

GETTING STARTED WITH PMEA ADJUDICATION

By Tom Snyder, Adjudication Chair

Thinking about participating in **PMEA Adjudication**? Not sure where to begin? Did you access the *Adjudication* section of the PMEA website, then not be sure what information you *really* needed or what materials you *absolutely* had to take the time to download, save and read? If you answered, “Yes, yes and yes”, the following information will help you ‘Get Started’!

PMEA Adjudication events are now known as ‘Music Performance Assessments’, or ‘MPA’s’, instead of ‘festivals’. In addition, what were generally referred to as ‘score sheets’ are now known formally as ‘Assessment Forms’. The main reason for the change to the term ‘Music Performance Assessments’ is to strongly and accurately place PMEA Adjudication events in an educationally valid context more readily understandable and, hopefully, more supported by administrators, school boards, other teachers, directors, parents and the students themselves. The ‘Assessment Forms’, updated for 2009, now better reflect current assessment processes, and should ---both in perception and reality---also be more academic in stature.

A goal of PMEA Adjudication remains to provide quality opportunities for soloists and small, medium and large ensembles to receive a rating reflecting performance level---which, yes, is an evaluation of how effectively the music curriculum has been implemented---along with meaningful feedback from the tapes and written forms to maximize learning for both directors and students. In today’s educational environment, this is indeed ‘assessment’. Directors can benefit from the evaluation process as applied to music performance and ‘speak the language’ of testing, curricular accountability and program validity when promoting the results to stakeholders and decision-makers.

PMEA Adjudication, by focusing on both assessment and feedback, is striving for effectiveness, relevance and acceptance by directors as a valuable choice for participation within the hectic schedule and demands of the school year.

First, download the *2009 Adjudication Calendar* for the most current list of scheduled MPA’s to identify the contexts, dates and sites of the events that may work best for your program.

Interested in Adjudication for your Band, Orchestra or Chorus? Learn all about participating by downloading the *Guide to Participating in BOC MPA’s*. All of the PMEA *Guides* should answer the most common questions of the interested director and serve as a review or just a reference for those who have participated in the past.

Note that adjudication is offered for standard medium-sized choral ensembles, such as madrigals, concert chorales, women’s choirs and men’s choirs, through Choral MPA’s. However, MPA’s are not yet available for jazz choirs or show choirs.

Interested in Adjudication for your Jazz Ensemble or Percussion Ensemble? Jazz Ensemble Adjudication was approved as a permanent component of PMEA Adjudication for 2008. Percussion Ensemble Adjudication is now its own MPA context after being separated from Solo and Small Ensemble. Guides to participating in both MPA’s are posted.

Interested in Solo and Small Ensemble Adjudication? This MPA context provides assessments for your winds, percussion, strings and vocal soloists and duets, trios, quartets and larger small ensembles. The *Guide to Participating in Solo and Small Ensemble MPA’s* is posted.

Guides to Hosting all current PMEA Adjudication MPA contexts are now posted. New hosts are needed throughout the state in every context; please contact me if interested!

Checklists for Participating and Hosting are also posted as a ready reference and a snapshot of what is involved.

How will your students' performances be assessed? Download the drafts of the revised *Assessment Forms* for each MPA context to check out their first updates since being released by MENC in 1958, with the goal to better reflect current assessment processes while improving ease of use by adjudicators as well as enhancing their educational value for directors and students alike. These Assessment Forms will be piloted this year, with the goal of receiving feedback from their use by all involved to continue to improve them for 2010 and beyond.

All applications and forms needed to participate or host are posted. A complete list of forms needed to participate in or host a given MPA context can be found on the *Introduction* page of the Participation or Hosting Guide for each.

Not sure what repertoire to perform? Consult the *Selective Music Lists* posted on the website. Note that the existing lists will also be updated. Much flexibility exists concerning what repertoire can be approved for participation, as these lists have not been updated for almost 20 years. If you wish to perform a piece or pieces not on 'the list'----as it is likely that any recently-published piece is *not* included----simply download and submit the *Request for Addition to Selective Music List Form* no later than 60 days prior to the event. PMEA Adjudication strives to be as 'inclusive' as possible.

Once you choose the site and date that best works for your program, contact the host via email or phone to reserve performance slot(s). Some sites fill quickly; be sure to confirm that openings exists before processing the application and check for registration.

I hope this helps you 'Get Started' in PMEA Adjudication! Please contact me with any questions at tsnyder@westallegheny.k12.pa.us or at (724) 695-5269.