



Intro to PMEA Music Performance Assessment

**Tom Snyder, MPA Coordinator
PMEA In-Service Conference
Erie, PA
Friday, April 19, 2024**



Music Performance Assessments

Tom Snyder, MPA Coordinator

- **Has served PMEA in this role since 2004. 2024 is his 19th MPA 'season'.**
- **Retired in 2021 at the end of his 40th year of teaching, the last 37 at West Allegheny SD in the western suburbs of Pittsburgh. His first 20 years were as a HS band director along with elementary instrumental lessons and as music department chair. His last 20 years were as District Arts Coordinator along with 6th grade Band and MS music classes. Currently continues with WA musicals as assistant producer. Also subs for band and orchestra from grades 4-12 in the Seneca Valley SD, where he lives.**
- **Has been active in the community band setting since 2009 as Associate Conductor of the West Hills Symphonic Band.**
- **MPA experience includes participating as a HS director in numerous 'Adjudication' festivals, hosting several instrumental and choral adjudications at WA, and adjudicating both 'in the hall' and sight-reading at instrumental MPA's since 2006. Related adjudicating experience includes 20+ years as a marching band judge (music).**



Music Performance Assessments

Music Performance Assessment across the U.S.

- **Almost all states have ‘Music Performance Assessment’, also commonly known as ‘Adjudication’, for most of the common performance areas-- Band, Orchestra, Chorus, Jazz Ensemble, and Solo & Small Ensemble.**
- **In most other states, adjudication has been well-established for decades, entrenched as a fundamental component within the music education culture.**
- **States differ widely in what organizations sponsor performance assessment:**
 - **In 21 states, adjudication is administered by state level Activity Associations under the auspice of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). If that was the case in PA, the PIAA would also include an array of other activities, including music festivals (District through State) and adjudication. PMEA would administer everything else.**
 - **In 16 states, festivals and adjudication are administered by separate Band, Orchestra and Choral associations working or separate organizations under the auspice of the state MEA,**
 - **In 10 states, including PA, festivals and adjudication/performance assessment are directly administered by the state MEA itself – PMEA!**



Music Performance Assessments

Music Performance Assessment in PA

- 'Adjudication' began in PA in 1986-87 with 15-20 large ensemble 'festivals' sponsored by PMEA and held mostly at colleges and universities throughout the state. Solo & Small Ensemble festivals soon followed. By the mid 1990's, festivals were also held at high schools as college hosting dwindled but soon declined to around 10 festivals per year.
- The most participation since 2004 was in 2018 with 18 MPA's and 139 participating ensembles.
- The current 2024 season by its completion is projected to include a PMEA record 22 MPA's----15 for Band & Orchestra, 5 for Chorus, and 3 Solo & Small Ensemble. At least one MPA is scheduled in every PMEA District except 6 and 11.
- Comprehensive guides to participating and hosting for each current MPA area---Band & Orchestra, Chorus, and Solo & Small Ensemble---are available within the MPA area of the PMEA website along with all forms and documents involved. To get started, read the appropriate guides and feel free to contact me with ANY questions!



Music Performance
Assessments

What is the PMEA MPA Program intended to accomplish?

- **Formerly known as ‘PMEA Adjudication’, the ‘PMEA Music Performance Assessment’ program provides formal, educational assessments within which any instrumental or vocal music student from Pennsylvania schools who is sponsored by a PMEA member may participate.**
- **Program goals include fostering outstanding musical performance, recognizing musical achievement, and serving as valuable director resource for materials, consultation, and professional development in addition to the performance assessment itself.**



Music Performance Assessments

Why should I participate in an MPA?

- **Participating in an MPA involves ALL the students in an ensemble compared to the few per school who can participate in PMEA festivals and other honors festival settings. Directors can involve as many students in a Solo & Small Ensemble MPA as can be scheduled by the host.**
- **Participating in an MPA involves a formal assessment process through PMEA, our professional arts/music education organization, that can be considered roughly parallel to PSSA's---something that students, parents, other teachers, administrators and school board members can understand.**
- **Participation in an MPA results in feedback from the adjudicators through audio commentary in real time at large ensemble MPA's along with the scores, ratings, and written comments on the assessment forms at all MPA's to enrich student learning, enhance the professional growth of directors, and support effective implementation of the school's music curriculum**



Music Performance Assessments

Are MPA's only available for high school ensembles?

- **NO!** This is a common misperception.
- Ensembles, soloists and small ensembles from elementary and middle/junior high schools are both eligible and encouraged to participate.
- When younger students and ensembles experience the performance assessment process, they are much more informed and ready to benefit at a higher level upon reaching high school.
- Younger students are often more willing to participate as soloists or in small ensembles for the first time!



Music Performance
Assessments

What is the event called in Pennsylvania?

