

**ILLINOIS GRADE SCHOOL MUSIC ASSOCIATION**  
**Northern Division**

**SOLO AND ENSEMBLE CONTEST**  
**INSTRUCTIONS FOR ADJUDICATORS**

You have been invited to serve as an adjudicator for the Illinois Grade School Music Association, Northern Division. It is our hope that you will do everything in your power to make the contest day a wholesome and worthwhile experience for our young musicians.

Below you will find listed some of the rules of our Association; also some suggestions and explanations to aid you. Please follow them carefully so that we may maintain consistent standards throughout all of our contest activities.

1. Solo Identification: Soloists shall be identified by grade in school, number of years played (instrumental students), or number of years in school vocal organization (vocal students).
2. Adjudicators shall rate all soloists primarily on the quality of performance. A soloist's grade in school and number of years' experience are to be used as secondary adjudication tools.
3. Rating the Contestant ó The Point System: The Comment Sheets by the Association require each adjudicator to evaluate and score each contestant on seven aspects of the performance: such things as Intonation, Tone Quality, Interpretation, Technique, etc., are to be scored from 1 to 4 on the sheets. After each item is scored, the points are totaled and this figure determines the final adjudicator's rating. Adjudicators must be sure that the total number of points and the final rating agree. Unless it is absolutely necessary, do not erase or change any ratings after you have entered them on the sheet. Final ratings must be in ink.

4. Rating Divisions: All contestants are to be rated in one of three divisions:

**Division I** ó Represents the best conceivable performance for the event being judged; worthy of being recognized as first place winners. (7 to 10 points)

**Division II** ó Represents a performance which is good to excellent, but has minor defects in some aspects of the performance which mar the overall effect. (11 to 15 points)

**Division III** - A performance not worthy of a Division II rating. A rather poor performance showing much need for improvement. (16 to 28 points)

Note: Some districts may include scales as a component in determining the final rating, in which case the point total listed above will vary.

5. Distribution of Ratings: The Association does not specify any particular distribution of ratings. Some adjudicators gain the reputation of being too thorough, too severe; other adjudicators have the reputation of being too soft, too generous. It would seem that the best adjudicators are those who have neither reputation. We ask you to use your very best judgment in the distribution of your ratings.
6. Written Comments: It is the obligation of each adjudicator to make written comments, helpful and critical as well as commendatory. These comments should be as thorough and detailed as time will allow. Some of the solo and ensemble contests will be programmed on a 7 or 8 minute schedule. The 6-minute performance limit still applies. The additional time is for the adjudicator's benefit and should be used to make written comments.
7. Written comments are of much greater value than oral comments. Young musicians are too keyed up to properly understand the adjudicator's oral comments and cannot accurately relay these comments to their teachers.
8. Directors must provide a condensed or full score for solos and ensembles for the use of the adjudicator. Measures must be numbered.
9. Time Limit: The performance time of a composition must not exceed six minutes. If a performer exceeds the 6-minute time limit, the adjudicator may stop the performance. If this happens, the event should be adjudicated based on the portion that has been performed. Piano contestants are allowed an additional 2-minute warm-up.
10. All solos must be performed with an accompanist unless the accompaniment is listed as optional on the score or is listed as unaccompanied. No student shall accompany their own solo.

11. All ensembles with a written accompaniment must be performed with an accompanist unless the accompaniment is listed as optional on the score.
12. The use of an electronically recorded accompaniment shall be prohibited in Solo and Ensemble Contests.
13. Unpublished original compositions will be allowed in Contests. A full score is to be presented for the use of the adjudicators.
14. When performing a composition at Solo and Ensemble Contest for which a full score is not available, the director is to prepare a full score for the use of the adjudicator and include a letter from the publisher/music supplier indicating that a score does not exist.
15. Photocopied music may be provided to adjudicators only in an "emergency." An emergency shall be defined as a case in which music is out-of-print with no new score available or purchased music copies are backordered. Written evidence in the form of a school purchase order and/or a written statement from the supplier shall be required to document the "emergency." E-Print Music may be used but must be labeled or a receipt shown to indicate it is not a photocopy. Public Domain Music may be used but must have the Public Domain copyright date clearly displayed and a note indicating the source.
16. Instrumental Solos and Ensembles may be read from a score. Vocal Solos and Ensembles must be memorized.
17. Solo and Ensemble participants must perform a minimum of 28 measures of music from one composition, excluding any form of repeats. Vocal Solos may count repeats as additional measures if the lyrics are different.
18. Any ensembles missing instrumental or voice parts shall be heard and rated on the performance presented.
19. Percussion: Please see percussion solo performance requirements for detailed information. Snare drum duets must be played on two (2) snare drums.
20. Students may not wear medals, uniforms, and/or apparel with any logos or markings identifying the participating school when performing a solo or ensemble. The Association does not wish the adjudicators to know the school or town of participating students in the solo and ensemble contest.
21. Directors are allowed in a contest room during performance by their students for the purpose of accompanying or listening. The coaching of performers by the director is not allowed. Directors will not be allowed to discuss the rating given to a student with the adjudicator.
22. Woodwind, Brass, or String ensembles consisting of 9-24 members may be conducted. Percussion ensembles consisting of 6-24 members may be conducted.
23. No adjudicator shall hold the behavior of a Special Needs student against the performance of the whole ensemble/organization. In order for this consideration to be given, a written note of sufficient explanation shall be submitted the day of Contest and attached to the copies of music for the adjudicators, using the form provided on the IGSMA website under Contests/Festivals.

#### VIOLATIONS

For any violation of the rules and regulations, the adjudicator and/or designated contest official shall lower the rating of an individual or group by one step. Violations of the contest rules of this Association, other than those listed, shall be presented to the President, whose duty it shall be to present the same to the members of the Executive Board for action.

Adjudicator's Conduct: An adjudicator shall do whatever possible to put the contestant at ease. Some children are quite "on edge" and any outward signs of pain, annoyance, impatience, boredom or disinterest on the part of the adjudicator can easily spoil the performance. Adjudicators will please refrain from unnecessary discussion with contestants prior to the student's performance.

Adjudicators must report to the local contest office before departure. We sincerely hope you will enjoy yourself and that the experience will be worthwhile for you.