

Middle Level Orchestra Festival

Grades 6–9

February–April 2018

Alexandria — Stillwater — Faribault

Purpose

The Middle Level Orchestra Festival offers orchestras constructive criticism and comments to improve the group's musical performance, improve the students' understanding of musical concepts, increase the students' understanding of music literature, motivate the students in their continuing study of music, set standards of excellence in musical performance and help students understand the relationship of their musical experiences to other life experiences. This is not intended to be a public concert. It is intended to be a learning experience, whether students are performing for judges' comments, listening as audience members, or participating in the clinic session.

MNSOTA hopes that every director will use the Middle Level Orchestra Festival in the way that best meets the needs of their students. Some might prefer to perform for comments only. Some might want to receive a rating, but choose not to share the rating with their students. Some might not tell students about Tier 2. Depending on your preference, your students can experience either a competitive or non-competitive performance opportunity.

Please read all the rules carefully.

General Information — Tier 1

There are three sites planned for Tier 1: February 21 at Alexandria Area High School; February 26 at Stillwater Area High School; February 28 at Faribault Middle School. The Tier 1 Festivals take place 7:30 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. at each site; you may be scheduled outside your school day.

Each orchestra will participate in a warm-up session, performance, and a 25-minute clinic session, as well as listen to the performances of 2–3 other groups at the festival site. Each orchestra has the opportunity to be considered for Tier 2. Distinguished clinicians and adjudicators offer positive remarks and constructive criticism. A list of performance standards follows to guide your preparation. Groups will be scheduled to listen to two or three other orchestras at the festival site and are encouraged to use the topics on the judging or comment form to help focus their listening. Each orchestra will receive an official MNSOTA certificate of participation.

At Tier 1, directors can choose from three levels of participation: Comments Only; Comments + Rating; Comments + Rating + Consideration for Tier 2. The grade requirements are slightly different for Tier 2 consideration. Please read the Grade Level Eligibility rules carefully when you select your level of participation.

Tier 2 — April 2, 2018

All orchestras that qualify will be invited to participate in Tier 2. In order to qualify for Tier 2, orchestras must: apply for Tier 2 consideration; satisfy the grade requirements; and receive an overall Superior with Distinction rating from both judges at Tier 1. There is an additional fee of \$100 for groups that advance to Tier 2; ticket prices for the Tier 2 concert will be announced at the conclusion of the Tier 1 festivals.

The orchestras selected for the Tier 2 honor will: participate in a 35-minute sectional with a Minnesota Orchestra musician and a 35-minute rehearsal on stage at Orchestra Hall during the daytime hours; perform selections from Tier 1 in an evening concert; receive an ensemble trophy; make memories that will inspire their musical growth for years to come; be able

to purchase CDs through their director.

Information and Eligibility

Fees — The festival fee is \$150.00 for each performing group and should be included with your application. Please make the check payable to MNSOTA. Mail both the registration form and the check to Cassandra Herold, 5428 44th Ave So; Minneapolis, MN 55417. Applications will not be processed unless accompanied by the registration fee.

There will be an additional \$100.00 fee for all groups that advance to Tier 2. In addition, the Tier 2 Orchestra Hall performance will be a ticketed event.

Acceptance — Orchestras will be registered for the festival on a first come, first served basis, by date of postmark of complete application. *Incomplete applications will be ignored.* **The POSTMARK DEADLINE for applications for all sites is December 8!** Some sites fill up, so you are encouraged to send the application form and payment prior to the deadline.

You will be contacted when your application and registration fee have been received. A complete information packet with directions, restaurant locations, schedule and other details will be sent when the schedule is finalized.

Festival Reminders

- All participants *must* perform from legally acquired copies of the music, in compliance with the Copyright Law.
- All groups should plan for a 2.5 hour commitment at your site. Your assigned listening, warm-up, clinic or performance times may be outside of the school day. The Tier 1 Festivals take place between 7:30 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. at each site.
- There is an additional \$100 participation fee for groups who advance to Tier 2 at Orchestra Hall, Minneapolis.
- There is a ticket charge for audience members to listen to the Tier 2 concert.
- All directors will receive an email announcement of the Tier 2 results at the conclusion of *all* Tier 1 performances.

Middle Level Festival Scheduling

Scheduling will be done on a first-come, first-served basis. Directors should mail their registration and payment to Cassandra Herold, 5428 44th Ave So; Mpls, MN 55417.

Festival Website

Participating directors can check the Festival website: sites.google.com/site/mnsotafestival/home for maps, schedules, & other info as it becomes available.