- The events themselves are **ALSO** known as ‘MPA’s’, or ‘Music Performance Assessments’, and are currently available for the following:

Band

String Orchestra

Full Orchestra

Mixed Chorus – larger ‘choirs’ as well as medium-size chorales/select choirs/madrigals

Treble Chorus

Tenor/Bass Chorus

Jazz Ensemble

Solos & Small Ensembles: Winds, Percussion, Strings & Vocal

- **MPA’s** are not currently available for **Marching Band, Jazz Combos, Show Choir or Jazz Choir.**



Music Performance Assessments

When are MPA's normally held in Pennsylvania?

- **MPA's are usually scheduled on a weekday between early March and mid-May with hosts able to choose dates that work best for their programs and facilities.**
- **Most Solo & Small Ensemble MPA's are held on Saturdays due to the facility needs for classrooms as assessment areas.**



Music Performance Assessments

How much time is involved at an MPA?

- **BOC ensembles usually plan to arrive about 60-75 minutes before their scheduled on-stage performance, providing enough time to load-in and prep in the Holding Area before the 30-minute Warm-up slot. The on-stage performance slot is 30-minutes. Bands and Orchestras then have a 30-minute sight-reading slot in a separate room.**
- **Hosts have the option to do assess the Prepared Pieces and the Sight-reading on stage in one 45-minute slot preceded by a 45-minute Warm-up slot.**
- **Ensembles are free to leave after their assessment, usually only waiting for directors to receive their tabulated assessment forms. Total time on site for an ensemble usually ranges from 2 to 2½ hours. Ensembles are encouraged to watch other performances as time permits.**
- **The time on site for a soloist or small ensemble depends on the overall performance schedule for the students traveling together from a given school. A single soloist or small ensemble could be on site for an hour or a few hours while waiting for everyone from their school to finish and for the director to receive the tabulated results.**



Music Performance Assessments

What does the 'performance' aspect of 'performance assessment' include?

- **Large Ensembles** that choose to participate in the 'Traditional' performance context perform **Prepared Pieces** at a declared grade level that are assessed in five Evaluation Areas---Tone, Intonation, Accuracy, Technique, and Interpretation---receiving scores, a summary rating, written comments, and audio comments recorded throughout the performance from three adjudicators.
- **Bands and Orchestras** perform two **Prepared Pieces** and participate in a sight-reading component with a separate adjudicator. **Choruses** perform three **Prepared Pieces**.
- **Soloists and Small Ensembles** perform one **Prepared Piece** for one adjudicator that is assessed using the same five Evaluation Areas, receiving scores, written comments, and a **Final Rating** along with verbal comments from the adjudicator immediately following the performance.



Music Performance
Assessments

Are options available for directors new to performance assessment?

Yes! Band, Orchestra and Choral directors new to MPA's or who feel that the 'Traditional' context doesn't meet the needs of their program at that time may choose for their ensembles to perform in the 'Festival' performance context.

This option permits directors to customize the assessment experience by:

- performing any Prepared Pieces from music of any style or grade level already being rehearsed for spring concerts
- choosing between sight-reading or a clinic by one of the adjudicators reflecting on the performance
- choosing between receiving scores and ratings along with the written and audio comments or the comments without the scores and ratings

22% of directors have selected the Festival option since its launch in 2016!

Hosts have the flexibility to hold an 'all-Festival' MPA.



Music Performance
Assessments

SOLO & SMALL ENSEMBLE MPA's



Music Performance Assessments

Who can participate in a PMEA Solo & Small Ensemble MPA?

- **Students in grades 3 -12 who are enrolled in a band, orchestra or chorus class are eligible to participate at an MPA in any PMEA District.**
- **Each participating student must be sponsored by a PMEA member. The PMEA member may be a student's director, private teacher, youth ensemble director or section coach, or a retired PMEA member.**
- **The private teachers working closely with students on their solos might want to sponsor them to participate in a Solo & Small Ensemble MPA but must be a PMEA member. Private teachers do not need a music education degree to be a PMEA member, as active membership is open to persons engaged in music teaching or other music-related educational work.**
- **The most common scenario is that private teachers are the most involved preparing students for the MPA with the student's school director serving as the official 'sponsor'.**



Music Performance Assessments

Who can participate in a Solo & Small Ensemble MPA?

- **Cyber students may participate if they are sponsored by a PMEA member.**
- **Home-schooled students may be sponsored by a private teacher who is a PMEA member or a PMEA member director in their school district of residence.**
- **Parents cannot sponsor the student but may transport the student to and from the MPA.**
- **Small ensembles are defined as ranging from a duet of two students through a small ensemble of up to 12 students.**
- **Students may participate in a maximum of three performances at a given MPA; a maximum of one solo and two small ensembles or up to three small ensembles. Hosts may permit a student to participate in more than three performances if time slots are available.**



Music Performance Assessments

What happens at a Solo & Small Ensemble MPA?

- **Soloist and Small Ensembles perform one Prepared Piece for one adjudicator whose instrumental or vocal background is aligned to the students scheduled for assessment.**
- **The student will receive written comments, scores in five Evaluation Areas, and a summary Final Rating communicated using the PMEA Assessment Form**
- **After the performance, the adjudicator will provide verbal feedback during the remaining time.**
- **No sight-reading is required for Solo & Small Ensemble participants.**



Music Performance
Assessments

What happens *after* a Solo & Small Ensemble MPA?

