



FALL 2026 TOURNAMENT OF BANDS FIELD RULES

TOB 2025 modifications in RED (December 18th, 2025)

1. GROUP SIZES/CLASSIFICATION:

Bands will be grouped according to the number of players in the band proper as follows:

- Group 1 - up to 30 musicians and a maximum of 30 auxiliary
- Group 2 - 31 to 50 musicians and a maximum of 50 auxiliary
- Group 3 - 51 to 75 musicians and a maximum of 75 auxiliary
- Group 4 - 76 or greater

Group Size Confirmation:

For the purpose of group size, a musician shall be defined as any student playing an instrument or simulating the playing of an instrument while obviously performing in the role of a musician/ band proper member. A student creating and/or triggering any electronic sound is a musician. Any band not conforming to group size classifications will be assessed a five (5.0) penalty for each person over the limit. It will be the Field Coordinator's responsibility to check each unit for size confirmation. All members of the auxiliary will be counted in size confirmation requirements. A member of the auxiliary who contributes to the musical effect or content of the program will be judged by the appropriate judge. Auxiliary members singing will not change group size.

Auxiliary Size:

The number of band front/auxiliary members contributing to the visual effect of the show shall be limited to the same maximum numbers which apply to the playing members of that classification. Musicians utilizing auxiliary equipment during the contest will not affect the size classification for front/auxiliary, but will be judged by the appropriate judge.

There are three levels of performance classification that a member may elect to participate:

1. OPEN CLASS

Open Class is designed for ensembles performing at an intermediate to advanced competitive level, demonstrating significant depth, variety, and sophistication in musical and visual design. Programs in this class feature layered responsibilities, mature expressive range, advanced staging, expanded orchestration, coordinated pacing, and high-level environmental challenges.

Performers exhibit consistent achievement across captions, including clarity, precision, nuanced artistry, unified ensemble control, and refined effect development-characteristics aligned with the evaluation language found throughout the TOB judging sheets.

These groups compete throughout the season and conclude with the Region and/or State Championships, with qualifying units advancing to the Atlantic Coast Championships.

2. A CLASS

A Class is designed for ensembles developing beginning to fundamental musical and visual skills. Design and repertoire are intentionally aligned with the needs of bands new to competition, programs with emerging performers, or ensembles building foundational musicianship and coordination skills. Scoring parameters emphasize growth within the class curriculum, rewarding progress, clarity, and achievable design.

A Class ensembles conclude their season at Region and/or State Championships and may qualify for the Atlantic Coast Championship.

3. FESTIVAL CLASS

Festival Class introduces developing ensembles to TOB in a ratings-based, non-numeric format. Groups receive bronze, silver or gold ratings rather than scores or placements. The focus is on student development, instructional support, and positive reinforcement.

Bands and staff receive comprehensive educational commentary emphasizing emerging skills, new performers, and developing instructional teams. Festival Class units conclude their season at Region Championships under the same rating structure.

GROUP SIZE/CLASSIFICATION CONTINUED:

Every regular season TOB Show will offer the three levels of participation - in every group
Region Championships will include three levels of participation/awards
Separate Atlantic Coast Championship will be offered to the OPEN CLASS and A CLASS participants.

2. **PROMOTION:**

A TOB A-Class band scoring 90.00+ total or 18.00+ in three(3) of the five(5) captions at Regional or Atlantic Coast Championship will be recommended for reclassification. Those units recommended for reclassification at either of these events will submit a video for review by caption facilitators and administrators in the weeks directly following the conclusion of the season. The results of those reviews will be communicated before the end of December immediately following the end of the season. An appeal of this decision may still be submitted to the Tournament Director. Appeals should be received in writing within two weeks of the decision to reclassify a unit.

Directors can request a reevaluation at the start of the season, one time. A video must be submitted of the current season by the final competitive week of September.

3. **DECLARATION OF GROUP SIZE/CLASS:**

All bands will declare their group/class of competition by September 1. At no time during the season may a band move down in group/class once they have competed in a group/class. Bands may move to higher group size, or A Class to Open Class, up to two weeks prior to Region Championship and must compete at least one (1) time in the new group/class prior to the Region Championships.

