

WHAT HOSTING A PMEA ADJUDICATION MPA CAN DO FOR YOU

Tom Snyder, PMEA Adjudication Chair

For any music teacher with ensembles, developing and implementing a performance schedule throughout the year is always a process fraught with conflicts and unexpected obstacles. Even with annual events, new wrinkles emerge that always seem to take an inordinate amount of time to resolve. Of course, that time spent includes an endless barrage of paperwork. Directors wishing to participate in PMEA Adjudication face the challenges involved in finding a date and site that 'work', especially given the restrictions of fixed events such as testing windows, PMEA festivals, and school musicals.

For an ensemble director, hosting a Music Performance Assessment through PMEA Adjudication offers numerous benefits, especially the element of control that is often lacking when juggling performances that we 'want to do' with those we 'have to do'.

An MPA host can choose the date that is THE best for all involved. Controlling the decision on the best date that works for that district's ensembles, usually among different buildings, is usually challenging but can be the factor that determines what ensembles can participate or not. Many hosts fill half or more of the day's performance slots with ensembles from his/her own school district! Hopefully, the chosen date also will work for enough ensembles in the area to fill all of the available performance slots. Hosts are urged to actively communicate with friends and colleagues in neighboring schools to gather input concerning preferred date options. Having this control over the date is often the difference between participating or not in PMEA Adjudication that season for some schools.

As host, the director also controls the schedule for the event itself, which can be quite an important factor when working within parameters that limit when students and their ensembles are available within the school day. In many schools, it's becoming increasingly difficult to get students excused for field trips, even formal performance assessments. Ensembles can complete a large ensemble Adjudication in about 3 periods, which is both efficient and 'saves' that field trip permission for another endeavor.

Financially, by hosting an MPA, the district saves the cost of traveling out of the district, certainly a welcome factor amidst increasing budget constraints. In addition, each host receives a \$150 honorarium from PMEA for hosting that is paid to the ensemble's student activity account or parent booster group. Many hosts use that honorarium to defray one registration fee.

No costs are involved for the host, as the registration fees from participating ensembles fund the adjudicator stipends, recording, assessment tapes, adjudicator meals and the award plaques. Administrators definitely welcome that factor, too.

Similar benefits apply to Solo and Small Ensemble Adjudication, especially the control over schedules for each instrument's assessment that can better accommodate the increasingly complicated whirlwind that our students all seem to have on Saturdays when this MPA context normally occurs.

Comprehensive *Guides to Hosting* are updated annually and posted on the PMEA website for prospective and first-time hosts to peruse. Hosts are most welcome to contact me at any time with questions. As with most such things, the first time through is the most challenging. After that, it becomes routine with a few tweaks made as needed.

I remain indebted to ALL of our MPA hosts for their dedicated efforts in support of the benefits that PMEA Adjudication provides for participating students, ensembles and their directors. I hope that each enjoys the intrinsic satisfaction derived from knowing that their efforts 'above and beyond' have made a difference for all involved.

To member directors *throughout* the state – please consider hosting a PMEA Adjudication Music Performance Assessment this year or in the future. Available assessment contexts include Band and/or Orchestra, Chorus, Jazz Ensemble, Percussion Ensemble and Solo/Small Ensemble. With benefits such as control over the date and the schedule, an honorarium, funded expenses, and detailed resource materials, it is easier now than ever for a first-time host to smoothly run a successful event. You will soon find that whatever hosting can do for YOU---as this article is titled--- is overshadowed by the educational experiences that your hosting provides for ALL of the participating students and directors. Give it a try!