26-27 MIDDLE SCHOOL
CHORAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK

REGISTRATION

Online and Postmark Deadline - January 29, 2027
Cancellation - February 1, 2027

Login to the SCMEA Choral Division Website, by creating an account using your NAfME membership. Navigate to CPA>Middle School Site Info to view site information and registration. Once you have logged in to the Choral Division Website and completed registration and payment you will be considered fully registered.
Checks made payable to **SCMEA Choral Division**
Mail to:
League Academy
% Casey Kerr
125 Twin Lake Road
Greenville, SC 29609

EASTERN UPSTATE SITE - ROEBUCK, SC - **March 16-17, 2027**
DORMAN HIGH SCHOOL
1050 Cavalier Way, Roebuck, SC 29376
SITE HOST - Beth Hoffee - 864-353-3425
SITE HOST - Leigha Keller - 864-316-5236
SITE HOST - Joey Carlisle - 803-468-0559

WESTERN UPSTATE SITE - CLEMSON, SC - **March 18-19, 2027**
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH of CLEMSON
397 College Ave, Clemson, 20631
SITE HOST - Kayla Williams - 864-723-2378

MIDLANDS SITE - WEST COLUMBIA, SC - **March 18-19, 2027**
LEXINGTON 2 PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
509 Bulldog Blvd, Cayce, SC 29033
SITE HOST - Beth Brooks - 803-260-6553

LOW COUNTRY SITE - SUMMERVILLE, SC- **March 15-16, 2027**
SUMMERS CORNER PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
318 Gnarly Oak Lane, Summerville, SC 29485
SITE HOST - Andrea Scheulen - 443-875-9151

GENERAL RULES AND PROCEDURES

1. Participating choral directors must be members of SCMEA and present your membership card or proof of current membership. It is the director's responsibility to provide this information on online registration and to ensure that it is valid and current. If membership proof is not provided, performance will be denied. No refunds will be issued

2. Each school is guaranteed slots for two (2) participating choirs. Registrations for additional choirs beyond two (2) must be approved by the CPA committee chair. This decision will be based on availability of time slots at the requested location.

3. Choirs must perform on the scheduled day and time in which they are assigned. Any exceptions will be made by the committee due to logistics and time constraints of the event. These decisions are determined by the number of registrations received.

   Commute times will be researched prior to creating the performance schedule. Choirs with a commute of 2 hours 30 minutes or more will not be scheduled before 9:00 am unless otherwise arranged with the choral director. Choirs with the same director will not be scheduled less than 1 hour apart. Choirs with the same director and from the same school will not be scheduled on separate days unless a special circumstance is presented to the committee by the director. Submitting the request is not a guarantee.

4. The schedule of the event will be EMAILED to registered choral directors. Verification of registration, posting of schedule, and performance site instructions will be communicated through email. Directors need to provide a working email addresses that are checked daily and prevent event emails from being blocked. It is the director's responsibility to make sure s/he has working emails that are checked and emails are being received. Directors are responsible for keeping up with deadlines, paperwork, and information that is distributed by email.

5. Event day procedures will be sent out by email to registered directors prior to the festival. Follow these procedures precisely.

6. Names of the event judges will be posted on the Choral Division website as well as at the SCMEA Professional Development Conference in February. If, for any reason, judging panels are not available for an announcement, the committee chair will communicate the judging as they are secured. Directors must not discuss the Choral Performance

Assessment with the judges or use any of the judges as a clinician during that school year.

7. Directors, students, chaperones, and guests are to follow instructions given by the CPA Committee on the day of the event.Directors are responsible for all students and chaperones and their behavior while at the event site. Electronic devices are strictly prohibited in the performance venue. This rule covers everyone in attendance, including students, teachers, chaperones, and parents.
8. Directors are responsible for all students and chaperones and their behavior while at the event site. Electronic devices are strictly prohibited in the performance venue. This rule covers everyone in attendance, including students, teachers, chaperones, and parents.
9. If a problem occurs, schools may incur a rating deduction, dismissal from the event, and/or probation and suspension with accompanying letters to the director and principals notifying them of the infraction or inappropriate conduct.
10. All site procedures must be followed.

