

PMEA ADJUDICATION



GUIDE TO PARTICIPATING IN A SOLO AND SMALL ENSEMBLE MUSIC PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

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PMEA ADJUDICATION: GUIDE TO PARTICIPATING IN A SOLO AND SMALL ENSEMBLE MUSIC PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (MPA)

INTRODUCTION

The fundamental goals of a *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.

Hosts choose to offer either an *Instrumental* or *Vocal* Solo and Small Ensemble MPA due to the separate equipment, piano and adjudicator challenges involved within each context. *Instrumental* hosts offering assessments for *Winds* and *Percussion* may choose whether or not to also offer assessment for *Strings*, depending on the projected registration for each and adjudicator availability. *String* hosts may choose whether or not to include *Winds* and *Percussion*. While hosts are urged to be as inclusive as possible to offer this opportunity to more students, each has the flexibility to determine what context(s) will work best in their given situation.

The following forms are used when participating in a Solo and Small Ensemble MPA:

- *Solo and Small Ensemble Application*

PROVIDED BY HOST FOR THE ADJUDICATORS

- *Solo/Small Ensemble: Wind Instruments- Solo MPA Form*
- *Solo/Small Ensemble: Wind Instruments- Small Ensemble MPA Form*
- *Solo/Small Ensemble: Percussion – Solo MPA Form*
- *Solo/Small Ensemble: Percussion – Small Ensemble MPA Form*
- *Solo/Small Ensemble: Strings – Solo MPA Form*
- *Solo/Small Ensemble: Strings – Small Ensemble MPA Form*
- *Solo/Small Ensemble: Vocal – Solo MPA Form*
- *Solo/Small Ensemble: Vocal – Small Ensemble MPA Form*

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: SOLO AND SMALL ENSEMBLE 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.

A student must be enrolled in a band, orchestra or chorus class at his elementary, junior high/middle school or high school to be eligible to participate in a *Solo and Ensemble MPA* sponsored by PMEA Adjudication.

Note that a student may participate in a maximum of two (2) entries. Directors should contact the host to resolve any issue in this regard as soon as it is known. If not resolved prior to the event, the host shall remove the student from any entries listed on the application in order after the second entry. Hosts do have the flexibility to confer with the director concerning the student's preferred entries, but, if not resolved, shall remove the student from entries as the policy states. Hosts also have the option to permit a given student to perform in more than two entries as the event schedule permits, which could easily occur for an active student who is part of more than one small ensemble in addition to a solo.

MINIMUM NUMBER OF ENSEMBLES TO HOLD AN MPA

There is no policy at this time concerning the minimum number of students who must be confirmed with applications and checks received to hold a sanctioned *Solo and Small Ensemble MPA*. While the need certainly exists to best ensure financial viability within both the event itself and the adjudication system as a whole, it remains, at this time, the mutual decision of the host with the Adjudication Chair to hold or cancel the MPA based on the interdependent factors of student registration, registration by instrument/voice, and adjudicator availability in both time and area(s) of expertise.

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF ENSEMBLES PERMITTED

MPA's are not formally limited by a maximum number of students being permitted to participate. Hosts usually determine the starting and ending times with a maximum number of solos and ensembles that can be accommodated based on the same factors---student registration, registration by instrument/voice, and adjudicator availability in both time and area(s) of expertise---along with facilities factors such as number of different rooms needed and if another event is booked for the area later that same day. If the available performance slots for a given adjudicator are filled, hosts are urged to maintain a 'waiting list'.

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 any aspect of participating in a scheduled MPA.

Solo and Small Ensemble MPA's are normally held on a Saturday morning or weekday evening. In today's high-stakes testing environment, it is becoming increasingly difficult for students to be excused from classes. We hope that your decision makers are receptive to you requesting to take your students to an event outside of the school day, rather than asking for them to be excused from classes.

Even though the educational validity of this event remains as vital as ever, we hope that your decision makers also appreciate that your students would be attending an 'assessment' rather than a 'festival'.

Hosts are permitted to hold a smaller-scale MPA on a weekday evening, but directors may face more student availability conflicts than on a Saturday. Given the numerous separate rooms involved, hosting this adjudication context during the school day is not possible.

