



Music Performance Assessments

2026

GUIDE TO HOSTING A BAND AND/OR ORCHESTRA MPA

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West Allegheny SD - Retired

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INTRODUCTION

The fundamental goals of this *Guide* have not changed since the first *Manual* was released in 1986:

- To provide directors with the information needed to successfully host an MPA
- To answer common questions about hosting an MPA
- To provide an ongoing reference for those who have hosted in the past
- To identify any changes and new aspects of hosting
- To provide practical suggestions for hosts, especially those new to hosting MPA's

In turn, feedback is welcome from all involved for this Guide to best serve as a relevant resource.

The name of this program changed from "PMEA Adjudication" to "PMEA Music Performance Assessment" in 2019. The events themselves continue to be called "MPAs" or "Music Performance Assessments." This change simplifies and clarifies 'what we are' and focus upon 'what we do'-----*music performance assessment*.

Hosts should also review the current *Guide to Participating in a Band or Orchestra MPA* for an overview from that perspective.

All forms and items needed to participate in and to host an MPA are posted within the Music Performance Assessment area of the [PMEA website](#).

The forms listed below are used when hosting a Band and/or Orchestra MPA:

- *Band Music Performance Assessment Form*
- *Band Sight-reading Assessment Form*
- *String Orchestra Performance Assessment Form*
- *String Orchestra Sight-reading Form*
- *Band/Orchestra MPA Rating Summary Form – Individual Ensemble*
- *Band/Orchestra MPA Rating Summary Form – All Ensembles*
- *Adjudicator Application*
- *Adjudicator Contract & Adjudicator Stipend Confirmation Form*
- *W-9 Form for Adjudicators*

Online forms issued from PMEA include the following:

- *Host Information Form*
- *MPA Host Expense Report Form*
- *MPA Host Assessment Report Form*
- *Registration Form* (developed for each MPA, accessible from within the MPA Calendar)
- *Declaring Prepared Pieces Form* (developed for each MPA, accessible from within the MPA Calendar)

Potential hosts are recommended to participate in at least one PMEA MPA before hosting. However, experience participating in a festival or performance assessment event of any kind should enable directors to successfully host a PMEA MPA.

Contact Tom Snyder, MPA Coordinator, with questions at mpa@pmea.net or (724) 816-0420.

SECTION 1: PLANNING

A. SELECT A VIABLE DATE

- MPAs are commonly scheduled within a two-month window between early March and early May but may be held earlier or later. While most MPAs are held during the school day, an MPA on a weekday evening or a Saturday is permitted. MPAs held over two or more consecutive weekdays, or a Friday-Saturday are also permitted.
- Avoid conflicts with PMEA festivals, AP testing, and PSSA testing. Dates near Easter may limit participation given the varying lengths of spring breaks before and after Easter and the resulting gaps between rehearsals.
- Planning a back-up date is recommended in case the MPA needs to be postponed due to weather, a health or family situation involving the host, or an emergency district or facility situation. While participating directors can't guarantee availability given the variables involved, they would at least have a chance to keep a back-up date available.
- When requesting permission to host, provide principals with relevant information concerning facility needs, how any displaced classes would be accommodated, and where students from other schools will be entering and exiting the building. Once a date is confirmed, arrange for any assistance needed from colleagues, parents, students, the stage manager, and custodians.

B. SELECT A FORMAT

- Unique to PA is the flexibility to structure the MPA to reflect the host's interests and priorities, including the options listed below. Those involving bands and orchestras are **bolded**.

<p>TYPICAL FORMATS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All Bands (MS and/or HS) - Mix of Bands & String Orchestras (MS & HS) - Choruses (Mixed, Treble & Tenor/Bass) (MS & HS) - Solo & Small Ensemble (MS & HS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Winds with or without Percussion All Percussion All String All Instrumental (Mix of Band & Orch. instruments) All Vocal Mix of all Instruments & Voices - Internal MPAs for Bands and String Orchestras or Solos & Small Ensembles all from within the host's school district 	<p>OTHER AVAILABLE OPTIONS, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE FOLLOWING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All Festival (Band and/or String Orchestra, or Chorus) (MS and/or HS) - All String Orchestra (MS and/or HS) - All Middle/Junior High School Bands, Bands & String Orchestras, String Orchestras, or Choruses - All Sixth Grade Bands, Bands & String Orchestras, or Choruses - Solo & Small Ensemble All Middle/Junior High School with the host's preferred combination of winds, percussion, strings & voices (could include 3rd, 4th & 5th grades)
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C. CONFIRM YOUR MPA DATE WITH PMEA AND PUBLICIZE IT TO POTENTIAL PARTICIPATING DIRECTORS

- As soon as your date is confirmed, complete the online *Host Information Form* posted within the MPA area of the PMEA website for the MPA site and date to become 'official' with PMEA.
- PMEA will use the information included on that form to customize an online *Registration Form* for each MPA embedded in the MPA Calendar for directors to register. PMEA will post the initial MPA Calendar within the MPA area of the PMEA website on October 1 and update it as additional hosts confirm.
- In addition to the publicity through PMEA, promote your MPA through your PMEA District's newsletters as well as through email invitations targeted to schools within a reasonable driving distance, including those in neighboring PMEA Districts given that ensembles can participate in MPAs located within any PMEA District. Schools in adjacent states may also be interested if your MPA is closer than some in their own states.

