

PMEA ADJUDICATION



GUIDE TO PARTICIPATING IN A BAND OR ORCHESTRA MUSIC PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

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PMEA ADJUDICATION: GUIDE TO PARTICIPATING IN A BAND OR ORCHESTRA MUSIC PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (MPA)

INTRODUCTION

The fundamental goals of this *Guide* have not changed since the first *Manual* was released in 1988:

- To provide directors with the information needed to successfully participate in this adjudication context
- To answer common questions
- To provide a current reference for those who have participated in the past
- To identify any changes that will be implemented in the upcoming year
- To provide a checklist and practical suggestions for new participants

Thoroughness and clarity remain among the priorities in regularly updating this document in the hope that directors become as aware and comfortable as possible with all aspects of participating.

In turn, feedback and suggestions are welcome for this to best serve as a relevant, viable resource. Input is welcome from all stakeholders: hosts, adjudicators, members of the *Adjudication Committee*, the *PMEA State Board* and all participating or interested directors.

The following forms are used when participating in a Band or Orchestra MPA:

- *BOC Application*
- *Request for Addition to Selective Music List Form (if needed)*
- *Band/Orchestra Music Performance Assessment Form*
- *Band/Orchestra Sight Reading MPA Form*
- *Band/Orchestra MPA Rating Summary Form*
- *Medal Order Form (Optional)*

All forms and additional resources are posted on the Adjudication page of the PMEA website at www.pmea.net.

Contact Tom Snyder, Adjudication Chair, with any questions or for further information.

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SECTION 1: BAND & ORCHESTRA MPA'S - THE SYSTEM

GOALS (As stated in or updated from the original *Manual* in 1988)

The overall goals of *PMEA Adjudication* include:

- To provide interscholastic, educationally-valid assessment contexts in which any instrumental or vocal music student from Pennsylvania schools who is sponsored by a PMEA member may participate
- To foster musical achievement
- To provide recognition for the musical achievement of individuals and ensemble through medals, plaques and/or certificates
- To enable directors to select repertoire most appropriate for their soloists and ensembles from graded levels of music delineated within the *PMEA Selective Music Lists*
- To provide students and directors the opportunity to hear performances by ensembles and soloists from other schools when possible

ADJUDICATION INFRASTRUCTURE

The *PMEA Adjudication Chair* is an Ex-Officio Member of the PMEA State Board responsible for administrating all aspects of the overall Adjudication 'system', to chair the *PMEA Adjudication Committee*, to promote participation by PMEA member directors and their students, and to attend the annual spring Conference and summer meetings of the Board. The Chair reports to the President and the Executive Director.

The *PMEA Adjudication Committee* meets annually at the annual PMEA In-Service Conference to provide input concerning direction, policies and procedures. The PMEA Adjudication Committee is formally comprised of the twelve (12) Adjudication Liaisons---one from each PMEA District, all MPA hosts, the chair of the Adjudication Music Review Committee---currently Dr. Tad Greig from Westminster College, and other appointed PMEA members. All interested PMEA members are welcome to attend and actively participate in the meetings. *Special Committees* are formed as needed to address specific tasks, meeting as necessary.

The *PMEA Adjudication Liaison* is a position approved by the PMEA State Board in July 2005 but has not yet been effectively implemented by the Adjudication Chair. Each PMEA District President has been asked to annually appoint an *Adjudication Liaison*, with responsibilities that include:

- To represent his District as a voting member of the statewide *Adjudication Committee*
- To serve as the contact person to receive and disseminate information as appropriate within his District *from* the Adjudication Chair
- To serve as the conduit for questions, concerns, input and suggestions from directors within his District *to* the Adjudication Chair
- To serve as a resource within his District concerning participating in or hosting MPA's

- To assist in promoting Adjudication in PA by recruiting new hosts, encouraging participation, and being an accessible, familiar ‘go-to’ person for directors within his District

MPA CONTEXTS

The following Music Performance Assessment contexts are available within PMEA Adjudication:

- **BOC:** Band, Full Orchestra, String Orchestra or Chorus (Mixed, Treble or Men’s)
- **JAZZ ENSEMBLE**
- **PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE**
- **SMALL ENSEMBLES:** Woodwind, Brass, Percussion, String or Vocal
- **SOLO:** Woodwind, Brass, Percussion, String or Vocal

PMEA Adjudication does not currently provide an MPA context for Vocal Jazz Choirs or Show Choirs.

ELIGIBILITY

Participating directors must be members of PMEA. If the director is not a MENC/PMEA member, his group may still participate, but with the higher fee charged as indicated on the application. Ensembles from neighboring states are welcome to participate in PMEA Adjudication at the member rate if the director is an MENC member in his state.

Any student enrolled in a band, orchestra or chorus class at an elementary, junior high/middle school or high school in Pennsylvania is eligible to participate with that ensemble in PMEA Adjudication.

A band member may also perform with the full orchestra from the same school if he is enrolled in both ensembles. No student may perform with an ensemble if he is not enrolled in that ensemble’s class. No student may participate in more than one band or orchestra unless the student is enrolled in both ensemble classes.

MINIMUM NUMBER OF ENSEMBLES TO HOLD AN MPA

A minimum of six ensembles must be confirmed with applications and checks received to hold a sanctioned MPA due to the need to best ensure financial viability within both the event itself and the adjudication system budget as a whole.

