
CWEA

POLICY MANUAL

2026

IMPORTANT NOTE: This document is currently undergoing revisions and is subject to change. Any additional changes to the document for the upcoming season will be listed below. The By-Laws and Constitution section of the previous handbook will exist as a separate document moving forward.

Revisions List

- 10/2/2018: Updated section 1.1.3 to clarify that Intent Letters are not a requirement for participation.
- 10/2/2018: Updated section 1.2.1 to include Non-member participation fees
- 9/18/2018: Added section 1.2.6 Refund of Membership Fees
- 9/14/2018 : Working document published to membership.
- 2/26/2019: Updated section 4.1.7 to correct a typographical error
- 10/24/2019: Changes to policies from 2019 Spring Membership Meeting updated
- 11/7/2021: Changes to policies from 2021 Spring Membership Meeting updated
- 11/1/2022: Changes to policies from 2022 Spring Membership Meeting updated
- 11/26/2023: Changes to policies from 2023 General Membership Meeting updated
- 5/17/2024: Updated to match Proposal Results from past General Membership Meetings
- 7/15/2024: Changes to policies from 2024 General Membership Meeting updated
- 8/24/2025: Changes to policies from 2025 General Membership and Board Retreat Meeting

CWEA POLICY MANUAL

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1.0 MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

1.1 Membership Eligibility

1.1.1 Divisions of Competition

Membership in this organization is available to Color Guard, Marching & Concert Percussion, and Winds groups.

1.1.2 Right of Refusal

The Board of Directors reserves the right to refuse and/or disqualify any person and/or organization from current or future membership whose conduct is inconsistent with the goals and/or philosophies of CWEA.

1.1.3 Letter of Intent

All scholastic groups who plan to field a group are encouraged to submit a Letter of Intent to CWEA no later than September 1st. This form may be completed online on the circuit website. This form can be found on our website: cweaindoor.org/resources-and-files/. This form is not required for participation with CWEA.

1.1.4 Scholastic Member Participation in Independent Groups

In order for a student who has participated with a CWEA member high school to participate in an independent group, they must first file a letter of release with the circuit by emailing support@cweaindoor.org. The letter of release must be submitted using the template available from CWEA and requires the signature of the student, a parent or legal guardian, the independent group director, scholastic group director, and band director. The letter of release can be found on our website: cweaindoor.org/resources-and-files/.

If a letter of release for a student has not been filed with CWEA, and the student chooses to participate in an independent group, then that student will not be permitted to perform with the independent group at a CWEA event and may not be counted as a performer unless they meet one of the following exemptions:

- A. Exemption #1: Students who have not previously participated with a high school program, or who have not participated within the past 12 months with the high school program are exempt from this requirement.
- B. Exemption #2: If the school has not filed a letter of intent with CWEA per section 1.1.3, then the student is exempt from submitting a letter of release.
- C. Exemption #3: If a student has previously participated in an independent group, and then their school decides to field a group in the winter, then that student may continue to participate in the independent group without a letter of release.

1.2 Financial Obligations

1.2.1 Membership Dues

Membership dues for the current season are set by the Board of Directors as follows: Standard Membership – \$795, Deluxe Membership – \$895, and Premium Membership – \$995. Non-member participation fees are \$300 per event. Membership Registration opens on the second Tuesday in September of each year.

Circuit dues are used to help offset operational costs, as well as support the educational opportunities offered by the organization.

1.2.2 Late Fees

Groups are expected to submit all required registration forms and dues payments no later than 11:59 PM on December 31st of the current fiscal year. Groups who do not submit all required registration forms and dues payments by this deadline will be fined a late fee of \$100.00. Groups who do not submit all required registration forms and dues payments by January 31st of the current fiscal year will be fined an additional late fee of \$100.00, for a total of \$200.00.

1.2.3 Withdrawal/Cancellation Fines

All groups that register to compete at a CWEA contest are required to perform at the event. Groups wishing to withdraw must do so through Competition Suite by the contest's designated closing date, which is three weeks prior to the event on Friday at 5:00 p.m. Any group withdrawing after the closing date must notify the CWEA Administration directly.

Withdrawals and Cancellations will be fined as follows:

- All Withdrawals/Cancellations received by the designated closing date will not incur any financial penalties.
- "Member Groups" who fail to withdraw from an event prior to the closing date but before the date of the contest will be fined \$250.00 per group.
- "Member Groups" who fail to withdraw from an event prior to the closing date and also fail to notify the circuit prior to the contest will be fined \$300.00 per group.
- "Non-Member Groups" who fail to withdraw from an event prior to the closing date of the contest will forfeit their registration fee. If the group has not yet paid their registration fee, the group must pay the fee before they will be permitted to participate in future CWEA Events.

1.2.4 Payment Methods

Payments to CWEA may be made by the following methods:

- Mail Check (preferred) – Checks may be mailed to the following address: CWEA Indoor, PO Box 1136, Simpsonville, SC 29681. Checks may also be turned in to the CWEA Treasurer at the regularly scheduled membership meetings. All associated fees for returned checks will be charged to the group. Fees must be paid before the group will be allowed to participate in any other CWEA event.
- Credit/Debit Card – payments by credit/debit card may be made online during the registration process. Payments for outstanding balances may be made by contacting the CWEA Treasurer. All payments made by debit/credit card will incur an additional service charge.

