

2019-20 UHS Band Lettering Guide

Name _____

All band students with 1st semester and 3rd quarter *grades of "B" or better* are eligible for the letter award

1st Sem. Grade: _____ 3rd Quarter Grade: _____ (Both must be "B" or better to be eligible)

- July 4th Parade _____ (25)
 - Football Game Sept 6 _____ (25)
 - Football Game Sept. 20 _____ (25)
 - Football Game Oct 4 _____ (25)
 - Football Game Oct. 18 _____ (25)
 - Football Game Oct. 25 _____ (25)
 - Homecoming Parade _____ (25)
 - Playoff Game(s) _____ (25/ game if we have them) ~~(We had zero this year)~~
 - Johnston Marching Contest 25 (event cancelled, everyone gets the points) _____ (25)
 - Urbandale Marching Contest _____ (25)
 - ValleyFest _____ (25)
 - State Marching Band Contest _____ (25)
 - January Concert Band Concert _____ (25)
 - 5th Grade and Wind Symphony Concert _____ (25)
 - Band Summit _____ (25)
 - March Concert Band Concert _____ (25)
 - Wind Symphony combined concert with Valley High School _____ (25)
 - Awards Concert Band Concert _____ (25) (Yes, count this since you will be there)
 - State Concert Band Contest _____ (25) (Yes, count this since you will be there)
 - Private Study on primary band instrument _____ (25/semester)
 - Perform solo or small ensemble at Urbandale Solo Festival _____ (150)
 - Earn Division-I at Perry Band Olympics _____ (150)
 - Earn Division-II at Perry Band Olympics _____ (125)
 - Earn Division-III at Perry Band Olympics _____ (100)
 - Jazz I or II or III _____ (150)
 - All-State Auditions _____ (150)
 - All-State Selection (including Alternate) _____ (75)
 - SCIBA Honor Band Audition _____ (50)
 - SCIBA Honor Band Participant _____ (25)
 - Other Honor Band Participant _____ (25)
 - Summer Camp 'outside of Urbandale' last summer (per week) _____ (50)
 - Complete senior year of band _____ (200)
 - Other (brief description) _____ (value determined by staff - see page 2 for examples)
- TOTAL** _____

Final

Letter = 675 Points (Receive a letter or an attachable bar)

Double Letter = 1350 Points (Receive a letter or an attachable bar, plus Double Letter Medallion)

“Other” defined

Please notate all “other” items on page 1 of the lettering guide.

You may have additional items beyond those listed below. This is simply a brainstorm guide to how we value events in the “other” category.

Level 1

(10 points)

Description: Students independently prepare and perform on their band instruments for occasional events.

- Performing a solo on primary band instrument at church, nursing home, etc. (1-3 times per year)
- Performing at CJC Jam Session (1-5 times per year)
- Accompanying a band solo at festival
- Tuba Christmas
- Marching Band Uniform & Instrument Crew
- Concert Band Setup Crew

Level 2

(25 points)

Description: Membership in groups that rehearse and perform multiple times over the course of approximately 18 weeks.

- Susie Miget Theory Class or combo (One Semesters)
- Meyer Orchestra
- Pit Orchestra for Urbandale Drama Department Musical
- Show Choir Band
- Performing a solo on primary band instrument at church, nursing home, etc. (4 or more times per year)
- Performing at CJC Jam Session (6 or more times per year)
- Rehearsing / Performing with a church group on primary band instrument monthly throughout the school year
- Auditioning for Concerto Contest (25 first time + 10 for additional Auditions w/ same piece)

Level 3

(50 points)

Description: Membership in groups that rehearse and perform multiple times over the course of the entire school year.

- Susie Miget Theory Class or combo (both semesters)
- Des Moines Youth Symphony (both semesters)
- 45-60 minute recital on primary band instrument
- Rehearsing / Performing with a church group on primary band instrument weekly throughout the school year

The Lettering Guide – De-mystified

Although some might believe there to be, there's really no mystery surrounding the Band Lettering Guide. The "Varsity" Letter award is a way to give recognition to students who go beyond daily participation in band by taking advantage of enrichment opportunities to promote their personal growth and contributions to the group.

The secret is two-fold: 1. Be at all the performances. 2. Participate in solo festival.

Practicing and performing a solo is a very valuable experience for students. It's an opportunity for them to take complete ownership in their performance. There is no section-mate to lead the way, there is no stronger player to rely on – it's all up to the individual performer. Taking ownership in his/her performance encourages musical growth, and of equal importance, confidence, self-discipline, and independence. This is why we place a strong emphasis on solo festival in the lettering guide.

Of course, attendance at all performances is self-explanatory, but I can't resist so I'll write about it anyway. One of the reasons band students are so successful later in life is because they have developed an understanding of what it means to be part of something bigger than themselves. They develop ownership in the total performance product embodied by the larger ensemble. They learn their actions and decisions impact other members of the performing group, from as simple as playing in tune with a section mate, to as complex as a whole line of section mates trying to set a diagonal line on the marching field behind a missing person. (now that's hard to do!)

Through rigorous rehearsals and high performance expectations, students in band *Perform to Inspire* an audience. Only with every member present doing his/her best can the band fully reach that goal. With every absence a small message is sent saying *'I believe my presence in this performance does not have a bearing in the final result.'*

On the contrary, the staff strives to instill the value that each member's contributions are essential in order for the ensemble to reach its fullest potential. The easy answer regarding attendance at all performances is to do it because "you signed up for it." The deeper answer is to do it because every student's presence is important and all the members are counting on each other to fulfill the promise of an inspiring performance.

What is beyond "The Letter?" That's easy – a Double Letter. This recognition is for students who earn double (or more) the points of a Letter. The most frequent way to this recognition is by fully earning performance and solo festival points and then also participating in Jazz Band, All-State Auditions, SCIBA honor band auditions, etc.

Historically approximately 60% of band students earn a letter each year. We feel this is a good percentage to show the recognition is a challenge to earn and meaningful to those who earn it.