

# **INFORMATION FOR JUDGES**

## **WMTA DISTRICT AUDITIONS**

### **EVENT SUMMARY:**

District Auditions gives students from grades 1-12 and adults an opportunity to play memorized pieces for an adjudicator and receive written comments for the student and teacher to go over together. (There are also options that allow students to perform with their music.) The student also takes a Musicianship Test (music theory) that is appropriate for their age and skill level. Points are earned by participating in both of these activities. The points add up to incentive awards for continued improvement. All teachers who enter students in district auditions are expected to volunteer in the planning of their District's Audition and to attend on Auditions Day.

### **WHAT THE JUDGES DO:**

Judges write comments and assign a number of points for each piece that students perform. *There will be more details in the following information that addresses awarding points.*

### **BEFORE AUDITION DAY:**

Please thoroughly read all of the Adjudicating Guidelines for WMTA Auditions below. These materials include the goal of WMTA Auditions, repertoire and memorization requirements, as well as rating guidelines. Contact the district chair with questions prior to the auditions day if possible or ask your questions at the Judges' Orientation Meeting that morning.

## **WMTA PHILOSOPHY**

1. The role of the WMTA judge is to nurture musical talent. The WMTA adjudicator works in harmony with the teacher and parents in this important task. This is accomplished not only through specific, honest and constructive criticism, but also and equally important - through positive reinforcement and an appreciative, supportive and helpful attitude. The adjudicator must be as honest as possible when encouraging these students without compromising WMTA and their own standards.
2. The WMTA auditions are designed for all students, not merely the more talented and advanced students. It is important that teachers know they can enter any of their students and

that the auditions will be a positive learning experience for all, no matter what ratings are achieved. Remember too, that even the best students need suggestions and inspiration for future development.

3. Within a single site the adjudicator will be likely to hear several levels of advancement or maturity. Some comparisons are inevitable, but your student's performance will be judged on its own merits in terms of evident preparation and musical communication. The judge will adjudicate on how well the student dealt with the music they had prepared rather than on a particular level of advancement.

4. WMTA does not suggest that a certain percentage of rating sheets be at a specific point level. The adjudicator understands that slips and memory lapses may occur due to nervousness, an unfamiliar piano, surroundings, etc. How well your students deal with a memory lapse, a piano that has a problem or a large room will be given at least as much weight as the problem itself.

### **DAY OF THE AUDITION:**

Dress appropriately. The student is being asked to dress for a successful performance. Your appearance is a model to them. Plan to arrive 25-30 minutes prior to judging, to attend the judges orientation meeting. Ask any questions regarding the day. Communicate with your assigned door monitor in regard to timing of opening the door, bringing the next student into the room, etc.

### **MORE BASICS ABOUT THE STUDENTS PERFORMANCES:**

All participants perform a minimum of two pieces and take a written and aural musicianship (music theory) exam. Specific requirements vary depending on the instrument (or voice) and the level entered. See the "Summary table of performance guidelines" below.

The levels (sometimes referred to as "tracks") that students may enter are:

"District 2"	(two memorized pieces)
"District 2 Non-Memorized" (D2-NM)	(two pieces with music)
"District 3"	(two memorized pieces, one not)
"State Track"	(three memorized pieces)

Adults may enter any of the above tracks, however, memory is required only on the State Track. They receive critique and points just as the graded students do.

All “District” entries participate at the district level only – meaning they do not advance onto another event.

Only students who enter the “state track” are eligible to advance on to the Badger competition *if they earn the required number of points at the District Auditions.*

## **WMTA GUIDELINES FOR THE ADJUDICATORS**

WMTA strives to maintain a high standard in their auditions. The grade the student receives reflects the ENTIRE performance. This includes: memorization where required, musicality, stylistic knowledge, technical facility, attention to detail, and presentation/stage presence, including attire and projected attitude. Below you will find more detailed instructions as to how we ask judges to encourage our students to continue to strive for those high standards.

In general, we ask that judges use sensible and motivating comments as well as constructive criticism to help the student learn from an audition experience. We want them to grow from the preparation for auditions as well as from a specific performance itself. The audition performance carries weight when students perform for other ears, for someone who will reinforce their (and their teacher’s) efforts and offer another viable viewpoint to consider.

