

## **VCDA District 7 All-District Chorus Audition Procedures**

- Auditions are held on the first or second Saturday in November
- High School (9-12) enrolled in chorus may audition and Junior High (6-8) enrolled in chorus or a music class may audition for their respective choirs
- High School and Middle School auditions are held on the same day
  - 2018 was the first year D7 held combined auditions (previously D7 held auditions separately on the first two Saturdays in November)
- Audition committee consists of the District Representative(\*) and event chairs that split the duties of
  - (a) Event Host - finances and district paperwork, secures judges
  - (b) Scheduling Host - scheduling and scoresheets
  - (c) Site Host - audition site host

*\*District 7 chooses to split the duties of Junior High and Senior High between 2 elected individuals. The Senior High rep serves as the VCDA District Choral Rep for all VCDA duties.*

### **1. Audition registration - costs and procedures**

- An audition information packet is sent to directors in late September/early October
- Directors mail the following to the event host: (1) school registration form (2) student audition fee of \$6 per student (\$5.80 plus \$0.20 VMEA fee) (3) a director surcharge fee (\$20 per director, not per school)
- Directors are given a link to register student names and voice parts via Google Sheets.
- Directors request a time slot for their students. Priority is given to those with furthest travel distance. Special audition times are arranged for students involved in other school events, ex. VHSL activities and other events as approved by the audition committee.
- Committee sends audition schedule by school and by student to the directors.

### **2. Location**

Any school in our district that is equipped with enough space to accommodate the needs for auditions may host. Needs include audition rooms spaced out to avoid bleedover, holding room/check-in space, warm-up space, judges hospitality, tabulation room.

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### 3. Audition piece - how it's selected, performed, rotated

Middle school - committee rotates between three art songs in different keys for the voicing of Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass.

- *How Can I Keep From Singing*
- *The Ash Grove*
- *The Water Is Wide*

High school - auditions using the All-VA audition piece of that year.

- Blow, Blow Thou Winter Wind (2019-20)
- She Walks in Beauty (2021-22)
- Where-er You Walk (2020-21)
- Whither Must I Wander (2018-19)

### 4. Sight Reading Procedures

Students have 30 seconds to study the sight-reading example before they perform for a score. Students may sing aloud during the 30 second practice time. An audio recording (like used for All-VA auditions) will establish tonality, give instructions, wait 30 seconds, then establish tonality again to cue the student to begin. All voice part examples will be available in treble clef. Tenor and Bass examples also available in Bass Clef. Students are to sing in the given octave. Students may sing using solfege, numbers, or neutral syllables.

- **Junior High (6-8) criteria** - 4 measures, Begin & End on DO. Stepwise motion, Range DO-SOL, 4/4 time signature, Notation values: Whole Note, Half Note & Rest, Quarter Note & Rest, Key: Soprano - F, Alto/Bass - Eb, Tenor - G.
- **Senior High (9-12) criteria** - 4 measures, Begin & End on DO. Stepwise motion, Range TI-LA, 4/4 time signature, Notation values: Whole Note, Dotted Half Note, Half Note & Rest, Quarter Note & Rest, paired Eighth Notes. Keys: Soprano/Tenor - Eb, Alto/Bass - C.

Four equitable sight-singing exercises will be pulled by the District Rep from Sight Reading Factory using the established criteria. Exercises will remain secure until time of auditions. Exercises will be rotated 1, 2, 3, 4...throughout the audition process.

