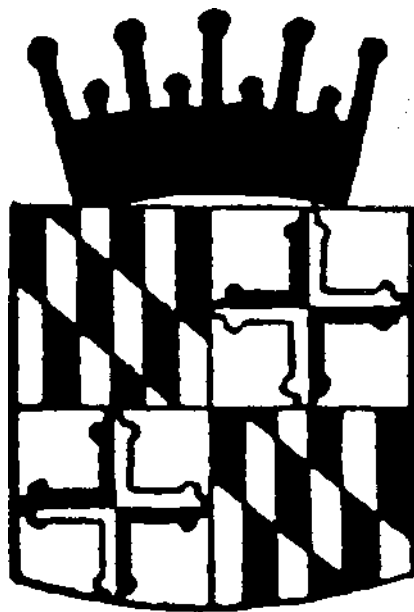


**Maryland Music Educators Association**  
**Maryland Choral Educators Association**



# **Policies and Procedures**

**Maryland Choral Educators Association  
Policies and Procedures**

[Maryland Music Educators Association](#) and its component organizations, [Maryland Band Directors Association](#), [Maryland Choral Educators Association](#), and [Maryland Orchestra Directors Association](#), sponsor statewide festival events for students every year. These include the [All State Ensembles](#), the [Solo and Ensemble Festivals](#) and the State Band, Chorus, and Orchestra Festivals. The eligibility policy for the events appears in the MMEA August *All State Auditions Handbook* and on the MMEA Web page. Additional requirements are handled in the Policies and Procedures of each of the component organizations, MBDA, MCEA and MODA.

## **Introduction**

1. All State Choral Auditions (Junior Chorus, Senior Mixed Chorus, Senior Women's Chorus)
  - A. General Information
  - B. Audition Requirements
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2. MMEA Districts
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  - A. Classification of Events and Rating System
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  - C. State Choral Festival
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## **Maryland All State**

### **Junior Chorus, Senior Mixed Chorus, and Senior Women's Chorus**

The Maryland Choral Educators Association shall sponsor an All State Junior Chorus for vocal music students in grades 7, 8 and 9. For vocal music students in grades 10, 11, and 12, MCEA shall sponsor an All State Senior Mixed Chorus and an All State Senior Women's Chorus. To participate in any of these choruses, a student must attend an independent (private), parochial, or public school in Maryland. Students must be enrolled in a chorus class in their schools in the appropriate grade to audition for statewide activities. The music teacher who teaches the specific ensemble class must initiate the application for his or her students' audition, and all applications have to be signed by the school principal. If a high school uses an alternative scheduling model, students can participate in the years in which they receive a full credit for ensemble classes. Students who do not participate in their school chorus class are not eligible. Student membership for each chorus is selected on the basis of a statewide audition.

### **Recommended Voicing for All State Junior Chorus, Senior Mixed Chorus, and Senior Women's Chorus**

There is strong clinical evidence that the practice of allowing young adolescent females to sing exclusively in the lower register may inhibit development of the upper vocal register and in some cases cause physical damage. Therefore, the Maryland Choral Educators Association strongly recommends that female singers audition as soprano or alto singers for the Maryland All State Choruses. However, if a female wishes to audition as a tenor singer, she does so at her own risk. A consent form relieving the Maryland Music Educators Association and the Maryland Choral Educators Association of liability must be signed by the student's parent or legal guardian before the student may be nominated for an

audition. Female soprano and alto singers who are returning to an All State Senior Chorus will be assigned to the ensemble in which they have not participated the previous year.

## **AUDITIONS**

1. A student must be nominated for an All State audition by his/her school chorus director on a standard All State Chorus nomination form provided by MCEA. This form is published in the MMEA August *All State Auditions Handbook*.
2. The nomination form must be correctly filled out and signed by the director and the principal and sent to the Executive Director of the Maryland Music Educators Association. All nominations must be received no later than the published deadline date. A fee of \$35.00 per student must accompany the late forms (check or money order payable to MMEA).
3. Directors and teachers should not misconstrue the All State Chorus audition as an opportunity for adjudication or comments. The event is solely an audition for All State Chorus membership selection.
4. Requests for audition scores may be made by teachers in writing on school letterhead to the MMEA Executive Director, with a self-addressed stamped envelope enclosed. The audition forms will not be shared.
5. All deadline dates are for receipt of applications and will be strictly enforced.
6. In the event that a student arrives at the audition with the incorrect audition music prepared, the student will be given the correct music and up to an hour to prepare the correct music before the audition.
7. In the event that a student is auditioning for more than one All State ensemble, the directors must follow the procedures outlined in MMEA August *All State Auditions Handbook*.
8. Adjudicators follow the audition script posted on the MMEA website annually.

