

COLORADO ALL STATE CHOIR AUDITION
“PROCEDURES and REQUIREMENTS”
(Updated Fall of 2015)

AUDITION PROCEDURES:

Auditions: Auditions will be held in four regions of Colorado by the same group of judges to ensure consistency in evaluating. Students must audition in the area designated unless a petition for a change of site has been requested and approved. A time or site change may be granted in the event of emergencies or illness based on audition space available. Petitions must be submitted according to the same audition deadline schedule. If a student is going to audition who will require special accommodations based off of an IEP, it is required that the Chair of All State be notified at the time of registration and be told of the modification so that the head judge may be prepared to accommodate that student.

Eligibility: Students must be in grade 11 or 12 and a member of their school’s curricular vocal music program - if one exists. (Home-schooled students must meet this requirement as well.) **At the time of the audition and the festival,** students must be eligible under the rules of the Colorado High School Activities Association. If you need to review these rules, please contact your principal or activities director. If questions regarding unusual circumstances pertaining to eligibility arise, please contact the Chair of the All State Choir Governing Board. Each \$20 registration fee is charged per student that auditions.

Preparation for auditions: Preparation for auditions is important. Each director is responsible for preparing students to ensure a positive experience during their auditions. Directors should help students select appropriate solo literature, learn sight reading and music literacy skills, and achieve a self motivated, positive attitude. Guidelines for appropriate literature are the same as all CHSAA sponsored music festivals. Broadway, Jazz and popular literature are not considered appropriate for this audition (see CHSAA handbook). All solos must have live piano accompaniment. No *a cappella* singing. Adhering to deadlines and checking all audition forms for accuracy will assist your students.

Directors are responsible for assigning the appropriate voice part to each of their students. If an incorrect voice part has been printed on the audition card, only the director may request the site governor to make a change. Changes cannot be made after auditions have been completed.

Emergency absence: In the event of an emergency preventing a student from auditioning at the site assigned, please notify your All State Choir Governor immediately. Do not just show up at an alternate site. If you must cancel an audition, please have the courtesy to notify the governor of that site as soon as possible. (No auditions can be scheduled after the final audition site.)

Selection Process: Audition scores are totaled and entered into a database. The z-score formula is then applied to the scores generating a list of students ranked by voice part and z-score. The z-score is a scientific formulation designed to eliminate subjectivity. (A full explanation of z-scores is available under “audition information” on the website).

Students who have been members of the Colorado All State Choir the previous year are automatically placed in the opposite choir if they are chosen a second year. Directors are responsible for indicating previous All State Choir membership on the registration sheet. All other students are alternately assigned to the choirs according to their z-score rank. All three choirs are of equal importance and talent is distributed evenly between them.

Notification: Results for all students will be e-mailed to directors by the end of November. If you have not heard by December 1st, please e-mail the Colorado All State Choir Administrative Assistant. Schools that did not have students selected will also be notified at that time. All pertinent information about tickets, fees, t-shirts, etc. will be available at that time on the Colorado All State Choir website www.aschoir.com. A festival fee of \$35 per student is charged for each student who accepts their position into the All State Choirs.

Second Auditions: After students have been selected and have sent in their acceptance forms, they must thoroughly prepare and memorize the literature before rehearsals begin. Rehearsal recordings will be available to the student through the website. Please see the All State Choir Website: www.aschoir.com. Students must pass a second music audition before the first rehearsal. Portions of the rehearsal recording will be used in the audition. After students have successfully completed this audition, they will be seated in their assigned choir. **Attendance at second auditions, all rehearsals, and concert performance is mandatory. No exceptions will be made.**

Code of Conduct: Students chosen to participate in the Colorado All State Choir Festival are expected to memorize and sing all literature designated by the choir assignment, attend all rehearsals and concerts, meet eligibility requirements according to CHSAA guidelines, and follow the rules listed on the acceptance and code of conduct form. (This form is available under “acceptance information” on the website).

AUDITION REQUIREMENTS:

Solo (50%)

Sing a prepared classical solo. This may include folk songs, art songs, and arias. This does NOT include Broadway, jazz, and popular songs. The solo will be judged to demonstrate: tone quality/technique, intonation, accuracy, diction and musicality. If you are performing a piece in a foreign language, the language should be from the “western choral tradition” (i.e. Italian, German, French, and Spanish). Singing in a foreign language is appropriate if your diction and pronunciation are correct. Students must sing a solo from a “published vocal music source” in the key that it is written and not from a song that is written in several parts. Students singing inappropriate literature will receive a score of zero for the solo. The judge will confirm a score of zero with an All State Choir Board member.