D. NUMBER OF ENSEMBLES NEEDED TO HOLD AN MPA

- A minimum of six ensembles is required to hold an MPA for the event to be financially viable. An MPA including five ensembles is permitted if necessary.
- An MPA including three or four ensembles is permitted if the host waives either the Host Honorarium or the reimbursement for Host Expenses.
- An MPA with two ensembles committed to participate may need to be canceled. However, hosts, especially those with a first-time MPA, are urged to first discuss options with the MPA Coordinator that could still enable those students to benefit from a performance assessment experience.
- Hosts determine the maximum number of ensembles participating based on scheduling parameters and adjudicator availability.

E. CONTRACT ADJUDICATORS

- A benefit of hosting is that the host chooses the four adjudicators, three to adjudicate the two Prepared Pieces performed by each ensemble and one to adjudicate the Sight-reading component. For an 'all-Festival MPA', a fourth adjudicator is not needed, as the three hall adjudicators will rotate for the post-performance clinics in lieu of sight-reading.
- Hosts are recommended to contract a blended panel of retired and active directors from the college/university and high school/middle school levels. If needed, contact the MPA Coordinator for a list of adjudicators. Adjudicators are recommended, but not required, to be PMEA members.
- If the MPA will include bands and string orchestras, contract adjudicators who are comfortable with both types of ensembles.
- Ask adjudicators new to PMEA MPAs to complete and submit an *Adjudicator Application* to the MPA Coordinator.

- Contract adjudicators well in advance, as their availability is often limited. Communicate the approximate starting and ending times, as availability often depends on late afternoon and evening commitments. Contract adjudicators who can travel to and from the event on the same day.
- Communicate to prospective adjudicators in advance the amount of the projected honorarium and travel expenses.
 - Each adjudicator will be paid \$35 per ensemble adjudicated.
 - Adjudicators may be eligible for a travel reimbursement based on the number of miles traveled one-way to the MPA site as follows:
 - No Reimbursement - Traveling less than 50 miles one way
 - \$25 - Traveling 50-99 miles one way
 - \$50 - Traveling 100-149 miles one way
 - \$75 - Traveling 150+ miles one-way
- As soon as availability is confirmed, ask the adjudicator to complete the *Adjudicator Contract* and return it to you to compile, scan and upload after the MPA within the online *Host Expense Report Form* submitted to the PMEA Office.
- At the MPA, provide each adjudicator with a blank *Adjudicator Stipend Confirmation Form* to confirm the final payment due based on the exact number of ensembles being adjudicated and the one-way mileage that determines the amount of travel reimbursement due, if any. Also compile, scan and upload these forms after the MPA within the online *Host Expense Report Form* submitted to the PMEA Office.
- Also at the MPA, provide each adjudicator with a *W-9* form to complete and to you to compile, scan and upload after the MPA within the online *Host Expense Report Form* directed to the PMEA Office. Note that an adjudicator who has already submitted one to PMEA from another MPA, guest conducting, or other contracted services during the same calendar year does NOT need to submit another form but may do so if desired.
- Hosts and Adjudicators will receive payment from PMEA within one month from when the online *Host Expense Report Form* is submitted. All Registration Fees must be paid before these payments and reimbursements are issued.

F. CONFIRM HOSPITALITY ARRANGEMENTS

- Hosts are reimbursed up to \$130 for hospitality, normally including breakfast refreshments along with lunch as often provided by a nearby restaurant or the school's food service department. Some hosts graciously fund or supplement the allotted reimbursement from activity accounts or boosters.

G. CONFIRM ENSEMBLE REGISTRATION

- Directors register through the *Registration* link provided for each individual MPA within the *PMEA MPA Calendar* posted within the MPA area of the PMEA website. Hosts will be provided with access to monitor the summary document that compiles the information submitted through this form to use in planning.

- If all available performance slots are taken, PMEA will include within the MPA Calendar that interested directors are to contact the host to be placed on a waiting list. Maintain a waiting list of ensembles/directors that contact you in the order received as a reference if an unexpected opening occurs.
- Participating directors must complete the online *Registration* and *Declaring Prepared Pieces* forms for each of their participating ensembles to confirm participation. Hosts must also complete the online *Registration* and *Declaring Prepared Pieces* forms for each of their participating ensembles.

H. CONFIRM THAT EACH DIRECTOR SUBMITS A DECLARED SUMMARY GRADE LEVEL WITHIN THE DECLARING PREPARED PIECES ONLINE FORM

- Directors declare their two selected Prepared Pieces through the online *Declaring Prepared Pieces* link provided for each MPA within the *PMEA MPA Calendar* posted within the MPA area of the PMEA website. Within this form, directors provide the Title, Composer/Arranger, Year Published and approved PMEA Grade Level for each piece, followed by the Declared Summary Grade Level.
- Hosts will be provided with access to monitor the summary document that compiles the information submitted through this form. Hosts must monitor this document to confirm that each director has submitted this essential information. Directors may change pieces but must email the host to update the summary document accordingly.
- The MPA Coordinator will confirm that the pieces submitted are from the *Selective Music List for Band* or newly approved for Band or String Orchestra and if the submitted Grade Levels are accurate.

I. DEVELOP A SCHEDULE TEMPLATE

- Hosts decide whether to hold the *Sight-reading* component on stage immediately after the performance of the Prepared Pieces or in a separate area.
- If the Sight-reading is held on stage, the time slots will be 45 minutes long.
 - Each time slot includes entering the stage, seating, confirming percussion set-up, the on-stage warm-up, the Prepared Pieces, the Sight-reading, and exiting the stage.
 - *Festival* ensembles that do not choose the Sight-reading component will receive a clinic from one of the three hall adjudicators during the time remaining after the Prepared Pieces.
 - Scheduling time between slots, such as five minutes inserted between ensembles, is not necessary but would be permitted if possible within the overall schedule structure.
 - While an open time slot for lunch for the adjudicators would be welcome, it is not necessary if not possible within the overall schedule given that the adjudicators can eat between ensembles.