IMPORTANT: Payment for outstanding balances will not be accepted at circuit events other than regularly scheduled membership meetings.

1.2.5 Outstanding Balances

Any group with outstanding financial obligations to CWEA will not be scheduled for or allowed to participate in any CWEA event until those obligations are satisfied. Financial obligations must be current at the time the event closes in order for a group to be scheduled.

1.2.6 Refund of Membership Fees

Should you need to request a refund for your membership fees, you must send your request in writing to the CWEA Treasurer (treasurer@cweaindoor.org). All refund requests are at the discretion of CWEA and require the approval of the President. Please note, if a refund request is approved, only the membership fee portion of the transaction will be refunded. All fees (late fees, convenience fees, processing fees, etc.) are non-refundable.

All requests for refunds received prior to December 31 of the current competitive season will be issued in the same manner in which they were received. Refund requests received on or after January 1 of the current competitive season will be issued as an account credit. Account credits will expire after one year from the date of issue. Refund requests received after the first event closing date of the current competitive season will be denied.

1.3 Membership Entitlements

1.3.1 Contest Participation

Member groups are permitted to compete in contests that are sponsored by/or sanctioned by CWEA. Member groups are given priority performance order over non-member groups.

1.3.2 Entry Passes

Member groups will receive event passes based on their membership level: Standard Membership – seven passes, Deluxe Membership – nine passes, and Premium Membership – twelve passes. Non-member groups will receive seven event passes for each event they compete in. Event passes may only be issued to staff, chaperones, or bus drivers, and are not to be provided to spectators or individuals not directly associated with the performing group. Depending on the venue, these passes may be designated for backside seating only.

Wristbands will be provided for all members of a participating group (active performers, alternate performers, and/or injured performers). This does not include staff, volunteers, parents and/or chaperones, and other persons not considered performers at the discretion of CWEA. Any abuse of the entry passes policy could result in a penalty up to and including disqualification. Enforcement of this policy is at the discretion of the CWEA Contest Administrator in consultation with the Timing & Penalty judge.

2.0 CODE OF ETHICS

2.1 Instructor Code of Ethics

The CWEA Board of Directors feels that it is important to enforce the Instructor's Code of Ethics. If judges and staff are expected to adhere to a professional code of conduct, then it is appropriate that this standard is exacted from the instructional community as well.

If undue and unfair pressure is applied to judges and/or CWEA staff through inappropriate behavior, then this places the competitive experience at risk. Examples include, but are not limited to directors and/or instructors shouting at judges or CWEA staff whether in public or critique, inappropriate conduct of any instructor while accompanying the guard onto the contest floor, or inordinate and unauthorized telephones calls or other communication with judges or the Chief Judge. There is also a growing concern about disruptive behavior in the warm-up area, and rude behavior from the performers and/or staff of one group towards another. Behavior of this type is intolerable and will result in the loss of the privilege that has been violated. For example, directors and/or instructors could lose all critique privileges with judges, they could be barred from the contest floor or venue, or lose the right to use the warm-up venue. Addressing this important issue must be a priority for all competing ensembles and members of our organization.

In instances of poor conduct, it may be necessary to take administrative action based on the severity of the infraction. In all cases, the Executive Board of Directors will be the authority on issues of misconduct or inappropriate behavior. Instructors in violation or breaching contest etiquette may be subject to warnings, single-show suspensions, permanent suspensions, or loss of privileges at the discretion of the Executive Board of Directors.

For issues at events that disrupt the educational environment of the event, the Contest Administrator in consultation with the Circuit President and/or the Director of Events will be responsible for taking action to preserve the positive educational environment for all participants. In escalated situations that may require more action, the Executive Board of Directors and/or the event Contest Administrator will be responsible for taking appropriate action as deemed necessary up to removal from the venue.

2.2 Judge's Code of Ethics

2.2.1 Affiliations

A CWEA judge must disclose to the Judge Coordinator(s) and the Director of Events any affiliation with any performing ensemble (color guard or percussion) based on the following definitions:

PRIMARY AFFILIATION: Designer, instructor, manager, or administrator of the competing ensemble. Individuals may not judge for CWEA if they are performing in any ensemble. A judge with a primary affiliation may not adjudicate the class where his/her affiliation exists, unless approved by the President, Director of Events, and Judge Coordinator(s).

SECONDARY AFFILIATION: Any judge who receives compensation from the school, and/or sponsoring organization and any related organization that sponsors or supports the competing ensemble (i.e. an individual who teaches in the school or who might teach or provide other services for the sponsoring organization) as well as any judge, who through family, spouse or significant other who has a primary affiliation as described above. These affiliations will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. A judge with a secondary affiliation may judge in his/her affiliated class as long as the ensemble he/she is affiliated with is not performing at that contest. There may be rare exceptions to this rule as determined by the Circuit President, Director of Events, and Judge Coordinator(s).

2.2.2 Consultations

A current CWEA Judge is not permitted to give any consultation to any ensemble actively competing in CWEA at an event that he/she may adjudicate.

