FINE ARTS

national fine arts festival rulebook 2026

St. Louis, Missouri

ASSEMBLIES
OF GOD ❤ YOUTH
MINISTRIES

Amazing Students, Parents, and Youth Leaders,

Thank you for being a part of such a significant discipleship journey with us. As the rulebook is released this year, our prayer is that this will be the most transformational year for you yet. That as you practice, write, draw, paint, and dance, you would encounter the Holy Spirit in a new and fresh way. Our prayer is that as you practice your presentations, you have impactful times of discussion, prayer, and discipleship with your youth ministry.

Fine Arts is much more than the presentation you are preparing. It is a time of DISCOVERING, DEVELOPING, and DEPLOYING your God-given giftings. It is the chance to integrate these skills into your local churches and youth groups. It is sharing your artwork with your friends in such a way that fosters evangelistic conversations. It is a Christ-centered and gospel-focused discipleship journey that we are on together.

Our prayer is that this Fine Arts season, you will give it your best. Not because of a certificate, rating, or trophy, but that you would give it your best because God created you to create. Every time you sing, paint, act, draw, or play your instrument, you have an opportunity to give glory to God.

Be encouraged today and remember Paul's words to Timothy as he said, "Do not neglect the gift you have" (1 Timothy 4:14). For we are on a mission: to be a movement of student artists who are more in love with Jesus, more creative, more innovative, and committed to spreading the gospel through any means necessary.

Developing together,

The National Fine Arts Team

INSTRUMENTAL DIVISION **73**

new for the 2026 national fine arts festival

Universal Changes
- The NFAF is implementing an AI policy. See page 21.
- Kalimba and Steel Drum are added to the Approved Instruments List under Folk Instruments. See page 23.
- The Approved Languages are amended for specific categories. See page 19.

Category Changes

ART
- T-Shirt Design is changed to Apparel Design. See page 29.
- Apparel Design minimum size is changed to 6x6. See page 29.
- Fiber Art is moved to the Art Division as an Official Category. See page 30.
- Fiber Art no longer requires a minimum depth. See page 30.

COMMUNICATION
- Children's Lesson is allowed to use notes. See page 40.

DANCE
- Dance Division categories may use English or Spanish music, or both. See page 53.
- Praise Dance is a new category in the Dance Division. See page 53.

DRAMA
- Human Video categories may use English or Spanish music, or both. Human Video, Spanish is no longer a separate category. See page 61.
- Human Video Ensemble, Large, Jr. is a new category. See page 61.
- Musical Theater allowed props rule is amended. See page 63.

VOCAL
- Vocal Solo, Spanish Female and Vocal Solo, Spanish Male are renamed to Spanish Vocal Solo, Female and Spanish Vocal Solo, Male. See page 83.
- Worship Teams may present in English or Spanish, or both. See page 97.

Clarifications
- Required Introductory Comments are amended to include scripts. See p. 19.
- The definition of mounting is clarified. See page 28.
- Writing Division rules are reorganized into universal division rules and specific category rules. See page 101.

national fine arts festival contact information

Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (PT)

Phone: 417.427.1905

Email: faf@ag.org

Web Address: youthconference.ag.org

Social Media: National Youth Ministries social media exists solely for the sharing of information from the National Youth Office or ideas from its constituents. Social Media is not the appropriate medium to contact the National Office or any of its staff members. NFAF and NYC is not responsible for information shared by commenters that is not in alignment with this rulebook or the General Council of the Assemblies of God. Fact checking of posts and comments on social media is the responsibility of leaders, students, and parents.

national youth conference and fine arts festival

Registering within one week following your district festival is highly recommended. NFAF office support is not available after hours, on weekends, or holidays.

Information

The location for the 2026 National Fine Arts Festival is St. Louis, Missouri.

Dates: July 27–July 31, 2026 | Monday–Friday

Location: St. Louis Convention Center: America's Center, 701 Convention Plaza, Suite 300, St. Louis, MO 63101

Event Website: youthconference.ag.org

Conference Center Website: explorestlouis.com/americas-center/

Housing: Visit youthconference.ag.org. Housing opens Fall 2025.

Registration and Deadlines: Online registration closes at midnight (PT) on June 4, 2026. To register, visit youthconference.ag.org.

How to Register for Fine Arts/Kappa Tau

Online registration is open for qualified students at youthconference.ag.org. Online registration closes at midnight (PT) on **June 4, 2026**. Missed categories and late registrations may be considered between **June 5–June 26, 2026**, and will accrue a $30 late registration fee and an additional $10 per category late fee. Requests to add missed categories or late registration must be made by calling the NFAF office at 417.427.1905 during office hours. Paper registration is not offered.

Each church should register together in one registration order or in multiple orders registered back-to-back. All registration fees must be paid at the time of online registration. Credit cards are the only available online payment method. American Express, Visa, MasterCard, and Discover are accepted.

One youth pastor or Fine Arts leader per church is to be designated as the on-site leader/contact and an accurate phone number and email address is to be provided with each student's registration. This email address will receive the link to the Certificate and Evaluation Sheet portal for the church the weekend of the festival.

2026 National Youth Conference Registrants and Ticket Add-On Fees

All attendees ages 11 and up must register and pay the appropriate fee to attend. Children under 11 do not require registration. All children under 11 must be supervised by a parent or legal guardian adult registered for and present with them at the festival.

NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

$105 Early Bird Registration (August 5, 2025 – January 14, 2026 at midnight PT)

$115 Registration (January 15, 2026 – June 4, 2026 at midnight PT)

$125 Late Registration (June 5, 2026 – July 31, 2026 at 4:30 p.m. PT)

A National Fine Arts Festival participant is defined as a student who qualifies for the FAF according to the NFAF Participant Requirements found on page 13, or as a Kappa Tau participant according to the KT Requirements found on .

Qualifying students must register online. Fine Arts participants may only register for the category(ies) for which they qualified at the district festival.

If a participant fails to enter the selection of a category ticket on his/her registration, he/she may add it by calling 417.427.1905 or emailing faf@ag.org through 4:30 p.m. (PT) **June 4, 2026**, with complete details and payment information. Any requests to add missed category tickets after this deadline must be made by calling the NFAF office at 417.427.1905. These requests may be considered until **June 26, 2026**, and will accrue an additional $10 per category late fee. Categories will not be added after **June 26, 2026**.

This registration **does not** include the first Fine Arts or Kappa Tau category. Each category is an additional ticket of $25 above the registration fee.

Included in the price of the registration ticket:

- Admission to National Youth Conference
- Admission to view all FAF and KT presentations
- Admission to all workshops
- Admission to all evening services
- Evaluation of initial presentation by qualified evaluators
- Initial presentation evaluation sheets and certificates, distributed digitally

NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE TICKET ADD-ONS

- FAF and KT Categories ($25 each)
- 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament ($50 per student)
- Master Classes ($25 each class)
- AIM Outreach ($150)
- Pickleball Tournament ($25)
- Gaming Tournament ($25)

PARENT/ADULT CHAPERONE ATTENDEE: $65 REGISTRATION

A Parent/Adult Chaperone Attendee is an attendee over the age of 18 not registered as a Kappa Tau Participant. Parent/Adult Chaperones must be associated with a participating church. A $10 fee will be added for on-site registrations.

- Admission to National Youth Conference
- Admission to view all FAF and KT presentations
- Admission to workshops
- Admission to all evening services

cancellations

For this event, approval for a refund due to unexpected emergencies may be requested only by submitting the Refund Request form at agyouth.formstack.com/forms/refund_requests. Absolutely no refunds will be administered after **July 17, 2026 at 4:30 p.m. PT**. Refund approvals are not guaranteed, and any refunds that are approved will incur a 30 percent nonrefundable administrative fee. For questions, call 417.427.1905.

on-site check-in

All registrants must be present or represented by an adult to complete the mandatory On-Site Check-In from **8 a.m. until 6 p.m.** on **Monday, July 27**, in St. Louis, Missouri.

