



USING NYSSMA EVALUATION SHEETS IN
PORTFOLIO/PERFORMANCE BASED
ASSESSMENT PRACTICES IN
MUSIC EDUCATION

November 1995



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Effective use of the NYSSMA evaluation sheets can enhance teaching and learning and assist in developing musicianship through performance.

I. PURPOSE

This pamphlet outlines ways to use NYSSMA evaluation sheets to:

- ▶ *improve the teaching-learning process;*
- ▶ *expand the content of individual instruction, maintaining performance as the core;*
- ▶ *add assessment tools for music teachers;*
- ▶ *develop support for improving the music program.*

It also provides basic information on portfolio/performance based assessment practices in music education.

Portfolio assessment, along with performance evaluation, helps students increasingly to respond, criticize, and analyze their own performance and the performance of others more skillfully. This makes them more independent learners in music not only from week to week but also throughout their lives.

Music teachers must manage assessment in such a way that a student perceives that the rating sheets are part of an ongoing assessment process. Teachers should review student portfolios on a regular basis. This pamphlet lists some actions that teachers and students can take in these reviews.



II. TYPES OF PORTFOLIOS

Three kinds of portfolios are identified here: process, product and cumulative.

Process Portfolios contain a wealth of material related to student achievement such as:

- ▶ *audio tapes of the student's performances;*
- ▶ *rating sheets (such as NYSSMA evaluation sheets);*
- ▶ *students' journals, logs, and self-defined goals;*
- ▶ *commendations and criticisms;*
- ▶ *repertoire lists;*
- ▶ *weekly lesson evaluations;*
- ▶ *practice records;*
- ▶ *programs from attended performances;*
- ▶ *essays, research reports, and critiques;*
- ▶ *compositions and arrangements;*
- ▶ *grades, quarterly reports;*
- ▶ *tests, quizzes, examinations;*
- ▶ *course standards, grading policies;*
- ▶ *learning contracts.*

The student maintains the process portfolio. The teacher should provide a list of options for inclusion by the student and should check its contents periodically.

Product Portfolios are accumulated at specific times of the year (e.g., each quarter or semester) from items in the process portfolios that the teacher and student select. Its purpose is to demonstrate achievement and give students an opportunity to reflect on his/her work. Therefore, in addition to accumulated items selected from the process portfolio, the product portfolio consists of the following items:

- ▶ *the students' critique of his/her progress;*
- ▶ *the teacher's assessment of the student's growth, not only in music content but*
- ▶ *also in managing his/her own learning process.*

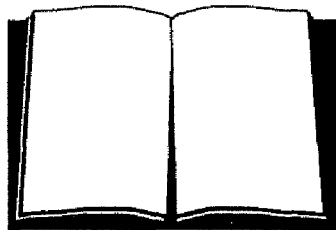
Cumulative Portfolios are assembled at the end of each year and contribute to the school-wide portfolio of each student. Each contains the best work that year, the student's critique of his/her work, and the teacher's end-of-year evaluation of the student's progress. The cumulative portfolio is an opportunity for goal-setting for the summer and the following year. This material is retained to start the following school year and is passed on when the student changes schools or teachers.

III. RUBRICS FOR MUSIC PERFORMANCE K-12

A rubric is an assessment tool that describes levels of student achievement on performance tasks. Grant Wiggins defines it as a printed set of guidelines for distinguishing between performances or products of different quality. Rubrics are based on standards for achievement, provide criteria understandable to students, and contain scores arranged on a scale. Rubrics are marked by other characteristics:

- ▶ *the points (scores) of the scale are equidistant on a continuum;*
- ▶ *descriptors are provided for each level of student performance;*
- ▶ *descriptors are valid (meaningful) and scores are reliable (consistent);*
- ▶ *the highest point (level) indicates exemplary (professional) performance;*
- ▶ *scores are related to actual levels of student performance (empirically validated);*
- ▶ *the scale includes 4 or more rating levels (points);*
- ▶ *types include holistic (overall student performance) and analytic (dimensions) and the assessment of a student performance should include both types;*
- ▶ *they make explicit to students, parents, and administrators the criteria for student achievement; and*
- ▶ *they can be used by students to assess their own performance and the performance of other students.*

NYSSMA forms and adjudication standards for NYSSMA Evaluation Festivals include sets of rubrics. Examples can be found on the backs of NYSSMA Evaluation Forms and in the NYSSMA Manual. Teachers should write rubrics for their own programs.



