

Iowa All-State Music Festival

Frequently Asked Questions

What IS All-State? The Iowa All-State Music Festival is a regional representation of the finest high school musicians Iowa has.

How is quota determined? Iowa is divided into 6 All-State regions/districts. The number of students in those districts accepted into the All-State Chorus, Band, or Orchestra is based upon a quota for each voice part/instrument. That quota is the ratio of the number of students auditioning on each voice part/instrument within that district versus the total number audition statewide applied to the total number needed for each All-State Ensemble. In instances of a tie, the district with the lowest scratch ratio is awarded that folder/position.

Where's the bar? What does it mean to be "All-State caliber"? This is difficult to answer because that threshold is different for different voice parts and different instruments. The audition process for some voice parts and instruments is more competitive than others due to the number of students auditioning on those instruments or voice parts. At the very least "All-State Caliber" means that the student has reached a level of mastery that allows them to perform the required music with a proficient level of competency.

What does it mean to be selected as an "alternate"? Being selected as an alternate means that the student is All-State caliber but there are not enough slots available to accept them.

If an accepted student cannot participate what is the process for replacing them? The first alternate on that instrument or voice part from their audition district is then invited. If that district had no alternates designated then the 1st alternates from all districts are pooled and the audition cards are reviewed by the corresponding All-State Chair. From those, the top candidate is invited. If the Chair cannot decide between two or more candidates, the district with the lowest scratch ratio is awarded the position.

What is the process for filling unfilled quota? The 1st alternates from all districts are pooled and the audition cards are reviewed by the corresponding All-State Chair. From those, the top candidate is invited. If the Chair cannot decide between two or more candidates the district with the lowest scratch ratio is awarded the position. Once the 1st alternates have been utilized the 2nd alternates are considered. If unfilled positions remain after inviting all alternates selected those positions remain unfilled.

What does it mean to be recalled? Being recalled means the judge wants to hear you again for whatever reason. The process for Chorus, wind/percussion, and string recalls are each different and can be confusing.

Chorus Audition: The initial audition for chorus is performed by 1, 2, 3, or 4 singers in a group singing for a single auditor. The recall audition is a solo audition performed for a panel of 2 or 3 auditors. Both auditions are a cappella.

Woodwind/Brass/Percussion Audition: The initial audition is for a single auditor. Instruments whose audition schedule carries over the noon break will have a morning recall list posted and an afternoon recall list posted. All students under consideration (both accepted outright and those the judge needs to hear again) will be posted as “recalled”. Students auditioning in the morning whose name does not appear as “recalled” are not under consideration and as such are dismissed. All students recalled should appear at the designated time where the auditor will indicate which students are accepted (if any) and which students will need to be heard again and what the process will be for those recall auditions. In a few instances the number of students auditioning on a given instrument requires two auditors for that instrument. In those instances, each auditor will recall all students under consideration and then both auditors will jointly hear the recalls and determine which students will be accepted.

String Audition: Both the initial audition and recall audition will be heard by a single auditor. After the first round audition a listing of recalled students will be posted. The materials to be used for the recall audition and order of recalls will be posted outside of the audition center at the time recalls are announced. Once recalls have concluded a listing of all accepted (both those accepted outright and those accepted through the recall process) is posted.

How are auditors for the audition process selected, taught, and/or trained? The auditors utilized for the All-State Audition process are selected by each respective All-State Chair and approved by the IHSMA Executive Director (All-State Festival Director). These are individuals that are highly respected in their field and have the ability to remain organized and focused on the task at hand. Each auditor is provided instructions supplied by the All-State Chair that guides them through the process and lays out the expectations for the process. The vocal and wind/percussion auditing teams have head adjudicators responsible for reviewing the process with the auditing team prior to the audition day beginning. The site manager at each site meets with all adjudicators prior to the day starting to go over logistics and review the process with them.