



# Contest Rules & Procedures

REVISED:

**September, 2025: All Changes/Updates In Blue Font**

2025 California State Band Championships (CSBC)

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Through articulated partnerships, advocacy and philanthropy, CSBC will convene, unify, and support school and independent band organizations in an education based competitive environment.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

CSBC will be a nexus for music competitions throughout the region. We will be:

- Recognized as a facilitator of quality competitive events
- Recognized as innovators
- Recognized as a leader in performer achievement
- Promoter of new constituents
- Advocates for the arts

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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E-mail: [info@calstatebandchamps.org](mailto:info@calstatebandchamps.org)

**The California State Band Championships (CSBC) governs all California State Band Championship (CSBC) events. All rules and regulations are deliberated by a designated rules committee comprised of Directors, Instructors, and Judges. California State Band Championships is a registered trademark of Southwest Music Education Association (SWMEA) and all events must be sanctioned by the Board of Directors of CSBC. The Southwest Judges Network (SWJN) provides adjudication for all CSBC events. CSBC and SWJN are subsidiary organizations of SWMEA.**

## **REGISTRATION**

All registration must be completed online through the Competition Suite website ([www.competitionsuite.com](http://www.competitionsuite.com)). Registration for events must be completed at least fifteen (15) days prior to an event. Completed registration includes online registration through the Competition Suite website and full payment of registration fees by either check or credit card. Ensembles registered for events but have not paid in full will be removed from the schedule fourteen (14) days prior to the event. Championships registration must be completed by October 13<sup>th</sup>. No ensemble will be permitted to register or cancel registration for championships after that date.

## **CANCELLATION**

All cancellations must be completed through the Competition Suite website. If you must cancel a performance at an event you have already paid for, you must contact CSBC by email ([info@calstatebandchamps.org](mailto:info@calstatebandchamps.org)) to be issued a credit. Cancellations completed at least fifteen (15) days prior to an event will be refunded for credit on account. Cancellations received within fourteen (14) days of an event will not be refunded and the ensemble will be assessed a \$100 late cancellation fee that must be paid in full prior to inclusion at future events. Ensembles who “no show” to any event they are registered for will be responsible for the registration fee in addition to a \$200 no show fee. No registrations or cancellations will be accepted or processed by any other means.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

The composition of an ensemble must fall into one of the following categories:

1. All performers are students enrolled in a single high school
2. All performers are students enrolled in a single high school and its feeder middle schools/junior high schools
3. All performers are students enrolled in multiple high schools within the same school district

The purpose of allowing an ensemble to combine students from multiple schools is to encourage school programs affected by the effects of remote and hybrid learning as well as the limitation of resources. This will allow schools to combine resources and offer opportunities that a single school might otherwise have difficulty providing. If an ensemble combines students from multiple schools, it must perform under the name of a single school or the school district. These ensembles must complete an Eligibility Form that must be submitted to the Director of Operations prior to registering for contests. It is strongly encouraged that program administrators reach out to the Director of Operations prior to registration to ensure that a combined ensemble may be eligible to be approved to perform prior to the show planning process.

## **SCORING**

Competition Suite will be used for all score entry and digital commentary. All adjudication takes place from the press box level. All final scores at all CSBC events will be based on the following composition:

1. Music Performance (200 points) – The Music Performance sheet accounts for 20% of the total score. The Music Performance judge uses two sub-captions consisting of “Ensemble Quality of Achievement” and “Individual Training, Accuracy & Definition”.

2. Visual Performance (200 points) – The Visual Performance sheet accounts for 20% of the total score. The Visual Performance judge uses two (2) sub-captions consisting of “Ensemble Quality of Achievement” and “Individual Training, Accuracy & Definition”.
3. Music Effect (200 points) – The Music Effect sheet accounts for 20% of the total score. The Music Effect judge uses two (2) sub-captions consisting of “Content Effectiveness” and the “Performance Effectiveness”.
4. Visual Effect (200 points) – The Visual Effect sheet accounts for 20% of the total score. The Visual Effect judge uses two (2) sub-captions consisting of “Content Effectiveness” and the “Performance Effectiveness”.
5. Percussion (100 points) – The Percussion sheet accounts for 10% of the total score. The Percussion judge uses two (2) sub-captions consisting of “Content” and the “Achievement”.
6. Color Guard (100 points) – The Color Guard sheet accounts for 10% of the total score. The Color Guard judge uses two (2) sub-captions consisting of “Content” and the “Achievement”.

