



2025

Colorado Bandmasters Association  
Marching Band Procedures  
And  
Policies

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## Section 1: Mission Statement and Philosophy

### 1.01 The Colorado Bandmasters Association Exists To:

- Promote comprehensive music education through participation and performance in band.
- Provide support, leadership and educational opportunities to students and directors.
- Provide outstanding performance and educational events and venues that encourage, recognize and reward musical artistry and excellence.
- Work with other organizations to encourage and promote a lifelong love of music among students, teachers, and the community.

### 1.02 The Role of Marching Band and Competition

The Colorado Bandmasters Association believes that marching band is just one aspect of a quality high school band program. The marching band should be based upon educationally sound music principals of individual musicianship, ensemble music performance as well as the visual elements of movement, choreography, and drama.

The role of competition is to provide an educational tool to help develop musicianship, self-motivation, group discipline and the learning of life lessons. Competition holds all accountable for their role in education. It also provides the opportunity for students, directors, staff and parents to celebrate those who achieve the highest levels of musicianship and artistry.

It is important to keep competition in perspective with the responsibility of directors/staff to educate the students. When these objectives are not the primary goals of a program then marching band ceases to be educationally valid. While CBA will not approve, reject, or censure program content, it is expected that all shows will be in good taste and respect students, schools, and the CBA audience.

The Colorado Bandmasters Association seeks to provide marching band events for students and directors that will enhance their competitive experience with quality judging and performance venues.

## 1.03 CBA Code of Conduct

Professional ethics are essential to the conduct of a band director and staff choosing to have their band participate in any competition. Directors and staff should be good representatives for the profession by making decisions with care. The following are some guidelines for appropriate decision making:

- Directors, staff, students, and parents should act in a supportive manner of all participating groups. All participating groups and individuals should be treated with respect and appreciation of their performance.
- Respect the competitive process. Directors, staff, students, and parents should act in a respectful manner toward contest hosts, adjudicators, event workers, other spectators, and participants.
- All performing groups deserve a quiet appreciative audience. Directors and staff should educate and supervise their students while observing performances by other bands. Use of drones is strictly prohibited.
- Directors, staff, parents, and students should not contact judges or the Chief Judge during a contest. **Directors/Staff may contact the T&P Judge.**
- Directors and staff **must read and follow** all materials sent to the by contest hosts.
- Directors and staff are responsible for **reading and understanding** the **CBA Rulebook**. Questions regarding any rule/procedure may be submitted to the CBA Head Timing and Penalties Judge.
- Schedules are to be followed to the minute. Staying in any warmup area longer than the designated time infringes on the next group being able to warmup appropriately.
- Concerns regarding judging, scoring or a specific judge should be communicated to the CBA Chief Judge within three days after a contest.
- Concerns regarding a specific contest should be communicated to the contest host and the CBA Marching Chair within three days after a contest.
- Directors are encouraged to contact the CBA Marching Chair or any member of the CBA Marching Committee with concerns, proposals or suggestions.
- Directors are encouraged to attend and participate in the annual CBA Marching Committee meeting. The Marching Chair will notify directors of the date, time, location, proposed rule changes, etc.
- All participants, including parents and staff are expected to adhere to all festival policies and guidelines.
- Other than promoting your own band, directors, students, and parents should refrain from the use of all Social Media regarding CBA affairs.

## 1.04 CBA Membership Requirement

The Colorado Bandmasters Association requires all Colorado directors and assistant directors to be current members of CBA in order for their band to participate in any CBA sanctioned event. Membership information can be obtained at [www.coloradobandmasters.org](http://www.coloradobandmasters.org) or by contacting the CBA Executive Secretary.

## Section 2: CBA Rulebook

The CBA Rulebook is posted on the marching website. Directors, assistant directors, and staff are responsible for reading and understanding the CBA Rulebook. Anyone with questions regarding a specific rule (clarification, interpretation, implementation, etc.) may contact the Chief Timing and Penalties Judge via email or phone conversation.

Directors, assistant directors, staff, etc. are encouraged to ask questions of the Timing and Penalties Judge at CBA Sanctioned Contests.

