

Press Release

Ponca City Middle School Bands Earn Top Marks at OSSAA Contest

The Ponca City Public School district is proud to report that both East and West Middle School Bands have earned top marks at the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association (OSSAA) District 4 Concert Band Contest held recently at Cushing High School.

7th Grade Band Director Andrew Orr and 8th Grade Band Director Keith Crocker stated, "This contest marked the culmination of months of diligent hard work for our middle school bands. Many other bands from across the region also attended this event. Each ensemble was evaluated with a State Performance of two prepared pieces of contrasting style. At the conclusion of the State Performance, the students move on to the Sight Reading Room for another process of evaluation like non other."

During the Sight Reading process, the students and director are given a piece of music they have never seen or rehearsed before. The bands then have eight minutes to prepare the music to an outstanding level of quality. During those eight minutes, with the assistance of the director, students may count the rhythms out loud, clap, and air play, but no playing of the music is allowed. At the conclusion of the preparation time, the band then plays through the music for the first time, and is given a rating for their performance.

The West Band performed *Majestica* by Brian Balmages, and *Battlesong* by Randall D. Standridge for their prepared pieces. The band earned Superior Ratings from all the judges for their Stage Performance, as well as a Superior Rating in the Sight Reading Room. With Superior Ratings in both events, the band earned the coveted OSSAA Outstanding Achievement Award, which is the highest honor a Middle School Band can achieve in the State of Oklahoma.

The East Band performed *Pinnacle* by Rob Grice, and *Chimera* by Vince Gassi for their prepared pieces. The band earned one Superior, and two Excellent Ratings for their Stage Performance, as well as an Excellent Rating in the Sight Reading Room.

Orr and Crocker stated, "We would like to thank Po-Hi Band Director, David Christy for his assistance in preparing the young bands for contest, and his continued support throughout the school year. The directors would also like to thank Dan Larson, Paula Macpherson-Cochran, Katie Rolf, Peggy Maples, and the Instrumental Music Parents Association for their support of the Band Program. Special thanks also to the Administration Team, fellow teachers, and parents at West and East Middle School. Without their support, our success would not be possible. Our students represented our community with pride and class, and made us proud. Congratulations to all the students on a job well done!"

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