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF ENSEMBLES PERMITTED

MPA’s are not formally limited as to the maximum number of ensembles permitted to participate. Hosts usually determine the starting and ending times and the maximum number of ensembles that can be accommodated based on director interest, ensemble scheduling flexibility and adjudicator availability. After the planned performance slots are filled, hosts are urged to maintain a ‘waiting list’ in case an ensemble cancels.

CALENDAR

The most current, formal *MPA Calendar*, listing dates, sites, hosts and contact information, is posted on the PMEA website and is also released in the Fall Issue of the *PMEA News*. Contact the host with questions concerning participating in a scheduled MPA.

Additional hosts are always welcome, as more hosts provide more dates as options for interested directors. MPA's are normally held during the school day, when students seem to be best available. In today's high-stakes testing environment, it is becoming increasingly difficult for directors to be permitted to have their students excused from classes. The more MPA date options, the better. And, principals and other teachers should be more receptive to ensembles participating in an 'assessment' rather than a 'festival'.

Hosting an MPA on a Saturday is permitted, but directors may face the obstacle of student availability conflicts. Hosting a smaller-scale MPA on a weekday evening is also permitted.

Before confirming participation with a MPA host, check the school and band/orchestra calendar to avoid conflicts with in-service or non-student days, other scheduled school or arts events, PMEA District and Region festivals, or with PSSA testing and make-ups. Also, consider any class schedule changes during PSSA testing, as rehearsal time may be limited or lost, negatively affecting preparing for a scheduled MPA date that immediately follows the testing window.

SCHEDULING PERFORMANCE TIMES

Interested directors are urged to formally schedule the performance time(s) of the ensemble(s) involved at or soon after the time participation is confirmed, as available performance times often determine whether or not an ensemble is indeed able to participate. Scheduling ensembles on a 'first-come' basis greatly benefits directors and hosts, as a confirmed performance time helps avoid a cancellation later due to the inability of an ensemble to perform at an arbitrarily assigned time, and is also an incentive for directors to apply early. Scheduling when applying is even more critical for schools planning to bring more than one ensemble, especially two or more ensembles with the same director or two ensembles that share students. The starting and ending times for the MPA are at the discretion of the host.

When confirming participation and performance times, directors should also communicate with the host concerning:

- if the ensemble is large, the number of students involved to ensure that the ensemble of that size can be accommodated on the host's stage and sight-reading area, if separate
- lunch options, especially if lunch is needed on site, as hosts would need to make cafeteria arrangements. Hosts should be prepared to recommend restaurant or food court options in the area.
- the exact warm-up and performance times and the length of the each time slot, which would depend on whether the sight-reading component will be held on stage immediately following the performance of the prepared pieces or in a separate area

APPLICATION

Interested directors must submit the *BOC Application Form* with the Registration Fee to the host at least four weeks in advance of the MPA to formally confirm participation. This form is available on the PMEA website. Checks are to be written payable to *PMEA*. Please do not staple the check to the application. This time frame was established as an essential courtesy to hosts to facilitate planning, especially in developing the event schedule. The data included on the application enables effective communication prior to the event and in case of emergency, while providing essential information for the adjudicators, host and Adjudication Chair.

A copy of the director's current MENC/PMEA membership card must accompany the application. If the director is not a MENC/PMEA member, his group may still participate but with a higher fee charged as indicated on the application. Ensembles from neighboring states are welcome to participate in PMEA Adjudication at the member rate if the director is an MENC member in his state.

An ensemble cannot perform unless the host has received both the application and fee. Directors are reminded to be cognizant of the procedures and time frame parameters involved for checks to be processed and mailed to meet the deadlines involved.

The application fee will be refunded if the director cancels at any time prior to three weeks before the event. Extenuating circumstances causing cancellations within three weeks of the event will be considered. This policy is intended to discourage a director from canceling for 'non-extenuating' reasons, such as preparation concerns or ineffective planning that did not account for schedule conflicts, permissions, student availability, etc. By being notified three weeks or more in advance, a host can implement schedule adjustments, such as replacing the ensemble with another from a waiting list, or even just better accommodating another director's schedule needs. Also, each MPA has expenses obligated. Adjudicators are often contracted given a projected time commitment and stipend for that time. A performance slot is reserved for each ensemble that submits the *BOC Application*, signed by the director and principal, which serves as a 'contract' with the host confirming the intent to participate. Therefore, each reserved performance slot must be funded whether or not a cancellation occurs.

ENSEMBLE TYPE

Directors must declare the ensemble type---BAND, FULL ORCHESTRA or STRING ORCHESTRA---on the formal BOC Application. Bands and orchestras of any designation or of any grade level or combination of grade levels from elementary through high school are eligible and strongly encouraged to participate.

DECLARING ASSESSMENT CONTEXT

Directors must declare on the formal BOC Application whether the participating ensemble will perform for either a formal *Rating* or for *Comments Only*. The procedures and Assessment Forms for both contexts are identical with the only difference being that, for *Comments Only*, the adjudicators would not provide any scores or ratings. See the *Band/Orchestra Music Performance Assessment Form* for the scoring rubric, ratings and descriptors as well as the criteria and 'talking points' for each Evaluation Area. This form is posted on the PMEA website.

CHOOSING REPERTOIRE

Directors must list the required information about the repertoire to be performed---the titles, composers and grade levels of the two prepared pieces---on the *BOC Application*. Information about the warm-up is not required.

