### **Impact of Design:**

- Design is broken down into music design, visual design, and sound design.
- Design is reflected in the effect categories as well as in percussion and guard. Within these categories the students are judged on content (what they are doing) and excellence (how well they are achieving what was written).
- Design is subjective - and different adjudicators will reward and respond to this in different ways. This is part of the “art” form and is subjective. The students may march the drill correctly and play the music correctly - but the “source materials” (drill & music) may not be to a judge’s liking.

### **Things to consider:**

- A portion of the score has nothing to do with the students and how they execute their materials - it is in the show design, which is subjective and not in the students’ control.