

**Audition Procedures for Performing Groups**  
**2027 PMEA Annual In-Service Conference**  
**April 14-17, Bayfront Convention Center, Erie**  
**Application Fee - \$25**

\*Administrator approval is required in order to apply.

Ensembles wishing to perform during the 2027 PMEA Annual Conference via one or more of the following performance opportunities will complete the application when the window to submit opens on Wednesday, May 13:

- Innovations Stage (up to 6)
- Modern Band (up to 4)
- **Traditional Conference Performance** - Large School Ensemble (up to 6)
- **Traditional Conference Performance** - Small/Rural Schools Ensemble (up to 6)
- **Traditional Conference Performance** - College/University Ensemble (up to 6)
- **Traditional Conference Performance** - Chamber Ensemble (up to 6)
- **Traditional Conference Performance** - Community Ensemble (up to 3)

\*The conference program chair & committee reserve the right to appropriately balance the conference performing ensembles and may deviate from the prescribed allotments.

The **Innovations Stage** is an opportunity for PMEA members to share experiences they are providing students (ES, MS, HS & College) outside of the traditional PMEA Conference performance track. Ensembles should: be inclusive of a diverse group of students representing the school community; incorporate non-traditional instrumentation and/or unique instrument/vocal groupings; involve innovative or diverse styles of music. \*Ensemble size is limited to 20 students or less.

The **Modern Band** will feature modern band ensembles. This opportunity is open to student ensembles from grades 4-12 with a PMEA member director. Consideration will be given to collegiate-level ensembles based on the level of response from 4-12 ensembles.

**Traditional Conference Performance** Groups (ES, MS, HS & College) will be divided into opportunities according to their school group identification and could include full concerts (25-40 minutes); or could be selected for a shared concerts (20-25 minutes) and mini-concerts, which take place in a lobby area of the convention center (20-25 minutes).

**Window of Opportunity to Submit – Wednesday, May 13 - Wednesday, June 17, 2025**

*Failure to comply with the PMEA Conference Performance criteria will result in the performance application not being considered for the conference. All deadlines and criteria must be met. No refunds of performance application fees will be made.*

**Eligibility**

PMEA members of **all teaching levels and areas** are encouraged to submit an application for consideration to perform at the 2027 PMEA Annual Conference. In an effort to involve as many ensembles as possible, an ensemble appearing at a PMEA Annual Conference is eligible to perform once every four years (i.e. first year of eligibility for groups who performed at the 2026 Annual Conference will be the 2030 Annual Conference). **\*No school building (i.e. ES, MS, HS), organization or director may have a performance group of the same medium (i.e. choir, band, orchestra, etc.) appear at consecutive PMEA Conferences.** This applies to all ensembles appearing on any concert at the conference. (Example: A school, organization or director may not enter a concert choir one year and a woman's choir the next year.)