Directors must also declare the summary level for the two prepared pieces, as it determines the level of the sight-reading music used for that component of the adjudication and what will be engraved on the plaque awarded to each ensemble. If both pieces are from the same grade level, the director will simply declare that level for adjudication. However, if the pieces are from different grade levels, the summary level declared for adjudication would be the lower level of the two pieces. For example, an orchestra that performs a Grade 3 piece and a Grade 4 piece would formally 'adjudicate' at a Level III.

Currently, a great deal of flexibility exists concerning the director's choices of prepared pieces. While, theoretically, the prepared pieces must be chosen from the existing *PMEA Selective Music List*, the list is not current. It is more common, at this time, for the director to freely choose to perform a newer piece or one not on the list and receive formal approval to do so by simply contacting the member of the Adjudication Committee responsible for approving pieces to confirm the grade levels involved. Therefore, the role of the host is to note what repertoire is submitted, confirm what grade levels are declared with what is listed in the *PMEA SML* or within written documentation from Dr. Greig provided by the director, and to contact the Adjudication Chair with any questions in that regard. Dr. Greig emails the Adjudication Chair with all approved pieces and grade levels.

Directors requesting approval to perform a piece not on the existing list and to confirm the grade levels involved must simply submit the completed *Request for Addition to the Selective Music List* form and a copy of the score(s) to Dr. Tad Greig, the Adjudication Committee member responsible for approving pieces and confirming grade levels. This form is available on the PMEA website.

Directors are permitted to substitute repertoire after the application is initially submitted but must notify the host of the change in writing---by email is fine---prior to the event so that the host may verify the grade levels involved and provide accurate updates to the adjudicators and to verify what is to be engraved on the award plaque. Directors should retain a copy of all written communications for documentation if needed.

Directors are permitted to substitute repertoire after the application is initially submitted but must notify the host of the change in writing---by email is fine---prior to the event so that the host may verify the grade levels involved and provide accurate information in this regard to the adjudicators. Hosts should retain a copy of all written communications for documentation if needed.

All of the PMEA repertoire lists for band, orchestra and chorus as well as for solo/ensemble will be updated. Until these revisions are completed, directors are strongly encouraged to submit recently published and other quality pieces for permission to perform in adjudication. Please do not permit the shortcomings of the existing list to discourage participation. As an ongoing goal of *PMEA Adjudication* is to maximize participation, a primary objective at this time in reviewing music submitted for permission to perform is merely to confirm its grade level.

ASSESSMENT FORMS

The PMEA Adjudication *Assessment Forms* for each MPA context are being updated at this time to reflect current assessment practices, with the resulting drafts to be piloted in the 2009 MPA's, followed by a thorough evaluation and permanent adoption of final versions in 2010. The most current drafts are posted on the PMEA website and have been emailed to participating directors and adjudicators from 2008 festivals for review and input. Hosts will use the summary ratings forms for individual and all participating ensembles that are also posted on the website.

ADJUDICATORS

Four adjudicators are needed for a *Band/Orchestra MPA*, three 'on the floor' or 'in the hall' to adjudicate the performance of the prepared pieces and one to adjudicate the sight-reading component. Hosts may choose to hold a 'band-only' MPA but are strongly recommended to openly invite and welcome orchestras. If several orchestras are participating, hosts should contract at least one adjudicator who is an orchestra specialist or has a strong orchestra background. Hosts may choose to hold an 'orchestra-only' MPA but are urged to actively recruit to ensure a full schedule for a viable event.

Hosts may choose any adjudicator who they believe is qualified for that MPA context. College and university directors, active high school and middle school/junior high directors and retired directors are most often contracted. Adjudicators are strongly recommended, but not required, to be PMEA members.

No policies exist concerning adjudicator training or formal certification at this time, other than that such sessions must occur. An adjudicator accreditation process began at the 2007 Summer Conference, focusing on awareness of *PMEA Adjudication* philosophies and procedures as well as the use of the *Assessment Forms*.

Anyone interested in being an adjudicator for PMEA Adjudication MPA's is recommended to contact the Adjudication Chair.

PROVIDING A RECORDING

Hosts are required to arrange for the recording the performance of the prepared pieces directly to CD for directors to take home that day, either with school personnel and equipment or outsourced to a local vendor. A CD recording is invaluable for immediate feedback for the director as well as an educational tool for classroom use. If the sight-reading component is held on the stage, it may also be recorded at the host's option.

COMMUNICATING WITH THE HOST PRIOR TO THE EVENT

Directors are strongly recommended to be proactive in communicating with the host prior to the event to ensure the best possible understanding of what is involved in participating at the given site. Final confirmations should include:

- The MPA date, especially if the original date announced was changed at ANY time
- That the host received the application and check for the registration fee
- The final schedule of warm-up and performance times, including the location of the *Sight Reading* component and the resulting length of each time slot (30 or 45 minutes)
- Directions to the site, including any traffic advisories
- Information about bus parking, where to enter the building, and where to register
- What to bring to the registration table: three manila envelopes (10x13 recommended), one for each adjudicator, labeled with the school name, ensemble name and "Adjudicator #1, 2 or 3". Each envelope must contain an original score for each of the two prepared pieces with the measures numbered if not already numbered by the publisher. Scores must be originals unless the piece is out of print. Copies may then be made, but only with written permission of the publisher provided. If copies are made, pages should be taped, rather than stapled, as stapled pages are difficult for an adjudicator to manipulate while following the performance. Directors are recommended to order the additional scores from their music dealer well in advance of the event to permit enough time to receive them from the publishers or for obtaining permission to make copies if the chosen piece is out of print.
- Facilities information and guidelines to follow when on site
- Lunch information (if needed)
- Percussion instruments provided, especially if the host is able to provide instruments beyond the minimum required
- A list of the adjudicators
- Arrangements to attend other performances if possible