Students must provide their own piano accompanist and **furnish an original printed (not duplicated) score for the judge**. Please be sure the edition handed to the judge is the same edition and in the same key the singer and accompanist are using (example: *Schirmer's 24 Italian Songs and Arias* and *26 Italian Songs and Arias* edited by Paton are not the same). Students without an original musical score for the judge will not be allowed to audition. Please consider using more than one accompanist (student accompanists are acceptable). Due to scheduling constraints, one accompanist should not play for more than 10 students per audition day per school.

Audition procedures: Please limit solos to 3 minutes or less. Judges reserve the right to stop students if their solo exceeds three minutes. Because of the 3 minute time limit, long piano introductions and/or interludes should be cut down, and repeats should be eliminated! **Only the student and the accompanist may be in the room during the solo.** No page turners are allowed in the audition room. No tape or CD accompaniments will be allowed. No electronic devices are permitted in the audition room. Following the performance of the solo, accompanists are also asked to leave the room. Only the student and the judge may be in the room during the skills portion of the audition. **No directors, students, or parents are allowed to listen to the audition through the door to the room.** Directors, students, and accompanists are asked to not discuss the auditions while at the audition site. Governors are asked to keep a distance between people waiting and the audition space.

Memorization is required. Students who look at their musical score or copies of the words will not be allowed to audition.

Students will be judged according to the following 5 categories that are worth up to 10 points each:

- Tone Quality / Technique: (tone, breath support, vowels, appropriate style)
- Intonation: (singing in tune)
- Accuracy: (accuracy of notes and rhythms)
- Diction: (text clarity, accurate pronunciation)

- Musicality: (dynamics, sensitivity to text, articulation to convey appropriate meaning)

Judges will play the tonic triad, the beginning pitch and also give a “suggested tempo” (beat note = 60mm) for each example both when the example is first given to them and at the end of the 30 second practice period.

In each of the five 10 point categories:

- A score of 10 would indicate the highest level of achievement
- A score of 6 would indicate average level of achievement
- A total score of 30 would indicate an average solo score.

The judges use the following as a “scoring guide”:

- 10 Superior
- 9 Excellent
- 8 Very Good
- 7 Good
- 6 Average
- 5 Below average
- 4 Fair
- 3 Less than fair
- 2 Poor
- 1 Unprepared
- 0 In-admissible solo

Skills: (50%):

Sense of Tonality (10%)

The student will be given only one opportunity to perform each of the following skills:

Sing one each of the following, ascending and descending, on a neutral syllable, *solfege* syllables or numbers in the following order:

- **Major Triad**
- **Minor Triad**
- **Diminished Triad**
- **Augmented Triad**
- **Major Scale**
- **Harmonic Minor Scale**
- **Melodic Minor Scale**

Various beginning pitches will be given by the judge according to the range that they are for which they are auditioning. Altos and Bases will be expected to sing down to a low “G” and Sopranos and Tenors will be expected to sing up to a high “G”. Each triad and scale will begin on a different pitch.

Example:

Sample keys for Alto / Bass triads:

Major triad 2 minor triad 3 Augmented triad 4 diminished triad

The image shows four triads on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). 1. Major triad: C4, E4, G4. 2. Minor triad: C4, E3, G3. 3. Augmented triad: C4, E4, G#4. 4. Diminished triad: C4, E3, G#3.

Sample keys for Soprano / Tenor triads:

Major triad 2 minor triad Augmented triad 4 diminished triad

The image shows four triads on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). 1. Major triad: C4, E4, G4. 2. Minor triad: C4, E3, G3. 3. Augmented triad: C4, E4, G#4. 4. Diminished triad: C4, E3, G#3.

Sample Alto/Bass keys for Scales

The image shows musical notation for Alto/Bass keys. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff is divided into three sections: 'Major Scale' (measures 1-4), 'Harmonic Minor Scale' (measures 5-8), and 'Melodic Minor Scale' (measures 9-12). The bass staff contains the corresponding scale patterns for each section. Red dots are placed under the first and last notes of each scale in both staves to indicate starting and ending points.

Sample Soprano / Tenor keys for Scales

The image shows musical notation for Soprano/Tenor keys. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff is divided into three sections: 'Major Scale' (measures 1-4), 'Harmonic Minor Scale' (measures 5-8), and 'Melodic Minor Scale' (measures 9-12). The bass staff contains the corresponding scale patterns for each section. Red dots are placed under the first and last notes of each scale in both staves to indicate starting and ending points.

