



A Student and Parent Guide to PIMBA Competitions

The MAHS Marching Band participates in marching band competitions sponsored by The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Marching Band Association or PIMBA (www.pimba.org). This document will explain the details and events associated with these Band Competitions.

MAHS Band philosophy on marching competitions is not to compete with other bands but compete with ourselves and to raise the performance level of everyone within our organization. Our goal is to improve one element of the performance during every performance or rehearsal, whether it is at a football game, competition, or the run through at the conclusion of every rehearsal. Yes, we will be in competition with other bands, and receive a “score” for our level of achievement, but we should be concerned about how much, we as an ensemble, improved and how much the individual student improved in that specific performance.

Judges, who are educators, college professors, or people who have been involved and successful in this activity provide feedback, offer opinions and insight that the staff and students use for ideas, assistance, or just to see a different opinion and side of our show. Judges are humans, their mood (what they ate for dinner, their drive to the show etc.) may influence the number they assign us for our performance. If we receive a low score and we performed the best show to date, improving on elements of the show, then we accomplished our goals. If we receive a high score and we as a group think we did not continue our improvement, then we did not accomplish our goals.

The band will be participating in three PIMBA competitions and PIMBA Championships during the year. Kiski H.S. PIMBA Show on September 8, Norwin H.S. PIMBA Show on October 6, and Deer Lakes PIMBA Show on October 20. Shows are sponsored by the individual high school bands and are held at their respective school fields.

The culmination of the competitive season is the PIMBA Championships, which we will be at our very own Moon Area High School Tiger Stadium on Saturday, October 27. The Championship show is bid upon at the Winter Director’s Meeting and is awarded to the school that has the most points in the bidding system. These shows are fundraisers for the respective booster organizations. You can visit www.pimba.org for full schedules and other information regarding shows.

The MAHS Band also participates in competitions sanctioned by Bands of America. Bands of America (BOA) is a program of Music for All. More than 1 million people are alumni of a Bands of America marching band event, the first of which were held in 1976. Bands of America was first named “Marching Bands of America (MBA), renamed Bands of America (BOA) in 1984 and merged with the Music for All Foundation in 2006 to create Music for All (MFA). MFA’s marching band events continue to carry the name “Bands of America.” Music for All holds festivals for Concert Bands, Percussion Ensembles, Jazz Ensembles, and Orchestra. MFA also holds a summer music camp, “The Summer Symposium” for students and directors alike to hone their skills with some of the biggest names in the music field. Bands of America holds 15 marching band regional competitions across the country, spanning the east to west coast. These competitions begin in mid-September and end in November with the Grand National Marching Band Championships. Grand Nationals are held in Lucas Oil Stadium, home of the Indianapolis, Colts. This four day, 100-band event culminates with the crowning of the number one marching band in the nation. This year MAHS will be traveling once again to Canton, Ohio and attending the Canton/Akron Regional at Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium next to the Pro-Football Hall of Fame on October 13. In past years the band has traveled to Towson, MD, Dayton OH, and Monroeville, PA to participate in these regional competitions. While PIMBA has adopted most policies, rules, and regulations in which BOA follows, one drastic change from BOA to PIMBA is the classification of bands. PIMBA classifies bands according to the number of musicians in each band. 1A (small) to 4A (largest). BOA classifies bands according to school size. A, AA, 3A, 4A and 5A (mostly Texas bands). At a BOA Regional, there will be two shows, a preliminary competition in the morning to early afternoon, in which all band enrolled will be judged and scored. The final show, in the evening, is for the top 10 scoring bands, regardless of class size. It is a great honor to be named a finalist band at a BOA Regional,

What to expect on Saturday afternoon:

- Students will be asked to report several hours before the show on Saturday afternoon to rehearse briefly, load equipment, change clothes, eat, and travel to the show site. The time will be announced during the week of the show via itineraries.
- The Band Parent Association will feed the students a light meal before or in transit to the show.
- Students will not have time to go home after rehearsing and before departing for the show site, please make sure students have all items packed before arriving at school.

At the Competition:

- Upon the bands arrival at the show site, they will warm-up musically and physically, thus not entering the stadium until they perform.
- After their performance, the band will reload the trailer and reenter the stadium to watch the rest of the performances.
- PIMBA bands compete in classes, most of which are determined by the size of the Band.
- Bands will perform according to a random draw, which was held at the Summer Director's Meeting. Bands will perform in random class order.
- PIMBA Classification is by band size, and BOA is by school size. Moon Area competes in class 4A (AAAA) in the PIMBA Circuit, and 2A (AA) in the BOA Circuit.
- Judges both on the field and in the stands judge bands in several music and visual categories.
- Just remember, a band's score depends on many factors, some of which are difficult for the audience to understand. An entertaining show, which seems like a crowd favorite may not necessarily be the winner. Check-out the explanation of scoring in the front of every PIMBA program, sold at the events.
- At the end of competition, Drum Majors will report to the sidelines to await the results (this is called "retreat"). Scores will be announced and trophies handed out for each class.

What can parents expect at the competition:

- You can arrive at any time during the competition. The gate price will be \$9.00 for adults and \$6.00 for students and Senior Citizens. The ticket price will be the same regardless the time you arrive.
- Cash is the only option at these events.
- The best seats are toward the center of the stadium, and high up, in order to see all of the visual elements that are built into the programs. But these seats are filled up early.
- The complete performance schedules are on the PIMBA website at www.pimba.org, click the events tab, and then click the specific event. Also, directions to each stadium are listed on the schedule as well.
- All fan seating will be on the press box side of the stadium. Bands will be seated on the visitor side or in other special areas.
- The Moon Fans sit together to support the band, and wear red. The kids can see the big blob of red in the stands, and feed off the energy you bring.
- Dress for the weather, bring blankets, seat cushions etc. PLEASE DO NOT BRING UMBRELLAS, they will block the view of the people behind you.
- Please do not interrupt the bands by leaving during a performance, or trying to be seated during a performance. Wait until the end of the bands performance. There are intermissions built in to each show to give the spectators a break as well as the judges.
- Please refrain from talking during performances.
- Please make only **POSITIVE** comments about all bands' performances. Do not fall into the trap of criticizing other bands. You do not know who is sitting around you and might take your comment the wrong way. Everyone puts forth a huge amount of time and effort to make the best possible show. You would not want your children to be criticized for having a bad show, please do not criticize other bands. Your remarks reflect the entire band program as well as the school district.
- The Band Boosters of each host band will be operating a concession stand. They will have programs for sale. They may also have band related items to sell. There may be a 50/50 drawing as well. This is a fundraiser for the band booster/parents organization, please patronize these booths. Organizations incur a large amount of up front costs to host a (Judges, trophies, etc), most organizations barely make a profit, please support these organizations.
- Many bands sell candy grams (candy with a note attached from you that is delivered to the band after they compete). Look for a table when you enter.

What to expect after the competition:

- After the awards ceremony, the staff (directors) have a chance to speak with the judges about the show (critique), and ask questions etc. This gives the staff valuable information that can be used to improve the performance. During this time, the students will load the rest of the items on the trailer, go back to the buses, change out of uniform, use the restroom, and get ready to head home.
- I will Tweet our score, and when we are departing the show, please sign up for this valuable tool.
- Upon arrival at home, the trailer will need to be unpacked, instrument and equipment put away, and uniforms hung up properly. With 120 students, this may take a while, please be patient, this takes time.
- Parents who attend the competition: You *will* be back in plenty of time to meet your child at school.