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

Applications and registration fees are due to the host no later than six weeks prior to the event. Hosts can start tentatively scheduling students by instrument/voice as the applications are received, but note that other considerations will complicate the schedule development process, including:

- The availability of rooms with pianos and stereos (And, possibly, computers/speakers with Smart Music)
- The availability of accompanists
- The availability of individual adjudicators for a specific instrument/voice or ensemble type

- The earliest reasonable arrival time for students coming from any distance
- Requests from directors to accommodate students who must arrive or leave early for other commitments
- Attempting to match students with adjudicators best suited for that instrument, level of music and age

While hosts attempt to schedule applications received on a ‘first-come’ basis and schedule students from the same school at approximately the same time, directors and their participating students need to understand that these diverse factors will impact how the actual schedule is derived.

Hosts are not obligated to hold an assigned performance slot if the application and check has not been received within six weeks of the event. A priority of the host is to fill all performance slots without any holes. Therefore, from the outset, it is important for directors to keep abreast of the status of all involved students to confirm participation, and, to keep the host informed as to any additions or cancellations that will affect the schedule. Effective communication with the host is essential.

A 15-minute time slot is scheduled for each soloist and small ensemble, four per hour for each adjudicator. Each 15-minute time slot includes: entering the room, adjusting seating and/or stands as needed, preparing the accompaniment---if used, playing a few warm-up notes (optional), performing the prepared piece, verbal feedback from the adjudicator, and exiting. Note that scales or sight-reading is not required at this time in this MPA context.

APPLICATION AND FEE STRUCTURE

Interested directors must submit the *Solo and Small Ensemble Application Form* with the Registration Fee to the host at least six 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. **As mentioned, at least six weeks notice is critical for hosts in this MPA context.** 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.

Include the total number of each type of solo and small ensemble, total number of performers, and total fee owed as well as the names of the soloists and instruments/voice part, small ensembles and names of their participants, titles, compositions, PMEA levels and need for piano as requested on the application.

Note that all soloists and small ensembles will receive a *Rating*. *No Comments Only* option is offered in this adjudication context.

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.

The fee structure is revised for 2009 for the benefit of all small ensemble contexts:

Soloist	\$10
Small Ensemble of 2-4 Students	\$7 for each student
Small Ensemble of 5 or more Students	\$5 for each student

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. This policy is intended to discourage directors and students 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 the necessary schedule adjustments with other students and the adjudicators involved, or even just better accommodate another director's schedule needs. Note that each MPA has expenses obligated. Adjudicators are contracted with an understanding of the projected time commitment and stipend to be paid. A performance slot is reserved for each ensemble that submits the *Solo and Small Ensemble 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.

Hosts have the flexibility to accept late applications after the deadline to fill openings or extend the schedule as long as they wish prior to the event, as coordinated with the adjudicators involved and facilities availability. Checks accompanying late applications are non-refundable.

CHOOSING REPERTOIRE

Currently, a great deal of flexibility exists concerning the choice of the prepared piece. While, theoretically, the prepared piece must be chosen from the existing *PMEA Selective Music List*, the list is not current. At this time, it is more common for the student with his director and/or private teacher to freely choose to perform a newer piece or one not on the list.

The member of the Adjudication Committee responsible for approving pieces to confirm the grade levels involved is currently doing so only for BOC repertoire. At this time, to encourage and facilitate participation, the judgment and decision as to grade level of a piece not on the existing PMEA SML is that of the director, with his recommendation based on his experience, the level indicated on the music itself, or indicated for that music in a catalog or another state or festival list.

Participating directors or hosts with repertoire questions should contact the Adjudication Chair. The goal is to include, not exclude, soloists and small ensembles with regard to repertoire selection. However, an appropriate grade level must be confirmed prior to the event in order to provide that essential information to the adjudicators.

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. Directors 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 and small ensemble will be updated. Until these revisions are completed, directors are strongly encouraged to seek out

recently published and other quality pieces available, including those on other state or festival lists. Please do not permit the shortcomings of the existing list to discourage participation. As a goal of the adjudication system is to maximize participation, the goal at this time is merely to determine the grade level of the chosen piece as accurately as possible.

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; input is most welcome.

ADJUDICATORS

The number of adjudicators needed is dictated by the instruments or voices involved, the numbers registered for each, and the music levels submitted. Even though applications are due six weeks prior to the event, determining how many adjudicators are needed and finding enough who are available can be quite a challenge.

Hosts may choose any adjudicator who they believe is qualified for this MPA context. Music educators who are college and university directors, active elementary through high school directors, or retired directors are most often contracted.