Directors may propose new rules or rules changes. The CBA Marching Committee votes on all new rules/rule changes at the annual rules meeting in December of each year. The Marching Chair may implement a rule at any time to ensure the safety of students, directors, spectators, etc.

## Section 3: Copyright

The Colorado Bandmasters Association requires all bands to comply with copyright laws regarding performance and/or arrangements of copyrighted music, visual images, and other materials, as well as the use of copyrighted audio text, and the display of copyrighted words and images. This requirement also applies to all portions of the performance including pre-show or visual displays. **See Section 7 in Rulebook.**

CBA requires all directors to submit the CBA Copyright Report by August 20 along with all supporting documentation. This includes any documentation showing proof of licenses purchased giving permission to arrange music, permission to perform the arrangements given by the arranger and permission to record for educational purposes only.

Failure to provide any documentation asked for by the CBA Marching Chair will result in a band not being able to perform at any CBA sanctioned event.

CBA encourages directors to obtain copyright documentation as early as possible. Directors should contact the CBA Marching Chair with any questions.

## Section4: CBA Classifications

The Colorado Bandmasters Association uses school enrollment data to assign schools to a classification. CBA obtains enrollment data provided by the Colorado Department of Education. This data is published by the CDE every January and is based up the official October pupil count. The CBA Marching Chair obtains this data (published on the CDE website) and then assigns bands to the appropriate classification.

CBA has considered a classification system based upon the number of students in a band twice and membership has chosen to stay with a school size system.

A director may petition to move down a classification. Such a petition must be submitted to the CBA Marching Chair by **April 1**. The CBA Marching Committee will review all petitions and either approve or disapprove. Historically the Marching Committee has approved these petitions when one of two criteria have been met:

1. A band is returning to competitive marching after a number of years where the band has not participated in competitive field show events.
2. A new school has opened and does not have full enrollment of grades 9-12.

The Marching Committee can grant these petitions for a period of up to two years.

Any director may petition to compete in a classification higher than their assigned class. The deadline for notifying the CBA Marching Chair is May 1.

**Combined bands-** Two schools may petition to combine their bands into one competitive marching band. If granted, this will be allowed for a period of two years. A petition will be considered if one of the bands has no more than 2% of the school population as determined by the CDE enrollment data in that school's marching band. The classification of the combined unit will be determined by the combined total enrollment of both schools.

Bands wishing to combine must have the approval of the marching chair prior to the **August 20<sup>th</sup>** State Championship registration deadline.

## Section 5: CBA Sanctioned Contests

### 5.01 Sanctioned Independent Contests

The Colorado Bandmasters Association currently has sanctioned independent contests. All sanctioned contests use CBA judge sheets, use a combination of out of state judges and in stage judges, use a full panel of judges, use the CBA School Size Classification system and follows the rules/procedures listed in the **CBA Rulebook**. A sanctioned exhibition format show may vary from the requirements of panel size and makeup but must adhere to the CBA Rulebook and use CBA evaluation sheets/criteria.

These independent contests are hosted by a director (current CBA member) supported by the affiliated band booster organization. These contest hosts meet yearly with the CBA Marching Chair to ensure consistency from one event to the next.

Each independent contest is liable for all expenses related to hosting a marching band contest. Entry fees, spectator ticket prices, concession stand prices are all set by the local contest host. CBA assumes no financial liability for any independent contest.

Each contest host will send out entry information to directors. The CBA Marching Chair will also publish a schedule of all sanctioned events with appropriate internet links. Each contest host will send to participating directors all pertinent information regarding schedules, site maps, etc.

Each independent contest host may determine a specific format approved by CBA. This could include a 100% open class contest, a contest done according to CBA classifications, a format that favors small schools or a modified format approved by CBA.

Sanctioned shows that schedule by classification will provide 13 minute slots for Cal1A-3A and 15 minute slots for Class 4A and 5A. Open Class shows will use 15 minute slots regardless of class, All Finals competitions will be considered Open Class.

There are several other marching contests in Colorado that are not sanctioned by CBA. Bands are not prohibited from participating in non-sanctioned events but are encouraged to support sanctioned CBA events.