### **INTERACTION WITH STUDENTS:**

For piano events, play the instrument in your judging room and make note of any problems. **BE SURE TO TELL EACH STUDENT or ACCOMPANIST ABOUT ANY PROBLEMS WITH THE INSTRUMENT or ASK THE ROOM MONITOR TO TELL THEM.**

Make eye contact and smile when the student enters the room and use some verbal interaction with the student. For pianists, encourage the student to try the piano and give the student a fair chance at warming up. Have the room monitor help the smaller children adjust the bench. Vocalists and instrumentalists should not warm up in the performance room.

To help students feel more comfortable, you can explain that you are not only the judge, but just another teacher giving them suggestions and ideas. Offer a few positive personal words when the student completes their performance or provide a simple “Thank you for playing” as the student exits.

## **OVERVIEW/SUMMARY of Performance Expectations**

Each piece the student performs is given a number rating. The rating is on a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest number of points per piece.

**EXCEPTION: D2-NM** has a scale of 1 to 4 with 4 being the highest number of points per piece. All judging criteria to reflect this scale should be adjusted accordingly for these students.

See the Rating Summary Guideline below for specific expectations when deciding on a score (number of points awarded) for a piece. More detailed guidelines will be presented later in this document.

A "5" is a student whose performance is well-integrated, convincing, and secure in all technical, musical, and expressive elements demanded by an authentic performance of the composition.

A "4" is a student whose performance may contain a few inaccuracies and insecurities, "slips" from which a good recovery is made, exhibits some projection of mood, style, and expression but is lacking in security, conviction, accuracy, and/or consistency throughout the piece.

A "3" is a student whose performance does not have a cohesive flow, still contains a significant number of inaccuracies and insecurities, and is devoid of any elements of expression and style.

A "2" is a student whose performance is deficient in almost all of the musical and expressive elements required by the composition.

A "1" is for a student whose performance is deficient in pitch, rhythm, dynamics, and phrasing. This score is rarely given.

### **USING THE ADJUDICATION FORM:**

The critique of the performance is to be **mainly written comments** so that the student and teacher can benefit from your words. No matter what "rating" the student receives, the written comments are what the student can learn from the most. It is important that your comments support the rating that is given.

Please write legibly.

Try to mark "+" and "-" in the boxes on the left side of the adjudication form to help the student understand their rating.

Judge all performances, including the State Track, for that performance only. DO NOT advance students to the State Competition assuming they will practice/improve between the District and State audition dates.

Please take into consideration, and give as much weight to how well the student recovers from a memory slip as to the slip itself.

Take one point off for any student in grade 7 or above, who has not numbered every measure in each piece.

**PLEASE SUPPORT THE SCORE GIVEN WITH COMMENTS TO HELP THE STUDENT AND TEACHER UNDERSTAND WHY A PARTICULAR NUMBER OF POINTS WAS AWARDED.**

If a rating is less than a “4”, please be sure to offer adequate feedback so the student and teacher understand why they received that rating. Many teachers and students often look at any rating of a “3” or less to be a low rating. Of course, written suggestions and compliments are still encouraged even for the students who receive “4”s and “5”s.

**DISQUALIFICATION OF THE STUDENT** shall be given as a penalty for the infraction of the following rules:

The use of recording devices, audio or audio-visual equipment in the room.  
Parents talking or conversing with the judge regarding the performance of any student.

Photocopied music.

EXCEPTIONS: A page may be copied (with the original present) to facilitate a page turn for District 2-NM and District 3 students. Accompanists may use photocopied music as long as the actual book is present.

Please write DISQUALIFIED on the rating sheet for infractions and also write the reason why.

**NO POINTS SHALL BE GIVEN:**

If the judge’s copy is not brought to site, no points are given for that piece(s), only comments!

If a student needs to use music for a piece in which memory is a requirement, he shall receive comments only. There will be no points given for that piece. This applies to the following tracks at district auditions:

District 2, District 3, and State track.

## STAYING ON SCHEDULE:

Try not to take too much time between pieces. Use the student schedule you've been given in your folder to be aware of the time. This will help keep you on schedule. If you are far behind and judging at district auditions, ask the chairperson to take a couple of students and give them to another judge, so you can get back on schedule.