All final scores at all CSBC events will be based on the following:

Music Performance	20%
Visual Performance	20%
Music Effect	20%
Visual Effect	20%
Percussion	10%
<u>Color Guard</u>	<u>10%</u>
Total	100%

### **COMPETITIVE DIVISIONS**

Ensemble administrators will register their ensembles based on the total number of student performers. Total performers are all students on the field during the performance. This includes winds, percussion, auxiliary, misc performers (vocalist, prop movers / holders, actors, etc). The drum major(s) will not be counted in the performer count unless they actually participate as a performer in the program (anything other than conducting). Divisions are determined by the following performer count:

Division 1A	1-35
Division 2A	36-50

Division 3A	51-70
Division 4A	71-100
Division 5A	101-140
Division 6A	141+

Ensembles may compete in divisions with higher performer counts without penalty.

Changes of divisions can be made up to fifteen (15) days prior to the ensemble's first competition. Once an ensemble has performed in competition, ensembles will be locked into the division they competed in. In the event an ensemble registers and performs in the incorrect division at its first show, the Head Judge will contact the ensemble's director prior to the awards ceremony and decide on one of the following:

1. Stay in the original division and receive a penalty for an excessive number of performers. Changes in the performer count will need to be made to avoid penalties in subsequent competitions.
2. Immediately withdraw from the show as a competitor and only receive judge's commentary as an exhibition group; scores will not be given. The ensemble will be reclassified into the correct division at future shows. The ensemble will still need to compete in two shows to be eligible for Semi-Finals.

<b>PENALTY:</b> Ten (10) point penalty for an excessive number of performers
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### **STUDENT/PARENT/INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF BEHAVIOR**

Head Judges may at any time penalize or disqualify an ensemble if there is any behavior from a parent, student, or instructional staff member that is seen as inappropriate, threatening, or an interference with any of the judges' or show staff's duties.

<b>PENALTY:</b> Discretion of Head Judge up to Disqualification
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### **AUDIO MIXING**

Audio mixing by non-performers is not permitted within the performance area. Audio mixing by non-performers is permitted on the track (in plain sight from the press box) or by remote tablet/phone devices (including mixing from the stands). All audio samples must be triggered/initiated by student performers.

<b>PENALTY:</b> (10) point penalty for Non-Performer Mixing in performance area. (10) point penalty for audio samples triggered/initiated by non-student performers.
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## **WARM UP**

There will be an area designated for performers to warm up that is outside of the aural and visual vicinity of the Performance Area.

Competing ensembles and their accompanying instructional staff may not intentionally create noise interference in warm up areas or while entering and/or exiting the performance area. This includes, but is not limited to, playing (e.g., drum cadences), loud metronomes, and PA systems. **Failure to comply with notice from the Head Judge that noise interference is occurring will result in penalties applied as follows below. Additionally, failure to warm-up in designated warm-up areas by the show-host or CSBC will also result in penalties assessed following the guidelines below:**

**PENALTY: First Contact = Warning; 2nd Contact = (5) point penalty; 3rd Contact = (10) point penalty**

## **ENTRY**

Ensembles should be ready to enter the field at their designated performance time. Travel time from warm-up areas will vary depending on the site. It is the responsibility of the performing ensemble to assure that they are ready to enter the performance area at their designated time.

Conducting podiums may be placed anywhere in the performance area. Conducting from the stands / viewing area will not be permitted.

All performers must enter the performance area through the designated entry area. Prior to the actual start of the performance time, the ensemble may utilize the entire performance area for set up and pre-show preparations.

Props and equipment must also enter the performance area through the designated entry area. Props may not be assembled near the performance area in order to minimize distraction from the preceding performance. Following the end of the ensemble's performance, all props and equipment must proceed to the designated exit area.