AWARDS: PLAQUES & MEDALS

PMEA will award each ensemble participating for *Ratings* with an official plaque displaying the name of the ensemble, the rating earned and the formal grade level declared of the prepared pieces. Directors should ensure that the ensemble name is indicated correctly on the *BOC Application*. The Adjudication Chair is responsible to order and mail the plaque to the participating director. Directors are encouraged to display their PMEA Adjudication plaques with pride in their school's rehearsal room or display cases.

Directors of ensembles that earn a rating of *I: Superior*, *II: Excellent* or *III: Good* have the option to order medals for their individual students through the Adjudication Chair. The *Medal Order Form* is available on the PMEA website. Directors are encouraged to fund the purchase of the medals from his school, ensemble activity account or parent booster group for their students to be able to proudly display evidence of their ensemble's achievement on their concert attire and graduation robes.

QUALIFYING TO PERFORM AT THE PMEA IN-SERVICE CONFERENCE

One performance slot at the PMEA In-Service Conference is dedicated for a band, orchestra or chorus chosen from the Adjudication system. This ensemble is selected from recordings submitted within the deadlines and criteria consistent with the process involved for all performance slots. To be eligible to submit a recording for consideration for this dedicated slot from PMEA Adjudication, the ensemble must have received a rating that year of 'I: Superior' from each adjudicator, known as 'straight 1's', at a sanctioned MPA.

While each ensemble that receives 'straight 1's' would be eligible to submit a recording, the decision to do so would remain solely that of the director. Directors may submit a recording of chosen repertoire in whatever context desired; the recording does not have to be from the MPA itself or of the repertoire performed for adjudication. Directors are required to also submit a second recording to be considered in their ensemble category (I.e. HS Band, MS Chorus, HS String Orchestra, etc.).

Performing ensembles chosen from PMEA Adjudication to perform at the Conference have included:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>ENSEMBLE</u>	<u>DIRECTOR</u>	<u>PMEA DISTRICT</u>
2008	Central Bucks West HS Symphonic Band	Ed Protzman	District 11
2009	Spring-Ford HS Wind Ensemble	John Eckstine	District 11

Since performing at the Conference is a prestigious honor, we hope that this initiative increases awareness of PMEA Adjudication statewide and motivates more directors to participate.

SECTION 2: BAND & ORCHESTRA MPA'S - THE EVENT

REGISTRATION TABLE

Upon arriving at the event site, the director or his designee, usually another music teacher assisting that day or a parent chaperone, must check-in at the *Registration Table*. The registration table should be located near the designated group entrance and is normally staffed by student or parent assistants.

'Checking in' includes:

- Confirming that the ensemble has arrived and verifying arrangements for bus parking.
- Submitting three envelopes containing scores for the adjudicators
- Confirming where the students are to proceed first, usually to the *Holding Area*.
- Confirming where the restrooms are located that the students are to use
- Confirming the location of additional changing areas if requested and available
- Confirming if any last-minute changes have been made to the event schedule
- Confirming how to contact the host director if needed, whether it be by cell phone, a 'runner' or simply knowing where the *Tabulation Area* or host's office is located

HOLDING AREA

Following check-in, the ensemble proceeds to a designated *Holding Area*, a secure area for instrument cases, coats and personal belongings. Student or parent assistants normally secure this area throughout the event. If a holding area is not available, these items should then be kept on the buses. If keeping personal items and cases on the bus is the only option, hosts should provide a parking area for the bus as close as possible to the group entrance and notify participating directors in advance to be prepared accordingly. While this option is certainly not ideal, it has proven to be workable rather than be a deterrent to hosting.

Most ensembles arrive wearing their 'concert dress'. However, if students do need to change, usually the available bathrooms will suffice. Directors should confirm any needs for changing with the host in advance of the event. Note that hosts are not required to provide locker room access or dressing rooms, often not possible during the school day due to use by physical education classes.

The ensemble normally stays in the holding area until proceeding quietly through the halls to the *Warm-Up Area* and waiting quietly until being directed to enter. Students should not have to wait outside the warm-up room for an inordinate period of time. If time permits prior to the scheduled warm-up, directors may choose for the ensemble to watch another ensemble perform. Directors have noted that watching another group lessens the performance anxiety of their own students.

WARM-UP AREA

The formal *Warm-Up Area* is normally the band or chorus room with enough chairs available to seat all the wind or string instrument players. Music stands are not normally provided but would be welcome if available. Some directors choose to bring folding stands for use in this area. Percussion instruments are not provided, as the primary use of this area is intended to be warming up and tuning, not rehearsing. Directors are responsible to bring their own tuner.

The length of the warm-up time slot will be 45 minutes if the sight-reading component is being held on stage following the prepared pieces, or 30 minutes if the sight-reading component is being held in a separate area. Directors should have confirmed the length of the time slots with the host prior to the event.