4. **GIMMICK EFFECTS:**

Any instrument carried by a member of the auxiliary and/or Drum Major (s) can be considered a gimmick, and as such will be judged by the appropriate judge. This will not affect class size. Any instrument carried by a member of the auxiliary and/or Drum Major (s) that is utilized in a manner that contributes to the musical effect or content of the program will also be judged by the appropriate music judges. Such performers then become countable in adhering to group size classification. Non-Instrumentalists of a participating band who are singing will not affect group size.

5. EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT:

Group 1 & 2 - \$450.00 Groups 3 & 4 - \$500.00

TOB members will be reimbursed for expenses in a combination of total cash and/or adult tickets. If a sponsor chooses the ticket method of reimbursement, all tickets will be in the hands of the competitor two weeks prior to the show. If tickets are not received by this time, the sponsor will reimburse that unit in cash at the contest site, according to the chart above. Arrangements for the contest will be made between the sponsor and the competitor.

Prior to the start of the competition season individual regions can elect not to do the expense reimbursement for region contests and members only. Any TOB member outside that region will receive the expense reimbursement according to the chart above.

Expenses for the Region Championships will be worked out by each Region's Executive Committee.

If a contest has 8 or less units scheduled, expense reimbursement may be reduced by half.

Group 1 & 2=\$225 Group 3 & 4=\$255

6. SCORING:

- Visual Ensemble - 20 Points
 - 10 points Composition
 - 10 points Achievement
- Music: Individual- 20 points
 - 10 points Composition
 - 10 points Achievement
- Music: Ensemble - 20 points
 - 10 points Composition
 - 10 points Achievement
- General Effect Music - 20 points
 - 10 points Repertoire
 - 10 points Performers
- Visual: General Effect - 20 Points
 - 10 points Repertoire
 - 10 points Performers

The TOB A Class Scale will be separate from the TOB Open Class Scale.

The TOB A Class scoring will reflect emphasis on training/achievement/performers. Scores will be weighted/calculated/multiplied via the tabulation system (WINDI) at .7 for Composition/Repertoire and 1.3 for Achievement/Performer.

The TOB Festival Class will be rated with Bronze(basic), Silver(proficient) and Gold(advanced) on three music sheets and three visual captions. An average of all six (6) scores will determine the final rating.

Specialty awards – Percussion and Auxiliary- will also be 20-point captions using TOB captions and NJA staff. If a host fails to request special award judges, and presents awards, the host will make those selections and notify all Band Directors that no NJA judges will score/select special awards. No scores will be given.

Specialty awards will be announced along with the individual band placement. Ties will not be broken at ACC for music/visual awards.

7. SCORING (STANDSTILL):

Only the following Music Captions will be adjudicated in a regular contest manner:

- Music: Individual
- Music: Ensemble
- Music: General Effect

The three music scores will be adjudicated, added, and used as total for placement at an indoor contest. Scores will not be announced or reported/published. Recaps for the Music Scores may be distributed to only the Participating Bands that attend the critique.

8. CONTEST PRIZES:

All contest prizes will be awarded on total unit scoring and shall be the same for all group sizes. Specialty awards are made at the host's discretion, exclusive of the Region Championships. Special awards are to be given by competing group size in both A Class and Open Class. Specialty awards are limited those drawn from current TOB sheets. Most specialty awards will necessitate a separate judge for each award and they must use an official TOB judging sheet for that caption.

9. AMPLIFICATION/REMOTE DEVICE:

(Within the performance time of 6:00 to 10:00/A 7:00 to 10:00/Open)

Please note: TOB does not require hosts to provide power source or guarantee the watt/amp/power will be sufficient to run every amplification/electronic system. This information should be provided by the host, and requested from interested competitors. There is to be no guarantee, by TOB, on watt/amp/ground/electrical power source.

Amplification of string, wind, percussion, electronic instruments, and voice is permitted. The use of pre-recorded music and pre-recorded singing is allowed. Pre-recorded effects and/or narration may be introduced. Audio volumes may be controlled with a wireless device from any place in the Competition Field (Rule 10) or the Spectator Area open to the public for the event, including designated staff listening/viewing areas. Regardless of such designation, Tournament of Bands does not guarantee the operability of such devices, including the devices' communication with other devices within the Competition Field. Such devices are used entirely at the risk of the user.

9.2 ADULT OPERATION: Adult operation of electronic devices: An adult may operate such devices, but must do so from outside the boundaries of the Competition Field, except in the case of catastrophic technical failure. Please note that allowing an adult to operate a soundboard does not grant permission for them to contribute directly to the music or visual program.

