

# Music Division

## OFFICIAL GLOBAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION (GCEA) STATEMENT OF ACCEPTABLE MUSIC FOR CONFERENCE COMPETITION



GCEA desires to have the highest quality music competition possible. Such competition is intended to demonstrate a student's instrumental and vocal music skills, while encouraging a student to use his musical talents to glorify God. GCEA encourages all students to aspire to reach their highest potential; maximizing the gifts God has given them.

Competition arrangements are to be Christian, patriotic, and/or classical in nature. In Vocal and Instrumental Music categories, contestants are not permitted to use the musical score (except instrumental ensembles). Narration and/or dramatic dialogue are not allowed. All vocal entries must be presented in the English language. (We apologize that we are not able to grant any exceptions.)

**APPEARANCE** Gentlemen: Dress shirts, ties, and jackets should be worn for all music performances with the following exceptions: 1. School uniforms 2. A tuxedo with either a vest or cummerbund without a jacket.

Ladies: Professional/church outfits should be worn for all music performances with the following exceptions: 1. School uniforms 2. Formal attire that meets the modesty requirements for conference.

When selecting a musical piece, please consider the following:

**NOTE:** Check with the director of your specific JYC to determine the exemptions to the dress code mentioned above.

**ELEMENTS OF MUSIC** **Melody**—A good melody has a definite high place near its conclusion so that there is a sense of climax and resolution. **Harmony**—Harmony should support the melody and play a subservient role. **Rhythm**—The rhythm of a song has much to do with the overall integrity of the piece. A subtle rhythm or sense of pulsation with a balance of regular accent patterns and occasional syncopation for variety and interest is preferred. The rhythm should not overtake the melody, harmony, message, or overall flow of a song. Musical compositions with excessive repetition of a melodic phrase, harmonic pattern, rhythmic pattern, or any combination of these three should be avoided.

A musical composition should have a definite beginning, build to a climax point, and communicate a definite sense of conclusion. The musical sound should not detract from the message of the words.

**Message**—Good lyrics say something of value. Not every song needs to be as profound as our richest hymns, but good lyrics rarely include trite phrases just for the sake of rhyme. Such phrases are many times designed more for entertainment rather than edification. Good lyrics fulfill a definite purpose. If the text is sung as a hymn, it should express some Godly attribute that helps us worship the Lord. If the text is sung as a gospel song, it should be a message that encourages us. The message should also be simple enough that almost anyone can easily understand it, relate to it, and apply it.

## PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUES

**Presentation**—Give careful attention that the musical presentation does not solely reflect secular styles (breathy, sensual, and so on). “Crooning,” “sliding,” “sagging, etc.,” should only be used wisely and purposely. Use caution that the presentation is not done in a purely “entertainment” attitude or style. **Movement**—No choreography, planned or unnecessary bodily movement (including hand clapping, foot stomping, deaf signing, finger snapping, etc.), will be permitted. Occasional movement of the hands/arms for dramatic effect (i.e., placing hand to heart, raising hand toward Heaven) is permitted but should be used sparingly. Competitors should stand erect; bend knees slightly to relax rigid leg muscles, with arms and shoulders relaxed and thumbs resting at the side-seam of clothing.



Questions to evaluate musical selections/performances:

1. Does the music glorify God, not the performer or composer?

2. Does the music reflect Biblical doctrine and Godly living?
3. Is the rhythm a subservient feature that does not dominate the music?
4. Does the background music play a subservient role to the lyrics and not distract the listener from the message?
5. Are the lyrics Biblically accurate?
6. Is the performance a straightforward presentation, focusing on vocal technique that employs proper breathing (only occasional, purposeful breathy tones, sagging and sliding pitches)?
7. Is the music easily identifiable as a Christ-honoring piece?
8. Does the music invoke positive responses?
9. Does the selection draw the listener closer to God and uplift his/her spirit?
10. Does the music praise the Lord, focus on God, or deliver a clear spiritual message?