2.2.3 Conduct

No judge may display interest or preference toward any competing ensemble he/she may judge. Wearing an ensemble's insignia is forbidden. Judges are encouraged to give input regarding the ethical standards of the judging community. This should be handled through the Chief Judge.

2.3 Social Media Guidelines for Instructors and Judges

Social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, discussion forums, blogs, wikis, virtual worlds or any other form of user-generated media, are powerful informational engines for our activity. CWEA recognizes the value of these tools in building buzz and excitement for our activity and everyone is encouraged to share their enthusiasm with friends, family and the general public. Adherence to these guidelines assists us in maintaining the integrity of the adjudication and administrative services CWEA provides to competing ensembles.

Guidelines for using personal social media

- All parties should be aware of your association with CWEA in online social media streams. Use common sense, professional judgment and caution.
- No communication is allowed privately or publicly on any social media streams with any director, instructor, judge or performer about any competitive aspect of any performing ensemble. This type of communication is strictly prohibited by the rules without the express written permission of the Chief Judge, Director of Events or Circuit President.
- CWEA staff and judges should never comment on any individual group's anticipated or actual performance or anything of a competitive nature, however positive. Such postings create openings for questions from anyone reading the post. What seems an innocent comment can be easily misconstrued.
- CWEA staff and judges should change personal settings on Facebook to allow review and approval of any post visible to the public. Use caution on "liking" any post regarding any individual group or CWEA.
- CWEA staff and judges are prohibited from promoting any participating group with which they are affiliated so not to present the appearance of intended influence.
- CWEA staff and judges should refrain from posting any pictures or comments that imply favoritism towards any one group or instructor.
- CWEA staff and judges should use caution in posting or "tagging" photos or videos of any ensemble on your personal social media streams.

It is important to remember that anything posted on the internet is permanent. Although it can be "taken down", it may well exist somewhere for years to come and often reach large numbers of people quickly. If misinterpreted or open to misinterpretation, such postings can do incalculable damage to the reputation of individuals, organizations and CWEA.

CWEA will use these guidelines to determine whether an employee or contractor has been appropriate in their public online behavior with respect to their CWEA-related responsibilities. Those employees and contractors associated with CWEA must represent appropriate conduct for a competitive, scholastic-based activity. Violation of these guidelines can lead to disciplinary action including suspension and/or termination.

3.0 **DIVISIONS & CLASSIFICATIONS**

Color guards may not compete with less than five (5) nor more than fifty (50) performers in the competition area at any time.

3.1 **Color Guard Classifications**

- 3.1.1 **Regional AA Class (Scholastic Groups Only):** The Regional AA Class is designed for the newest ensembles in our activity. Performers in this class will display purely introductory skills with regards to vocabulary, technique and conceptual design. Evaluation for the Regional AA class will be based on the Regional A criteria. Color Guard groups performing in the Regional AA class are eligible for promotion.
- 3.1.2 **Cadet Class (Scholastic Groups Only):** This class is for all groups whose performers are junior high/middle school age or younger. High School students are not allowed to compete in this class. Evaluation will be on the WGI Regional A criteria. Color Guards performing in the CADET Division will not be promoted outside of this class.
- 3.1.3 **Regional A Class (Scholastic Groups Only):** This class is for the beginning performers who are new to the activity but have surpassed the requirements for Novice class. Performers in this class will display introductory and basic skills with regards to vocabulary, technique and conceptual design. This class is intended to encourage and develop the growth of groups that are continuing to develop beyond the Novice level. Evaluation will be based on the Regional A criteria.
- 3.1.4 **A Class (Scholastic & Independent Groups):**
 - 3.1.4.1 **AAA Class (Scholastic Groups Only):** Participants in this class should have beginning vocabulary, programs, achievement levels, and have progressed beyond the introductory level, but are not yet ready to being incorporating intermediate concepts. Evaluation will be on the WGI A class criteria.
 - 3.1.4.2 **AA Class (Scholastic Groups Only):** Participants in this class should have beginning vocabulary, programs, achievement levels, and are ready to begin incorporating intermediate concepts. Evaluation will be on the WGI A Class criteria.
 - 3.1.4.3 **A Class (Scholastic & Independent Groups):** Participants in this class should have beginning vocabulary, programs, achievement levels, and are beginning to incorporate intermediate concepts. Evaluation will be on the WGI A Class criteria. Groups not in Scholastic A or Scholastic National A who attend a WGI Regional and make finals will be automatically reviewed by the Classifications Committee for possible promotion.
 - 3.1.4.4 **National A Class (Scholastic Groups Only):** This is designed to bring the groups together that are striving to be considered at the WGI Regional and World Championships level in A class. If you are participating in at least two WGI Regionals or WGI World Championships in the A class, you are **required** to compete in this class. Groups may elect to participate in this class regardless of their WGI Participation. Once a group is classified into National A, they cannot be moved out of the class until after the conclusion of the current season.
- 3.1.5 **Open Class (Scholastic & Independent Groups):** Participants in this class should have intermediate vocabulary, programs, achievement level, and are beginning to incorporate advanced concepts. Evaluation will be on the WGI Open Class criteria.
- 3.1.6 **World Class (Scholastic & Independent Groups):** Participants in this class should have advanced vocabulary, programs, achievement level, and are exploring new material. Groups in these classifications should be setting the standard all other groups strive to achieve. Evaluation will be on the WGI World Class criteria.