- A sample schedule for an MPA with eight ensembles scheduled with 45-minute time slots follows, including adjudicators eating lunch between ensembles:

SLOT	TIME	WARM-UP ROOM	STAGE (Prepared Pieces & Sight-reading)
1	8-8:45 AM	Ensemble #1	-----
2	8:45-9:30	Ensemble #2	Ensemble #1
3	9:30-10:15	Ensemble #3	Ensemble #2
4	10:15-11	Ensemble #4	Ensemble #3
5	11-11:45	Ensemble #5	Ensemble #4
6	11:45-12:30 PM	Ensemble #6	Ensemble #5
7	12:30-1:15	Ensemble #7	Ensemble #6
8	1:15-2	Ensemble #8	Ensemble #7
9	2-2:45		Ensemble #8

- If the Sight-reading is held in a separate area, the time slots for warm-up, performance, and sight-reading would be 30 minutes each.
 - Each time slot would include entering the area, seating, confirming percussion set-up, the Prepared Pieces, and exiting the stage to move to the Sight-reading area.
 - Each ensemble will receive a clinic on stage from one of the three hall adjudicators if time is available after the Prepared Pieces before transitioning to the Sight-reading area. The possibility will vary depending on the length of the Prepared Pieces, usually shorter at grades .5 to 3.
 - Scheduling time between slots, such as 5-minutes inserted between ensembles, is not necessary but would be permitted if possible within the overall schedule structure.
 - A 30-minute slot for a lunch break for the adjudicators would be needed.
 - Note that ten ensembles can be accommodated in 30-minute time slots in about the same length of time that eight ensembles can be accommodated in 45-minute time slots.
 - A sample schedule for an MPA with ten ensembles scheduled within 30-minute time slots follows:

SLOT	TIME	WARM-UP ROOM	STAGE (Prepared Pieces)	SIGHT-READING (Separate Room)
1	8-8:30 AM	Ensemble #1	-----	-----
2	8:30-9	Ensemble #2	Ensemble #1	-----
3	9-9:30	Ensemble #3	Ensemble #2	Ensemble #1
4	9:30-10	Ensemble #4	Ensemble #3	Ensemble #2
5	10-10:30	Ensemble #5	Ensemble #4	Ensemble #3
6	10:30-11	Ensemble #6	Ensemble #5	Ensemble #4
7	11-11:30		Ensemble #6	Ensemble #5
8	11:30-12 PM	Ensemble #7	LUNCH for hall adjudicators	Ensemble #6
9	12-12:30	Ensemble #8	Ensemble #7	LUNCH for sight-reading adjudicator
10	12:30-1	Ensemble #9	Ensemble #8	Ensemble #7

11	1-1:30	Ensemble #10	Ensemble #9	Ensemble #8
12	1:30-2		Ensemble #10	Ensemble #9
13	2-2:30			Ensemble #10

- *Festival* ensembles that do not choose the Sight-reading component for a rating may choose to do a 'practice sight-reading' for comments only or receive a clinic from the Sight-reading adjudicator during the 30-minute slot on a topic that the host coordinates in advance between the director and adjudicator.

J. SCHEDULE PERFORMANCE TIMES

- Schedule performance slots on a first-come basis with interested directors early in the process, as a viable performance time is often a condition of directors being able to participate, especially for schools bringing more than one ensemble with the same director. The opportunity to lock in performance times is an incentive for directors to commit early to participate.

K. PREPARE FOR THE SIGHT-READING COMPONENT

- Ensembles participating in the *Traditional* performance context are required to participate in an adjudicated Sight-reading component immediately after performing the Prepared Pieces, with the rating received factored into determining the Final Rating.
- Within the *Traditional* context, ensembles will sight-read a piece at a grade level below the declared grade level of the Prepared Pieces according to the following table:

DECLARED GRADE LEVEL OF THE PREPARED PIECES	GRADE LEVEL OF THE MUSIC TO BE USED FOR SIGHT-READING
6	4
5	3
4	2
3	1 ½
2	1
1	½

- Ensembles participating in the *Festival* performance context also have the option to participate in an adjudicated Sight-reading component with directors choosing the grade level of the piece.
- Hosts provide the Sight-reading adjudicator in advance with a list of the ensembles participating in the Sight-reading component, the *Declared Summary Grade Level of the Prepared Pieces* for each ensemble, and the resulting grade level of the corresponding music to be used for Sight-reading.
- The Sight-reading adjudicator will provide at least one piece at each grade level. The adjudicator has the option to have two or more pieces available and then choose one for the given ensemble to perform.

- The Sight-reading adjudicator is responsible for providing the music and folders through one of the following options:
 - Compile the music and folders themselves from their own school's music library or other sources
 - Borrow music from a music distributor
 - Borrow music from the host or another source
 - Compile their own 'sight-reading box', a collection of several pieces at each grade level from their own school library or borrowed from colleagues. This option is more common among those who often adjudicate sight-reading.
- The director must be given an original, unmarked score, not a copy or one that is marked with conductor notes. The Sight-reading adjudicator must also have score to refer to throughout, which may be a copy.
- The method of organizing the music is up to the adjudicator. Hosts should provide volunteers to assist with distributing and collecting music. Options for distribution include:
 - Compile and distribute complete folders by instrument with all the music being used that day.
 - Distribute just the piece being used by that ensemble. Parts can be distributed directly to each student or grouped by section and handed to a student in the section to distribute to the rest of the section.
- Providing quality, appropriate pieces for sight-reading impacts the overall success and quality of the student experience. The sight-reading adjudicator should avoid selecting pieces in x/8 meter at any grade level along with avoiding pieces in 3/4 time or cut time in grades ½, 1 or 1 ½. We also recommend avoiding pieces with intricate meter changes, complex rhythm patterns, or more difficult percussion writing that involves several accessory instruments