When evaluating musical selections, an appropriate piece will always yield a “YES” response to all of the questions given. If there is **ANY** doubt regarding the appropriateness of a piece and to avoid conflict, please submit the selection to GCEA for review/approval. Out of love and respect for the students competing, GCEA would never desire a student to invest time and energy preparing a selection, only to be marked down because the selection does not meet the guidelines.

For review/approval, selections must be submitted to GCEA no later than **February 1**. Please allow two to three weeks for the review process. Selections, musical score, and lyrics should be submitted to:

Shipping Address: Mailing Address: GCEA YOUTH CONFERENCES 5472 Plum Street, Coloma, MI 49038

Submitted selections will be returned with the GCEA seal of approval or an explanation as to why the piece is not appropriate for this competition.

**GENERAL PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES IMPORTANT!!!!** All copies of music, CDs, and photos must be **CLEARLY LABELED** with the student’s name, school name, school telephone number, complete school address, and category.

1. Three copies of the arrangement, **as performed**, must be given to the judges before a performance. Music must be performed exactly as it appears on the score. For example, if chords are changed, music should be rewritten to reflect the changes. **Submitted copies must include the musical score, numbered measures, and the lyrics.** The judges must receive copies of the

corrected/changed scores. Copies must be **CLEARLY LABELED** with the student's name, school name, school telephone number, complete school address, and the category.

2. Contestants may sing a cappella; be accompanied by an adult or student (of conference age) playing a piano or acoustic guitar; or use an accompaniment recording (piano or acoustic guitar only). Note: Contestants are to make sure the recording is of the best possible sound quality.

Poise and presentation are part of the judging criteria; thus contestants are not to provide their own accompaniment (with the exception of the self-accompaniment solo category).

3. Contestants must submit a color photo of themselves, with faces clearly visible. They must be in the same outfit they will be wearing for that event. Photos should be clearly labeled with student's name, school name, school telephone number, complete school address, and the category.

4. All vocal and instrumental music is to be memorized (exception: Instrumental Ensembles).

5. There should be a preselected spokesperson for each group who will introduce the group, the school or homeschool represented, and the title of the song to be performed. (This is not counted against performance time.)

6. Personal amplification equipment for competition is not allowed.

7. Musical competition time limit is 5 minutes. If the competition piece exceeds the 5-minute time limit, the contestant will receive a **.5-point deduction** for any portion of thirty (30) second increments. (For example, a piece timed at 5:12 would receive a half-point deduction from the total score. A piece at 5:42 would receive a deduction of a full point from the total score.)

### **Checklist for Music:**

1. Copies of music: **Three (3) copies** must be brought to convention. **Submitted copies must include the musical score and the lyrics.** All copies are to be inserted in a clear, gallon-sized, zippered plastic bag with the student's name, school name, school address, and school telephone number clearly visible on the front of **EACH** copy.

2. Photo: Submit a color photo simulating the performance wearing the outfit in which the student will perform. **VERY IMPORTANT: CLEARLY LABEL** the **BACK** of the photo with the student's name, school name, school telephone number, school address, and the category.

3. If using a recorded accompaniment, each contestant must provide his or her own playback device.

4. When selecting music for vocal music competition, careful attention should be given to level of difficulty. Songs with too much unison or lack of distinct, individual parts do not usually place well. All members (duet, trio, quartet, etc.) or sections (ensemble) should demonstrate an ability to "carry" their individual parts with proper pitch, tone, and blend.

## VOCAL

**Solo (1 contestant)** There are two different entries available in the solo category: male or female.

**Duet (2 contestants), Trio (3 contestants), Quartet (4 contestants)** Time limit: 5 minutes. Contestants may be male, female, or mixed.