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### 5. Audition Procedures

- a. Upon arrival, directors will check-in their students.
- b. Each student will receive an audition packet. The packet is stapled and contains a cover sheet and two judging rubric score sheets.
  - i. The cover sheet lists the student's name, audition number, voice part, school, and director. This will be removed by the room monitor just before the student enters the adjudication room. This helps to ensure score sheets are mixed up and accounts for each student that follows through with the audition.
  - ii. Score sheets (judging rubrics) are printed for every auditioning students with the unique student number that has been assigned so that judges will not know the name or school of the student auditioning.  
Examples: JR.123.A - Junior High, student number, Alto voice part  
SR.081.S2 - Senior High, student number, Soprano 2 voice part
  - iii. These materials are printed 1-2 weeks before the event.
- c. Audition rooms are assigned 1-2 voice parts. Whenever possible these will have the prepared piece and sight reading in the same keys to avoid confusion/error with audio tracks.
  - i. Example: Soprano 1, Tenor 2, Soprano2/Tenor1, Alto1/Bass1, Alto2/Bass2,
  - ii. Holding area - auditorium or gym
  - iii. Warm-up area - Band or Chorus Room, or other area away from audition rooms
- d. Students will perform the prepared piece first followed by sight reading.
- e. Tabulation. After 5-10 auditions, room runners collect score sheets and take them to the tabulation room so that tabulators can enter scores for each caption. The spreadsheet is set up to doublecheck accuracy of addition. Tabulators, preferably teachers, check for any discrepancies between spreadsheet calculation and score sheet. Once all scores are entered, the spreadsheet is sorted by voice part, then by highest to lowest score. We typically have 3-5 teachers tabulating at one time.

### 6. Judges (who and how they are funded)

- The audition committee compiles a list of potential judges including teachers from other districts, retired teachers, college music professors and other music instructors. The judges should not be teachers of the auditioning students. The audition chair secures 18 judges (two per room).
- Audition fees and director surcharge fees are used to pay judges and other expenses.

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### **7. Who staffs the auditions?**

- The audition committee (Senior High District Representative, the Junior High District Rep, Event Host, Scheduling Host, Site Host) staff the audition
- directors able to travel separate from students
- parent and student volunteers secured by the site host.

Volunteers are trained beforehand on the process by doing a “mock audition” walkthrough. The hosts hold a meeting with the workers to discuss rules and expectations.

### **8. Scoring practices and rubrics**

Junior High and Senior High utilize the scoring rubric used for All-Virginia auditions.

- Vocal Quality - 20 pts
- Pitches - 20 pts
- Rhythms - 20 pts
- Interpretation - 20 pts
- Diction - 10 pts
- Sight Reading - 10 pts
- Maximum of 100 points per judge

### **9. Description of hospitality for judges and audition staff**

Typically, a light breakfast is provided for judges along with a full lunch during their break. Snacks and refreshments are made available throughout the day in the hospitality room. Payment for the hospitality comes from the budget of the event.

### **10. Concessions/meals available for auditionees.**

Concessions are based on the host school. In the past, the host school has provided concessions for sale as a fundraiser for the school's organization.

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### **11. Results and how they are announced**

Junior High (6-8) - SSA and SATB

Senior High (9-12) - SSAA and SATB

Once scores are entered, they are sorted from highest to lowest based on voice parts. Tie scores are broken utilizing the procedures as established in the VCDA manual. The cutoff score is up to the discrepancy of the District Representative(s)\* and the Audition Committee. The host(s) for the District Choir event is consulted regarding the capacity of performance and rehearsal space for the event. There are typically two alternates per voice part, per choir. In the event of a tie, the district chair utilizes the tie-breaking procedures as established in the VCDA manual and determines whether to go above or below the cutoff number based on the choir.

Mixed and Treble choir assignments will be determined by alternating down the score list. The rotation follows the same rotation as All-Virginia. The chair will prepare draft results to allow teachers to confirm that all information is correct. These draft scores should not be announced to students.

Since auditions are held on Saturday, results are released to the directors “unofficially” on Monday. Once, all results have been double checked, official results are usually released to the directors by Tuesday. Results are listed by student name, school/director and student number. Once official results have been released, the Audition Scheduling Host will distribute scoresheets to directors.

### **12. Typical Enrollment for Auditions**

For auditions in November 2018, District 7 had 49 schools register to audition,

- 402 Junior High (6-8) students auditioned in 2018
- 320 Senior High (9-12) students auditioned in 2018