- The access badge is distributed **only** during On-Site Check-In.
- All non-presenting entries must be checked in on **Monday, July 27, 2026**, from **8 a.m. until 6 p.m.**
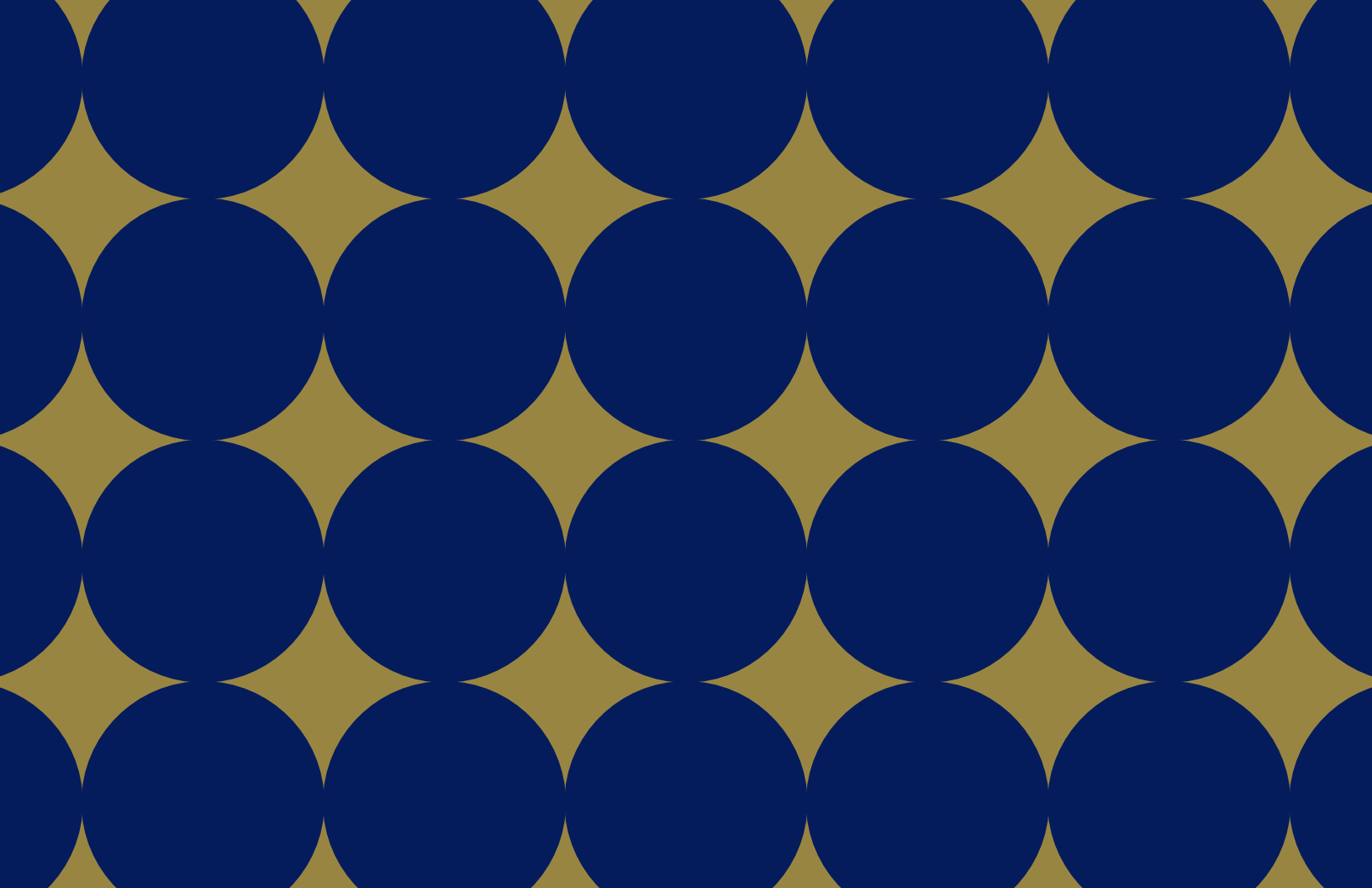
general information

general information

The General Information section applies to all Fine Arts Festival participants.

For information pertaining to your district festival, contact your district youth director or district Fine Arts coordinator.

purpose

Fine Arts Festival is a discipleship tool of Assemblies of God Youth Ministries (AGYM) designed to help students discover, develop, and deploy their ministry gifts.

Although competitive elements are present, providing a competition venue is not the primary mission of the Fine Arts Festival. Through Fine Arts Festival, students are given the opportunity to have their skills evaluated by qualified ministers, industry professionals, and educators who encourage excellence, offer ideas for improvement, and inspire students to use their gifts in the local church, community, and around the world in ministry or secular vocation. Scores are not as important as how students are developed through the Fine Arts process by practicing, preparing, and participating in this ministry.

rules agreement

National Fine Arts Festival (NFAF) and Kappa Tau (KT) participants must read and abide by this 2026 Fine Arts Festival Rule Book. It is the responsibility of each participant to be familiar with the rules and procedures of this festival. No other person may be held responsible for a participant's lack of information.

By completing a district and/or 2026 registration and attending or participating in a festival, pastors, leaders, parents, and students acknowledge that:

1. They have read, understand, and agree to abide by the rules of this festival.

2. They will accept the decisions of the evaluators and coordinators as final.

3. They will not hold AG Youth Ministries, district youth directors, Fine Arts nor its respective officers and staff responsible for any injury as a result of their (or their child's) participation in the festival.

Additional copies of the 2026 Fine Arts Festival Rule Book may be downloaded at faf.ag.org. A Spanish version is available for download at faf.ag.org.

For questions regarding NFAF rules, fill out and submit this form: agyouth.formstack.com/forms/faf_rules.

Official responses to NFAF Rule Questions will only come from an ag.org email address. Questions asked on Social Media are not guaranteed an official response.

fine arts participant requirements

Fine Arts Festival is open to all Christian students who meet the following criteria:

1. Participating students must be enrolled in grades 6–12 or be 12 to 17 years of age as of September 1, 2025.

2. Participating students must be in good standing with a local AG church or an officially recognized Cooperative Fellowship church and/or youth ministry.

    Note: 19-year-old students may not participate in Fine Arts unless they are enrolled in grades 6–12 as of September 1, 2025. Students who qualify for the national festival by grade and district advancement may participate at the NFAF even if they turn 19 before/during August 2025.

NFAF students must register with their home church.

Students may not participate with multiple churches or with churches or districts other than their own.

If the student is in good standing with more than 1 AG church or youth ministry, he/she must select only 1 home church with which to participate.

Students with satellite or campus churches must register with only one campus, and may not register with a group from a different campus. It is recommended to register all students with the home campus.

jr./sr. categories

Categories designated as Jr. are open to students enrolled in grades 6–8 during the 2025–2026 school year (or at least age 12 per participant requirements on page 13).

Categories designated as Sr. are open to students enrolled in grades 9–12 during the 2025–2026 school year.

kappa tau participant requirements

Kappa Tau: College Fine Arts is an extension of the Fine Arts Festival for college-aged students. Kappa Tau participants are not required to participate in nor receive an advancing rating from a district festival. Some districts do offer Kappa Tau categories at their district festivals for students wishing to receive additional experience. Contact your district office for specific information on availability of Kappa Tau categories and how to register for your local festival(s).

It is the participant's responsibility to contact their district office for specifics regarding the district festival. NFAF is not responsible for rules, policies, or category variations specific to district festivals.

Kappa Tau: College Fine Arts is open to all Christian students who meet the following criteria:

1. Participating students must be 18 to 23 years of age and no longer enrolled in high school as of September 1, 2025.
2. Participants must be in good standing with a local AG church and/or AG student ministries organization (e.g., church programs, Chi Alpha, or AG university).

Kappa Tau students must register with their home church or AG School.

Students may not participate with multiple churches or with churches or districts other than their own.

If the student is in good standing with more than 1 AG church or youth ministry, he/she must select only 1 home church with which to participate.

Students with satellite or campus churches must register with only one campus, and may not register with a group from a different campus. It is recommended to register all students with the home campus.

district fine arts festivals

Most AG districts hold a Fine Arts Festival. Some districts have pre-district festivals (sectional, zone, etc.). Contact your district office for specific information on how to register for your local festival(s). Visit ag.org/Resources/Directories/District-Network-Offices for district contact information. If you are unsure which district your church is located in, enter your information at ag.org/Resources/Directories/Find-a-Church.

Students must register with their home church. Students may not participate with multiple churches or with churches or districts other than their own. If the student is in good standing with more than 1 AG church or youth ministry, he/she must select only 1 home church with which to participate.

Most district festivals follow the same rules and policies as the NFAF. However, some differences in rules and procedures may include, but are not limited to, the establishment of alternate age or grade requirements and variant scoring procedures.

The following ratings are given to presentations in Official Categories at the district level of evaluation:

Up to 25 points	Fair
26–30 points	Good
31–35 points	Excellent
36–40 points	Superior with Invitation
-2 points	Time Violation
-2 points	Rule Violation

The following ratings are given to presentations in Exhibition Division categories at the district level of evaluation:

Up to 35 points	Not Advance
36–40 points	Advance

District level Exhibition Division presentations are given an "Advance" or a "Not Advance" recommendation from each evaluator. All Exhibition Division entries receiving an "Advance" from at least two of the three evaluators are eligible to advance to the NFAF.

A "Superior with Invitation" or an "Advance" rating from a district festival qualifies a student to participate in the NFAF. If no presentation within a category receives a "Superior with Invitation" or "Advance" at a district festival, then no one in that category will advance to the next level of evaluation.

Participants advancing from the district to national level of evaluation may improve their work even to the point of completely changing the entire selection (i.e., song, script, sermon, artwork, etc.).

District festivals are not required to offer all NFAF categories, nor offer any NFAF Exhibition categories or Kappa Tau categories. Districts may also create their own Exhibition categories with the understanding that categories not offered at the NFAF are not eligible to advance. However, participants wishing to register for NFAF (except Kappa Tau) must qualify at their district festival by receiving an "Advance" or "Superior with Invitation" in the category(ies) and register accordingly.

If mistakes are made in computing point values or if other situations arise that require attention at a district festival, contact your district coordinators.

It is the participant's responsibility to contact their district office for specifics regarding the district festival. NFAF is not responsible for rules, policies, or category variations specific to district festivals.

national festival evaluation process and ratings

Presentations are evaluated by 3 qualified evaluators, chosen for their education, expertise, and impartiality, using the following general criteria:

Selection
Communication
Presentation and Technique
Overall Effectiveness

At the NFAF, an average of the scores from 3 evaluators determines the rating of each entry.