Private lesson instructors who are not active public/private/charter school or college teachers are permitted to adjudicate as long as they have a music degree, either a performance or a music education degree. Hosts considering potential adjudicators who have a performance degree or have music education degrees but are currently not teaching or teaching in another subject area are urged to use those who have proven experiences working with students, such as within a private studio, youth ensembles or marching band staff.

Note that current college music students are not permitted to adjudicate, as they do not yet have their degree.

Hosts are strongly recommended to contract adjudicators who majored on the instrument or voice that is being assessed, for obvious reasons. This is a greater consideration for older, advanced students.

More flexibility is possible with younger students, but only if necessary. For example, a female vocal teacher could adjudicate sopranos and altos, even if she is an alto. A trumpet specialist could adjudicate all young brass players. And, an experienced middle school orchestra director would certainly be able to effectively adjudicate elementary and middle school students on any string instrument.

As the assessment is not blind, adjudicators are NOT permitted to assess their own current students---either from their current ensembles or private studios---due to the obvious conflict of interest issues. It is preferred that they not even assess students from their own school district, which could include former students, if at all possible. Adjudicators are not assess any students who they are directly affiliated with as a private instructor, member of a youth ensemble that they coach, or a member of a marching band or other performing ensemble where they serve as an instructor.

Adjudicators are strongly recommended, but not required, to be PMEA members.

Contact the Adjudication Chair for a list of contact information for potential adjudicators. Anyone interested in being an adjudicator for *PMEA Adjudication MPA's* is also recommended to contact the Adjudication Chair.

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, confirming any changes
- Directions to the site, including any traffic advisories
- Information about bus parking, where to enter the building, and where to register
- Facilities information, map and guidelines to follow when on site
- A list of the adjudicators
- Percussion instruments provided, especially if the host is able to provide instruments beyond the minimum required
- Lunch/dinner information (if needed)

AWARDS: MEDALS

Beginning in 2008, *PMEA Adjudication Medals* are awarded to each student participant, the same medal but with a blue ribbon for a *I: Superior*, a gold ribbon for a *II: Excellent*, and a white ribbon for a *III: Good*. Students are encouraged proudly display this evidence of their achievement on their concert attire and graduation robes.

SECTION 2: SOLO AND SMALL ENSEMBLE MPA'S – THE EVENT

REGISTRATION TABLE

Upon arriving at the event site, the participating director or a designee usually represents the school at 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. Parents are permitted to transport their child to and from the event, and may check-in before or after the director and other students from that school. All participating students should arrive at least 45 minutes before the assigned performance time

'Checking in' includes:

- Confirming that the student(s) has arrived and verifying car or bus parking instructions, if needed
- Confirming where the student(s) is to proceed first, usually to the *Holding Area*
- Confirming where parents may wait, usually the auditorium or another large area, if available
- Confirming where the *Directors' Hospitality Room* is located, if provided
- Confirming where the restrooms are located
- Receiving a copy of the final schedule and facilities map, noting any last-minute changes
- Confirming how to contact the host quickly if needed, whether it be by cell phone, a 'runner' or where the *Tabulation Area* or host's office is located

HOLDING AREA

Following check-in, the student(s) proceeds to a designated *Holding Area* to store instrument cases and/or coats and personal belongings. A large area is normally provided for this purpose, such as the auditorium or the cafeteria. Facilities and enrollment may dictate other options, such as a separate holding area assigned to each participating school. Hosts have the best knowledge of the facilities and have the flexibility to use them to best meet the needs of the participants. Hosts may choose to use the auditorium only for a waiting area for parents and directors. Student and/or parent volunteers should monitor these areas throughout the event.

Parents, chaperones, private teachers and directors often wait in this area with the students. It seems that more and more parents are transporting their children to and from the event, especially arriving to pick-up the child as soon as he or she is finished rather than have them wait for and ride home on the bus. These parents need a place to wait rather than roaming the halls. Hosts may choose to have their booster group and/or HS students run a small concessions table.

Students are also normally permitted to begin warming-up in this area while waiting. Use of the auditorium in this context is similar to its use during PMEA festival auditions.

Most students arrive dressed for the adjudication. However, if students do need to change, usually the available bathrooms will suffice. Hosts are not required to provide locker room access or dressing rooms.

The student(s) normally stays in the holding area until proceeding quietly through the halls to the formal *Warm-Up Area*, if available, then waiting quietly until entering at the assigned time. The student(s) is solely responsible for monitoring the clock to arrive at the warm-up area and assessment area on time.