- Scores and ratings for soloists and small ensembles are released **ONLY** to the sponsoring member. Many states post MPA results on their websites. PMEA does not.
- Each student soloist or member of a small ensemble will receive extrinsic recognition through a PMEA MPA medal:
 - a Blue/White ribbon for those earning a 'I'
 - a Gold/White ribbon for those earning a 'II'
 - an all-White ribbon for those earning a rating lower than 'II' or participating for 'Comments Only'.



Music Performance
Assessments

PMEA ASSESSMENT FORMS



PMEA Music Performance Assessment
BAND/ORCHESTRA
Assessment Form

Performance #: _____ MPA Date: _____ MPA Site: _____

School: _____ Ensemble Name: _____

| SCORE | EVALUATION AREA | COMMENTS |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| SC. = RATING with DESCRIPTORS | ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK | |
| 13-15 I Superior A+ Outstanding | + Area of strength; Noticeably strong within rating | Adjudicators are to use this space for specific written input focusing on areas of strength or concern. |
| 10-12 II Excellent A Advanced | Blank Commensurate to rating | |
| 7-9 III Good B Proficient | - Area of concern; Noticeably needing attention within rating | |
| 4-6 IV Fair C Basic | | |
| 1-3 V Unprepared U Below Basic | | |

| SCORE | EVALUATION AREA | COMMENTS | | | |
|---------------------------|--|---|------------|------------|----------------|
| | TONE | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality/Clarity/Use of Air-Bow | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Control/Consistency | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Blend | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Balance: Texture & Chord | | | | |
| | INTONATION | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Full Ensemble/Consistency | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Melodic or Individual Line | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Within & Between Sections | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Intervals & Chords | | | | |
| | ACCURACY | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Notes | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Pulse & Meter | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Rhythm | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Articulation | | | | |
| | TECHNIQUE | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Facility | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Flexibility throughout range | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Control/Precision/Unity | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | INTERPRETATION | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Tempo | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Dynamics | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Phrasing | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Style | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Expression/Nuance/Artistry | | | | |
| TOTAL | FINAL RATING | TOTAL SCORE to FINAL RATING with DESCRIPTORS | | | |
| Add the five scores above | Convert the Total Score to the Final Rating according to the table on the right. | 63-75 | I | Superior | A+ Outstanding |
| | | 48-62 | II | Excellent | A Advanced |
| | | 33-47 | III | Good | B Proficient |
| | | 18-32 | IV | Fair | C Basic |
| | | 5-17 | V | Unprepared | U Below Basic |

| OTHER FACTORS (+, Blank or -) (Not scored; does not affect Final Rating) | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Conduct/Confidence/Approach | |
| Appearance/Posture | |
| Choice of Repertoire | |
| Response to Conductor | Adjudicator Signature |

Features of the PMEA Assessment Forms

1. A Rating Scale from 1-15 is used with a range of three numbers at each achievement level.

A rating scale from 1 to 15 permits the adjudicator to identify the achievement level in which the performance falls with three options---'low', 'middle', and 'high'---within the given level that permits more flexibility in assigning the 'right' score.

With a range of 1-15 available, the resulting score for each category should be more representative of the performance level of the ensemble.

2. The Rating Descriptors include the traditional Roman numerals and terms along with letter grades and adapted PSSA terminology.

Evaluating performances on any numeric scale is challenging, especially when all ratings should reflect consistency and validity regardless of the number of ensembles being evaluated that day and throughout the entire 'season'. Adding letter grades and adapted PSSA terminology to the descriptors helps all involved differentiate among achievement levels more easily and accurately.



PMEA Music Performance Assessment

CHORUS

Assessment Form

Performance #: _____ MPA Date: _____ MPA Site: _____

School: _____ Ensemble Name: _____

| SCORE | | EVALUATION AREA | | COMMENTS |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|---|---|
| SC. # RATING with DESCRIPTORS | | ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK | | Adjudicators are to use this space for specific written input focusing on areas of strength or concern. |
| 13-15 | I Superior A+ Outstanding | + | Area of strength; Noticeably strong within rating | |
| 10-12 | II Excellent A Advanced | Blank | Commensurate to rating | |
| 7-9 | III Good B Proficient | - | Area of concern; Noticeably needing attention within rating | |
| 4-6 | IV Fair C Basic | | | |
| 1-3 | V Unprepared U Below Basic | | | |

| SCORE | EVALUATION AREA | COMMENTS |
|--------------|--|---|
| | TONE Quality, Clarity & Projection Posture & Breathing Blend Balance: Texture & Chord | |
| | INTONATION Full Ensemble/Consistency Within Melodic Line Within & Between Sections Intervals & Chords | |
| | ACCURACY Notes Pulse, Meter & Rhythm Entrances, Attacks & Releases Diction & Pronunciation | |
| | TECHNIQUE Facility & Flexibility Control, Precision & Unity Breathing: Control & Management | |
| | INTERPRETATION Tempo Dynamics Phrasing Style Expression, Nuance & Artistry | |
| TOTAL | FINAL RATING | TOTAL SCORE to FINAL RATING with DESCRIPTORS |
| | | 63-75 I Superior A+ Outstanding |
| | | 48-62 II Excellent A Advanced |
| | | 33-47 III Good B Proficient |
| | | 18-32 IV Fair C Basic |
| | | 5-17 V Unprepared U Below Basic |

