



New Mexico Music Educators

Southwest District 1 Handbook

Updated August 2026

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I. District Eligibility/Classification

- Directors must be active members of NAFME and the New Mexico Music Educators Association in order to vote, hold office, or participate in district festivals.
- Anyone wishing to attend our festival from out of state must be a member of their state music organization.
- In order for a student to be able to participate in an SW-NMMEA Sponsored Festival, the Director must follow eligibility rules and guidelines set by their School District.
- As per State Regulations, students who are not enrolled in a school program where a program is available may not participate in festivals or all-state tryouts. However, should no program exist in a school, private or public, a student should contact the nearest director dealing with the desired medium for sponsorship into the festivals.

Infraction of rules

- District rules and regulations regarding festivals will be in effect throughout the duration of the festival. Any infractions of the rules should be reported to the festival chairperson and the district president, who will discuss the infractions with the directors of that organization. If a reasonable resolution or compromise cannot be reached, the problem can be brought before the Board of Directors and the general membership.

Classifications

- Classifications are determined by your school's NMAA basketball classification.

II. Officers and Their Responsibilities

- **Officer Positions**
President, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice Presidents for Band, Choir, Orchestra, and General Music
- **Term Information**
Each officer should serve no more than two consecutive terms. In the event an officer takes office mid-term, they will serve until the next regularly scheduled election. The election process includes nomination, seconding, acceptance of nomination, and voting. If multiple nominations are made, discussion and voting will take place while nominees wait in another area.

- **Officer Communication, Documentation, and Transition**

- All officers are to use the state-provided email address to conduct district business and agree to check it on a regular basis.
- Documents created for district use should be saved to the Google Drive associated with the email address, allowing for a smooth transition to the next VP.
- Assist future VP's with understanding the email, documents, and responsibilities of the position.
- Officers can serve as signers on checks and contracts once cleared by the bank.

- **Elections**

Each NMMEA district will nominate and elect one individual from the current membership to serve as a member of the NMAA State Concert Band and Choral Advisory Councils. This position will be elected every two years and serve that term in full. The elected member must be either a current High School or Middle School band or choral director. If that elected individual can no longer serve in this capacity, the President of the District will ask a member to fill that position. The elected member can only serve two consecutive terms and will be elected in the year the district president is elected.

President Responsibilities

- Attend NMMEA State meetings or appoint a VP for representation.
- Plan and oversee district meetings.
- Relay State information to the district and relay district information to the state.
- Update District Calendar, present at the fall meeting, and relay to the state.
 - Find corresponding dates.
 - Communicate with performance venues (NMSU, OMHS PAC, and local schools).
 - Complete facility use forms for events and communicate.
- Assist festival/site hosts when possible; set a time to be on hand to sign checks.
- Report MPA scores to the state within 24 hrs of contest completion.
- Close website registrations with the state and email a copy of entries to the VP and treasurer.
- Maintain an adequate supply of awards.
- President will lead nominations for NMMEA State awards at the spring meeting.
- Serve as a member of the NMMEA Board of Directors.
- Provide all requested information on time to the Executive Director.

Secretary Responsibilities

- Record minutes of all district meetings and send to the president for state reports.
- Present a written record of past meetings at subsequent meetings and send to the president so they can be posted online.

- Perform needed written correspondence.
- Update Handbook, send to President for placement on the website.
- Update Membership lists and Contact information; provide a sign-in sheet at meetings.

Treasurer Responsibilities

- Collect and deposit fees for all district events.
- Present an accurate accounting of district finances at district meetings.
- Provide payment for district activities.
- Provide a budget for each district event.
- Assist in booking hotels for out-of-town judges.
- Maintain an up-to-date bank account, including (but not limited to) a signature card, a supply of checks, and all bank correspondence.
- Provide tax information to the state when requested.
- The Treasurer will receive a stipend of \$1000 per year to be distributed in June.
- Collect W-9's from all vendors and provide to the NMMEA Executive Director.
- Collect contracts from all vendors.
- Provide the NMMEA Executive Director with amounts paid to all vendors.