Non-performing adults may enter the performance area prior to the start of the performance to assist in the set-up of props / equipment. All adults must clear the performance area prior to the start of the performance. Any person(s) entering the performance area must show a valid entry credential this includes but is not limited to staff, students, and helpers/volunteers. Any ensemble permitting non-credentialed person(s) to enter the field may be penalized up to and including disqualification.

<b>PENALTY:</b> Head judge discretion up to Disqualification
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**TIMING:**

- The ensemble may enter the performance area once the announcer says “[School Name] you may enter the field. You have four (4) minutes.”
- The ensemble is allowed four (4) minutes for set up and Pre-Show.
- One (1) minute prior to the beginning of the performance, the announcer will announce “[School Name] you have one (1) minute.”
- **Performance and Interval Times are denoted in the table below:**

Division	Performance Time	Deployment Time	Total Interval
1A - 3A	9 - minutes	4 - minutes	13 - minutes
4A - 6A	11 - minutes	4 - minutes	15 - minutes

- Performance Timing begins after the announcement “The California State Band Championships is proud to present [School Name]”, which will not occur until after the four (4) minutes that are allowed to set up.
- Performance Timing ends when the performance area is cleared of all personnel and equipment.
- Divisions 1A/2A/3A will be scheduled at thirteen (13) minute intervals.
- Divisions 4A/5A/6A will be scheduled at fifteen (15) minute intervals.

<b>PENALTY:</b> One (1) point penalty for every thirty (30) seconds or fraction thereof that any unit is over the required performance time. <b>For the 2025 season, performing groups in division 1 - 3 are asked to comply with the 9-minute maximum performance time if possible. Timing penalty for divisions 1 - 3 will not be applied until after those units have exceeded the 11-minute maximum for this season only.</b>
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**PERFORMANCE AREA**

The performance area includes the marked football field including the end zones.

***USE OF DANGEROUS EQUIPMENT IN WARM-UP OR PERFORMANCE AREA***

Use of dangerous equipment including, but not limited to, pyrotechnics, firearms, pressurized canisters, and flammable liquids is prohibited.

<b>PENALTY:</b> Disqualification
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### **PROP / PODIUM HEIGHT AND SAFETY MEASURES**

No performer may be on any portion of any prop where the performer's feet are more than four (4) feet above the playing surface of the performance area unless appropriate safety railing and/or other safety equipment are in place and used. If drum major podiums are higher than four (4) feet high, appropriate safety railings must be in place.

<b>PENALTY:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>First Two Weeks of Season: Warning Only (Education Period)</b></li><li>• <b>October 12th - 25th, 2025: 10-point penalty</b></li><li>• <b>October 26th - End of Season: Judges Discretion (10-point minimum to disqualification)</b></li></ul>



### **MOTORIZED VEHICLES**

Motorized vehicles including golf carts and small ATVs are allowed to pull equipment on and off the field unless prohibited by the show venue. At no time are any persons allowed to ride on trailers or other equipment unless in a seat designed for such activity. Participating ensembles and their associated organizations are liable for any damage to property or injury caused by these vehicles and/or their operator.

### **POWER**

Although show hosts may supply power at the field level this is not guaranteed for all venues and the stability of the power source is not guaranteed. Ensembles that use equipment that requires power are responsible for supplying their own power. **Performance time will begin at the end of the 4-minute deployment period. Drum majors will be asked if they are ready approximately 20-seconds prior to the expiration of the deployment period. If there is no acknowledgement, the performing ensemble will be announced into competition and the performance time will start regardless of whether or not the ensemble chooses to begin their performance. Performance timing penalties will apply for any overage caused by a delay due to power supply failure or any other electronics issues.**

### **FIELD CONDITIONS**

At times when environmental conditions adversely affect the performance area, an assessment will be made to determine the feasibility to continue a show. These conditions include, but are not limited to, the following: rain, fire, smoke, earthquakes, and thunderstorms/lightning.

