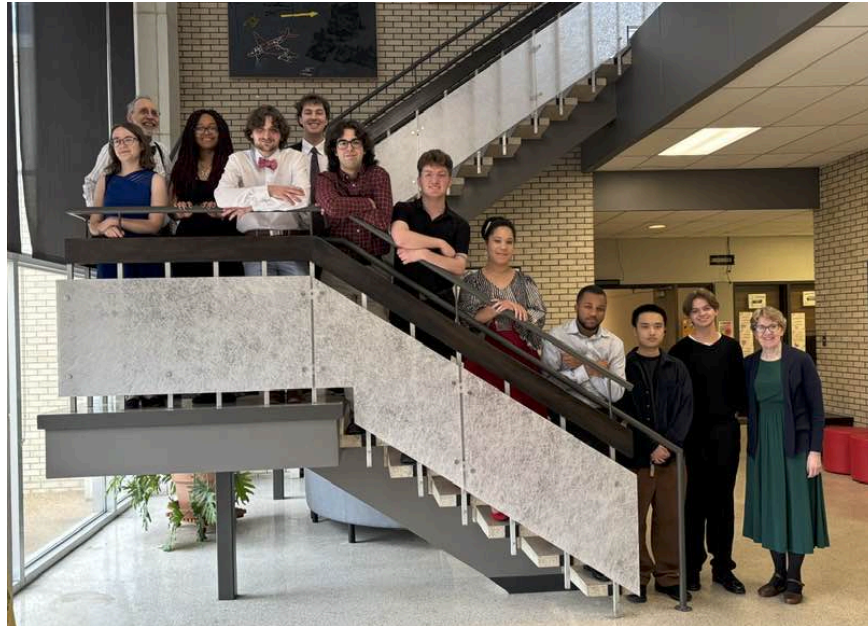


# A-STATE PIANO STUDIO NEWSLETTER

## UPDATED MAY 25, 2026



Welcome to the **SUMMER SCALE CHALLENGE!**

### Rules:

1. Perform any scale or arpeggio. Can be in person for Dr. Clark or sent via video.
  - a. Tempo must be very steady, with no stops, hesitations, speeding up, or slowing down. Choose a tempo at which you think you can play it accurately.
  - b. Fingering and notes must be exactly correct in both hands. No exceptions.
2. Get 100 points for each scale, arpeggio, or chord progression that meets all the above criteria.

3. **For every 1000 points earned, you will get \$10 in cash!**
4. Here is the book of [Scale and Arpeggio Fingerings and Sightreading Resources](#)
5. I sent you a link to a spreadsheet which shows everyone's progress.
6. Dr. Clark is allowed the final word on all rulings.

### **SUMMER OF SIGHTREADING CHALLENGE:**

#### Rules:

1. Sightreading needs to be done in person or in live remote meeting. If done remotely, Dr. Clark will send you the piece at the time of the live remote meeting.
2. Sightread any piece or excerpt of a piece that is at least 8 measures long.
  - a. Scan the music for 3 minutes before playing. Identify potential trouble spots.
  - b. You may finger the notes silently over the keys but do not make any sound.
  - c. If you can, imagine what the piece will sound like when played.
  - d. Play the piece at a tempo at which you can play it accurately.
  - e. Correct rhythms and consistent tempo outweigh correct notes.
  - f. Don't look down at your hands.
  - g. Don't stop or pause, no matter what.
3. Each piece or excerpt starts at 100 points. 20 points are deducted for every pause or change in tempo, or for egregiously wrong rhythms or notes.
4. **These points count toward the Summer Scale Challenge.**
5. Dr. Clark is allowed the final word on all rulings.

**Whoever gets the most points overall will win a special prize at the end of the summer!**

This challenge lasts until August 1, 2026.

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### **FEDERATION FESTIVAL:**

[Here is the link](#) to sign up to assist with the Federation Festival this Saturday Feb. 21 at the Fine Arts Center. You can get \$10/hour and also Recital Credit for each full hour you monitor. Plus, you get to hear some great young pianists and singers perform for judges!

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### **SPECTRUM CONCERT APPLICATION:**

If you plan to submit a video for the [Spectrum Concert Auditions](#), you may do so at Studio Class on Monday. Be sure you have a phone or device to make the recording, and dress appropriately (concert attire, doesn't need to be black).

If you will not make your recording during class time, you should reserve a time in the Recital Hall next week to make your video. This could be during your lesson time but you can also do it without me if that's preferable.

Applications are due March 2 at 11:59 pm.

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## **LET'S PRESENT AT ASMTA CONFERENCE!** June 5-6, Fayetteville

Instead of doing the Piano for Band and Choir Student idea, let's choose a composer to present on. Can look at this list or consider others, [A Seat at the Piano](#).

More info (I can send you this email with link to application):

As we celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Music Teachers National Association, I am excited to invite you to the 2026 ASMTA State Conference at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville on Friday June 5th and Saturday June 6th. This will be our 104th annual conference and I am pleased to announce that our featured guest artist is **Alan Chow**, Chair of the Piano Department at Eastman School of Music and former University of Arkansas piano professor, and our Guest Clinician is **Carla Davis Cash**, Professor of Piano Pedagogy at Texas Tech University.

