



"The Spirit of Performing Arts"



SOUNDSPORT®

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Presented by:





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INTRODUCTION

Launched in 2013 as a part of the DCI Summer Tour, SoundSport® empowers musicians and performing arts groups of all sizes to stage audience-focused performances that reflect their local schools and communities. With a heightened focus on student engagement, the “SoundSport® Scholastic” Event Series – fueled by Varsity Performing Arts and Drum Corps International – will increase overall participation in SoundSport® and ensure student safety while supporting lifelong participation in music and performing arts. Designed to welcome thousands of new participants, the program eliminates existing barriers to participation and offers high-quality performance stages across the country uniquely different from what has been offered previously. Groups are encouraged to perform locally in a broad range of divisions that can create pathways for national and international performance opportunities.

This performing arts competition is now reimagined as a festival-style showcase. Instead of competing against peers, teams are encouraged to bring their best selves to the stage and perform alongside the talent neighboring their local communities. SoundSport® Scholastic provides performing artists with a sense of belonging, camaraderie, and a growth mindset that encourages teamwork and community.

Varsity Performing Arts is a division of Varsity Spirit, the leader in cheer, dance, and scholastic band with a mission to elevate the performing experience for all students through camps, education, and events. Through educational initiatives, Varsity Performing Arts works with coaches, leaders, and participants across campuses to develop opportunities for collaborative spirit in school and the surrounding community.

Both organizations bring a combined 90 years of event coordination and management experience to the redefined SoundSport® Scholastic stage. With a shared commitment to music education, performing arts, and the student experience, Varsity Performing Arts and Drum Corps International are thrilled to welcome every participant to bring their best selves forward in the pursuit of performance excellence.



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WHAT IS SOUNDSPORT® SCHOLASTIC?



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The SoundSport® Scholastic Event Series is a branch of Drum Corps International’s SoundSport® competition. It is a program designed to offer students an engaging and educational music education and performing arts experience celebrating musical excellence, crowd engagement, and community. Multiple performance stages allow for large and small ensemble performances across four reimagined categories – Marching Band, Athletic Band, Percussion, and Performing Arts Showcase. The events are designed to provide an educational clinic experience with an emphasis on growth mindset, building confidence, and improving their skills with positive reinforcement.

Events add value to the event day designed around performance assessments, educational clinics, and immersive, highly interactive involvement, designed with the student experience as the foundation of the program. SoundSport® Scholastic encourages smaller ensembles to explore creative performance styles and encourages autonomy in designing that style. Ultimately, the experience provides a format to celebrate and spotlight styles of ensembles, regardless of size, resources, or prior experience and achievements. The SoundSport® Scholastic Event Series champions young performing artists in this effort. Welcome to the Experience!

OUR MISSION & VALUES

Our mission is to elevate the student experience through music and performing arts.

GOALS

1. Increase participation by designing a format that connects the activity to the role of school spirit and lowers current barriers to entry for participants.
2. Foster new performance opportunities focusing on student engagement and collaboration across student groups.
3. Enable universities to increase recruitment touchpoints with prospective students.
4. Offer a uniquely different educational performing experience for participants that celebrates excellence in performance and innovation in style.



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THE SOUNDSPORT® SCHOLASTIC EXPERIENCE

The SoundSport Scholastic experience offers a music festival atmosphere offered in an educational clinic-style setting, where success is measured through student achievement and crowd engagement. Participating ensembles are assigned a university mentor that offers feedback, encouragement, and service from beginning to end.

ASSESSMENT MODEL

SoundSport Scholastic's "Festival style" performance assessment is designed as an educational tool for all participating groups by emphasizing the skill of the students and providing valuable feedback that supports growth as musicians and performers. Tied directly to the National Core Arts Standards, teams will perform with the goal of achieving a SUPERIOR rating and opportunities to be awarded various Caption Awards.

The Festival assessment platform of evaluation is based on a rating system. Adjudicators award participating ensembles an overall rating in one of three categories: Good, Excellent, Superior. This rating is reached through feedback and explicit commentary in 2 captions – *Sights* and *Sounds*.