The following ratings are given to presentations in Official and Exhibition Division categories at the national level of evaluation:

Up to 25 points	Fair
26–30 points	Good
31–35 points	Excellent
36–40 points	Superior
-2 points	Time Violation
-2 points	Rule Violation

The following awards are given at the national level of evaluation. Entries must have received a "Superior" on their initial presentation to be eligible for awards.

Award of Merit	1 trophy per group/solo entry
Top 3	Entry name recognized at Celebration Service
Top 10	Posted online following the festival

At the NFAF, callbacks may be conducted in categories with a large number of entries depending on the number of entries, space available, and Convention Center limitations. Callbacks are issued to a limited percentage or number of the entries receiving a "Superior" rating. Callbacks serve only to assist the evaluators in choosing the Assemblies of God National Award of Merit recipients. Evaluation sheets are not distributed for callbacks.

Presentations must receive a "Superior" rating to be considered for a callback or any other award. However, receiving a "Superior" does not automatically qualify a student for a callback or other award. Neither evaluation sheets nor certificates are distributed for callback presentations.

The rating that NFAF participants receive during their initial presentation(s) is the rating reflected on the evaluation sheets and certificate(s) distributed by the NFAF and is the rating that serves as the permanent record for scholarship verification (in addition to any NFAF awards received).

No attempt is made after the NFAF to return materials not collected on-site. Evaluation sheets and certificates may be emailed upon request only by emailing faf@ag.org.

code of conduct

NFAF maintains a high standard for its participants and attendees. Parents, leaders, students, and guests involved in this festival must be committed to the ministry and must represent Christ in their behavior.

Parents, leaders, students, and guests are expected to demonstrate integrity, respect, and support for all other churches, teams, evaluators, participants, and volunteers. An overly competitive attitude, rudeness, or unsportsmanlike conduct is not acceptable and is considered grounds for dismissal.

Parents, leaders, and students are expected to observe courteous and safe practices when on Festival premises. Practices include but are not limited to:

1. Keeping all walkways clear
2. Refraining from practicing any physical movement presentations near the top of the stairs, railings, balconies, or any other potentially dangerous locations.

NFAF provides volunteers who operate as auxiliary staff for the festival. These volunteers give their time and resources and work long hours throughout the week to serve students and the festival. Any rude behavior including verbal/physical abuse directed toward volunteer staff will not be tolerated and may result in disqualification and dismissal of parents, leaders, students, and guests.

It is the responsibility of all NFAF participants and attendees to leave a positive impression at the facilities and on the people with whom we work. Therefore, any participant or attendee showing disrespect for people or property in the host city may be disqualified and dismissed from the NFAF.

Failure for any attendee to abide by this code of conduct may lead to disqualification and dismissal from the event.

dress code

Appropriate dress is required for all entries—keeping category norms, target audience, and ministry effectiveness in mind.

Modest attire must be worn. Clothing must be appropriate for effective interpretation, intended audience, and a worshipful atmosphere. Low-cut tops, open-front shirts, backless shirts, tight apparel, short shorts, extremely baggy pants, and see-through skirts without leggings are never acceptable. Leggings must be non-see-through.

equipment provided

For a list of equipment provided and allowed audio formats at your district festival, contact your district youth director or district Fine Arts coordinator.

For a list of equipment provided and approximate stage sizes at the NFAF, visit faf.ag.org.

Wherever possible, the NFAF provides all listed equipment and listed stage sizes. However, where space or other limitations exist, the NFAF reserves the right to remove or limit the availability of provided equipment and adjust stage sizes.

For presentations requiring audio, the NFAF only provides 3.5mm (⅛") audio plugs. Participants are responsible to bring a suitable device with 3.5 mm (⅛") audio jack in order to play their tracks. **USB drives, CDs, and soundtracks that require Wi-Fi or a streaming service are not accommodated or allowed.**

Bluetooth speakers are not allowed in any category.

room configuration

Every effort is made to provide adequate space for all presentations. However, due to Convention Centers' policies, room or staging/equipment availability, or other circumstances that may arise outside of NFAF control, be prepared to adjust your presentation according to actual room and stage sizes.

scholarship information

Many AG universities, colleges, and church programs offer scholarships to qualified district and NFAF participants. Each institution determines and administrates their own application process and award amounts.

The NFAF encourages students to keep all certificates obtained for colleges requesting proof of awards. The NFAF can provide

letters of verification for AG colleges requesting lists of National Festival ratings and awards upon request.

Visit colleges.ag.org or contact the AG university or college of your choice for more information about scholarships, applications, and processes.

No scholarships are distributed directly from the National Fine Arts Festival/National Youth Department.

heart of fine arts

Students don't always know what their God-given gifts are or how to use them. *Heart of Fine Arts* is a six-week small group series designed to help students discover, develop, and deploy their skills and passions so they can feel confident and self-assured when they have the chance to share the gospel.

Order at digital.myhealthychurch.com.

general rules

The General Rules section applies to all Fine Arts Festival participants.

For General Rule questions pertaining to your district festival, contact your district youth director or district Fine Arts coordinator.

Read the category rules and evaluation criteria for each category in addition to the General Rules.

Category Rules govern the objective elements presentations must follow and are subject to rule violations if not followed.

Evaluation Criteria govern the subjective elements of a presentation and help define what the evaluators are looking for.

For questions regarding rules, fill out and submit this form: agyouth.formstack.com/forms/faf_rules.

Students must register with their home church. Students may not participate with multiple churches or with churches or districts other than their own. If the student is in good standing with more than 1 AG church or youth ministry, he/she must select only 1 home church with which to participate.

rule and time violations

Rule and time violations in any category receive a 2-point deduction per violation, per evaluator.

content

Whether through preaching, ASL, acting, dancing, singing, playing an instrument, sculpting, painting, or any other medium, the goal of the NFAF remains the same: helping students discover, develop, and deploy their ministry gifts. The following terms are meant to serve as a guide as you prepare your Fine Arts presentations.

All presentations must be in harmony with the Statement of Fundamental Truths of the Assemblies of God. A copy of the Statement of Fundamental Truths at ag.org/Beliefs/Statement-of-Fundamental-Truths.

Christian Message is defined as "anything that reflects the message of Jesus." We believe the Christian message is found in the person and the presentation. We believe "you can identify people by their actions" (Matthew 7:20). We want Christian students to glorify God with their ministry gifts in their presentation(s).

Evident Ministry is defined as "a presentation that clearly communicates a biblical truth." Biblical truths are communicated in various ways through different mediums. Consult the category rules for clarity on which categories require Evident Ministry.

Overall Effectiveness is defined as "a quality presentation that is deemed appropriate for this festival."

To honor the diverse thought across our Fellowship, presentations including secular music will not be allowed to present on the National Fine Arts Festival/National Youth Conference evening stage as a preservice presentation or during the Celebration Service. Contact your district regarding their guidelines on the use of secular music for district festivals.

In keeping with Festival standards, we ask that mature content, scenes, or depictions not be included in presentations.

The following content is never allowed in any Fine Arts presentation and will result in disqualification. Remember, you are ministering to a culturally and geographically diverse audience of all ages.

1. Explicit songs, lyrics, text, scripts, or images

2. Nudity

3. Cursing

4. Racial slurs and intentional/blatant racial insensitivity

5. Excessive weaponry and graphic violence

Scripts, songs, sermons, artwork, and writing entries should be developed or created by participants or groups for this Festival and not submitted to any previous year's Assemblies of God Fine Arts Festival (with the exception of the sectional or district festival[s] the entry advanced from).

Pastors, leaders, and churches are responsible to ensure that all presentations are in alignment with the content rules.

time limits

All scheduled events have time limitations (see specific category rules to find out time limits). Each presentation room has an official timekeeper. If a presentation exceeds the time limit, a 2-point deduction from each evaluator is assessed.

1. Setup time—Begins when the name of the entry/participant is called as being "up" and the announcement is made, "Your setup time begins now." For setup times, see specific division and category rules.

2. Introductory comments—Comments made prior to the presentation. Introductory comments do not count toward the setup or presentation time limits. For introductory comments instructions, see the Required Introductory Comments section.

3. Presentation time—Begins when a participant does or says anything to indicate the beginning of the presentation. See individual category rules to find out time limits.

4. Teardown time—Follows the presentation and allows time for clean up and removal of props, objects, instruments, and other materials. For teardown times, see specific division and category rules.

required introductory comments

Introductory comments are required for all presenting categories. The following rule applies to any presentation, in any category, in any division. Before beginning the presentation, participants must introduce themselves and their piece. All set up, soundchecks, warm-ups, etc., must be completed prior to introduction. Introductory comments DO NOT count toward the setup or presentation time limits. Comments must be minimal. Do not make other comments like a testimonial or justification for choosing the song(s), sermon, piece, etc.; 15 to 20 seconds is sufficient.

The following rule applies to any timed presentation, in any category, in any division. Before beginning the presentation, participants must introduce their music or script selection(s) by stating the title(s), name of the artist/composer/writer, and arranger (if known). If the piece was written, composed, or arranged by the student, that must be stated. Use this format: "Hello, my name is (or our group name is) _____ and I/we have chosen to use "Script Title" by writer(s), "Song Title" by songwriter(s) (and "Song Title" #2 by songwriter(s), and "Song Title" #3 by songwriter(s) [if applicable]) for our presentation."