MNSOTA Membership — The conductor of the orchestra must be a member of ASTA/MNSOTA. If your membership has expired, contact www.astastrings.org to renew and send verification of membership to MNSOTA Member Coordinator Cindy Johnson MNSOTAmembership@gmail.com. Your membership status will be verified before your application can be processed.

Grade Level Eligibility —

- In order to participate for Comments Only or Comments + Rating, orchestras must have at least some members in grades 6-9.
- To be considered for Tier 2, *all* of the students in the performing group should be in grades 6–9. Combinations of Grades 5 & 6 or Grades 9 & 10 should participate for Comments Only or Comments + Rating. (If your orchestra has special circumstances that you think might warrant an exception for Tier 2 consideration, contact Festival Coordinator Cassandra Herold, cassandraherold@yahoo.com before September 20 so the MNSOTA board can consider your circumstances at their fall meeting.)
- Adults may not perform with any group at Tier 1, but may provide piano accompaniment.
- String or full orchestras may apply. If your literature deviates from standard instrumentation, please explain on the application.
- At Tier 1, students may participate in only one ensemble being considered for Tier 2. They may participate in additional ensembles participating for Comments Only or Comments + Ratings
- To be considered for Tier 2, all performers must be registered student members of their ensemble.
- All students who perform at Tier 2 must have performed at Tier 1. (Exceptions will be made for students who were absent from Tier 1 due to illness.) Any other exceptions to your Tier 2 roster must be cleared with the Festival Coordinator.

Schedule — The schedule for the day will be set on a 30-minute rotation — please note that ensembles will spend several minutes waiting on stage after their performance before moving to the clinic location. Listening to other orchestras perform is an important part of the day's activities; your group will be assigned to listen to at least two other ensembles. Please help your students understand appropriate behavior in the festival setting. Students should not enter or exit at any time during a performance. Students should be respectful of the group performing.

Food — Directors are responsible to make arrangements for lunch off-site if lunch is necessary. Lunch is not provided on-site. A list of available restaurants near each site will be included in the Festival packet.

Recording — Directors will receive a performance CD (1) and CDs with comments from each judge (2).

Judging sheets — Judges' rating forms will be given to directors at the conclusion of their clinic.

Festival Standards Guideline — Please refer to the Judging Criteria, the Ratings information and the Rating Form to aid in the preparation of your ensemble. Contact Cassandra Herold, cassandraherold@yahoo.com, if you have any questions.

Performance Requirements

- Each orchestra will prepare a minimum of three pieces. Performance time should be no more than 20 minutes. Selections are to be of contrasting styles. There may be two movements from the same work.
- Pop tunes and novelty pieces will not be considered appropriate literature. If you have concerns about a selection, contact Cassandra Herold, cassandraherold@yahoo.com, for a board decision. A list of pieces performed at the Tier 2 concert for the past three years is included to help you gauge the repertoire other directors are selecting. This is intended as a guide only and is *not* a required repertoire list for the Festival.
- 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.) *All scores must have each measure numbered.* 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.

Sample judge/clinician label

(circle): Judge 1 Judge 2 Clinician

School Name _____

Orchestra Name _____

Director Name _____

Performance Time _____

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.

Compliance with the Copyright Law

- **All participants in the MNSOTA Middle Level Festival are required to perform from legally acquired copies of the music.**
- **Use of unauthorized photocopies for the judges, clinician, performers or director will result in disqualification** for Tier 2 consideration and the ensemble will receive Comments Only (no rating).
- **Exception: "Emergency copying to replace purchased copies which for any reason are not available for an imminent performance is permissible provided replacement copies shall be substituted in due course." (No. 1 of the Guidelines on Fair Use of Copyright Material.)** In this situation, a letter from the publisher/music vendor reflecting a *non-returnable* order for the printed music in question is required and should be presented to the

MNSOTA board liaison on-site in advance of the ensemble's performance. Failure to provide this letter in advance of the orchestra's performance will result in disqualification for Tier 2 consideration and the ensemble will receive Comments Only (no rating).

Judging Criteria

Musical Expression — The performance should be expressive with distinguishable phrasing, evident and appropriate dynamics, emotional quality compatible to the mood, and stylistically correct.

Tone — The performance should have focus, warmth, consistency throughout the dynamic range, and various articulations

appropriate to the literature choice.

Rhythm — The rhythm of the performance should be accurate with suitable and controlled tempos and tempo changes. Steady pulse, accurate rhythms and nuance of beat quality should reflect the meter of each piece.

Intonation — The performance should be in tune. There should be understanding of half and whole step relationships in each piece as well as the key signatures and their scales. Accuracy to printed pitches including accidentals is essential.