L. REVIEW THE SIGHT-READING PROCESS

1. A summary of the Sight-Reading process and a sample script for the sight-reading adjudicator to refer to or read as is included as Appendix 1 of this guide as a resource.
2. Immediately following the Prepared Pieces, the ensemble will remain on stage or proceed to a separate area.
3. The adjudicator and assistants will distribute music that is to be turned over or music folders that are to remain closed until instructed to proceed. The director may confirm all part and percussion assignments.
4. The adjudicator will review the Sight-reading process and then instruct the students to turn over the music or retrieve a specific piece from the folder.
5. The adjudicator will then formally start a timed two-minute preparation period to be used by the director and students to silently peruse the music. No playing or talking is permitted. The adjudicator will notify the ensemble when thirty seconds remain. The timpani may be tuned during this quiet time.
6. The adjudicator will then formally start a timed three-minute period for the director to communicate suggestions for successfully sight-reading the assigned piece. Instruments cannot be played. The director and students may sing, count, clap, finger, 'air-play' or 'air-bow', ask questions, or otherwise highlight

any aspect of performing the music. The adjudicator will notify the ensemble when one minute, and then thirty seconds remain. Students are not to write on the music.

7. The adjudicator will then instruct the director to begin the Sight-reading performance. During the performance, the director may clap or tap on the stand, sing parts, count, call out rehearsal numbers/letters, or give verbal instructions without penalty. While the less the director needs to be involved verbally, the better, providing appropriate verbal assistance is encouraged.

8. The director may choose to stop and re-start the ensemble. The adjudicator will then identify the point where the ensemble will restart, which should be a rehearsal number/letter just before where the director stopped the performance. While the fewer stops and re-starts, the better, the director is urged to stop and re-start as necessary in the best interests of the overall assessment experience.

9. After the performance, the Sight-reading adjudicator will provide feedback during the remaining time before collecting the music and the students **exiting** the area before the next ensemble enters.

M. PROCESS THE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT RESULTS IN THE TABULATION AREA

- Once the runners bring the assessment forms to the Tabulation Area, check each adjudicator's math on the Assessment Forms for accuracy. If an error is spotted, send the form back to that adjudicator to correct and initial.
- For ensembles participating in the *Traditional* performance context, use the two tables below to derive the Summary Rating of the Prepared Pieces and then combine that with the Rating received for Sight-reading to derive the Final MPA Rating.
- For ensembles participating in the *Festival* performance context when the director chooses Ratings & Comments as the Evaluation Option AND to participate in the Sight-reading component, use the same two tables below the same as described above.
- For ensembles participating in the *Festival* performance context that do NOT choose to participate in the Sight-reading component, derive the Final Rating of the Prepared Pieces by using only the first table below.

- The *Summary Rating* earned from the performance of the Prepared Pieces is determined by combining the Final Ratings from the three adjudicators according to the following table:

USE THIS TABLE TO DETERMINE THE SUMMARY RATING OF THE PREPARED PIECES OR TO DETERMINE THE FINAL RATING FOR ENSEMBLES IN THE 'FESTIVAL' CONTEXT THAT DO NOT CHOOSE TO SIGHT-READ					
COMBINE THE RATINGS FROM THE THREE ADJUDICATORS	I, I, I	I, II, II	I, III, III	I, IV, IV	I, V, V
	I, I, II	I, II, III	I, III, IV	I, IV, V	II, V, V
	I, I, III	I, II, IV	I, III, V	II, IV, IV	III, V, V
	I, I, IV	I, II, V	II, III, III	II, IV, V	IV, V, V
	I, I, V	II, II, II	II, III, IV	III, IV, IV	V, V, V
		II, II, III	II, III, V	III, IV, V	
		II, II, IV	III, III, III	IV, IV, IV	
		II, II, V	III, III, IV	IV, IV, V	
			III, III, V		
SUMMARY RATING OR FINAL RATING	I	II	III	IV	V

RATING	PMEA DESCRIPTOR	LETTER GRADE	APPROX. PSSA EQUIVALENT
I	Superior	A+	Outstanding
II	Excellent	A	Advanced
III	Good	B	Proficient
IV	Fair	C	Basic
V	Unprepared	U	Below Basic

- The *Final MPA Rating* is then determined by combining the Summary Rating of the Prepared Pieces (PP) with the Rating received for Sight-reading (SR), according to the following table:

COMBINE THE SUMMARY RATING OF THE PREPARED PIECES (PP) WITH THE RATING FROM THE SIGHT-READING (SR) COMPONENT TO DETERMINE THE FINAL MPA RATING									
PP	SR	PP	SR	PP	SR	PP	SR	PP	SR
I	I	I	III	II	IV	III	V	V	IV
I	II	I	IV	II	V	IV	III	V	V
		I	V	III	II	IV	IV		
		II	I	III	III	IV	V		
		II	II	III	IV	V	I		
		II	III	IV	I	V	II		
		III	I	IV	II	V	III		
I		II		III		IV		V	

FINAL RATING	PMEA DESCRIPTOR	LETTER GRADE	APPROX. PSSA EQUIVALENT
I	Superior	A+	Outstanding
II	Excellent	A	Advanced
III	Good	B	Proficient
IV	Fair	C	Basic
V	Unprepared	U	Below Basic

- The tabulator types or writes in the final score and rating indicated on each adjudicator's assessment form onto the *Band/Orchestra MPA Rating Summary Form*.
- The tabulator then types or writes in the final score and rating for each ensemble on the *Band/Orchestra MPA Rating Summary – All Ensembles Form* as part of the online *MPA Host Assessment Report Form* directed to the MPA Coordinator.
- Make a copy of each Assessment Form (front and back) to scan and upload as part of the online *MPA Host Assessment Report Form* directed to the MPA Coordinator. If the back of the form is blank with no written comments, that page does not need to be submitted.
- Final MPA Ratings are not posted or published.