See individual categories for any additional requirements.

approved languages

Bilingual entries are not permitted with the exception of:

- Dance Division categories (See page 53, rule 7 for details.)
- Human Video categories (See page 61, rule 4 for details.)
- Worship Team (See page 97, rule 8 for details.)

Entries designated as American Sign Language categories must be presented entirely in American Sign Language. Entries designated as Spanish must be presented entirely in Spanish. All entries not otherwise designated must be presented entirely in English with the exception of:

- Dance Division categories (See page 53, rule 7 for details.)
- Human Video categories (See page 61, rule 4 for details.)
- Vocal Solo, Classical, Sr. (See page 94, rule 4 for details.)
- Worship Team (See page 97, rule 8 for details.)

Background vocals must be in the same language as the presentation.

entry limit guidelines

A participant or group of participants may not enter the same category of a division twice. There is no limit to the number of different categories in each division for which a participant may register.

There is no limit to the number of qualified entries from 1 church.

group entry participant guidelines

A group/ensemble entry is defined as a presentation given by 2 to 10 students. If a category is specified as a small group/ensemble, it consists of 2 to 4 eligible students (e.g., Drama Ensemble, Small). If a category is specified as a large group/ensemble, it consists of 5 to 10 eligible students (e.g., Human Video Ensemble, Large).

Choir is the only group entry that is allowed more than 10 participants; up to 75 members are allowed.

substitutions

If you need a substitute for a student who participated at the district level, but is unable to attend the national festival, follow these instructions:

1. Substitutions may be made between the district festival and the national festival as follows:

   Small Groups (2 to 4 participants) are allowed 1 substitution.
   Large Groups (5 to 10 participants) are allowed 2 substitutions.
   Choirs with 11–50 original members are allowed 4 substitutes.
   Choirs with 51–75 original members are allowed 6 substitutes.

   The original group is understood to be the group members who participated at the district festival. If a student registered for but did not participate in a group at the district festival, he/she is not counted in the original group.

2. When registering online for nationals, locate the "Substitute For" box and list the name of the student(s) who is unable to participate at nationals.

To substitute a student after you have registered your group for the national festival, follow these instructions:

1. There can only be a post registration substitution if the original group member is paid in full. The Fine Arts office is unable to process new payments after the registration deadline.

2. Contact the NFAF at 417.427.1905 or faf@ag.org with the name of the student(s) no longer participating, the student(s) taking their place, and group names affected.

3. Substitutions may be made by the NFAF office through 4:30 p.m. (CT) July 21, 2026. Substitutions may also be made at On-Site Check-In on Monday, July 27.

conductor/director rules

Choir is the only Vocal Division category allowed an adult conductor/director as part of the presentation.

All categories are not permitted to have a conductor/director in the audience.

Rhythm, balance/blend, cues, signals, etc., from anyone in the audience is not allowed.

license

NFAF attendees and/or participants, by submitting a registration and participating, grant permission to The General Council of the Assemblies of God and to Assemblies of God Youth Ministries to use the registrant's image(s) and to photograph, reproduce, edit, publish, and/or record any musical, dramatic, artistic, photographic, and/or written presentation at the NFAF without compensation to the subject, registrant, author, or creator of the work for the purpose of promoting the NFAF and/or Assemblies of God Youth Ministries. The author or creator of any entry used retains copyright ownership subject to any subsequent written agreement or employment relationship.

copyrighted material

It is the responsibility of the students, parents, and youth leaders to be completely legal and ethical in their conduct regarding copyrighted music, scripts, or any other original published or unpublished works. All NFAF participants must follow these guidelines:

a. Never use digital or printed copies of music or scripts to avoid purchasing original materials.

b. Never use software, sound files, video clips, quotes, or any other copyrighted work for your presentation without obtaining the copyrights or the explicit written permission from the publisher or creator. Always give appropriate credit to

the author or creator for all copyrighted materials used to create your Fine Arts Festival entries.

c. Never use unpublished music or scripts without written permission from the author or creator of the work.

d. Splicing must only be done after obtaining the proper license or permission of the copyright owner(s).

ai policy

Purpose

To protect the originality and creativity of student work submitted in the Art and Writing Divisions of the National Fine Arts Festival while providing clear expectations regarding the use of artificial intelligence (AI).

Art Division

What Is Allowed:

- Students may use digital software that includes AI-based features (e.g., auto-fill, color correction, digital brushes) as tools in their process. NOTE: AI cannot be used to remove watermarks or violate copyright protections.
- AI-generated references (such as poses or lighting samples) may be used for inspiration but cannot be submitted or directly included.

What Is Not Allowed:

- Submitting artwork that was fully or primarily generated by AI image models (e.g., Midjourney, DALL·E, etc.).
- Editing or modifying AI-generated images and submitting them as student-created work.

Disclosure Requirement: All digital art entries must include in their description any programs/software use:

- The software used.
- Any AI features used and how.
- Confirmation that the student created the majority of the final piece.

Promo Video & Short Film

What Is Allowed:

- Students may use video editing software and tools that include AI-based features (e.g., auto-stabilization, color correction, noise reduction, auto-captioning) as part of their production process.
- AI tools may be used for technical assistance only, such as organizing raw footage, enhancing audio/video quality, or creating subtitles/captions.

What Is Not Allowed:

- Including any AI-generated video, image, voiceover, music, script, or animation directly in the final product (e.g., content created by tools such as Runway, Synthesia, ChatGPT, ElevenLabs, etc.).
- Using AI to impersonate a person's voice or likeness without consent or as a shortcut to original creativity.
- Editing or modifying AI-generated content and submitting it as student-created work.

Disclosure Requirement:

All Promo Video and Short Film entries must include in their description any programs/software use:

- The software and tools used.
- Any AI features used and how.
- Confirmation that the student created the majority of the final piece.

Music Production

What Is Allowed:

- Students may use music production software (DAWs) that include AI-based features as tools to assist in the creative process. Examples of allowable features include:
  - Pitch Correction
  - Tempo syncing and quantization

- ⬩ AI-assisted mixing/mastering tools (e.g. iZotope Ozone, LANDR)
    - ⬩ Smart EQ or compressor settings
    - ⬩ Virtual instruments (VSTs), drum machines, and sample libraries that are human-controlled or sequenced manually
- AI-assisted research may be used for background knowledge or idea generation only.

What Is Not Allowed:

- Submitting tracks that were fully or primarily generated by AI music tools (e.g. AIVA, Amper Music, Soundraw, Suno, Udio, etc.).
- Using AI to compose, arrange, or generate melodies, harmonies, lyrics, or full tracks..
- Editing or modifying AI-generated music and submitting it as original student work.

Music Production entries must include in their description any programs/software use:

- The software and tools used.
- Any AI features used and how.
- Confirmation that the student created the majority of the final piece.

Writing Division

What Is Allowed:

- Students may use grammar and spellcheck tools (e.g., Word Editor, Grammarly) to correct mechanics.
- AI-assisted research may be used for background knowledge or idea generation only.

What Is Not Allowed:

- Any portion of the writing generated by an AI writing tool (e.g., ChatGPT, Jasper, Copy.ai, etc.).
- Using AI to draft, paraphrase, or reword the student's entry.

Disclosure Requirement: All writing entries must include a signed statement in the registration process:

- The work was written entirely by the student.
- No AI was used to generate or edit any portion of the final draft.

Evaluation & Accountability

- AI detectors may give false readings and will not be used as the basis for evaluating AI usage.
- If there are concerns about a submission, NFAF staff or evaluators may contact the student's Fine Arts Leader/youth pastor and/or the student to request clarification.
- Students and leaders are expected to be honest about the tools used in creating the work.
- Submissions found to violate this policy may be disqualified.

approved instrument lists

Electronic versions of approved instruments are allowed (except where category rules state otherwise) as long as the participant provides the necessary amplifiers and cords and time limits are not exceeded.

KEYBOARDS
NFAF provides either a piano or keyboard for categories that require them; see individual category rules for specifications.

Piano	Keyboard	Synthesizer

WOODWINDS

Flute family	Oboe	English Horn	Clarinet family	Saxophone family
Bassoon				

BRASS

Horn family	Trumpet family	Trombone family	Baritone (T.C./B.C.)/Euphonium
Tuba			

TRADITIONAL STRINGS

Violin	Viola	Cello	String Bass	Harp

RHYTHM/ALTERNATE STRINGS
NFAF provides a direct box and an amp emulator.*

Acoustic Guitar	*Bass Guitar	Electric Guitar	12-String Guitar

*Guitar Solo will be provided with a physical guitar amp

**Guitar Solo may not use a bass guitar.

PERCUSSION, TRADITIONAL

Drums (and Cymbals)	Bongo	Cajon	Congas	Djembe
Guiro	Handbells	Maracas	Marimba	Orchestra Bells
Sandpaper Blocks	Shakers	Tambourine	Timbales	Timpani
Triangle	Vibraphone	Wood Blocks	Xylophone	

A basic drum set is provided for some categories. See individual category rules for specifications.

