



Plainview-Old Bethpage Central School District
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Dear Parents & Guardians,

I would like to take this opportunity to tell you about the NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL MUSIC ASSOCIATION (NYSSMA) SOLO AND ENSEMBLE EVALUATION FESTIVAL. Please take a few moments to read the following description of this event, in the format of questions and responses to the most commonly asked questions.

Q. WHAT IS NYSSMA?

A. NYSSMA (New York State School Music Association) is the state professional organization for music educators. One of the major events that NYSSMA sponsors is the Solo and Ensemble Evaluation Festival each spring.

Q. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS FESTIVAL?

A. This festival provides the opportunity for student musicians to perform a musical selection before a professional adjudicator. The adjudicator will be a music teacher from outside the school district. Utilizing a rating system based on several musical categories (e.g. tone, intonation, technique, accuracy, interpretation, scales and sight-reading) each student receives a summative rating as well as verbal and written constructive criticism. This is an authentic assessment which has been utilized for many years and has become the model for other state assessments. Preparing a NYSSMA solo is an optional, extra task, above and beyond the regular band, chorus or orchestra work. This preparation requires a substantial commitment of time for additional and consistent home practice. The most successful students participating in NYSSMA study with a private teacher. We have always encouraged students to study privately in preparation for NYSSMA.

Q. WHAT MUSIC MAY BE USED FOR THIS PERFORMANCE?

A. The music to be performed for the festival must be selected from the latest NYSSMA Manual – *Edition 31, effective July 2015*. **Please make sure your private teacher is using the most recent manual.** The music teachers will assist each student in choosing an appropriate selection for performance. Music for each instrument and voice is listed by difficulty levels 1 through 6, with 1 being the least difficult and 6 being the most difficult.

Each student participating must bring two original copies of the music to the festival – one for his/her use and one for use by the adjudicator. Piano accompanist scores are acceptable for use as the second copy if they include the solo part. **Photocopied music is not permitted at the festival and may result in your child being disqualified from NYSSMA.** *Music that has been legally downloaded and paid for is acceptable for use at NYSSMA festivals, but you are strongly encouraged to bring your paid receipt with you to the festival.*

Q. WHAT BENEFITS ARE RECEIVED BY PARTICIPATING IN THIS FESTIVAL?

A. Participation at NYSSMA offers the student an objective assessment of his/her musical progress from a trained, professional adjudicator. NYSSMA Solo Festival grades are also used in the selection process for All County Music Ensembles. High school students (grades 10 and 11) can also audition for participation in an ALL-STATE ensemble, through the performance of a Level 6 selection at the All State Solo Festival. Participation in these festivals can also be listed on college applications.

Q. DOES MY CHILD NEED A PRIVATE TEACHER?

Students may need additional out of school assistance/coaching in preparing for the NYSSMA Festival. It is expected that students preparing for NYSSMA have a private teacher. A list of private teachers and high school tutors can be obtained from your school music teacher. If you decide to do this, you need to arrange for this coaching privately. Vocalists should perform with an accompaniment. There will be additional costs involved to utilize a piano accompanist. Again, you need to arrange for this privately. **All students must also have an original copy of their music for the adjudicator to use.** You may also wish to utilize the Tri-M Music Honor Society Tutors from John F. Kennedy High School for a nominal fee. Building music teachers have those student's names and contact information. I would recommend this for solo adjudication Levels 1-4

While students are not required to receive private instruction in order to attend NYSSMA, the POB teachers can provide limited support in the group setting in which they teach, and are not able to provide one-on-one preparation. In addition, the school district cannot compensate teachers for individualized instruction or accompaniments provided outside of the school day.

If your child is interested in participating in a NYSSMA Festival, please complete the attached registration form. Be sure to check the festival and fee on the registration form. Return the completed form and a non-refundable check or money order (payable to **POBCSD**) for the festival fee to your child's music teacher.

If you have a preferred date, you may indicate it on the registration form, but please understand that **we cannot guarantee when your child will be scheduled to perform during the NYSSMA festival. Please mark the festival dates on your calendar, and be aware of SAT test dates your child may commit to. If your child does not attend the NYSSMA festival for any reason, fees will NOT be refunded.** If you have an important event that may produce a conflict, please indicate it on the registration form. We will do our best to accommodate the situation. Times cannot be changed at the last moment.

Finally, it is the policy of NYSSMA Zone 13 and the Plainview-Old Bethpage Music Department that each student shall only perform one solo per instrument/voice in a given year. If there are any problems at a festival adjudication, they need to be made known and addressed at that time to the Festival Chairperson. Once the festival is over the grades are final.