Vice Presidents (VP) - General Responsibilities

- Run District Section Meetings:
 - General Membership Report:
 - Acknowledgments, kudos, items to be celebrated
 - Solutions for improvement of district events or policies
 - Festival information: dates, times, locations, personnel, results, considerations
 - Fall Meeting:
 - Vote on MPA Judges
 - Add Solo and Ens. Judges' names to the list
 - Talk about upcoming events: marching festival, choir solo/ensemble, etc.
 - Spring Meeting:
 - Review events in order
 - Confirm new dates for events
 - Discuss changes and keepers for the event
- Hiring Judges:
 - Create and/or maintain a voting/selection system for selecting judges at the fall meeting.
 - Keep a record of past judges.
 - Contact prospective judges immediately following their selection after the fall meeting.
 - Announce confirmed judges by email and send them a contract.

- Provide information to judges about:
 - Judging expectations, and how to use the judging sheets
 - Location, site host, dates/times, schedule
 - Contract including mileage, honorarium, and lodging
- Confirm judging assignment 1 month before the event.

III. Fees, Expectations, and Honorariums

Fees

- Music Performance Assessment
 - 1st group: \$225.00
 - 2nd group: \$200.00
 - 3rd group and any additional: \$175.00
- Solo and Ensemble
 - Solo: \$8.00 per student, per time slot
 - Ensemble: \$8.00 per student, \$80.00 maximum
- Marching Band Music Performance Assessment
 - \$225.00 per band

Expectations

- Once you enter your students/groups in an event, you are obligated to pay for the number entered. Judges are hired based on entries, not entries minus cancellations.
- Payment and/or P.O. is to be emailed to the treasurer before the event or hand-delivered on the day of the event.
- If the Treasurer receives the purchase order or fee after the date of the festival, a \$100 late fee will be assessed and must be paid before that school program can participate in the next festival.
- Registration is considered “late” if the P.O. date is after the event, or if a check is issued after the event without a P.O. for entry fees.
- Each NMMEA member shall consider it their professional responsibility to make sure their school's participation fees for every NMMEA District event are paid in full by the end of the semester in which the event took place.
- In the event that a school's participation fees are not paid for any given District event by the end of the academic school year, that school will not be allowed to participate in the next year's District events until past-due payments are rectified.

Cancellation Policy

- A registered entry into an SW-NMMEA event may be canceled up to two weeks before the event without penalty, as long as the registered director/sponsor communicates with

both the section vice-president and treasurer before the two-week deadline. Extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration, but the decision will ultimately be left up to the district president concerning reimbursement.

Honorariums

- Marching Band MPA Judges
 - \$185 for the event
 - A small dinner will be provided.
 - Mileage: \$0.40 per mile
- Concert MPA Judges
 - **\$25 per ensemble**
 - Lunch will be provided; Dinner will also be provided if groups are performing into the evening.
 - Lodging and mileage will also be taken care of by SW-NMMEA.
 - Mileage: \$0.40 per mile
- Solo and Ensemble Judges
 - \$30/per hour (begin at judges meeting through the last student judged)
 - Lunch and snacks will be provided.
 - Mileage: \$0.40 per mile

IV. Concert Music Performance Assessment (MPA)

For the Director

- Registration:
 - <https://www.nmmea.com/districts/southwest/entry-forms/>
 - All MPA registration deadlines are the second Friday in December.
 - Communicate special scheduling requests on the form, such as placing your bands on different days or on the same day, if you assist another director, and any travel considerations.
- Bus Request:
 - Once the schedule has been sent out, directors should secure buses with their fine arts directors/transportation department.
- Program Requirements:
 - Ensembles will be required to perform three pieces of contrasting styles for stage programs, with none of the pieces sharing the same composer.

- If one of the pieces is a multi-movement work, then the stage performance program can consist of two selections.
- Stage performance not to exceed the following time limits:
 - HS: 30 minutes for set-up, entrance, performance, and exit
 - MS: 25 minutes for set-up, entrance, performance, and exit
- One piece must meet the grade-level requirement (based on NMAA Basketball Classification) using the UIL PML as the source for literature selection and grade-level verification.

