
From: Choate [ChoateM@k12tn.net]
Sent: Thursday, February 05, 2009 2:55 AM
To: Valerie Dehoff
Subject: RE: Choral Festival Schedule

February 5, 2009

Dear MTVA Colleagues,

PLEASE READ THOROUGHLY!!!!!! THERE IS IMPORTANT INFORMATION HERE REGARDING THE UPCOMING CHORAL FESTIVAL!!!!!!!

I know that you have all been anxiously awaiting the schedule for the 2009 MTVA Choral Festival. After hours of sifting through special requests and scheduling parameters, I have achieved what I hope is a schedule that has accommodated everyone's special requests and that has addressed your individual needs as much as possible. Schedules are saved by day and attached to this email. Please print all four days and do a thorough search for your groups. If you see a mistake, please let me know. I will do all that I can to address any concerns you may have. Also, please know that if you have multiple ensembles performing, you may choose whatever order you wish for them to perform. Please email me with your preferred order so that I can change it on the master schedule.

In approaching the scheduling process for this year's event, it was apparent that almost no ensembles were available for later afternoon performances, due primarily to transportation challenges within each school district. Almost every special request was identical, requesting specific days/performance times in the middle of the day only, due to many school, student, and performance conflicts, as well as to the limitations of busing and transportation in general. In fact, many of you stated in your special requests that you would have to withdraw from the festival if your requests were not honored. When I began plugging in choirs at 15-minute intervals as we have done in the past, many requests for midday times were falling outside what was possible. To make the situation even more challenging, some of the registration information was still delayed due to $\text{\textcircled{C}}$ growing pains¹ with our new online registration process. Furthermore, increased participation in our festival for the past several years provides an even greater challenge in scheduling, since more outstanding ensembles from more schools will be participating.

Because of these challenges with accommodating your specific requests for midday times, the MTVA Board and membership will be discussing/examining ways to approach the festival in the future so that addressing transportation issues for participating schools can be handled effectively.

However, the need for an immediate solution to this year's midday requests became a necessity, in order for you to receive a schedule/plan your transportation as soon as possible.

*****AFTER MUCH DIALOGUE, MTVA HAS DECIDED TO LESSEN THE PERFORMED PIECE REQUIREMENT FOR THIS YEAR ONLY TO 2 PIECES PER CHOIR, rather than asking each choir to perform 3 selections. This will apply to all choirs at all levels this year.*****

By cutting the requirement down to 2 pieces only, we were able to move to 10 minute performance times rather than 15 minutes, which allowed 8 more choirs per day to perform during their requested time frames. All involved in this decision are aware that 3 selections provide greater opportunities to express more musicality, contrasting styles, etc. There is no plan to make this a permanent change in the festival. Furthermore, I will personally see that the adjudicators are aware of this change, so that they are more mindful of this imposed situation upon you. Hopefully, you have enough time to make a thoughtful decision in selecting which two pieces you will choose. Please remember, the goal was to accommodate the membership and the needs of participants in the festival. Also, remember that the state festival will still require 3 pieces for all ensembles receiving a superior rating in the performance portion of our festival. Hopefully, you will all be able to enjoy the festival experience more, now that transportation issues may have been alleviated for you.

I would like to thank you for your patience and your assistance. I have spoken to many of you during this process, and it is evident that wonderful choral music programs are alive and well in Middle Tennessee! If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to call or email. Judge's bio's will be sent to you by the first of next week.

Sincerely,

Michael Choate,
Cookeville High School
MTVA Choral Festival Chair, 2009