

# Indiana State School Music Association

## Philosophy & Definition of Purpose

### For

## Marching Band Classifications & Events

### **Summer Showcase**

The Summer Showcase Marching Band event is offered to any band, regardless of class or enrollment category, that wishes to have an additional performance assessment opportunity as they conclude their summer season or begin their fall season. Festival Class adjudication sheets, procedures, and awards will be utilized at this event. A Gold Rating at the Summer Showcase event counts toward qualification for the All-Music Award. Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Participation Ratings will be awarded, as well as “With Distinction” Awards for meeting specific criteria in Music and Visual captions. Bands that participate in the Summer Showcase are eligible to participate in Festival, Scholastic, or Open Class events later in the fall marching season.

**Evaluation Focus: Assessment/Rating**

### **Festival Class**

ISSMA Festival Class is a commitment to inclusivity and accessibility in the arts, offering an opportunity for bands with limited resources—be it financial, personnel, or rehearsal time—to engage in a meaningful musical experience without the pressures of competition. By creating a non-competitive, single-performance event, Festival Class acknowledges the importance of participation over ranking, allowing bands to showcase their growth and creativity without the burden of comparison between bands.

The Festival Class events use a comprehensive evaluation sheet representing both musical and visual elements of the performance, and utilize a Gold/Silver/Bronze rating system, as well as “With Distinction” awards for meeting specific criteria in Music and Visual captions. Rankings or placements are **not** a part of the evaluation process. A Gold Rating at the Festival Class Event satisfies the Marching Band Component of the ISSMA High School All-Music Award. Adjudication is conducted by a panel of 3 judges made up of current and retired Indiana Music Educators.

**Evaluation Focus: Assessment/Rating**

### **Scholastic Class**

ISSMA Scholastic Class emphasizes the educational and developmental journey of smaller bands, acknowledging the unique challenges faced by schools with limited resources. It creates a structured environment where competition is balanced with support and encouragement, fostering growth while recognizing the individual strengths of both large and small school bands. By dividing bands into categories based on school size and enrollment, this classification aims to level the playing field, ensuring that each band can compete against similarly resourced groups. The recognition of Gold Ratings and the designation of placements in each division celebrate the achievements of all participants. While Class Champions will be named, the designation of State Champion will be reserved for the Open Classifications. The goal of Scholastic Class is to allow a place for bands who desire the competitive experience, but lack the resources to compete at the Open Class level. Scholastic Class also includes a progression system to Open Class participation based on performance success factors.

Scholastic A and B Classifications are determined by both school enrollment in grades 9-12 as reported to the Indiana DOE and number of performing members in the ensemble. Scholastic Classification uses the same competitive evaluation format as Open Class based on 6 individual captions, utilizing a panel of 6 nationally recognized pageantry arts professional adjudicators. Scholastic events use a shorter performance field time schedule than Open Class events. The Scholastic Class season consists of two potential events in early/mid-October: Scholastic Prelims and Scholastic Finals. A Gold Rating at the Scholastic Prelims Event satisfies the Marching Band Component of the ISSMA High School All-Music Award.

#### **Scholastic Class Prelims**

- Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Participation Ratings
- With Distinction awards for meeting specific criteria in Music, Visual, and Effect captions.
- **Evaluation Focus: Assessment/Rating/Scholastic Finals Qualification**

#### **Scholastic Class Finals**

- Top 16 bands in each classification qualifying from Scholastic Prelims
- Top 5 Placings announced in each classification
- Top scoring band in Scholastic B and Scholastic A named Scholastic Class Champions
- Both Class Champion bands will be invited to perform in exhibition at Lucas Oil Stadium during Open Class State Finals.
- **Evaluation Focus: Ranking/Assessment**

## **Open Class**

ISSMA Open Class stands as a testament to the continuity of the competitive tradition, offering a space for those bands that seek to engage in the full competitive experience. By maintaining divisions based on school enrollment, the ISSMA Open Class respects the established framework, while providing a clear path for advancement from regional to state levels. It honors the pursuit of excellence in musical performance by allowing bands to compete within their classification, fostering a spirit of healthy competition and achievement. Through the structure of Regional, Semi-state, and State Finals events, the Open Class ensures that the highest levels of performance are recognized, and the dedication of all participants is celebrated.

Open A, B, C, and D Classifications are determined by school enrollment in grades 9-12 as reported to the Indiana DOE, with no limitations to number of performing members. Open Classification uses a competitive evaluation format based on 6 individual captions, utilizing a panel of 6 nationally recognized pageantry arts professional adjudicators. Four potential performance opportunities in Open Class are available through the month of October and early November, utilizing a combination of Rating and Ranking evaluations, depending on the event. Performance rankings determine the advancement from Regional to Semi-state to State Finals events. A Gold Rating at the Open Invitational and/or Open Regional events, or qualification for State Finals, satisfies the Marching Band Component of the ISSMA High School All-Music Award.

### **Open Class Invitational**

- Not a qualification event, but an achievement assessment opportunity prior to Open Class Regional.
- Optional judges' critique session
- Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Participation Ratings
- With Distinction awards for meeting specific criteria in Music, Visual, and Effect captions.
- **Evaluation Focus: Assessment/Rating**

### **Open Class Regional**

- First phase of qualification for State Marching Band Finals.
- Top 10 bands in each class at each Regional site qualify for Open Class Semi-state
- Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Participation Ratings
- With Distinction awards for meeting specific criteria in Music, Visual, and Effect captions.
- **Evaluation Focus: Ranking/Semi-State Qualification/Rating/Assessment**

### **Open Class Semi-state**

- Final phase of qualification for State Marching Band Finals
- Top 10 bands in each class qualify for Open State Finals.
- **Evaluation Focus: Ranking/State Finals Qualification/Assessment**

### **Open Class State Finals**

- Showcase for the top 10 bands in each Open Class
- 1-10 placements announced in each Open Class
- Top scoring band in each Open Class (A, B, C, and D) designated as State Champion.
- **Evaluation Focus: Ranking/ Assessment**