Add the five scores above

Convert the Total Score to the Final Rating according to the table on the right.

| OTHER FACTORS (+, Blank or -) (Not scored; does not affect Final Rating) | | Adjudicator Signature |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Conduct, Confidence & Approach | |
| | Appearance & Facial Expression | |
| | Choice of Repertoire | |
| | Response to Conductor | |

3. Five overall Evaluation Areas that are broad and comprehensive

Managing too many evaluation areas is challenging for the adjudicator and often negatively affects the assessment itself. We chose five as the fewest number that best covers the essential performance aspects to be assessed and to facilitate more effective numbers management within areas that remain significant and distinctive in both scope and depth.

4. Additional 'snapshot' feedback possible within each Evaluation Area through '+' and '-' .

Adjudicators have the option to include a '+' or a '-' for each of the critical attributes listed within each Evaluation Area. This component of the Assessment Form enables adjudicators to provide quick, focused, direct feedback beyond the score itself, readily recognizing a particular critical attribute(s) that was an area of strength throughout the performance and/or identifying one or more that stand out as needing to be addressed.



PMEA Music Performance Assessment
SMALL ENSEMBLE: STRINGS
Assessment Form

Performance #: _____ MPA Date: _____ MPA Site: _____

Ensemble Name: _____ School: _____

| SCORE | EVALUATION AREA | COMMENTS |
|---|--|---|
| SC. = RATING with DESCRIPTORS 13-15 I Superior A+ Outstanding 10-12 II Excellent A Advanced 7-9 III Good B Proficient 4-6 IV Fair C Basic 1-3 V Unprepared U Below Basic | ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK + Area of strength; Noticeably strong within rating Blank Commensurate to rating - Area of concern; Noticeably needing attention within rating | Adjudicators are to use this space for specific written input focusing on areas of strength or concern. |

| SCORE | EVALUATION AREA | COMMENTS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---|-------|-----------|-----------|------------|-------|------------|------|--------------|-------|-----------|------|---------|------|----------|------------|---------------|
| | TONE <table><tr><td>Quality/Clarity/Use of Bow</td></tr><tr><td>Control/Consistency</td></tr><tr><td>Blend</td></tr><tr><td>Balance: Texture & Chords</td></tr></table> | Quality/Clarity/Use of Bow | Control/Consistency | Blend | Balance: Texture & Chords | Additional space is available on the back of this form. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Quality/Clarity/Use of Bow | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Control/Consistency | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Blend | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Balance: Texture & Chords | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | INTONATION <table><tr><td>Control/Consistency</td></tr><tr><td>Melodic or Individual Line</td></tr><tr><td>Pitch center/Tonality</td></tr><tr><td>Intervals & Chords</td></tr></table> | Control/Consistency | Melodic or Individual Line | Pitch center/Tonality | Intervals & Chords | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Control/Consistency | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Melodic or Individual Line | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pitch center/Tonality | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Intervals & Chords | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | ACCURACY <table><tr><td>Notes</td></tr><tr><td>Pulse & Meter</td></tr><tr><td>Rhythm</td></tr><tr><td>Articulation</td></tr></table> | Notes | Pulse & Meter | Rhythm | Articulation | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Notes | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pulse & Meter | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rhythm | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Articulation | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | TECHNIQUE <table><tr><td>Facility</td></tr><tr><td>Flexibility throughout range</td></tr><tr><td>Control/Precision/Unity</td></tr></table> | Facility | Flexibility throughout range | Control/Precision/Unity | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Facility | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Flexibility throughout range | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Control/Precision/Unity | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | INTERPRETATION <table><tr><td>Tempo</td></tr><tr><td>Dynamics</td></tr><tr><td>Phrasing</td></tr><tr><td>Style</td></tr><tr><td>Expression/Nuance/Artistry</td></tr></table> | Tempo | Dynamics | Phrasing | Style | Expression/Nuance/Artistry | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tempo | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dynamics | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Phrasing | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Style | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Expression/Nuance/Artistry | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL Add the five scores above | FINAL RATING Convert the Total Score to the Final Rating according to the table on the right | TOTAL SCORE to FINAL RATING with DESCRIPTORS <table><tr><td>63-75</td><td>I</td><td>Superior</td><td>A+ Outstanding</td></tr><tr><td>48-62</td><td>II</td><td>Excellent</td><td>A Advanced</td></tr><tr><td>33-47</td><td>III</td><td>Good</td><td>B Proficient</td></tr><tr><td>18-32</td><td>IV</td><td>Fair</td><td>C Basic</td></tr><tr><td>5-17</td><td>V</td><td>Unprepared</td><td>U Below Basic</td></tr></table> | 63-75 | I | Superior | A+ Outstanding | 48-62 | II | Excellent | A Advanced | 33-47 | III | Good | B Proficient | 18-32 | IV | Fair | C Basic | 5-17 | V | Unprepared | U Below Basic |
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| 5-17 | V | Unprepared | U Below Basic | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| OTHER FACTORS (+, Blank or -) (Not scored; does not affect Final Rating) Conduct Confidence/Approach Appearance/Posture Choice of Repertoire | Adjudicator Signature _____ |
|---|-----------------------------|