If pieces are too long for the allotted time, please gently “cut-off” the students' pieces to fit. But, do not cut out an entire piece to get back on schedule.

Some high school seniors may be scheduled with extra performance time if they are also preparing for upcoming college auditions. The district chair should/will notify you of this situation during the morning orientation meeting if you will be judging one of these students.

## Summary table of performance guidelines:

	District 2	District 2	District 2-NM	District 3	State Track
Grades Eligible	1 – 6	7 – 12	7 – 12	7 – 12	1 – 12 *
Must perform:	2 pieces	2 pieces	2 pieces	3 pieces	3 pieces
Contrasting Time Periods Required?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Memorization requirements:					
PIANO	2 pieces	2 pieces	None	2 pieces, 1 not	3 pieces
ORGAN	1 piece	1 piece	None	1 piece	1 piece
Non-Keyboard INSTRUMENTS	Memorization optional	Memorization optional	None	Memorization optional	1 piece
VOICE	2 pieces	2 pieces	None	2 pieces, 1 not	3 pieces

\* Students in grades 1-3 may enter “State track” at the district auditions. But, these students are not eligible to advance to the Badger competition. (The Badger competition is for students in grade 4 and older).

## **REPERTOIRE REQUIREMENTS**

Repertoire written for a specific instrument and in its original form, should be chosen for performance on that instrument. (*Example: pianists are not allowed to perform an arrangement of a violin sonata or a theme from a symphony*). However, students playing non-keyboard instruments, may choose arrangements and transcriptions. See the table below.

Selections chosen be contrasting in nature (mood, tempo, character, articulations etc.) Please see other information in the table below:

Repertoire that is or is not allowed:	PIANO	ORGAN	Non-Keyboard INSTRUMENTS	VOICE	DUET
Arrangements	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Transcriptions	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Simplifications	No	No	No	No	No
Folk/Spiritual	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Popular/Top 40	No	No	No	No	No
Broadway	No	No	No	Yes	No

Depending on grade level, each student is given 8-15 minutes with the judge (see the table below). A brief warm-up and the your time for writing comments is included in this short period.

### **ACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE PRACTICES:**

Read any explanation of terminology or other information regarding the piece that may be given in footnotes or elsewhere on the page. Do not guess at any terms that are unfamiliar to you.

If the teacher has added or deleted details into the score, please judge these details as part of the whole performance.

Acceptable Baroque practices are:

- Ornamentation may be added on the repeat.
- Phrasing slightly different than indicated within the Baroque style.
- Pedal used as a connecting tool.
- Terraced dynamics.

Repeats are performed at the discretion of the teacher and student. For Sonata or Sonatinas, a single movement, or more than one movement,

maybe be performed. If more than one movement is being performed, please pay special attention to the time – you may need to “cut-off” the student to stay on schedule (unless it is a high school senior – this was addressed above in the “Staying on Schedule” section.)

DO NOT ADD YOUR PERSONAL PREFERENCES when judging repertoire.

### **Maximum scheduled performance time:**

Level Entered	Grades 1 – 6	Grades 7 - 9	Grades 10 - 12
District 2	8	10	12
District 2-NM	Does not apply	10	12
District 3	Does not apply	12	15
State Track	10	12	15

## **DETAILED EXPLANATION of Performance Expectations**

### **A RATING OF A “5” DEMONSTRATES ALL OR MOST OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- **In-depth knowledge of the piece reflected in security of memory**
- **Technical control leading to musical expressiveness**
- **Accuracy in rhythm and markings in the score, including dynamics, articulation, balance, appropriate tempos**
- **Projection of mood and style**

### **A RATING OF A “4” DEMONSTRATES ALL OR MOST OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- **Security of memory**
- **Technical control**
- **Accuracy in rhythm and markings in the score, including dynamics, articulation, balance, appropriate tempos**
- **The performance is generally accurate but lacks musical conviction**

**A RATING OF A “3” DEMONSTRATES ALL OR MOST OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- **Insecurity in memory**
- **Lack of technical control at times in the piece**
- **Insecurity of rhythm effecting fluency and tempo**
- **Inattentiveness to markings in the score, thus affecting the style and musical conviction of the piece**