## Audition Criteria

1. All Teachers and conductors of all performing groups submitting applications **MUST BE CURRENT MEMBERS OF PMEA** (expiration date of 6/30/26 to submit; 6/30/27 to perform). In the case of faculty ensembles, all performers in the ensemble **MUST BE CURRENT MEMBERS of PMEA - No exceptions**.
2. All groups wanting to appear in any concert session of the 2027 PMEA Annual Conference must submit the following during the submission window (Wed. May 13 - Wed. June 17):
  - A. Completed online application for performance \*Please note that an OpenWater account (pmea.secure-platform.com) is required in order to submit an application.
  - B. **Application fee of \$25 per submission** - A quality recording of your ensemble's performance must be submitted online (application fee must be paid with credit card).
  - C. Unedited live recording of **two (2) selections** (individual movements of a piece can be considered as separate pieces). An optional third selection may be submitted. Audio only or audio and video - **please be sure the conductor cannot be identified if submitting video**. Please do not include any identifying factors in the video or file name.
    - i. Unedited shall mean NO studio enhancements or alterations of any type.
    - ii. Live performance shall mean a complete performance of each selected work (does not have to take place in front of an audience).
    - iii. Live performances shall also mean that all accompaniments must be live.
    - iv. Show choirs/a cappella/vocal jazz choirs must submit a video file.
  - D. The date of each performance recording must be included on the application. Recordings must have been made during the 2025-26 school year.
  - E. **Choral & Instrumental Submissions** must include **two** contrasting selections illustrating wide musical variety with a **total time limit of 15 minutes**.
  - F. **General Music Submissions** (i.e. Orff ensemble, recorder ensemble, etc.) must follow the guidelines as above; however, if the group involves visual material and the director feels it would be beneficial, a video may be submitted. The submission must be clean and cannot contain anything that would identify the group or director in any way.
  - G. **Community Groups** must follow the same procedures as above as well as meet the following requirements: No more than 50% of the ensemble can include professional musicians/music educators/students pursuing a music degree/private music instructors; the ensemble must have regular rehearsals throughout the year and have an annual concert schedule that is made available to the public. If selected to perform, the majority of the ensemble in the audition recordings submitted must perform at the PMEA conference. Eligible groups will be invited at the discretion of the Conference Chair.
  - H. All audition materials must be submitted during the window of opportunity, which begins on **Wednesday, May 13** and will close at 11:59 p.m. on **Wednesday, June 17**.
3. Each application for performance by elementary, middle & high school groups must be verified by an administrator (principal or superintendent) certifying it is the intent of the group to appear on the conference program, if invited (not applicable for college & community group applicants).
4. Conductors of performance groups:
  - A. must be paid members of PMEA (expiration date of 6/30/26 during the application window and 6/30/27 after July 1)
  - B. must be the director of the group on the audition recording.
  - C. who are submitting multiple ensembles for consideration, please note only one ensemble will be invited to perform at the conference.

5. Performance groups appearing at the conference must be the same ensemble represented on the audition recording. If accepted, students in the performing group must be current members of the ensemble (cannot bring back students that were in the ensemble last year, but not this year). Therefore be sure to name the ensemble accordingly, based on who will be performing.

6. PMEA/NAfME acknowledges the wide diversity of performing ensembles and encourages the submission of the following groups:

- A. Bands: traditional concert bands, wind ensembles, and jazz bands (no combos)
- B. Choirs: traditional choral ensembles of like or mixed voices, a cappella choirs, chamber choirs, show choirs, vocal jazz ensembles, etc.
- C. Orchestras: string or full orchestras
- D. Small Ensembles: wind, brass, percussion, string, jazz combos, or vocal small ensembles.
- E. Non-Traditional or Emerging Ensembles: mariachi, steel drum, guitar ensembles, technology ensemble, etc.

7. An effort will be made to ensure that invited performing groups will represent a variety of levels, sizes and genres.

8. Groups selected as performing ensembles may be asked to serve as a demonstration group for the conference.

9. **If submitting more than one ensemble for consideration, a separate application must be completed and a separate fee must be paid for each ensemble auditioning under the same director.** \*Please note that if multiple ensembles with the same director are submitted, only one will be selected.

10. The director of the group submitting the application **must remain the director** if the group is selected. If there is a change in directors, the group will be disqualified, **no exceptions.**

11. ***THE RUBRIC THAT APPEARS ON NEXT PAGE WILL BE USED TO EVALUATE THE PERFORMANCE.*** All performing groups are auditioned on a strictly anonymous and impartial basis by panels of music educators who serve as adjudicators. Quality of performance, literature displayed and the potential contribution to the entire content of the conference program will be the determining factors in the final selections. **No evaluations from the adjudicators will be provided for the auditioning groups.**

12. Invitations to appear at the 2027 PMEA In-service Conference will be issued by the Conference Program Chair in September. \*Please note that you may be asked to share a concert with another performing group. Due to scheduling constraints, PMEA cannot accommodate requests for performance on a specific day/time.

