

MIDDLE SCHOOL SONG FEST GUIDELINES

(Approved August 2001)

Objective: The purpose of the Middle School Song Fest is to provide an enriching choral experience for outstanding middle school students in PMEA District 7. The emphasis of the fest is to be an educational experience, rather than competitive activity.

Resources

1. PMEA "Fest" Event Resource Guide
2. Compiled letters, budgets, information sheets, sample contracts, permission forms, contacts and sample publicity items located in folder provided to host director(s)
3. Middle School Song Fest Guidelines

First Steps

1. Immediately following previous middle school fest, seek permission from district for facilities and dates for next year event

2. Request superintendent or principal to send letter of invitation to District 7 President

3. Secure reliable conductor and begin discussions of possible music for event. We strongly recommend the sampling of opinion about the conductor and proposed music from several participating school directors to determine the conductor's ability to successfully work with this age student and that the music suggested is both practical and challenging. Contact the C/I chair and District 7 President to gain permission to hire the selected conductor. This is an important step in the process, for they may have knowledge of the individual's past experiences with other districts.

Suggested completion of above tasks by beginning of August

Next Steps

1. Determine the appropriate number of students who may attend the event by conversation with conductor and examination of facility space. This number will help determine the per student cost.

2. Order the music early, so that if special permissions need to be secured, the host director(s) has time to contact publishers and work out details.

3. Confer with the appointed tape chairman as the music is selected, so that he/she can organize appropriate recording of the solo line, accompaniment and any language difficulties.

4. Prepare the information sheet and registration form that will appear in the District 7 Fall newsletter. Set deadline for registration.

5. Organize a proposed budget. Many sample budgets are contained in the folder from past fests to assist in planning. The host director(s) must also include a biography of the proposed conductor for approval by the Board. Make 40 copies to take along to District 7 meeting in late August for Board approval.

6. Hire a competent accompanist for the event. The usual fee has been \$150.

Suggested completion of above tasks by late August.

Tasks to begin in host school district

1. Completing any forms necessary for facilities and staff needs
2. Communicate closely with host school principal about schedule and facility needs: risers, piano, janitorial assistance, tables, chairs, sound systems, parent support, student assistants, etc.
3. Determine which school personnel should be in attendance at the fest and who will be asked to make remarks. Schedule them early before other obligations are on their calendars.
4. Contact parent support groups about assisting with details of day
5. Establish the system acceptable to your district business office to receive funds and pay bills
6. Decide if a professional recording will be made of the concert. The District 7 President has a list of local companies. The President will also supply the host director(s) with the necessary forms (4 copies that must be submitted at least 30 days before the concert).

Determining conductor needs and directions

1. As soon as possible, decide any musical details that need to be communicated to participating students and directors and the tape chair: memorization, preference on vocal parts, specifics on foreign language, tempos, dynamics, etc.
2. In addition to deciding on the fee (which has usually spanned \$350 to \$500), finalize transportation and lodging costs. Then send PMEA contract to be signed by the conductor. A copy must be maintained in the file of the host director.
3. Query conductor as to his/her physical needs for the day: podium, chair, water, CD player for demonstration recordings, etc.
4. Jointly decide what special musicians may be needed to enhance the choral work: instrumentalists, unique instruments etc. and then either recruit appropriate musicians from the host school (which may include high school students), participating music teachers or local musicians

Contact with PMEA District 7

1. Numerous fees are required to be processed for each student attending the fest. The forms and amounts are located in the "Fest" booklet. PMEA requires a \$1 fee; District 7 requires a \$.50 fee; and a PMEA insurance fee of \$25 covers liability for the event.
2. Opportunities for Act 48 activities during the day of the fest are to be planned in conjunction with the C/I chairman. The chair will offer suggestions and handle specific details about this issue.
3. "Seed money" in the amount of \$1000 is available through the District 7 Treasurer to cover start up expenses. This money must be returned to the District 7 treasury at the conclusion of the fest.
4. Student certificates are available through PMEA. Contact the District 7 President to order the appropriate amount (@\$1). The host director(s) will need to supply information about the host school name, date of the event, name of host director(s) and name of District 7 president

5. A plaque will be ordered by the District 7 treasurer. Call to confirm the details with the treasurer.

6. Specific forms are included in the "Fest" booklet to be used as the students are registered for the event by the home director. These include the PMEA Student Medical and First Aid/Emergency Treatment Authorization form. The host director should carefully scan these forms as they arrive, so that no information is missing. No student should be permitted to participate who has not provided parent permission and full medical information.

7. A District 7 PMEA banner will be provided for display on the day of the event.

8. Space should be provided in the auditorium lobby for display of any District 7 or PMEA music advocacy materials to be shared with families of participating students.

9. A final report of the finances of the event will be prepared and presented by the host director(s) at the District 7 Board meeting in May.

10. A honorarium is provided by District 7 to the host director (usually \$200) in appreciation of their time and effort. This is not an expense that is included in the proposed budget or in the final budget.

11. Should the event conclude with a profit, the first \$100 should go to the host school. The remaining monies are divided 50-50 between the host school and District 7.

Communication with Participating Directors

1. Sample copies of letters are located in the folder

2. Music (one copy for each student and the participating director) and tapes should be mailed no later than early January for a late March event.

3. Information about the concert that includes clothing needs, directions and ticket costs (if collected) should be sent to students and their parents as early as possible, at least six weeks in advance of the concert. The decision as to whether or not tickets are sold is at the discretion of the host director(s) and will be determined by their budget proposal.

4. A list of e-mail addresses, school telephone numbers and home phone numbers of participating directors should be collected by the host director(s) to enhance communication and to make any last minute contacts.

Other Important Details

1. It has been customary to allow a non-PMEA member to involve their students in the song fest for one year. After that singular event, the participating director must become a member of PMEA, in order to involve their students

2. It is expected that the director will bring their students to the event and stay throughout the day. If it is necessary to be absent for the day or part of the day, the participating teacher must locate another PMEA member music teacher in their school district who will supervise their students.

3. The host director(s) will determine how food needs for the day will be handled. Past practice for District 7 has been that the host school provides a refreshment break of juice, fruit and/or snacks in the midmorning and afternoon. Students have carried their own lunches. Directors have shared a meal provided by the host school and then reimbursed the host director(s).

4. The host director(s) will provide details of the event to the local newspapers, radio and television stations in hopes of securing publicity for the concert.

5. The host director(s) determines how programs will be printed. However, specific directions from District 7 about the order of speakers is provided in the folder. All students and participating schools and directors are identified in the program. The biography of the conductor is always printed. The host director may choose to include information about the accompanist and/or himself/herself.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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