**A RATING OF A “2” DEMONSTRATES ALL OR MOST OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- **Major breakdowns in memory**
- **Lack of technical control many times in the piece**
- **Lack of steady beat and/or highly inaccurate counting**
- **Inattentiveness to many markings in the score, thus affecting the style and musicality of the piece**

**A RATING OF A “1” DEMONSTRATES ALL OR MOST OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- **Memory breakdowns whereby the student is unable to recover without using the music**
- **Lack of technical control throughout**
- **Lack of steady beat and/or highly inaccurate counting**
- **Inattentiveness to almost all markings in the score, thus affecting the style and musicality of the piece.**

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

1. Students entering District 2-NM can earn a maximum of 4 points per piece. No rating of 5 is allowed. No memory is required.
2. When giving a numerical rating, you are allowed to use a + or - if you feel the student's performance is somewhat in the “crack”. These + or -'s do not factor in the overall numerical grade of the performance.

3. The critique of the performance is to be mainly written comments so that the student and teacher can benefit from your words. No matter what "rating" the student receives, the written comments are what the student can learn from the most. The following are some general criteria to use when writing a clear and concise rating sheet:

- Using language that is meaningful to the student as well as the teacher, is important. Work to avoid using generic terms such as good, fine and nice. Remember: the student is walking in the door thinking their piece is already "good". More specific words will pinpoint exactly what you are thinking and assist the student in further exploration of the music. Compare "you have a nice sound" to "the depth of your tone in the opening of the Brahms was warm and inviting."
- Be sure to write both general and specific comments. Use measure numbers when going into detail on a specific issue. A general comment such as "good dynamics" is a place to start. Students and teachers will find it even more helpful, however, if you follow the general comment with something more specific such as "your dynamic contrasts shaped the line very well, especially in measures 25-29."
- **Support your ratings with your comments.** Work especially hard when giving a 4+ as to why the piece was a 4+ and not a 5-!! As you write your comments, try to answer any questions you think the student or teacher would have asked you regarding the rating that you gave the student.

4. Please confine your written comments to the student's adjudication sheet rather than their music.

5. Try to balance positive and negative comments. ALWAYS START WITH A POSITIVE COMMENT! All students need some praise and some suggestions for further growth. At the same time, be sure you identify and clarify why the rating you chose was not a high one. If the performance was excellent and the rating high, work to challenge the student to explore new layers of the music.

6. Please remember that you are hearing young people and not mature adults. They are learning and growing as musicians and WILL make errors in their performances.

7. Base the rating on musicality that was used when playing the music, rather than just notes themselves. If you were to erase all the notes on the page and have the student perform the piece, were the details that were left on the page performed to their fullest? This is the question to ask yourself in choosing a rating.

8. Take into consideration the quality of the instrument and the acoustics of the room when giving a rating. Be sure to try the piano YOURSELF before the audition begins.

9. If photocopies are brought to the site for a piece, no points are given for that piece, only comments!

10. Photocopies are allowed for accompanists, as long as the original book is also there.

11. If the judge's copy is not brought to site, no points are given for that piece(s), only comments!

12. If a student needs to use music for a piece in which memory is a requirement, he shall receive comments only. There will be no points given for that piece.

**THE FOLLOWING ITEMS APPLY TO STATE TRACK AUDITIONS ONLY**

1. Judging should not be more stringent for STATE TRACK auditions than for DISTRICT 2 and DISTRICT 3 auditions.
2. Students participating in STATE TRACK auditions are not competing against other students. Each student should be judged individually based on their own performance. If they earn a total of 14 or 15 points in their performance plus a satisfactory theory test score, the student has then earned the right to advance and compete in the Badger Competition later in the spring.
3. There is no limit as to the number of STATE TRACK students who advance to the Badger Competition.

**AT THE END OF YOUR ADJUDICATION DAY:**

Fill out your hour and mileage sheet and return it to the chairperson along with the folder. Also fill out the “Judges Information Form” so you can be added to the database and be called to judge again in the future.

Return the room the way you found it at the beginning of your day. Destroy any copied music you obtain during the day.

Drive home safely knowing you have encouraged and helped to shape a child even more in their journey of learning a musical instrument.

**THANK YOU FOR READING THIS INFORMATION AND  
FOR AGREEING TO JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT LEVEL  
WMTA AUDITIONS!**