

NEMFA Solo and Ensemble Festival

FAQ & Policies, Rules and Regulations

Revision: October 2015

PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS:

The Solo and Ensemble Festival is an annual event that provides instrumental and vocal music performance adjudications for high school musicians in New England. These performance adjudications serve two purposes: (1) To offer a true performance situation with a professional, subjective adjudication, and (2) To be evaluated using a set of criteria so that the adjudication ratings can be used, if desired, as criteria for invitation and acceptance into the Concert Festival Orchestra, Band, or Chorus.

The Solo and Ensemble Festival consists of two similar events scheduled on two Saturdays in December, one at a northern site and the other at a southern site, the location being selected on a basis of availability and suitability of facilities and equipment.

QUALIFICATIONS:

The Solo and Ensemble Festival is available for all high school musicians properly registered in New England schools in grades 9 -12, and whose sponsors are members in good standing of the Association. This includes schools without music departments, students from state registered home schools where their parents serve as their sponsors and high school students who are sponsored by their private teachers or regional ensemble leadership. Membership in a school-based performance ensemble is not required, but highly encouraged.

Eighth Grade students may also participate in the Solo and Ensemble Festival, performing pieces from the appropriate NEMFA repertoire or otherwise for evaluation and feedback. They will not be considered for invitation to the Concert Festival, regardless of their rating level.

APPLICATION:

Application can be made by a current NEMFA member sponsor to the Solo and Ensemble Festival Coordinator, accompanied by the required fees, and by the announced deadline in the fall. Currently applications are only accepted online through the provided registration website.

SELECTION OF MUSIC:

Performances may be of any music selected by the student for any musical instrument, voice or ensemble as long as the performance is less than 10 minutes in length.

Only performances of music selected from the current adjudication repertoire published by NEMFA will be considered for invitation and acceptance to the Concert Festival. Students performing music other than from current NEMFA listing shall not be eligible for invitation nor acceptance to the Concert Festival regardless of how high their adjudication rating was nor how limited the number of eligible students there are for that instrument or voice part.

In addition to a full range of instrumental and vocal solos, the NEMFA repertoire also includes the following vocal ensembles: SSA, SSAA, SAB, SATB, SSATB, and TTBB. No other ensembles, whether vocal or instrumental will be considered for invitation and acceptance to the Concert Festival.

In 2014, the Violin solo repertoire was reworked to create a separate listing for pieces that are more challenging and thus deserve additional consideration by the adjudicator. Performances of these Virtuoso pieces may receive additional points from the adjudicator. This effort was extended to the Viola, Cello and String Bass repertoires in 2015.

Students may not perform the same piece eligibility for Concert Festival consideration more than once during their four years of eligibility.

PERFORMANCE ADJUDICATIONS:

Music must be performed as it appears in the published parts with the noted instruments/voices. No teacher or student transcriptions may be used even to allow a substitute instrument or voice. The published listed on the repertoire is a suggested one only and other publications may be used. However, should the difficulty of the piece be reduced by this other publication, that lack of challenging material will be taken into consideration by the adjudicator in assigning the student's rating.

Each performance shall be of less than ten minutes duration, and consist of a complete, uninterrupted performance of selected music. If the repertoire does not specify any movements or sections, then the entire piece is to be performed.

Conducting an ensemble is not allowed.

All students are expected to observe the current Solo & Ensemble Dress Code. A deduction in their adjudication rating will result should the adjudicator determine that they are not meeting that code.

Experienced and well-regarded adjudicators will be contracted to hear the adjudication performances and in the interest of fairness and consistency, every effort will be made to utilize the same adjudicators at the two adjudication sites. The adjudicator's scores and comments for their registered students will be made available to each sponsor as soon as possible after the second Solo and Ensemble Festival.

Invitation and acceptance into one of the Concert Festival ensembles will be determined by the appropriate ensemble manager and members of the NEMFA Executive Board based upon adjudication ratings from the Solo and Ensemble Festival for performances of music from the current NEMFA repertoire. The higher ratings will be seated before lower ratings and any ties that might affect seating will be broken by the other criteria currently in effect such as grade in school and NEMFA experience.

Adjudication performances at the Solo and Ensemble Festival receive ratings using the current adjudication form for their voice, instrument or ensemble.