The Head Judge and Event Host will consult on whether or not a show will continue as scheduled, be delayed, be moved to an indoor location or be cancelled entirely. For CSBC

Semi-Final, Division Finals, and State Finals shows, all final decisions will come from the President and/or Vice-President of CSBC. Student and public safety are always the primary concern when making all decisions. If shows proceed, participating Band Directors may always decide to withdraw their unit from competition should they deem it necessary. CSBC is not liable for any injuries to performers, staff or volunteers, nor is CSBC liable for equipment damage should a Director choose to perform. CSBC can only make reasonable decisions as to the condition of the field with the information available to CSBC staff at the time of the decision.

1. When the performance area becomes compromised for any reason, the Head Judge will immediately suspend the show to consult with the site host Band Director.
2. The Head Judge and Event Host will decide to temporarily suspend the show for up to ninety (90) minutes to allow for weather to pass, or the field to be cleared of whatever obstruction has occurred, move the show indoors, or cancel the show entirely. If the delay is anticipated to be more than ninety (90) minutes or if rain is impending, the show should immediately be moved indoors if possible.
3. When considering whether or not to resume a show, the Head Judge and Event Host will survey the performance area once conditions have improved. If the field conditions are acceptable to continue with performances, Band Directors will be given no fewer than fifteen (15) minutes and up to thirty (30) minutes notice to resume the competition (depending on proximity of where the next two performing units have staged during the delay). The show host will be responsible for notifying all participants.
4. In the case of lightning, the event shall be IMMEDIATELY halted. Equipment will be removed from the field if safe to do so. Otherwise, all metal equipment will be left on the ground and performers will take cover under the bleachers or the closest protective covering. The show should resume only after there is no lightning for thirty (30) minutes. If a stoppage occurs in the middle of a performance, the ensemble will restart their performance from the beginning once conditions allow for the show to continue. Reasonable on field warm-up time will be granted by the Head Judge.
5. If performances are moved indoors, ensembles will be judged as follows:
  - a. Music Performance, Music Effect and Auxiliary caption judges will judge based on the same criteria as used outdoors.
  - b. Auxiliary units will perform in a stationary position. Equipment work should be performed in a way so that it does not put any performer or spectator in danger.
  - c. Visual Effect becomes more of a General Effect commentary with emphasis on the Auxiliary unit and band appearance (visuals, body expression etc.). Visual Performance remains the same but with greater emphasis on auxiliary as well as band appearance (visuals, body expression, etc.).

## 6. CSBC Qualifying

- a. Indoor performances count as a participating event counted towards the minimum number of performances required to participate in Semi-Finals competition.
- b. Scores from indoor performances do not count towards the scoring average for performance placement at Semi-Finals. If an ensemble is left with only one (1) qualifying score, then that score is the average used for performance order at Semi-Finals.

## 7. Refunds

- a. No performance entry refunds are given for shows that are delayed, moved indoors, or cancelled due to field conditions. All Band Directors are asked to share in this burden with CSBC and each event host as shows are only cancelled in extraordinary situations. All efforts to host a performance indoors will be made should an outdoor performance venue be deemed unusable due to field conditions.

The Head Judge has the final decision-making policy on all regular season CSBC shows and will remain in consultation with the Event Host. All participants are considered when making decisions regarding field conditions.

## **EXIT**

For purposes of timing, equipment and props are considered “removed” when they cross outside the field boundary lines (front or back). After the equipment/props have crossed this line, they must continue to make forward progress out of the competition area. Failure to make forward progress may result in a penalty for creating a delay in the schedule. DO

<b>PENALTY:</b> One (1) point penalty for every thirty (30) seconds or fraction thereof
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## **OTHER PENALTIES**

Non-student interference, which includes movement of props or entrance into the performance field during the ensemble’s performance, is prohibited.

