

# **SWINGIN' TO THE PROMISE LAND: YIKES! MY JAZZ ENSEMBLE MADE IT! – WHAT DO I DO NOW?**

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## **THE DECISION TO APPLY TO MIDWEST WITH YOUR JAZZ ENSEMBLE– ARE WE READY?**

- Analyze your group—Some questions to answer before you apply for a Midwest Clinic performance.
  1. Is the group performing at a high level this year and will it be a strong performing group next December?
  2. How many seniors do you have in the group?
  3. Can the group perform a Midwest caliber concert without these seniors?
  4. Will the majority of your rhythm section be back next year and perform at the Midwest Clinic?
  5. Will your school administration, parents, and community support your appearance at the Midwest Clinic?
  6. Can you build a support system?\_

## **THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

### **Requirements for application**

- Three contrasting styles
  1. Swing
  2. Ballad
  3. Latin, Funk, Rock, etc.

***All recorded selections must be unedited and not digitally enhanced in any manner!***

- A videotape of the ensemble performing the same music as on the CD.
- A list of the names of the performers and their instruments that will be performing in December. Indicate with an asterisk the players who will be new to your program in the fall.
- Three evaluations from prominent directors who have worked with or heard your group within the last year. These forms must be sent directly to the Midwest Clinic office by March 18, 2005.
- One recent glossy picture of your organization and one of yourself.

- Several printed programs from the last two years.
- Your signature and your school official's signature on this application, indicating acceptance of the policies set forth in this application.
- Directors of the participating groups are required to attend a planning meeting in Chicago on June 4, 2005. **IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND THIS MEETING, PLEASE DO NOT APPLY!!!**

### **PREPARING THE CD OF YOUR ENSEMBLE**

- Audition CD must be recorded after September 1, 2004.
- Your Administrator must certify that the selections on this recording are unedited.
- You must include minute and second timings for each selection.
- The CD must contain the following information:
  1. Name of Organization
  2. Conductor's Name
  3. Title, composer, arranger of each selection
  4. Minute and second timing for each selection
- For best results, submit selections performed live at a concert. This will be the best representation of your group.
- Avoid submitting recordings done in a studio setting.
- Plan several concerts to allow you choices of which concert best represents the quality of group.
- Video and audio record the jazz festivals you attend.
- If necessary, plan a small concert in the band hall to record selection for Midwest.
- The video must be the same music performance as submitted on the CD.

### ***YIKES! MY JAZZ ENSEMBLE MADE IT! – WHAT DO I DO NOW?***

### **THE JUNE MEETING FOR DIRECTORS**

- Mandatory meeting for all directors
- This meeting will explain and make clear the following:
  1. The philosophy of the Midwest Clinic
  2. Introduce the Midwest Clinic Board
  3. Introduce the various entities involved in producing the Midwest clinic
  4. The expectation of the performing groups will be made clear
  5. The timeline and deadlines for submitting various forms such as music selection, travel arrangements, rehearsal, etc.

### **SELECTING MUSIC – HOW IT WORKS?**

- Select music that best reflects the talent of your group

- 50% of each jazz ensemble program must be music published and printed between September 15, 2003 and September 15, 2005. Any music (score and parts) not off the press by September 15, 2005, cannot be programmed. The number of selections, not timing, determines the percentage of new music.
- Your group will be on stage longer than your actual performance time. For Example, your group may be scheduled for an hour performance but your actual playing time may not exceed 45 minutes. This will allow ample time for announcements, introductions and changes of conductors.
- Any music performed in the three years prior to your Midwest performance may not be performed.
- The Midwest Clinic schedule does not allow time for intermissions and encores!
- The group should be able to play the music well without having long extended summer rehearsals
- Select music that showcases the talent of guest artist without overwhelming the level performance level of your group.

### **REHEARSING THE MUSIC**

- Careful planning of your rehearsal time is essential for a successful performance at the Midwest Clinic.
- Begin rehearsing the music by first establishing good basic playing fundamentals
- Keep in mind the length of your program and develop the endurance level necessary to perform the music
- Perform several concerts before you attend the Midwest Clinic

### **PERFORMING WITH A GUEST SOLOIST**

- Select an artist that performs on an instrument that is not well developed in your group
- Communicate with your guest artist and be upfront with the talent level of your group

### **TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS**

- Plan in detail every aspect of your group's travel early
- Have someone organize all the financial aspect of the trip with you overseeing the results
- If fund raising is challenging then plan the events early and include as much parent participation as possible. Have a time line, developed with fund raising events, concerts, payment dates, and Midwest deadlines.
- Have a back up plan for each event, and a goal of how much money should be raised. Set an amount for each student to fund raise or pay. Give out donation sheets to be given to contributors, companies, or friends.
- Set a target date to complete all financial aspects of the trip, a month of two prior to departure to Midwest, this makes the last month's focus solely on the preparation of the band.

- Immediately after the June meeting begin your travel arrangements
- Come up with a total package amount for each student traveling. Include air, meals, hotel, ground transportation, tips and over size baggage expenses that sometimes are incurred
- Here are some travel issues to consider:
  1. **Air transportation** - How much equipment will you need to travel? Make a deal with the airline prior to flight about oversized baggage and music equipment.
  2. **Ground transportation** - Negotiate a price
  3. **Hotel Accommodations** - Familiarize yourself with each hotel in town prior to your departure.
  4. **Meals** - Use a daily allowance for each student, this makes it harder for them to spend all their meal money the first day (approximate \$50 a day.)
  5. **Touring Chicago** – Take advantage of the great culture Chicago has to offer and plan a tour to visit places such as the Adler Planetarium, Shedd Aquarium, Sears Tower Observatory, Navy Pier, Museum of Science & Industry, etc. Insist that everyone travel in the streets in groups preferably with a chaperone.

### **THE CONCERT AT MIDWEST**

- Make an itinerary and detail every aspect of your Midwest Trip.
- Assign chaperones duties and give guidelines before leaving for the Midwest Clinic.
- Plan to meet with the group prior to performance to settle jitters.
- Give your group ample time to arrive at the performance site.
- Arrive at least one hour before your sound check. You need time to make sure your equipment is set-up properly.
- Have a plan for after the concert is over.

### **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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*Publications include: Co-author of Jazz Expressions™ and Middle School Music Expressions™, author of Afro-Cuban Percussion Module and World Percussion Module of the Middle School Music Expressions™ series, contributing author of Jazz Pedagogy by Dick Dunscomb and Willie Hill. These books as well as several jazz charts are published by Warner Bros. Publications.*