All independent CBA Sanctioned Contests are approved the CBA Marching Chair. Any contest that does not adhere to CBA guidelines or is deemed to not meet/exceed CBA expectations may have the sanction removed by the CBA Marching Chair.

## 5.02 Performance Options at CBA Sanctioned Contests

Bands have three performance options at any CBA sanctioned contest other than State Championships:

1. Perform for a score, placement and ranking
2. Perform for a rating (I, II, III, IV or V)
3. Perform for comments only.

Regardless of which option a director chooses the entry fee will be the same. If a band performs for comments only or a rating all judges will still provide commentary. For a ratings only performance, two music judges and one visual judge will provide the ratings, all other judges will provide commentary.

The performance order for a contest will be:

1. Comments only performances will be first
2. Performances for a rating will follow bands that perform for comments only
3. Performances for a score, ranking and placement will take place after those bands who performed for comments only or for a rating

Directors must give show hosts 15 days prior notice if they choose to change their performance option. After the 15 day window no changes will be made.

Bands that perform for comments only or for ratings at a CBA Regional will not qualify for State Championships.

## 5.03 CBA Regional State Qualifying Contests

CBA has five Regional State Qualifying Contests. Any band wanting to qualify for State Championships **must** participate in a Regional State Qualifying Contest. The CBA Marching Chair will publish the date and location of each Regional. The Marching Chair will also assign bands to a specific regional and publish that information. Bands will be required to participate in the contest at their assigned regional site.

Each Regional host will send out entry information, collect entry fees and then send out all pertinent information to participating directors. This entry process is separate from the State Championship entry process.

Performance times for each Regional will be done in order of Classification. Within each class the schedule will be determined by a blind draw in groups of four based upon the previous year placements.

The CBA Marching Chair will publish a list of bands that qualify for State Championships based upon the results from the five Regional State Qualifying Contests. The number of



bands that will qualify for State Championships is determined before the start of the marching season based upon the number of bands in each classification.

In the event a Regional is postponed or cancelled due to weather, CBA will follow the procedure detailed in **Rule 9.03** for determining if bands scheduled to perform at the cancelled Regional qualify for State Championships and how those bands will be seeded for State Championships.

## 5.04 CBA State Championships

CBA State Championships are the culminating events of the fall marching season. CBA has two State Championship events; the 4A/5A State Championship held at Falcon Stadium on the United States Air Force Academy and the 1A/2A/3A State Championship which rotates between two locations in the State, Grand Junction and Pueblo on a three year rotation (two years in Pueblo and one year in Grand Junction).

Entry form information for State Championships is posted online ([www.cbamarching.com](http://www.cbamarching.com)) and are due by **August 20** each year. This is a separate entry from Regionals. Any director who is more than one week late in completing all required materials will have their band perform first in their class at Regionals and at State Championships (**Rule 9.10**). A complete entry consists of the following:

1. Entry form and entry fee
2. NFHS Band Safety Certificate from director and assistant director(s) (completed certificate is good for three years)
3. Completed **and approved** Copyright Form
4. Staff form
5. Completed Announcement Form
6. Paid CBA Membership

## 5.05 Class 4A and 5A CBA State Championships

State Championships for the 4A and 5A classifications takes place over two days at the Air Force Academy. The first day will be the Quarterfinals round. The second day will be the Semifinals and Finals competitions.

Twenty bands in Class 4A and in Class 5A will qualify based upon Regional scores. The format will be a Quarterfinals, Semifinals and Finals round. Scheduling for Quarterfinals will be in reverse order of seeding from Regional rankings. In Quarterfinals, the bands that are seeded #1-6 will receive a bye and the bands that are seeded #7-20 will compete with the six highest scoring bands in both classes advancing to Semifinals.

In Semifinals the scheduling will be a blind draw in groups of four based upon the ranking from those bands that advance from Quarterfinals and the top six seeds from Regional rankings. The six bands that received the bye will compete with the six bands that advanced from Semifinals. From these twelve competing bands the eight highest scoring bands will advance to finals. This will apply to Class 4A as well as Class 5A.

