

**SOUTH DAKOTA HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION  
and  
SOUTH DAKOTA BANDMASTERS ASSOCIATION**

**Recommendations**

**to**

**Band Directors**

**and**

**Students**

**for**

**P R E P A R A T I O N**

**F O R**

**A L L - S T A T E B A N D**

**A U D I T I O N S**

**Prepared by 2005 Audition Judges  
(Revised - July, 2009)**

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## **BAND DIRECTORS:**

### **The Audition:**

1. Please tell your students about the audition regulations. Chromatic scales, for example, must be memorized.
2. Please give your students the most recent scales downloaded from the SDHSAA or the SDBA website.
3. Encourage your students to rehearse the scales. Remind your students that it is important to practice both the major and minor scales at the minimum tempos using a metronome. A faster tempo is all right if the student is comfortable, but a slower tempo will result in a reduced score.
4. Work with your students on correct articulations. In sight-reading, the articulations are as important as notes and rhythms.
5. The judge will give your student a few seconds to look over the sight-reading. Help them learn to spot problem areas quickly.
6. *Directors should monitor the progress of their students throughout the fall to be sure that the students are ready for their January auditions.*
7. *Unless there are extenuating circumstances reported at the time of registration for the All-State auditions (i.e., a schedule conflict such as a ball game or some other type of competition) OR a last minute emergency (i.e., illness of the student), all students should audition on the date and at the site that is scheduled for their school. The other listed audition dates and sites are not "alternate" times and places for auditions (the All-State auditions are not like Burger King where students can pick and chose their audition date and site at will).*

## **STUDENTS:**

1. Two or three weeks is certainly not enough time to prepare for an audition. You will be very frustrated when you are not prepared. Your judges recommend the following schedule for preparation:

### **Suggested Preparation Schedule:**

- June - Begin to work on scale preparation (memorized chromatic).
- July - Select a solo and begin serious preparation on it.
- August - Begin sight-reading exercises from several sources.

2. Give the judge an original score of your solo. If you do not have printed copies for both you and your judge, give the judge a piano score. Be sure it is the same edition of the solo you are performing. Musical markings in a different edition may vary from yours and therefore make it confusing for you and the judge.

3. If you change articulation marks on your solo, put them in the judge's copy and explain them to the judge. It is all right to change marks to correspond to a fine recording, but the judge must know what you have done.
4. You should not play "piano cues." They are not for you. You also need not count extended rests. Pause briefly and go to the next entrance.
5. Please do not use photocopies of your solos in the audition. If a judge notices this, they must note it on your ballot. This is unethical and illegal. No judge should be *placed in a position of compromised ethics*.
6. SCALES: While the tempo, as given on the sheet, must be observed as a minimum, *you* should only consider playing the scales faster to the extent that *you* are able to play them with the clarity and accuracy of an even tone, technique, and pitch throughout the range.
7. Please empty the water from your instrument prior to the audition. At the least, empty it when you notice it.
8. You should not be forced into an audition for which you are not adequately prepared. Auditioning is difficult enough when prepared.
9. Please understand that an All-State Band audition is not a measure of your worth as a band member or, more importantly, as a person. The All-State Band audition is a measure of how well you played for seven minutes on that particular day. You can only be expected to do your best. Expecting more is unrealistic and expecting less is cheating yourself.
10. Please do **not** ask the judge "how you did." **This** can be awkward for you and the judge.
11. On the audition day, check twice to make sure that you have the correct audition form filled out and that you have all of your audition music with you. Judges always encounter a few students who do not have their solo or their scales. A few walk off with the sight-reading. This wastes time and will rattle even the best player.
12. Talk with your director about appropriate dress. Well-dressed students give the judge a positive impression immediately. It also puts you in a positive frame of mind.
13. Try very hard to have your instrument in excellent playing condition for the audition. In the event that something goes wrong at the last moment, tell the judge what has happened and see if you can be moved to later in the schedule.
14. Do everything you can to be on time for the audition. Be prepared to enter the room when the previous student leaves.

#### **PERCUSSION AUDITIONS:**

- a. **It is your responsibility to furnish the proper snare sticks, timpani mallets, and keyboard mallets as needed.**

- b. Timpanists should learn to tune with a pitch pipe and bring one to the audition.
- c. You should use the percussion instruments that are furnished by the audition site. If you make it into the All-State Band, you will be playing someone else's instrument during rehearsal and the concert. If you can only play your own instrument, you will be in trouble at the All-State Band site. That performance is certainly as important as the audition. You must adapt.

## **UNDERSTANDING THE BALLOT:**

Please help your students to know that all of the musical elements are of equal importance. The various captions on the ballot address these elements.

The **SOLO** is the first thing the judge hears. The primary captions on the solo are Interpretation, Technique, and Articulation. In the General Captions, however, we also consider Dynamics, Intonation, and Tone Quality.

The **SCALE TECHNIQUE** on the ballot is critical. Notes, Rhythms and Articulations are very important. Tempos, Tone Quality, and Intonation are also factors.

The **SIGHT-READING** is primarily about Note Accuracy, Rhythm Accuracy, and (again) Articulation.

It would seem that since Articulation is the only caption twice on the ballot, it must be quite important.

The **GENERAL CAPTIONS** are Tone Quality, Intonation, and Musicality. This means that these three items are scored on all aspects of the audition. Tone Quality will certainly affect a student's solo. Intonation is vital to every note that is played. Musicality is about whether the students can play with style, emotion, dynamics, and with knowledge of the music they are playing.

The only other thing scored on the ballot is the **TERMINOLOGY TEST**. This test is important for several reasons. Music terminology is the language of music. It is what makes music the universal language. Students will better understand the music they play if they know the language. Finally, it is another way to measure whether students are serious about making the All-State Band.

Talk to your students about the ballot. All the captions on the ballot are equally important. Every caption is there for a reason and provides an assessment of the student's ability.