



NYSSMA NEWS

ZONE 11

DECEMBER 2025

AREA ALL STATE

Thank you to everyone who helped make our 2025 AAS a success. This was our first year back at SUNY Performing Arts Center since 2019, and required much planning. We truly appreciate your patience, chaperoning, and leadership in running sectionals. Your support elevates the experience for our students. The concert was attended by NYSSMA President-Elect Daryle Redmond.

A huge thank you to AAS Festival Coordinator Patrick Murphy, all of the ensemble chairs, and the WCSMA Board.

NICE
WORK

WINTER CONFERENCE

Bravo to the Zone 11 teachers who presented or presided over sessions, showcases, and concerts!

Madolyn Accola

Austin Day

Margaret Chan

Kimberly Dunkin

Amanda Gundling

Deanna Loertscher

Bradley Morrison

Alia Naqvi

Mahum Qureshi

Jon Riss

Matthew Rotjan

Matthew Royal

Matthew Suffern

Nucleo Vega

Avid Williams

Faith Willett

Brian Zeller

MAJORS & CLINIC EVALUATION

Based on last year's registration numbers, we've determined that we need three days for instrumental performances and two days for choral. The schedule below reflects this data. Thank you for your patience as we navigated our first year of having two sites, and for your understanding as we tweak to fit our Zone's needs.

Choral: May 19 & 20 at Fox Lane HS (Bedford)

Instrumental: May 18-20 at Mamaroneck HS

Please do not cancel your Majors time. Last year, several last-minute cancellations — including some back-to-back — left judges idle for over an hour. More importantly, those canceled spots could have gone to other ensembles that we had to turn away due to limited space. If you are concerned that your students are not as prepared as you would like, please consider going for Comments Only rather than canceling. Canceling is inconsiderate to all involved.

If you are interested in the Clinic, please make sure that you fully read the guidelines. There was some confusion last year about a Traditional Rating for Comments Only versus the newer Clinic Model. If you have questions about either, please let me know.

Registration opens on Monday, January 5 at 9am: www.nyssma.org



JOIN US

BECOME AN ADJUDICATOR

Applications due March 1.
Details and application can be found [here](#).

March 6-7: Nassau CC (piano only)

March 13-14: Talent Unlimited HS (NYC)

April 17-18: East Syracuse-Minoa HS

April 24-25: Half Hollows Hills HS (no piano)

Already an adjudicator? **Consider getting oriented in a second area, Majors, or All-State!** Zone 11 only has 3 All-State adjudicators, so it would be a huge help to everyone statewide. Be on the lookout for an email about your availability to judge in the 2026 season, as well as "refresher" classes coming up in February on Zoom.

SAVE THE DATE

JOSEPH R. SUGAR DAY

Each March, NYSSMA celebrates "Music in Our Schools Month" across New York State. During this time, NYSSMA arranges a day in Albany for music educators to meet county and state legislators. Each zone schedules times with their assembly members and senators to discuss current issues and how they may affect music programs for students. This is also an opportunity to express our gratitude for continued support of music education. The theme for this year's MIOSM is "United Through Music."

This year, Joseph R. Sugar Day will take place on **Monday, March 9**. I will be attending with Anthony Maceli, WCSMA Government Relations Chair. If you are interested in joining us, please email: zonell@nyssma.org.

Additionally, the All-State Jazz ensembles will perform a concert at this event on Monday evening. A few of our Zone 11 students will be participating!

NEW

SUMMER CONFERENCE

NYSSMA is offering a summer conference experience in association with **Jazz at Lincoln Center**. The conference will take place on July 24-25. Registration will open early in 2026.

The two-day workshop for instrumental and general music teachers will focus on jazz instruction, and will include evening performances at Jazz at Lincoln Center's Rose Theater and Dizzy's Club. Wynton Marsalis and his band will be featured.

Registration includes all sessions, two concerts, and one dinner. Cost is \$425.

More details to follow.





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CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

The NYSSMA Curriculum Committee is continuing to add sample lesson plans and templates for your use. They serve as a guide and are built on the NYS Standards. There are templates for both general music and performance ensembles, and it is searchable by grade level, anchor standard, or artistic process. Zone 11 Arts Director Gary West (White Plains) serves on the Curriculum Committee!

Curriculum Committee page: [Click here](#)

FEES FOR THE 2026 SEASON

Fees have not increased this year and will be the same as last year. As always, when you send checks to festival hosts, **PLEASE include invoices and/or teacher names so that we know who to mark as paid.** There was lots of detective work done last year to figure out whose unmarked check was whose.

Solo Festival:

Levels 1-4/Piano 1-4: \$20/\$26
Levels 5-6/Piano 5-6: \$30/\$36
All-State: \$36

Majors Festival:

Levels 1-3: from \$150 to \$210
Level 4: from \$180 to \$245
Levels 5-6: from \$225 to \$315

WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

If you are interested in becoming involved with NYSSMA in any capacity, please fill out the form below. Opportunities include:

- Vocal/Instrumental Committee
- Manual Editor
- Government Relations/Advocacy
- BEDR/Diversity Initiatives Committee
- Electronic Music
- Modern Band
- Composition/Songwriting
- General Music/Classroom committee
- SEL
- Neurodiversity & Accessibility
- Tri-M
- Zone Representative
- Research
- Jazz
- Adjudication

SIGN UP!

NYSSMA Interest Form: [Click here](#)

HAVE A GREAT BREAK!

Have a wonderful concert and holiday season, and a beautiful new year. Enjoy your well-deserved time to rest and be with loved ones. See you in 2026!