Bowing — The performance should exhibit control of bowings and articulations: accurate and consistent bowings, correct direction and placement of selected strokes, and variety of articulations.

Ensemble — The performance should exhibit quality ensemble playing: correct balance, blend, awareness of role(s), uniform execution, and eye contact with other members of the group as well as the conductor.

Other Factors — The performance should exhibit appropriate concert etiquette including good poise, proper posture, suitable appearance, stage presence, and attitude. Suitability of literature and other factors will be left to the discretion of the judges.

Pieces Performed at Tier 2, 2015—2017

This list of pieces performed at the Tier 2 concert for the past three years is included to help directors gauge the repertoire other directors are selecting. This is intended to serve as a guide only and it is not a required repertoire list for the Festival.

Ted Allen, *Fire in the Forge*
Shirl Jae Atwell, *Paeon, Jeunesse*
Bach/arr. Isaac, *Brandenburg Concerto #5*
Brian Balmages, *Afterburn, Woodsplitter Fanfare, Spartacus, Medieval Wars*
James Barnes, *Yorkshire Ballad*
Jeffrey Bishop, *Declarations, Riding the Dragon's Back*
George Bizet/ arr. Isaac, *Farandole*
George Bizet/Vernon Leidig, *Carmen Suite*
Larry Clark, *Measured Tones*
Susan H. Day, *Midnight Rain*
Elliot Del Borgo, *Dance Scenario, Danse Infernale, Russian Sleigh Ride*
Ralph Ford, *Hyperdrive*
Doris Gazda, *Appalachian Sunrise*
Kathryn Griesinger, *Legends of Glory*
Bob Grice, *Warriors of Beijing*
arr. Carrie Lane Gruselle, *Little Turtle Dove*
G.F. Handel/arr. Dackow, *Concerto Grosso Op. 6 No. 1*
William Hofeldt, *Twilight Ceremonial*
Norman Leyden, *Serenade for String Orchestra — IV. Cakewalk*
Deborah Baker Monday, *Dies Irae: Fantasia, Conquistador!*
Kirt Mosier, *The Dance of Iscariot*
Soon Hee Newbold, *Mythos, The Odyssey*
Yukiko Nishimura, *Bluebell, Autumn Waltz*
David O'Fallon, *Legend*
Joseph Phillips, *Fantasia on an Original Theme*
Rimsky-Korsakov/arr. Dackow, *Dance of the Tumblers*
Alan Lee Silva, *Blue Ridge Run*
Doug Spata, *Gauntlet*
Richard Stephan, *Fanfare and Frippery, Variations on a Well-Known Sea Chantey (excerpt)*
G.P. Telemann/arr. Mozier, *Allegro from Sonata No. 1*
G.P. Telemann/arr. McCarrick, *Concerto for String Orchestra*
Traditional/arr. Maiello, *Irish Tune from County Derry (Danny Boy)*
Antonio Vivaldi/arr. Frackenpohl, *Allegro in D*
Antonio Vivaldi/arr. Parrish, *Inverno*
Albert Wang, *Love Song from Kangding*
Douglas Wager, *A Quiet Music*
Richard Wagner/arr. Dackow, *March of the Meistersingers*

Ratings

5 Superior with Distinction — This rating represents an outstanding performance in all major categories for all selections performed. Any deficiencies in the performances are considered minimal. There shall be no significant weaknesses. The conductor and students shall have demonstrated outstanding musicianship. An extraordinary level of performance.

4 Superior — This rating reflects a quality performance as a result of sound fundamental training. The performance will be rated as superior in the majority of major categories for all selections performed. There shall be few significant weaknesses. The conductor and students shall have demonstrated superior musicianship.

3 Excellent — This rating describes a sound performance with proficiency in many aspects with a need for improvement in some categories. The conductor and students shall have demonstrated excellent musicianship.

2 Good — This rating indicates good preparation, but a performance that is uncertain and holds numerous errors.

1 Fair — This rating indicates a performance that is lacking in the fundamental aspects of performance, understanding or preparation.

Overall Ratings

The overall rating will be calculated as the sum of the ratings in each category: 32–35 = Superior with Distinction; 25–31 = Superior; 18–24 = Excellent; 11–17 = Good; 10 or less = Fair

To qualify for Tier 2, orchestras must receive an overall *Superior with Distinction* rating (32–35 points) from both judges. All qualified orchestras are eligible to participate in Tier 2.