WARM-UP AREAS

The nature of the *Warm-Up Area* may vary from site to site. One option for the host is to provide enough separate, formal areas, usually classrooms, for each soloist and ensemble to be scheduled to warm-up in during the 15-minute time slot immediately prior to the assigned performance time. These areas are usually classrooms equipped with chairs and music stands.

Hosts who assign each school its own Holding Area of the appropriate size for the number of participants from that school may simply choose to have that area also function as the *Warm-Up Area*.

Some hosts simply designate a group of classrooms as ‘open’ warm-up areas, not formally scheduled, for students and directors to use as they wish on a ‘first come basis’. Directors are urged not to monopolize a given area in order to be fair to all involved.

It has also worked where participants simply warm-up as little or as much as they wish in the large Holding Area, usually the auditorium and/or cafeteria, not moving to a separate area for warm-up.

Facilities, number of schools participating, overall number of students participating, and types and sizes of small ensembles participating are all factors involved in the decisions concerning how best to schedule the warm-up area component of the event.

Directors, other music teachers or private instructors are welcome to assist their students in this area with warm-up and tuning. Some choose to warm-up and tune all students from their school at one time. Students or the adults involved are responsible to bring their own tuners.

At *Instrumental* events, enough rooms are to be equipped with pianos or electronic keyboards and amps to meet the needs of the students who choose to use piano accompaniment. One of the priorities in scheduling in this event context is to ensure that each student who is using a keyboard accompaniment has a scheduled warm-up time with a keyboard and is scheduled for adjudication in a room with a keyboard. Some students may choose to bring their own keyboard, amp and/or speakers. A schedule of times and student names should be posted on the doors of the warm-up areas that include a keyboard.

At *Vocal* events, each room must be equipped with a piano or electronic keyboard/amp.

Note that we strongly urge colleges and universities to host this MPA context, as their facilities offer numerous studios---virtually all with piano, which are ideal for the adjudicating itself, ample practice rooms for warm-up and large rehearsal rooms (with pianos) and auditoriums/recital halls for holding and waiting areas.

Students playing or singing with a recorded accompaniment on CD or through an iPod/mp3 player are responsible to have their own portable stereo/boom box to use in this area. Directors should urge their students to have fresh batteries rather than rely on finding an outlet to plug in for use in the holding or warm-up areas. Or, plan to bring a long extension cord to reach an outlet from whatever distance is required in any of the areas used.

ASSESSMENT AREAS

The *Assessment Areas*, normally classrooms, are to be equipped with enough space, chairs and music stands for the scheduled participants. Only the student(s) and accompanist, if used, are permitted in the assessment area. Directors, private teachers, parents or others are not permitted to be present unless assisting by operating the stereo in the room, the portable stereo brought in by the student, or the portable computer/speaker.

Pianos or keyboards, with enough range and weighted keys, and amps are to be available for areas with students who are using piano accompaniment. Note that electronic/digital keyboards must be set to produce ‘acoustic piano’ sounds. Adjudicators may need to relocate temporarily to other areas that are equipped for piano accompaniment, sharing those areas with other students and adjudicators within a master schedule designed accordingly. At *Vocal* events, each area will need a piano or electronic keyboard/amp.

A quality stereo system or portable stereo/boom box is to be available for students who are using accompaniment on a CD. Given the sound quality of the portable systems today, students are encouraged to use their own portable stereo for the assessment, using their own CD or iPod/mp3 source accompaniment. The familiarity with one’s own equipment---both in use and in sound---can certainly be helpful. And, CD’s of different formats don’t always play on all stereos. Note that another person, usually the director, is permitted to be present to operate the stereo. Adjudicators may need to relocate temporarily to other areas that are equipped with stereos, as not enough stereos may be available to equip each assessment area.

Some students may wish to perform with a *SmartMusic* accompaniment. With this technology becoming more affordable, practical and portable, students may indeed choose to bring their own ‘set-up’ of laptop and speakers, with the software and appropriate accompaniment downloaded, that they run themselves or operated by someone else, usually the director. Until this use becomes more commonplace, it is not possible to require hosts in a K-12 school situation to provide the necessary technology, *SmartMusic*

subscription access, and all of the necessary accompaniments. Computers can also have different sound cards that can present unexpected differences in sound for the student.