AUDITORIUM STAGE

The auditorium stage is the performance area where the formal adjudication of the two prepared pieces takes place. Hosts have the option of holding the sight-reading component on stage immediately following the adjudication of the selected repertoire. Otherwise, a separate, additional area is needed.

The length of the performance slot in the auditorium will be 45 minutes if the sight-reading component is being held on stage following the prepared pieces, or 30 minutes if the sight-reading component is being held in a separate area. This time frame includes entrance, set-up, optional warm-up, performing the two prepared pieces, the sight-reading component--- if held on stage, and exit.

The stage is to be lit with a standard concert stage wash and equipped with enough chairs and stands for all participating ensembles, a conductor's podium and concert percussion. Chairs and stands are normally pre-set in concentric semi-circles on a flat stage. Risers are not to be used.

Directors may adjust the seating configuration prior to the performance but must do so quickly. Most choose to adjust the seating as the ensemble is entering the stage, assisted by the students themselves. Hosts must provide students or parents as a 'stage crew' throughout the event to assist with moving chairs and stands. Any extra chairs and stands can remain on stage or be moved to the wings.

Hosts must provide the following concert percussion: concert bass drum, four timpani, bells, xylophone, marimba and chimes. Some hosts are able to provide additional percussion instruments and are urged to include a list in the pre-event communication.

The participating ensembles are responsible to provide their own mallets and sticks, snare drums, crash and suspended cymbals and auxiliary/accessory percussion instruments (i.e. triangle, tambourine, temple blocks, etc.) required by their selected repertoire. Most directors prefer to use their own equipment, instruments that their students are accustomed to using and hearing. Directors are urged to contact the host well in advance to address unique percussion needs.

If the sight-reading component is held on stage, the standard concert percussion required for this component is already present. If the piece used for sight-reading calls for a particular accessory percussion instrument that not available, the part is simply omitted and the ensemble is not penalized.

The only 'audience' would be students from another ensemble that has already performed or is waiting for their warm-up time. Hosts are encouraged to schedule their own ensemble(s) and, perhaps, the school's chorus students to watch performances if possible. However, study halls or other students from the host school are not permitted to use the auditorium during the event.

WARM -UP

Directors may choose to perform an optional *Warm-Up* piece of any grade level or exercise sequence of no longer than three minutes. The performance of the warm-up is not judged. Any music used does not need to be from the *PMEA Selective Music List* nor included on the *BOC Application*. Scores do not need to be provided to the adjudicators. Most band and orchestra directors do choose an on-stage warm-up of some kind, usually a march (some take second endings), a chorale/ballade, or a memorized or written exercise sequence.

PERFORMING THE PREPARED PIECES

Bands and Orchestras must perform two *Prepared Pieces* for adjudication chosen from the *PMEA Selective Music List* or approved with a grade level formally assigned by the Adjudication Committee member responsible for approving pieces and confirming grade levels.

As mentioned under **SELECTING REPERTOIRE** on pages 7-8, a great deal of flexibility currently exists concerning the director's choices of prepared pieces. Directors requesting approval to perform a piece not on the existing list and to confirm the grade levels involved simply must submit the *Addition to the Selective Music List* form and a copy of the score(s) to Dr. Tad Greig. This form is available on the PMEA website.

HOW THE ADJUDICATORS USE THE ASSESSMENT FORMS

As mentioned under **ASSESSMENT FORMS** on page 8, the PMEA Adjudication *Assessment Forms* for each MPA context are being updated at this time to reflect current assessment practices, with the most current drafts now posted on the PMEA website.

The adjudicators are to assess the performance and assign a Score from 1-10 for each of five Evaluation Areas: Tone, Intonation, Accuracy, Technique and Interpretation, according to the following rubric and descriptors:

SCORE	RATING	PMEA DESCRIPTOR	LETTER GRADE	APPROX. PSSA EQUIVALENT
9-10	I	Superior	A+	Outstanding
7-8	II	Excellent	A	Advanced
5-6	III	Good	B	Proficient
3-4	IV	Fair	C	Basic
1-2	V	Unprepared	U	Below Basic

The two-point range within the scoring for each Evaluation Area provides adjudicators more flexibility in conveying their assessment within a given rating.

The scores for each of the five Evaluation Areas are added together to determine the Total Score, which is then converted to a Final Rating according to the following rubric and descriptors:

TOTAL SCORE	FINAL RATING	PMEA DESCRIPTOR	LETTER GRADE	APPROX. PSSA EQUIVALENT
43-50	I	Superior	A+	Outstanding
33-42	II	Excellent	A	Advanced
23-32	III	Good	B	Proficient
13-22	IV	Fair	C	Basic
5-12	V	Unprepared	U	Below Basic

The adjudicators will provide Additional Feedback within each Evaluation Area in the middle column of the Assessment Form through the use of pluses "+" or minuses "-" with the short list of critical attributes being evaluated, according to the following descriptors:

+	=	Area of strength; Noticeably strong with rating
Blank	=	Commensurate to rating
-	=	Area of concern; Noticeably needing attention within rating

This component of the Assessment Form enables adjudicators to provide a consistent 'next level' of quick, focused, direct feedback beyond the score itself within each Evaluation Area, readily identifying a particular critical attribute(s) that may be strongly affecting the score, positively or negatively.

The adjudicators are strongly recommended to provide additional input through written comments within each Evaluation Area that are clear, direct and relevant. Ideally, these comments will identify strengths and areas of concern along with suggestions for appropriate enhancements or solutions.

