Solo Fest Information and Requirements

This information applies to both the MCSMA (Monroe County School Music Association) January solo fest, and the NYSSMA (New York State School Music Association) spring solo fest.

- MCSMA is run by Monroe County and is open to students of all levels. Students receive comments and a grade rating and are eligible to be placed in All County ensembles based on a formula and scores. See [http://www.mcsma.org/events.htm](http://www.mcsma.org/events.htm) for event dates.

- NYSSMA has 2 types of festivals – the In House and the All State
  - The In-House NYSSMA is for all levels; no accompaniment is required but is certainly accepted. Students receive comments and a grade rating but are not eligible for Area or All Conference ensembles.
  - All-State NYSSMA is usually for students in levels 5 and 6 who want to qualify for an Area All State or All Conference ensemble
    - To be eligible for All Conference students must be in 10th or 11th grade, perform a level 6 solo and use piano accompaniment if the pieces has accompaniment. Accompaniment is not required for Area All State ensemble consideration.
  - Students are selected for ensembles based on past NYSSMA (not MCSMA) scores and the public school teacher’s recommendation. There is a formula used to determine who gets in based on level and seniority (i.e. a level VI 95 would trump a level V 100, or a senior who gets a level VI 100 would get preference over a junior with the same score). See [http://www.mcsma.org/docsallcountyscores.htm](http://www.mcsma.org/docsallcountyscores.htm)
  - PIANISTS only participate in the In House Eastman NYSSMA Festival; solos do not have to be memorized; however, if the student plays level 6 memorized and receives a 100, the student is eligible to apply for the Piano Showcase at the NYSSMA Winter Conference.
  - Winter MCSMA places students in a March All County ensemble, where spring NYSSMA places students in Area All State or All Conference groups in November of the following year

- Pathways requires its students to participate in the annual Eastman In-House NYSSMA the second Tuesday in May unless they are advanced enough to participate in an All State festival. SOTA likes their students to perform in both festivals. MCSMA is optional for other Pathways students but is highly recommended for those who have been in Pathways a few years.

- RCSD teachers must register students for solo festivals and ECMS teachers help select and prepare the student. Inform the RCSD teacher what the solo is as soon as it is chosen via the NYSSMA Solo Name – ECMS to RCSD form. It’s best to provide this information through email rather than depend on the student. If a student needs to purchase the music or any supplies and it’s not happening, let the RCSD teacher know. The music may be available from the RCSD music library. Let the Pathways Coordinator know if there is a financial hardship.

- If your student’s teacher does not register your student, ECMS does have a sign-up sheet in the ECMS office as a back-up.

- Deadline for registration is no less than six weeks in advance of the solo fest. January registration needs to be completed by mid-November before Thanksgiving break. The deadline for the annual Eastman In-House is the end of March. Since the dates of the spring All State NYSSMA festivals can be in April or May, it’s best to get registration information to the RCSD teacher by the end of February. See [https://www.nyssma.org/events/2018-03/](https://www.nyssma.org/events/2018-03/) for events.

- Accompanying: All solos that are going to be accompanied must be registered as accompanied at the initial registration and the accompanist’s name and any day/time limitations listed for purposes of room scheduling.
As previously mentioned, students trying for All Conference must play with accompaniment unless the solo is listed as unaccompanied. Non All State solos do not need to be accompanied.

- Solos must be selected from the current NYSSMA Manual. The manual can be found in the ECMS office, music stores, the RCSD music library, and some RCSD classrooms. If you have a question about a solo, call Atlas music: 671-2020 x3. The manual and solos are updated frequently, so be sure to check the most recent one.

- If a solo is not listed in the manual, the student may still attend solo fest but will receive comments only.

- The manual lists criteria the student needs to know for each instrument and solo level. Read the **solo information** in the rules & regulations section (in the July 2012 manual it’s page R-7) to find out how many movements of a multiple movement piece is required for the audition, repeats, or cadenzas.

- Students must have two originals of the piece they are playing: one for them and one for the judge. If the student does not have two originals, the judge will read off the same music as the auditioning student, but that is not optimal. If a student is accompanied, the accompanist must also have an original. CD sheet music is allowed with CD festival letter. If there is a bad page turn, one page may be copied to alleviate the problem.

- There is a fee to audition based on the level of the solo. Fees range from $14 to $26 per solo (fees change year to year). Some RCSD schools will cover this fee but sometimes the student will have to pay it.

- Graded solo sheets are available to RCSD teachers at the audition site on the day of the audition. If the teacher does not pick up the sheets they are mailed to the district for distribution. This takes between one and two weeks.

- Students fill out a playing permit when they register. They should clearly mark what school they attend.

- Contact the RCSD teacher or Pathways Coordinator with any questions or comments.