

SCDistrictBandmasters MPA Updates (Middle and High) from our State Chair

January 7, 2022

Good morning everyone! We are working at the district level to finalize the guidelines for our upcoming MPA events, but I wanted to go ahead and share some time-sensitive information we recently received at the State level. Please be aware of the following changes that have been approved for all MPA events.

- MPA Rule 3c. is suspended for 2021-22. Directors may choose to have students perform on their primary instrument in multiple bands from the same school to alleviate instrumentation issues that may arise due to the impact of COVID.
- Directors may reasonably rescore parts to help with balance/instrumentation issues. Choices made will be considered by adjudicators under the caption "General Factors".
- In the event a band's instrumentation is completely missing ALL the following instruments: Tuba, Euphonium, Trombone, Bass Clarinet, Tenor Sax, Bari Sax, Bassoon, the Director may ask for permission from the MPA Event Chair via email and prior to the event to use either Bass Guitar or Electronic Keyboard for the bass voice only. All the instruments must be missing for approval and the band must register for Comments Only.
- Bands may choose to play a flex band arrangement of a piece already on the NCBA MPA repertoire list but must enter for Comments Only. Sightreading would be optional in this instance.
- Directors are encouraged to consider music from all grade levels, even if it requires registering a grade level or two lower than school tradition.
- Directors are strongly encouraged to participate in MPA to help build energy and increase student motivation in the band program. Comments Only is a viable option for all bands during the challenging times.
- Any school district finding it necessary to combine bands for concert band MPA must receive permission from the State Concert Band MPA Chair at least sixty (60) days in advance of the Concert Band MPA Event.
- Event chairs will instruct adjudicators to consider COVID context while considering instrument mask use, instrumentation and other factors. A COVID related video will be developed for showing at pre-event adjudicator meetings.

If you are a middle school director looking at the rule regarding combining bands (buddying up with another small program in your area) and doing your calendar math, you have probably noticed that we are already dangerously close to the prescribed deadline for making that request. I have reached out to our State Chair for guidance on how to deal with the tightness of the deadline in relation to our middle school event dates, and he has granted me a small window of wiggle room to allow ensembles to still

have that option. I am asking that any middle school director who does wish to pursue this option get in touch with ME (as per his approval) **as soon as possible** so we can work through the process of approving the combination. High school directors who wish to use this option should still plan to follow the timeline listed since we have more time to make those decisions or have those conversations with our colleagues who are in similar situations.

Josh and I will be pushing out information soon regarding the guidance we plan to follow for the event sites as well as registration information and such. Please feel free in the meantime to reach out with questions regarding the information above. Thank you for your patience as we continue to navigate through these uncertain times.

Tracy