<b>PENALTY:</b> Up to a five (5) point penalty at the discretion of the Head Judge for each performance area offense
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Misuse of any National Colors in accordance with the American Legion Competitive Flag Code ([www.legion.org/flag/code](http://www.legion.org/flag/code)) will result in a discretionary penalty as determined by the Head Judge. **Here is a general guide to staying in compliance with the Flag Code:**

### **Marching Band Guidelines for Respecting the American Legion Flag Code**

- **Never dip the flag:** The American flag must never be lowered or "dipped" to any person or group.
- **Lead the parade:** If carried, the U.S. flag should be at the front of the formation or in a position of highest honor.
- **Flag bearer etiquette:** The flag should always be held upright and free to fly—never touching the ground.
- **Marching formation:** No other flag should be placed above or to the right (the flag's own right) of the U.S. flag.
- **Respect during performance:** If the flag is displayed or passing, all band members not playing should face the flag and stand at attention; those in uniform should salute.
- **Condition of the flag:** Use a clean, well-maintained flag—no rips, tears, or discoloration.
- **Themed uniforms/instruments:** The use of our national colors is permissible, but should not directly resemble the complete appearance of the American Flag. Creative license is acceptable here as long as it is "use of national colors" and not intended to be a disrespectful or misrepresentation of the flag.
- **Don't use the U.S. flag as decoration:** Use red, white, and blue bunting instead—never drape the flag or use it as a cover.

<b>PENALTY:</b> Five (5) point penalty per infraction
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Ensembles that damage the stadium field turf or track WILL BE held liable for the repair and/or replacement of damaged property. CSBC strongly suggests that all ensembles regularly inspect their equipment.

## **CHAMPIONSHIPS**

### **Division Championships (Held regionally for Southern / Northern California)**

1. Ensembles wishing to compete in Division Championships must register by October 13 and provide payment by October 15.
2. Ensembles must compete and post scores in a minimum of two (2) events to be eligible to compete at Division Championships.
3. Performance order for each division will be based on the average of the ensemble's top two highest scores of the season.

## **State Finals**

1. State Finals will be split into two segments. Divisions 1-3 and Divisions 4-6. Finalists will be determined by the Division Champions (highest overall score) of each division from both Northern and Southern California plus the next 10 highest scores separated by divisions 1-3 / 4-6. Should an ensemble elect not to attend State Finals, their position will be given to the next highest scoring group.
2. Performance order for State Finals will be based on scores from Division Championships. Groups will perform in reverse order of placement (lowest score first, highest score last).

## **COPYRIGHT**

### **Policy Statement**

All music performed at any CSBC event/show should comply with US copyright laws. Copyright compliance is vital to protect the performing ensembles and the CSBC from any potential claims of copyright infringement by the holders of said rights as well as to nurture an environment that respects the intellectual property rights of others.

### **Copyright Procedure**

It is the responsibility of the director of each performing ensemble to obtain appropriate copyright clearances prior to the first show of the ensemble's season. The CSBC Board of Directors and its affiliates will not be held liable for non compliance. Items needing copyright clearance is defined, but not limited to the following:

1. Original Composition, either commissioned or purchased, requires submission of the current performance license.
2. Compositions/Arrangements purchased through a retail sheet music outlet and performed as is require submission of a copy of the front page of the score showing copyright info at bottom.
3. Preexisting composition arranged for your group, including the use of an as-is wind score with revised or any alterations, including revised or added percussion parts, requires a completed Permission to Arrange agreement. Said agreement must include performance rights for the season in which it is to be used. Obtaining a Permission to Arrange agreement should be completed prior to starting to arrange or orchestrate and may take up to eight (8) weeks or more.
4. Information for musical arrangements of public domain music, including the date the original piece of music was written, must be submitted to CSBC via Competition Suite

(group data) prior to October 1<sup>st</sup>. Please note that arrangements or transcriptions of public domain music may be subject to copyright protection.

To support directors in complying with this policy, CSBC will provide support materials and educational resources to competing directors. Also, licensing resources for those directors seeking Permission to Arrange licensing will be provided. In addition, CSBC will designate a contact person to provide clarification and additional support to competing directors in meeting the requirements of this policy.

### **PENALTIES**

- Penalties will be assessed by the Head Judge.
- Penalties will be deducted from the “Subtotal” score and reflected in the “Total” score.
- All penalties assessed by the Head Judge are final.

### **STANDARD LIST OF AWARDS**

The following awards will be given at each regular season show:

- Ensemble placing: First through last by division
- High Percussion and High Auxiliary by Division
- High Music (one (1) per award ceremony)
- High Visual (one (1) per award ceremony)
- High Effect (one (1) per award ceremony)
- Tournament Champion (one (1) per award ceremony)