## **ALL STATE JUNIOR CHORUS, SENIOR MIXED CHORUS, and SENIOR WOMEN'S CHORUS AUDITION REQUIREMENTS**

### **Required Music**

- MCEA lists the required music for audition preparation in the MMEA August *All State Auditions Handbook*. It includes one SATB accompanied piece, one a cappella folk song, and melodic and rhythmic sight reading.
- It shall be the student's responsibility to prepare the music, with the teacher's assistance, for the audition event.
- For the accompanied piece, it is the directors responsibility to provide legal scores for their students.
- For the memorized a cappella piece which is printed in the Audition Handbook, students must adhere to tempo, dynamics, and phrasing as indicated.

## **Judges:**

There will be one judge in each room. Student scores will be mathematically adjusted to account for multiple audition sites.

## **Sight Reading Procedure for the Visually Impaired Student:**

Teachers must notify the MMEA office of any adaptations needed for students who are visually impaired at the time of registration.

There are three options for students who are visually impaired.

1. The sight reading examples may be enlarged.
2. The sight reading examples may be translated into Braille
3. The sight reading examples may be read aloud for the student according to the following:
  - An adult, other than the judge, who has been trained in the process, will read the sight reading examples to the student.
  - For rhythmic sight reading, the adult will speak the rhythmic notation one measure at a time to the student. The student will have a practice time, during which they may ask for the measure to be spoken to them a total of three times before performance. They may practice a total of 15 seconds for each measure example.
  - For melodic sight reading, the adult will ask the student if they want the example described to them in solfege, intervals, or note names.
  - The adult will read the melodic sight reading examples to the student two measures at a time. The student will have a practice time, during which they are allowed to ask for the two measures to be spoken to them a total of three times before performance. They may practice a total of 30 seconds for each example.

## **ALL STATE CHORUS NOTIFICATION AND ACCEPTANCE**

All teachers who nominate students for an All State audition will receive the list of accepted students. Selected students receive all information and commitment materials from the nominating teacher. Those materials include the “**Rules Governing Maryland All State Ensembles,**” and the student, parent, teacher and principal sign the student contract that attests to understanding what is required of the students, including the rules. Students who violate those rules will be dismissed from the group and may face consequences at the school. **Music is sent to the nominating teacher,** who should monitor the preparation of the student. Students/parents are responsible for fees that cover hotel and meals, and parents are responsible for transportation to the rehearsal site and from the performance site.

## MARYLAND MUSIC EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION DISTRICT FOR FESTIVALS

**District 1** – Prince George’s County

**District 2** – Montgomery County

**District 3** – Anne Arundel County

**District 4** – St. Mary’s County

**District 5** – Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, Worcester Counties

**District 6** – Harford County

**District 7** – Baltimore County

**District 8** – Carroll County

**District 9** – Allegany and Garrett Counties

**District 10** – Baltimore City

**District 11** – Charles County

**District 12** – Calvert County

**District 13** – Howard County

**District 14** – Frederick County

**District 15** – Washington County

**District 16** – Cecil County

*\* Districts may collaborate on festival/assessment events if they so choose.*

## FESTIVAL/ASSESSMENT POLICIES

### Classification of Event

Participants may enter the festival/assessment on six (6) grade levels designated according to music difficulty. Each of the following levels will be open to students from any secondary school:

1	- Easy	4	- Moderate Difficult
2	- Moderate Easy	5	- Difficult
3	- Average	6	- Very Difficult

### Maryland Rating System

The Maryland five rating plan will be used in solo and ensemble festivals and district and state festival/assessment:

I	- Superior	IV	- Fair
II	- Excellent	V	- Poor
		III	- Average

Rating I      **Superior** – The best possible performance. This rating might be compared to a percentage of 96-100.