Classification	Varsity	Non-Varsity	Sub-Non-Varsity
5A	Grade 4	Grade 3	Grade 2
4A	Grade 3	Grade 2	Grade 1
3A-A & MS	Grade 2	Grade 1	-

- Definitions
 - Varsity: Highest-level ensemble or only ensemble in program
 - Non-Varsity: Second ensemble
 - Symphony Orchestra will be considered a non-varsity ensemble due to combining of string ensembles
 - Sub-Non-Varsity: Third or more ensemble
- Implementation for this requirement, as well as the committee, will be in effect for a three-year period, and then a reassessment will occur
 - Reassessment in the Summer of 2029
- Program Submissions:
 - Final program information must be emailed to the chairperson 1 month before the event, allowing time for program creation and verification of the grade-level requirement.
 - Band: sw-vpband@nmmea.com
 - Choir: sw-vpchoir@nmmea.com
 - Orchestra: sw-vporchestra@nmmea.com
- Waiver Opportunity for Special Cases
 - Waiver must be submitted to the district president **NO LATER than 2 months prior to MPA event**, to allow for review by the grade-level requirements committee.
 - Examples:
 - 50% or more of the ensemble are players that are significantly younger/less experienced than the target level
 - Programs with recent director turnover

- Day of MPA

Before the Festival and Arrival	Warm-up	Perform	Sight-read	Check Out
Arrive with plenty of time to check in before going into warm-up. Have three sets of blank, numbered, original scores. E-print scores must be accompanied by a receipt for all 3 scores purchased. Directors with scores that break copyright will have their ensembles judged for comments only and not scored. <i>Repeat offenses will be left up to the discretion of the district president.</i>	A worker will greet you in the holding area and have you line up for warm-up 5 mins. before your scheduled start time. The warm-up monitor will give you timing reminders. While scheduled in 30-minute slots, warm-up is 25 mins. to allow for transition to stage. Please remain backstage until the stage crew confirms setup.	An announcer will announce you and your ensemble, along with your musical selections.	After the performance, a worker will guide you to the sight-reading room. Each participating ensemble must sight-read. Please consult each area's sight-reading procedures.	Please check out with the festival chair to retrieve your scores, judges' sheets, etc.

Festival Site Chairperson/Vice President Responsibilities

- **Picking Adjudicators**
 - Use the list voted on at the annual spring meeting by membership.
 - Adjudicators should be contacted and finalized as soon as possible.
 - The **vice president or chairperson** will communicate necessary information to the adjudicators, including the schedule and location.

- **Scheduling**

- The schedule should be made and emailed out to the membership by January.
- When scheduling, travel time for out-of-town schools must be considered.
- It is a good idea to consult fine arts coordinators, etc. for information on bus schedules.

- **Site Expectations**

- Provide a courtesy room for directors, accompanists, helpers, and judges.
- Provide timers for sight reading and warm-up in the form of a stopwatch, computer screen, or tablet.
- Work with the festival site director to ensure that basic percussion instruments are provided: bass drum, 23", 26", 29", 32" timpani, xylophone, bells, chimes, vibraphone, tam tam, and marimba. The site will NOT provide mallets, cymbals, stands, and small percussion instruments. Make sure the director specifies percussion needs on their setup chart.
- Oversee the running of the festival.
- Gather sight-reading folders and supply with enough parts for the largest ensemble.
- Label one sight-reading sheet per ensemble.
- Keep a master score list; at the conclusion of the event, send it to the NMMEA state executive director.

- **Judges' Meeting**

- Meet with adjudicators at least 30 minutes before the festival to go over procedures, goals, rules, and regulations.
- Explain digital recorders or Competition Suite.
- Hand out expense sheet and take lunch/dinner orders.
- There will be a runner to deliver scores and sheets throughout the day.
- Brief description of SW District 1: Las Cruces, Alamogordo, Silver City, Deming, Ruidoso, Cloudcroft, Hatch, Bayard, Santa Teresa, and Anthony
- Go over the judging sheet criteria and answer any questions they may have.
 - Sight reading judge
 - There will be a monitor to help distribute folders.
 - Allow the director to go over the score for 3 minutes as you explain the rules to students.

