

I'm Singing at What?!



Choral Festival for the First Time Choral Educator
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Registration and the Festival Scheduler

- Festival registration is done online through the Festival Scheduler on the MSVMA website.
 - [Here is how to set up your login.](#)
- This tool lets you schedule your choirs, view schedules and ratings, track invoices, and more.
- [Let's sign up a choir together.](#)

View Registration History 2022 ▾					
Registration #	School	Festival	Ensemble Name	Grade Level	Status
1915	Wayne Memorial High School	D12 HS Choral	WMHS Concert Chorale		Submitted
					DETAILS EDIT DELETE

Music Selection and the MSVMA Rubric

- Each Ensemble performs two songs for a panel of three judges and one clinician.
- Your Ensemble is scored based on criteria broken down on the [MSVMA Rubric](#).
 - Make sure your Ensemble has worked with the rubric before arriving to Festival.
- In a traditional year, one of these pieces comes from the [MSVMA Required List](#).
 - Due to MSVMA Guidelines, there is no required list this year only.
- The level your group sightreads at is traditionally based on the required pieces voicing and difficulty.
- Strive to pick music that is appropriate for the age, range and skill level of the ensemble, and make sure these pieces are contrasting in style.

Pre-Festival Concert and the MSVMA Clinician Consultant Program

- Your Pre-Festival Concert is a great way to practice your Festival Routine.
- Invite a Clinician to observe your concert.
 - Invite them fill out a MSVMA Festival Rubric as your students sing.
 - Invite them to do a clinic with your choir(s) on stage at the performance.
 - Allows community to be informed on how festival works.
 - Gives students a real time Festival-like experience.
 - Allows director to experience the process.
- Member schools have the opportunity to bring a clinician/consultant into their classrooms to work with students and directors. Clinician/Consultants must be selected from this list. MSVMA will reimburse schools up to \$185 of the costs incurred by participating in this program.
 - Each school can apply/receive this money one time per school year
 - Can be used for any type of clinic, not just related to festival

What to Know Before You Go

- Timing is everything. Early is on time. Plan to arrive early enough to check in, potentially watch some choirs, and know the layout of the festival site.
- Make sure students are prepared to be exemplary models of behavior and etiquette. Your group is recognizable anywhere in the building, and you don't want to be remembered for your hallway noise, but for your skills on stage.
- Headquarters is for you to find your ratings, talk to the district manager, or take care of administrative duties.
- The judges are here with your best interest at heart. They want to see you succeed and do well. They are here to give your students new ideas and perspectives as they continue to grow as singers.
- The [MSVMA website](#) is amazing. It has all sorts of tools and information to make Festival a success for your choir.
- Know whether your district is a 20/20/20 or a 15/15/30 process.

Navigating Your Festival Experience

- Arrive early, armed with Chaperones and calm, confident students.
- Check your ensembles in, and if time, have them observe other performing groups.
- Arrive to your warm-up room about five minutes before your time.
 - Make sure student bathroom breaks are accounted for, you can't interrupt your 75 minute process.
- Know how to organize your choir in the warm-up room to ensure they arrive to the stage in the right order.
 - Account for number of risers, and steps on risers.
 - You do not need to use all of the risers, just have an action plan.
- If your Festival is Multiple Days, consider taking time to visit your site beforehand to familiarize yourself with the setup. Also consider visiting another District to see how the process is done.

Director Do's and Don'ts - On and Off the Stage

Do...

- Have clear expectations for student audience behavior, hallway behavior, and performance behavior.
- Ask to move the piano to the location you are used to in your performance setting.
- Dress in clothing that fits correctly and comfortably and doesn't distract from the choir.
- Confirm that judges are ready for your choir to begin each selection
- Be open to new ideas from Judges/Clinician

Don't...

- Leave students unattended in any part of the building.
- Make excuses for performance errors.
- Focus festival on you. It's about the students learning and growing as performers.
- Sing along with the choir.
- Overprogram. Choose age/grade/level appropriate music.
- Talk too much in sight reading. Let the students display their knowledge.
- Work against your Judges/Clinicians. If an issue arises, take it to the festival manager.