5. Comments

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

6. Other Factors (not scored; does not affect Final Rating)

The adjudicator may provide additional feedback through pluses and minuses that is not scored or part of the Final Rating. While these attributes are certainly important, they are inherently 'non-musical' and therefore not part of a 'music performance assessment'.

PMEA Music Performance Assessment
BAND/ORCHESTRA
 Assessment Form - BACK

| EVALUATION AREA | ATTRIBUTES TO CONSIDER FOR ASSESSMENT AND AS 'TALKING POINTS' FOR ORAL & WRITTEN COMMENTS |
|-----------------------|---|
| TONE | Quality; Clarity; Focus; Projection; Maturity; Use of air speed, amount and support; Use of the bow; Control throughout range of dynamics and pitches; Consistency and evenness of sonority; Resonance; Blend within section, family and ensemble; Balance of parts overall, of parts depending on role within the texture, and of parts depending on role within the chord; Posture impacting tone; Appropriate use of vibrato |
| INTONATION | Within the individual player, section, families and ensemble overall; Within the melodic or individual lines; Throughout range of dynamics and pitches; Within unisons, intervals and chords; Tonality awareness; Pitch center; Adjustments and recovery |
| ACCURACY | Notes overall and within the context of key signatures, key changes and accidentals outside of the key; Pulse stability; Rhythm including subdivision and patterns that include rests, ties, dotted notes and syncopation; Entrances and releases; Articulation method; Slur clarity and precision |
| TECHNIQUE | Facility as the ease of execution of technical passages; Flexibility as the ease of maneuverability throughout range; Rhythms vertically aligned; Dexterity; Coordination; Bowing |
| INTERPRETATION | Tempo – stability, changes, range and contrast; Dynamics – levels, changes, range and contrast; Phrasing, phrase shaping and contouring; The realization of the composer's aesthetic intent; Style in terms of performance practice and historical context; Articulation implied by the style; Nuance and artistic subtleties; Sensitivity; Musicality; Effect; Emotion or Feelingfulness |

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

7. Additional Terminology is included on the back of the form.

This area came into being by accident when we encountered a variety of terminology from assessment forms procured from throughout the country and chose to include many of them on the back of our revised PMEA form as an additional reference. We found that these additional attributes for each Evaluation Area were helpful as a resource for many teachers and their students as well as in providing more 'talking points' for oral and written comments by the adjudicators.

8. The current PMEA Region & State Festival Audition Forms were revised in 2015 to align in philosophy, structure, and process with the PMEA MPA Assessment Forms.

As directors become increasingly familiar with using the PMEA Region & State festival audition forms themselves, we hope that they become more comfortable with how ensembles and students are evaluated in the MPA context with the MPA Assessment Forms. That familiarity should enable directors to be more comfortable when participating, to better understand and benefit from the ratings received, and to possibly motivate some to become adjudicators themselves in the future.



Music Performance Assessments

Is sight-reading part of the performance assessment?

- **Yes, for Bands and Orchestras.** After performing the Prepared Pieces, they sight-read a piece at a lower grade level than the Declared Grade Level of the Prepared Piece.
- The process involves a 2-minute period for directors and students to silently peruse the piece, followed by a 3-minute period for the director to best set up the students for success through instructions, counting, singing, clapping or any other means other than playing.
- During the sight-reading performance, directors can call out rehearsal numbers and stop/resume as needed to best support the ensemble.
- Sight-reading is assessed by a fourth adjudicator using the same Evaluation Areas with the Summary Rating earned factored into those received from the other adjudicators to determine the Final Rating.

| DECLARED GRADE LEVEL OF THE PREPARED PIECES | GRADE LEVEL OF THE PIECE USED FOR SIGHT- READING |
|---|---|
| 6 | 4 |
| 5 | 3 |
| 4 | 2 |
| 3 | 1 ½ |
| 2 | 1 |
| 1 | ½ |

We plan to develop and pilot a sight-reading component for choruses soon that reflects best practices in other states and provides similar benefits for choral programs in PA. No sight-reading is required for Solo & Small Ensemble participants.



Music Performance Assessments

What happens with MPA results?