Rating II      **Excellent** – A performance of distinctive quality but not worthy of the highest rating due to minor defects in performance. This rating might be compared to a percentage of 90-95.

Rating III      **Average** – A performance showing some accomplishment and promise but lacking in essential musical qualities. This rating might be compared to a percentage of 80-89.

Rating IV      **Fair** – This is a performance that is weak and uncertain and is comparable to a percentage of 74-79.

Rating V      **Poor** – A performance that reveals lack of preparedness and musical understanding.

Where the director or teacher desires, the entrant(s) may perform for a “Comments Only” category at the district festival only. There will be no rating given nor will entrants qualify for participation at the State level.

## **SOLO AND ENSEMBLE FESTIVAL POLICIES I. Eligibility**

To participate in the Maryland State Solo and Ensemble Festival, a student must attend an independent (private), parochial, or public school in Maryland. Students must be enrolled in a chorus class in their secondary school in grade 9-12 in order to audition for statewide activities. The music teacher who teaches the specific ensemble class must initiate the application for his or her students, and all applications have to be signed by the school principal. If a high school uses an alternative scheduling model, students can participate in the years in which they receive a full credit for ensemble classes. Students who do not participate in their school chorus class are not eligible.

Only those soloists or ensembles that receive a I rating in the District Festival on grades 2 through 6 are eligible to enter the State Solo and Ensemble Festival at the same grade level that they entered at the district level.

In special cases, a soloist or an ensemble may contact the festival manager of another district to request permission to perform in another district festival. However, a soloist or ensemble may not enter (for rating or comments) more than one district festival. For the State Solo and Ensemble Festival, all soloists and ensembles must perform on the scheduled date at the State Festival site.

No substitutions of personnel or any change of music as stated on the application will be allowed. The person or persons who qualify at the district level must be the same persons who perform at the State Level.

Although District Chairpersons are responsible for organizing their District Solo and Ensemble Festival in a manner which best suits the needs of their district, it is to be understood that any solo or ensemble participant must have participated in a District Festival that meets the following State Solo and Ensemble Festival policies:

### **Entrance Limitations**

Schools may send as many soloists and ensembles in any event that they desire. A student may perform in as many as three (3) events.

### **Music Requirement**

Participants will perform for adjudication only a selection chosen from the current MMEA Graded Solo Music List found on the MMEA Web page. The music for vocal ensembles may be chosen from the NYSSMA list. The music from these list will determine the grade level entered.

### **Accompanist**

All solos must be accompanied unless specifically written to be performed unaccompanied. Failure to provide an accompanist will result in a penalty of one rating lower. Teachers must submit an “Accompanist Form” for an accompanist accompanying more than three students.

## **Music for Adjudicators**

A complete measure-numbered score for each ensemble or a measure-numbered original of the solo for each soloist must be provided for the adjudicator. Failure to provide this music may result in a penalty of one rating lower. The Maryland Choral Educators Association expects full compliance with U.S. copyright laws for all music used in the festival. Only music in the Public Domain may be photocopied. Any illegal photocopies used in a performance may result in the lowering of the score by one grade.

## **Time Limit**

A maximum of ten (10) minutes for vocal events will be allowed. In works that are more than ten (10) minutes, the adjudicator will determine the cuts.

## **Directing an Ensemble**

Any direction of an ensemble, sextet or smaller, by the director or vocal teacher will result in a penalty of one rating lower.

## **II. Rating Sheets**

At the State Festival, the rating sheet of each performance will be given to the performer by the judge at the conclusion of the performance.

## **III. Awards**

MCEA will award certificates to each soloist and each ensemble member participating in the festival. At the State Festival, medals may be purchased for participants who receive a rating of I or II – blue ribbons for a rating of I and red ribbons for a rating of II.

## **IV. Festival Application Deadline, Fees**

- The solo and ensemble festival application forms must be received by MMEA Executive Director by the published deadline date. A ten (10) day extension may be granted provided a late fee of \$35 accompanies the application forms (check or money order payable to MMEA).
- The application form must be signed by the director and the school principal.
- Entrants earning a rating of I are eligible for the State Festival. The District Festival shall distribute the State application for the State Solo & Ensemble Festival. Entrants must submit a new application. There must be a separate application for each event.

