

Final Solo & Ensemble Tips and Requirements

2026



Here are some tips and requirements for the final days leading up to Solo & Ensemble Festival:

- Be sure to write (IN PENCIL) your group's performance info on your judge's music before your performance date. Write on the music – Group Leader, Your School, Performance Section Number, and Performance Time.
- Know where your original copy will be on your performance day. The original is the copy you give to the judge (you can perform with a photocopy; the judge **must** have the original). Will it be in the site Headquarters (RHS Media Center) or will you be taking it after school Friday?
- Make sure your music meets time requirements – minimum 2 minutes for 1-8 members, and minimum 3 minutes (except in very rare situations) for chambers/choirs.
- Be detail oriented in your final week. The art is in what is not written on the page (phrasing😊/Balance) as well as great dynamic contrast.
- Play for Mr. Oranchak or Mr. Griffith BEFORE the festival.
- Soloists – Rehearse with your accompanist at least 2 times before your performance and make sure they know your performance date, section number, and performance time.
- Don't forget to bring your instrument AND your music home with you on Friday.
- Percussionists – Know who oversees getting your instrument to the school! If you are using an instrument from Rochester High School (this is not common) double check with Mr. O or Mr. G to make sure you are in the correct performance room.
- Soloists – If you have not pre-paid your accompanist, write a thank you card and place the money in the card. You can give it to them before or after your performance. If you pre-paid the accompanist, you should still write a thank you.
- Dress for success – Although there are no dress requirements, you should dress nicely.
- Be polite to everyone at Rochester High School. Almost all of them are volunteers! Don't forget, you are representing yourself, your family, your band director, your school, and your band program by your performance and behavior.
- Be peaceful in the halls most of the day! There are people performing in rooms that are not soundproof!

- Check-In to your section warm-up room (each entrance will have information desks and maps) at least 20 minutes before performing, preferably earlier. There is an MSBOA Volunteer in the room, identified by their MSBOA lanyard. They will be your guide through the warm-up and performance process. They will tell you when you can warm up and when you will walk to the performance room. NOTE – If they ask you to perform earlier than your scheduled time, it is up to you to say yes, please or no, thank you. If you are ready to perform, go for it. If you need to wait due to group members or audience members not yet there, don't do it.
- Sometimes the site runs behind schedule. Try to be flexible. If you are in multiple events performing in the same general time frame, be sure to keep in communication with your other group members and the warm-up room official. If your accompanist is running behind, be patient.
- Before warming up, double check you numbered the measures in your original score!
- When you enter the performance room, the room chairperson will take the original to the judge. Do not approach the judge unless asked to do so. Simply set up, play a few notes, and do a quick tuning note. Wait for the room official to announce your group before you perform.
- After you perform, it is normal for the judge to work with you a little before you leave. They may take a moment to write down some thoughts first. This is a good time to breathe😊.
- After leaving the room, at least one person from your group should stay outside to collect the original score and, if you qualify (First or Second Division ratings), the medals cards for the group. Medals are usually distributed in the cafeteria. Be sure to get them before you leave. It can be VERY difficult to get them after the day is done.
- Know what you are to do with the original score before you leave the site. Do you drop it off in Headquarters (there would be a box specifically for LCN Bands in this case) or do you take it with you and bring it to school Monday?
- FAMILIES – Audiences are welcome to listen to the performances. Filming your student is acceptable, but you might need to refrain from filming the judges' comments following the performance.
- **If you have a problem and need help**, Mr. Oranchak will be available at a table outside (or just inside) MSBOA Headquarters (the media center/library) unless actively assisting a student. Mr. Griffith will be working in a performance room all day. He would love to hear how you did but may not be available when you arrive.
- If you receive a First Division rating at the District Festival, you and/or your group will need to decide if you will be going on to the State level festival. Information regarding states will be available early in the week following District S&E.
- Try to have fun! Good luck!