

St. Louis Suburban MMEA District 5
Middle School
Solo and Ensemble Festival - 2024
General Rules, Guidelines, and Information
Updated – August 1, 2023

1. ELIGIBILITY

Students, grades 6-8, participating in the festival must be enrolled in and doing regular work in the school which they represent. All participants must be regular members of the organization entered, with the exception of accompanists for all events. No ensemble groups may consist of students from more than one school.

2. ENTRY FEE

Schools will pay \$15.00 per entry. Schools will pay this fee directly to *St. Louis Suburban MMEA District 5*. There will be no cancellation fee. Checks should be made payable to *St. Louis Suburban MMEA District 5*. After all entries have been received and a schedule distributed, directors will receive an invoice for all events entered in the middle school solo and ensemble festival. Instructions will be on the invoice on how and where to process payment.

3. ENTRY GUIDELINES

- a. All participants must meet the eligibility requirements as set forth in this handbook.
- b. There are no limits as to the number of solos and small ensembles that may be entered from an individual school.
- c. Do not enter probable events.
- d. An individual student in grades 6-8 is allowed to participate in a maximum of three events as follows:
 - one solo and two small ensembles
 - three small ensembles
 - **Yes – 6th graders may do a solo**
- e. Piano solo entries will not be accepted.
- f. Anyone may serve as an accompanist, whether connected with the school or not. **The only restriction on accompanists is that no single accompanist may do more than 25 events. If you have questions about a particular accompanists assignment or potential schedule, please contact the festival chair and/or event scheduler.**

4. TIME LIMITS

Solos and small ensembles are allowed seven minutes for each entry with no more than five minutes of actual performance. Performances should be long enough for the adjudicator to hear the soloist or group adequately to demonstrate their ability. Vocal small ensembles and all instrumental performances should plan to be at least two and one-half minutes in length and vocal solo performances should have two minutes of actual singing.

Small conducted ensembles are allowed fourteen minutes for each entry with no more than ten minutes of actual performance. No more than four minutes will be allowed for the setting up and tuning of small conducted ensembles.

5. SELECTION OF MUSIC

The selection of music for all solos and small ensembles is the option of the music instructor. There are no required selections. However, music to be performed should be serious in nature (not "popular" music), or be of comparable quality. If more than one selection is performed, the selections should be of contrasting style and/or represent different eras of compositional development.

6. MEMORIZATION – NOT REQUIRED

- Instrumental soloists **MAY** use their music with no lowering of the final rating. The soloist, accompanist, and adjudicator must all have published music; no photocopies are allowed.
- Vocal soloists **MAY** use their music with no lowering of the final rating. The soloist, accompanist, and adjudicator must all have published music; no photocopies are allowed.

7. ACCOMPANIED SOLOS AND SMALL ENSEMBLES

All solos and small ensembles should be performed with accompaniment unless the score does not prescribe an accompaniment. Failure to perform without accompaniment MAY result in lowering of the final rating one step. **For 2024, if securing or providing an accompanist is not possible, there will be no penalty. Smart Music and other "electronic and computer assisted" forms of accompaniments are allowed. Please check with the festival manager if you have questions.**

8. MUSIC SCORE FOR THE ADJUDICATOR

Each soloist and small ensemble must furnish the adjudicator with a published solo part or conductor's score **with each measure numbered**. The soloist's name and school name should be clearly printed on the cover. If a soloist does not perform from memory, both the soloist and the adjudicator must have a published score; no photocopies will be allowed unless accompanied by written permission from the publisher. Verification that the music is on order is not sufficient to allow the use of photocopies. Only the music publisher can grant permission for a photocopy to be made. Use of an illegal photocopy may result in disqualification. Please contact the festival manager and/or event scheduler if you have questions.

9. EVENTS

Vocal Solo Events: Only entries in the events listed below shall be accepted by the festival chair and/or event scheduler for the middle grades solo and small ensemble festival.