Finals competition will be scheduled in reverse order of ranking from the Semifinal competition. At the end of Finals, a full band retreat will occur (weather permitting) with the awards presentation starting when all bands have assembled.

Placement awards will be given to each band in Finals. Awards for High Music, High Visual and High General Effect will be given in each class. Medals will be given to the top three bands in each class. The top scoring band in each class will receive a Champion Banner.

In odd numbered years the 4A Class will perform first in Quarterfinals, Semifinals and Finals. In even numbered years the 5A Class will perform first.

## 5.06 Class 1A, 2A and 3A CBA State Championships

The number of bands that will qualify for 1A/2A/3A State Championships is determined before the start of the marching season based upon the number of bands in each classification.

The format will be Semifinals and Finals. Scheduling for Semifinals will be a blind draw in groups of four based upon the seeding from Regional rankings. The number of bands that will advance to Finals in each classification is based upon the number of bands that were scheduled into Semifinals. That information will be published at the start of the marching season by the CBA Marching Chair.

Finals competition will be scheduled in reverse order of ranking from the Semifinal competition. At the end of Finals, a full band retreat will occur (weather permitting) with the awards presentation starting when all bands have assembled.

Placement awards will be given to each band in Finals. Awards for High Music, High Visual and High General Effect will be given in each class. Medals will be given to the top three bands in each class. The top scoring band in each class will receive a Champion Banner.

In even numbered years the 3A Class will perform first in Semifinals and Finals followed by Class 1A and then Class 2A. In odd numbered years the 1A Class will perform first followed by Class 2A and then Class 3A.

## 5.07 Postponement or Cancellation of State Championships

In the event weather forces the postponement of State Championships (either 1A/2A/3A or 4A/5A) CBA will make every attempt to reschedule the event a week later. This will be dependent upon numerous factors including stadium availability, judge availability and the ability of qualifying bands to participate. Alternate dates may be explored as needed.

Cancellation of State Championships will be a possibility if postponement is not an option. CBA will not refund entry fees according to **Rule 9.03**.

## Section 6: Performance Procedures

### 6.01 Performance Times

Performances are scheduled in 13 minute intervals for class 1A-3A and 15 minute intervals for class 4A and 5A. A band has a total of 13/15 minutes to enter the field, set up, perform, and clear the field. The Timing and Penalties Judge or the T&P assistant will give the band permission to enter the field precisely at the scheduled performance time.

Timing of the show starts immediately after the conclusion of the announcement.

Minimum show times are:

Class 1A- 4 ½ minutes

Class 2A & 3A- 5 minutes

Class 4A & 5A- 5 ½ minutes

### 6.02 Announcement

Each band has the option of when the announcement will begin (**Rule 5.09**). The default procedure is that the announcement will start exactly 3:15 after the band has been given permission to enter the field. Any band has the option to have the announcement start when the director signals the Timing and Penalties Judge. That can only happen prior to the 3:15 mark.

CBA uses a standard announcement form for all sanctioned events.

## 6.03 Entrance and Exit Procedures.

Each stadium has characteristics that are unique to that venue. Directors should follow the instructions provided by each contest host. Rules that apply to field boundaries, entrance and exit procedures are stated in section 5 of the **CBA Rulebook**.

## 6.04 Judge Commentary and Scores

CBA uses Competition Suite to record judge commentary and to release scores/recaps after the conclusion of the awards presentation for prelims or finals. New directors will be contacted by the Marching Chairman to enable access to Competition Suite.

## 6.05 Awards

Independent CBA sanctioned events may decide the number of placement awards given at their contests. They have the option of including High Music, High Visual and High General Effect. These contests may not give awards recognizing the most improved band, color guards, percussion sections, brass sections, woodwind sections or drum majors.

Regional State Qualifying Contests will only give placement awards.

At CBA State Championships all bands will receive a placement trophy and a small banner. The students in the top three bands in each class will receive a medal. The first place band in each class will also receive a CBA Champion banner. CBA will also award High Music, High Visual and High General Effect in each class at the finals awards presentation.