Kick Drum/Single Pedal		Snare	1 Rack Toms	Floor Tom
Crash Cymbal	Hi-Hat Cymbal	Ride Cymbal	

*Percussion Solo/Ensemble Traditional will be provided with a five-piece drumkit, which includes a kick, snare, two

rack toms, one floor tom, one hi-hat cymbal, one ride cymbal, one crash cymbal)

Additional percussion accessories are permitted (double bass pedal, extra cymbals, etc.) but must be provided by the participant; setup and teardown time limits apply.

FOLK

Accordion	Acoustic Guitar	Autoharp	Bagpipe	Banjo
Concertina	Dulcimer	Djembe	Fiddle	Harmonica
Kalimba	Lute	Lyre	Mandolin	Ocarina
Penny Whistle	Steel Drums	Tin Whistle	Ukulele	Zither

Other nontraditional instruments (not listed above) are also permitted if they are considered a folk instrument and not used in traditional Western bands or orchestras. Other folk percussion instruments are also allowed.

OTHER

Harmonica (Christian Band; Instrumental Ensemble, Contemporary; Worship Team or Kappa Tau Worship Team)
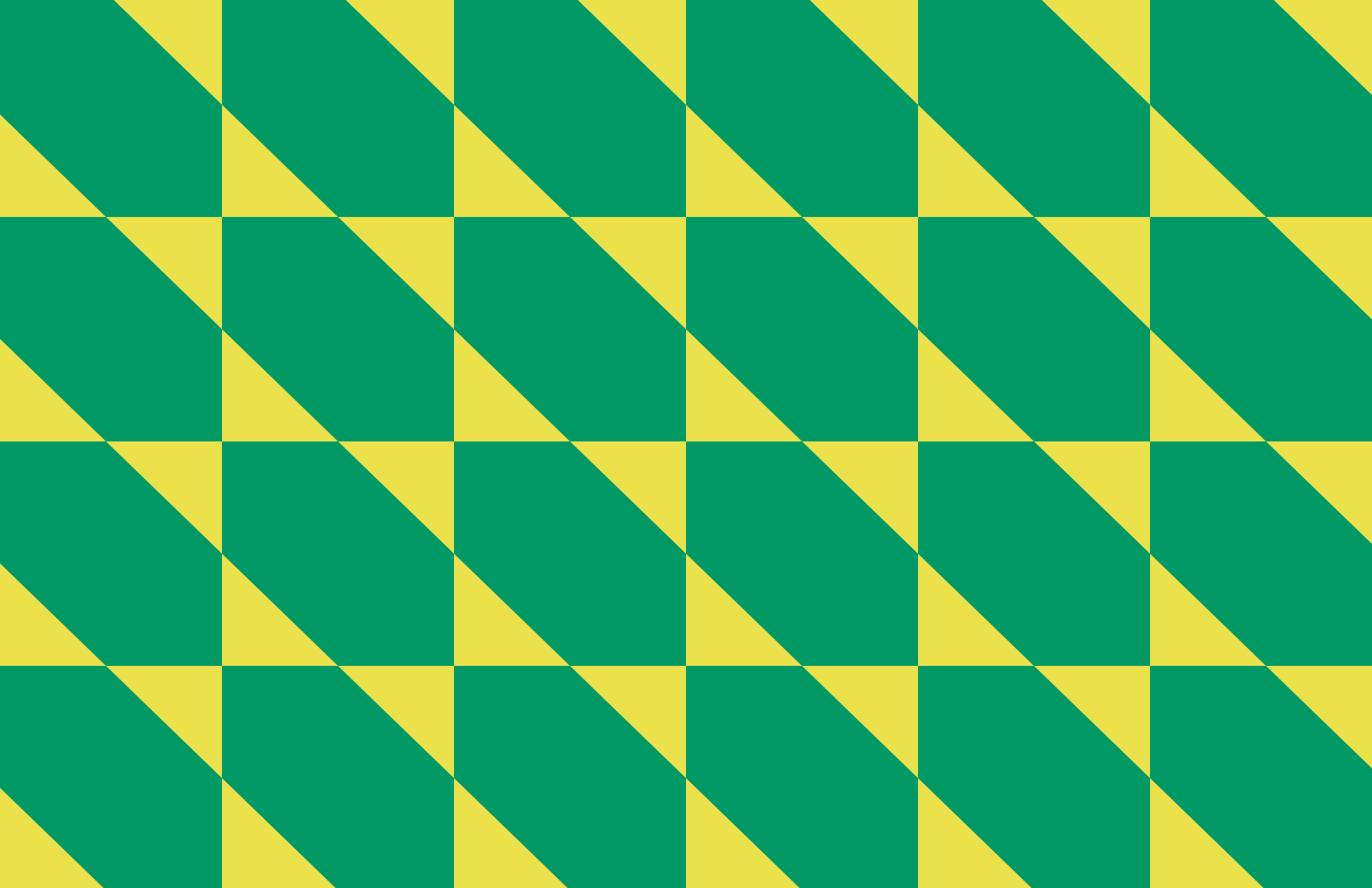
art division

art division

categories

Registrants in the Art Division may submit entries in the following categories:

Apparel Design
Fiber Art
Graphic Design
Photography, Digital Camera, Jr.
Photography, Digital Camera, Sr.
Photography, Film
Photography, Mobile Device, Jr.
Photography, Mobile Device, Sr.
Visual Art, Three-Dimensional
Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Alternative Media
Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Painting and Drawing, Jr.
Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Painting and Drawing, Sr.

Kappa Tau Fiber Art
Kappa Tau Graphic Design
Kappa Tau Photography, Digital Camera
Kappa Tau Photography, Mobile Device
Kappa Tau T-Shirt Design
Kappa Tau Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Painting & Drawing

information

Read the General Information and General Rules on pages 13–23.

Kappa Tau category participants must meet Kappa Tau Participant Requirements on page 14.

Categories designated as Jr. are open to students enrolled in grades 6–8 during the 2025–2026 school year (or at least age 12 per participant requirements above). See page 14.

Categories designated as Sr. are open to students enrolled in grades 9–12 during the 2025–2026 school year. See page 14.

Categories not designated as Jr., Sr., or KT fall under the Fine Arts Participant Guidelines ages and grades found on page 13.

district festival delivery instructions

For rules and/or guidelines pertaining to the evaluation process, delivery instructions, and deadlines for Art Division entries for your district festival, contact your district youth director or district Fine Arts coordinator.

nfaf delivery instructions

Art Division entries for the NFAF must be hand-delivered to the Art Gallery by the student or an adult representing the student following the completion of On-Site Check-In on Monday, July 27, 2026 between **8 a.m. and 6 p.m.** Art entries are not accepted prior to On-Site Check-In or after On-Site Check-In closes at 6 p.m. on July 27, 2026.

The utmost care is taken in the handling of Art Division entries. However, the creator of the work assumes full liability for damage due to the handling of the artwork before, during, and after the festival. Artists desiring additional protection are encouraged to personally insure their entries.

nfaf information

The artist/designer is not required to be present at the NFAF.

Artists/designers not attending the NFAF in person must meet registration deadlines and pay the full registration fee.

nfaf pick-up process

Art entries may be picked up at the NFAF by an adult representing a participant.

Art Division entries must be picked up between **8 a.m. and noon** on Friday, July 31, 2026. All entries not picked up are considered discarded as of 3 p.m. on Friday, July 31, 2026 and no further attempt to return to participants is made.

art

Rules (apply to all Art Division categories)

1. Art entries must be entirely the original concept of 1 eligible student. They cannot be recreations of a non-original art piece from a pattern or any form of instructional art kit.

2. Art entries are not permitted if previously submitted to this festival in a past festival year (with the exception of the festival[s] the entry advanced from). Participants advancing to the next level of evaluation may improve their work even to the point of completely changing the entire entry.

3. Every Art Division entry must have a typed credit line (information page) attached to the back of the entry upon delivery. If the credit line is not present, is missing any information, or is handwritten upon delivery at the Art Gallery, the entry receives a 2-point rule violation per evaluator. The credit line must include the following information as listed in the order given below:

   - Participant
   - Grade (All Kappa Tau entries should list "Post Secondary" on this line)
   - Category (must use official category name as stated on page 25)
   - Designation of medium (state the materials used to create the piece)
     - Visual Art—State the material and/or medium used to create this piece (Visual Art, Three-Dimensional; Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Alternative Media; Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Painting and Drawing)
     - Digital Art—State the equipment, and/or programs/software used to create this piece (Apparel Design; Graphic Design; Photography, Digital, Photography, Film; Photography, Mobile)
   - Explanation of medium (Explain how the piece was created in technical terms by stating techniques, processes, manipulations, construction, equipment used, etc.)
   - Explanation of inspiration (State in 2 sentences maxiumum the inspiration or meaning behind the art piece. Explanations are required but the content is not evaluated.)
   - A brief visual description of your piece.
   - Church name, city, state

4. Only the credit line is required (according to rule #3). An essay or story beyond the required explanation of inspiration explaining the message or the theme of the piece is not allowed.

5. Copyright and AI policies: Assemblies of God Youth Ministries and The General Council of the Assemblies of God are not responsible for assuring that all material included in students' work is in compliance with existing copyright laws. It is the responsibility of the students, parents, and youth leaders to be completely legal and ethical in their conduct regarding copyrighted material used to create an entry for the NFAF. Students must obtain either the copyrights or explicit written permission for use of all design elements included. Students may not copy another artist's design or claim another individual or company's work as their own. See pages 20 and 21 for additional lists of guidelines.

