

NYSSMA® Solo and Small Ensemble Festival Season 2021 - Update

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A Virtual NYSSMA® Solo and Small Ensemble Festival Season will be held this coming March – June, 2021. There will not be a NYSSMA® Majors Festival Season this school year.

Please find the NYSSMA® festival calendar posted on the website. Notice that the calendar includes two new columns: Registration Deadline and Upload Period. No longer listed is the column labeled Festival Dates, as the original festival dates are no longer significant.

The registration deadline date is very important as this date represents the last day you may register your students for any particular festival. The upload period for each festival is equally critical as the dates represented in this column reflect the period when your students are required to perform their solo, scales (or rudiments), and sight-reading.

Additionally, find a link on the home page under News & Updates titled: 2021 NYSSMA® Virtual Solo and Small Ensemble Festival Season Information. There are a number of informational documents posted here. As more information becomes available it will be posted to this link. Please note that all rules for festivals (unless otherwise stated by NYSSMA®) will remain in place.

The Cyber Summit Conference, December 3-5, 2020, will also offer sessions to assist teachers and adjudicators with the virtual NYSSMA® festival training. Following the Cyber Summit Conference these sessions will be archived on the NYSSMA® website.

NYSSMA® 2021 Virtual Solo & Small Ensemble Evaluation Festival FAQs – Part II

Will it be Possible for Small Ensembles to Participate in 2021 NYSSMA® Virtual Evaluation Festivals?

Small Ensembles (two to sixteen members) will be able to participate in NYSSMA® 2021 Solo & Ensemble Virtual Evaluation Festivals. All rules and regulations as stated on R-19 of the NYSSMA® Manual must be followed. Traditional seating arrangements may need to be altered to accommodate social distancing requirements.

What Considerations Should be Made Concerning Recording Equipment Placement?

The placement of the recording equipment should allow the recording to provide the adjudicator with an unobstructed view of the following:

- Brass – Waist up view showing playing position, bell not aimed at mic.
- Jazz Drum Set – 45degree camera angle from high hat side of drum set, showing head to toe
- Percussion – mallet or stick grip, 45degree camera angle
- Piano – Full view of both hands
- Strings & Guitar – Bow grip and left-hand position
- Voice and Vocal Jazz – view of head to toe
- Woodwinds – Embouchure and hand position

Is it Possible to Scan the Music for Task 1 Directly into the Platform?

No, the copy of the student's music must be a PDF. The PDF must be on the student's computer or phone for the upload to Task 1 of the platform.

Will the Sight-reading Criteria listed in the NYSSMA® Manual be applied to Task 4?

Yes, the sight-reading exercises generated in Sight-reading Factory will follow the sight-reading criteria listed in the NYSSMA® Manual.

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NYSSMA® 2021 Virtual Solo & Small Ensemble Evaluation Festival FAQs – Part II *continued*

How Will the Improvisation Requirements for Vocal and Instrumental Jazz be Incorporated in the Virtual Evaluation?

The improvisation with backing tracks should be recorded in Task 3.

Please see NYSSMA® Manual 9-3 for specific instrumental jazz improvisation requirements.

Vocal Jazz soloists will prepare either:

- Slow Blues in G – 12 measures
- Fast Blues in Bb – 24 measures

The improvisation choice for Vocal Jazz will be dependent on the tempo of the solo. Solos with a fast tempo will choose Slow Blues in G. Slow solos will choose Fast Blues in Bb.

All other requirements listed on Manual page 9-24 2 will apply to Vocal Jazz solos.

Do All Four Tasks Need to be Uploaded at the Same Time or Can They be Uploaded Separately?

Each of the four tasks may be uploaded at different times, they do not have to be uploaded at the same time.

When and How is Student Registration Payment Made?

Student registration fees must be submitted to the Festival Chair by the registration deadline. Purchase orders or checks made payable to NYSSMA® are due at registration. As has been past practice, school districts should send one check for all the students registering, rather than individual checks. Credit cards are not accepted.

Will Information be Available at the NYSSMA® Cyber Summit Regarding 2021 NYSSMA® Solos & Ensemble Evaluation Festivals?

Webinars provided by the platform vendor, Music First, will be available at the NYSSMA® Cyber Summit. There will be separate webinars available for teachers, adjudicators, and students. The webinars will begin on December 5 at 12:30 PM.

Are There Sources for Additional Information About the NYSSMA® 2021 Virtual Solo & Ensemble Evaluation Festivals?

Information concerning 2021 NYSSMA® Virtual Solo & Ensemble Evaluation Festival season is available on the homepage of the NYSSMA® Website. In addition to the website, information about the 2021 virtual evaluation festival season is found in the October and November/December issues of the School Music News.

NYSSMA® 2020 "Virtual" All-State Update

During the month of October 2020, commitment notices were received from students and the rosters for all 8 All-State ensembles were finalized. Beginning the last two weeks of October and continuing in November All-State committees made up of the Chairs, Assistant Chairs, and Ensemble Clinicians met to work through the phases of the project. Students will be receiving Welcome Letters from Chairs (either through email or snail-mail) with instructions to meet for their first ZOOM session. At their meeting, each student will receive their SmartMusic membership. They will be on-boarded to SmartMusic, meet the Chair / Assistant Chair, meet the Clinician assigned to their voice or instrumentation, and each will be provided with a schedule. All meetings will be virtual and ultimately students will be uploading a video recording of their performance to be included in the 2020 All-State Concert. There are many moving parts to the process therefore the exact date of the concert cannot be announced at this time. The concert however is slated for March (TBA) and will feature all 8 All-State Ensembles. The concert will stream via the NYSSMA website and all are invited: students, parents, teachers, friends, and relatives. The concert will then be available for one full year for viewing or download.