

Dear Tier 1 Directors:

Here are some thoughts on what to expect at Festival, especially if you are coming for the first time. It is so encouraging to see so many groups at these three sites and we wish you well.

Days Leading up to Tier I:

Give your student a list of expectations: how we act on the bus, how we walk into the school, how we listen to the other groups, how we tune, how we walk on stage, etc. We often spend so much time educating the students on the music that we forget about these important life lessons.

Arrival:

Plan on arriving 15-20 minutes before your first scheduled time slot. A director should come in by themselves without the students to get the 'lay of the land' before debussing the students. Encourage your students to leave their coats on the bus if possible as the homeroom spaces can be quite tight.

Listening to other groups:

Each performing orchestra will be listening to two orchestras perform. You are encouraged to print off a judges score sheet and distribute to each student so as they listen they can be filling out a critique sheet. Also, remember to place parent chaperones near potential chatty students. (!)

Parent Chaperones:

A good number to go by is one parent for every 8-10 students. Consider assigning parents 'jobs' for the day. *Carrying Judges Packets *Rock Stops & Extra Strings * Photographer * Attendance on bus * Passing out critiques and pencils to student for 'listening time' * Cello/Bass Unloader * Help with Stage Set Up * etc. I remember my first few years at festival being so overwhelmed - and I wished I had more parents along to help out - (p.s. most parents love to help)

Tuning and Warm -up:

Here is what I have done that seems to help. While our orchestra is in the auditorium listening to other groups (with plenty of parental chaperones), I will take 2 or 3 students with me to the place where our cases are. I quietly have an "A" playing, the students unpack the instruments, bring them to me, and I tune them up quietly. This way our warm up time can be spent 'warming up' instead of tuning up. Depending on the site, this doesn't always

work but it does seem to help.

Performance:

You will be ushered into the performing space. There will be someone who will announce your group and repertoire and then you can begin. Following your performance have your students remain seated and someone will come and escort you to the clinic room.

Other Considerations:

Here are things that some directors do to get their students mentally and musically prepared.

- * A day or two before festival have students write down the three spots where they need to concentrate most in the music (and then mark it in their parts)
- * Have students write an emotional word at the top of each selection that will help them focus
- * Give players a 'wet one' to wipe their hands before playing
- * Bring in a community musician into a rehearsal a week or so before to give some pointers
- * Give all the girls the same hair type backs and guys a temporary tattoo to remind them to be a team

Also:

* Personally, I always tell the students that before we listen and read the judges comments, we will always critique our performance. i.e. "How do you think we did?"

* Please read below and all the Festival Rules posted at www.MNSOTA.org to familiarize yourself with what you need to bring to the site.

GOOD LUCK - HAVE FUN!!

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Performance Requirements

- Each orchestra must supply four (4) original scores for each piece. (Two are for the judges, one is for the clinician, and one is for the conductor.) Place a set of scores for the judges (2) and clinician (1) into separate manila envelopes. Label each envelope clearly with your school name, orchestra

name, director name and performance time, and designate the envelope for “Judge 1,” “Judge 2” or “Clinician.” Fill out two rating forms and place one in each judge’s envelope. Give these envelopes to the MNSOTA board liaison when you arrive; pick them up, along with your rating forms and recordings, from the board liaison before leaving the Festival.

- Duplicated scores will be accepted only if accompanied by written permission of the copyright owner. Letters representing placed orders are not acceptable. In the event that scores do not arrive, ensembles will perform for Comments Only. We recommend that you order scores in November to ensure delivery.
- All four scores must have each measure numbered.