



NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL MUSIC ASSOCIATION
(NYSSMA)
Spring Evaluation Festivals

Dear Music Students and Parents,

This letter will provide important information concerning the annual **New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) Evaluation Festivals** held each spring. Whether your child is considering their first venture into the festival process or a return visit, this information will hopefully aid in their decision.

What is NYSSMA?

NYSSMA is our statewide music organization who, among many other activities, sponsors student festivals held each year across the state. Each school district is assigned to an area where their students will perform either a solo, a duet or in small ensembles to be “judged” by certified NYSSMA adjudicators, providing a means of objective musical evaluation.

What are the Requirements?

Only music listed in the current NYSSMA Manual (Edition XXXIII-effective July 1, 2022), can be performed at the festival. Every Lynbrook music teacher has a copy of the manual. If your student has or will study with a private music teacher who will be selecting their audition piece, **it must be listed in this manual**. The selected piece, along with memorized scales (or rudiments for drummers) and sight-reading will make up the evaluation. For Jazz auditions, improvisation will be performed in lieu of scales. The approved music from the NYSSMA manual is divided into six levels of difficulty (Level 1= basic to Level 6= most challenging). The literature chosen for performance must be appropriate for each student’s ability and skill level as determined by his or her music teacher. Advanced instrumental and vocal students in 10th and 11th grades may choose to audition for the NYSSMA ALL-STATE performing groups by preparing a Level 6 piece of music; filing an All-State application, and if required, arranging for a piano accompanist. All-State auditions are the highest level performed and should be carefully considered. Your music teacher will provide information on this type of audition.

How is a NYSSMA audition “scored”?

The registration process, the choosing of solos to perform and other features remain the same as in previous years.

- ◆ In-person at a specified location.
- ◆ There will be 3 Requirements: 1. Scales 2. Solo 3. Sight-reading

NYSSMA FESTIVALS

Performance ratings (the student's score) will be adjudicated as in past festivals and will stress quality of performance through several musical criteria including tone, technique, intonation, and rhythmic accuracy. The final rating (score) will consist of three components:

(1.) the level of the music [1-6] (2.) a letter grade, and (3.) a numeric score (Ex: 6 A+ 100)

The NYSSMA sheet the adjudicator will complete after hearing the performance will also contain written comments. A student's recommendation to *honors* ensembles such as All-County, All-State, Long Island String Festival, can include these scores each year as part of their application and selection process. *Students in 8th grade and above should note that a NYSSMA score rating of 4-Outstanding or higher is required to be considered for membership in the high school's Tri-M Music Honor Society.*

Should I Participate?

Participation in NYSSMA can be a challenging and rewarding experience which can improve many facets of a student's musical abilities. It is important to note however that NYSSMA is *strictly voluntary* and may not be for everyone. The NYSSMA process is one that involves a great deal of time, effort, and dedication from both parents and students. Participation in a NYSSMA Festival requires a true commitment to follow through with the entire process *and* devote a considerable amount of time to individual practicing. Although not required, students who have been the most successful in the past have obtained private lesson instruction in preparing for the audition. Our school group rotation lessons can offer only limited time to assist with a student's NYSSMA preparation and with our current situation, lesson time allotments may be compromised further.

There is a participation fee required for each student performing at an evaluation festival. At the time of this writing the NYSSMA participation fees are as follows:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ◆ Instrumental and Vocal Levels 1-4: \$20 | ◆ Instrumental and Vocal All-State: \$36 |
| ◆ Instrumental and Vocal Levels 5-6: \$30 | ◆ Piano Levels 1-4: \$26 / Levels 5-6: \$36 |

How Do I Register?

Festival dates and registration deadlines will be provided by your school music teacher. This information, along with the required registration form(s) can be found and printed from the Fine & Performing Arts webpage (see below). Teachers will alert students when they are accessible.

- Go to www.lynbrookschoools.org
- Select **Departments** from the menu headings on top
- Select **Fine & Performing Arts** and find the **NYSSMA** section in the gold column to the left
- Print appropriate form(s); complete; sign and submit to your music teacher w/check payable to Lynbrook Public Schools. (forms will be available in early January)

Further information on both the festival process and the NYSSMA organization can also be found at www.NYSSMA.org. and/or by contacting your music teacher or the Department of Fine and Performing Arts. I hope this information will prove helpful and if you choose to participate, your NYSSMA experience is a positive one!

Sincerely,



Adrianna J. Schaefer
Director of Fine and Performing Arts
Lynbrook Schools