**Vocal Ensemble (5-10 contestants\*)** There may be only one school entry under the designation “Vocal Ensemble.” Your ensemble may be male, female, or mixed, but it will be judged with all the other Vocal Ensembles. It may have an adult directing. If a student plays accompaniment, he is not included in the 10 total allowable contestants. (\*The adult director is not considered a contestant.)



**Choir (11 + contestants\*)** There may be only one school entry under the designation “Choir.” Your Choir may be male, female, or mixed, but it will be judged with all other Choirs. It may have an adult directing. (\*The adult director is not considered a contestant.)

**Note:** Contestants may not use sound equipment during competition. Winners selected to perform before a rally audience will be provided with appropriate

microphones.

## VOCAL MUSIC JUDGING CRITERIA Areas of Evaluation

### Appearance and stage deportment POSSIBLE POINTS

- A. Approach—confident, yet with grace and humility (1-3)
- B. Posture—upright look, not slumped (1-3)
- C. Eye contact—scanned the audience, not stared (1-3)
- D. Poise—in full control (1-3)
- E. Clothing—color coordinated, neat, sharp, beautiful (1-3)
- F. Departure—confident (1-3)

### Interpretation

- A. Mood—prayerful, enthusiastic, peaceful (1-3)
- B. Intensity—not too weak or too strong, enough power, etc. (1-3)
- C. Style—presentation matched the printed intention (1-3)
- D. Tempo—flowing, not too fast or too slow (1-3)
- E. Phrasing—feeling of motion or rest (1-4)
- F. Climax—handled well (1-4)
- G. Dynamics—volumes changed correctly (1-4)
- H. Word Emphasis—each word received right emphasis (1-3)

### **Musicianship**

- A. Memory (1-5)
- B. Projection—each part of the music could be heard (1-5)
- C. Proper diction—correctly pronounced, articulated, enunciated (1-5)
- D. Tone quality—full, rich sound (1-5)
- E. Correct rhythm—performed like the printed page (1-5)
- F. Proper breathing—breathed at the right places, the right way (1-5)
- G. Intonation—correct pitch for solos or blends for groups (1-5)
- H. Balance of voices and/or accompaniment— accompaniment added to the beauty, not overrode (1-5)

### **Appropriateness of selection**

- A. Message/ministry—it ministered to the listener (1-5)
- B. Degree of difficulty (1-5)

### **Proper documentation submitted (1-5)**

### **TOTAL POINTS (100)**

## **INSTRUMENTAL**

**Piano Solo**— Piano will be provided by the convention. See Piano Judging Criteria below.

**Woodwind Solo**— Any woodwind instrument, such as flute, saxophone, clarinet, etc. See Instrumental Music Judging Criteria. (Note: A recorder is not considered a woodwind instrument and should be entered into the miscellaneous category.)

**String Solo (Bowed)**—Violin, viola, cello, string bass, etc. See Instrumental Music Judging Criteria.

**String Solo (Plucked, hammered,**



**strummed, etc.)**—Harp, classical guitar, banjo, mandolin, etc. See Instrumental Music Judging Criteria.

**Brass Solo**—See Instrumental Music Judging Criteria (Note: Although many saxophones are made of brass, they are not in the brass family of instruments. Saxophones are woodwind instruments.)

**Miscellaneous Solo**—Includes instruments such as accordion, marimba, xylophone, recorder, handbells/hand chimes, bagpipe, etc. Drums and amplified instruments are not permitted.

**Percussion is only permitted in Large Instrumental Ensemble.** Accompaniment is limited to piano or acoustic guitar. See Instrumental Music Judging Criteria.

**Piano Duet**— Two people playing the same piano or two pianos. Pianos will be provided by the Convention. See Piano Judging Criteria.

**Instrumental Duet Competition**—A combination of **any** two instruments (woodwind, string, brass, etc.) played together with or without accompaniment. Piano accompaniment is permissible and may or may not be counted as one of the two instruments. If piano is accompaniment only, please note such on the Judge’s Form (e.g., two guitars playing the melody with piano accompaniment, one guitar and piano sharing the melody). See Instrumental Music Judging Criteria.