- **Volunteers**

- Headquarters manager - adult only
 - Check in - organize music scores and set-up charts
 - Manage judges comments
 - Record scores
 - Check out - return music scores, judges' sheets, and plaques

- Holding area
 - Direct incoming traffic
 - Guide the director to go check in at headquarters
 - Inform the director where and what time the warm-up begins
- Warm-up monitor
 - Inform the director when to begin and end the warm-up
 - Assist with setup in the warm-up room
 - Guide to stage
- On-stage crew
 - Set up chairs, stands, etc., for each performing group
 - Coordinates a crew of 3-4 in process; one of these people can be the guide to sight-reading.
- Announcer (adult preferred)
 - Must be “experienced,” i.e., familiar with concert etiquette and composers’ names.
 - Review the program beforehand; the chairperson should preferably have this organized beforehand.
- Sight-reading monitors
 - Preferably 3 helpers with one experienced adult (educator)
 - Assist with setup changes
 - Distribute/collect folders
 - Keep accurate timing

Regulations

- Groups are prohibited from playing or singing the same selection within a 3-year period.
- Directors may not program music that was included in any all-state concert program during that school year.
- Wind and percussion students who participate in multiple ensembles should perform on a different instrument.
- String students may perform in a “chamber orchestra” as a separate entry and still play in the string orchestra.
- Students may not “move down” to seed a lower-level ensemble, even if that ensemble is lacking in instrumentation.

V. Sight-Reading at Music Performance Assessment (MPA)

Sight-Reading Classification (All Areas: Band, Choir, and Orchestra):

- All high school ensembles will be based on their NMAA basketball classification.

- All ensembles will use the sight-reading level according to the chart below.

Classification	Varsity	Non-Varsity	Sub-Non-Varsity
5A	SR Level 4	SR Level 3	SR Level 2
4A	SR Level 3	SR Level 2	SR Level 1
3A-A & MS	SR Level 2	SR Level 1	-

- **PLEASE NOTE: CHOIR ONLY**
 - Directors may elect to sight-read one level lower than indicated above to align with the established set of statewide criteria.
 - Directors may also elect to sight-read one voice part below stage performance voicing.
 - MS Directors may elect to sight-read in unison.
- **Definitions**
 - Varsity: Highest-level ensemble or only ensemble in program
 - Non-Varsity: Second ensemble
 - Symphony Orchestra will be considered a non-varsity ensemble due to combining of string ensembles.
 - Sub-Non-Varsity: Third or more ensemble
- UIL sight-reading literature will be used for all instrumental sight-reading.
 - [Band: UIL SR Level Criteria](#)
 - [Choir: UIL SR Level Criteria](#)
 - [Orchestra: UIL SR Level Criteria](#)

Sight-Reading Procedures (Instrumental):

Duration: 25 minutes

- Once your students are seated, the sight-reading monitors will distribute folders (do not open until told to do so).
- The judge will give the director 3 minutes to study the score while they give rules/explanation to the students.
- Timing will begin when all students have their correct parts and the procedures have been explained.
- Timing allowances:
 - Grade levels 4-6 will be allowed 10 mins.
 - Grade levels 1-3 will be allowed 7 mins.
- Process: You may rehearse any or all of the piece by air banding/shadow bowing, clapping, counting, singing, **playing on instruments**, or using any technique that you see

fit. **The director may NOT play any instrument with or for students, even during the rehearsal process.**

- There will be a timer set up so that the director can see the time countdown.
- At the conclusion of the timing, instrumental ensembles may play a scale or tuning note, then conduct the students through the piece.
- No vocal cues are allowed during this performance.

Sight Reading Procedures (Vocal):

Duration: 20 minutes

- Enter the room and arrange students in seats; sight-reading material will be handed out. The music **must remain upside down while being passed out.** The judge will establish rules, then allow the ensemble to start their 12-minute rehearsal time.
- The director will have 12 minutes to rehearse the piece; you may sing a scale, an arpeggio, and establish starting pitches.
- You may rehearse any or all of the piece by singing, changing, and/or speaking solfege/numbers. **The director may NOT sing with students, even during the rehearsal process.**
- Accompanists may not play parts and can only play the choral reduction during the rehearsal process.
- At the end of the 12-minute rehearsal, the ensemble must perform the piece a capella. They may re-establish tonality by singing a scale, an arpeggio, and their starting pitches before their final performance.

