MISSOURI BANDMASTERS ASSOCIATION

BUILDING BETTER BANDS

Oct. 2026 | Vol. 39

Are you playing a game worth losing?

I recently came across a reflection that really resonated with me:

"The greatest quests are worthwhile not just because of the rewards they bring, but also because of who we must become along the way."

It was followed by a question that stuck with me: **"Are you playing a game worth losing? Will it have been worth the attempt even if it doesn't work out?"**

As marching band season comes to a close, some of us are celebrating trophies, superior ratings, and performances that exceeded expectations. Others may be reflecting on goals that weren't reached or results that didn't reflect the work invested.

But here's the question: Was it worth it anyway?

I hope the answer is a resounding yes.

Along the way, our students learned perseverance, accountability, and the value of commitment. We grew as educators, learning to adapt, problem-solve, and lead through challenges. Those lessons aren't defined by a judge's score or placement.

As we turn our attention to district and All-State Band auditions, the same message applies. Students across Missouri will spend countless hours preparing, knowing not everyone will earn a chair. Of course, we want them to succeed, but the audition itself is worth the effort, regardless of the outcome. The student who develops a stronger sound, practices more consistently, or learns to manage nerves has already gained something valuable, even if their name isn't on the list.

IMPORTANT DATES

All-State Band Registration Window
November 3-24, 2026

All-State Band Auditions
December 5, 2026

All-State Paperwork Due
December 15, 2026

All-State Payments Due
January 12, 2027

All-State Band/MMEA
January 27-30, 2027

MBA Summer Convention
June 27-30, 2027

As directors, we have an opportunity to celebrate growth as much as achievement and remind our students that falling short doesn't make the effort a failure.

So as we close one chapter and begin another, I encourage you to celebrate your students and reflect on the journey.

Because the greatest reward isn't always what we achieve, sometimes it's who we become in the pursuit.

Here's to a wonderful conclusion to marching band season and a successful district and All-State audition season!

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Active Membership: $50
Associate Membership: $40
Sustaining Membership: $150
Retired Membership: $30
Collegiate Membership: FREE
First-Year Teacher Membership: FREE

https://missouribandmasters.org/membership/

MBA Podium Masters: Wisdom Worth Sharing

Have you explored MBA's YouTube channel? The Podium Masters interview series features conversations with some of Missouri's most respected band directors, sharing their experiences, stories, and wisdom from years in music education.

Whether you're a new director or a seasoned veteran, these interviews offer valuable insights, inspiration, and a chance to learn from those who have helped shape band education in Missouri.

Watch, learn, and be inspired!

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