N. RETURN THE ASSESSMENT RESULTS AND SCORES TO EACH DIRECTOR

- Return the following items to each director before the ensemble departs:
 - The ensemble's *Band/Orchestra MPA Rating Summary Form*
 - Three *Band or String Orchestra Music Performance Assessment Forms*, one from each adjudicator
 - The *Band or String Orchestra Sight-reading MPA Form* (if applicable)
 - Six Conductor scores, three for each of the two Prepared Pieces provided for the adjudicators

O. CONFIRM FINAL ARRANGEMENTS

- Communicate at least two weeks in advance with the participating directors to confirm final arrangements that include the following:
 - Requesting a seating chart if not already received
 - A list of percussion instruments that can be provided, especially if instruments are available beyond the minimum required. Directors appreciate when percussion instruments are available that they do not need to bring. Remind directors to contact you with any percussion questions.
 - The final schedule of warm-up and performance times
 - A list of the adjudicators
 - Bus parking instructions, where to enter the building and check in, and other facility information
 - Any known traffic issues or road construction advisories that could impact travel time
 - A reminder to submit three manila envelopes (10x13 recommended), one for each adjudicator, labeled with the school's name, ensemble name and 'Adjudicator #1', 'Adjudicator #2' or 'Adjudicator #3'. Each envelope must contain an original score for each of the two Prepared Pieces with the measures numbered if not already numbered by the publisher. Scores must be originals unless the piece is out of print. Copies may then be made, but only with written permission of the publisher provided. If copies are made, pages should be taped, rather than stapled. Scores do not need to be provided for any warm-up piece or other music used.
 - How and when adjudicator recordings can be accessed
 - A reminder that ensembles are welcome and encouraged to attend other performances. If so, students must enter and exit only between performances, not between pieces, and that applause is permitted and encouraged after each piece.
- Communicate at least two weeks in advance with the contracted adjudicators to confirm final arrangements that include the following.
 - The final schedule of warm-up and performance times
 - Any traffic issues or road construction advisories that could impact travel time
 - Parking information along with where to enter the building, where to check in and obtain an official visitor's pass if needed, and whether to proceed to the auditorium or another area
 - What digital audio recording technology will be used
- Confirm that an ample number of volunteers have committed to assist throughout the MPA---students, parents and music department colleagues---as needed within the following areas:

Set-up	To assist in preparing each area involved, including setting the stage, warm-up, and sight-reading (if separate) areas, posting signs indicating where to enter the building and to assist ensembles as they move throughout the site, and equipping the adjudicators' workstations
Check-in Table	To assist the participating ensembles upon arrival. Use an actual table as a reference for directors new to the site.
Holding Area	To monitor care of the instrument cases, coats, and personal belongings
Escorts	To stay with a given ensemble from check-in to the holding area through the warm-up and performance, then back to the holding area and departure. To serve as a liaison between the director and the host.

Stage Crew	To help ensembles entering the stage by moving chairs, stands and percussion to best set each director's preferred seating chart
Runners	To take the envelopes of conductor scores to the adjudicators. To take the completed assessment forms and conductor scores from the adjudicators to the Tabulation Area. To swap out recorders, if used, between ensembles. To take the assessment forms and music from the Tabulation Area back to the directors before departure. To assist the host as needed throughout the MPA.
Sight-reading	At least two or more volunteers to assist the Sight-reading adjudicator with distributing, collecting, and sorting the Sight-reading music. Ensure that assistance is provided throughout the entire MPA.
Adjudicator Hospitality	To provide breakfast refreshments, lunch, and beverages throughout the MPA. Colleagues and parent volunteers often assist.

SECTION 2: FACILITY NEEDS

Prospective first-time hosts often have facility-related concerns. Contact the MPA Coordinator with questions rather than permit concerns to deter hosting. An overview of facility needs follows.

A. CHECK-IN

- Place a check-in table at the designated ensemble entrance staffed by another music teacher, students, or parent volunteers to serve as a contact point for directors upon arrival, especially for those attending for the first time. Ensure ample signs are posted to help ensembles proceed wherever they need to go while on site.
- With each ensemble, the volunteers at the Check-in table need to:
 - Confirm with the director where buses are to park
 - Collect the three envelopes containing conductor scores for the two Prepared Pieces and take them to the host to distribute to the adjudicators
 - Inform the director where the students are to go first, usually the *Holding Area*
- Ensure volunteer escorts are available to escort the ensembles throughout the site, especially for those attending for the first time.