Notification of Ratings

Rating forms will be returned to directors, along with their scores and recordings, at the conclusion of their clinic. Since some directors choose a non-competitive experience for their students, any discussion of ratings at the event is inappropriate. We appreciate everyone respecting the confidentiality of the results until the official announcements. Judges, clinicians and site hosts are not in a position to discuss results at any time. Please contact Cassandra Herold at cassandraherold@yahoo.com with any questions or suggestions.

Middle Level Orchestra Festival

Grades 6–9

February 2018

Alexandria — Stillwater — Faribault



Application Form

Festival Fee \$150.00. Check payable to MNSOTA must accompany application.

Check your preferred date, your preferred time, and your level of participation. If you are available for more than one date, number your preferences. If your first choice site is already full, you will be assigned to your second (or third) choice.

Feb 21 — Alexandria
Alexandria Area High School
4300 Pioneer Rd S.E.

Feb 26 — Stillwater
Stillwater Area High School
5701 Stillwater Blvd N., Oak Park Hts

Feb 28 — Faribault
Faribault Middle School
704 17th St. S.W.

Number your preferences 1–4 for scheduling:

Early Morning

Late Morning

Early Afternoon

Late Afternoon

Check your level of participation (see Grade Level Eligibility Rules). This orchestra will perform for:

Comments Only

Comments + Rating

Comments + Rating + Tier 2 consideration

There is an additional \$100 fee if selected for Tier 2

Mail application form and fee to: Mail to: Cassandra Herold,
5428 44th Ave So; Minneapolis, MN 55417
cassandraherold@yahoo.com

**Registration POSTMARK Deadline is
December 8 for all sites.**

Event Cancellation Policy

Since events cannot be rescheduled, MNSOTA is committed to holding all events as planned. MNSOTA will cancel an event only in cases of a safety emergency (e.g. road conditions/weather), based on state advisories. If an event is cancelled, at the discretion of the board, a partial refund to participants may be considered after expenses have been paid.

Performing Group (at least some students must be in grades 6–9) _____

Full Name of School _____

School Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Director _____ ASTA/MNSOTA Membership # _____ exp. date _____

Directors must be ASTA/MNSOTA members for their students to participate. Membership will be verified.

My membership is not current, but I have contacted www.astastrings.org to renew/become a new member and have sent verification of membership to MNSOTA Member Coordinator Cindy Johnson MNSOTAmembership@gmail.com

E-mail _____ Preferred Phone _____

Check number _____ Amount \$ _____

A \$15 NSF fee will be charged for any returned check.

Principal's signature (**required**) _____

WORKS TO BE PERFORMED: Each orchestra should prepare a minimum of three pieces. Total performance time is limited to 20 minutes. In January, directors will be asked to finalize their repertoire selections by emailing Festival Coordinator Cassandra Herold cassandraherold@yahoo.com.

You must bring 4 original scores (no copies) of each piece to be performed. All scores must have each measure numbered. Bring scores for judges (two sets) and clinician (one set) in separate, clearly-labeled manila envelopes. Fill out two rating forms and place one in each judge's envelope.

All participants in the MNSOTA Middle Level Festival are required to perform from legally acquired copies of the music.

Use of unauthorized photocopies for the judges, clinician, performers or director will result in disqualification for Tier 2 consideration and the ensemble will receive Comments Only (no rating).

Complete the Seating Chart on the next page.

Complete application for Tier 1 includes check, application form, current MNSOTA membership and seating chart. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

If a group needs to withdraw from the Festival, refund requests must be submitted to the board prior to the event and will be considered at the next board meeting.