6. If set up or assembly is required for the display of Art Division entries, it must be completed by the student.

7. NFAF does not provide electricity for Art Division entries. If an Art Division entry requires electricity, it must be battery powered and provided by the participant.

8. Entries are measured in specific height and width dimensions, not in square inches. For overall size (including mounting and matte) of an entry, the following apply:

   - Apparel Design—product entries must be no smaller than 6 by 6 inches and no larger than 18 by 24 inches.
   - Fiber art—entries, including mounting, may be no smaller than 6 by 6 inches and no larger than 32 by 32 by 32 inches.
   - Graphic Design—entries, including mounting, must be no smaller than 4 by 6 inches and no larger than 18 by 24 inches. The piece must follow standard industry sizes.
   - Photography (Digital, Film, and Mobile)—entries, including mounting, must be no smaller than 8 by 10 inches and no larger than 16 by 20 inches.
   - Visual Art, Three-Dimensional—entries, including mounting, must be no smaller than 6 by 6 by 6 inches and no larger than 32 by 32 by 32 inches.

- Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Alternative Media—entries, including mounting, must be no smaller than 8 by 10 inches and no larger than 32 by 32 inches.
- Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Painting and Drawing—entries, including mounting, must be no smaller than 8 by 10 inches and no larger than 32 by 32 inches.

9. Mounting is the process of attaching a piece of artwork to a backing to provide stability and prevent damage. Entries requiring mounting may not be attached only to a frame. Where mounting is required by category rules, material other than art board (matte board or foam core) is not allowed. Framing is not necessary, but if it is used, only art board is allowed for framing. Glass, wood, plastic, etc., are not permitted except for Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Alternative Media and Visual Art, Three-Dimensional categories.

10. Weapons are not allowed in the National Fine Arts Festival Art Gallery. If a student attempts to enter a weapon for evaluation, it will be removed from the gallery, held by security for the duration of the festival, and can be retrieved by the student's leader from security on Friday, July 31, 2026, after the Art Gallery closes.

11. All Visual Art entries must be submitted on an individual panel. Multi panel entries such as diptych, triptych, or polyptych art entries are not permitted.

12. Model Release policy: Assemblies of God Youth Ministries and The General Council of the Assemblies of God are not responsible for assuring that all use of human subjects included in students' film productions are in compliance with existing model release laws. It is the responsibility of the registrants, authors, creators, students, parents, and youth leaders to be completely legal and ethical in their conduct regarding the use of people's images and likenesses used to create an entry for the NFAF. Students must obtain either a model release or explicit written permission (not required to present to evaluators) from each actor or appropriate parental consent. See page 20 for complete license statement.

Consult the rules under each category for further guidelines.

apparel design

Rules

1. In the Apparel Design category, the following products are accepted, but are not limited to:

   bags & backpacks   beanies & caps   t-shirts & long-sleeve t-shirts   sweatshirts & hoodies

2. Apparel Design entries may incorporate purchased design elements such as fonts, vectors, and illustrations as part of the entry's original design.

3. Entries must be submitted as a finished product. All graphics must be permanently affixed to the apparel (e.g., screen printing, heat transfer, embroidery, or similar).

4. Hangers, stands, or other product displays are not allowed for the NFAF. For your district festival, contact your district youth director or district Fine Arts coordinator.

5. Entries do not have to be overtly religious in subject or theme.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival in subject and taste; overtly religious subjects, symbols, or themes are not required; appropriate level of difficulty. See page 18 for content requirements.
Fresh concept—demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Initial impression—immediate visual impact; meaning and message readily grasped.
Originality—displays an individualistic style; avoids overused ideas or concepts.
Range of appeal—relevant and appealing to multiple audiences.
Visual impact—imagery that is visually compelling; forceful, subtle, or vivid.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Clarity—well-defined in its intent.
Consistency—consistent use of medium.
Finished presentation—completeness; apparel must be submitted as a finished product.
Organization—apparent focal point; organization of compositional elements.
Proportion—appropriate use of space.
Technique—proper use of the medium.
Use of color/values—consistent and visually enhancing color and/or gradation.
Use of type—correct spelling, interesting use of fonts and font sizes, interesting use of upper/lower case.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Effectiveness—produces an overall effective visual impression or impact.
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Preparation—an apparent effort of time and thought in preparation.
Understandable concept—the combination of subject selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

fiber art

Rules

1. Fiber Art entries are defined as textile art that is created using natural or synthetic fibers such as fabric, yarn, or thread.

2. In the Fiber Art category, mediums accepted include, but are not limited to:

basketry	crochet	embroidery	knitting	macramé
needlework	quilting	rug making	weaving	

3. Entries do not have to be overtly religious in subject or theme.

4. Fiber Art entries may be mounted, but it is not required.

5. Fiber Art entry concepts must be entirely the original work of 1 eligible student. They cannot be recreations of a non-original art piece from a pattern or any form of instructional art kit.

6. Fiber Art entries are not permitted if previously submitted to this festival in a past festival year (with the exception of the festival[s] the entry advanced from). Participants advancing to the next level of evaluation may improve their work even to the point of completely changing the entire entry.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival in subject and taste; overtly religious subjects, symbols, or themes are not required; appropriate level of difficulty. See page 18 for content requirements.
Fresh concept—demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Initial impression—immediate visual impact; meaning and general intent readily grasped.
Originality—displays individualistic style; avoids overused ideas or concepts.
Range of appeal—relevant and appealing to multiple audiences.
Visual impact—imagery that is visually compelling; forceful, subtle, or vivid.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Consistency—consistent use of medium.
Finished presentation—completeness; entries may be mounted (with no framing other than matte); overall size, including mounting, can be no smaller than 6 by 6 inches and no larger than 32 by 32 by 32 inches.
Flow—a natural flow of image(s) for the viewer's eye.
Neatness—clean appearance; free of smudges.
Organization—apparent focal point; organization of compositional elements.
Proportion—appropriate use of space.
Technique—proper use of the medium.
Use of color/values—consistent and visually enhancing color and/or gradation.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Effectiveness—produces an overall effective visual impression or impact.
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Preparation—an apparent effort of time and thought in preparation.
Understandable concept—the combination of subject selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

graphic design

Rules

1. In the Graphic Design category, the following submissions are accepted:

digital advertisement	banner	billboard	brochure	bulletin/program
business card	flyer	logo	newsletter	podcast/album cover art
poster	print advertisements	social media graphics	stickers	web page
3-D renders				

2. Graphic Design entries must be mounted flat on art board backing (foam core or matte board). Entries must be mounted, no smaller than 4 by 6 inches and no larger than 18 by 24 inches. The piece must follow standard industry sizes.

3. Entries in the Graphic Design category may take any of the following forms: finished piece, full-color drawing, or comprehensive full-color dummy or proof. Digital imagery and computer illustrations are appropriate for this category but must be high resolution (at least 300 dpi at 100 percent of output size). Students must submit the best representation of their design.

4. Entries do not have to be overtly religious in subject or theme.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival in subject and taste; overtly religious subjects, symbols, or themes are not required; appropriate level of difficulty. See page 18 for content requirements.
Fresh concept—demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Initial impression—immediate visual impact; meaning and message readily grasped.
Originality—displays an individualistic style; avoids overused ideas or concepts.
Range of appeal—relevant and appealing to multiple audiences.
Visual impact—imagery that is visually compelling; forceful, subtle, or vivid.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Clarity—well-defined in its intent.
Consistency—consistent use of medium.
Finished presentation—completeness; Graphic Design entries must be mounted flat on foam core or matte board; no smaller than 4 by 6 inches and no larger than 18 by 24 inches; presents the piece in a way that communicates the purpose of the submission.
Organization—apparent focal point; organization of compositional elements.
Proportion—appropriate use of space.
Technique—proper use of the medium.
Use of color/values—consistent and visually enhancing color and/or gradation.
Use of type—correct spelling, interesting use of fonts and font sizes, interesting use of upper/lower case.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Effectiveness—produces an overall effective visual impression or impact.
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Preparation—an apparent effort of time and thought in preparation.
Understandable concept—the combination of subject selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

photography

Photography, Digital Camera Rules

1. Only digital cameras may be used for photographs entered in the Photography, Digital category.
2. Fine Art Photography is defined as photography that is created in a studio, sitting portraits, uses off-camera lighting, or is intended to be displayed as art such as landscapes, etc.
3. Lifestyle & Ministry Photography is defined as photography that involves candid or everyday life, including church and ministry photos, journalism style images, or content created for social media, websites, or other digital platforms.
4. The credit line page that must accompany the entry must indicate the camera, type of software, and any other form of technology used to produce the image under "Explanation of medium."
5. Entries do not have to be overtly religious in subject or theme.
6. Computer-generated improvements are allowed in order to enhance the original photograph (cropping, color depth or hue, color contrast, etc.).
7. A montage of up to 3 photographs may be used to create 1 image. All photographs used to create the image must appear to the viewer as if they are a single image. Entries must be an original work of 1 student, including all photographs used to create the image, and not submitted to any previous Assemblies of God Fine Arts Festival (with the exception of the festival[s] the entry advanced from).
8. No collages are permitted in this category.
9. No typography is to be added to the finished image. Words or letters in the photograph must appear to the viewer as if they are a part of the image.
10. A Photography, Digital image must be mounted on or printed directly on art board backing (foam core or matte board). Mounting or printing on a stretched canvas is not allowed. The entry may be framed with cut matte board. No other framing or mounting is allowed. The image must be no smaller than 8 by 10 inches and no larger than 16 by 20 inches.