- **Scores and ratings for bands, orchestras, choruses, soloists and small ensembles are released ONLY to the director involved before they depart from the MPA. Many states post MPA results on their websites. PMEA does not.**
- **A list of all BOC ensembles and directors that participated within a given season is posted within the MPA area of the PMEA website. That list includes a ‘#’ identifying each ensemble that earned a Rating of ‘I Superior/Outstanding’ from all the adjudicators.**
- **Note that ensembles that earn ‘straight 1’s’ also qualify to apply for the performance slot dedicated to the MPA program at the next year’s PMEA Conference. Four ensembles are performing this year that earned straight 1’s in a 2023 MPA: Brookville Area HS Concert Band (D3), Cedar Crest MS Falcon Ensemble (D7), Lincoln Park Performing Arts Charter School Women’s Choir (D5), and Warwick HS Symphonic Band (D7).**



Music Performance Assessments

Using PMEA Assessment Forms to inform pedagogy

- **Use the form to convey to students what adjudicators are looking for and how adjudicators would evaluate a PMEA large ensemble MPA, a solo or small ensemble MPA, or even Honors/District/Region/State Festival auditions. PMEA festival audition forms are similar to MPA assessment forms are similar, as I led the revision of festival audition forms in 2015.**
- **Use the form for a ‘practice assessment’.**
- **Use recordings of ensembles, soloists and small ensembles and use the form for evaluate their own performances.**
- **After students participate in an MPA, review the Assessment form received to interpret the scores, ratings and comments received-----both for identifying and improving upon strengths and identifying and addressing areas of concern.**



Music Performance
Assessments

HOSTING AN MPA



Music Performance Assessments

Who can host an MPA?

- **Potential hosts are recommended to participate in at least one PMEA MPA before hosting a band/orchestra or choral MPA.**
- **However, significant experience participating in or hosting a performance assessment event, competition, or festival of any kind likely enables a first-time participating and prospective first-time host director to be comfortable enough to host a PMEA MPA.**
- **Any interested director is welcome to host a Solo & Small Ensemble MPA. The infrastructure has been completely updated for this season.**



Music Performance Assessments

What are the benefits of hosting an MPA?

- **Hosts choose the dates within the school year that best work for their ensembles and facilities as well as the starting and ending times that meet the needs of their own and the other participating ensembles.**
- **The convenience of students from throughout the host's district NOT needing to travel to participate, thus minimizing time out of class and bus expenses.**
- **The benefit of including as many of the host's own district's ensembles as they wish AND setting the performance schedule to best meet intra-district travel or 'out of class' restrictions.**
- **Since a minimum of 6 ensembles are needed for a given MPA to be financially viable, hosts should, hopefully, be able fill a full day with their own district's ensembles and those recruited from surrounding schools, especially with elementary and middle school/junior high ensembles encouraged to participate and the availability of the 'Festival' option.**



Music Performance Assessments

What are the benefits of hosting an MPA?

- Hosts choose the adjudicators who they feel will best meet the needs of the participating ensembles and may consult with the MPA Coordinator for recommendations as needed.
- An honorarium is paid to the host's school activity account or parent booster group or can be applied to registration fees owed.
- There are no significant costs for the host. PMEA reimburses host expenses such as a meal and beverages for the adjudicators and hosting personnel.
- The *intrinsic satisfaction* that comes from contributing *above and beyond* your classroom to advance music education in PA through meaningful performance assessment.



Music Performance Assessments

Hosting Format Options

Unique to Pennsylvania is that hosts have considerable flexibility in determining the large ensemble setting that best reflects their interests and priorities in meeting the needs of the students involved.

While the typical MPA where a mix of middle and high school bands and orchestras, or choruses from throughout the area convene at a given site for the performance assessment experience remains the most common, several other options are available:

- **'Internal' MPA's** where all the participating ensembles are from the host's school district, prioritizing the opportunity for ensembles from grades 6 (or younger) through middle and high school to participate. Ensembles can often watch the other ensembles perform to reinforce exposure to support recruiting, retention, and program cohesion. Adjudicator time can also be maximized for post-performance clinics.
- **'All-Festival' MPA's** where all ensembles participate in the 'Festival' performance context. Particularly attractive for directors and programs new to performance assessment, ensembles can simply perform music being prepared for spring concerts without concerns for grade levels or choosing from selective music lists. Bands and orchestras often choose a post-performance clinic from the adjudicators instead of sight-reading to receive additional focused feedback while eliminating the need to prepare for a sight-reading component.



Music Performance Assessments

Hosting Format Options

- **‘All Middle School MPA’s** where all the participating ensembles include students from as young as grade 5 through even grade 9. The MPA could be ‘internal’ with all ensembles from within a given school district or be more typical by inviting other middle school ensembles from throughout the area. This also opens the opportunity for middle school and junior high directors to host. A common misconception is that MPA’s are only for high school ensembles hosted by high school directors. High school directors can certainly help their colleagues with planning and provide high school student volunteers to assist throughout the event.
- **‘All String Orchestra MPA’** where all the ensembles are middle and high school string orchestras. It could be easily structured as all ‘Festival’, all ‘Traditional’, or a mix of the two. An additional benefit would be that all the adjudicators should have strong orchestra backgrounds.
- **‘All 6th Grade MPA’** where all the ensembles are sixth grade or a combination of 5th and 6th grade students. Adjudicators should be contracted who have significant experience at this level. Given that the Prepared Pieces are shorter in length, ample time remains for on-stage adjudicator clinics whether or not sight-reading is included.