- Triads are worth one point each. To receive the point for each triad, the singer must start and end on the given pitch.
- Scales are worth two points each which indicates accuracy ascending and descending, starting and ending on the given pitch.
- One point is subtracted if the scale is sung from a different pitch than the given pitch or the pattern is wrong ascending or descending (if both errors were to occur, the result in that score would be 0 for that scale).

Intervals (10%)

There will be 5 total intervals at 2 points each, 10 points overall.

All intervals will be selected from the Major scale as follows:

Ascending options - M2, M3, P4, P5, M6, M7, P8

Descending options - m2, m3, P4, P5, m6, m7, P8

No augmented or diminished intervals (NO Tri-Tone)

The order in the audition will be: Sing 3 intervals then identify 2 intervals

- **Sing Three Intervals above or below the given pitch:**
- The judges have been instructed to use the word ascending or descending before every request.
- Various beginning pitches will be given by the judge.
- The judge will play the beginning note of the interval and then the student will sing the interval beginning on the given pitch. The student must sing the interval within a short, reasonable time. The student may sing any syllable or number for their answer.

- When a student sings the answer he/she must only sing the two notes of the interval out loud.
 - Each beginning note will only be played once.
 - Two points will be given for correctly sung intervals. Zero points will be given for incorrectly sung intervals, and intervals that are not sung on the “given pitch”.
- **Identify Two Intervals played on the piano:**
 - These will be played on the piano one note after the other, not together.
 - The student may not hum the pitches as they are being played by the judge. The student must use the number and the quality in their verbal answer on the identifications. The student is not required to identify ascending or descending to receive full credit.
 - Student will receive two points for a correct answer and zero points for an incorrect answer.
 - Remember for this audition that all Major intervals go up, all minor intervals go down, and perfect intervals go in both directions.
 - Each interval for identification will only be played one time.
 - The audition card will say sung interval 1, 2, 3 and interval ID 1, 2. On the score reporting it will be broken out by sung and ID because each student will receive different intervals in different orders for both categories.

Melodic Sight Reading (20%)

There will be two melodies valued at 10 points each. The student will be given a maximum of 30 seconds to look over the exercise before beginning. The judge will set a “suggested tempo” at 60mm for the beat note. Sing the melody using a neutral syllable, *solfege* syllables or numbers. Students are judged based upon both the melodic and rhythmic accuracy of each of the melodic sight reading examples. The melodic sight reading may include the following: accidentals, and rhythmic notation that will not exceed an eighth note in all forms of simple meter.

Each sight reading will be 5 measures in length. Scoring for each melodic sight reading can be from 0 to 10 points at 1 point for every half of the measure.

Rhythmic Sight Reading

There will be one rhythm exercise. The student will be given a maximum of 30 seconds to look over the exercise before beginning. The judge will set a suggested tempo at 60mm for the beat note. Sight read the given combination of rhythmic patterns (notes and rests) with a “voiced syllable”, which may be supported by clapping or tapping. The judge is scoring on the rhythm that is being **verbally spoken**. The rhythmic sight reading may include: dotted notes, triplets, and any combination of half notes, quarter notes, eighth notes and sixteenth notes in all forms of simple meter.

A WORD OF CAUTION: If you choose to use numbers, the judge must hear the pattern of sound and silence. For example:

The image shows two musical staves in 4/4 time. The first staff is labeled 'CORRECT' and contains a quarter note (1), an eighth note (2) with an eighth rest (&), a quarter note (4), and a quarter note (1). A box under the first two notes says 'held for 1-1/2 beats'. The second staff is labeled 'INCORRECT' and contains a quarter note (1), an eighth note (2&3), an eighth note (&), and a quarter note (4&).

The judge needs to hear the correct sounds and silences of the rhythm written, not the division of the beat.

- If there are two lines, continue reading until you come to the double bar line.
 - Each sight reading will be 5 measures in length
 - Scoring for the rhythmic sight reading can be from 0 to 10 points at 1 point per half measure.

PHILOSOPHY OF JUDGING

(as determined by the All State Choir Board)

While nurturing and encouraging attributes are essential as a teacher and certainly desirable in our judging, the primary job of a judge is not to teach. We agreed that the judge's primary job involves evaluation and discernment to select the very best of the best and do so in a pleasant and caring manner.

This judging guideline is based on that philosophy and a sincere desire to have a wider spread than 11.4 points between the average and the best of those who audition.

The average score would most likely fall between 65 and 74. The above average score should fall between 75 and 89. The "cream of the crop" would fall between 90 and 100. It is our hope that the results of these judging guidelines will give students and teachers a clearer picture of where they rank in the best of the best. We hope it will give each student a clearer understanding of what he/she can work on to improve and we hope it will be helpful in gearing the selections performed at the concert to the achievement level of the singers.