3.2 Marching Percussion Classifications

- 3.2.1 Junior Class (Scholastic Groups Only):** Ensembles entirely comprised of middle school aged students. High School students are not allowed to compete in this class. Here is where the novice or beginning student discovers the joy of performing and realizes the sense of achievement as each skill is learned. Ensembles are evaluated on the WGI Marching A Class sheets but not ranked against A class groups.
- 3.2.2 A Class (Scholastic & Independent Groups):** Ensembles are the younger, less developed participants. Here is where the exploratory student discovers the joy of performing and realizes the sense of achievement as each skill is learned. Evaluation will be on the WGI A Class Marching Sheet
- 3.2.3 Open Class (Scholastic and Independent Groups):** Ensembles have some experience in the indoor percussion arena. Open Class ensembles have several members who understand the skills required to perform intermediate levels of playing and movement. Here is where the intermediate student explores new challenges through performance and realizes a greater sense of achievement as each more complex skill is learned. Evaluation will be on the WGI Marching Open Class Sheet.
- 3.2.4 World Class (Scholastic & Independent Groups):** Ensembles demonstrate a high degree of advanced development. All of the performers contribute to the consistent high levels of performance being demonstrated. World Class ensembles are trendsetters in the indoor percussion activity. Programs are unique and innovative and these components are important at this level. Some very sophisticated challenges will be placed on the performers. Evaluation will be on the WGI Marching World Class Sheet.

3.3 Concert Percussion Classifications

- 3.3.1 Junior Class (Scholastic Groups Only):** Ensembles entirely comprised of middle school aged students. High School students are not allowed to compete in this class. Here is where the novice or beginning student discovers the joy of performing and realizes the sense of achievement as each skill is learned. Ensembles are evaluated on the WGI Concert A Class sheets but not ranked against A class groups.
- 3.3.2 A Class (Scholastic Groups Only):** Ensembles are the younger, less developed participants. Here is where the exploratory student discovers the joy of performing and realizes the sense of achievement as each skill is learned. Evaluation will be on the WGI A Class Concert Sheet.
- 3.3.3 Open Class (Scholastic Groups Only):** Ensembles have some experience in the indoor percussion arena. Open Class ensembles have several members who understand the skills required to perform intermediate levels of playing and movement. Here is where the intermediate student explores new challenges through performance and realizes a greater sense of achievement as each more complex skill is learned. Evaluation will be on the WGI Concert Open Class Sheet.
- 3.3.4 World Class (Scholastic Groups Only):** Ensembles demonstrate a high degree of advanced development. All of the performers contribute to the consistent high levels of performance being demonstrated. World Class ensembles are trendsetters in the indoor percussion activity. Programs are unique and innovative and these components are important at this level. Some very sophisticated challenges will be placed on the performers. Evaluation will be on the WGI Concert World Class Sheet.

3.4 Winds Classifications

- 3.4.1 A Class (Scholastic & Independent Groups):** Ensembles are the younger, less developed participants. Here is where the exploratory student discovers the joy of performing and realizes the sense of achievement as each skill is learned. Groups in the A Class should demonstrate basic musical and movement skills. Evaluation will be on the WGI A Class Winds Sheet.
- 3.4.2 Open Class (Scholastic & Independent Groups):** Ensembles have some experience in the indoor Winds arena. Open Class ensembles have several members who understand the skills required to perform intermediate levels of playing and movement. Here is where the intermediate student explores new challenges through performance and realizes a greater sense of achievement as each more complex skill is learned. Groups in the Open class should demonstrate more integrated movement and dance skills and a higher level of production value. Evaluation will be on the WGI Open Class Winds Sheet.
- 3.4.3 World Class (Scholastic & Independent Groups):** Ensembles demonstrate a high degree of advanced development. All of the performers contribute to the consistent high levels of performance being demonstrated. World Class ensembles are trendsetters in the indoor winds activity. Programs are unique and innovative and these components are important at this level. Some very sophisticated challenges will be placed on the performers. Fully integrated movement and dance skills, in addition to more advanced Design and production value. Groups in the World class will display Evaluation will be on the WGI World Class Winds Sheet.

3.5 Placement Within & Movement Between Classes

3.5.1 Classifications Committee

The Classification Committee consists of A MINIMUM of 10 total representatives (5 Guard representatives and 5 Winds/Percussion representatives) that will review and discuss whether groups will be reclassified. The committee will consist of the Advisory Board Chairs (Guard and Winds/Percussion), 4 appointed guard representatives, and 4 appointed Winds/Percussion representatives. Representatives will be appointed by the Chair of the Classification Committee prior to the start of the competitive season. The Chair of the Classification Committee will be appointed by the CWEA President and must be voted in by majority vote by the Board of Directors at the annual Spring Meeting.

3.5.2 Choosing a Classification

Member groups who competed in the circuit the previous season will automatically be placed in the classification in which they ended the previous season, with the exception of groups being promoted by policy 3.5.8.