Photography, Film Rules

1. Only a film camera may be used for photographs entered in the Photography, Film category.
2. Only 1 image is acceptable.
3. Entries do not have to be overtly religious in subject or theme.
4. Black-and-white or color photographs are accepted.
5. In-camera manipulations of the original work are allowed. Post-processing manipulations and edits are not permitted.
6. No typography is to be added to the finished image. Words or letters in the photograph must be a part of the original image.
7. A Photography, Film image must be mounted on or printed directly on art board backing (foam core or matte board). Mounting or printing on a stretched canvas is not allowed. The entry may be framed with cut matte board. No other framing or mounting is allowed. The image must be no smaller than 8 by 10 inches and no larger than 16 by 20 inches.

Photography, Mobile Device Rules

1. Only mobile device cameras may be used for photographs entered in the Photography, Mobile category.
2. Fine Art Photography is defined as photography that is created in a studio, sitting portraits, uses off-camera lighting, or is intended to be displayed as art such as landscapes, etc.
3. Lifestyle & Ministry Photography is defined as photography that involves candid or everyday life, including church and ministry photos, journalism style images, or content created for social media, websites, or other digital platforms.
4. The credit line page that must accompany the entry must indicate the device, type of application, and any other form of technology used to produce the image under "Explanation of medium."
5. Entries do not have to be overtly religious in subject or theme.

6. Computer-generated improvements are allowed in order to enhance the original photograph (cropping, color depth or hue, color contrast, etc.).

7. No collages or montages are permitted in this category.

8. No typography is to be added to the finished image. Words or letters in the photograph must appear to the viewer as if they are a part of the image.

9. A Photography, Mobile image must be mounted on or printed directly on art board backing (foam core or matte board). Mounting or printing on a stretched canvas is not allowed. The entry may be framed with cut matte board. No other framing or mounting is allowed. The image must be no smaller than 8 by 10 inches and no larger than 16 by 20 inches.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival in subject and taste; overtly religious subjects, symbols, or themes are not required; appropriate level of difficulty. See page 18 for content requirements.
Fresh concept—demonstrates a fresh approach.
Style—keeps with genre (traditional, digital, or mobile).

COMMUNICATION
Initial impression—immediate visual impact; meaning and general intent readily grasped.
Originality—displays an individualistic style; avoids overused ideas or concepts.
Range of appeal—relevant and appealing to multiple audiences.
Visual impact—imagery that is visually compelling; forceful, subtle, or vivid.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Consistency—consistent use of medium.
Elements of design—incorporation of shape, line, pattern, texture, space, framing, size, angle, and cropping.
Finished presentation—completeness; photograph must be mounted (no framing other than matte) with overall size no smaller than 8 by 10 inches and no larger than 16 by 20 inches.
Flow—a natural flow of image(s) for viewer's eye.
Lighting—effective use of light; develops mood and nuance.
Organization—apparent focal point; organization of compositional elements.
Proportion—appropriate use of space.
Technique—proper use of the medium.
Use of color/contrast—black and white reveals contrast; color is clear and appropriate for image.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Effectiveness—produces an overall effective visual impression or impact.
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Preparation—an apparent effort of time and thought in preparation.
Understandable concept—the combination of subject selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

visual art

Visual Art, Three-Dimensional Rules

1. Visual Art, Three-Dimensional entries are defined as either sculpture that can be viewed from all sides or a work that simulates the effect of depth or the illusion of a third dimension.

2. In the Visual Art, Three-Dimensional category, the following mediums are accepted:

mixed media sculpture pottery woodwork/wood carvings architectural models
metal works paper maché mixed media abstract

3. Entries do not have to be overtly religious in subject or theme.

4. Mounting is not required; but if used, Visual Art, Three-Dimensional entries may be mounted on wood, plastic, metal, etc. The overall size may be no smaller than 6 by 6 by 6 inches and no larger than 32 by 32 by 32 inches.

5. Weapons are not allowed in the National Fine Arts Festival Art Gallery. If a student attempts to enter a weapon for evaluation, it will be removed from the gallery, held by security for the duration of the festival, and can be retrieved by the student's leader from security on Friday, July 31, 2026, after the Art Gallery closes.

6. Stand-alone fiber arts and fashion design entries are not accommodated in this category.

7. 3D printed entries must include the CAD/digital designs created by the artist. 3D printed items may not be stand-alone single print items. 3D printed items must include multiple printed items combined into a single entry..

Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Alternative Media Rules

1. Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Alternative Media entries are defined as art that is created using non-traditional methods, materials, or canvas/base. Entries may contain texture or be created on a three-dimensional canvas or base, but may not be fully three-dimensional or a sculpture (as defined under Visual Art, Three-Dimensional) nor a submission that would categorize itself as a graphic design.

2. In the Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Alternative Media category, mediums accepted include, but are not limited to:

bark, wood beads collage comic strip digital drawings
found materials mixed media montage mosaic prints
stained glass wires

3. Entries do not have to be overtly religious in subject or theme.

4. Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Alternative Media entries must be mounted on foam core, matte board, Masonite board, wood board, canvas, or similar backing. The entry may be framed with cut matte board. Framing other than matte board is not allowed. Entries may be no smaller than 8 by 10 inches and no larger than 32 by 32 inches.

5. Stand-alone fiber arts and fashion design are not accommodated in this category.

Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Painting and Drawing Rules

1. Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Painting and Drawing entries are defined as art that is created using traditional methods with traditional mediums, on a traditional canvas/base where no physical texture or dimension is present other than that created by the accepted chosen medium.

2. In the Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Painting and Drawing category, mediums accepted include, but are not limited to:

acrylics watercolor oils tempera
sketches (ink, pencils, chalk, charcoal, pastels)

3. Entries do not have to be overtly religious in subject or theme.

4. Texture added to a painting or drawing entry is prohibited, except for texture created by paint if used.

5. Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Painting and Drawing entries must be mounted on foam core, matte board, Masonite board, or similar backing. Paintings on stretched canvas are considered mounted already. The entry may be framed with cut matte board. Framing other than matte board is not allowed. Entries may be no smaller than 8 by 10 inches and no larger than 32 by 32 inches.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival in subject and taste; overtly religious subjects, symbols, or themes are not required; appropriate level of difficulty. See page 18 for content requirements.
Fresh concept—demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Initial impression—immediate visual impact; meaning and general intent readily grasped.
Originality—displays individualistic style; avoids overused ideas or concepts.
Range of appeal—relevant and appealing to multiple audiences.
Visual impact—imagery that is visually compelling; forceful, subtle, or vivid.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Consistency—consistent use of medium.
Finished presentation—completeness; 2-D entries must be mounted (with no framing other than matte); overall size, including mounting, can be no smaller than 8 by 10 inches and no larger than 32 by 32 inches; 3-D entries must be no smaller than 6 by 6 by 6 inches and no larger than 32 by 32 by 32 inches.
Flow—a natural flow of image(s) for the viewer's eye.
Neatness—clean appearance; free of smudges.
Organization—apparent focal point; organization of compositional elements.
Proportion—appropriate use of space.
Technique—proper use of the medium.
Use of color/values—consistent and visually enhancing color and/or gradation.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Effectiveness—produces an overall effective visual impression or impact.
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Preparation—an apparent effort of time and thought in preparation.
Understandable concept—the combination of subject selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

communication division

communication division

categories

Registrants in the Communication Division may submit entries in the following categories:

American Sign Language Group
American Sign Language Solo
Children's Lesson Group
Children's Lesson Solo
Promo Video
Puppetry Group
Puppetry Solo
Short Film
Short Sermon, Jr.
Short Sermon, Sr.
Short Sermon, Spanish
Spoken Word

Kappa Tau American Sign Language Solo
Kappa Tau Short Film
Kappa Tau Short Sermon
Kappa Tau Spoken Word

information

Read the General Information and General Rules on pages 13–23.

Kappa Tau category participants must meet Kappa Tau Participant Requirements on page 14.

Categories designated as Jr. are open to students enrolled in grades 6–8 during the 2025–2026 school year (or at least age 12 per participant requirements above). See page 14.

Categories designated as Sr. are open to students enrolled in grades 9–12 during the 2025–2026 school year. See page 14.

Categories not designated as Jr., Sr., or KT fall under the Fine Arts Participant Guidelines ages and grades found on page 13.

american sign language

Information

A set of lyric sheets (without glossing) may be hand-delivered to the evaluators for the evaluators' benefit at each level of participation, but is not required. Lyric sheets must be typed with the lyrics divided into the sections of the song (chorus, verse, bridge, etc.) and must have a title page or heading that includes the following information as listed in the order given below:

- Title
- Category (must use official category name as stated on page 37)
- Lyricist(s)
- Credits
- Church name, city, state

Rules

1. American Sign Language Group/Solo is an interpretation of a prerecorded song using American Sign Language (ASL) to encourage a cross-cultural experience, explore the correlation between ASL and English, and to prepare the participant for Deaf ministry.