ADJUDICATION GUIDELINES

SoundSport Scholastic events are assessed on a festival model, with assessment criteria designed to support the National Core Art Standards for music. Adjudicators will be highly qualified individuals in music and visual performance and will adhere to the official SoundSport Scholastic assessment sheets.

[SOUNDS ASSESSMENT SHEET](#)

[SIGHTS ASSESSMENT SHEET](#)

Adjudication criteria places the performance focus on student execution and achievement as well as audience effectiveness. Adjudicators will provide written and verbal commentary in relation to their assigned division and caption and in accordance with these sheets.

At the Grand Finale, ratings will be announced. Ensembles may also have the chance to be awarded various "Caption Awards" in each division and at each event.

SOUNDSPORT SCHOLASTIC LICENSING PROGRAM

WHAT IS LICENSING? | The SoundSport Scholastic Licensing Program localizes SoundSport competition through independent event coordination. Licensed events focus on the most local level of performance and offer a direct pathway to larger SoundSport performance opportunities at our National and International Events.



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LICENSEE ELIGIBILITY | Eligible affiliates are any groups that currently host performing arts events on their campus. High schools, organizations, and state associations can apply to become SoundSport Scholastic Event Licensees. Licensing organizations will augment existing competition platforms by adding a SoundSport Scholastic component to their day's events.

HOW TO LICENSE SOUNDSPORT SCHOLASTIC | Affiliates, once approved, receive the licensing to SoundSport Scholastic annually which provides the licensing rights; SoundSport Scholastic format of performance; the official rulebook, scoresheets, and adjudication guidelines; access to training for staff, volunteers, and adjudicators; and adjudicator selection assistance. *Note: Dates of affiliate performances are subject to the annual schedule of larger SoundSport Scholastic performances such as the National and International Event Series.*

PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY & REGISTRATION | For questions on how to become a SoundSport Scholastic Affiliate or license the SoundSport Scholastic model, please contact performingarts@varsity.com.

SOUNDSPORT SCHOLASTIC NATIONAL EVENT SERIES

The SoundSport Scholastic National Event Series is a program that regionalizes performance opportunities and partners with colleges and universities to offer an educational performance experience for participants.

Utilizing national standards for music and arts, these events are designed to highlight music and performing arts ensembles staged at colleges and universities. Participants will engage with campus organizations through clinics and workshops and may have opportunities to perform alongside university ensembles.

EVENT PARTNER PARTICIPATION | A National Event Partner is any university that invites the SoundSport Scholastic team to stage an event on their campus. Events are run in direct coordination with the facilities staff and the university Music and Performing Arts Departments. National Event Partners will coordinate with a SoundSport Scholastic Event Director to schedule educational clinics and masterclasses, recruitment workshops, and performances throughout the event day.

PARTNER ELIGIBILITY | SoundSport Scholastic is dedicated to fostering lifelong participation in performing arts and enabling universities to increase touchpoints with musicians. National Event Partners may change on a rotational basis year to year, season to season. The decision to rotate the National Event Series locations equalizes those opportunities for more universities and lowers travel-related barriers to entry for scholastic ensembles across the country.

PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY & REGISTRATION | For questions on how to become a SoundSport Scholastic Affiliate or license the SoundSport Scholastic model, please contact varsityperformingarts@varsity.com.



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SOUNDSPORT SCHOLASTIC PERFORMANCE DIVISIONS

ATHLETIC BAND

DESCRIPTION | Athletic Band is any pep or marching band whose primary focus during this performance format is to be ambassadors of their school and community. Performances should focus on the authentic sights and sounds of their school and community in a Game Day setting with the goal of connecting performers to the audience and their community. Teams have the option and are encouraged to include other school spirit-based groups (i.e. cheer, dance, mascots, etc.) in their overall team to further this goal. Examples of this style of performances can be found at HBCU, Power 5, and other nationally recognized college bands.

This is a division for teams with performances that represent their school and community spirit! Shows should be authentic to the sights & sounds of their community and focus on collaboration & crowd engagement. Teams are encouraged to showcase their authentic Game Day experience in 1 of 3 registration categories (see below). Assessment will reward level-appropriate composition and execution, innovation, and showmanship to this point.