FEES AND REFUNDS

Fees

The registration fee is $250.00 per choir. No money will be refunded due to cancellation after February 1, 2027. Any cancellations must be sent in writing/email to the Committee Chair. Checks should be made payable to SCMEA Choral Division. Schools registering two or more choirs may submit 1 check for their school Note: Late registrations and/or fees will not be accepted. Schools that fail to communicate check delays by the registration deadline will forfeit their registration.

Refunds

The following events do offer refunds for group cancellation by specific deadlines: Middle School Choral Performance Assessment and High School Choral Performance Assessment. For these events, refunds will not be automatically processed. Directors must request a refund by the published deadline. The refund request must be submitted in writing via email to the event chairperson. Please note: online payment processing fees can never be refunded at the fully charged amount.

REPERTOIRE REQUIREMENTS

- Each ensemble will perform only two selections.
- All music must be memorized.
- Repertoire must be quality choral literature that is both festival appropriate and appropriate for each individual ensemble.
- Judges have the discretion to take choice of repertoire into account for scoring using the performance rubric provided. Judges can take off points for choice of repertoire if they feel that the music chosen does not fit the voices within the ensemble.
- Directors must cite credible literature sources from which their repertoire was chosen. Acceptable sources may include but are not limited to:
    - All-County Chorus Concert Repertoire
    - ACDA Repertoire lists
    - Middle School Honor Choral Clinic lists
- Repertoire information, including instrumentalist needs for additional chairs and/or stands, will be required during the registration process.
- There will be no previously recorded background accompaniment unless the recording is part of the composition.
- Choreography can only be used if it is written into the music or approved by the committee.

PERFORMANCE PROCEDURES AND RULES

Warm Up:

- Choirs are provided a warm-up room for twenty (20) minutes. The warm-up room will have a piano or keyboard provided.
- A monitor will be provided to each warm-up room to notify when time begins and ends.
- The twenty (20) minute warm-up time begins when the last member of the ensemble enters the room.
- A five (5) minute warning will be given to alert the director of the time remaining.
- Travel time from the warm-up room to the stage **will** be factored into the stage performance schedule.
- If your choir is late, the missed warm-up time will be forfeited. The festival must remain on schedule (as much as possible) for all choirs

involved. If your choir arrives past their assigned performance time, the choir may not perform.

Stage Performances:

- Choirs will be adjudicated on **two** pieces.
- All repertoire must not exceed 10 minutes of performance time..
- Travel time on and off the stage will not count as part of the 10-minute performance time. Time will begin at the end of the presenting announcement.
- Student Teachers or Long Term Substitutes may be given permission by CPA committee to conduct a school's ensemble in extenuating circumstances (ie. director is sick, on maternity leave, last minute emergencies). Student Teachers or Long Term Substitutes must be a current NAfME member and must provide their membership number when registering the choir on event day. If this information is expired or invalid, the student teacher/long term sub will not be able to conduct the choir.
- Each director will be provided with professional recordings of his/her choir's stage performance and each of the judge's comments.
- Groups need to be dressed in proper concert attire: NO JEANS, SHORTS, LEGGINGS, ATHLETIC WEAR or SHORT SKIRTS (above the knee). An appropriate wardrobe may consist of the following: matching ensemble t-shirts/polo shirts,dress shirts, dress pants, slacks, knee/ankle length skirts or dresses.

Marked Original Scores:

- Directors must provide a completed ANNOUNCEMENT sheet upon arrival on event day. Directors must provide **three** original copies of ensemble repertoire with numbered measures.
- Copied music will not be allowed without a letter of permission from the publisher included with each judge's copy. Letters for the judges **and** the Site Host will be provided at the registration table (**4 TOTAL**).
- Digital-download copies will be allowed, but either a receipt for purchase or publisher authorization script showing the number of copies purchased matches the ensemble enrollment should be seen on each copy of the music presented.
- If copied music is used without publisher permission, the choir will be able to perform for comments only.