B. HOLDING AREA

- Provide a secure space for instruments, instrument cases, coats, and personal belongings
- Do not permit students to play instruments in this space
- Ensembles are permitted and encouraged to watch other performances if time permits instead of waiting in the Holding Area until their warm-up time

C. WARM-UP AREA

- Provide a warm-up area with ample chairs, usually a large ensemble room
- Music stands are not normally provided but are welcome if available

D. AUDITORIUM STAGE

- Set enough chairs and stands for the largest ensemble placed in concentric arcs on a flat stage. Directors should plan in advance how to best fit their ensemble within a basic concert set comprised of concentric arcs.
- Request a seating chart from each director to facilitate smooth transitions. Extra chairs and stands can remain on stage or be moved to the wings.
- Provide a 'stage crew' of students or parent volunteers to assist throughout the MPA
- Provide the following large concert percussion instruments: concert bass drum, four timpani, bells, xylophone, marimba, and chimes. Directors should request permission in advance to use the host's larger accessory instruments such as congas or concert toms rather than bringing their own.
- Ensembles are responsible to provide their own mallets and sticks, snare drums, crash and suspended cymbals and accessory percussion instruments that their students are accustomed to using and hearing.
- Provide a microphone for the announcer
- If the Sight-reading is held on stage, provide a wireless lapel/clip-on mic for the Sight-reading adjudicator to be heard easily by anyone in the auditorium, especially when there are other ensembles watching. If not available, provide a wireless handheld mic. While not convenient if the adjudicator chooses to conduct an excerpt, it's better than no amplification at all.
- Post a sign on all auditorium doors indicating 'PMEA MPA in progress. Enter only between performances'.
- Make arrangements that PA announcements and change of class bells don't interrupt performances if possible

E. ANNOUNCER

- Secure another music teacher, a parent volunteer, or student(s) to announce each ensemble. Hosts can serve in this role if needed but not recommended given the extent of the hosting tasks involved.
- Prepare a script for the announcer to introduce each ensemble that includes the name of the school, ensemble, director, adjudicators and where each adjudicator teaches/taught, and the titles and composers and arrangers of the two Prepared Pieces. Include phonetic spellings as appropriate. A sample script is included as Appendix 2 of this guide to use as a basic template.
- As serving as an adjudicator also serves as outreach and publicity for the (mostly) universities involved, it is important that the ensemble and those in the auditorium hear their names and where they teach/taught. Also ensure that the titles and names of the composers and arrangers are pronounced correctly out of respect for the repertoire itself and those who create it.
- Start the announcements after the ensemble is set and any warm-up is completed.
- Hosts have considerable flexibility in how to implement the announcements----being sure to include the essential information listed above---choosing among:
 - Reading the announcements all at once before the first piece or announce each piece
 - Asking the Director to announce their Prepared Pieces all at once or before each piece

F. ADJUDICATOR NEEDS

- Provide each of the three adjudicators in the hall with the following items:
 - A desk or table with ample workspace along with a comfortable chair
 - A lamp to supplement the hall lighting if needed
 - The final schedule
 - An Assessment Form for each ensemble. Just the 2-sided form itself is needed for each ensemble. Do not include the Additional Descriptors. Hosts are urged to type in the headings for one set, then to print and copy sets for the other two hall adjudicators. Also type in the headings for Assessment Forms needed by the Sight-reading adjudicator.
 - Provide one blank Assessment Form and Additional Descriptors form stapled together to each adjudicator as a reference.
 - Extra sharpened pencils
 - An additional table for the Sight-reading Adjudicator to use for the sight-reading music
 - A copy of the Ensemble Profile document provided in advance by the PMEA MPA Coordinator. Do not provide or permit participating directors to provide any additional information about the ensembles to the adjudicators to best ensure consistency within all MPA's throughout the state.

G. TECHNOLOGY OPTIONS FOR ADJUDICATOR RECORDINGS

- Hosts have utilized a variety of technology in recent years for their adjudicators to provide audio commentary for each ensemble, including the following options:
 - Ask the adjudicators to use a recording app on their own phone or tablet and email the audio files to the host to compile and distribute. Hosts choosing this option must confirm these plans with each adjudicator in advance to ensure that each has and is comfortable using an appropriate app and brings a phone charger. Some adjudicators may prefer to bring their own iPad and microphone.
 - Use a set of six digital recorders or three iPads/tablets with an appropriate app that are owned by the host's school. Hosts choosing this option must provide instructions and confirm that each adjudicator is comfortable using that recorder or device.
- Hosts often compile and post the audio recordings themselves after the MPA. Plan to do so as soon as possible given that directors are usually anxious to hear the recordings, share the input with their students, and implement the feedback in rehearsals. Communicate to directors when and how they can retrieve their recordings.

H. THE SEPARATE SIGHT-READING AREA IF USED

- A separate Sight-reading area requires ample chairs, stands, a conductor's podium and the following minimum concert percussion: concert bass drum, at least three timpani, bells, and a xylophone.
- If the pieces used for the Sight-reading component call for accessory percussion instruments that aren't available, those parts are omitted with the ensemble not penalized. Hosts should communicate with the Sight-reading adjudicator in advance to identify what percussion instruments are needed within the sight-reading pieces to possibly have those available for the ensembles to use.
- Provide at least two student or adult volunteers throughout the MPA to assist with distributing and collecting the Sight-reading music.

I. TABULATION AREA

- Choose an appropriate space convenient to the auditorium for the host or a designee, often another music teacher or a parent volunteer, to compile the assessment results and gather materials to return to the directors. Students are not permitted to serve in this role given the professional confidentiality required. Provide the volunteers with a copy of the *Tabulator Information* document included as Appendix 3 of this guide as a resource.
- The tabulation area volunteers often collect the completed Assessment Forms and conductor scores from the adjudicators to bring back to the *Tabulation Area* to process. If not, ensure that other volunteers, usually students, are available to assist as needed. Provide the volunteers with a copy of the *Tabulator Information* document included as Appendix 3 of this guide as a resource.
- While the host often compiles and distributes the audio recordings from the adjudicators after the MPA, ensure that the tabulator(s) know how to compile the audio recordings as received from the adjudicators if not performing that task.
- If digital recorders are being used with adjudicators alternating between recorders while the files are being downloaded from the other recorder, ensure that the runners know to pick up and deliver the 'A' and 'B' recorders to adjudicators in a timely manner so that no adjudicator is left without a device when an ensemble is starting its performance.