## **CHORAL ASSESSMENT POLICIES I. Eligibility for State Choral Assessment**

All school choruses must perform in a Maryland District Festival/Assessment in order to apply to the Maryland State Choral Assessment. Choruses receiving a rating of I in the District Festival/Assessment on grades 2 through 6 are eligible for participation in the State Choral Assessment. Each adjudicated piece must be the same grade level performed at the District level.

Although District Chairpersons are responsible for organizing their District Choral Festivals/Assessments in a manner which best suits the needs of their individual district, it is to be understood that any chorus in any district wishing to attend the State Choral Assessment must have participated in a District Festival/Assessment that meets the following State Choral Guidelines:

## Music Requirements

Choruses shall perform three (3) selections:

- A short warm-up selection, not to be adjudicated, followed by two selections from the current MCEA Choral List.
- Directors may choose to enter any one of the six MCEA graded levels of music at the District level which best suits the ensemble. These six graded levels of music are:
  - 1 – Easy      4 – Moderately Difficult
  - 2 – Moderately Easy   5 – Difficult   3 – Average   6 – Very Difficult
- Only grades 2 – 6 are eligible for the State Choral Festival.
- Choirs may only perform music from the MCEA Choral List and specified voicing must be listed.
- Choruses will sing the adjudicated selections in the voicing as indicated on the Application – Mixed Voicing, Treble Voicing, or Men’s Voicing.
- The music performed at the District Festival/Assessment and State Festival/Assessment must be performed as published.
- It is recommended that directors choose both adjudicated selections from the same grade level. If selections are made from more than one grade level, the chorus must enter the assessment at one grade level lower than the higher graded piece. However no selections may be made that are more than two levels apart.
- No changes of music may be made after the application deadline. No “TBA” indications are allowed, even for the warm-up selection.
- Schools with multiple performing groups with shared personnel may not perform any of the same literature.

## Music for Adjudicators

All directors **MUST** furnish three (3) scores for each of the two adjudicated selections. Measures must be numbered. Failure to provide three (3) measure-numbered scores for each of the two adjudicated selections may result in a penalty of one grade lower.

The Maryland Choral Educators Association expects full compliance with U.S. copyright laws for all music and scores to be used in choral assessments.

## Sight Reading

Sight Reading is required of all choruses in both the district and state choral festivals/assessments.

- Middle and high school choruses will sight read music at the grade level of entry. If two adjudicated selections are two or more grade levels apart, the group will sight read one grade level lower than the higher level selection.
- Schools with two performing ensembles with shared personnel performing the same grade level adjudicated selections will not sight read at the same grade levels. One group will sight read at the assigned level, and the other will sight read at a higher level. The level of sight reading for each group will be decided by the adjudicator in the sight reading room. A Chorus will sight read at the same voicing as the performance. For example, an SATB chorus that sings two



SATB selections will sight read the SATB sight reading, if it is provided for that level of music. For middle schools reading Level 3 and 4, teachers may assign their changing voice student to whatever part is comfortable. For middle school choruses, singing parts in varying octaves is appropriate for this level for the sight reading portion of the Middle School Festival/Assessment.

- Sight Reading Procedure is explained in the script used by all sight reading adjudicators.

## Sight Reading Script

There are two sections to the sight reading procedure, a rhythmic section and a melodic section. The process for each 8-measure section is similar. You will have a study period, a practice performance and a performance that is judged. I will lead you through the rhythmic section. Your teacher will work with you on the melodic section.

## Rhythmic Sight Reading

On my signal, you will turn the example over. You have one minute to study the example silently and independently. I will then set the tempo on the metronome and lead you through the exercise, once for practice and a second time for a grade.

## Study Period

Your one minute of study begins now. (**Demonstrate beat counts**) (quarter note = 66 for 3/4 and 4/4 time, and dotted quarter note = 54 for 6/8 time) (Explain that 6/8 is compound time, and that although only two beats are felt, the music is subdivided into six 8th note counts.)

I will be using a metronome to set and maintain the tempo throughout the exercise. When clapping, please use two fingers, (demonstrate) so everyone will be able to hear the metronome and stay with the beat. This is how I will count off for 4/4 time, 1, 2, 3, begin. (for 3/4 time, 1, 2, begin; for 6/8 time, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, begin.)

