

## **Anchorage School District Music Department Anchorage School District Solo and Ensemble Festival**

Dear Student:

Thank you for participating in the Anchorage School District Solo and Ensemble Festival. We look forward to your performance and hope that you will find the experience both educational and rewarding. The following tips will help you as you practice your piece and hopefully better prepare you for what happens when you perform in front of an adjudicator (judge).

### **Solo Preparation**

1. Choice of Music - Please choose music that is on the ASD Solo & Ensemble Approved Repertoire List. This is available online.

Go to: [music.asdk12.org](http://music.asdk12.org)

Click on : Festivals & Honor Groups

Click on: Solo & Ensemble Festival

Click on: Approved Repertoire List

Do not choose music from movies or pop tunes. All repertoire performed at ASD Solo & Ensemble Festivals must be on the Approved Repertoire List. If you have already begun practicing a piece not on the list, your teacher should contact the music office to request approval.

2. Time your music - an entry should be no longer than 5 minutes.
3. Number each measure in the music - your copy should have measures numbered and the adjudicator's **original** should also have all measures numbered.
4. If your music is accompanied, please try very hard to find an accompanist. It will enhance your performance and you need to experience the added complexities of balance, blend and intonation that playing with another instrument will create.
5. Perform your solo in front of others - as many times as you can. This helps you deal with the problems that nervousness can cause. For example, nervousness can cause your breathing to be more shallow than normal and shaky fingers can really impair your technique. Also, your "audience" may hear mistakes in your performance that you haven't caught. Ask your teachers, your friends, your brothers and sisters and your parents to listen to you.

### **What To Expect on Performance Day**

1. When you arrive at the site, there will be a registration table inside the main door. The people sitting there will be able to answer any questions you may have. Hopefully

you will already know your performance time and the location of your performance but it never hurts to double check.

2. If there is time and space available, go to the practice rooms to warm up and practice your piece one more time.
3. The rooms that we are allowed to use are often very small. Prepare yourself mentally - you may be in one of those smaller rooms and may be standing closer to the audience than you normally do.
4. The performance room will have audience members as well as your adjudicator. Our adjudicators all have different styles - some may write a lot on your adjudication form and only talk a little to you after the performance. Others may write very little and spend their time talking to you and give you tips on how to be a better player or singer. Some adjudicators talk to you afterwards in a loud voice so that the members of the audience can hear what they have to say to you. Other adjudicators may call you over to the table where they are seated and speak quietly to you. Still others may get out of their seats to work with you.
5. Most adjudicators do stay seated during your performance but some may get out of their seat while you are performing to check hand position, bow position or even posture. Remember that the ASD Solo and Ensemble is set up to be an educational experience so be prepared for this “masterclass” aspect of your performance.
6. You will be adjudicated on the beauty of your tone, your intonation (how well you play in tune), your technical facility (your ability to play/sing the fast parts with ease and grace), your musicianship (dynamics, phrasing, style, interpretation), balance and blend (if you are playing with others) and stage presence, choice of music and appearance.
7. Other tips:
  - Dress appropriately. You do not have to be in concert black but you should be dressed in clothes that are better than average school clothes. Dress in such a way that you will not be calling attention to your clothes - you do not want to take any attention away from the quality of your performance.
  - Introduce yourself, the name of your piece and the composer and your accompanist before you perform. After your performance, you bow first and then acknowledge your accompanist so that he/she can also take a bow.

We hope that this will help you as you prepare for Solo and Ensemble. Performing a solo or in a small ensemble can be a scary experience and we applaud your courage and your willingness to perform.

See you soon!

Frank Hauser, ASD Music Supervisor  
Ilona Barber, ASD Music Coordinator