PERFORMANCE REGULATIONS |

PERFORMANCE SITE: The standard SoundSport Scholastic performance area measures 60'x90' on an indoor or tarped site *or* 30 yards wide by 20 yards deep on a regulation football field (measured between the 35-yard lines and from the front sideline to 4 22.5" steps behind the front hash). This stage will be taped off by the event team prior to performance.

In the case of performances occurring in outdoor venues such as regulation football or soccer stadiums, ensembles have the option to utilize the full 100-yard field and the space between the front and back sidelines. Please note that in the case of inclement weather, teams will be performing on the standard SoundSport Scholastic stage.

It is highly encouraged that ensembles select a performance area conducive to their size and desired level of crowd engagement. When registering, ensembles must mark if they will be using the "standard SoundSport Stage" or the "full field option."

Performers may not extend beyond these parameters except for when they are executing their run-ons and run-offs **to include a front ensemble**. All assessed performance must be conducted within these guidelines. Coordinating spirit elements must also perform within this space and are encouraged to integrate as much as possible with the band.

PERFORMANCE FORMAT: Teams will produce a program that may not exceed 6:30 minutes with no minimum performance time. The total time that groups are allotted on the field (from entrance, through performance, to full exit off the field) may not exceed 10 min. Success in the Athletic Band Division is measured by excellence achieved in an engaging performance in one of 3 categories. Upon registration, teams will select in which category they will be assessed:

- **"STAND BAND"** is defined as any pep band that mimics a home stands Game Day experience! Teams do not demonstrate visual excellence through staging or drill. There is no dynamic movement across the field, though teams may (and are encouraged to)



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dance, perform engaging and crowd-leading horn moves, and collaborate with spirit teams to enhance their performance. Tunes for performance should include crowd-rallying pieces or call and response, drumline cadences, and recognizable pop tunes, and must include the school's fight song or alma mater.

- **"PREGAME"** is defined as the essence of community rallying and includes everything that happens prior to kick off! Bands participating in this category should execute a full pregame performance which may include: a dynamic "run-on" and "run-off" from the field complete with drill; a featured performance by the drum major or mascot; the school's fight song or alma mater; a band chant or crowd-leading drumline cadence; executing a tunnel; forming a school mascot, letter, or symbol on the field; and anything else relevant to the pregame experience. Order and format is not specified, and teams are encouraged to bring the full spirit of THEIR Game Day to the field!
- **"HALFTIME"** is defined as any marching performance occurring between game halves whose goal is to engage the crowd through community/cultural music or recognizable themes, tunes, and visuals. Fun entertainment is the spirit of this category! This category differs from the Marching Band Division in that the focus here is on school/community connection, entertainment, and coordination with other spirit teams whereas the Marching Band Division is not school-oriented as much as it is artistic and thematic.

In addition to this, teams are expected to submit a prepared "Game Day Script" for the announcer to cue transitions (similar to a spiel sheet). The school may provide a mic'd emcee or may choose to have the announcer read on their behalf (sample scripts will be made available).

UNIFORMS: Uniforms should represent the school and community through coordinated colors, school letters, use of mascots, and other crowd-leading equipment. Traditional marching uniforms; coordinated pep and performance wear; and school-oriented color guard, cheerleading and dance team fashion are appropriate uniform choices.

EQUIPMENT & INSTRUMENTATION: The use of large props and amplification are not encouraged and will not be considered in the adjudication. "Large props" refer to any stationary or mobile piece of art, infrastructure, drop screen, or electronic enhancer that is used to relay a theme and provide concealment, elevation, or transition for members of the team. The effective and safe use of color guard standard equipment (flags, rifles, sabres, air blades), drum major and majorette batons and maces, pom poms, mascot costuming and related equipment, crowd-leading signage, and unamplified megaphones are encouraged. The use of large run-on flags and banners are also encouraged.

Authorized instruments for Athletic Band performances include any instrument that is played or struck to create sound in real time including live human voice. Instrumental amplification of any kind is not encouraged and will not be considered in the adjudication. This includes use of electronic keyboards, guitars, bass guitars, audio-engineered sound patches and synthesizers. However, use of unamplified megaphones are authorized in this division. Please contact the SoundSport Scholastic support team with any further questions.