Middle Level Orchestra Festival

Seating Chart — Required for Tier 1 and Tier 2

Formal name of the orchestra: _____

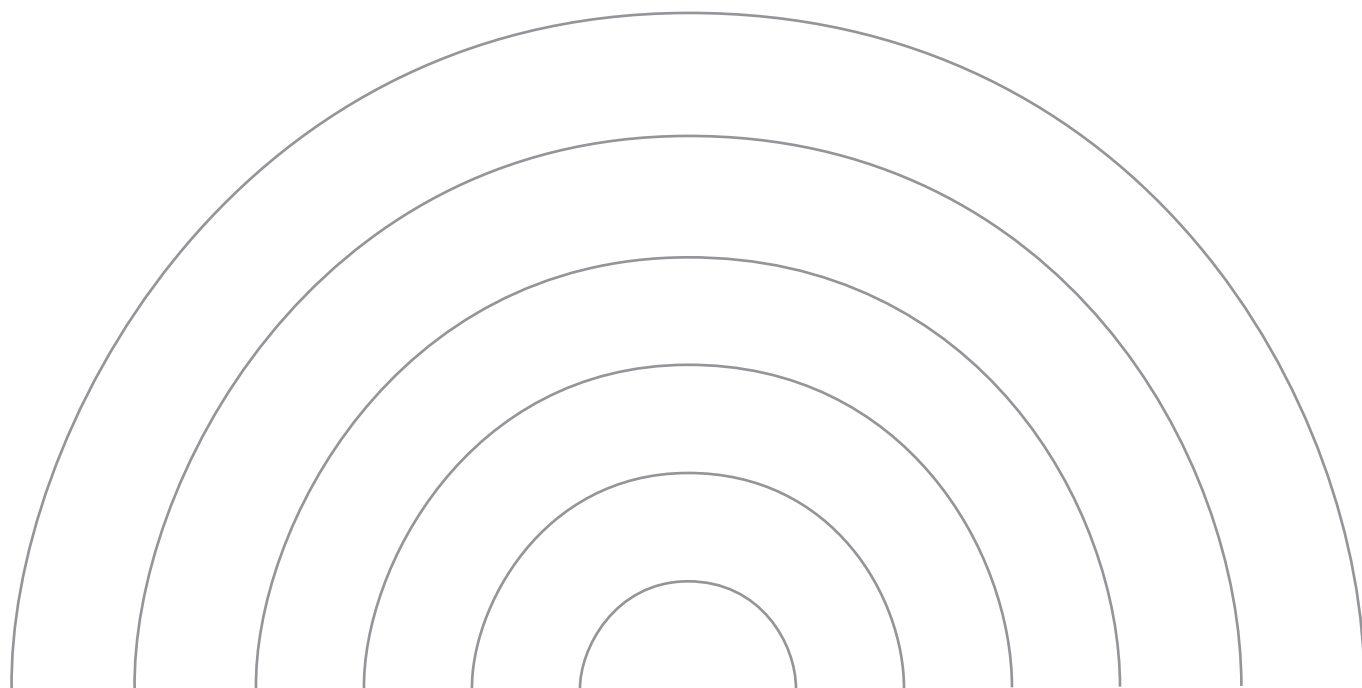
School name: _____

Number of students _____ Grade levels _____

Draw a detailed layout of the set-up of this orchestra.

- Use one X for each chair
- Draw a line — where each stand should be placed.
- Draw lines to show the separation between each section.
- Indicate the location of the bass section.
- Write the number of chairs and stands needed in each row.

Do you need a piano? yes no (Please indicate the piano placement.)



of chairs in each row _____

of stands in each row _____

Describe anything about your set-up that would help a competent parent helper get it perfect before you go on stage:

Group Profile — For Tier 2 performers

Directors of orchestras selected for Tier 2 performance will be contacted electronically after Tier 1 is completed to write a Group Profile paragraph for the Tier 2 program.



Middle Level Orchestra Festival

Rating Form

School _____ Orchestra _____

Performance Time _____ Director _____

Selections to be Performed _____

↑ *This section to be completed by the director in advance of the Festival. Include one completed rating form in each judge's envelope (2).*

5 Superior with Distinction

Outstanding performance in *all* major categories for *all* selections. Any deficiencies are minimal. *No* significant weaknesses.

4 Superior

Sound fundamental training. Superior in the *majority* of major categories for *all* selections. *Few* significant weaknesses.

3 Excellent

A sound performance with proficiency in *many* aspects with a need for improvement in *some* categories.

2 Good

Good preparation, but a performance that is *uncertain* and holds *numerous* errors.

1 Fair

A performance that is *lacking in the fundamental aspects* of performance, understanding or preparation.

Musical Expression

style, phrasing, dynamics, emotion

Tone

quality, focus, warmth, consistency

Rhythm

tempo, meter, pulse, accuracy, nuance

Intonation

pitch, accuracy, mechanical skill

Bowing

articulation, uniformity, control

Ensemble

balance, blend, awareness

Other Factors

difficulty, poise, posture, appearance

Total Score

32-35 Superior with Distinction
 25-31 Superior
 18-24 Excellent
 11-17 Good
 10 or less Fair

Judge's Signature _____



Middle Level Orchestra Festival

Comments Form

School _____ Orchestra _____

Performance Time _____ Director _____

Selections to be Performed _____

↑ *This section to be completed by the director in advance of the Festival. Include one completed rating form in each judge's envelope (2).*

Musical Expression

style, phrasing, dynamics, emotion

Tone

quality, focus, warmth, consistency

Rhythm

tempo, meter, pulse, accuracy, nuance

Intonation

pitch, accuracy, mechanical skill

Bowing

articulation, uniformity, control

Ensemble

balance, blend, awareness

Other Factors

difficulty, poise, posture, appearance

Judge's Signature _____