9.3 LOCATION: The triggering of electronic music, sound effects, voiceovers is only permissible by a student musician who is in the Competition Field. It is viewed that those aspects are the same as a musical contribution to the show and therefore should only be produced by musicians within field boundaries.

9.4 LIGHTING: The triggering of any/all lighting effects, is only permissible by a student auxiliary member who is in the Competition Field. It is viewed that those aspects are the same as a visual contribution to the show and therefore should only be produced by auxiliary within field boundaries.

Adults may provide direction to student operators of such equipment, so long as they remain outside of the Performance Field.

PENALTY for adults contributing to Performance (except as permitted above) – 5.0 points per violation.

10. COMPETITION FIELD:

The Competition Field shall be a standard High School Football Field 160 x 360 feet with yard lines

every five (5) yards and yard line markers every ten (10) yards on both front and back sidelines. Regulation High School Hash Marks must be visible, An additional fifteen (15) feet performance area from **the 25 yard line to the 25 yard line** will be available (stadium conditions permitting) across the front sideline of the Competition Field. No equipment or personnel, other than soloists, conductors, and podiums may be placed beyond this additional area (stadium conditions permitting). Equipment and props may be placed along the front boundary of the additional performance area for retrieval during the performance. Crossing (not merely stepping on) the front additional area performance boundary on foot will result in a 0.1 penalty per occurrence to a maximum of 2.0 points. Hands, arms or upper body may cross the boundary for equipment retrieval.

Speakers may be placed an additional three (3) feet beyond this fifteen (15) foot line(stadium conditions permitting).

The mixer/sound board may be located no more than 6 foot maximum beyond drum major podium (stadium conditions permitting).

PLACEMENT/RETRIEVAL OF EQUIPMENT:

Anyone may place or remove equipment before or after the performance. However, during the performance, only clearly-identifiable student personnel may assist with equipment. There are no limits to the number of student equipment personnel used, but they must be declared to the Field Coordinator prior to the start of the performance and be clearly-identifiable throughout the performance. Only students are allowed on the field once the performance starts. It is the responsibility of the competing unit to ensure the safety and well-being of these persons with regard to the placement and retrieval of said equipment.

No parents, or adults, may enter the field. Runners that add to the effect of the performance must be counted as part of the band front/auxiliary (moving scenery, etc.).

11. ENTRANCE-PERFORMANCE-EXIT TIMING:

Each band will have an interval time of fifteen (15) minutes during which they will enter, set up, warm up, perform, and exit the Competition Field. The visual and music performance must be a minimum of seven (7:00) and maximum of ten (10:00) minutes. A Class Band minimum time is six (6:00) minutes.

- A. All props/pit equipment/auxiliary equipment/drum major podiums may enter the field to set up as long as a) the Field Coordinator has given them permission and b) they do not interfere with the previous ensemble's exit. These items may be carried by the students, adults, or a combination of both.
- B. Entrance of the band proper will be from the goal line, and the fifteen (15) minute block (interval) time will begin upon the Field Coordinator's signal.
- C. Entrance/exit areas for all events will be dictated by the host facility layout. These directions will be sent to Band Directors by the show host or in the championship information packet.

12. LATE TO THE LINE:

Any band late to the line will be assessed a two (2.0) point penalty and will be inserted into the schedule at the discretion of the Chief Judge, and Field Coordinator, of the contest. A band late for their group shall comply with Rule #14 BAND ORDER.

13. BAND ORDER:

Any band added to a show after the show is closed and schedule posted in WINDI must be added to the beginning of their respective group. Any bands unable to compete with their respective group, regardless of reason, must perform an exhibition. Bands must compete in continuous Group Sizes. All regular season TOB contests must be set up in Class(A/Open) order and then by Groups within the particular class. A host band may perform last regardless of class. They will receive a score and commentary.

14. ADJUDICATOR FILES:

All judges except Field Coordinator will use digital (mp3) files for adjudication. Files will be loaded to website for access by the Band Director.

JUDGES MEETING/CRITIQUE:

The judges meeting will begin fifteen (15) minutes after the last judged band. Units will limit staff members to a total of eight (8).

Recaps will be distributed (if available) at the post-contest meeting.