Groups will be re-classified if needed after their first show of the season (Premiere). Any subsequent promotions throughout the season will be considered as such. A group can request to be reclassified by communicating such request to the Chair of the CWEA Classifications Committee.

3.5.3 Non-Member Group Classifications

Non-member groups may select the class in which they wish to compete relative to their current experience and ability but may not compete in Scholastic Regional AA. The classification of competition should be relative to the class they compete in at their home circuit. Members of the Classification Committee will help guide groups who are unsure of the class that is relative to their experience and ability. The Classifications Committee Chair, in consultation with the President and/or Judge Coordinator(s), may designate which class a non-member will compete in so that the best interests of all competing teams are honored.

3.5.4 Criteria for Review of a Group

Reviews for possible promotion will be triggered based on a target number for each respective class each week. The final score will NOT be the only criteria used for promotion consideration, but will be used to trigger review. If the trigger number is reached (in 3 out of 5 captions for guard and 2 out of 4 captions for percussion), the group will be reviewed the following week by the Classifications Committee.

The Classifications Committee will review the group's video from the previous week and make a determination by consensus or majority vote on the determinations for that particular group. Every effort will be made to have a determination by the respective group's next scheduled season show. If a determination has not been made by the group's next scheduled show, they will continue to compete in their current classification until a determination is made. If a group is promoted, the group will perform within the new classification.

3.5.5 Appealing a Decision by the Classification Committee

If a group chooses to appeal a Classification Committee determination, the appeal must be sent in writing to the Classifications Committee Chair within 48 hours of the notification of the Committee's determination. At this time, the appeal will go to the committee for further review and consideration. If a group chooses to appeal, said group will compete in their newly promoted class until a final determination is made.

3.5.6 WGI Level Promotions

Groups in Scholastic A, National A, Scholastic Open, Percussion Scholastic A, Percussion Scholastic Open, Percussion Scholastic Concert A, Percussion Scholastic Concert open, Winds Scholastic A, Winds Scholastic Open and all Independent groups can be promoted by WGI, CWEA will recognize them as such.

3.5.7 Promotion Recognition

All groups who are promoted during the season based on a review from a non-Premiere circuit event will receive special recognition at Circuit Championships. Groups that are reclassified based on their Premiere performance will not receive such recognition.

3.5.8 CWEA Color Guard Championships Automatic Reclassifications

- The top THREE scoring groups at Circuit Championships from the Scholastic Regional AA class, regardless of round, will automatically be reclassified to the Scholastic Regional A class for the subsequent season.
- The top THREE scoring groups at Circuit Championships from the Scholastic Regional A class, regardless of round, will automatically be reclassified to the Scholastic AAA class for the subsequent season.
- The top THREE scoring groups at Circuit Championships from Scholastic AAA class, regardless of round, will automatically be reclassified to the Scholastic AA class for the subsequent season.
- The top THREE scoring groups at Circuit Championships from the Scholastic AA class, regardless of round, will automatically be reclassified to the Scholastic A class for the subsequent season.

4.0 EVENT ADMINISTRATION

4.1 Contest Regulation

4.1.1 WGI Rules & Procedures

All competition rules will remain consistent with Winter Guard International, unless otherwise stated in this Policy Manual. Rules and policies will be updated as needed.

4.1.2 Registering for Contests

Directors are responsible for registering their groups for shows online via Competition Suite. Registration for shows will open on the first Tuesday in October of each year. Once registrations are open, group directors are advised to register their groups as soon as possible in order to help the circuit plan for attendance at certain events. Groups may only register for one (1) premiere event each season. Directors are encouraged to register for regionally located premiere events when possible.

4.1.3 Contest Season

The contest season will begin no earlier than January 1st and will extend to no later than April 30th.

In May, the circuit will distribute the Event Partner Application form, which includes a list of contest dates available for the subsequent year. Event Partner Applications will be accepted through July 30th. The Contest Schedule will be announced no later than a week before Membership registration begins.

The circuit will hold (at a minimum) the following events for a season:

- A Premiere Contest, to be the first contest of the season. More than one Premiere contest may be scheduled based on geographic or other membership factors.
- Three regular season contests. Every attempt will be made to have these contests distributed evenly across the geography of the circuit.
- A Circuit Championships Contest, to be the last contest of the season.

4.1.4 Performance Order Procedures

Group performance order will be randomized for each class of competition at each Premiere and Regular Season event.

4.1.5 Timing Requirements

Groups planning to attend Circuit Championships should be aware of and reference section 4.2.2, which sets minimum performance time requirements to be eligible for participation in the Championships events.

COLOR GUARD TIMING				
CLASS	INTERVAL TIME	MINIMUM PERFORMANCE TIME	MAXIMUM PERFORMANCE TIME	AUTHORIZED EQUIPMENT TIME
Cadet Class	7 minutes	2.5 minutes	4.5 minutes	2 minutes
Regional A and Regional AA Class	7 minutes	3 minutes	4.5 minutes	3 minutes
A Class	8 minutes	4 minutes	5.5 minutes	3.5 minutes
Open Class	9 minutes	4 minutes	6.5 minutes	3.5 minutes
World Class	10 minutes	4 minutes	7.5 minutes	3.5 minutes

Regional A color guard groups promoted to the AAA class during the season will be afforded an exemption from A class timing requirements for the remainder of the competitive season.

