

Good Evening,

It gives me great pleasure to write this letter of support for Ben Channell for membership in the Eta Chapter of Phi Beta Mu. Ben has completed 13 years of teaching, most recently serving as Director of Bands at Lebanon High School. Our chapter has already recognized Ben's exemplary teaching as evidenced by his being named the 2025 Director of Note. He is a member of ASBDA and has served as Ensemble Chairperson, Event Coordinator and Auditions Coordinator for MTSBOA. In 2024 and 2025, under Ben's direction, the Lebanon Wind Ensemble received back to back Awards of Distinction in Concert Performance Assessment.

I recently spent a day serving as a clinician at Lebanon High School and had the privilege to work with all of the ensembles. Several things stood out as notable as we consider Ben's membership in Phi Beta Mu. Every rehearsal was positive and productive. Students were engaged and respectful. They entered the band room ready to work in a climate of warmth and support. The healthy culture in the band room facilitated their comfort in answering questions and voicing opinions about their music. The Wind Ensemble was working on Maslanka's "Give Us This Day" and several of the students were soloing on secondary instruments. Their musical acumen and maturity was something I have rarely experienced in a high school setting. Ben has obviously facilitated this culture and every student benefits from his healthy educational philosophy.

Ben has fostered good relationships with his colleagues in the building. Several other teachers stopped by during the day and his principal came down to watch rehearsal. Their support of the band program and Ben, specifically, is evidence of the impact he is having on the entire building. I hope the Da Capo Committee will agree Ben is worthy of inclusion in our chapter and he will be an asset to our organization.

If I may provide more information, do not hesitate to contact me.

Warmest regards,
Nola Jones

Ron Meers
Phi Beta Mu Membership Committee Member
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May 12th, 2025

Phi Beta Mu
ETA Chapter Membership Committee

Subject: Letter of Recommendation for Ben Channell for Membership in the ETA Chapter of Phi Beta Mu

Dear Members of the ETA Chapter Membership Committee,

It is with pleasure and without reservation that I recommend Ben Channell for membership in the ETA chapter of Phi Beta Mu. Having known Ben for over 10 years in his capacity as Director of Bands and Performing Arts Department Chair at Lebanon High School, as well as through his active involvement in the Middle Tennessee band community, I have been impressed by his dedication, musicianship, leadership, and unwavering commitment to music education. I have had the pleasure of working with the Lebanon Band on several occasions. Students are always well-behaved, prepared musically, engaged, and respectful.

Ben's track record at Lebanon High School speaks volumes about his abilities. Under his direction, the band program has flourished, consistently achieving superior ratings and receiving accolades at various assessments, festivals, and contests. This success is a direct reflection of his passionate instruction, his high musical standards, and his ability to inspire students to achieve their full potential. He fosters not only excellent musicianship but also a strong sense of community and discipline within his ensembles. Beyond his work at Lebanon High School, Ben is an active and respected member of the broader musical community. As a performer, composer, and arranger, he demonstrates a deep understanding and love for music. The fact that he has premiered several of his own works in the Middle Tennessee area highlights his creative talent and his commitment to contributing to the artistic landscape. Furthermore, his service to the Middle Tennessee School Band and Orchestra Association (MTSBOA) and the Tennessee Music Education Association (TMEA) in various roles underscores his dedication to the advancement of music education at a regional and state level.

Ben embodies the ideals of Phi Beta Mu. He is a dedicated educator who cultivates excellence in his students, a talented musician who contributes to the artistic community, and a respected leader who serves his profession with distinction. His passion for music, his commitment to his students, and his active involvement in professional organizations make him an ideal candidate for membership in your esteemed chapter.

I am confident that Ben Channell would be a valuable and contributing member of the ETA chapter of Phi Beta Mu, and I wholeheartedly endorse his candidacy. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Sincerely,

Ronald S Meers
Past President, Phi Beta Mu



Stewarts Creek High School Band

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May 6, 2025

Mr. Justin Scott
President Elect and Membership Chair
Phi Beta Mu – Eta Chapter

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Phi Beta Mu, Eta Chapter

It is my privilege to recommend Ben Channell for membership in Phi Beta Mu. I am continually impressed with his musicianship, professionalism, leadership, dedication to students, and willingness to serve the organizations of our profession.

Ben Channell is an outstanding musician, dedicated educator, and a leader amongst his peers in the band director community. Ben has spent his entire thirteen-year teaching career in the Lebanon Special School District, first at Winfree-Bryant Middle School before moving to Lebanon High School. During his tenure at Lebanon High School, the band program has seen growth in both membership and musicianship.

Bands under Mr. Channell's direction have received numerous superior ratings in both concert and marching events. In 2024 and 2025, the Lebanon High School Wind Ensemble earned superior ratings with distinction and the MTSBOA Concert Performance Assessment performing Grade 6 literature. In addition to teaching, Ben is an active composer and arranger. He arranges for several marching bands and is a published composer with Murphy Music Press.

Mr. Channell is active as a leader, serving music education at the district, region and state level. He has served as a chairperson for the All Mid-State Bands and currently serves on the Executive Committee for MTSBOA. He also serves TMEA as the current Chairperson of the 11-12 All-State Band.

I have the highest personal and professional respect for Ben. His musicianship, dedication, and professionalism make him a role model for all band directors in our state. Without hesitation or reservation, I give Ben Channell my highest recommendation for membership in Phi Beta Mu.

Sincerely,

Debra L. Burton

May 10, 2025

Phi Beta Mu Membership Committee,

It is my honor to recommend Ben Channell for membership in Phi Beta Mu. Having had the unique opportunity to know Ben first as his school band director at Tullahoma, and now as a professional colleague, I can speak to the depth of his character, the excellence of his work, and his commitment to instrumental music education.

As the Director of Bands at Lebanon High School, Ben has built a program marked by outstanding musical achievement and a positive, student-centered culture. His ensembles consistently perform with excellence, but equally important, they reflect his belief in music as a vehicle for discipline, creativity, and community. His students thrive under his leadership, and his impact on their lives is profound and lasting.

During my tenure on the music faculty at Cumberland University, I had the opportunity to observe his work early in his teaching career, as the band director at Winfree-Bryant Middle School in Lebanon. I was impressed with both his knowledge of instrumental techniques and methods, and his obvious enthusiasm for teaching. Ben displayed maturity and patience when working with his students, and created a positive learning environment.

What sets Ben apart, beyond his obvious talent and strong work ethic, is his deep commitment to the music education profession as a whole. He gives generously of his time and energy through his involvement in key roles in both MTSBOA and TMEA. His professionalism and teaching excellence led to his selection by Phi Beta Mu for the 2025 Director of Note Award.

As his former teachers, both Marion and I have had the joy of watching Ben evolve from a dedicated young student musician into a thoughtful and effective educator. His professionalism, humility, and passion for teaching exemplify the ideals that Phi Beta Mu seeks to honor.

I offer my highest recommendation for Ben Channell and would be happy to provide additional insight if needed. Thank you for your consideration of this outstanding member of our profession.

Respectfully,

Stephen Coleman