VII. Marching Music Performance Assessment

For the Director

- Registration:
 - <https://www.nmmea.com/districts/southwest/entry-forms/>
 - Registration will be one month before the event.
 - Communicate any special scheduling requests on the form.
- Bus Request:
 - Once the schedule has been sent out, directors should secure buses with their fine arts directors/transportation department.
- Program Submissions:
 - The band vice president will send out an email with the schedule, a map, and a request for any required information from each band. Please reply in a prompt manner so that we can have all the info ready for the announcer.
 - sw-vpband@nmmea.com

- **Day of Festival:**

Before the Festival and Arrival	Warm-up	Sight-read	Check Out
When you arrive, there will be a lot designated for trucks and buses and a lot designated for public parking. Please refer to the map that the Band VP sends out. Make yourself aware of your warm-up and gate time. You may start unloading your equipment truck at any time.	A worker will greet you at the warm-up area and remind you of your times. Warm-up will be 30 minutes, followed by a 10-minute transition time to the gate. Each band will have 15 minutes total to set up, perform, and be off the field.		After your performance, you should take your equipment back to the truck area. You may meet with your band and give them water at this time. If you and your group would like to watch the remainder of the performances, you may enter the stadium <u>free of charge.</u>

Festival Site

Chairperson/Band Vice President Responsibilities

- **Picking Adjudicators**
 - Use the list voted on at the annual spring meeting by membership.
 - Adjudicators should be contacted and finalized as soon as possible.
 - The vice president or chairperson will communicate necessary information to the adjudicators, including the schedule and location.
- **Scheduling**
 - Communicate with the district president about closing the online registration form by the date on the calendar. They will receive a spreadsheet of registrations.
 - The schedule should be made and emailed out to the membership as soon as possible.

- The first band usually performs at 5:00 pm, in 15-minute increments. (We may start earlier depending on the number of entries.)
- Warm-up is 30 minutes long, and transition time to the gate is 10 minutes.
- **Site Expectations**
 - Reserve Field of Dreams with Fine Arts Coordinator and District Athletic Director (LCPS paperwork).
 - 4 Security guards need to be hired through LCPS:
 - 1 guard at the entrance to the east lot so that the general public does not park there
 - 1 guard at the main entrance with parents collecting the entrance fee
 - 1 guard where bands exit
 - 1 guard walking around stands by the press box.
- **Preparation (one week prior to event)**
 - Set up Competition Suite with line-up, schedule, and classifications.
 - Check on the organization of hospitality (snacks, drinks, water).
 - Check on the organization of a simple meal (ex., burritos).
 - Check that there are parents to take tickets and money at the gate, have petty cash of at least \$200, lots of 1-dollar bills, and the rest 10's and 5's.
 - Make sure you have an announcer for the night, plus scripts from all bands.
 - NMSU student helpers to guide bands
 - One of the HS boosters is running concessions.
 - Figure out what time the Field of Dreams needs to be opened (concessions, east lot, and to the public).
 - Speak with the treasurer about having checks for judges ready for the end of the festival.
 - Collect W2's from judges.
- **Judges' Meeting**
 - Meet with adjudicators at least 30 minutes before the festival to go over procedures, goals, rules, and regulations.
 - Explain digital recorders or Competition Suite.
 - Hand out expense sheet and take lunch/dinner orders.
 - There will be a runner to deliver scores and sheets throughout the day.
 - Brief description of SW District 1: Las Cruces, Alamogordo, Silver City, Deming, Ruidoso, Cloudcroft, Hatch, Bayard, Santa Teresa, and Anthony
 - Go over the judging sheet criteria and answer any questions they may have.
- **Volunteers**
 - 1 Person at check-in east lot
 - 2 persons at warm-up giving time and transition to the gate
 - 2 persons at the field entrance before the band goes onto the field

- 1 judge runner brings new SD cards to judges and takes old ones to the person uploading comments. If using Competition Suite, the person checks on judges.
- Band parent selling tickets at the entrance gate for \$5 for spectators 13 years of age or older. Children 12 years of age and younger are admitted free of charge.
- 1 person transferring judges' comments to Google Drive (if applicable)
- Band parent to do hospitality for judges in the press box
- One school runs the concessions stand.