PERCUSSION TIMING			
CLASS	INTERVAL TIME	MINIMUM PERFORMANCE TIME	MAXIMUM PERFORMANCE TIME
Junior Class	9 minutes	3 minutes	6 minutes
A Class	9 minutes	3 minutes	6 minutes
Open Class	10 minutes	3.5 minutes	7 minutes
World Class	11 minutes	4 minutes	8 minutes

WINDS TIMING			
CLASS	INTERVAL TIME	MINIMUM PERFORMANCE TIME	MAXIMUM PERFORMANCE TIME
A Class	9 minutes	3 minutes	6 minutes
Open Class	10 minutes	3.5 minutes	7 minutes
World Class	11 minutes	4 minutes	8 minutes

4.1.6 Sound Checks

Sound checks will be permitted during the hour prior to the start of the competition. Sound checks may be permitted during breaks in the show at the discretion of the Contest Administrator. It will be the responsibility of the Contest Administrator to ensure sound checks take place within the prescribed limits.

4.1.7 Sound Policy (Color Guard Only)

All performance music for color guards must be submitted via Competition Suite no later than 11:59 p.m. on the Thursday preceding the contest. If the color guard does not utilize the Competition Suite upload process, then it is the responsibility of the group's director to ensure that their performance music is turned in at each event. Neither CWEA, nor its sound operator(s), will accept responsibility for maintaining performance music for groups that do not utilize the Competition Suite upload process.

All color guards are expected to do a sound check to ensure the playability of any digital file, or device. Color guards should check the soundtrack at multiple places in the music to verify playability of any device.

- Color guards are responsible for providing the method that the music will be played (MP3 player, computer, etc.). Each color guard should have two methods to play their soundtrack in the event that one does not work. Color guards utilizing the Competition Suite upload process are expected to have a backup method of playing their music in case there is an issue with the uploaded file.
- The following methods of music submission will not be accepted:
 - Cassette tape
 - Emailed files to the sound operator or other personnel
 - Streaming services (i.e. Apple Music, Spotify, YouTube, etc.) or any method dependent on an internet connection during the performance.
- Color guards must provide their music in a timely manner to the sound operator. Any delay in providing music is the responsibility of the color guard.
- Color guard must have a designated person at the sound table to operate any device provided to play music such as MP3 players or computers. Guard's representative is responsible to set up and play device.

- **If the color guard has an issue with the music such as music is too soft, it begins in the wrong place or skips, the color guard's representative must make the decision to stop the music and tell the sound operator to stop the music.** If the color guard representative chooses not to stop and the color guard completes their performance, the color guard will not be offered an opportunity to perform again.
- Interval timing will continue as the color guard resets and begins again. The Contest Administrator has the sole discretion in waiving any timing penalty due to the restart. If the stoppage is due to faulty sound equipment, operator error or an unexplained reason, overtime penalty may be waived.
- Issues related to the equipment provided by the color guard or the color guard's representative error (using wrong playlist on MP3, etc.) will result in the actual interval timing being used and penalties, if any, being assessed.
- **Volume direction must come from the color guard representative at the sound table. Direction will not be taken from the audience viewing area or across the floor.** Final volume discretion is given to the sound operator based on their equipment and the Contest Administrator who ultimately determines an appropriate volume level.
- The color guard representative may provide direction to the sound operator during the performance regarding equalization.
- It is the responsibility of the color guard to provide their music for each performance and to ensure that their soundtrack is working appropriately. Devices may not be left at sound table between performances.
- Under no circumstances will verbal abuse of the sound operator be tolerated. Penalties will be assessed per current WGI rules at the discretion of the Contest Administrator.

If a warm-up area allows for music to be played during warm-up, it will be stated in the event description on the CWEA Event Details page. No music will be allowed in a shared warm-up space (for example: split-gym warm-up areas).

4.1.8 Review of Protests

A review committee of the Contest Administrator, Chief Judge and two Board Members will address any protest of the rules and/or judging issues of a contest. Any protest concerning the administration of a contest must be submitted to the Contest Administrator immediately following the performance of the groups in the contest and prior to the retreat ceremony.

4.1.9 Competition Scheduling

Draft schedules for competitions will be posted to the circuit website three weeks prior to the contest. All schedules for contests will be finalized by the Monday prior to the contest. No changes will be made after Monday unless necessary due to an error. If changes are made after Monday, groups will be notified.

