

2026 PMEA All-State Modern Band Audition Instructions

Time Frame- Wednesday 11/12/25- Tuesday at NOON 1/6/2026

1. Directors who wish to have their students (grades 10-12 only) considered for selection should: Complete the application form with payment (**\$20.00**) online at www.pmea.net, scroll to “Conferences and Events” and then click on “PMEA All-State Information”. The Director must be a current PMEA member. ***All student applicants must upload a headshot photo - (ABOVE the SHOULDERS) labeled LAST NAME, FIRST NAME (i.e. Smith, John)***
2. The Audition selections must be submitted online via the PMEA Website listed above. The audition selections must be recorded from start to finish without cuts and/or splices. SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS on how to submit EACH SELECTION are listed BELOW as well as on the Application. ***ARMS, FINGERS and HEAD must be visible when submitting the application for recording. NO EAR BUDS or HEADPHONES are permitted to be used in the recording.*** To obtain the best audio quality, a good microphone as well as high-end computers or digital recording devices for the recording equipment are suggested. * **NEW- A VIDEO** outlining “how to make a better recording online for submission” is available on the PMEA website. Please take the time to review the recording instructions.
3. No identifying clothing may be worn (i.e. no school t-shirts, no name identification, no PMEA, NAFME All Eastern or National shirts).). ***Additionally, please do NOT include any identifying information in the video file name or in the contents of the recording.***
4. The “Window of Opportunity” to record begins **Wednesday 11/12/2025** and ends at **NOON, Tuesday 1/6/2026**. **Once completed, a confirmation email will be sent to the address used to register.** Please check your SPAM filters for any communications and also check with your IT Administrator if a school email address is used and no email is received.
5. The director is asked to view the file and verify the recorded audition is consistent with the student’s level of performance.
6. Although PMEA checks to ensure the videos play in the correct format and the file can be opened- PMEA is **NOT** responsible for the content repertoire of the video. **Please follow the repertoire and file labeling instructions.**
7. Students may audition on multiple instruments. However, a separate payment and application is required for each submission. **All requirements for EACH instrument must be met and sent on a separate upload video.**
8. Results of the 2026 PMEA All-State Modern Band Ensemble will be posted on **Friday, 1/30/2026** via the PMEA Website- www.pmea.net.
9. If selected for the 2026 PMEA All-State Modern Band Ensemble, the student will no longer be eligible for any of the other All-State Ensembles.

2026 PMEA All-State Modern Band Audition Information

Due to the nature of the ensemble, all students are required to demonstrate facility on a variety of styles. These styles can include Pop, Rock, Hip Hop, R&B, Country, Metal, or other genres.

While singing is not mandatory for instrument auditionees, preparation of a short excerpt demonstrating singing ability is recommended.

Vocals/Rap

Prepare two songs of contrasting style performed with an instrumental track (no-sing-alongs) or live ensemble:

- Be sure that at least one piece demonstrates background vocals or ability to sing harmonies
- Be sure that one piece includes improvisation (melodic and/or lyrical). Some ideas for soloists to emulate: Aretha Franklin, Freddie Mercury, James Brown, Esperanza Spalding, Stevie Wonder, Dolly Parton
- One of the pieces can be original; at least one of the pieces must be a cover
- Rapping highly encouraged, either as a cover or original

Guitar

Prepare two songs of contrasting style:

- The audition selections should demonstrate diversity of both rhythmic and melodic playing
- At least one piece must include a lead guitar solo. Some ideas of soloists to emulate are: Jimi Hendrix, Annie Clark, Carlos Santana, David Gilmour, Nancy Wilson, Stevie Ray Vaughn, Prince, etc.
- Both pieces should demonstrate variety of chordal usage: open chords, barre chords, power chords, triads, etc.

Bass

Prepare four bass grooves:

- The audition selections should demonstrate a variety of styles that show versatility and ability to play in the pocket.
- Some ideas for bassists to emulate for cover grooves: James Jamerson, Carol Kaye, Flea, Paul McCartney, John Entwistle, Gail Ann Dorsey, etc.
- One can be an original composition; three must be covers

Drums

Prepare two songs and two-four additional grooves:

- The audition selections/additional grooves should demonstrate a variety of groove styles: aka Rock, Hip Hop, Latin, etc.
- The pieces must demonstrate ability to play along with recording to demonstrate ability to switch between drum grooves in sections of the song
- Additional grooves should be recorded with a drum-less jam track or a metronome

Keyboard

Prepare two songs of contrasting style:

- Should demonstrate diversity in both rhythmic and melodic playing
- One piece must include an improvised keyboard solo. Some ideas of soloists to emulate are: Keith Emmerson, Fiona Apple, Ray Manzarek, Stevie Wonder, etc.

Other Instruments (ukulele, brass, strings, winds, etc.)

Prepare two songs:

- The audition selections should demonstrate style and versatility as lead or accompanist
- The pieces should include an improvisatory section
- For brass, strings and winds: an original, simple arrangement of you playing backgrounds over a chord progression is strongly encouraged. This can be recorded multi-track or with live section players

When selecting audition materials, students should select songs that are roughly three minutes in length and record the piece in its entirety.

When recording the audition materials, please note the following:

- No identifying clothing may be worn (i.e. no school t-shirts, no name identification, no PMEA, NAFME, etc. shirts).
- The student must be visible in the video (especially hands and faces). It is strongly recommended that students and directors preview all videos before submitting to ensure the auditioning student is visible and the audio quality is acceptable.
- No auto tuning/pitch fix is permitted.