For percussionists, the area must have the instruments needed and ample space for the scheduled participants, usually in a larger room such as the band or chorus room. Hosts are required to provide the following percussion: bass drum, four timpani, bells, xylophone, vibes, marimba and chimes. Students are responsible to provide any other instrument used, including snare drums, crash and suspended cymbals, concert toms and any auxiliary/accessory percussion instruments that their pieces require. Students are also responsible to bring their own mallets and sticks.

Hosts who are able to provide additional percussion instruments are urged to do so and to include a list in the pre-event communication. Directors whose students are planning to bring their own large percussion instrument (I.e. xylophone) should inform the host, who might then not have to worry about providing that instrument or be able to use it instead in a warm-up room. Directors are urged to contact the host well in advance to confirm percussion availability and address any unique needs.

PERFORMING THE PREPARED PIECE

Soloists and small ensembles must perform one *prepared piece* for adjudication chosen from the *PMEA Selective Music List* or as approved by the participating director, with a grade level determined by the director based on his experience, the level indicated on the music itself, or indicated for that music in a catalog or another state or festival list. As mentioned under **SELECTING REPERTOIRE** on pages 8, a great deal of flexibility currently exists concerning prepared pieces.

HOW THE ADJUDICATORS USE THE ASSESSMENT FORM

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 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 are to 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 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 verbal & 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 adjudicators are to 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 directly part of a ‘music performance assessment’.

After the performance of the prepared piece, the adjudicators are to provide feedback verbally to the student(s). This direct, personal contact from adjudicator to participants is an invaluable component of this MPA context. Comments should be concise, focused on strengths, the most significant concerns---with possible solutions--and should be encouraging and nurturing. The adjudicator needs to allow enough time to complete the written assessment form prior to the end of the given time slot. Adjudicators have the flexibility to manage their time within the 15-minute slot as they choose. Some prefer to complete all the writing on the assessment form prior to making the verbal comments, with the ability to use all of the remaining time for feedback. Others prefer to complete the rating and some of the comments before providing the verbal comments, then returning to the form to finish.

DIRECTOR’S HOSPITALITY ROOM (OPTIONAL)

Hosts have the option to provide a separate room, usually a smaller area such as teacher’s lounge or other classroom as a *Director’s Hospitality Room*, where directors can relax with cold and hot beverages and light snacks, donuts, cookies, etc.

GETTING THE RESULTS & MEDALS FROM THE HOST

Correctly and efficiently processing the results of the adjudication is one of the most important responsibilities of the host. 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.

Directors will be able to pick up all of the *Solo or Small Ensemble Music Performance Assessment Forms* and the matching *PMEA Adjudication Medals* prior to departure from the site, usually at the *Registration Table*. Confirm at the registration table upon arrival when and where these materials will be available for pick-up.

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 review the assessment forms with the participating students as educational tools to enhance their overall experience
- To write a press release for your district's public relations coordinator to distribute about the accomplishments of your students at this event. Consider including a photo.
- 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 *Solo and Small Ensemble 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 *Solo and Small Ensemble 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: SOLO & SMALL ENSEMBLE MPA'S CHECKLIST FOR PARTICIPATING DIRECTORS

- Download and review the *Guide to Participating in a Solo and Small Ensemble 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. 6-7)
- Download the *Solo and Small Ensemble 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 six weeks prior to the event. (Pp. 7-8)
- Choose or assist your students with choosing appropriate repertoire and ensure grade levels are stated on the application. (Pp. 8-9)
- Download and review the current versions of the forms as needed by your students in this context, with hard copies to be provided for use at the event itself by the host:
 - *Solo/Small Ensemble: Wind Instruments- Solo MPA Form*
 - *Solo/Small Ensemble: Wind Instruments- Small Ensemble MPA Form*
 - *Solo/Small Ensemble: Percussion – Solo MPA Form*
 - *Solo/Small Ensemble: Percussion – Small Ensemble MPA Form*
 - *Solo/Small Ensemble: Strings – Solo MPA Form*
 - *Solo/Small Ensemble: Strings – Small Ensemble MPA Form*
 - *Solo/Small Ensemble: Vocal – Solo MPA Form*
 - *Solo/Small Ensemble: Vocal – Small Ensemble MPA Form*
- Review how adjudicators use the Assessment Form. (Pp. 13-14)
- Use the MPA forms as educational tools to prepare your participating students for the event.
- Monitor how your participating students pace the learning of their prepared pieces to best ensure that they are fully prepared and confident for their performance at the MPA.
- 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.10)
- Communicate with the host prior to the event to confirm all essential information. (p. 10)