IV. USE OF NYSSMA EVALUATION SHEETS IN AN ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

A. Types of Rating Sheets

Although NYSSMA publishes over fifty different evaluation sheets for various instruments, voices, and ensembles, there are basically four different types of NYSSMA sheets a teacher may want to use. They include:

- ▶ *Solo Sheets for levels I through IV with the 28 point evaluation system;*
- ▶ *Solo Sheets for levels V and VI with the 100 point evaluation system;*
- ▶ *Small Ensemble Sheets;*
- ▶ *Major Organization Sheets*

Teachers may select the sheets that best meet the needs of their students and their grading system and/or philosophy. Teachers may also want to encourage students to evaluate their overall performance using rating sheets. For example, students in a small ensemble may use NYSSMA Ensemble Sheets. Through coaching, a teacher can encourage formal cooperative learning and evaluation among students.

B. Suggestions for Effective Use

Students must be given instructional opportunities in order to be able to use appropriate terminology (tone, intonation, etc.) to evaluate their own performance and the performance of others. Using available resources, teachers must work to enhance their students' ability to discriminate and articulate differences in the quality of music performances. High quality professional performances (recorded or live) should be the standard for which to aim and the basis for effective use of NYSSMA evaluation sheets.

- ▶ *Performance examples should include student, teacher and professional artists, both recorded and live.*
- ▶ *Teachers must cover all aspects (tone, intonation, etc.) of music performance. Most of those aspects will include various subcategories.*
- ▶ *Evaluation by the student and the teacher should be a part of each period of instruction.*
- ▶ *The student and the teacher must be involved in formalized evaluation at regular intervals.*

V. ROLES OF PARTICIPANTS

The following are lists of suggested activities to include teachers, students, parents, and administrators/boards in effective portfolio performance based assessment practices.

A. Teachers can use NYSSMA sheets to:

- ▶ *assess individual student needs;*
- ▶ *help define instruction;*
- ▶ *improve overall achievement;*
- ▶ *establish baseline instructional priorities and follow-up;*
- ▶ *determine the extent of success (i.e., pre-instruction and post-instruction use of sheets);*
- ▶ *assess the extent of student growth on a regular basis (i.e., quarterly, each semester, each school year);*
- ▶ *establish and/or monitor the status of the instructional program on a yearly basis by developing an overall review of evaluation sheets;*
- ▶ *document achievement through the use of outside evaluators;*
- ▶ *model the assessment process before students are required to assess each other.*

B. Students can use NYSSMA sheets to:

- ▶ *receive an indication of what they need to work on most;*
- ▶ *define specific study objectives with the help of a teacher;*
- ▶ *reflect on what was effective and how it was achieved;*
- ▶ *learn how to evaluate the performances of other students.*

NOTE: When students use evaluation sheets to evaluate other students, teachers should assess students on how well they use the sheets/criteria in the assessment process. The important point is to develop students as adjudicators in addition to students as performers.

C. Parents:

- ▶ *receive a summary of individual sheets prepared by teachers to indicate the positive aspects and areas in need of improvement of the program;*
- ▶ *review and reflect on their children's NYSSMA sheets. Parent comments can become part of the student's portfolio;*
- ▶ *are encouraged to reflect on the program information provided and submit comments. Comments can become part of a program portfolio for the school.*

D. Administrators/Board of Education:

Program assessment can be accomplished by teachers/directors collecting the overall assessments from sheets and reporting to Administrators and the Board of Education on a yearly basis. Year to year comparisons could also be included. Major organization evaluation sheets as well as the compilation of solo and ensemble sheets can be included.

Notes

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