

2025-2026 NHMEA Jazz All-State Audition Information

All materials and purchase links can be found at nhmea.org

Please email Auditions Chairperson Joe Conti at jconti@sau29.org with any questions
For all payment and money related questions, please email Eric Kobb at statemanager@nhmea.org

Audition Date: Saturday, October 18, 2025, at Londonderry Middle School (please note the location change!!)

Festival Date: February 5-7, 2026, at Pinkerton Academy

Registration Deadline: Saturday, September 22, 2025 at 11:59PM

Audition Payment Deadline: Saturday, October 4, 2025

Note: All students will audition individually. Group auditions are not permitted.

DIRECTORS: Please review the eligibility requirements and rules document found on the NHMEA Jazz All-State page before registering your students.

VOCAL AUDITIONS

ALL MUSIC MUST BE MEMORIZED

PART 1: BALLAD/STANDARD:

Soprano and Tenor students will prepare the melody and lyrics to “I Thought About You” in the key of C Major from the Jamey Aebersold Jazz Volume 113 (book titled “Vocal Standards ‘Embraceable You’”) on page 17.

Alto and Bass students will prepare the melody and lyrics to “I Thought About You” in the key of B-flat Major from the same book on page 39.

Both of these will be accompanied by the faster version track #18 on each of their respective CDs found in the back of the book.

The tune will be sung through one time only, and students are encouraged to interpret the piece in the appropriate jazz style, including altering rhythms, adding approach notes, etc.

NOTE: There is a 1st and 2nd ending. This means students will sing both verses of the melody, following the standard road map for 1st and 2nd endings.

There is no improvisation chorus on this part of the audition.

PART 2: BLUES ETUDE & IMPROVISATION

Each student will sing a memorized, four-part vocal jazz etude which is currently available at [the NHMEA website](http://theNHMEAwebsite). A recorded accompaniment for the etude will be provided with the student’s voice part missing. The student will sing their missing part using the given lyrics and articulations.

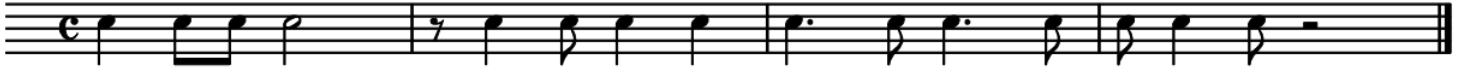
Students auditioning on soprano voice will be required to prepare and sing the Soprano 2 line for their audition.

(All five parts will be included on the recording).

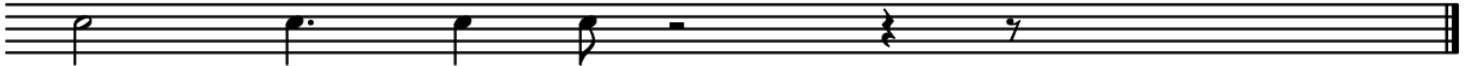
Students will improvise for 24 measures. Upon completion of the F-blues etude, students will move directly into their improvisation for a total of 2 choruses (24 measures). The recorded accompaniment will not stop between the etude and the improvisation.

PART 3: SIGHT-READING

Each student will be asked to sight-read. After being given the tonic arpeggio, the student will read a four measure diatonic melody in Common Time. The melody will begin on “DO”. The student will determine the tempo and sing on their choice of solfege, numbers, or a neutral syllable. A swing feel must be used where applicable. The rhythm may include such combinations as:



And may include the following note values:



Students will be given two opportunities to perform the sight-reading portion of the audition.

WIND AUDITIONS

Saxophone, Trumpet, Trombone, Tuba*

*Students auditioning on tuba will be placed in an ensemble at the discretion of the NHMEA Jazz All-State auditions and festival committees.

PART 1: BALLAD/STANDARD

Students will be asked to prepare the melody to “Foolish Heart” from the Jamey Aebersold Jazz volume 25 titled “All-Time Standards.” **Be sure students are using the correctly transposed parts for their instruments.** Students will play the melody one time using appropriate jazz interpretation, including altering rhythms, adding approach notes, etc.

There is no improvisation chorus on this part of the audition.

PART 2: BLUES ETUDE & IMPROVISATION

Each student will prepare the F-blues etude which is currently available at [the NHMEA website](http://theNHMEAwebsite.com). A recorded accompaniment for the etude will be provided of the rhythm section for the students to play along to. The track will be the F-blues accompaniment track found on the Jamey Aebersold volume 1 CD.

Upon completion of the F Blues etude, students will move directly into their improvisations for a total of 2 choruses (24 measures). The recorded accompaniment will not stop between the etude and the improvisation.

PART 3: SIGHT-READING

Students will be asked to sight-read a short excerpt ranging from 8 to 16 measures. The sight-reading will be done in a jazz style and students should use appropriate articulations and style during the performance of the sight-reading. Students will be given two opportunities to perform the sight-reading portion of the audition.

PART 4: RANGE CHECK (trumpets & trombones only)

Trombone and trumpet players will be asked to perform a range check. This portion of the audition is NOT scored and does not affect a student's eligibility or entry into the festival. This allows the adjudicators and committee to appropriately place players in the ensembles for the festival for those who qualify entry.