4.1.10 Weather Cancellations

At times, it may be necessary for the delay and/or cancellation of an event due to inclement weather for the safety of students, instructors, spectators, and CWEA Staff. In the event of inclement weather, the following procedures will be followed:

- The Circuit President (or their designee) will consult with the Event Partner to determine if a safety concern exists. All parties will then determine to either cancel the event, delay the start of the event, change the schedule for an event, or to postpone discussions until a more educated decision can be made.
- If it is determined that a delay of start of the contest is necessary, or if a change in schedule is required, the Circuit President (or their designee) will work to create a new official schedule for the event which will be posted to the circuit website. Notifications of these changes will be sent via email and text message through Competition Suite.
- If it is determined that the event is to be cancelled, notification of the cancellation will be posted to the circuit website. Notification will also be sent via email and text message to all group participants through Competition Suite.
- In the event of a cancellation, all groups that are scheduled to compete at the time of the cancellation will still receive performance credit for Circuit Championships.
- Non-Member Groups who are registered AND have paid the non-member registration fee will receive a credit for the amount of the fee to their account. The credit will remain for use towards other fees, fines, and/or registrations for other events. No refunds will be issued as a result of an inclement weather cancellation.
- Should a group director determine that due to inclement weather, travel for students and staff of the ensemble is unsafe, they must notify the Contest Administrator via telephone as soon as the decision is made. Group directors will be assessed the withdrawal fines as described in section 1.2.3 of the CWEA Policy Manual.
- Group Directors may submit a signed letter from their school administration to the circuit explaining that they were unable to travel due to inclement weather. Groups who submit the letter will have associated fines waived and removed from their account. Letters from scholastic groups must be received no later than one week (5 business days) from their return to school. Letters from independent groups must be received no later than five business days following the event.

4.1.11 Video Recordings

There is to be no video recording of any CWEA Event or CWEA Championships performance. No video cameras will be allowed in any contest venue and no authorized space will be provided for groups to record their performance.

Any liability associated with unauthorized recordings will rest with the individual or organization making the recording. CWEA does not condone, nor accept any liability for, any unauthorized recordings. No video passes will be issued.

4.1.12 Commentary

Audio Commentary by the judging panel will be made available through the group's Competition Suite account. It is the group director's responsibility to ensure that the proper access to the group's account is made prior to events. If you have issues with your Competition Suite account, you should consult with the Contest Administrator.

4.1.13 Critique

Critique with the judging panel will be held at designated times throughout the contest day. The circuit will schedule critiques with the consideration that all groups must be given an adequate opportunity to receive and evaluate commentary before being scheduled to attend critique.

You must register for critique in advance of the event. Registration for critique will be administered through Competition Suite, and will close at 5:00 PM on Friday preceding the show. Groups that do not sign up for critique in advance of the event will not be permitted to participate. Groups who register for critique and then do not attend critique may lose their critique privileges for the remainder of the season, unless extenuating circumstances are discussed with the Contest Administrator prior to the critique sessions and the absence is excused.

4.2 Circuit Championships

4.2.1 Eligibility

Participation in Circuit Championships is available only to Member groups. Non-member groups are not permitted to participate in Circuit Championships. Member groups must be in good standing with the circuit and must have satisfied all financial obligations to CWEA.

4.2.2 Qualification

In order to qualify for Circuit Championships, groups must meet the following criteria:

Color Guard:

- Perform in at least one of the designated CWEA Premiere Events
- Perform in at least two additional circuit events
 - Groups may use a WGI Regional performance to substitute for one of their additional circuit event requirements.
- Groups must perform at least one half of the minimum performance time required for their classification at all of their scheduled performances.
 - The performance time must have adequate choreography and staging in order to be considered towards the performance time requirement. Excessive un-staged and/or un-choreographed performance time will not be counted towards this requirement.

Percussion and Winds:

- Perform in at least three circuit events (no Premiere requirement)
 - Groups may use a WGI Regional performance to substitute for one of their circuit event requirements.

The performance qualification requirements may be waived by the Board of Directors in extenuating circumstances.

4.2.3 Registration Deadline

Groups registering for CWEA Circuit Championships must register before January 31st. Any group registering after January 31st will be assessed a \$100 late registration fee.

4.2.4 Event Capacity

Once the maximum number of group registrations is received, all other groups will be placed on a waiting list until the Circuit Administration determines whether or not space will be available for those participants, or until space in the event becomes available from withdrawals and/or cancellations.

4.2.5 Performance Order for Color Guards

For Scholastic Regional AA, Scholastic Regional A, Cadet, Scholastic AAA, Scholastic AA, and Scholastic A classes with sixteen (16) or more color guards will be seeded into "tournament-style" rounds for Circuit Championships using their most recent score (as described in Item G) increased by 1.5 points each week of the circuit calendar up to two weeks prior to Circuit Championships. The resulting "standings list" will be used to assign color guards to their preliminary round. Color guards with identical scores will be randomly assigned to a round. This ranking method was designed to be an objective way to determining appearance. Classes with less than six (6) color guards will perform in reverse order of rank. A single panel of judges will judge all performances.

The following example is based on a preliminary contest with 45 color guards. The number of rounds and guards within each round will vary depending on the size of the contest but this gives an example of the process. The numbers represent the RANKING of the color guard. The highest ranked color guard will perform in the last round.

ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3
3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45	2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26, 29, 32, 35, 38, 41, 44	1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34, 37, 40, 43

Once placed into a round, color guards will be divided into two groups according to ranking (highest ranking, next highest ranking, etc.). Color guards will random draw for performance order within their group with the highest ranking color guards in that group performing in the second half. The highest ranked color guards will perform in the last round.

