

MUSIC FESTIVAL BENEFITS

The CHSAA Large Group Instrumental Music Festivals provide a unique, inspirational and highly educational experience for all students. As Spring music activities approach, music educators, administrators, parents and community should reflect on the educational & developmental importance of music festivals. Additionally, participants receive the benefit of a 'rated' performance, sight-reading, and clinic opportunity. Our adjudicators provide a 100% educational experience; listening, evaluating, recommending and providing professional comments.

The CHSAA encourages music educators to discuss the following philosophy, benefits, risks, and responsibilities with their administration, parents and students. Our Colorado performing ensembles excel by determining real performance goals for music festivals. These goals can help to achieve a lifelong love for music, musical growth and student progress.

Benefits of Music Festivals:

1. 100% educational. Focus on musical technique, skills, expression, artistic growth and development.
2. All ages, grades, and skill levels are welcome to participate with their schools.
3. Clinics. By popular demand! All groups receive immediate feedback by an adjudicator on stage after performing. (Large Group)
4. Adjudicators are specialized and trained. Adjudicators attend a yearly continuing education clinic and are yearly approved by the CHSAA Music Committee. All adjudicators are required to be members of CMAA and CMEA.
5. Performances develop positive concepts about life and self; human values, self-worth, desire to challenge oneself, and self-discipline.
6. Participation in a festival motivates students and directors toward achievement of musical excellence.
7. The CHSAA rating provides performance standards and a process for evaluation against those standards.
8. Attending a festival and listening to peers helps create a background for the lifelong appreciation of music.
9. Performing for adjudicators and peers allows for opportunities to cope with success and failure.
10. Attending a festival motivates for achievement in academics.
11. Interaction. Brings forth interplay between young people and adults and produces teamwork and allegiance necessary to work in a group toward a worthy goal.

Values of Music Festivals:

1. Are festivals our primary reason for performing or simply one of the many ways to test musical skills to develop musicianship?
2. Are we teaching young people to perform or using performance to teach musical insights and appreciation that will accompany our students throughout their lifetime?
3. Is our goal for festival performance perfection of the objective elements of music that “rate well” in festivals or the motivation of students to achieve real musical growth?
4. Do we participate in festivals only when we feel we can “rate well” or do we participate for the growth and evaluation we and the group can receive?

Risks of Music Festivals

1. First Division ratings at festivals may receive more emphasis than learning about music. In other words, the end may become more important than the process.
2. Pressured for First Division ratings, directors may resort to negative motivation and rote teaching; these methods will not foster the self-control and musical understanding that can come from better teaching methods.
3. Directors, students, schools and communities may develop resentment toward others who receive First Division ratings
4. Peers may look for negative qualities in their counterparts.
5. Students may develop “tunnel vision” for the music program if they lose sight of the need to also learn in other areas.
6. Directors and students may lose a sense of self-worth if they do not learn how to ACCEPT ADJUDICATION.
7. A community’s evaluation of the music education program may be solely based on festival results, although there are more important factors to be recognized.
8. Too often, the greater the success the higher the expectations, so that peers and adults may fail to recognize students for strides that they have made unless their ratings are equal to or better than previous years.

How to Increase the Benefits and Reduce the Risks of Music Festivals

1. In word and action, emphasize the importance of the music, not the importance of the festival.
2. Establish goals that stress progress toward musical goals rather than First Division ratings, medals and plaques.
3. Constantly take steps to enlighten students and patrons regarding the fact that success is an outgrowth of learning and not an end in itself.
4. Prepare students, administrators and patrons for the SUBJECTIVE ADJUDICATION of music festivals. Although Colorado uses a process that stresses objectivity, traces of subjectivity will always be a part of music adjudication.
5. Allow time after all festivals to reflect upon the achievement of musical goals rather than the results of the festivals.