



THE MTNA STATE PERFORMANCE COMPETITION IN WISCONSIN WILL BE OCTOBER 31, 2026 IN UW-OSHKOSH. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT THE MTNA WEBSITE [HERE](#).

I am coordinating this year's Wisconsin entries for the MTNA Composition festival. My name is Shad Ryan Wenzlaff, and my email is: thestudio615@gmail.com if you have questions. I'm happy to schedule a phone conversation as well to help you consider entry. But first, please check out the information and guidelines presented by MTNA on their website at this [LINK HERE](#). Here are what I believe to be the main things to consider:

- One may enter the MTNA composition festival in addition to having entered the Young Composers Festival. For clarification, the WMTA Young Composer Festival is a separate, unrelated (but similar) event.
- The MTNA website notes: Entrants and teachers must meet the Entrant and Teacher Requirements. All submissions must follow the Composition Competition Rules.
- There are no restrictions regarding ensemble size.
- Registration opens early August. Check the MTNA website. I recommend students enter as soon as August 15, but note that registration is due September 9. The website notes that the submission portal will close at precisely 3:00 pm Eastern Time, no exceptions. Since MTNA assumes no responsibility for problems with computers, technology, etc., I highly recommend that teachers plan ahead accordingly rather than waiting for the day of the deadline. It will take some time to create the required YouTube link and the score using whichever notation software your students prefer/are able to navigate.
- Fees vary by age- \$50-\$100. Because a credit card is required, many students will need a parent/guardian to register on their behalf. There are rules regarding teacher MTNA membership dues – please refer to the website if your MTNA membership is not up to date at the time of entry.
- Prizes are awarded for each age category at the national level: Winner, 2nd, and 3rd place. These range from \$300-\$3000, and are funded by Alfred Music and the MTNA Foundation.
 - PDF Score and a YouTube link are required at the time of submission.
 - Handwritten scores are not accepted.
 - Measure numbers are required (see website for details)
 - All materials must be labeled with the name of the composition, the name of the entrant, and the level. If you have questions about this, please don't hesitate to contact me (Shad).

- Score must NOT include the teacher's name, or reference to institution, school, or entrant biography. The entrant certifies that the composition is an original work, and the score was produced by the entrant. AI is not permitted. (I'm editing a note about this because I sense that many teachers refrain from submitting student entries for this reason. Please use your discretion with regard to what you regard as "teaching" students to use software and "teaching" students to notate their compositions. Students need to be guided to use the software – and honestly, can a 5-year-old steady a mouse or trackpad sufficiently to enter their notation into Sibelius? Guiding your students through this process will take more than a lesson. Encourage them to complete the required tasks and learn to use the notation software. If we heed advice recently shared at the WMTA State Conference by Christopher Fisher, we are reminded of the collaborative roles of the teacher, the parent, and the student as we teach our students.
- The quality of the recording is not a factor for adjudication; instead, think of YouTube as an "aid" for the judge when offering comments. As a point of clarity: YouTube links are used so that the MTNA system is not overloaded by large file sizes, and it can simply be a sound file (I'm happy to talk teachers through how to create this, and provide additional detail).
 - The website stipulates rules for the following considerations:
 - Entrant must be sole composer, entering with teacher permission.
 - Length must not exceed 10 minutes.
 - Refer to the website if a text is being used.
 - Winner restrictions apply (i.e. if they have entered previously).
- There are no stylistic restrictions. If your student is writing jazz, video game music, classical, etc., these are all permitted. That said, it must be completely notated (i.e., a student must not submit a lead sheet, for instance).
- All communication is via email (so check your spam filters, etc.). I will do my best to ensure that each entrant receives communications as well.

As you prepare your entry, it is highly advisable to spend time (it's about a 15-minute read) on the MTNA website reviewing all of the requirements and details in advance to ensure that you have followed the guidelines accordingly.

Finally, allow me to encourage widespread participation. I'd love to see at least 2 entries from each category – last year there were just 2 entries from WI, in fact, none from the Young Artist level. The composition competition is the only MTNA competition that allows youth ages 5-10 to enter a competition, so please encourage your students to enter! Happy composing!

Shad Ryan Wenzlaff