There are only two ways a color guard may switch rounds, and these are entirely at the discretion of the Circuit President.

- There is a performance scheduling conflict with another performing color guard of the same school or organization at Circuit Championships. In this case, the color guard will be shifted to the next non-conflicting performance time within the ranking. Non-affiliated groups or groups not traveling together may not necessarily be accommodated and must plan accordingly for stagehand assistance.
- Color guard performance times may be adjusted at the discretion of the Director of Events and/or Circuit President if the color guard is delayed due to inclement weather, and/or unexpected travel issues. Depending on the length of the delay, it may also be determined that the color guard will perform in exhibition only. If space in the schedule is not available, the ensemble may not be allowed to perform. Scheduling adjustments are not guaranteed and are entirely at the discretion of the Director of Events and/or Circuit President.

For National A, Open and World classes, all performing color guards will perform in a single round. Color guards will be divided into two groups according to ranking (highest ranking, next highest ranking, etc.) using their most recent score (as described under Circuit Championships Item G) increased by 1.5 points each week of the circuit calendar. Color guards will random draw for performance order within their group with the highest ranking color guards in that group performing in the second half. Classes with less than six (6) color guards will perform in reverse order of rank. A double panel of judges will judge all performances.

4.2.6 Performance Order for Percussion Groups

Classes with sixteen (16) or more ensembles will be seeded into "tournament-style" rounds for Circuit Championships using their most recent score (as described in Item G) increased by 1.5 points each week of the circuit calendar up to two weeks prior to Circuit Championships. The resulting "standings list" will be used to assign ensembles to their preliminary round. Ensembles with identical scores will be randomly assigned to a round. This ranking method was designed to be an objective way to determining appearance. Classes with less than six (6) ensembles will perform in reverse order of rank. A single panel of judges will judge all performances.

The following example is based on a preliminary contest with twenty ensembles. The number of rounds and ensembles within each round will vary depending on the size of the contest but this gives an example of the process. The numbers represent the RANKING of the ensemble. The highest ranked ensemble will perform in the last round.

ROUND 1	ROUND 2
2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20	1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19

Once placed into a round, ensembles will be divided into two groups according to ranking (highest ranking, next highest ranking, etc.). Ensembles will random draw for performance order within their group with the highest ranking ensembles in that group performing in the second half. The highest ranked ensembles will perform in the last round.

There are only two ways an ensemble may switch rounds, and these are entirely at the discretion of the Circuit President.

- There is a performance scheduling conflict with another performing ensemble of the same school or organization at Circuit Championships. In this case, the ensemble will be shifted to the next non-conflicting performance time within the ranking. Non-affiliated groups or groups not traveling together may not necessarily be accommodated and must plan accordingly for stagehand assistance.
- Ensemble performance times may be adjusted at the discretion of the Director of Events and/or Circuit President if the ensemble is delayed due to inclement weather, and/or unexpected travel issues. Depending on the length of the delay, it may also be determined that the ensemble will perform in exhibition only. If space in the schedule is not available, the ensemble may not be allowed to perform. Scheduling adjustments are not guaranteed and are entirely at the discretion of the Director of Events and/or Circuit President

4.2.7 Performance Order for Winds Groups

Classes with sixteen (16) or more groups will be seeded into "tournament-style" rounds for Circuit Championships using their most recent score (as described in Item G) increased by 1.5 points each week of the circuit calendar up to two weeks prior to Circuit Championships. The resulting "standings list" will be used to assign groups to their preliminary round. Groups with identical scores will be randomly assigned to a round. This ranking method was designed to be an objective way to determining appearance. Classes with less than six (6) groups will perform in reverse order of rank. A single panel of judges will judge all performances.

The following example is based on a preliminary contest with twenty groups. The number of rounds and ensembles within each round will vary depending on the size of the contest but this gives an example of

the process. The numbers represent the RANKING of the ensemble. The highest ranked ensemble will perform in the last round.

ROUND 1	ROUND 2
2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 , 14, 16, 18, 20	1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19

Once placed into a round, ensembles will be divided into two groups according to ranking (highest ranking, next highest ranking, etc.). Groups will random draw for performance order within their group with the highest ranking groups in that group performing in the second half. The highest ranked groups will perform in the last round.

There are only two ways a group may switch rounds, and these are entirely at the discretion of the Circuit President.

- There is a performance scheduling conflict with another performing group of the same school or organization at Circuit Championships. In this case, the group will be shifted to the next non-conflicting performance time within the ranking. Non-affiliated groups or groups not traveling together may not necessarily be accommodated and must plan accordingly for stagehand assistance.
- Group performance times may be adjusted at the discretion of the Director of Events and/or Circuit President if the group is delayed due to inclement weather, and/or unexpected travel issues. Depending on the length of the delay, it may also be determined that the group will perform in exhibition only. If space in the schedule is not available, the group may not be allowed to perform. Scheduling adjustments are not guaranteed and are entirely at the discretion of the Director of Events and/or Circuit President

4.2.8 Class Divisions

Classes will be divided and awarded based on competitive rounds. Each round will be awarded a First, Second & Third place trophy. Additionally, the highest scoring group from the class, regardless of round, will be awarded the Class Championship.