Music Performance
Assessments

WEBSITE



Music Performance Assessments

Where can I find more information about PMEA Music Performance Assessment?

On the PMEA home page,

<https://www.pmea.net/>

click on Conferences and Events on the main menu bar.

Then, click on Music Performance Assessments within the sub-menu to access the MPA area.

The screenshot shows the PMEA website home page. The top navigation bar includes links for Advertising, Contact, and Store, along with a 'Not a member?' section with 'Join', 'My Account', and 'Login' buttons. The main header displays the PMEA logo, the organization's name 'PENNSYLVANIA MUSIC EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION', and its address and phone number. Below this is a secondary menu bar with categories: About Us, Membership, Conferences & Events, Calendar, Resources, and Focus Areas. The 'Conferences & Events' dropdown menu is expanded, showing a list of options including All-State Information, Annual In-Service Conference, Community Happenings, Composition Program, Crescendo Student Conference, Fest & Festival Information, Future Music Educators Honors Symposium, Leadership Academy, Music In Our Schools Month, Music Performance Assessments (highlighted with a red arrow), NAFME Eastern Division Conference & Honors Ensemble Information, Summer Conference, and Webinars. On the right side of the page, there are sections for News & Updates, Calendar, Membership Benefits, Follow Us (with social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube), and Our Districts (with a map of Region II showing counties like LARION, JEFFERSON, CAMERON, CLINTON, CLEARFIELD, and CENTRE).

MPA

'HOMEPAGE'

Current MPA Calendar

Info & Essential Resources

Directors

Hosts

Adjudicators

Articles about MPA

**Participating Ensembles &
Directors in the Last 5 Seasons**



Advertising Contact Store

PENNSYLVANIA MUSIC EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION
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(610) 562-9757

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Home / Music Performance Assessments

Music Performance Assessments



Music Performance
Assessments

Click the appropriate sub-heading below to access the information for that MPA type.

2024 MPA Calendar (Sorted by Date – Updated 4/2/24)

2024 MPA Calendar – (Sorted by District – Updated 4/2/24)

Information for Participants

- Band & Orchestra MPAs
- Choral MPAs
- Solo & Small Ensemble MPAs
- Jazz Ensemble MPAs
- Percussion Ensemble MPAs
- Large Ensemble MPA Medal Order Form
- Solo & Small Ensemble MPA Medal Order Form

Information for Hosts

Information for Adjudicators

From the Music Performance Assessment Coordinator

- Getting Started with PMEA Music Performance Assessments
- Consider These Options for Participating in or Hosting an MPA This Year!
- How Hosting A PMEA MPA Can Benefit You And Your Program
- Professional Growth Through PMEA Music Performance Assessment
- For Director Reference: Articles About Music Performance Assessments

Ensembles & Directors That Have Participated in an MPA in the Last Five Seasons

- Ensembles and Directors that Participated in an MPA in 2023
- Ensembles and Directors that Participated in an MPA in 2022
- Ensembles and Directors that Participated In an MPA in 2019
- Ensembles and Directors that Participated in an MPA in 2018
- Ensembles and Directors that Participated in an MPA in 2017
- Ensembles and Directors that Participated in an MPA in 2016

Questions? Need additional information? Contact Tom Snyder, Music Performance Assessment Coordinator, at mpa@pmea.net or at (724) 816-0420

CURRENT MPA CALENDAR

Essential MPA Info

Registration Info

Links to Online Forms

Registration

Declaring Prepared Pieces (BOC)

Declaring Participants & Repertoire (S&SE)



2024 MPA CALENDAR (sorted by date)

Note that ensembles may participate at ANY site in ANY PMEA District.

3 in District 1; 1 in District 2; 1 in District 3; 1 in District 4; 5 in District 5; 0 in District 6;
4 in District 7; 2 in District 8; 1 in District 9; 3 in District 10; 0 in District 11; 1 in District 12

