

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

IOWA ALL-STATE MUSIC FESTIVAL

November 19 - 21, 2026

Iowa State Center – Ames, Iowa

80th Annual All-State Music Festival Scheduled for November 19 - 21

The **Iowa High School Music Association (IHSMA)** and the **Iowa Music Educators Association (IMEA)** will present the **80th Annual All-State Music Festival Concert** on **Saturday, November 21, 2026**, at **7:30 p.m.** in **Hilton Coliseum**, Iowa State University, Ames.

The concert will feature the **All-State Band**, **All-State Chorus**, and **All-State Orchestra** showcasing 1,100 of Iowa's most accomplished high school musicians selected through the statewide audition process. District auditions take place October 24. Participation recognizes exceptional musical achievement and reflects months of preparation by students and their music educators.

Festival Conductors

All-State Band – Dr. Cynthia Johnston Turner

Dean, Faculty of Music, Wilfrid Laurier University

Dr. Cynthia Johnston Turner is an internationally active conductor, educator, and advocate for new music. Before becoming dean at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario, she served as Director of Bands at the University of Georgia and Director of Wind Ensembles at Cornell University. She has conducted professional ensembles and honor bands throughout North America and internationally. Her work emphasizes innovative teaching, collaboration with contemporary composers, and service through music.

All-State Chorus – Dr. Christopher Aspaas

Director of Choral Activities and Professor of Music, Texas Christian University

Dr. Christopher Aspaas conducts TCU's Concert Chorale and Frog Corps and oversees the graduate choral conducting program. Under his leadership, the Concert Chorale has performed at national and regional conferences of the American Choral Directors Association and the Texas Music Educators Association convention. A frequent conductor of All-State and international honor choirs, Aspaas is also a composer and arranger with more than 60 choral works to his credit.

All-State Orchestra – Wes Kenney

Music Director, Fort Collins Symphony; Professor Emeritus, Colorado State University

Wes Kenney is an award-winning conductor whose career encompasses professional orchestras, opera, ballet, and music education. He served for 20 years as Director of Orchestras at Colorado State University and for 10 seasons as Music Director of the Denver Young Artists Orchestra. His honors include the grand prize at the Varna International Conducting Competition and multiple American Prize awards. He has guest conducted extensively in the United States and abroad and has led numerous All-State orchestras.

About the Festival

Participants will gather at the Iowa State Center November 19–21 for an intensive musical experience culminating in the festival concert. Working with distinguished conductors and fellow musicians from across Iowa, students will strengthen their artistry, build friendships, and celebrate the shared achievement of making music together.

Local schools can provide information about students selected to represent their communities.

Tickets are **\$30.00 each, plus fees**, and all seats are reserved. Tickets go on sale **Tuesday, October 27, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.** through **Ticketmaster**. Additional ticket information is available through the **Iowa State Center Box Office**.

The Festival Concert will be recorded and broadcast statewide by **Iowa PBS**. Broadcast dates and times will be announced at www.iowapbs.org.