

Indiana State School Music Association, Inc.

HIGHLIGHTS AND RULE CHANGES FOR 2026-2027

GENERAL

2026-2027 ISSMA Festivals Manual – The entire manual, including adjudication sheets and placemats, is available in the “Directors Only” area of the ISSMA Website. Recent changes have been highlighted in red. Hard copies of the manual will not be mailed to teachers. Access to the Directors Only area requires registration with an individual director login.

Fee Increases – To offset increasing expenses and costs for all events, Marching Band Spectator Admission Fees have been increased as follows: Open Class State Finals @Lucas Oil Stadium – Adults \$30, Students \$25; All other Marching Band Events – Adults \$13. Student/Preschool Fees will remain at \$7. Children under three years of age will be admitted free of charge.

Calendar – The Calendar of Events and Deadlines for 2026-2027 can be found on the ISSMA website under the “RESOURCES” menu link.

Adjudication Sheets – Adjudication sheets for all events, with the exception of Solo & Ensemble, will be in the form of placemats used by the judges as a reference for their recorded commentary and scoring. Ensembles will no longer receive written comment sheets, except for Solo & Ensemble events.

MARCHING BAND

Classification – *Classification as determined from Grades 9-12 IDOE enrollment from previous year.* **p. 9, VII.E.2**

CATEGORY	ENROLLMENT	TOTAL PERFORMERS
Festival	unlimited	unlimited
Scholastic B	924 or fewer	55 or fewer
Scholastic A	925 or more	110 or fewer
Open D	549 or fewer	unlimited
Open C	550-924	unlimited
Open B	925-1799	unlimited
Open A	1800 or more	unlimited

Field Passes

- Each participating band will be provided 36 field passes (*no longer will be designated personnel vs director) at all Scholastic and Open class events. Directors may purchase an additional sheet of (6) field passes for each marching band event, at the time of entry. **p.9, VII.H. 2**

Sound Amplification/Lighting

- A newly revised ideology statement regarding the use of amplification and electronic sound enhancement at ISSMA Marching Band events has been included in the Music Festivals Manual and can also be found on the ISSMA Website under the Marching Band tab. **p. 11, VII.L**

Scholastic Class Champion Designation

- The top scoring band in each Classification at Scholastic Finals shall be designated as Scholastic B State Champion and Scholastic A State Champion. **p. 15, VII.R.1.a**

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Scholastic Class Sustained Success

- Any Scholastic Class Band who has demonstrated sustained success by placing in the top five at Scholastic Finals in the same class for three (3) consecutive years shall be required to enter Open Class the next time they submit an entry for ISSMA Marching Band events. **p. 16, VII.R.1.f**
- Any Scholastic Class Band who wins the championship in their respective class shall be required to enter Open Class the next time they submit an entry for ISSMA Marching Band events. **p.16, VII/R.1.g**
- Any Scholastic Class Band that is required to register for Open Class based on top 5 placement success or winning a championship must remain in Open Class for the next three (3) years they submit an entry for ISSMA Marching Band events. The band has the option to submit a petition to return to Scholastic Class after two (2) years participating in Open Class in the case of a director change or other considerations deemed critical to the band's success. Said petition must be submitted to the ISSMA Executive Committee prior to August 1st. **p. 16, VII.R.1.h**

Open Class Regional Assignment

- Assignments of performance sites for Regional participation will be based on geographical and travel distance considerations. Band will be assigned to performance sites by the ISSMA Office. Every attempt will be made to have all 4 Open Classifications represented at each of the 4 Open Regional sites, while attempting to maintain a comparable balance of total bands at each site. **p. 18, VII.S.4.a**

Open Class Semi-state Qualification

- The top 50% of the performing bands in each class at each of the four Regional sites will automatically qualify for the Open Class Semi-state. For classes at a site that have an odd number of bands performing, the automatic qualifiers would include 50% plus 1. If all 20 potential Semi-state spots are not filled at that point, then the next highest scoring bands, regardless of site or rating, will be used to fill out the remaining spots. If there is a tie for the 20th spot, all bands tied for that spot will qualify. **p. 18, VII.S.4 b**

Open Class Semi-state Draw

- The performance order for Open Semi-state will be determined by an open draw with no mileage considerations. **p. 18, VII.S.5.b**

Open Class State Finals Performance Order

- The order of classes will be BCDA. **p. 18, VII.S.6.c**

SOLO AND ENSEMBLE

Revised Vocal Manual

- The Vocal Group I Required List Solo & Ensemble Manual has been revised and is available to view and/or download under the "Resources" link on the ISSMA website.

State Solo & Ensemble Entry Fee Payments

- All payments for State Solo & Ensemble entry fees must be paid electronically at the time of entry, either via credit card online, e-check online, or uploaded purchase order. **Site hosts will no longer be able to collect paper checks or purchase orders.** Please prepare ahead.

JAZZ/SHOW CHOIR

Group I Instrumental Jazz Site Assignments

- Group I Instrumental Jazz Ensembles attempting to qualify for State Jazz Finals must register for, or be assigned to, one of the four (4) performance sites established as State Qualification sites. These sites will be chosen from the current sites hosting ISSMA Jazz Events. **p. 26, IX.I.12**

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Missing Judge Policy

- See Festivals Manual for language regarding a missing judge at Organization events. **p.26, IX.J.9**

Group I Vocal and Instrumental Adjudication

- All Group I H.S. Vocal Jazz Ensembles must perform one selection from the Group I required list. Group I H.S. Vocal Jazz Ensembles attempting to qualify for State Jazz Finals will be evaluated using the Group I High School Vocal Jazz Ensemble sheet. Any Group I H.S. Vocal Jazz Ensemble not attempting to qualify for State Jazz Finals will be evaluated using the traditional Vocal Jazz Ensemble sheet. **p. 27, IX.L.9**
- Group I H.S. Instrumental Jazz Ensembles attempting to qualify for State Jazz Finals will be evaluated using the Group I High School Instrumental Jazz Ensemble sheet. Any Group I H.S. Instrumental Jazz Ensemble not attempting to qualify for State Jazz Finals will be evaluated using the traditional Instrumental Jazz Ensemble sheet. **p. 27, IX.M.6**

Show Choir Classification

- *A Large School shall be defined as 1525 students or more, and a Small School as 1524 students or fewer, based upon DOE enrollment statistics from 2025-2026 school year.* **p. 30, X.B.5**

CONCERT ORGANIZATION

Choral Adjudication

- All judges for choral organization events will now provide recorded commentary. **p. 35, XI.J.2**

Use of Multiple Movement works for H.S. Instrumental Organization and Group I State Qualifications

- Multiple movements of the same work, or different editions/arrangements of the same work, may not be used for more than one of the performed numbers, either required or selected. **p. 33, XI.E.6.j & p.39, XII.5.c**

Missing Judge Policy

- See Festivals Manual for language regarding a missing judge at Organization events. **p.35, XI.J.9**

Instrumental Sight-reading

- The rules and procedures for the instrumental sight-reading process for both High School Organization and Group I State Qualification have been revised. Please reference the indicated pages for the updates.
pgs. 36-37, XI.L.7 & pgs. 42-43, XII.M.7

High School Group I State Qualifications

- Group I State Qualifications will now include a String Orchestra division. Details can be found in the Festivals Manual, **pgs. 38-44, XII.A-N.**

State Concert Organization Finals

- State Concert Finals will now include a String Orchestra division. Details can be found in the Festivals Manual, **pgs. 44-46, XIII.A-J.**

**Specific changes in rules have been printed in italics.*