The Sight Reading Room

- Routine is key! Practice daily with your students on how sight reading works at Festival. Be familiar with the layout of the sight reading books.
 - District managers have copies of past years sight reading books they can share as examples.
 - [Use the MVSMA Sight reading Resources online.](#)
 - Have a system that the students understand and use that system often. It should be second nature in the sight reading room.
- Let the students take the lead. Guide them with questions if needed, but let their knowledge and skills shine.
 - Too much conversation from the director and it could lead to a loss of points.
- You have 30 minutes* to make it happen. Don't rush. Know how to manage your students in this time to use it effectively.

Scoring, Final Determinations, and What's Next

- You sing for a panel of four judges*
 - Three of them offer written feedback and a rating
 - One will write comments only and be your Clinician
- After you perform, you will work with a Clinician
 - Respect their voice and thoughts, do not make excuses
 - This is a positive, learning experience for your choirs
 - Any negative feelings should be addressed with your District Manager, not the Clinician
- Your score is out of 120 Points
 - 90 Points Performance
 - 30 Points Sight reading
- Once you have a final determination, you can purchase medals, apply for State Festivals, and celebrate with your students.

Tips from Adjudicators

An exemplary director does the following before/during their time at festival. (In the warm-up room, hallways, on stage, sight-reading room, etc.)

- Prepare. Prepare all of their administrative duties - bus requests, festival applications, check requests, organize chaperones, communicate with families about medals and food options, etc. They also prepare by working on sight reading skills for the entire year, preparing their music, etc.
- Empowers student excellence through student leadership and accountability focusing on the art of performance. Listen with an open heart for growth and development.
- Practice how you are going to do everything for Festival and explain how it will go. If you practice everything and do the same when you are at Festival kids are calm because they know the drill and what's coming.

Tips from Adjudicators

What should a new director avoid doing?

- Do not question the adjudicators on site. If you have concerns they should be taken to the district manager.
- Singing along with the choir on the stage.
- Choose music that is too difficult for their students. Forget to research and teach their students the festival process and what to expect. Place too much emphasis on the rating instead of what their students can learn from the process.
- Making excuses or explaining why their kids didn't do something. We have all been there. We get it that the kid who can't match pitch sings the loudest, etc.

Tips from Adjudicators

As a judge, my expectations for the director are...

- That they prepare their ensembles adequately, and are positive and encouraging about the experience.
- Professionalism from conductor to perform to the best of their ability. The rubric is your friend. Make sure the students understand what a superior performance requires.
- Train your students on all elements of the festival experience.
- That you would have taught the entire person and not just 2 little songs. They need to learn to become storytellers, singing from the voices, hearts and faces.

Tips from Adjudicators

As a judge, my expectations for the ensemble are...

- Have fun! Be professional on and off the stage. Be a fun group for the adjudicator to work with. Enjoy the process!
- Be open to new ideas. Be respectful of other students and directors. Be prepared to be and perform your best.
- Professional demeanor, good performance practices as outlined in the rubric. Cooperation in not only the performance and sight reading rooms but in the auditorium , lunch room etc.

Expectations for Adjudicators

- Adjudicators go through rigorous hours of training in order to be eligible to work with singers at MSVMA Festivals.
- Here are the most recent expectations current adjudicators are expected to follow.
 - Includes commentary on repertoire selection, age appropriate ears, masked singing and more
 - Outlines how to effectively work with singers to create a positive experience at all festivals.
- We value your feedback!
 - Good or bad, it is crucial that you take the time to fill out the Adjudicator Evaluation Form
 - We can't make the changes if we don't hear from you!
 - Complete this form in addition to talking with your district manager on site.
 - Some situations may require immediate attention, however the form keeps a written record.

Useful Links

- [MSVMA Website](#)
- [Festival Rubric](#)
- [Final Determinations](#)
- [Sight Reading](#)
- [Festival Scheduler](#)
- [Clinician Consultant Form](#)
- [Festival Scheduler Registration](#)
- [Adjudicator Expectations 2021/2022](#)
- [Adjudicator Evaluation Form](#)

Resources and Acknowledgements

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