- Girls Vocal Solo
- Boys Vocal Solo

All vocal soloists should spend at least two minutes actually singing (one selection is acceptable). If the selection does not last at least two minutes, the student may be asked to sing the selection a second time.

Vocal Small Ensemble Events: A vocal small ensemble is defined as a group of two (2) to twelve (12) performers. This shall include madrigal groups, but not pop, swing, jazz, or show choirs. **Small ensembles should be performed as written/arranged by the composer or at the discretion of the music instructor based on your program's instrumentation challenges. The goal here is student participation**

and a positive experience. If you have questions about a particular ensemble's or a substitution you would like to make, contact the festival chair and/or event scheduler.

Instrumental Solo Events: Only entries in the events listed below shall be accepted by the festival chair and/or event scheduler for the middle grades solo and small ensemble festival.

Piccolo	Soprano Saxophone	Snare Drum
Flute	Alto Saxophone	Multiple Percussion
Oboe	Tenor Saxophone	Timpani
English Horn	Baritone Saxophone	Mallet Percussion
E flat Clarinet	Cornet/Trumpet	Violin
B flat Clarinet	French Horn	Viola
Alto Clarinet	Trombone	Cello
Bass Clarinet	Baritone/Euphonium	String Bass
Bassoon	Tuba	

Instrumental Small Ensemble Events: An instrumental small ensemble is defined as a group of two (2) to twelve (12) performers. This shall not include pop, swing, jazz, or show ensembles. *Small ensembles should be performed as instrumented by the composer or at the discretion of the music instructor based on your program's instrumentation challenges. The goal here is student participation and a positive experience. If you have questions about a particular ensemble's instrumentation or a substitution you would like to make, contact the festival chair and/or event scheduler.*

10. CANCELLATION – LATE APPEARANCE – SUBSTITUTION

- a. Notice of cancellation of a event(s) should be given to the festival chair and/or event scheduler in writing (e-mail) as soon as it is known that the participant(s) cannot appear.
- b. A scheduled soloist or small ensemble not present at the assigned time will perform at the discretion of the judge and the festival chair and/or event scheduler.
- c. A substitution for a cancellation may be allowed in a like classification providing: The festival chair and/or event scheduler is notified, in writing, at least one week prior to the event. Like classification refers to the same instrument, same voice, or same ensemble type.
- d. ONLY the festival chair and/or event scheduler has the authority to alter a scheduled event, regardless of the nature of the desired change. Substituting, for any reason, IS NOT an option of the music teacher unless the festival chair and/or event scheduler approves the request.
- e. *There is no cancellation fee and no refunds of the entry fee. Schools will still be responsible for the \$15.00 entry fee per event entered once the schedule has been distributed. Substitutions will be allowed if necessary and the circumstances dictate a change is needed.*

11. RATINGS FOR SOLOS AND SMALL ENSEMBLES: STANDARDS FOR RATINGS

Adjudicators for solo and small ensemble festival, as well as the large group festivals, will be guided by the following standards for ratings:

RATING I - SUPERIOR: An exemplary performance that consistently demonstrates true musical expression and few technical errors. The performance is worthy of the distinction of being recognized as among the very best for the Middle School/Junior High school level.

RATING II – EXCELLENT: An outstanding performance of distinctive quality for the Middle School/Junior High school level yet has minor defects in musical expression and fundamental technique.

RATING III – GOOD: A satisfactory performance showing accomplishment and marked promise for the Middle School/Junior High school level, but lacking consistency of musical expression and fundamental technique.

RATING IV - FAIR: A developing performance for the Middle School/Junior High school level indicating room for improvement in consistent musical expression and fundamental technique. Such a performance would include many technical errors, poor musical expression and ineffective use of existing instrumentation or choral voicing.

RATING V - WEAK: An ineffective performance indicating obvious lack of overall preparation for the Middle School/Junior High school level.