SECTION 3: AFTER THE MPA

A. HOST HONORARIUM

- Each host of a large ensemble or Solo & Small Ensemble MPA will receive an honorarium check for **\$175** from PMEA issued payable to the host's choice of the school's activity account, parent booster group, or college/university music department. Checks will not be issued to individual hosts. Instead of this honorarium check, hosts may choose to apply the \$175 to registration fees, paying any difference owed or receiving an honorarium check for any balance remaining.

B. SUBMIT TWO SEPARATE HOST REPORTS WITHIN ONE WEEK OF THE MPA

Keep a copy of all forms and documents submitted for one year as a back-up in case any are needed again by PMEA to resolve any financial or other administrative issues that emerge in order to bring appropriate closure to each MPA.

1. MPA ONLINE HOST EXPENSE REPORT FORM

- Complete and submit the online *MPA Host Expense Report Form* for processing by the PMEA Office. In addition to the information requested, print to pdf/scan and upload the following items:
 1. Any receipts and/or Invoices for Host Hospitality Expenses or Other Expenses (Pre-Approved)
 2. Adjudicator Contract, Adjudicator Stipend Confirmation Form, and W-9 forms from the adjudicators if submitted.
- Hosts and Adjudicators will receive payment from PMEA within one month from when the online *Host Expense Report Form* is submitted. All Registration Fees must be paid before these payments and reimbursements are issued.

2. MPA ONLINE HOST ASSESSMENT REPORT FORM

- Complete and submit the online *Host Assessment Report Form* for processing by the MPA Coordinator to provide data for essential program records. In addition to the information requested, print to pdf/scan and upload the following items:
 1. *Band/Orchestra MPA Rating Summary Form – All Ensembles*
List each ensemble in alphabetical order by school, either typed into the form or handwritten on a paper copy before scanning. Format the file name as **MPARatingSummaryForm–All EnsemblesSiteName**.
 2. A copy of the *Band or String Orchestra Music Performance Assessment Form* from each adjudicator for each ensemble, including the *Sight-reading Assessment Form* for each ensemble that participated in that component. Include both the front and back of each form. If the back of the form is blank without any written comments, that page does not need to be submitted. Format the file names as **AssessmentFormSchoolEnsemble**

C. HOSTS AS MEMBERS OF THE PMEA MPA COMMITTEE

- The annual meeting of the *PMEA Music Performance Assessment Committee* is held at the PMEA In-Service Conference. Hosts are automatically members and are encouraged to attend and contribute their informed perspectives.
- While the meeting is informal, the agenda includes reflecting on the current season along with a forum for discussing possible ‘next steps’, an invaluable opportunity to consider options, to determine priorities, and to exchange ideas within dialogue not possible within individual communications.

D. FOLLOW-UP

- Email directors and adjudicators to express appreciation for their participation and to seek feedback concerning what worked well and what might need attention before hosting in the future.
- Thank the colleagues, parent volunteers, and students who assisted for their efforts and seek their feedback as well.

To prospective and new Hosts----I hope that this *Guide* provides the information needed to successfully host a *Band and/or Orchestra MPA* sponsored by the PMEA Music Performance Assessment program.

To experienced Hosts----I hope that this *Guide* serves as a helpful reference to refresh memories, introduce updates for the upcoming season, and answer new questions about any aspect of hosting a PMEA MPA.

Contact the MPA Coordinator with any questions.

APPENDIX 1



SIGHT-READING PROCESS & SCRIPT

The PMEA MPA instrumental sight-reading process is outlined below. Use the script included as a base template when communicating with the ensemble with the goal being to present essential information efficiently to maximize the time available for adjudicator feedback on the sight-reading efforts.

1. Facilitate the distribution of parts efficiently by section. Ask students to confirm that they have the correct part and turn the music face down on their stands. Confirm with the director that the percussionists know their assignments and have their parts.

2. Welcome the students to the sight-reading component of this music performance assessment. Introduce yourself, including your school/university and position.

3. SAMPLE SCRIPT TO REFER TO OR READ AS IS

“After I’m finished with reviewing the sight-reading process, you will be instructed to turn your music over and start a timed two-minute period for you and your director to silently peruse the music. Do not write on the music. I’ll announce when thirty seconds remain. Timpani may tune at this time.”

“I’ll then start a timed three-minute period for your director to communicate suggestions for successfully sight-reading this piece. Instruments cannot be played. You may otherwise sing, clap, finger, air play/bow, tap, count, and ask questions to highlight any aspect of the music. I’ll announce when one minute, and then thirty seconds remain.”

“You will then have one opportunity to play through the entire piece. Be aware that your director may clap, tap on the stand, sing parts, count, call out rehearsal numbers, and provide verbal assistance without penalty. Your director may also choose to stop and re-start the ensemble at an appropriate point if needed.”

“While the less the director needs to be involved verbally or stop and re-start, the better, the goal remains for you to have the most successful sight-reading experience as possible.”

4. After asking if there are any questions, instruct the director to begin the sight-reading performance.

5. After the performance, provide feedback during the remaining time. We recommend offering a ‘snapshot’ overview of what went well and of the most significant areas of concern to address as ‘next steps’. You are permitted to work with the band on specific spots. Offer strategies as appropriate.