Space for Additional Comments is included on the back of the form, along with a list within each Evaluation Area of attributes for the adjudicators to consider for assessment and as ‘talking points’ for their oral & written commentaries. These lists should also be helpful for directors and students.

An area listing Other Factors is included on the lower left front of the form. The adjudicator will provide feedback through pluses and minuses, but this evaluation is not scored or part of the Final Rating. While these attributes are certainly important, they are inherently ‘non-musical’ in and of themselves, and therefore not part of a ‘music performance assessment’.

DETERMINING THE SUMMARY RATING OF THE PREPARED PIECES

The Summary Rating earned from the performance of the two prepared pieces is determined by combining the Final Ratings from the three adjudicators according to the following table:

DETERMINE THE SUMMARY RATING OF THE PREPARED PIECES BY COMBINING THE THREE RATINGS					
RATINGS FROM THE THREE ADJUDICATORS	I, I, I	I, II, II	I, III, III	I, IV, IV	I, V, V
	I, I, II	I, II, III	I, III, IV	I, IV, V	II, V, V
	I, I, III	I, II, IV	I, III, V	II, IV, IV	III, V, V
	I, I, IV	I, II, V	II, III, III	II, IV, V	IV, V, V
	I, I, V	II, II, II	II, III, IV	III, IV, IV	V, V, V
		II, II, III	II, III, V	III, IV, V	
		II, II, IV	III, III, III	IV, IV, IV	
		II, II, V	III, III, IV	IV, IV, V	
			III, III, V		
SUMMARY RATING	I	II	III	IV	V

SIGHT READING AREA

Hosts have the option of staging the sight-reading component in a separate room. Hosts who choose to do so most commonly choose the band room. For college and university hosts, common options have included the band room, choral room, recital hall or mini-theatre.

A separate sight-reading area would also be equipped with chairs, stands, a conductor’s podium and concert percussion. Chairs and stands are normally pre-set in concentric semi-circles if the room is flat. A room with existing built-in tiers may be used.

The following concert percussion must be provided for the sight-reading area: concert bass drum, at least three timpani, and bells. Hosts should also provide a fourth timpani to complete the set and a xylophone if possible.

As mentioned, if a particular percussion instrument called for by the piece used for sight-reading is not available, the part is simply omitted and the ensemble is not penalized. This is more common if a separate room is used for the sight-reading component.

Hosts must provide at least two students or parents available throughout the day to assist with distributing and collecting the sight-reading folders as well as with moving chairs and stands as needed.

A goal of the option introduced in 2006 to hold the sight-reading component on-stage immediately after the performance of the prepared pieces was to enable more schools to be able to serve as hosts. Before then, many directors could not host because their facility did not have a separate room large enough to use for sight-reading. Even if a second area was available, hosts then did not have a third area large enough to serve as a warm-up room, let alone another space for a holding area. Outfitting a sight-reading room with a second set of stands and appropriate percussion can also be a daunting challenge. However, retaining the option to hold the sight-reading component in a separate area continues to work well for hosts with ample facilities and equipment resources. Also, obviously, hosts can accommodate more ensembles overall in the event by scheduling in 30-minute, rather than 45-minute, intervals.

SIGHT READING COMPONENT

After performing the two prepared pieces, ensembles are required to participate in an adjudicated *Sight Reading* component, with the rating received factored into determining the Final Rating earned.

To appropriately balance the sight-reading content with that of the prepared pieces, ensembles will sight-read a piece approximately 1 - 2 levels below the declared grade level of the prepared pieces according to the following table:

DECLARED GRADE LEVEL OF THE PREPARED PIECES	GRADE LEVEL OF THE MUSIC TO BE SIGHT-READ
6	4
5	3
4	2 ½
3	1 ½
2	1
1	½

The sight-reading adjudicator is responsible for providing the folders and music to be used, at least two pieces at each grade level needed for the given event. He may choose one for the director or give the director the choice; the director should choose a piece he is not familiar with. He should provide an original, unmarked score for the director to use, not a copy or one that is marked up with conductor notes or cues, and original parts if possible. He is also responsible for either acquiring a second score or making a copy for his own use in evaluating the performance.

Providing good pieces for sight-reading is essential, as the appropriateness of the music chosen significantly impacts the success and overall quality of the experience for the ensemble.

Note that the requirement that high school ensembles must sight-read a grade 3 piece, regardless of the level of their prepared pieces---which was often also grade 3, has been eliminated. It was perceived as punitive to the ensembles that often needed to be nurtured the most by a successful sight-reading experience and was often a disincentive for further participation in PMEA Adjudication.

Changes in the levels of the sight-reading music for ensembles that adjudicated prepared pieces at levels 4, 3 and 1 were made for the 2008 festivals. The rationale included:

PREPARED PIECES AT GRADE 4 --- SIGHT READ AT GRADE 2 ½

Ensembles adjudicating at grade level 4 were sight-reading grade level 2 music. For this context, basic grade level 2 music was too easy. Further complicating this issue was that adjudicators were often choosing music at a variety of difficulty levels within grade 2, some actually labeled as 'Grade 2 ½'. This led to significant inconsistency site to site, sometimes even band to band within a given event, as grade 2 and grade 2 ½ pieces are significantly different.