| DATE | TYPE | PMEA DIST. | SITE | HOST(s) | Links |
|--|---|------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Feb 29 Thursday | Band/Orchestra | D3 | Clarion Area JSHS | Sarah Dawson | Event Completed |
| March 4-7 Monday - Thursday | Band/ Chorus | D7 | Millersville University | Scott Muenz | Event Completed |
| March 16 Saturday | Solo & Small Ensemble (winds, percussion & strings) | D10 | Southern Lehigh MS | Jeffrey Loda | Event Completed |
| March 20 Wednesday | Band/Orchestra | D1 | PennWest California | Frank Stetar | Event Completed |
| March 20 Wednesday NEW SITE | Band/Orchestra | D5 | Greenville HS | Dan Danch | Event Completed |
| March 27 Wednesday | Internal MPA Choral | D5 | Seneca Valley Int. HS | Claire Barker | Event Completed |
| April 4-5 Thursday/Friday | Band/Orchestra | D7 | Cedar Crest MS | Jared Daubert & Scott Muenz | Register Declaring Pieces Form |
| April 5 Friday NEW SITE | Band/Orchestra | D8 | Lewisburg Area HS | Daniel Schwanger | Register Declaring Pieces Form |
| April 9 Tuesday | Band *Festival Only | D7 | Camp Hill HS | Armon Raygani | Register Declaring Pieces Form |
| April 9 Tuesday | Chorus | D12 | Immaculata University | Katherine Chmelko | Register Declaring Pieces Form |
| April 11 Thursday | Band/Orchestra | D1 | Upper St. Clair HS | John Seybert | Register Declaring Pieces Form |
| April 16 Tuesday | Band/Orchestra | D7 | Central York HS | Jim Martini | Register Declaring Pieces Form |
| April 25 Thursday | Band/Orchestra | D10 | East Stroudsburg HS North | Paul Bakner | Register Declaring Pieces Form |
| April 27 Saturday NEW SITE | Solo & Small Ens. (winds & strings) | D9 | Wyoming Valley West MS | Megan Wiski-Schneider & Suzanne Hall | Register Declaring Participants & Repertoire Form |
| April 29 Monday | Band/Orchestra | D1 | Norwin HS | Tim Daniels | Register Declaring Pieces Form |
| May 2 Thursday | Chorus | D5 | Hickory HS | Brandy Rockage | Register Declaring Pieces Form |
| May 3 Friday NEW SITE | Band/Orchestra | D10 | Exeter Township SHS | Lorraine Selke | Register Declaring Pieces Form |
| May 9 Thursday NEW SITE | Band/Orchestra | D8 | Commonwealth Univ. of PA – Mansfield | Adam Brennan | Register Declaring Pieces Form |
| May 10 Friday | Band/Orchestra, Jazz | D2 | Port Allegany HS | Brad Stewart | Register Declaring Pieces Form |
| May 17 Saturday | Chorus | D5 | West Middlesex SD | Kelli Burlett | Register Declaring Pieces Form |
| May 18 Friday | Solo & Small Ens. (winds, strings, perc. & vocal) | D4 | Penn State University | Ashley Shank | Register Declaring Pieces Form |
| May 30 Thursday | Internal MPA Band/Orchestra | D5 | Seneca Valley Int. HS | Sara Snyder , Brian Croach & Kelly Levere | Internal MPA |

***Only sponsoring PMEA members can register and declare participants & repertoire for Solo & Small Ensemble MPAs**



Music Performance Assessments

NEXT STEPS



Music Performance Assessments

NEXT STEPS!

- Continue to reflect and improve all processes and systems involved within the MPA Program
- Continue to research common and best MPA practices in other states
- Finish the *Selective Music List – String Orchestra* that is about 2/3 finished
- Finish the *Selective Music List – Treble Chorus* and *Selective Music List – Tenor/Bass Chorus*
- Subsequent steps involving the Selective Music Lists include the following:
 - Develop grading criteria
 - Develop approval criteria to be added to the list
 - To systematically research which titles are 'OOP' (Out of Print) or available only as rentals
 - To establish a network for borrowing a piece that is out of print
 - Identifying which of the titles included in the PMEA SML's are indeed 'masterworks' or 'core repertoire' as an additional resource for new and veteran directors alike



Music Performance Assessments

MORE NEXT STEPS!

- Update the *Guide to Hosting a Jazz Ensemble MPA* and *Guide to Participating in a Jazz Ensemble MPA*
- Develop and pilot a structure for a Marching Band MPA
- Develop and pilot a Sight-reading component for Chorus
- Update the Assessment Forms for Large Ensemble (BOC) and Solo & Small Ensemble MPA's (Developed in 2009)
 - Develop a separate form for Orchestra
 - Review Evaluation Areas on Chorus and Vocal Solo & Small Ensemble forms
 - Review Attributes under Evaluation Areas on all forms



Music Performance Assessments

EVEN MORE NEXT STEPS!

- Develop a *Guide to Adjudicating a PMEA MPA* as a resource for adjudicators and to better communicate the core philosophies, approaches and expectations involved in adjudicating MPA's in Pennsylvania for PMEA as well as the processes involved with using the formal assessment forms, all within the goal of improving consistency within performance assessment at MPA's throughout the state.
- Develop a roster of directors interested in going into schools as a resource to provide feedback on pieces being rehearsed to perform at an MPA, to do a 'practice MPA' on a single piece, or to do a 'practice sight-reading MPA'.
- Continuing to update and maximize the MPA area within the PMEA website.
- To continue to communicate with and maximize feedback from all stakeholders ----
PMEA members, adjudicators, students and anyone interest in performance assessment!



QUESTIONS?

Thank you!

Tom Snyder
MPA Coordinator

mpa@pmea.net

(724) 816-0420