- Choral Public Domain Library (CPDL) Procedure:
    - Print off the Title Page of your piece that CPDL provides as a cover for your music, each of the judge's copies, and your pianist (if applicable).
- Failure to provide three original copies of ensemble repertoire with numbered measures will result in the school performing for comments only - no rating will be given. Additionally, the CPA Chairperson will send written documentation of the situation to the school principal copying the director, and Choral Division President.

Sight Reading Rules and Procedures

- SEE **SCMEA Middle School CPA Sight Reading 2027** for specific level criteria
- Sight Reading repertoire will be in the same voicing as their most difficult voicing of the choir's stage performance repertoire and of Level 2 difficulty
    - Example:
        - A choir that performed an SA and an SSA piece onstage will perform SSA/Level 2 in Sight Reading
        - A choir that performed an SAB and an SATB piece will perform SATB/Level 2 in Sight Reading
- Directors may choose to sightread Level 1 instead, but this will eliminate the eligibility of a "Distinction" classification.
- Students may **not** be used for two ensembles in the same voicing category.
    - For example, if you are bringing 2 ensembles they need to be of different voicing category….SAB/SSA or SA/TB etc.
    - Choirs from the same school will sight-read different sight-reading levels if registered in the same voicing. Voicing information on the registration form indicates how many sight-reading copies are needed for the event.
- All choirs are required to sight-read.
- If a choir performs for "Comments Only" on the stage, then "Comments Only" will be given in the sight-reading room.
    - Directors will not communicate with judges and ask that they put a potential rating on the score sheet as though the ensemble was being rated.
- Directors, student teachers, and school administrators are permitted into the sight-reading room. However, ONLY THE DIRECTOR may assist

students with their preparation of sight-reading music. Chaperones and students from other ensembles are not permitted in the sight reading room.

- The sight-reading music will have lyrics. However, the director may specify the syllable(s) to be used by singers (i.e. "loo", Solfege, count singing, etc.). Sight-reading the text is not required.
- Preparation Time
    - Directors will receive one (1) minute of music perusal before the nine (9) minutes of prep time begins.
    - Ensembles will have nine (9) minutes of preparation time before being evaluated. The evaluator will signal the director on timing as determined by the director before the nine (9) minute preparation time starts.
    - The piano may only be used to arpeggiate the first (or tonic) chord and to sound individual reference pitches during the practice time. Two notes may not be played simultaneously on the piano. Two or more consecutive pitches from a particular voice part or phrase may not be played on the piano.
    - At the beginning of prep, directors may guide students to identify time/key signature and their first pitch. As students are reading and singing their part, the director may walk around to each part/group to do the following: listen, correct, sing along with, help with rhythm and pitch errors and guide students to figuring out the examples on their own.
    - Directors should NOT be singing and speaking pitches/rhythms, measures or phrases for students to listen to and then echo or repeat. Students should be learning, reading and figuring out their own musical pitches, rhythms, measures and phrases on their own with needed assistance and corrections from the director.
- Evaluation Time
    - After playing the beginning pitches, the piano may not be used during the evaluated sight-singing performance. Likewise, the director is prohibited from talking or singing with the ensemble during the evaluated sight-reading performance. In addition, students and directors are prohibited from producing any audible sound that assists from keeping a pulse. Doing so will result in disqualification of the sight-reading score.

    - Directors and singers should heed all tempo indications, phrase markings, and/or dynamic indications in the sight-reading material.

Adjudications

- Scoring sheets and rubrics will be provided to all judges or will be done digitally.
- All performance judges will provide feedback on a digital score sheet and recorded verbal comments.
- Sight Reading judges will provide written or digital feedback only.
- Separate ratings will be given for performance and sight-reading.
- The Performance Rating (80%) and Sight Reading Rating (20%) will be combined for an overall rating to be awarded.
- Judges Scoring Rubric
- Sight Reading Judges Rubric

SCORING AND RATING BREAKDOWN

Possible Rating outcomes:

- Superior with Distinction
    - A rating of 90-100 from all performance judges and the sight reading judge
    - Sight Reading performance of Level 2 music
- Superior
    - A rating of 90-100 as an average score from all performance and sight reading judges
    - Sight Reading performance of Level 1 music
- Excellent - A rating of 80-89 as an average score from all performance and sight reading judges
- Quality- A rating of 70-79 as an average score from all performance and sight reading judges
- Developing- A rating of 60-69 as an average score from all performance and sight reading judges
- Participation - A rating of 50-59 as an average score from all performance and sight reading judges

Awards (trophies) will be given to overall ratings for Excellent, Superior and Superior with Distinction.