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ELIGIBILITY: Ensembles must contain more than 5 performers, and any high school student who is an active member of the performing school's marching or pep band, color guard, cheer team, dance line or team, and mascot are invited to participate. Middle school and home-schooled performers are eligible to participate with their band if the school administration typically allows. No individuals in college or no longer attending high school are authorized to register in this division or with a participating band.

ADJUDICATION | Ensembles will be evaluated in 2 categories – Sights and Sounds. Adjudication criteria places the performance focus on student execution and achievement as well as on crowd effectiveness, showmanship, and collaboration between school groups. Tied directly to the Common Anchor #6 music performance standard, teams will be assessed on a festival platform, with the goal of achieving a SUPERIOR rating and opportunities to be awarded various Caption Awards.

MARCHING BAND

DESCRIPTION | This division is for bands with shows that are thematic, abstract, & artistically expressive, whose style mimics more closely that which is currently performed in outside circuits. Field shows are assessed on their crowd effectiveness as well as their musical and visual connection to the theme presented and emphasizes themes that are recognizable to a diverse crowd. This division is designed to encourage more groups to participate by lowering the cost associated with longer shows, large props, amplification, and by utilizing a smaller performance area.

PERFORMANCE REGULATIONS |

PERFORMANCE SITE: The Marching Band Division performance stage mirrors the Athletic Band stage.

PERFORMANCE FORMAT: Teams will produce a program that may not exceed 6:30 minutes with no minimum performance time. The total time that groups are allotted on the field (from entrance, through performance, to full exit off the field) may not exceed 10 min. Performances will range in theme, concept, and design. Attention to innovation, execution, and crowd effectiveness will be rewarded. Success in the Marching Band Division is measured by excellence achieved in a robust performance that:

- Demonstrates a consistent theme or idea throughout the performance
- Seamlessly and clearly connects the sights and sounds of the performance
- Is relatable and enjoyable to a diverse crowd (crowd effectiveness)
- Demonstrates a skill level that is achievable but challenging for the performers

UNIFORMS: Attention to costuming is at the discretion of the program and should connect to the performance in a style that is appropriate to the audience and context. Uniforms should either represent the school and community (i.e. traditional marching uniforms) through the school's colors, letters and/or mascot or represent the selected theme/idea.

EQUIPMENT & INSTRUMENTATION: The use of large props and amplification are not encouraged and will not be considered in the adjudication. "Large props" refer to any stationary



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or mobile piece of art, infrastructure, drop screen, or electronic enhancer that is used to relay a theme and provide concealment, elevation, or transition for members of the team. The effective and safe use of color guard standard equipment (i.e. flags, rifles, sabres, air blades) and non-standard, handheld equipment (i.e. hula hoops, batons, balls, streamers, etc.) are encouraged.

Authorized instruments for Marching Band performances include any instrument that is played or struck to create sound in real time including live human voice. Instrumental amplification of any kind is not encouraged and will not be considered in the adjudication. This includes use of electronic keyboards, guitars, bass guitars, audio-engineered sound patches and synthesizers. Please contact the SoundSport Scholastic support team with any further questions.

ELIGIBILITY: Ensembles must contain more than 5 performers, and any high school student who is an active member of the performing school’s marching band and color guard are invited to participate. Middle school and home-schooled performers are eligible to participate with their band if the school administration typically allows. No individuals in college or no longer attending high school are authorized to register in this division or with a participating band.

ADJUDICATION | Ensembles will be evaluated in 2 categories – Sights and Sounds. Adjudication criteria places the performance focus on student execution and achievement as well as on crowd effectiveness, showmanship, and thematic consistency. Tied directly to the Common Anchor #6 music performance standard, teams will be assessed on a festival platform, with the goal of achieving a SUPERIOR rating and opportunities to be awarded various Caption Awards.

PERCUSSION

DESCRIPTION | This division encourages drum lines, world drums, parade/cadence drumlines, or any other percussive ensemble to bring their best beats forward for a performance assessment. Drumline Battle will be a separate performance option in which to participate and will favor entertainment during the performance assessment.

