



Music for All Philosophy Statement: Use of amplification and electronic enhancement of band sonority

Music for All is committed to expanding the role of music and all arts in education and heightening the public's appreciation of the value of all arts education. We believe music and all arts are core to students' education and must be available to **all students**. We are faithful to a high standard of integrity, **a strong ethical framework**, and a deep and abiding sense of respect for all with whom we interact.

Bands of America nurtures the pursuit of music-making by creating and providing **quality educational experiences for every participant**. We believe that competition is a great motivator and provides substantial opportunities for learning life-lessons.

The essence of competition is to strive for performance excellence and to be **held accountable for learning**. If the **focus is on the learning**, the competitive climate will be valuable throughout one's life. On the other hand, the negativity associated with "winning at all costs" will be a detriment to personal growth.

Music for All's mission and core values support the principles of **fair play, including professional and collegial behavior**. Bands of America competition policies and guidelines are explicit regarding the expectations for all stakeholders, including performers, educators, and evaluators.

The following are examples of the parameters we believe all competing participants should adhere to:

*All music from traditional wind and percussion instruments or electronic instruments **must be performed by a Student Live and in Real Time**.*

*The use of **sampled, prerecorded, or sequenced sounds of woodwind, brass, and/or percussion instruments is not permitted**.*

Advancements in audio technology have created possibilities for participating ensembles to adapt musical performances in such a way as to minimize the involvement of every performer within the ensemble and showcase the talents of only a few. We acknowledge that, for artistic reasons, such adaptations may be appropriate and enhance the overall presentation. However, when **amplification of only specific individuals during full ensemble passages** leads to an intentional misrepresentation of the band sound as a whole, the instructional leadership has strayed from the core values and beliefs stated above. Such misrepresentation of acoustic

qualities, by enhancing the performance of only a few players, is unacceptable and must be self-regulated by the participating bands.

Music for All/Bands of America has always operated with the philosophy that the priority is an educational (more than a competitive) experience. We expect our adjudicators to be mindful of philosophical perspectives while providing the **best possible educational experience for all participants** through their role as evaluators. Similarly, we must encourage all educators to take a lead role in **prioritizing the educational process.**

Together we must demonstrate effective methods that showcase excellent teaching and performance and avoid misrepresentation of ensemble character by using artificial methods/devices to create a false depiction of the band sonority.

In consideration of the Bands of America philosophy, we recommend the following be implemented for the 2023 BOA season and beyond.

- Amplifying individuals through a soundboard during tutti sections leads to an intentional misrepresentation of what is being performed by the total ensemble. **This misrepresentation of acoustic quality by enhancing a few individuals is unacceptable.**
- Soloists and featured ensembles may use microphones during their feature section but must be muted from amplification when not being featured.
- Where a participating band has a limited number of performers (e.g., one player to a part), the use of individual microphones is acceptable.

The Bands of America Judge Administration Team recommends these guidelines and philosophy, with support of the BOA Advisory Committee.