



Texas Charter School Academic and Athletic League 2026-2027 Music Competition Rulebook

Music Competition Categories

- **Solo Guitar**
- **Solo Piano**
- **Small Ensemble Instrumental Group**
- **Concert Band (NEW)**

General Outline

All entries will compete in one (1) state level competition. For the TCSAAL Music Competition, there will only be one competition round performed in order to determine placing. Students will be grouped into two age groupings based on grade: 6th through 8th grades and 9th through 12th grades. Participants will be allowed to move up in competition level (i.e. K-5th grade participants can compete in 6th-8th grades, and 6th-8th grades can participate in 9th-12th grades) for instrumental events only – vocal performers cannot participate up in grade level.

Entry Fees

Solo Entries (Solo Guitar, Solo Piano): \$30 per entry

Small Ensemble Instrumental Entries: \$75 per entry

Concert Band: \$100 per entry

General Rules

1. The use of accompaniment is allowed for solo guitar and small ensemble instrumental performances if needed. Use of a pitch pipe is also allowed to check the starting pitch. Single accompanist only. Conducting will NOT be allowed.
 - a. A single accompanist is permitted for appropriate selections but is not provided. Entrants will have access to an electronic keyboard to use as accompaniment during their performance (accompaniment will not be permitted any practice time). Recorded music for the purposes of accompaniment only is permitted. Please note that TCSAAL will provide a 3.5mm auxiliary input and a USB-C to 3.5 mm adapter.
 - b. Only the following accompaniment options are permitted:
 - i. **Electronic keyboard** for live accompaniment
 - ii. **Recorded music via 3.5mm auxiliary input**
 - iii. TCSAAL will provide a **3.5mm auxiliary cable** and a **USB-C to 3.5mm adapter**.
 - iv. All playback devices (e.g., laptops, phones, MP3 players) must be capable of connecting to the sound system via a 3.5mm input.
 - v. No other formats or connections (including Bluetooth, CDs, cassettes, or wireless devices) will be allowed. Devices must be capable of connection to the sound system in order to be used.
2. Use of bodily sounds, including but not limited to: stomping, clapping, snapping, patting, and whistling, are permitted, but are not specified as judging criteria on the scoring rubric.
3. Movement will be allowed in all events, but choreography will not be specified as judging criteria on the scoring rubric.
4. Performance order will be determined by TCSAAL and released prior to competition date.
5. Guitar competitors and small ensemble instrumental must provide their own instruments.

6. Electronic keyboard will be available for all solo and small ensemble performances. Performers may bring their own electronic keyboard for use of their performance, provided that the keyboard can be brought on stage in a manner that does not disrupt the competition.
7. **Electronically amplified** musical instruments (including electronic guitars) will **NOT** be allowed.
8. All works (except Small Ensemble instrumental group) must be performed entirely from memorization and sheet music will not be allowed.
9. All piece information and sheet music must be submitted to TCSAAL no later than 1 month before the competition date. In addition, copies of the sheet music must be brought to the competition to be delivered to judges and TCSAAL administration (3 copies in total).
10. An individual can only be in one performance per music competition. For example, a performer can only participate in one solo piano entry.
11. An individual can participate once in every music category.

Music Competition Categories

Piano Solo

1. *Individual* entries consist of one (1) Pianist.
2. Soloist will perform 1 memorized selection within the allotted time. Maximum time shall be 5 minutes for 6th - 8th Grade with thirty second grace period and 7 minutes for 9th-12th Grade with a 30 second grace period. Violation shall result in being ranked last in the round. Visible time signals will be given by an authorized timekeeper.
3. No vocals will be allowed.
4. TCSAAL will provide piano specifics as soon as the facility has been reserved.
5. TCSAAL **will NOT provide a piano** for warm-up purposes. Bring synthesizers for warm-up.
6. Performers must prepare the memorized selections from the [TCSAAL Prescribed Music List](#) (PML). All entries must be performed with a selection from the TCSAAL PML.
7. Performance composition(s) and composer(s) must be submitted in writing to TCSAAL 1 month prior to the tournament date to be eligible for proper ranking and scoring.
8. Performance selection sheet music should be submitted to TCSAAL, via email at academics@texascharter.org, 1 month prior to the tournament date. In addition, copies of the sheet music must be brought to the competition to be delivered to judges and TCSAAL administration (3 copies in total).