Sight-reading adjudicators are now required to choose appropriate grade level 2 ½ pieces for this context. While no state or festival lists, to my knowledge, separate pieces within a given grade level, most publishers do distinguish between grades 2 and 2 ½ with separate, labeled series. The host should remind his contracted adjudicator of this requirement and stress that appropriate music is chosen. Adjudicators from a variety of backgrounds have equally varying levels of awareness of the content included within music of different grade levels. Adjudicators who are experienced with the content levels involved may include older pieces that were published before the '1/2' designation was used commonly within grade 2.

PREPARED PIECES AT GRADE 3 --- SIGHT READ AT GRADE 1 ½

High school and junior high/middle school level ensembles adjudicating at grade level 3 were sight-reading grade level 1 music. For this context, basic grade level 1 music was far too easy. Further complicating this concern was that adjudicators were often choosing music at a variety of difficulty levels within grade 1, some actually labeled as 'Grade 1 ½'. This led to the same inconsistency.

Sight-reading adjudicators are now required to choose appropriate grade level 1 ½ pieces for this context. Most publishers today also provide separate, labeled series for grades 1 and 1 ½. The host should remind his contracted adjudicator of this requirement. Adjudicators who are experienced with the content levels involved may include older pieces that were published before the '1/2' designation was used commonly within grade 1.

PREPARED PIECES AT GRADE 2 --- SIGHT READ AT GRADE 1

It remains appropriate that ensembles adjudicating at grade level 2 sight-read at grade level 1. The host should remind his contracted adjudicator of this requirement and stress that the pieces selected are indeed grade 1 pieces, not grade 1 ½, which would be too close to the content of the grade 2 prepared pieces.

PREPARED PIECES AT GRADE 1 --- SIGHT READ AT GRADE ½

Sight-reading adjudicators are now required to choose appropriate grade level ½ pieces for this context, or a piece labeled 'grade 1' with equivalent content. Many publishers, but not all, are including pieces designated as grade ½ or something like 'Very Beginning Band' in their catalogs. We do not want to eliminate pieces that would be terrific for this use but are either labeled as grade 1 by publishers that don't have grade ½ designations, or that were published before grade ½ designations were implemented. Bands adjudicating prepared pieces at grade 1, usually elementary bands, definitely deserve a piece that provides the vehicle for a successful sight-reading experience. The host should stress that the pieces selected are appropriate, not just any grade 1 piece, which would be close, identical or, worse, even harder when compared to the content of the ensemble's grade 1 prepared pieces.

SIGHT READING PROCESS

The *Sight Reading* component will be implemented as follows:

1. Immediately following the adjudication of the prepared pieces, the ensemble will remain on stage or proceed to a separate area. The adjudicator responsible for the sight-reading component will introduce himself and review the process involved.
2. The adjudicator and/or his assistants will distribute music folders that are to remain closed until he directs the students to open them to retrieve the assigned piece to be sight-read. As mentioned, the adjudicator should be able to choose between at least two pieces at each grade level. The director should not be familiar with the chosen piece, as it should be sight-reading for him as well as for his students.
3. The adjudicator will formally start a timed two-minute preparation period to be used by the director and students to silently peruse the music. No one is to speak; no instruments may be played. The adjudicator will notify the director and ensemble when thirty seconds remain.
4. The adjudicator will then formally start a timed three-minute period for the director to use as he chooses to best prepare the students for the sight-reading performance of the assigned piece. No instruments may be played. The director and students may sing, clap, finger, count, ask questions or otherwise highlight aspects of the music in preparation. The adjudicator will notify the director and ensemble when one minute remains, followed by when thirty seconds remain.
5. The adjudicator will instruct the director to begin the sight-reading performance of the assigned piece. During the performance, the director may tap on the stand, sing parts, count, call out rehearsal numbers/letters and give verbal instructions without penalty. However, the less the director needs to be involved verbally, the more credit the ensemble will receive for effective sight-reading. The director should strive to communicate as efficiently and effectively as possible through his conducting.
6. The director may choose to stop and re-start the ensemble once during the performance without penalty. The adjudicator will then identify the point where the ensemble will restart, which should be a rehearsal number/letter just before the point in the music where the director stopped the performance. Obviously, the fewer stops and re-starts, the better the adjudicator will rate the performance.
7. After the ensemble has finished its performance, the adjudicator will briefly discuss his evaluation with the students and the director, using as much of the remaining time as he wishes. He may choose to have the ensemble play an excerpt as part of the feedback, conducted either by the director or himself. The adjudicator must also allow enough time for the music folders to be collected and for the students to exit the area before the entrance of the next scheduled ensemble.

Directors are strongly recommended to prepare their students for this component by determining an approach to effectively implement each step involved in the sight-reading adjudication process. Directors are urged to diligently and regularly practice sight-reading, too. Some directors have successfully used a separate, designated 'sight-reading folder'.