**Instrumental Trio Competition**—Time limit: 5 minutes A combination of any **three** instruments (woodwind, string, brass, etc.) played together with or without accompaniment. Piano accompaniment is permissible and may or may not count as one of the three instruments. If piano is accompaniment only, please note such on the Judge’s Form. See Instrumental Music Judging Criteria.

**Instrumental Quartet Competition**—Time limit: 5 minutes A combination of any four instruments (woodwind, string, brass, etc.) played together with or without accompaniment. Piano accompaniment is permissible and may or may not count as one of the four instruments. If piano is accompaniment only, please note such on the Judge’s Form. See Instrumental Music Judging Criteria.

**Instrumental Ensemble Competition (5 or more contestants)** —Time limit: 5 minutes Five or more contestants with any variety of instruments. The time limit for the entire setup and performance will be twenty (20) minutes. There may be an adult directing. Piano accompaniment is permitted and may or may not count as one of the instruments. If piano is accompaniment only, please note such on the Judge’s Form. Musical scores are allowed.

**Pitched Percussion Choir- (5–18 contestants)** —Time limit: 5 minutes There may be an adult directing. Piano accompaniment is permitted. Musical scores are not allowed. See Pitched Percuss Choir Judging Criteria.

**GENERAL RULES** 1. One piano will be provided. 2. All other instruments are to be provided by the school. 3. No electrical instruments or amplification may be used. 4. For musical selection, follow the official statement of acceptable music given on page VIII-1.

## **PIANO JUDGING CRITERIA**

Areas of Evaluation POSSIBLE POINTS



**Appearance and deportment**  
(1-5)

**Difficulty** (1-10)

**Memory** (1-15)

**Musical features**

A. Melody—clearly heard  
(1-5)

B. Phrasing (1-10)

C. Rhythm (1-10)

D. Pedaling (1-10)

E. Tempo (1-10)

F. Dynamics and performance

indications (1-10)

G. Smoothness of execution (1-5)

H. Conveys the spirit of the music (1-5)

**Proper documentation submitted (1-5) TOTAL POINTS (100)**

**INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC JUDGING CRITERIA** (Excludes Small and Large Ensemble) Areas of Evaluation POSSIBLE POINTS

**Tone**

A. Beauty/clarity (1-4)

B. Color (1-4)

C. Strength, control, and embouchure (1-4)

D. Intonation (1-4)

**Technique and Musicianship**

A. Meter (1-4)



- B. Melody (1-4)
- C. Fingering and hand positions (1-4)
- D. Accents (1-4)
- E. Precision (1-4)
- F. Slurs (1-4)
- G. Bowing (strings), tonguing (wind instruments) (1-4)
- H. Attacks (1-4)
- I. Cutoffs (1-4)
- J. Accuracy (1-4)
- K. Memory (1-5)

### **Interpretation**

- A. Tempo (1-4)
- B. Style (1-4)
- C. Phrasing (1-4)
- D. Dynamics (1-4)

### **Presentation**

- A. Deportment (1-3)
- B. Posture (1-3)
- C. Balance and integration of accompaniment (1-4)

### **Selection**

- A. Message/ministry—Does it minister to the listener as performed? (1-4)
- B. Degree of difficulty (1-4)