I am attaching the proposal application for anyone who would like to be considered to be a presenter at the conference. The applications must be submitted by **March 23, 2026**. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to email me at [nxhakutani@ualr.edu](mailto:nxhakutani@ualr.edu)

Sincerely,  
Naoki Hakutani, ASMTA Vice-President

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## **DUETS AND ENSEMBLES:**

[Here is a link](#) to a folder with piano duets and ensemble music for us to do in Studio Class and possibly for the Piano Studio Recital on April 12. You should practice your part and get together with your partner(s) outside of studio.

Your names and assignments are on the titles of the documents, e.g. "Bober Fiesta de Mexico Piano Duet Mike 1, Eddie 2" means that Mike will play the Primo (higher part) and Eddie will play the Secondo (lower part). In such a case, the Secondo has been scanned as the first page. Of course, it's fun to look at all the parts so you know what everyone else is up to!

If you'd like another piece and/or you'd like to perform with a particular person, let me know.

Enchanted Castle is a piece for 3 pianists at one piano, and all of you have been assigned a part. It's not difficult, and it's very short. For the Piano Studio Recital, we can have a bunch of people playing it. I'm not sure who that will be yet. I realize many of you can't come to Studio Class, but you can still rehearse this piece with friends from the studio if you'd like.

Enchanted Castle Part 1:

- Lincoln
- Anamaria
- Carson
- Jakob Callis
- Nakita
- Nathan

Enchanted Castle Part 2:

- Jacob J. V.
- Kiri
- Chandler
- David B.
- Braden

Enchanted Castle Part 3:

- David G.
  - Eddie
  - Mike
  - Ethan C.
  - Emily
  - Sameer
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Action Items:

- Applications for [Privately Funded Scholarships](#) are due Feb. 9 (extended from Feb. 2). This includes all keyboard scholarships. Who doesn't love free money?
- Consider applying to audition for the [Spectrum Concert](#). The deadline for this has now been pushed back to March 2.
- Read your Syllabus on Canvas
- Sign up to perform on [Tuesday Morning Recital](#) (not required if you're playing on Piano Studio Recital)
- Consider auditioning for the [Beethoven Club Competition](#) in Memphis ([application](#))

Events:

- MTAD (Music Teachers Association of the Delta) Teachers Recital, January 25, 5:00, Recital Hall **Cancelled**
- MTAD Sunday Sampler Recital, Feb. 15, 2:00, Recital Hall. Pre-college pianists and singers.

- Delta Symphony Feb. 15 Concert there will be a soloist playing Beethoven 5th Piano Concerto, 1st movement. Riceland
- February 21, 2026 NFMC (National Federation of Music Clubs) Festival, helpers needed
- April 11, 2026 ASMTA (Arkansas State Music Teachers Association) Festival, helpers needed
- **Piano Studio Recital: Sunday 4/12/26 at 5pm in the Recital Hall.**
- June 5-6, 2026 ASMTA State Conference, In Fayetteville at UA. Free for college students! Let's apply to present as an MTNA Collegiate Chapter! (Really supposed to be members, but I can assist with fee which is about \$25.00, and we can find ways to fund going to the conference) More about this below.
- Studio Class is 3:00-4:00 on Mondays in Spring 2026.
- Read your Syllabus on Canvas
- Sign up to perform on Tuesday Morning Recital (not required if you're playing on Piano Studio Recital)
- Who can be our Social Media Chair?
- Dr. Clark will be out of town on Thursday March 19 and Friday March 20 for the [MTNA \(Music Teachers National Association\) National Conference](#), Chicago, March 20-25, 2026. This is during Spring Break. Please [sign up for makeup lessons](#) if you have your lesson on one of these days.

Everyone should plan to attend the 2027 MTNA National Conference, April 2-6, 2027 because it will be in St. Louis! We should present as a group! Maybe on Piano for Band and Choir Students? Carson (or someone else), can you organize this?

We could start by contacting Ms. Krissie Holmes at Jonesboro High.

Here's some information about that from Laura Watkins:

- Nettleton JrH and HS do NOT have piano labs. They have considered getting one at Nettleton STEAM Intermediate . In fact, they may have some keyboards over there they use similarly to a lab. I believe Casey Sherwood is at Nettleton STEAMi.
- Jonesboro Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) does have one. Candis Crawford (nee Sunday) has been working to "revive" it. I think the main thing needed was a new headset system.

- At VPA they have choir rehearsal and an african drumming ensemble (Saven Watkins is a part of this) that meet from 7:30 am to 8:00. I think school technically starts at 8:10 but drop off begins at 7:30. I think a lot of schools are staying away from after school activities so they are using that early morning slot instead.
- Let Dr. Clark know if you have any issues with practice rooms, including with keys to 241 and 238. Any trouble finding practice time? Key for these is in Locker 48, Combination 25-35-25.
- Do your stretches before each practice session!
- Carson Brinkley is the President of the A-State Piano Society/MTNA Collegiate Chapter, [kenneth.brinkley@smail.astate.edu](mailto:kenneth.brinkley@smail.astate.edu)
- [Department of Music information](#)
- [Helpful Campus Resources](#) (everything from Counseling to Food Insecurity, Emergency Housing, etc.)



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