

Balance Guidelines

- Flutes should balance to the trumpets when they have unison melodies
- Flutes should balance to the clarinets when they are an octave above the clarinets.
- Clarinets should balance to the flutes when they are in the same octave.
- Alto Saxophones should balance to the horn when they have unison lines.
- Low woodwinds should balance to the low brass when they have similar lines.
- Balance to the color instruments (oboe, bassoon, piccolo) when you have strong players on these instruments.
- The power of the brass must come from the trumpets, horn and trombone. When euphoniums and tubas play with the same aggressiveness as the other brass, they lose the center, focus and resonance in their sound. Trumpet, horn and trombone are the volume instruments with direction and projection. The euphonium and tuba are volume instruments that provide mass or body of sound.
- Battery percussion instruments (snare drum, bass drum, concert toms, etc.) should usually balance to and play inside the sound of the ensemble.
- Effect based percussion instruments (triangle, tambourine, cymbals, etc.) are usually above the sound of the ensemble.
- Bass drum should not be louder than timpani or tuba. Bass drum is a non-pitched instrument and it will cancel or distort the pitch if it is louder than these pitched instruments.

Thank you, Greg Countryman, Director of Bands - Fort Settlement MS
Fort Bend ISD, TX for these great guidelines!