**Proper documentation submitted (1-5) TOTAL POINTS (100)**

## **PITCHED PERCUSSION CHOIR JUDGING CRITERIA** Areas of

Evaluation POSSIBLE POINTS

**Memory** (1-10)

**Approach/departure** (1-5)

**Musicianship** (1-5)

**Appearance/poise** (1-5)

**Interpretation** (1-10)

**Blend—how bells/chimes are struck together** (1-10)

**Appropriateness of selection** (1-10)

**Rhythmic accuracy** (1-15)

**Tone—consistency of strike, form** (1-10)

**Technique—damp, trills, vibrato, etc.** (1-15)

**Proper documentation submitted (1-5) TOTAL POINTS (100)**

## **INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE JUDGING CRITERIA** Areas of Evaluation

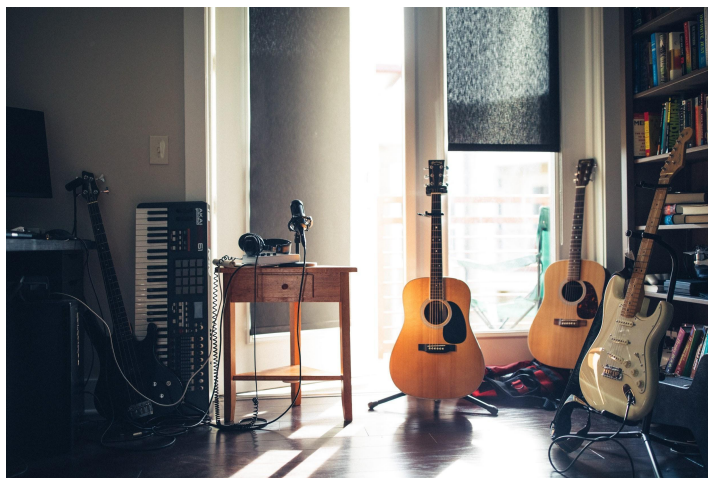
POSSIBLE POINTS

### **Tone**

- A. Beauty/clarity (1-4)
- B. Color (1-4)
- C. Strength, control, embouchure (1-4)
- D. Intonation (1-4)

### **Technique and musicianship**

- A. Meter (1-4)
- B. Melody (1-4)
- C. Fingering and hand positions (1-4)
- D. Accents (1-4)
- E. Precision (1-4)
- F. Slurs (1-4)
- G. Bowing (strings), tonguing (wind instruments) (1-4)
- H. Attacks (1-4)
- I. Cutoffs (1-4)
- J. Accuracy (1-4)



### **Interpretation**

- A. Tempo (1-4)
- B. Style (1-4)
- C. Phrasing (1-4)
- D. Dynamics (1-4)

### **Presentation**

- A. Deportment (1-3)
- B. Posture (1-3)
- C. Balance and integration of accompaniment (1-3)

### **Selection**

- A. Message/ministry—Does it minister to the listener as performed? (1-4)
- B. Degree of difficulty (1-10)

**Proper documentation submitted (1-5) TOTAL POINTS (100)**

**HINTS FROM THE MUSIC JUDGES** Most of the music judges' comments deal with intonation (the ability to sing and play in tune) and rhythmic accuracy. In many musical traditions, and especially in gospel music, it is important for the performer to be able to improvise and make various changes to the composition as it is performed. In this competition, however, the judges are requiring the music to be performed exactly as it is written. Often, student performers have lost many points because they performed a piece according to the way they have heard it in the past instead of the way the music indicates.

Both vocalists and instrumentalists need to be aware of the fact that good intonation is often



made easier by obtaining a qualified instructor who can teach the basics of breathing, posture, and other items that are the foundation of good musical performance.

Please be aware that the accompaniment is a vitally important part of a musical entry. If the accompanist does not have the ability to easily perform the accompaniment, it will undoubtedly cause the

score to be lowered. Recognizing the fact that many published arrangements deliberately simplify piano accompaniments so more pianists can easily perform the music, the judges will allow improvisation in the piano accompaniment; however, this liberty does not extend to the actual contestant.

Do not choose music that is overly difficult in an effort to impress the judges. It is impossible to hide the fact that you are performing music that is beyond your ability. Instead of raising your score by selecting impressive selections, your score will be lowered because you cannot perform the music well. It is better to choose simpler music that you can perform well.