## 6.06 Scoring and Tie Breakers

**CBA scoring is based on the following formula:**

**60% Music – 40% Visual and 60% Effect – 40% Performance**

Music Performance Average: is the Average of the Music Individual caption with the Music Ensemble caption = 20% of total score

Visual Performance Average: is the Average of the Visual Individual caption and Visual Ensemble caption = 20% of total score

Effect Total: is the Total of Music Effect 1 caption + Music Effect 2 caption + Visual Effect

caption = 60% of total score

Awards: Final Placement is based on the Total Score.

### **Tie Breaker System:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> tie breaker is Sub-Total Score
- 2<sup>nd</sup> tie breaker is Effect Total
- 3<sup>rd</sup> tie breaker is High Music Performance Average
- 4<sup>th</sup> tie breaker is High Visual Performance Average

### **Caption Awards:**

- High Music Performance Award: Music Performance Average
- High Visual Performance Award: Visual Performance Average
- High Effect Award: Effect Total

There is no tie breaker for Caption Awards. Bands will share the award if there is a caption tie.

CBA Policy: No Caption Awards are to be given for Color Guard, Percussion, Drum Major or any other caption other than the three official CBA caption awards listed above.

## **Section 7: Passes and Credentials**

### **7.01 Performers and Chaperones**

Performers are defined and UNIFORMED members of a marching band unit. Chaperones are defined as adult parents or staffs that are on the bus supervising students when the transportation vehicle arrives to a contest venue. Each student performer and adult chaperone will be issued a participant wristband or event specific hand stamp that will allow for stadium spectator access. This will not allow for adult access to the performance field. A separate credential will be required for that access. Contest hosts have the right to limit or set student to chaperone ratio for their contest.

### **7.02 Field Credentials**

Field access is only granted to uniformed performers and individuals holding a Director Pass, Staff Pass, Set-up crew wrist band. Wrist bands are issued to each performing group for each performance. Twenty five (25) wrist bands are provided to the band director prior to each performance. It is the responsibility for the director to distribute

and manage the use of these credentials. FIELD PASS WRISTBANDS DO NOT PROVIDE ACCESS TO ANY SPECTATOR AREA OF THE STADIUM AT ANY CBA SANCTIONED SHOW. Directors may apply for a Field Medical Pass to have the ability to provide support to specific students needing additional assistance.

### 7.03 Director Passes and Staff Passes (adopted 7/21/22)

Director and Staff Passes will be produced and distributed by the Chairman of Marching Affairs. Pass allowances will be made according to the formula approved by the Marching Committee.

- **One** pass for each certified **Director** named teacher of record for the band
- **One** pass for staff members up to 12% of the band membership for bands up to 60 members.
- **One** pass for each staff member up to 10% of the band membership for bands at 61 members and above.
- A **maximum of 10** passes is allotted to any band regardless of band size.
- **One Guest Pass** will be provided to every band to be used as they wish.
- Passes cannot be replaced if lost or stolen after initial distribution.

## Section 8: Marching Committee

### 8.01 Role of the CBA Marching Committee

The CBA Marching Committee is the governing entity for the marching band activity. The committee meets in December to review the fall marching season, CBA State Championships, financial reports provided the CBA Marching Chair, discuss and vote on proposed Rules/Procedures, review a report by the CBA Chief Judge and to take action on proposals submitted by CBA members.

The Marching Committee may meet at other times of the year as needed. The committee may also make decisions via email.

Anyone may attend a CBA Marching Committee meeting and participate in discussion.

## 8.02 Membership on the CBA Marching Committee

The CBA Marching Chair selects the members of the Marching Committee. Members must be a current member of CBA and a current director of a high school marching band. The Marching Chair will include representatives from each class and try to include representatives from each portion of the State of Colorado.

The Marching Chair will determine a term of four years for each member. A member may serve more than one term at the discretion of the Marching Chair. The Marching Chair may also replace a committee member prior to the conclusion of their term if needed.

## 8.03 Full Disclosure Regarding the CBA Marching Chairman and Marching Committee

The Marching Chairman will strive to be transparent in all decisions, finances, and procedures to the CBA membership. Marching Affairs meeting agendas will be sent to the membership prior to the annual Marching Committee meeting. The minutes will be published on the Marching Committee webpage. Any document will be provided to the membership upon request.