Guitar Solo

1. *Individual* entries consist of one (1) Performer.
2. Soloist will perform 1 memorized selection within the allotted time. Maximum time shall be 5 minutes for 6th - 8th Grade with thirty second grace period and 7 minutes for 9th-12th Grade with a 30 second grace period. Violation shall result in being ranked last in the round. Visible time signals will be given by an authorized timekeeper.
3. Soloist may perform their selection with one accompanist.
4. Only a 6 string acoustic guitar will be allowed.
5. Performer must **bring their own acoustic or classical 6 string Guitar**. TCSAAL will not provide a guitar for the performance.
6. Performers must prepare the memorized selections from the [TCSAAL Prescribed Music List](#) (PML). All entries must be performed with a selection from the TCSAAL PML.
7. Performance composition(s) and composer(s) must be submitted in writing to TCSAAL 1 month prior to the tournament date to be eligible for proper ranking and scoring.
8. Performance selection sheet music should be submitted to TCSAAL, via email at academics@texascharter.org, 1 month prior to the tournament date. In addition, copies of the sheet music must be brought to the competition to be delivered to judges and TCSAAL administration (3 copies in total).
9. No vocals will be allowed.

Small Ensemble Instrumental Group

1. *Individual* entries consist of two (2) – six (6) instruments / performers.
2. Entire performance is limited to exactly fifteen (15) minutes. At the end of the maximum allotted time, entries will be muted and escorted off stage. Scores will not be penalized from going over time, but the complete performance will be addressed on the competition's score sheet. Entries will be signaled when their performance time starts, and are expected to enter, place themselves, and leave the stage during the allotted maximum time.

3. Performers must prepare the selections from the [TCSAAL Prescribed Music List](#) (PML). All entries must be performed with a selection from the TCSAAL PML.
4. Performers must bring their own instruments (except for the piano).
5. Performance composition(s) and composer(s) must be submitted in writing to TCSAAL 1 month prior to the tournament date to be eligible for proper ranking and scoring.
6. Performance selection sheet music should be submitted to TCSAAL, via email at academics@texascharter.org, 1 month prior to the tournament date. In addition, copies of the sheet music must be brought to the competition to be delivered to judges and TCSAAL administration (3 copies in total).
7. Performance may utilize one accompanist. Conducting during small ensemble instrumental performances will be allowed.
8. No vocals will be allowed.
9. The performers are allowed to use sheet music (performers must provide their own music stands).
10. Performances **can** alter instruments from the selected piece (i.e. if you had a piece for flute, percussion, sax, and clarinet you could substitute one instrument for another).
11. Performance may **not** be directed.

Concert Band (NEW)

1. *Individual* entries consist of a minimum of seven (7) instruments / performers. There will be a maximum of twenty-five (25) instruments / performers.
2. Entire performance is limited to a strict twenty (20) minute total stage window. Time includes band entry, seating, setup, tuning, performance, and exit. At the end of the maximum allotted time, entries will be muted and escorted off stage. Scores will not be penalized from going over time, but the complete performance will be addressed on the competition's score sheet. Entries will be signaled when their performance time starts, and are expected to enter, place themselves, and leave the stage during the allotted maximum time.
3. Performers must prepare the selections from the [TCSAAL Prescribed Music List](#) (PML). All entries must be performed with a selection from the TCSAAL PML.
4. Performers must bring their own instruments (except for the piano).
5. Performance composition(s) and composer(s) must be submitted in writing to TCSAAL 1 month prior to the tournament date to be eligible for proper ranking and scoring.
6. Performance selection sheet music should be submitted to TCSAAL, via email at academics@texascharter.org, 1 month prior to the tournament date. In addition, copies of the sheet music must be brought to the competition to be delivered to judges and TCSAAL administration (3 copies in total).
7. Performance may utilize one accompanist. Conducting during small ensemble instrumental performances will be allowed.
8. Middle School students may move up to perform in High School ensembles.
9. No vocals will be allowed.
10. The performers are allowed to use sheet music (performers must provide their own music stands).
11. Performances **can** alter instruments from the selected piece (i.e. if you had a piece for flute, percussion, sax, and clarinet you could substitute one instrument for another).
12. Bands must perform two contrasting selections to show musical range.
13. Bands should ensure all measures are numbered on the physical conductor scores.

Accessibility

TCSAAL is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Directors should notify TCSAAL of any accessibility needs at least 1 month prior to the competition.

Scoring

TCSAAL will utilize a panel of multiple judges. Since preparation is a competitive aspect of music and there is no advancing or secondary round, ranking will be based entirely on one (1) performance for each event. Judges will score each performance via the same scoring rubric and the overall performance score will be determined by an average score amongst the judges in the panel. In the event of a tie for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place rankings, the panel will consider the difficulty of the composition and reconvene to break the tie.

Expectations

Performers should keep in mind that contrasting style, degree of difficulty, and musical challenge presented by the performance will be a part of the judging process.

Awards

For all categories, individual medals will be awarded to the State Champion, State Runner-Up, & State Third Place participants. In addition, trophies are awarded for State Champion, State Runner-Up, and State 3rd Place for the Small Ensemble Instrumental category.

Concluding Points

TCSAAL utilizes a [Prescribed Music List](#) (PML) for all musical categories, similar to the UIL competition format.