VIII. Solo & Ensemble

For the Director

- Registration:
 - <https://www.nmmea.com/districts/southwest/entry-forms/>
 - All registrations must be submitted by the deadline given through the online registration form.
 - Please communicate any special scheduling needs such as: time of day, two time slots, and especially a student's accompanist.
 - Accurate accompanist information **MUST** be included for EVERY student when the registration is submitted. Registrations using "TBA" or left blank will be considered to have no accompanist.
 - An accompanist may not play for more than 40 students.
- Day of the festival:

Before the Festival and Arrival	Performance	Perform and Check-Out
Bring original copies of scores for the judges. Consult the most recent schedule that your VP sent to confirm performance times. (Due to the nature of the festival, time changes may occur.) Arrive at the site early to check in.	Familiarize yourself with the performance rooms and cross-check with the schedules posted. Ensure that your students and their accompanists run as close as possible to the prescribed times. Please observe performance etiquette when performances are happening.	After the performance, you can retrieve your score sheets and music as the judge submits them back to the VP at their designated headquarters. Collect any medals, if applicable. Certificates will be given out as per direction of your VP.

Festival Chairperson/Vice President Responsibilities

● Picking Adjudicators

- Use the list that is voted on at the annual spring/fall meeting to acquire judges.
- The number of adjudicators is determined by the number of entries. The following is a guideline to work by:
 - Orchestra
 - 2 judges for upper strings and ensembles
 - 2 judges for lower strings and ensembles
 - Vocal (*judges should consist of at least one for each of the following voice part/ensemble*)
 - 1 Soprano
 - 1 Alto
 - 1 Baritone/Tenor/Bass
 - 1 Ensemble (any voicing)
 - 1 Middle school entries (more depending on entry numbers)

Note: Historically, there have been six solo judges and one ensemble judge. ([Perusal sample here](#))

■ Band

- 1 Flute
- 1 Clarinet
- 1 for all saxes
- 1 double reed and woodwind ensembles
- 1 Trumpet
- 1 Horn and Brass Ensembles
- 1 Low Brass
- 1 Percussion
 - *If middle school and high school perform on the same day, you may need to hire double judges for clarinet, saxophone, and percussion, depending on entries.

● Scheduling

- The schedule should be completed within 2 weeks of the registration deadline.
- Try your best to accommodate the time of day that the director requested.
- Accompanist booking **MUST** be considered when making the schedule. One single accompanist cannot be in two places at the same time.

● Site expectations

- Confirm with the festival site host that all necessary building use forms have been filled out months in advance.
- Make arrangements for each room to have either an acoustic or electric piano (you will have to borrow).
- NMMEA will pay for tuning of acoustic pianos if needed.

- Secure a team of volunteers to set up and tear down (detailed info below).
 - Arrange for adequate chairs and stands in each performance area; if that is a classroom, please communicate with the teacher in advance to move desks, etc.
 - Assign room numbers.
 - Provide a large area for warm-up.
 - Provide festival headquarters; sheets and scores collected here. This room can also be a courtesy room for directors and judges.
 - Provide judges with pencils, refreshments, and lunch.
 - Work with the festival site to ensure that percussion instruments are in the correct rooms. The festival site will only lend “large percussion instruments.”
 - Signs and schedules should be posted outside of every performance room.
- **Judges meeting**
 - Hand out and explain the expense sheet: mileage and honorarium.
 - Take lunch orders, if necessary.
 - There will be runners to pick up sheets/scores.
 - I-V rating system; + and - are allowed
 - Brief description of area
 - Please do your best to provide constructive criticism and comments.
 - Try your best to stay on time. If your room is running late, please limit comments to written only.
- **Volunteers needed**
 - Set up crew
 - Judge runners
 - Monitors at every performance door
 - Ensure the hallway is quiet
 - Help ensure the schedule is on time
 - Hospitality
 - Lunch orders for judges and volunteers
 - Take lunch order, arrange either delivery or pick up
 - Keep the hospitality room orderly and clean
 - Tear down crew

IX. Edits and updates to the handbook

- Edits and updates should be voted on by members of NMMEA and SW District 1.
- Requests to edit the handbook can be presented at any meeting and will be voted on by the membership, electronically or at any in-person meeting.