The Field Coordinator or designee will monitor the meeting so that all competitors have time with the judges. Any band director or instructor using loud or abusive language in the post-contest meeting will be barred from the next critique. If this should happen a second time during the same season, Bylaw #9 will be enforced leading to the immediate suspension of the unit from the organization pending the decision of the TOB Executive Board. Each staff will meet a minimum of 3 minutes at each judge station as set by the Chief Judge and Field Coordinator. At shows with 14 or more bands, each staff member will meet minimum for 2 minutes at each judge station as set by the Chief Judge and Field Coordinator. Regions may elect not to hold critique at Region Championships.

15. NATIONAL FLAG POLICY:

The use of the American Flag shall be optional in TOB. If used, however, the National Colors will be treated with respect and dignity. If used, however, the National Colors will be handled according to The Tournament of Bands Competitive Flag Code. Copies of the Code will be available from your Region Coordinator. Failure to do so will result in a one (1.0) point penalty.

16. PROHIBITED ITEMS:

The following are NOT ALLOWED on the Competition Field as part of Performance:

- Any equipment, object, or material (including, but not limited to debris, powder, water, or other liquids) that may cause damage to the Performance Field, that presents a safety hazard, or that disrupts the scheduled flow of the contest
- Animals
- Drones or any remote-controlled helicopter, aircraft or similar items
- Fire extinguisher and/or CO2 devices, aerosol products
- Fog, smoke, or similar effect-generating equipment
- Glass or breakable objects
- Hazardous electrical, flammable, chemical equipment
- Lighter-than-air or helium-filled balloons
- Lights-out routines
- Off-road mechanized vehicles (defined as golf carts, garden tractors, small ATVs, etc.) NOTE – does not include set-up prior to performance time
- Pyrotechnics of any kind, including fire, fireworks, or the discharge of firearms The penalty for violation of this rule is DISQUALIFICATION.

17. STAFF INTERFERENCE:

If staying adjacent to the competition field area, the staff of a competing band must stay outside the 40 yard lines of the competing field. (2023) At the discretion of the Chief Judge and Field Coordinator, band staffs may be deemed to be interfering with the orderly progress and adjudication of the contest. The Chief Judge and Field Coordinator may request that staffs move or stop any bothersome behavior. A one

(1.0) point penalty may be imposed. It is further suggested that each contest host provide space in the stands to be set aside for each band staff to view its unit's performance. In an emergency event, the band director may serve as conductor if the drum major is unable to do so. This must be cleared by TOB Director/Chief Judge.

In the event of weather conditions, the chief judge can authorize the use of adults to hold props for safety reasons.

A single adult may be designated as a sound technician and can enter the performance area at any time to make adjustments to electronic equipment as designated by the chief judge. It is understood that any sound produced as a result of electronic adjustments made by the sound technician may be judged accordingly (for example, an electric guitar being turned on in the middle of a musical phrase). Any sound produced by the sound technician as a result of electronic adjustments during a performance would not be considered staff interference by the Field Coordinator.

18. MEDICAL AIDE:

The sponsor must provide qualified medical aide at a contest site.

19. VIDEO:

Hosts should provide a video area for the competing bands to tape their designated band only. Taping is restricted to their own band. No video equipment will be permitted into a sanctioned TOB contest other than provided in this rule.

20. ACC ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The public address announcer at ACC's will announce the Band, Band Director, Region and musical repertoire of each band before it performs, as listed in the on-line ACC Registration.

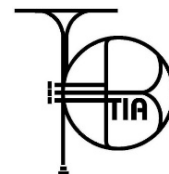
21. TOB CHAMPIONSHIPS:

To qualify for the Tournament of Bands Region Championship, a TOB member band must compete in a minimum of two (2) TOB sanctioned competitions. To qualify for the Tournament of Bands Atlantic Coast Championships, a TOB member band must compete in a minimum of two (2) TOB sanctioned competitions and Region Championship unless utilizing BYLAW 15.

Regions holding less than three shows in the TOB season may apply stipulations specific to the region for participation in Championships as approved by the Tournament Director.

TOURNAMENT MISSION STATEMENT:

Through positive reinforcement and an educational environment, Tournament provides a tradition of performance opportunities in the musical and visual arts.



GOALS:

1. Promote education for directors and students
2. Promote student achievement
3. Promote quality assessment/evaluation
4. Promote enrichment of schools and communities

Modified for TOB 2026