Student Performing Events Council Updates

By Jason Lerew, SPEC Chair

Welcome to the 2026-27 school year!

My name is Jason Lerew, District 10 Festival Coordinator and your newly elected Student Performance Events Council Chair. I am excited to work with all of our fest and festival representatives from across the state, as well as our state board to provide the best possible performance experiences for our students. I would also like to welcome Cyndi Mancini, Montour HS, the District 1 Festival Coordinator as our newly elected vice chair of the council. Please feel free to reach out to your district fest or festival representative if you have any suggestions for our PMEA student events. These representatives can always bring these matters to our attention for discussion on the Council.

Below you will find updates and information for the 2026-27 Fest & Festival season. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me or to the State PMEA office. Take care and best wishes for a safe and wonderful school year!

Fest & Festival Updates

- The term Collaborative Pianist will now be used instead of accompanist.
- The dress code for Region and All-State Band, Chorus, Jazz Ensemble and Wind Ensemble has been changed to Concert Black and will follow the current PMEA Orchestra Concert Black Attire Guidelines.
- The Cornet/Trumpet section configuration has been updated to a simplified Trumpet 1, Trumpet 2, Trumpet 3 section.
- The following programming guidelines have been approved for all Region and All-State festivals: At least one music selection from historically underrepresented composers (including, but not limited to women, LGBTQ+, Indigenous/Native, Black/African American, Hispanic, Latinx, Asian America, and/or Pacific Islander) must be programmed in each of the Region & All-State ensemble selections, though programming more than one is encouraged.
- The language regarding blind auditions has been updated as follows: All in-person auditions (including percussion auditions) must occur behind a screen, physical barrier or partition that ensures both auditionees and judges are unable to be visible to each other. This includes before and after all auditions. In the case of online video auditions where students are seen, auditions must be anonymous and devoid of identifying materials. The auditions will now be referred to as Anonymized Auditions.
- The following statement has been added to the Guest Conductor Agreement: Please submit copies of your Pennsylvania Act 34, Criminal History, and Act 151, Child Abuse History (or your state's equivalent) when returning this signed agreement.

All-State Updates

- Bass Trombone is now an at-large instrument, based on the selected All-State repertoire, for the All-State Concert Band/Wind Ensemble.

Music Performance Assessment (MPA) Updates

- The board has approved the option for hosts of existing non-PMEA performance events to make them a PMEA Affiliate Music Performance Assessment for an additional fee.
- Updates have also been made to the *Guide to Hosting a Special Venue MPA*
- PMEA Member registration fees for participating ensembles for the 2026-27 year will be as follows: Traditional Context: $250; Festival Context: $215.

Additional Items

- Please always remember that the students come first when planning for Fests and Festivals. While we are also here to serve the hosts and the rest of our colleagues, every decision should be made with the students' best interests in mind
- The PMEA member director listed on the School Acknowledgement Form MUST be the person who accompanies the students to registration and who serves on the Audition Committee (if applicable). If the person listed can no longer fulfill these duties, they must communicate to the host and/or coordinator who will replace them, and also clearly communicate the changes with school administrators and the student's parents. The replacement must also be a PMEA member.