PLEASE carefully review the official GCEA Statement of Acceptable Music in these guidelines before selecting your competition piece. If you have questions about the suitability of a certain piece, please submit it to GCEA for review and approval.

## **PREPARING FOR THE CONFERENCE**

## **TONE QUALITY**

### **General-**Beauty of tonal color

Each instrument or ensemble group possesses a unique characteristic tone quality (color). Performers are expected to achieve this tonal color in performance. Listen to quality recordings of professionals, and strive to match their tonal color as you play. Do not emulate the tonal production of jazz performers, stage bands, or the projection of performers in marching bands. Listen to classical soloists or chamber groups to develop a refined sound. Poor tone quality is usually an indication of improper air concepts on winds instruments, poor bow control on strings, or improper stroking on percussion instruments. Control and stability These terms refer to evenness of tone and ease of tonal production. Control and stability are best achieved by daily, thoughtful practice of long tones and scales throughout the instrument's range over a long period of time. Be prepared to spend many years of consistent practice developing control and stability of a beautiful tonal color.

**Solo** Range development Choose a solo that demonstrates your full note range. Solos that require tones that are too high or too low and solos that do not demonstrate the performer's full range should be avoided or modified.

**Embouchure (Winds)** The embouchure (lip and jaw function) should work freely to allow the air stream to cause a proper vibration. Obtain the services of a professional private instructor to develop proper embouchure habits.

**Ensemble: Balance of parts** Keep in mind that the melody line must predominate and that accompanying parts must present a unified foundation for the melody whenever it is present. Group blend Blend the voices of the ensemble so that they present a unified tonal color, one that is characteristic for the type of group that you are presenting. Strive to develop a classical chamber sound.

## **INTERPRETATION AND MUSICIANSHIP**

**Phrasing** This element, more than any other, separates maturity levels in performance. Only a small percentage of the dynamic and tempo variations are actually indicated in the score. Identify each phrase, and then identify the highest point of intensity within each phrase. Finally, use the tools of expression, tempo, dynamics, and spirit to enhance that point of intensity within each phrase.

**Expression, tempo, dynamics, and spirit** Strive to present the emotional intent of the composer/arranger and the spiritual qualities of the song's message (when applicable).

**Tradition** Some pieces, especially sacred classics, require some understanding of the performance practices of the musical period during which they were written. If you select, for example, a piece from the Baroque period, you would do well to research performance practices (including ornamentation styles) of the period. Please keep in mind that recordings can sometimes be quite misleading since not all recording artists emphasize historically accurate performances.

## **TECHNIQUE**

**General** (All Instruments) Demonstrate Fluency and overall technical ability Choose a piece that emphasizes your strengths. Fluency refers to technical freedom on the instrument. Many years of faithful practice under the direction of a good teacher are required to develop fluency and a wide-range technical ability. Articulations/fingerings/hand positions/posture

**Specific** (Instrument Categories) Bells and Chimes Efficiency of stroke technique For individual stroke consistency or group stroke consistency, choose the stroke patterns that produce the styles and expressions which the piece requires. Then practice those patterns carefully under the watchful eye of an instructor to develop consistency.

Remember—**PRACTICE MAKES PERMANENT.**

**Mallets** Hand positions/wrist technique/stroke placement on bars or strings A private instructor will be necessary to develop proper hand positions and wrist technique. The goal is to be able to play easily and efficiently. Each bar or string possesses a live spot or a heart that produces the optimum sound for that instrument. Bars also possess a secondary spot which may be utilized for efficiency of movement during fast passages. Learn these spots and practice slowly until you can strike the string or bar on its live spot every time.

**Strings** Bowing choice and execution While some bowings are marked, most require a decision on the part of the player. Obtain the services of a private instructor or a professional teacher to assist with bowing decisions. Bowing decisions will affect many other areas of your performance.