\*\*Please note that performing group concerts are for conference attendees. Groups selected to perform at the conference are strongly encouraged to schedule a concert for their community separate from their performance at the conference.

**ALL SUBMISSIONS ARE DUE 11:59 WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17 NO EXCEPTIONS**

## PMEA Conference Ensemble Selection Rubric

8 Criteria | 5 Levels | 1–5 Points Each | Total = 40

Adjudicators select the single descriptor that most precisely matches the recording.

| Criteria                                  | 5 – Exemplary                                                                                                                                 | 4 – Strong                                                                                         | 3 – Partially Proficient                                                                | 2 – Inconsistent                                                          | 1 – Deficient                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tone Quality & Clarity                    | Characteristic, centered tone consistently maintained across sections, ranges, and dynamics; clarity preserved in all textures.               | Characteristic tone maintained in nearly all passages; brief lapses do not affect overall clarity. | Generally characteristic tone; inconsistencies noticeable in exposed or extreme ranges. | Frequent tone inconsistencies across sections or dynamic levels.          | Tone frequently unfocused, unsupported, or inappropriate to ensemble type. |
| Tuning & Intonation                       | Melodic and harmonic intonation consistently accurate; chords stable; pitch adjustments consistently successful in sustained passages.        | Minor pitch discrepancies; harmonic clarity preserved.                                             | Noticeable intonation issues in exposed or sustained passages.                          | Frequent pitch inaccuracies affecting harmonic stability.                 | Persistent intonation problems obscure harmonic structure.                 |
| Rhythmic Precision                        | Entrances, releases, subdivisions, and tempo consistently unified; internal pulse secure throughout.                                          | Minor alignment discrepancies; tempo stable overall.                                               | Recurring alignment issues or brief tempo fluctuations.                                 | Frequent rhythmic inaccuracies; internal pulse inconsistently maintained. | Rhythmic instability regularly disrupts continuity.                        |
| Technical Facility (Accuracy & Execution) | Notes, passagework, onsets, and releases executed cleanly and accurately across sections; clarity maintained at all tempi.                    | Occasional minor note or execution errors; technical clarity generally maintained.                 | Noticeable inaccuracies in passagework or clarity of execution.                         | Frequent note errors or unclear execution across sections.                | Technical inaccuracies consistently disrupt performance.                   |
| Style & Interpretation                    | Genre conventions, articulation style, phrasing approach, and diction/pronunciation (if applicable) consistently appropriate and intentional. | Stylistic decisions appropriate in most passages; minor inconsistencies.                           | Some stylistic conventions evident; others inconsistently applied.                      | Limited adherence to stylistic conventions; authenticity uneven.          | Stylistic approach frequently inappropriate or inaccurate.                 |
| Balance & Blend (Ensemble Sound)          | Primary and secondary lines clearly differentiated; accompaniment supports; sections balanced; cohesive blend across ensemble.                | Balance appropriate in most passages; occasional dominance or obscured lines.                      | Balance inconsistencies noticeable in multiple passages.                                | Frequent imbalance between sections or parts.                             | Persistent imbalance; ensemble lacks cohesive sound.                       |
| Musical Role Awareness                    | Melodic, harmonic, and accompaniment roles clearly projected; musical priorities consistently transparent to listener.                        | Roles generally clear; primary lines projected appropriately in most passages.                     | Role differentiation evident but inconsistent across the performance.                   | Musical roles frequently unclear; important lines obscured.               | No clear projection of musical roles; listener cannot discern priorities.  |
| Musicality & Artistic Impact              | Dynamics, phrasing, pacing, and expressive shaping consistently intentional; interpretation cohesive and artistically compelling.             | Expressive shaping evident; interpretation sustained with minor lapses.                            | Some dynamic contrast and phrasing present; interpretation uneven.                      | Limited expressive shaping; performance primarily literal.                | Minimal expressive shaping; mechanical delivery.                           |