

## 2017 NHMEA Large Group Festival Changes

After over 50 years of Large Group following a very similar format, we felt it was time to bring our beloved, historic festival into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We have spent the last year gathering data from similar festivals around the country as well as collecting feedback from many of you. We have come up with some changes that will certainly be new to all of us but ultimately, we feel, will provide you and your students with a more educational experience with tangible data and information you can bring back to your school communities. Please read through these changes carefully as they are scheduled to be implemented into this year's festival.

### Updated Rubrics

We have created new and improved rubrics that are in line with how most states and school districts grade their students. We have shifted from the list of several categories and their often redundant sub-categories and narrowed them down to 8 all-encompassing categories that apply to all performing group types. Along with those new rubrics, we have eliminated the traditional grading scale of "A,B,C,D" and have changed them to a 4 point scale of "4,3,2,1", with 4 being the highest score a school can achieve. Each judge will assign you a number rating for each category and those categories will averaged together.

Example:

Judge A

<u>Category</u>	<u>Selection #1</u>	<u>Selection #2</u>	<u>Selection #3</u>	<u>Total</u>
Tone Quality	4	3	3	10

Judge B and C's rating will be added to Judge A's rating. This will be your group's final rating for the category.

Example

<u>Category</u>	<u>Judge A</u>	<u>Judge B</u>	<u>Judge C</u>	<u>Total</u>
Tone Quality	10	11	10	31

In the past, we have been very flexible with the amount of repertoire that has been performed as long as there have been 3 selections and one of those selections is listed on one of the approved repertoire list. Due to this new format, we will now stress that **all groups will be assessed on 3 selections. Any groups choosing to do more than 3 selections must notify the adjudicators and the Large Group Chairperson which selections that would like to be adjudicated on. All groups must perform 3 pieces within the specified time limitations.**

### **Final Ratings**

After your group's completion of your performance and sight-reading, all score sheets will be tallied in the tally room. We have also replaced the former letter rating system them with our numeric scale of "4, 3, 2, 1". Because we are now using a numeric scale, final ratings are calculated as follows:

<u>Final Rating</u>	<u>Score Range (per category)</u>
<b>4</b>	<b>28-32</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>20-27</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>12-19</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>0-12</b>

Schools which achieve a rating of "4" will have the opportunity purchase a plaque, just like in previous years.

### **Sight Reading Scoring**

Sight-reading scoring will work in a similar fashion and will carry the same weight as it has in previous years. You will notice that sight reading is no longer its own score sheet. Your sight-reading grade is now listed on the performance score sheet. You will still receive only 1 rating for your sight reading, which will be given by one of the adjudicators. Any adjudicators comments in regards to sight reading will also be included on this sheet.

## Sight Reading Procedure

After many years of examining our sight-reading procedure, we are making a change to the procedure in which **INSTRUMENTAL GROUPS ONLY** will go through this portion of the festival. After speaking with lots of festival attendees it was generally agreed upon that while more clinic time is always better, most choral groups currently receive sufficient clinic time with their adjudicator. Instrumental group clinics often suffer due to the logistics of moving equipment and passing out of music. **All choral groups will follow the traditional procedure of: warm up room, performance, sight read, clinic.**

All instrumental groups will get called to a warm up room 45 minutes before their schedule performance. The next 45 minutes break down as follows:

**15 minutes: Warm up time.**

**10 minutes: Sight reading crew will enter your warm up room with music and an adjudicator. Sight reading takes place during this time.**

**20 minutes: Refocus, continue with warm ups, send set-up crew to prepare performance area.**

At this point, your group will head to the performance area and perform your selections. After your performance, you will go into a 3<sup>rd</sup> room and receive your 15-20 minute clinic. The new instrument format is now: **warm up, sight read, performance, clinic.**

While we understand that this new format may add additional pressure and stress to some students and directors, the call for more clinic time was significant as was the call to keep the sight reading portion of the festival. We feel this compromise will allow for both elements of the festival to stay intact and will allow for students to have the best possible experience.

As an additional note, I will be requesting the instrumentation numbers from each school so appropriate numbers of copies can be made for the sight reading portion. When your sight reading has begun, you will be handed folders with exact instrumentation numbers specific to your group so as to cut down on time.

## Comments

Our last update includes the comments portion of the festival. So as to include additional high quality comments from adjudicators, we have cut the comments section of the score sheet in half so that adjudicators can now focus exclusively on spoken comments. Adjudicators will be encouraged to provide general comments on paper, but the recordings of comments will allow for real time insight into your groups performance. At the conclusion of your group's performance, you will receive 3 recordings with adjudicator comments and 1 clean recording of your group's performance.

I'd like to thank everyone who has taken the time to express their thoughts, ideas and concerns with me over the past several years as they have all directly influenced many of these changes. I would also like to thank Lyndsay Boysen who has done a tremendous amount of research and leg work into putting these rubrics and rating sheets together. This year will certainly be an experimental one and I hope you all as enthusiastic as I am to bring this festival into the modern era.

Ken Martin

NHMEA Large Group Chairperson