***Only directors may pick up original scores/scoresheets/trophies for his or her schools**

PERFORMANCE SITE RULES:

BEHAVIOR

- Teachers must accompany their choirs to the event and remain with them during event day.
- **NO VIDEO RECORDING PERMITTED.** This is a state event; directors, students and chaperones must adhere to copyright policy.
- All mobile phones, smart watches/glasses, or other electronic devices, hats, sunglasses, and gum are prohibited. iPads may be used if on Airplane mode and checked by Site Host, Warm-Up Room monitor, and Sight-Reading Room monitor. Any item that would interfere with performances, aurally or visually, are not allowed.
- Students may not wander in and out of the performance area, especially during the adjudication of another group.
- There is to be no loud talking, laughing, or loud and disrespectful noises, or other performance disruptions.
- If a student, chaperone, parent, or director displays unbecoming or illegal behavior or damages property, they will be put on probation for the next year and the principal will be notified. Additionally, unbecoming behavior may jeopardize the school's participation for the next year.
- No food or drink is allowed in the performance area.
- No smoking/vaping anywhere on or around the host site.
- Choirs are encouraged to observe other ensembles respectfully during the performance.
- If any interference occurs during a group's performance, those responsible will have to leave the performance site immediately with their directors, chaperones, and will not be allowed to stay. A disciplinary note will follow and may result in probation or suspension of the school from the next year's Choral Performance Assessment.
- All choirs, directors, chaperones, bus drivers, etc must remain in the designated "choral performance assessment areas." Instructional areas and wings on campus not designed for event use are prohibited. Any campus visitor found in prohibited areas will be dismissed from campus. A letter will be sent to the school's director and principal informing them of the action. Disciplinary action could result in probation or suspension

CONSEQUENCES OF RULES VIOLATION - NOTIFICATION

1. When a Rule Violation occurs, the choral director will receive a written letter from the committee stating exactly which standing rule was violated and that all guidelines must be followed or the director and/or school risks being placed on probation and/or barred from participation in future SCMEA

Choral Division events if rules violations recur. The Principal will also receive a copy of the same letter if the violation compromised student safety at the event. Students involved in the violation will be barred from attending the same event the following school year for a period of one school year.

2. The same choral director (even if transferred to another school in S.C.) again fails to adhere to the rules or commits two or more Committee Rules violations during the same event. Choral director and school will be put on probationary status. The school choral director, school principal, and Choral Division President will receive written letters from the committee stating that the school may still participate, but the SCMEA By-Laws and Committee Rules serve a real and valuable purpose and it is the Choral Director's responsibility to adhere to them. The letter will contain the event, date, and quote the exact committee rule(s) that were violated. The letters will also direct committee members who teach in the same region of South Carolina to serve as a mentor during this probationary period and submit written documentation to the committee chairperson. Lastly, the letters will state that a recurrence of future violations will result in the students involved, or the Choral Director and the school choral program being barred from attending SCMEA events for one year.

3. (a.) If the Choral Director continues to commit Committee Rules violations after #1 and #2 are issued, either the students involved, or the Choral Director and the school choral program will be barred from participation of all SCMEA Choral Division events for one year. (b.) If the evidence of violations is the direct result of the Choral Director's repeated negligence to review and adhere to the guidelines, the Choral Director (same or different school) and the choral program will be barred from participating in all Choral Division events for one year. The letters (a. and b.) will be mailed to the Choral Director, Principal, District Music Consultant, and Choral Division President containing the documented history of rules violations, dates, and quote the most recent committee rule(s) that were violated. Committee members who teach in the same region of South Carolina will continue to serve as a mentor during this period and submit written documentation to the committee chairperson.