## First Performance

(Count off with the metronome.)

## Second Performance (Adjudicated)

(Count off and begin the second performance.)

## Melodic Reading Instructions

During the melodic section, your director will be given five minutes to study the melodic example with you, with the following guidelines:

- The director may indicate key or time signatures or point out certain difficult passages and talk about them.
- The director may choose to have the choir practice the rhythms aloud, or speak through the example on solfege syllables.

- Teachers may use Curwen hand signs during the practice times, but not during the graded performance. Students may use Curwen hand signs during the practice times and during the graded performance.
- There is to be no vocalizing - singing or humming - by the director or choir, with one exception (below).

The director may choose to have students read silently through the example without vocalizing. To facilitate this internal reading, at your director's request, I will play the scale and tonic chord of the melodic sight reading example followed by the starting pitch for each section. The chorus may sing along with the scale, may sing an arpeggio with the tonic chord and hum their starting pitch(es). I will establish tonality and give starting pitches only once during the five-minute study period.

At the conclusion of the study period, I will play the scale, tonic chord and starting pitches, and you may sing along. Your director sets and maintains a tempo, and leads you through the exercise, once for practice and a second time for a grade. After the practice performance, you will be given **one additional minute for study**. I will establish tonality before the performance that counts.

### **Melodic Sight Reading: Study Period - Five Minutes**

You may begin your five minutes of study. (Establish tonality upon request, only once. Play the scale from “do to do,” ascending and descending (or up and down), the tonic chord and the starting pitch or pitches. Students are allowed to sing along with the scale, may sing the tonic arpeggio or whatever they are used to, and hum their starting pitch.)

### **Establish Tonality First Performance (not adjudicated)**

During this first performance, the director may conduct, tap, snap, or clap a steady pulse but may not sing, speak, tap, snap, or clap exact rhythms for the choir.

### **Study Period, one minute**

You have one minute to discuss the example. **Remember, there is to be no vocalizing.**

### **Establish Tonality Second Performance (adjudicated) II. Time Limit**

Warm-up will be about fifteen (15) minutes before stage time.

Performance time is limited to twenty (20) minutes.

These time limits include moving on and off stage. If the performance extends over the allotted time, the ensemble may be penalized.

## **III. Festival/Assessment Applications, Deadlines, Fees**

- A. The choral festival application must be received by the MMEA Executive Director no later than the published deadline date. Applications received after the deadline are scheduled on availability of space. Any application not complying with the above-stated deadline policy will not be accepted under any circumstances.
- B. The application must be signed by the director and the school principal.

- C. Choruses that receive a rating of I at the District Festival/Assessment are eligible for State Choral Assessment participation. Each chorus director must complete a state application form provided by the District Supervisor.
- D. District Festival/Assessment Supervisor must send the names of the choruses which receive a rating of I at the district level to the MMEA Executive Director within one week of the District Festival/Assessment.

#### **IV. Size of Groups**

The size of the group is limited to 120 chorus members. Choruses larger than 120 members have the option of bringing two groups with no shared personnel. Both groups may perform the same music. Schools entering two choruses with shared personnel should check the sight reading policies above. (Districts may choose to allow larger groups to perform at the District Festival/Assessment.)

#### **V. Assignment of Groups for Performance**

The order of performance times will be determined by the state assessment manager and will be forwarded to the participating directors.

#### **VI. Hearing Other Groups Perform**

The Maryland Choral Educators Association requires that assessment participants listen to at least two other groups perform during the assessment. Failure to do so may result in the rating being lowered.

#### **VII. Stage and Audience Etiquette**

Any Chorus whose students disrupt the Festival process or whose behavior distracts the Adjudicators during the Festival may have their final grade lowered a level.

#### **VIII. Posting of Ratings**

Ratings of all performing choruses will be sent to all participating directors within two weeks after the event.

#### **IX. Recognition of Festival Participation**

The MCEA will present certificates to all participating choruses at the State Choral Assessment unless they have been disqualified. Medals may be purchased by choruses receiving a I or II rating.

#### **X. Publicity**

Publicity by email, Web page, radio or newspaper claiming "State Championship" or a ranking by any group is forbidden. Such practices will be the basis for elimination from future MCEA events.

