**Music Conservatory – Audition Information**

**Band**

Here are the recommended preparations for students auditioning for band (winds, brass, or percussion).

* Each applicant will perform a 1 minute excerpt of a solo chosen from standard music literature that showcases the student’s technical and musical ability at the highest level that is comfortable. The excerpt should contain both technical and lyrical passages.
* Percussion applicants will play a snare excerpt as well as a marimba excerpt.
* Each applicant will play two-octave scales and arpeggios in the keys of C major, F major, B-flat major, E-flat major, A-flat major and D-flat major
* Percussion applicants, in addition to scales, will also play the following rudiments: open-closed-open, double stroke roll, flam accent, and paradiddle.
* Each applicant will read Levels 2, 3,4 of Sightreading Factory

**Orchestra**

Here are the recommended preparations for students auditioning for orchestra (strings).

* Each applicant should prepare to perform a 1 minute excerpt of solo chosen from the standard music literature. The excerpt should showcase the student’s technical ability at the highest level with which the student is comfortable. The excerpt should contain technical passages as well as lyrical.
* Each applicant should prepare to play two-octave scales and arpeggios in the keys of C major, G major, D major, F major, and B-flat major.
* Each applicant will read Levels 2, 3,4 of Sightreading Factory

**Evaluation Criteria for Band and Orchestra**

* The prepared solo will be judged on appropriate technical level, technical ability, intonation, pitch accuracy, rhythmic accuracy, tone quality, bow technique, musicality, phrasing, musical effect, and emotion.
* Scales and arpeggios will be judged on intonation, rhythmic accuracy, articulation, pitch accuracy, tone quality, bow technique, and left hand technique (including position, shifting, and vibrato).
* Applicants may be asked to sight-read a brief musical selection after 30 seconds of visual study; evaluation of sight-reading will be based on rhythmic accuracy, pitch accuracy, and musicality.
* Applicants may be asked to sing a familiar song (such as “Happy Birthday”); this will be evaluated for intonation and accuracy, not for the quality of the student’s voice.
* Applicants may be asked to sing back a series of notes played in real time; this will be evaluated for intonation and accuracy, not for the quality of the student’s voice.

Auditions may include an interview and/or writing sample to provide additional information about the student’s motivation, work ethic, and musical goals.

**Choral**

Here are the recommended preparations for students auditioning for choir.

* Learn the first verse of “My Country, ‘Tis of Thee” and practice singing it from memory.
* Learn a 1-2 minute excerpt from another song of your choice and practice singing it from memory. Bring sheet music for an accompanist to play, or a pre-recorded accompaniment track. Please note that NSA’s program is based on the classical vocal style, so it is better to choose a song that features you in a more classical sound. Popular songs are not appropriate audition choices.

During your audition, you will complete some or all of the following tasks.

* You will sing the first verse of “My Country, ‘Tis of Thee” from memory.
* You will sing your chosen song excerpt from memory.
* You will be asked to sing scales or other vocal exercises.
* You will be asked to participate in vocal exercises to check your skill at matching pitch and repeating what you hear.
* You will be asked to sight-read pitches and/or rhythms from a score.

Evaluation for choral auditions will be based upon the following criteria.

* The prepared solo will be judged on intonation, pitch accuracy, rhythmic accuracy, range, technique, expressiveness, and musical effect.
* Scales and arpeggios will be judged on intonation, pitch accuracy, rhythmic accuracy, range, expressiveness, and musical effect.
* Evaluation of vocal exercises and sight-reading excerpts will be based on accuracy, not vocal quality.

Auditions may include an interview and/or writing sample to provide additional information about the student’s motivation, work ethic, and musical goals.

**Music Conservatory – Audition Information**

**Guitar**

Here are the recommended preparations for students auditioning for guitar.

* Each applicant should prepare to perform a guitar solo chosen from the standard music literature. The solo should showcase the student’s technical ability at the highest level with which the student is comfortable.
* Each applicant should prepare to play two-octave scales in major and natural minor scales.
* Each applicant should prepare to play two-octave arpeggios in the keys of C major, A major, and G major.

Evaluation for guitar auditions will be based upon the following criteria.

* The prepared solo will be judged on appropriate technical level, intonation, pitch accuracy, rhythmic accuracy, tone quality, technical ability, expressiveness, and musical effect.
* Scales and arpeggios will be judged on intonation, pitch accuracy, rhythmic accuracy, tone quality, expressiveness, and musical effect.
* Applicants may be asked to sight-read a brief musical selection after 30-60 seconds of visual study; this will involve first position, C major, and the first three strings. Evaluation of sight-reading will be based on accuracy.
* Applicants may be asked to sing a familiar song (such as “Happy Birthday”); this will be evaluated for intonation and accuracy, not for the quality of the student’s voice.
* Applicants may be asked to sing back a series of notes played in real time; this will be evaluated for intonation and accuracy, not for the quality of the student’s voice.

Auditions may include an interview and/or writing sample to provide additional information about the student’s motivation, work ethic, and musical goals.

**Piano**

Here are the recommended preparations for students auditioning for piano.

* Each applicant should prepare to perform two contrasting pieces chosen from the standard music literature. These pieces should be for piano, not popular vocal tunes. Both selections should showcase the student’s technical ability at the highest level with which the student is comfortable. Memorization of both selections is preferred, but not required.
* Each applicant should prepare to play two scales (two to four octaves) and arpeggios from memory in keys that best demonstrate personal technique and mastery.

Evaluation for piano auditions will be based upon the following criteria.

* The prepared solo will be judged on level of selection, intonation, pitch accuracy, rhythmic accuracy, tone quality, hand position, wrist position, fingering, expressiveness, and musical effect.
* Scales and arpeggios will be judged on fingering, pitch accuracy, and rhythmic accuracy.
* Applicants may be asked to sight-read a brief musical selection after 30-60 seconds of visual study; evaluation of sight-reading will be based on accuracy.
* Applicants may be asked to sing a familiar song (such as “Happy Birthday”); this will be evaluated for intonation and accuracy, not for the quality of the student’s voice.
* Applicants may be asked to sing back a series of notes played in real time; this will be evaluated for intonation and accuracy, not for the quality of the student’s voice.

Auditions may include an interview and/or writing sample to provide additional information about the student’s motivation, work ethic, and musical goals.