PERFORMANCE REGULATIONS |

PERFORMANCE SITE: The standard SoundSport Scholastic performance area measures 60’x90’ on a tarped or taped off site *or* 30 yards wide by 20 yards deep on a regulation football field (measured between the 35-yard lines and from the front sideline to 4 22.5” steps behind the front hash). This stage will be taped off by the event team prior to performance. All assessed performance must be conducted within these guidelines.

PERFORMANCE FORMAT: Teams will perform in a timeframe that may not exceed 6:30 minutes with no minimum performance time. The total time that groups are allotted on the stage (from entrance, through performance, to full exit off the field) may not exceed 10 min. Performances will range in theme and style. Attention to innovation, execution, and crowd effectiveness will be rewarded. Eligible ensembles may include, but are not limited to:

- Marching drumlines – drumline field show features, parade cadences, Game Day crowd-leading



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- World drums & drum circles
- Beat boxing and body percussion
- Step or Stomp teams

UNIFORMS: Attention to costuming is at the discretion of the program and should connect to the performance in a style that is appropriate to the audience and context. Uniforms should either represent the school and community (i.e. traditional marching uniforms) through the school's colors, letters and/or mascot; represent the customary fashions of the performed musical style; or represent the selected theme/idea.

EQUIPMENT & INSTRUMENTATION: The use of large props and amplification are not encouraged and will not be considered in the adjudication.

Authorized instruments for Percussion performances include any instrument that is in the percussion family or device that can be struck to create rhythm and sound in real time including live human voice. Instrumental amplification of any kind is not encouraged and will not be considered in the adjudication. Please contact the SoundSport Scholastic support team with any further questions.

ELIGIBILITY: Ensembles must contain more than 5 performers, and any high school student who is an active member of the performing school's music ensembles are invited to participate. Middle school and home-schooled performers are eligible to participate with the ensemble if the school administration typically allows. No individuals in college or no longer attending high school are authorized to register in this division or with a participating band.

ADJUDICATION | Ensembles will be evaluated in 2 categories – Sights and Sounds. Adjudication criteria places the performance focus on musical excellence, ensemble cohesion, and crowd effectiveness. Tied directly to the Common Anchor #6 music performance standard, teams will be assessed on a festival platform, with the goal of achieving a SUPERIOR rating and opportunities to be awarded various Caption Awards.

PERFORMING ARTS SHOWCASE

This division is the broadest division, encouraging creativity and innovation. Anything from world music and kazoo bands to a brass quintet with color guard framing is encouraged to put an engaging performance together. The broad nature allows student groups and directors to explore creative performance styles and invites cultural music ensembles to bring their most entertaining pieces to the stage. Smaller ensembles or subgroups of larger groups might consider a performance in this division as well.

PERFORMANCE REGULATIONS | Ensembles must contain a minimum of 5 performers with no maximum and can be made up of any mix of instrumentation and visual element.

PERFORMANCE SITE: The standard SoundSport Scholastic performance area measures 60'x90' on a tarped or taped off site *or* 30 yards wide by 20 yards deep on a regulation football field (measured between the 35-yard lines and from the front sideline to 4 22.5" steps behind the front hash). This stage will be taped off by the event team prior to performance. All assessed performance must be conducted within these guidelines.



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PERFORMANCE FORMAT: Teams will perform in a timeframe that may not exceed 6:30 minutes with no minimum performance time. The total time that groups are allotted on the stage (from entrance, through performance, to full exit off the field) may not exceed 10 min. Performances will range in theme and style. Attention to innovation, execution, and crowd effectiveness will be rewarded. Eligible ensembles may include, but are certainly not limited to:

- World Music – i.e. mariachi bands, madrigal brass, polka groups, bagpipers, tribal performers, yodeling groups
- Ensembles comprised of unique instrumentations
- Concert ensembles
- Unicycling musicians
- Color guard ensembles
- A combination of musical and visual elements for a fun, engaging performance

UNIFORMS: Attention to costuming is at the discretion of the program and should connect to the performance in a style that is appropriate to the audience and context. Uniforms should either represent the school and community (i.e. traditional marching uniforms) through the school's colors, letters and/or mascot; represent the customary fashions of the performed musical style; or represent the selected theme/idea.

