

2025 NYSBDA Middle School Honor Band Preview

Omar Williams, Chairperson



The 2025 NYSBDA Statewide Middle School Honor Band will rehearse and perform at the NYSBDA Symposium **March 7 & 8, 2025** at the DoubleTree and Embassy Suites in Syracuse, NY. Approximately 100 middle school musicians from New York State will be selected for the Honor Band.

Ms. Erin Cole Steele has accepted the invitation of the NYSBDA officers and executive board to guest conduct the NYSBDA Middle School Honor Band. We are ecstatic to welcome her energy and expertise at this year's Symposium.

After the cancellation of the 2020 NYSSMA Solo Festival, NYSBDA created an online application form which excluded the requirement for students to submit an adjudication form. We will continue to use this policy so it is NOT required to have participated in last year's NYSSMA festival in order to apply for the NYSBDA Honor Band this year. We are working toward greater inclusion, equity, and representation in our ensembles from around the state. Honor Band selection will be based on band director recommendation and the criteria submitted in the nomination application.

The first criterion of the Honor band is, "Wind and Percussion students who demonstrate outstanding musicianship, accomplishments and exceptional musical interest," and only recommend students who truly fit that description. Also, while we realize that plans change, please only nominate students who plan to participate, if selected.

NEW: NYSBDA will be doing nominations through Da Capo. You may be familiar with the program through nomination processes such as all-counties and area-all states in your region. This should be completed by the nominating band director. We are also asking that the 2025 Commitment Form be filled out and signed by the appropriate parties. We anticipate this to be included in the Da Capo program but in case of technical issues it may be necessary to upload a copy for each student who you nominate. The 2025 Commitment Form can be found here: [COMMITMENT FORM](#). It is assumed selected students will participate in Honor Band. **DO NOT** nominate students if they do not intend to participate or if there are any conflicts. A copy of the student's 2024 NYSSMA Solo Evaluation may be submitted with each application, if applicable. Teachers should write a recommendation based on the student's abilities. **Nominating Band Directors must be current or new members of NYSBDA in order to have students selected.** Any applications received from non-members or inactive NYSBDA members as of the application deadline will not be considered.

The deadline for submitting online applications is Friday, October 25th

Band directors will be **emailed** the names of students accepted or selected as alternates for the Middle School Honor Band by Tuesday, November 12th, 2024. An all-inclusive, non-refundable participation fee of \$275.00 per student is due by December 15, 2024. The \$275.00 participation fee includes: music, guest conductor, rehearsal/performance spaces, shared room, meals and an audio recording of the concert. In order to ensure the safety of all participating students,

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NYSBDA Honor Band members are required to stay overnight on Friday at the Embassy Suites regardless of the proximity of their home to the hotel. Students will be housed two or three per room with chaperones and supervision provided by NYSBDA.

In addition, each school district with students participating in the Honor Band is expected to have an **authorized school chaperone** in attendance at the Symposium. Part of the responsibilities of the band directors, in addition to attending the Symposium, will be to actively participate in the student experience. All band directors will be asked to volunteer a few hours of their time during the Symposium to assist with supervisory duties of the Honor Band.

Students from the same school may not necessarily be assigned to the same hotel room and will need to stay overnight in the assigned room. Please make sure that students/parents are aware of this before applying for membership to the Honor Band.

Four meals, (Friday lunch, Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast and Saturday lunch) at the hotel are included in the participation fee.

Music will be sent to band directors at their school addresses for distribution to Honor Band members by **Thursday, January 2, 2025**. This will allow Honor Band members approximately nine weeks to thoroughly prepare their music prior to the first rehearsal.

The NYSBDA Middle School Honor Band will rehearse for approximately ten hours. Registration will take place the morning of Friday, March 7 from 10:30-11:30 AM (Percussionists from 10:00-10:30 AM). Rehearsals will commence after lunch and continue through the afternoon with breaks for sectionals and dinner. At the conclusion of rehearsal on Friday evening, the Honor Band will be provided with free time, an ice cream social, and attend the Friday night guest concert. On Saturday, the Honor Band will rehearse during the morning and afternoon in preparation for their afternoon concert, with breaks for lunch. The detailed schedule will be sent later this school year.

NEW EMAIL ADDRESS

Questions or concerns related to the NYSBDA Statewide Middle School Honor Band program should be directed to **Omar Williams, Middle School Honor Band Chairperson via email at MSHB@nysbda.org**.

Additional Middle School Honor Band information and forms are available via the NYSBDA website (www.nysbda.org). Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns regarding the NYSBDA Statewide Middle School Honor Band.

Musically Onward,

Omar Williams
Chairperson
NYSBDA Middle School Honor Band