CADENZAS:

Students should not perform the cadenzas that are included in their performance pieces unless specifically directed to do so on the appropriate repertoire listing.

ACCOMPANIMENT:

Piano accompaniment for music so published is optional, but highly recommended. Pianos will be provided in all adjudication rooms where accompanied performances are scheduled. NEMFA reserves the right to use adequate electronic keyboards when deemed advisable. Music designated as unaccompanied must be performed thus. Pre-recorded accompaniments may be utilized whenever live accompaniment is impossible or impractical, with the responsibility for supplying the recording and any needed playback equipment resting with the performer.

Because the scheduling of accompanists is the first priority in building the schedule, accurate and consistent entry of accompanists' full names is an important part of the application process. As well, given the timeframe of each performance and the schedule of each Solo & Ensemble Festival day, it is nearly impossible to schedule more than 20 students accompanied by the same person and impossible to then meeting any special requests for those students.

AUDIENCES:

Because it is a performance festival, it is acceptable for any interested person, including sponsors and other students, to attend adjudication performances as long as it is acceptable to the performer(s). Audience members must conduct themselves appropriately at all times. They shall not distract the performer(s) and/or the adjudicator.

ORIGINAL MUSIC:

NEMFA adheres to all current copyright laws, especially where it concerns the use of illegal copies of music. During the performance, all performers, including the accompanist, using music must perform from legally published, originals of their music. In the instance of an accompanist's bad page turn, it is permissible to use a facsimile of that

page. Performances from memory are allowed (and encouraged), but at least one original copy of the music must be available in the adjudication room, although it can be the accompanist's music as long as that document includes the soloist's part. The adjudicator must receive a copy of the piece as well and that should be an original, if possible. When an additional original is not available, a photocopy may be provided to the adjudicator, but it will be collected at the end of the performance and destroyed.

GROUP PREFERENCES:

Student group preferences should be consistent. Regardless of how many times or in how many ways, a student performs in the Solo & Ensemble Festival, their Group Preference should be the same in each application. No student who received a rating high enough to be accepted to the Concert Festival is ever refused that acceptance because of their Group Preference choice. Student preferences are used to help place as many students in the group of their choice as possible. However, the overall educational and musical success of the Performance Festival is the primary function of the selection process and therefore takes precedence over student choices. NEMFA is not obligated to honor any preferences.

ERRORS IN THE APPLICATION: PRIOR TO THE DEADLINE: Should you find that you made an error in your application data, return to the website, enter your NEMFA ID and edit your entries as needed. That data remains active until the deadline (usually late October).

AFTER THE DEADLINE: The applications will be closed after deadline. Should you find that you made an error in your application data after that date, please contact [Steffen Parker](#) immediately to see what rectification can be made.

SCHEDULE, SCHEDULE REQUESTS & CHANGES:

The schedule will be posted on the same site as the registration process, accessible by sponsors using their NEMFA ID as soon as possible (North site first).

A school travel time is a part of each sponsor's information and is used to schedule that school's applicants. Requests for scheduling time considerations need to be emailed (with all pertinent information) by the sponsor to [Steffen Parker](#). An effort will be made to accommodate all requests properly submitted. The more information available prior to scheduling (done the last week of October), the better the schedule is for everyone.

Schedule changes after the schedule is completed and posted are most difficult and should be limited to only students who would not be able to participate unless a change is made. There is no assurance that schedule change requests made after the schedule is completed will be honored.

WEATHER: Due the large number of people involved, the complexity of the preparation and operation, the tightness of the schedule and the time of year they occur, the **Solo and Ensemble Festivals** are very rarely postponed due to weather and then it is often due to the site being unavailable. If it's bad out, take your time, drive carefully and your students will be heard when they arrive, even if you have missed your scheduled timeslots.

ERRORS IN ADJUDICATION RESULTS:

The adjudication forms with the ratings and adjudicator's comments are posted online for sponsors to access with their NEMFA ID on the Wednesday immediately following the Southern Solo & Ensemble Festival's conclusion. Due to that major effort on your behalf, it is possible that an error slips through. Sponsors are requested to double-check all of their documentation for errors. If you find an error or have any concerns, call [Steffen Parker](#) (802.343.6282) IMMEDIATELY!