EQUIPMENT & INSTRUMENTATION: The use of large props and amplification are not encouraged and will not be considered in the adjudication. The effective and safe use of color guard standard equipment (i.e. flags, rifles, sabres, air blades) and non-standard, handheld equipment (i.e. hula hoops, batons, balls, streamers, etc.) are encouraged.

Authorized instruments for Marching Band performances include any instrument that is played or struck to create sound in real time including live human voice. Instrumental amplification of any kind is not encouraged and will not be considered in the adjudication. This includes use of electronic keyboards, guitars, bass guitars, audio-engineered sound patches and synthesizers. Please contact the SoundSport Scholastic support team with any further questions.

ELIGIBILITY: Any high school student who is an active member of the performing school's music ensembles are invited to participate. Middle school and home-schooled performers are eligible to participate with the ensemble if the school administration typically allows. No individuals in college or no longer attending high school are authorized to register in this division or with a participating band.

ADJUDICATION | Ensembles will be evaluated in 2 categories – Sights and Sounds (see chart below for weight in each category). Adjudication criteria places the performance focus on musical excellence, ensemble cohesion, and crowd effectiveness. Tied directly to the Common Anchor #6 music performance standard, teams will be assessed on a festival platform, with the goal of achieving a SUPERIOR rating and opportunities to be awarded various Caption Awards.

ADJUDICATION & ASSESSMENT

SoundSport® Scholastic events feature 2 judges who assess performance in 2 areas: Sights and Sounds. Execution is important as in any performance; however SoundSport® Scholastic will place additional



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emphasis on crowd effectiveness and showmanship. SoundSport® Scholastic is designed for achieving the best combination of excellence, spectator enjoyment, and connection to school and community!

The goal of each team should be to attain excellence in everything they do. Concentrate on achieving your best performance for the greatest chance of success in these events.

A panel of experts and educators from the marching music arts community will support SoundSport teams by means of insightful, educational commentary on a festival-style platform. Feedback from the adjudication panel will inform SoundSport teams’ ongoing development as a performing arts ensemble. Teams will be awarded an overall rating and will not be assigned a numerical score...

It should be understood that a team’s rating will vary from contest to contest. Performance variations primarily shape the score, but impact is also made with the dynamics of the contest. The overall level of achievement of all contestants will impact scoring within each caption criteria. SoundSport Scholastic teams can expect to receive evaluation of that day’s performance with no weight given to past assessment.

At the conclusion of the event, recognition will be awarded in a variety of captions (*see below*) across Divisions. In the event of multiple eligible teams for caption awards, the adjudication panel will decide a winner on the basis of crowd effectiveness and engagement. In the event of multiple eligible teams for Best in Show, the adjudication panel may choose to award to the two or more ensembles.

At the conclusion of the event, performing teams will be awarded a standard Good/Excellent/Superior rating. SoundSport Scholastic Events feature a festival-style awards ceremony where ensembles are not ranked by score using ordinals.

PRICING

Pricing for SoundSport Scholastic is on a single-entry model. Each division and ensemble performance is a separate “entry.” Schools may enter as many performances in their SoundSport Scholastic registration as they wish.

SINGLE PERFORMANCE DIVISION PRICING	
MARCHING BAND - unlimited members/team	\$600
ATHLETIC BAND - unlimited members/team	\$600
PERCUSSION	\$300
PERFORMING ARTS SHOWCASE	\$300
MULTI-ENTRY PRICING	



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COMBO: 1 LARGE STAGE + 1 SMALL STAGE*	\$800
UP TO 4 ENTRIES - ANY DIVISIONS**	\$1000 TOTAL
EACH ENTRY BEYOND 4	\$300 ea
*Large Stage describes Marching and Athletic Band divisions Small Stage describes Percussion and Performing Arts Showcase divisions **Any single, registering school/program can submit up to 4 entries of <i>any division</i> , with each entry over 4 at an additional \$300 charge.	

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions regarding SoundSport Scholastic, want to know how to license SoundSport Scholastic, or wish to host a National Event Series event on your campus, please email varsityperformingarts@varsity.com.



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