Please do not hesitate to contact your child's music teacher or me at the District Music Office (434-3283) with any questions you may have.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- You must meet the deadline for the return of the Registration Form and fees.
- All music must be chosen from the NYSSMA Manual – Edition 31 (effective 7/15). You will need two (2) original copies of the music. You can use a piano accompanist score as the second copy if it includes the solo part. You may also want to check with your private teacher to see if they have an extra copy of the music that you could borrow for the festival.
- **No photocopied music is permitted at NYSSMA.** Music that has been legally downloaded from the internet and paid for is acceptable for use at NYSSMA festivals, but you are strongly encouraged to bring your paid receipt with you to the festival.
- Pianos will only be available for accompaniment for vocal evaluations and ALL-STATE evaluations.
- *All checks or Money Orders must be made payable to POBCSD* – NO cash will be accepted. Please send a separate check for each festival location that your child is attending.
- NYSSMA fees cannot be refunded if your child does not attend the festival.
- Grades will not be posted at the festival. They will be distributed a few days after the festival through the school music teacher.
- Students participating in NYSSMA must be in the first grade of school or higher.
- **Attire:** There is no official dress code for NYSSMA, but students are encouraged to dress nicely (dress shoes, pants or skirt, dress shirt or blouse). Concert attire is also fine. Sneakers, jeans, shorts, and t-shirts are discouraged.
- Return the registration form on the following page to your child's school Music Teacher

Return this REGISTRATION FORM to your child's school music teacher. If your child is registering for more than one instrument, please submit a separate form and check for each solo. Checks should be made out to "POBCSD."

NYSSMA SOLO / ENSEMBLE REGISTRATION FORM (Please print clearly)

Name _____ School _____ Grade in School _____
First Last

Home Address _____ Phone No _____
Street Town

School Music Teacher's Name _____

Instrument or Voice Part _____ Circle One: *Solo* *Ensemble*

Name of Solo _____ NYSSMA Level _____ NYSSMA Manual Pg # _____

Composer/Arranger _____ Name of Accompanist (ALL-STATE): _____

Important – please check if this is a **jazz** solo (ask the teacher if you are not sure): _____

Please check the correct festival. PLEASE USE A SEPARATE FORM AND CHECK FOR EACH FESTIVAL YOU ARE REGISTERING FOR.

___ **Levels 1-6 Classical Piano** (no jazz piano) March 3rd & 4th Nassau Community College Register by 1/9

___ **Levels 1-6** March 31st & April 1st Holy Trinity HS Register by 1/23
(Instruments, Voice, Jazz, Jazz Piano)

___ **Classical Guitar** May 23rd & 24th Levittown, Salk Middle School Register by 2/3

___ **All-State** (Instruments and Voice) May 12th & 13th Syosset HS Register by 2/3

___ **All State Jazz and Vocal Jazz** April 28th & 29th Farmingdale HS Register by 2/3

FEES: (DO NOT STAPLE CHECKS TO THIS FORM – MAKE CHECKS OUT TO "POBCSD")

Instruments, Voice, _____ Levels 1 – 4 **\$ 16** _____ Levels 5 – 6 **\$ 22** _____ ALL-STATE **\$ 30**
Guitar, Jazz, Jazz Piano (10 minutes) (15 minutes) (15 minutes)

Classical Piano _____ Levels 1 – 4 **\$ 22** _____ Levels 5 – 6 **\$ 30**

**Please note there is a slight increase in fees from previous years!*

Indicate if you have a preferred audition date/time by circling a time slot. **Preferences ARE NOT guaranteed and CANNOT always be accommodated.**

No Preferred date/time

Classical Piano: Nassau Community College

Friday, March 3 4-6 pm	Friday, March 3 7-9pm	Saturday, March 4 9am-12	Saturday, March 4 1-3pm
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Instrument, Voice, Jazz, And Jazz Piano: Holy Trinity High School, Hicksville

Friday, March 31 4-6pm	Friday, March 31 7-9pm	Saturday, April 1 9am-12	Saturday, April 1 1-3p.m.
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Classical Guitar: Jonas A. Salk Middle School, Levittown

Tuesday, May 23 4-6pm	Tuesday, May 23 7-9pm	Wednesday, May 24 4-6pm	Wednesday, May 24 7-9pm
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All-State (instrument and voice): Syosset High School

Friday, May 12 4-6pm	Friday, May 12 7-9pm	Saturday, May 13 9am-12	Saturday, May 13 1-3pm
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All-State Jazz and Vocal Jazz: Farmingdale High School

Friday, April 28 4-6pm	Friday, April 28 7-9pm	Saturday, April 29 9am-12	Saturday, April 29 1-3pm
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Please note, if you have more than one child performing in the festival, and would like them to be scheduled around the same time, you should request the same preferred date/time for all of your children. Similarly, if you are performing more than one solo, and would like both solos to be scheduled close together, please select the same preferred date/time above for each solo.