The range check will be performed as follows:

TRUMPETS: Trumpet players will be expected to play their B-flat concert scale from low C to as high as they are comfortable (moving diatonically) until they play high C above the staff. Once they reach high C, they should change to a chromatic scale.

TROMBONES: Trombone players should play a B-flat concert scale from low B-flat to as high as they are comfortable, moving diatonically. If the trombone they are playing has a trigger, they should also play down as low as they are comfortable from low B-flat moving diatonically.

RHYTHM SECTION AUDITIONS

Guitar, Piano, Vibes*

***Students auditioning on vibes will be placed in an ensemble at the discretion of the NHMEA Jazz All-State auditions and festival committees.**

PART 1: BALLAD/STANDARD

Students will be asked to prepare "Foolish Heart" from the Jamey Aebersold Jazz volume 25 titled "All-Time Standards." Students will play the melody the first time (using appropriate jazz interpretation, including altering rhythms, adding approach notes, etc.) followed by a second chorus with accompaniment chords ONLY.

Piano - Students must play the melody, on the first chorus, with chordal accompaniment

Guitar & Vibes - Students may add chords to the melody on the first chorus of their performance if they wish. There is no improvisation chorus on this part of the audition.

PART 2: BLUES ETUDE & IMPROVISATION

Each student will prepare the F-blues etude which is currently available at the NHMEA website. A recorded accompaniment for the etude will be provided of the rhythm section for the students to play along to with their instrument track turned off. The track will be the F-blues accompaniment track found on the Jamey Aebersold volume 1 CD.

Piano - Students must play the melody with chordal accompaniment

Guitar & Vibes - Students may add chords to the melody on the first chorus of their performance if they wish.

Upon completion of the F Blues etude, students will move directly into their improvisations for a total of 2 choruses (24 measures). The recorded accompaniment will not stop between the etude and the improvisation.

PART 3: SIGHT-READING

Students will be asked to sight-read a short excerpt ranging from 8 to 16 measures. The sight-reading will be done in a jazz style and students should use appropriate articulations and style during the performance of the sight-reading. Students will be given two opportunities to perform the sight-reading portion of the audition.

Bass

PART 1: BALLAD/STANDARD

Students will be asked to prepare “Foolish Heart” from the Jamey Aebersold Jazz volume 25 titled “All-Time Standards.” Students will play the form twice. The first time as the melody using appropriate jazz interpretation, including altering rhythms, adding approach notes, etc. The second time as a walking bassline. Students will play along to the track with the bass channel turned off during the second chorus.

There is no improvisation chorus on this part of the audition.

PART 2: BASSLINE & IMPROVISATION

All students will be asked to play a walking bassline based on, but not limited to, quarter notes with a similar tempo and feel to the bassline heard on the F-blues recording from Jamey Aebersold’s Volume 1. To demonstrate their time keeping ability, students will play the above exercise without the recorded accompaniment.

Students will improvise on the F Blues for a total of two choruses (24 measures) while being accompanied by the recording from Jamey Aebersold’s Volume 1. Chord changes for the F Blues can be found in the book that accompanies Jamey Aebersold’s Volume 1 recording.

PART 3: SIGHT-READING

Students will be asked to sight-read a short excerpt ranging from 8 to 16 measures. The sight-reading will be done in a jazz style and students should use appropriate articulations and style during the performance of the sight-reading. Students will be given two opportunities to perform the sight-reading portion of the audition.

Drums

PART 1: SWING BEAT WITH 24 BAR “FOURS” IMPROVISATION

Drummers will play a swing beat with sticks with a similar tempo and feel to the beat heard on the F Blues recording from Jamey Aebersold’s Volume 1. Also, students will improvise by playing “fours” (alternating four measures of a swing beat with four measures of solo) for 24 measures. To demonstrate their time keeping ability, students will play the above without the recorded accompaniment.

PART 2: “HAYBURNER” BY SAMMY NESTICO

Students will prepare the drum part to the jazz standard “Hayburner” from letter G to the end of the chart. During the audition, students will play along to the Kendor Music Publishing recording found here:

<https://youtu.be/dawT3LXKWZU?t=146>

IMPORTANT NOTE: Students will NOT play along to the original Count Basie Orchestra album version of the chart. This version is different from the one produced by Kendor Music Publishing and should not be substituted.

Students and teachers can purchase the drum part from this E-Print link on JW Pepper: <https://www.jwpepper.com/hay-burner-544684-1209700/p>. Be sure to hit the link that says “purchase additional parts” to only purchase a PDF of the drum part.

PART 3: STYLES

Students will be asked to demonstrate Funk, Rock, Bossa, & Ballad brush beats. Please make sure you bring both sticks AND brushes to the audition.

PART 4: SIGHT-READING

Students will be asked to sight-read a short excerpt ranging from 8 to 16 measures. The sight-reading will be done in a jazz style and students should use appropriate articulations and style during the performance of the sight-reading. Students will be given two opportunities to perform the sight-reading portion of the audition.