## XI. Rating Formulas for Choral Festivals/Assessments

How to use this table: The table gives all the possible combinations of grades from four adjudicators and the resulting average scores. (You will have to convert back and forth between Roman and Arabic numerals.) For most scores, a glance will reveal the average, which is to the right of the “equal” sign (=). The sight reading grade may be recorded first, in the middle of the group, or last. However, in the case of a score whose average ends in .5, the performance grades – not the sight reading grade – are used to decide whether to round up or down for the final grade. For example, if the initial grades are 2 2 3 3 and the performance was graded 2 2 3, the final grade would be 2. If the performance was graded 2 3 3, the final grade would be 3. These round-up/round-down cases are indicated with an asterisk (\*).

1 1 1 1 = 1	
1 1 1 2 = 1	
1 1 1 3 = 1 or 2 *	
1 1 1 4 = 2	
1 1 1 5 = 2	
1 1 2 2 = 1 or 2 *	
1 1 2 3 = 2	
1 1 2 4 = 2	
1 1 2 5 = 2	
1 1 3 3 = 2	
1 1 3 4 = 2	
1 1 3 5 = 2 or 3 *	
1 1 4 4 = 2 or 3 *	
1 1 4 5 = 3	
1 1 5 5 = 3	
1 2 2 2 = 2	
1 2 2 3 = 2	
1 2 2 4 = 2	
1 2 2 5 = 2	
1 2 3 3 = 2	
1 2 3 4 = 2 or 3 *	
1 2 3 5 = 3	
1 2 4 4 = 3	
1 2 4 5 = 3	
1 2 5 5 = 3	
1 3 3 3 = 3	
1 3 3 4 = 3	
1 3 3 5 = 3	
1 3 4 4 = 3	
1 3 4 5 = 3	
1 4 4 4 = 3	
1 4 4 5 = 3 or 4 *	
1 4 5 5 = 4	
1 5 5 5 = 4	
	2 2 2 2 = 2
	2 2 2 3 = 2
	2 2 2 4 = 2
	2 2 2 5 = 3
	2 2 3 3 = 2 or 3 *
	2 2 3 4 = 3
	2 2 3 5 = 3
	2 2 4 4 = 3
	2 2 4 5 = 3
	2 2 5 5 = 3
	2 3 3 3 = 3
	2 3 3 4 = 3
	2 3 3 5 = 3
	2 3 4 4 = 3
	2 3 4 5 = 3 or 4 *
	2 3 5 5 = 4
	2 4 4 4 = 4
	2 4 4 5 = 4
	2 5 5 5 = 4
	3 3 3 3 = 3
	3 3 3 4 = 3
	3 3 3 5 = 3
	3 3 4 4 = 3 or 4 *
	3 3 4 5 = 4
	3 3 5 5 = 4
	3 4 4 4 = 4
	3 4 4 5 = 4
	3 4 5 5 = 4
	3 5 5 5 = 4 or 5 *
	4 4 4 4 = 4
	4 4 4 5 = 4
	4 4 5 5 = 4 or 5 *
	4 5 5 5 = 5
	5 5 5 5 = 5

## **ADJUDICATION POLICIES FOR MARYLAND FESTIVALS/ASSESSMENTS I. Number of Adjudicators**

Three (3) adjudicators must be used to judge the concert performance at all choral festivals/assessments. One additional adjudicator is needed to judge the sight reading event at district and state choral festivals/assessments.

### **II. Selection of Adjudicators**

At District Choral Festivals/Assessments, persons who teach secondary vocal music may be hired as adjudicators except in the District in which they teach. Teachers may not adjudicate sight reading in another district prior to their own district assessment. At the State Choral Assessment, no person who teaches secondary vocal music in a Maryland school may be hired as an adjudicator.

### **III. Adjudicator Fees**

Adjudicator fees are set by the MMEA Executive Board.

### **IV. Adjudicator Briefing**

Adjudicators should be advised to report to the festival/assessment site at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of the festival/assessment. The MCEA President and MMEA Executive Director should utilize this time to thoroughly brief the adjudicators on the rules and regulations of Maryland Festivals/Assessments.

## **MCEA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REVISION**

As needed, the three elected officers shall periodically review these Policies and Procedures to keep them current with changes in MCEA events.

