

Dear 2023 PMEA All-State Orchestra Member,

Congratulations on being selected to perform in the 2023 PMEA All-State Orchestra, April 19-22, 2023! Your selection puts you in a unique position as one of the most accomplished young musicians in the state of Pennsylvania. This is a great testament to your work individually, and the investment put into you by your teachers and family members over many years. If you have not already, please make sure to thank those who have had a role in your development over the years—they will want to celebrate with you!

My name is Dr. Timothy Dixon, and I will serve as your conductor for All-State Orchestra this year. For the last 21 years, I have been the Director of Orchestral Studies at Messiah University (PA), where I conduct the symphony orchestra and opera productions, and teach conducting at both the undergraduate and graduate levels (www.messiah.edu/music). I also serve as the music director and conductor of the American Youth Philharmonic, one of the nation's leading youth orchestras, which is based in the Washington D. C. area (www.aypo.org). When I am not teaching and conducting in these places, I am usually driving my two high school-aged kids (Laney and Alex) to rehearsals in the Camp Hill School District, or talking shop with my wife (Roxanne) a fellow music educator. You can learn more about me here: www.TimothyDixon.com After several years of conducting honors orchestras around the country (which was interrupted by the pandemic) I am very excited to be back to some degree of normalcy, and I am looking forward to making music with you!

As All-State musicians, you have already demonstrated a consistent commitment to musical excellence, and that same commitment will be required for us to have a convincing, compelling and successful performance. Please plan to spend some quality time in preparation for this weekend, both in listening to the pieces we will be performing, and in preparing your individual parts (especially the Mahler). Please make sure you know what every word on your page means, this is especially true for our final piece, which has many unusual directions in German (I will give you some resources below for that one)—this is especially important for those of you who require any special equipment such as mutes. Also, please have a sharpened pencil at every rehearsal.

Our program consists of three pieces and is centered around the theme: *Joy and Pain*. I have included some notes below to guide your preparation.

I have also created a YouTube playlist of the pieces:

https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLC_t-yFJ9i43TMaqfRbOgBe7nqaN_82Rc

I also have created a Spotify playlist (though it does NOT include *7 O'clock Shout*):

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/1zwOTHdt41qGRCaGD6E2Km?si=19fe378075b04252&pt=6081696404738648cbc7b88b493cbc>

CONCERT PROGRAM PERFORMANCE NOTES

Joyeuse Marche (approximately 4')**Emmanuel Chabrier
(1841-1894)**

This brief, goofy, joyous little march will begin our concert. Most of the individual parts are not terribly challenging (with the exception of a few licks here and there). Sixteenths should be short throughout, while being light, and overall the piece should sound effortless. Pay close attention to the detailed information the composer gives about dynamics and articulation throughout. The work is very delicately orchestrated, so entrances often come out of silence, which you must play lightly, but with confidence. Listening to the recording below will help you know how your part fits into the overall texture. Most of the score markings should be straightforward, but a few you may not be accustomed to: “3e Corde” means to play on the third string (from the top...i.e. D string for violins), same pattern for “4e corde” means the 4th string (G). “Bien chante” is an indication to play singingly. The tempo is M.M. = 116-112

Reference Recording: <https://youtu.be/C6deKJinyCo>***Seven O’Clock Shout (6')*****Valerie Coleman
(1970-)**

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, for several months as front-line healthcare workers were heading home during a shift change, there began a tradition of people throughout New York City opening their windows and cheering, clapping, and banging pots and pans loudly throughout to thank and honor those who were serving. This piece was commissioned by the Philadelphia Orchestra to honor these workers, and appropriate to that time and place, was premiered virtually in 2020. The piece begins poignantly, with several solos: 2 trumpets, flute, English horn and clarinet. These solos should be played expressively with a strong sense of singing line. The oboe solo at D is energetic and articulate (sing on the slur, short and accented on the syncopations)---other oboists should join on the 16hs after D. Soloists will be selected by your seating auditions. After letter F, many of you have the direction “ad. Lib. Whoops, shouts, claps or cheers (whatever feels good)” – this is exactly what it sounds like; make some sound--We need to be convincing to express the true joy here!

Here is the premiere performance as a reference: <https://youtu.be/uvBkdLqbKfw> Notice how even though they are all isolated, they make the shouting at letter F work! (around 4:20)

19’ *Symphony No.1, D major (19’) Mvt.IV***Gustav Mahler
(1860-1911)**

This of course is a major undertaking, and one of the landmark works of the orchestral repertoire—a piece of angst and of celebratory release and ultimate joy. This will require our most intense preparation. There is far too much to say in this document, too many tempo changes and details, but I have a more complete document (along with some other optional resources) at:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-kR0_INOLLeL2Utgc-6Mgkbqxcgb-kwcDsr150OJ87w/edit?usp=sharing

Please make sure you have any markings from this document in your parts. I will list a few notes here to get you started. One thing to note, we are only performing the finale (movement 4, most of your parts will likely say “IV. Satz” and/or “Stürmisch bewegt” at the top of the movement).

First and foremost, there are innumerable directions given to you by Mahler, mostly in German (for example, “drängen,” “zurückhaltend,” etc.). **PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU KNOW WHAT ALL OF THESE WORDS MEAN.** I have included a document with all of the German translations to help you: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UEqaEKmtBN8BEZWpbf1D0t78ZdMUDMJ/view?usp=sharing> Please **mark** them in your parts.

String divisi will be inside/outside (outside players play the upper part), EXCEPT at #16 for the cellos. The first 5 stands will play the upper part, and the rest the lower part. Please have both parts prepared, as seating will be determined after your auditions.

There are too many tempo changes to note here, but here is some guidance for the main areas which will require your practice (this document will include all tempos: : https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-kR0_INOLLeL2Utgc-6Mgkbqxcgb-kwcDsr150OJ87w/edit?usp=sharing) Focus first on the beginning up to #13, #22-25, #28-34, and #52 (esp, brass and woodwinds). Here are a few reference tempos for these sections:

Opening-#13 in 2, half note = 112-116
#22, half note = 108
#28, half note = 112-116
#38-40, piu mosso in 4, quarter note = 112,
#52 MM. in 4, quarter note = 144-138

There are MANY recordings of this pieces with wildly different approaches to tempo. This recording will be the closest to our approach: <https://youtu.be/whBRRixl-BI>

I am sorry if I overwhelmed you with this information---as you might guess, I am very excited for us to work on this program together! If you run across issues in your part preparation, please email me at: tdixon@messiah.edu and I will do my best to address your questions. Again, congratulations, and I look forward to meeting you in April!

Sincerely,



Timothy Dixon, DMA
Director of Orchestral Studies and Professor of Music, Messiah University (PA)
Music Director and Conductor, American Youth Philharmonic (VA)