6. Congratulate the students for their efforts within a positive, encouraging approach.

7. Collect the music efficiently by section before students exit.



ANNOUNCER INFORMATION & SAMPLE SCRIPT

Band or Orchestra

- Secure another music teacher, a parent volunteer, or student(s) to announce each ensemble. Hosts may serve in this role as needed.
- A primary goal within each ensemble's performance time slot is to provide as much time as possible for the sight-reading adjudicator or clinician to interact with the ensemble after the performance of the two Prepared Pieces before exiting the stage. Making one concise announcement at the outset helps save time to maximize that interaction.
- Hosts should prepare a script with one announcement for each ensemble that introduces the following:
 - School and ensemble
 - Director
 - Adjudicators, positions and where each adjudicator teaches/taught. Include 'retired from' where applicable
 - Titles and composers of the two Prepared Pieces. Include arrangers as applicable.
- Include the appropriate honorific for the director and adjudicators. (Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr.)
- Include phonetic spellings as appropriate so that what is read is accurately pronounced. It may be helpful to use a separate page for each announcement in a larger font for ease of reading.
- One announcement at the beginning enables directors to concentrate on their second piece and adjudicators to focus on completing their audio or written comments without an announcement in the background.
- The announcer should wait to begin until after the ensemble has completed any on-stage warm-up.
- Use the script included below as a base template for the announcement with the goal being to present essential information efficiently.

Welcome to the SITE NAME MPA. The next ensemble to perform is the SCHOOL & ENSEMBLE NAME under the direction of HONORIFIC, DIRECTOR NAME. Introducing today's adjudicators: HONORIFIC, FIRST NAME, LAST NAME from SCHOOL/COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY (for each of the three hall adjudicators). Today's sight-reading adjudicator is HONORIFIC, FIRST NAME, LAST NAME from SCHOOL/COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY, The band (or orchestra) will perform two pieces: TITLE by COMPOSER and TITLE by COMPOSER. Presenting, the SCHOOL & ENSEMBLE NAME.

APPENDIX 3



TABULATOR INFORMATION

Band or Orchestra

- After the runners bring the assessment forms from the adjudicators to the Tabulation Area, check each adjudicator's math for accuracy. If an error is spotted, send the form back to that adjudicator to correct and initial.
- For ensembles participating in the *Traditional* performance context OR in the *Festival* performance context when the director chooses Ratings & Comments as the Evaluation Option and to participate in the Sight-reading component, use the two tables below to derive the Summary Rating of the Prepared Pieces and then combine that with the Rating received for Sight-reading to derive the Final MPA Rating.
- For ensembles participating in the *Festival* performance context that do NOT choose to participate in the Sight-reading component, derive the Final Rating of the Prepared Pieces by using *only the first table below* to determine that ensemble's Final Rating. Ask the Host to confirm a given ensemble's status if not sure.

USE THIS TABLE TO DETERMINE THE SUMMARY RATING OF THE PREPARED PIECES					
COMBINE THE RATINGS FROM THE THREE ADJUDICATORS	I, I, I	I, II, II	I, III, III	I, IV, IV	I, V, V
	I, I, II	I, II, III	I, III, IV	I, IV, V	II, V, V
	I, I, III	I, II, IV	I, III, V	II, IV, IV	III, V, V
	I, I, IV	I, II, V	II, III, III	II, IV, V	IV, V, V
	I, I, V	II, II, II	II, III, IV	III, IV, IV	V, V, V
		II, II, III	II, III, V	III, IV, V	
		II, II, IV	III, III, III	IV, IV, IV	
		II, II, V	III, III, IV	IV, IV, V	
			III, III, V		
SUMMARY RATING OR FINAL RATING	I	II	III	IV	V

- The *Final MPA Rating* is then determined by combining the Summary Rating of the Prepared Pieces (PP) determined by using the table above with the Rating received for Sight-reading (SR), according to the following table:

COMBINE THE SUMMARY RATING OF THE PREPARED PIECES (PP) WITH THE RATING FROM THE SIGHT-READING (SR) COMPONENT TO DETERMINE THE FINAL MPA RATING									
PP	SR	PP	SR	PP	SR	PP	SR	PP	SR
I	I	I	III	II	IV	III	V	V	IV
I	II	I	IV	II	V	IV	III	V	V
		I	V	III	II	IV	IV		
		II	I	III	III	IV	V		
		II	II	III	IV	V	I		
		II	III	IV	I	V	II		
		III	I	IV	II	V	III		
I		II		III		IV		V	

FINAL RATING	PMEA DESCRIPTOR	LETTER GRADE	APPROX. PSSA EQUIVALENT
I	Superior	A+	Outstanding
II	Excellent	A	Advanced
III	Good	B	Proficient
IV	Fair	C	Basic
V	Unprepared	U	Below Basic

- Type or write in both the **Final Score and Rating** indicated on each adjudicator's assessment form onto the *Band/Orchestra MPA Rating Summary Form* to return to the directors along with the original Assessment Forms from each adjudicator.
- Type or write in the **Final Score and Rating** for each ensemble on the *Band/Orchestra MPA Rating Summary – All Ensembles Form* that the host will later submit to the MPA Coordinator.
- Make a copy of each Assessment Form (front and back) before returning them to the directors for the host to later submit to the MPA Coordinator as part of the *MPA Host Assessment Report Form*. If the back of the form is blank with no written comments, that page does not need to be copied and submitted. A copy does not need to be made of the *Band/Orchestra MPA Rating Summary Form* for individual ensembles.
- Final MPA Ratings results are to be kept confidential. Only the host and the director involved know a given ensemble's Final Score and Rating. They are not posted or published anywhere by PMEA.