DETERMINING THE FINAL MPA RATING

The *Final MPA Rating* the ensemble receives is determined by combining the Summary Rating of the Prepared Pieces (PP) with the Final Rating received for Sight-reading (SR), according to the following table:

COMBINE THE SUMMARY RATING OF THE PREPARED PIECES (PP) WITH THE FINAL RATING FROM THE SIGHT-READING (SR) COMPONENT TO DETERMINE THE FINAL MPA RATING									
I		II		III		IV		V	
PP	SR	PP	SR	PP	SR	PP	SR	PP	SR
I	I	I	III	II	IV	III	V	V	IV
I	II	I	IV	II	V	IV	III	V	V
		I	V	III	II	IV	IV		
		II	I	III	III	IV	V		
		II	II	III	IV	V	I		
		II	III	IV	I	V	II		
		III	I	IV	II	V	III		

FINAL RATING	PMEA DESCRIPTOR	LETTER GRADE	APPROX. PSSA EQUIVALENT
I	Superior	A+	Outstanding
II	Excellent	A	Advanced
III	Good	B	Proficient
IV	Fair	C	Basic
V	Unprepared	U	Below Basic

For example, an ensemble that receives a Summary Rating of II for its Prepared Pieces (PP) and a Final Rating of I for its Sight Reading (SR) would earn a Final MPA Rating of **II: Excellent**.

GETTING THE RESULTS & ADJUDICATION MATERIALS FROM THE HOST

Correctly processing the results of the adjudication is one of the most important responsibilities of the host throughout the event. Hosts usually perform this duty themselves, but it can be delegated to a qualified designee, usually another music teacher. Students and parents are not permitted to serve in this role due to the importance of the task and the professional confidentiality required.

The host or his designee must proceed quickly while the students are putting instruments away and gathering personal belongings to compile the results and return the necessary items to the director so that he and his students are not delayed in departing. Results from the other participating ensembles will not be provided.

These items will include:

- *Band/Orchestra MPA Rating Summary* form
- Four *Assessment Forms*, one from each adjudicator
- Conductor scores of the prepared pieces that the director provided for the adjudicators
- Three cassette tapes, provided by the host, one from each of the adjudicators who evaluated the prepared pieces
- CD recording of the performance of the prepared pieces

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DIRECTOR AFTER THE MPA

Recommendations to the participating director for after the event include:

- To thank any involved administrators for their permission and support of the ensemble's participation, any colleagues who assisted before or during the event, and any parent volunteer chaperones for their efforts.
- To use the CD recording, adjudicator tapes and assessment forms as educational classroom tools to enhance the overall experience for the students
- To send an email to the host expressing your appreciation for hosting the event and provide positive feedback and constructive suggestions
- To send an email to the Adjudication Chair (tsnyder@westallegheny.k12.pa.us) with any positive feedback concerning the event and the overall experience along with constructive suggestions concerning any aspect of participating in PMEA Adjudication, so that the 'system' can continue to evolve to better benefit the students, directors and programs involved
- To attend the annual meeting of the *PMEA Adjudication Committee* at the PMEA In-Service Conference. Any interested PMEA member is invited to attend, certainly including directors who have participated in an MPA. While the meeting is informal in nature, the Adjudication Chair uses this forum to review the 'state of PMEA Adjudication' and to present ideas for discussion and feedback. This meeting has been well attended in recent years and has been an exciting forum for deliberating upon possible 'next steps', establishing priorities, and exchanging perspectives---all within dialogue not possible within individual conversations and emails.

FINALE

To prospective participating directors---I hope that this *Guide* has provided a comfort level and information needed to successfully participate in a *Band or Orchestra Music Performance Assessment* sponsored by *PMEA Adjudication!*

To experienced participating directors----I hope that this *Guide* effectively serves as a reference tool to refresh memories, introduce changes or answer questions that may arise concerning any aspect of participating in a *Band or Orchestra Music Performance Assessment* sponsored by *PMEA Adjudication!*

Please feel free to contact the Adjudication Chair with comments or questions. Contact information is listed in the Introduction of this *Guide* and in several locations on the PMEA website.

PMEA ADJUDICATION: BAND & ORCHESTRA MPA'S CHECKLIST FOR PARTICIPATING DIRECTORS

- Download and review the *Guide to Participating in a Band or Orchestra Music Performance Assessment* from the Adjudication page of the PMEA website.
- Download the current *MPA Calendar* to identify the date and site that best works for your situation, then contact the host to confirm a performance slot and the best available performance time within your schedule parameters. Seek official permission to participate and process the necessary transportation request form (Pp. 5-6)
- Download the *BOC Application* to complete and submit to the host. Submit the necessary paperwork to generate a check for the registration fee. Submit both the application and the check to the host to confirm participation no later than four weeks prior to the event. (p. 6)
- Decide on the two prepared pieces to perform and confirm the grade levels involved with Dr. Tad Greig at Westminster College, if needed, by downloading, completing and mailing him the *Addition to the Selective Music List* form and a copy of the score(s). (p.7)
- Download and review the current versions of the forms involved in the MPA, with hard copies to be provided for use at the event itself by the host:
 - *Band/Orchestra Music Performance Assessment Form*
 - *Band/Orchestra Sight Reading MPA Form*
 - *Band/Orchestra MPA Rating Summary Form*
- Review how adjudicators use the Assessment Forms and how all Ratings are determined. (Pp. 13-14, 18)
- Use the MPA forms as classroom tools to prepare for the event.
- Choose repertoire and pace your rehearsal schedule to best ensure that your students are fully prepared and confident for their performance at the MPA.
- Review all aspects of the Sight Reading component, and diligently practice sight-reading with your ensemble. (Pp. 14-17)
- Review the *Guide* concerning the sequence involved from arrival through departure and what occurs within each part of the process. (Section 2 – starting on p.11)
- Communicate with the host prior to the event to confirm all essential information. (p. 9)
- Download the *Medal Order Form* and order medals for your participating students. (Optional)