**Winds** Breath control and tonguing Proper breath control is evidenced by pure tone quality and freedom in performing many styles of articulation (slurs, staccatos, and a wide variety of accents) at every conceivable dynamic level. The tongue can produce proper articulations only within the context of a well-controlled stream of air.



**RHYTHM Precision** Rhythmic precision refers to the accurate execution of each written rhythmic figure. Any variation to the written rhythms should be noted on each judge's copy of the music.

**Meter** Each time signature receives its own characteristic pulsation within every measure. This pulsation seldom varies throughout the piece unless it is interrupted by special articulations. The performer must learn the metrical pattern of each time signature so that the pulsation and variations in that pulsation can achieve the intended effects.

**Rhythmic figure interpretation** Not only is rhythmic precision important, but it is also important to achieve the interpreted style of unique rhythmic figures. For instance, in a march the dotted eighth and sixteenth figure must be treated differently than that same figure when found in a fanfare. Likewise, a triplet across two beats is likely to be performed in two different ways in a classical minuet and in a lullaby. It is also likely to be treated differently at the height of a phrase than from that at the end of a musical section. It may be helpful to secure the assistance of a professional instructor to guide in this area.

**Accents** Give special attention to every accent (both written accents and accents that are implied by the meter). There are several types of accents, and each style of piece requires its own special treatment of accents. Also, accents are performed at different intensities, depending on the dynamic level at the time.

**INTONATION Winds and strings** Individual (Solo) and Group (Ensemble) Winds must be aware that many notes on even the most carefully manufactured instruments are out of tune. These tones must be found (a portable tuner is a great help) and humored into tune. String players must learn accurate pitch placement and must adjust out-of-tune pitches quickly. Groups must practice slowly and carefully to achieve unity of pitch. Practice unison or octave scales in pairs, carefully tuning every tone before moving on, to develop good group intonation skills.

**Pretuned instruments in lieu of intonation (Bells, Chimes, and Mallets)**

Execution/consistency/stability of stylistic and dynamic contrasts Every consecutive percussive stroke at a dynamic level must achieve a consistent volume level. Also, consecutive strokes in a crescendo or decrescendo must produce smooth dynamic variation. Correct choice of mallets for each style/dynamic Mallets come in many different materials and tensions to produce different tone qualities and dynamics. Most performances benefit when the mallets are selected according to the musical needs.

**PRESENTATION Suitability to ability** Choose a piece that clearly shows your ability, keeping in mind that a piece does not need to be difficult to be musically excellent and to

minister to fellow believers.

**Suitability of musical style** Follow the suggested guidelines carefully. Keep in mind that the music itself will develop an atmosphere. That atmosphere should be consistent with the spirit of the song and the spirit of the service in which the piece is being played.

**Stage presence (Soloist) and stage appearance (Ensemble)** Soloists should try to present a spirit of quiet confidence. Do not look at the judges or audience while playing. You may look at each other if doing so enhances musical communication and performance. Simply concentrate on the music. Ensembles should try to sit or stand in an attractive formation. Give each instrument plenty of room. Make sure your performance area is attractive and orderly. Develop a simple, silent, hidden (if possible) starting signal.

**Entrance and exit** Take some time to develop an orderly entrance and exit. Look positive from the time that you enter the performing area to the time that you leave.

**Clothing** Follow *GCEA Student Convention Guidelines*. A special uniform for large groups lends much to the overall effect of the presentation. Contestants who do not meet GCEA dress guidelines will be asked to return for their performance when they are properly dressed.

**Time limit** Time your piece when you are selecting it. Choose a piece that fits easily into the time limit. Cuts and tempo variations to make the time limit are often quite distracting. NOTE: Musical competition time limit is **five (5) minutes**. If competition piece exceeds the five (5) minute time limit, the contestant will receive a **.5-point deduction** for any portion of thirty (30) second increments. (For example, a piece timed at 5:12 would receive a half-point deduction from the total score. A piece at 5:42 would receive a deduction of a full point from the total score.)