2. The interpreted song must be a musical track that includes lyrics.

3. ASL Group entries may consist of 2 to 10 eligible students.

4. ASL Solo entries have a time limit of 5 minutes. ASL Group entries have a time limit of 7 minutes. Both have 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.

5. The English-to-ASL interpretation must be an original interpretation by the student and not a copy of another's work or sign choices.

6. Presenters must use ASL linguistic features in the interpretation. This may include, but is not limited to: ASL sentence structure, sign choices that reflect meaning, appropriate body shifts, appropriate use of space, and correct palm orientation. The presentation must be a visualization of the interpretation, not simply in English word order.

7. If the presenter(s) is deaf, he/she may use a cue (not a sign) or have someone mouth the words in order to stay in sync with the music. This person is not considered part of the entry, but evaluators must be informed of their presence and how they are cueing the participant(s).

8. The presenter(s) must maintain a professional appearance. Attire and accessories must not create visual distractions. Costumes and costume makeup are not allowed. Participants must wear a solid top contrasting with his/her skin tone.

9. Mouthing lyrics/lip syncing is not used in American Sign Language. Only linguistically appropriate facial grammar must be present. This may include, but is not limited to: puffed cheeks/pursed lips, head tilt/forward nod/head shake, raised eyebrows, appropriate eye gaze, mouth morphemes, and other nonsigned facial grammar that can influence the meaning of the sign. These must be used as is fitting within the language itself.

10. No live music is allowed.

11. Introductory comments are required in both ASL and spoken English. See page 19.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Christian message—presents a Christian perspective and message with ministry effectiveness in mind.

COMMUNICATION
ASL structure—ASL grammatical structure (not English word order).
Clarity and hand-positioning—hands must be clearly within signing space; finger spelling must be clear and accurate.
Clarity of signs—signs easily understood individually.
Conceptual accuracy—appropriate choice of signs for overall meaning; message is easily understood.
Facial expression—demonstrates appropriate emotion for the conceptual sign; eye contact.

Interpretation of meaning—shows a visual picture instead of signing only word order.
Originality—use of inventive and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Creative elements—thoughtful and creative application of signs.
Directionality—proper direction of signs for whom the message is intended.
Energy—demonstrates the emotion of song with appropriate energy.
Presenter appearance—professional attire; shoes; solid color shirt that contrasts with skin tone; hair pulled back, if necessary; absence of visual "noise" such as rings, watches, necklaces, etc.
Sign placement—setting up the space appropriately.
Spacing—use of space; signs are large enough to be seen by entire audience.
Stage presence—command of stage; control, confidence, and comfort.
Synchronization—uniform precision of signers during synchronized parts of the song.
Use of classifiers—hand shapes that represent a person or object.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Interpretation—overall effectiveness and visual impact.
Memorization—strong knowledge of lyrics and signing of the selection.
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.
Understandable concept—the combination of song selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

children's lesson

Information

Black lights (if used) must be brought by participants using puppetry, as well as any necessary extension cords. Each entry must provide individuals to turn room lights off and on. The NFAF cannot guarantee there will be a complete blackout for any presentation due to conference center security reasons. For rules and/or guidelines pertaining to blacklight use in entries for your district festival, contact your district youth director or district Fine Arts coordinator.

Sound effects, if used, may be on devices that plug into the DI box provided by the National Fine Arts Festival. See p. 14, "Equipment Provided."

Rules

1. Children's Lesson Group/Solo is the art of communicating a biblical message with a stated verse or portion of Scripture presented verbally and visually in a lesson geared toward children ages 5–10.
2. A Children's Lesson Group may consist of 2 to 10 eligible students.
3. In a Children's Lesson Group, at least 1 person must be in direct verbal communication with the audience.
4. Children's Lesson Group/Solo entries have a time limit of 5 minutes. There are 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.
5. Participants may use various means of communication (object lesson, illusion, ventriloquism, etc.). Flammable illustrations are not permitted. Liquid illustrations are permitted, but all liquid must remain within the stage area and must not cause damage to any person or property. Items such as candy and prizes may not be thrown into the audience. All other aspects of the entry must take place within the boundaries of the stage.
6. Entries must be the original work of the presenter(s), not a memorization of someone else's sermon or lesson.
7. A central Scripture or Bible story must be used. Scripture reference must be cited with all Scripture quotations or readings.
8. Notes are permitted.
9. Props are permissible as long as the 90-second setup and teardown times are not exceeded. All props and illustrations must be cleaned up and cleared as part of the teardown time.
10. Costumes are permitted.
11. A puppet stage is provided for Children's Lesson Group/Solo. Participants may not bring their own puppet stage.
12. Children's Lesson entries may not solicit volunteers from the audience.
13. Introductory comments are required. See page 19. Include main text Scripture reference(s) in the introduction for this category.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty; appropriate for intended audience.
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message with age-appropriate ministry effectiveness in mind.
Originality—use of inventive and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Choreography—strong knowledge of lyrics and actions of the piece.
Expression/body language—enhancement of delivery by use of nonverbal communication (i.e., facial expressions, hand and arm gestures).
Focus—participants and puppets, if used, maintain good eye contact with both the audience and other characters in the presentation.
Presentation—scene additions, props, signs, and lighting must enhance rather than detract from the presentation and message.

Physical energy—engaging, consistent presence for target audience throughout the presentation.
Posture—effective stance appropriate for public speaking, stage presence, and proper breath support.
Stage presence—command of stage; control, confidence, and comfort.
Timing—the ability to move from point to point smoothly and with a sense of pacing; effective use of allotted time spent on opening, main points, and conclusion.
Vocal clarity—appropriate use of volume and proper pronunciation.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Delivery and timing—demonstrates understanding of the pace of the scene in order to generate a response; body movements must relate to the rhythm of the music.
Elicits response—demonstrates purpose of sermon with a question for a response in conclusion.
Entrances and exits—use of the "stairs" using 3 or 4 bounce steps; use of the full depth of the stage.
Grouping and group dynamic—purposeful use of each puppet and effective relationships.
Height and positioning—puppets must be at belly-button height. Sinking puppets and excessive height will affect the evaluation.
Lip synchronization—puppet's mouth must move in sync with the words as they are spoken or sung; the puppet's jaw must open 1 time per syllable.
Mouth action—dropping of the jaw, not the whole head.
Opening/conclusion—attaining and maintaining the attention of the target audience.
Presentation—character, puppetry, or scene additions, as well as props and/or signs, must enhance not detract from presentation and message.
Posture—puppets must be straight and have good posture.
Rod arm/human arm technique—appropriate rod arm/human arm movement.
Staging and blocking—puppets must be appropriately placed with plenty of room, making the best use of the stage space.
Structure of content—effective organization of thoughts communicated for understanding, believability, and remembrance.
Transitions—statements that bridge the main points of the sermon.
Use of Scripture—incorporates scriptural text and quotations.
Use of illustrations—incorporates vivid image, characters, examples, testimony, and object lessons as reinforcements to sermon topic.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Preparation—an apparent effort of time and thought in preparation.
Relevance—appropriate and relevant application.
Understandable concept—the sermon selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

promo video

District Festival Delivery Instructions

For district festival rules and guidelines pertaining to the evaluation process, delivery instructions, and deadlines for Promo Video entries, contact your district youth director or district Fine Arts coordinator.

NFAF Delivery Instructions

Promo Video entries must upload entries to uploads.faf.ag.org. The NFAF does not accept any other form of submission. Promo Video entries registered for, but still not received by the NFAF on July 1, 2026, are considered canceled and no attempt is made by the NFAF to obtain the entries.

Every Promo Video entry must have a PDF file of the credit line (information page) uploaded with the entry. If the credit line is not present or is missing any information, the entry receives a 2-point rule violation per evaluator. The credit line must include the following information as listed in the order given below:

- Participant(s)
- Grade(s)
- Category (must use official category name as stated on page 37)
- Video Title
- Explanation of medium (Explain how the piece was created in technical terms by stating processes, software used, equipment used, etc.)
- Church name, city, state

NFAF Information

The Promo Video participant is not required to be present at the NFAF.

Promo Video participants not attending the NFAF in person must meet registration deadlines and pay the full registration fee.

Rules

1. The creation of a Promo Video is the art and process of producing a film. The Promo Video must promote a ministry, product, event, etc., and contain a combination of visual images and sounds to communicate effectively a mood, emotion, and/or message by 1 to 10 eligible students.

2. Entries must be an original work of the registrants, including both script and storyline, and not submitted to any previous Assemblies of God Fine Arts Festival (with the exception of the festival[s] the entry advanced from)

3. Entries in Promo Video have a time limit of 3 minutes.

4. The creator(s)/producer(s) of the film must meet the NFAF age or grade requirements and must register as participants. Adults may not serve as the primary director(s) or editor(s) of the film being submitted by the participant(s). However, those appearing in the film or supporting the production (actors, grips, lighting, boom operator, etc.) do not need to meet age requirements or register as participants.

5. Copyright and AI policies: Assemblies of God Youth Ministries and The General Council of the Assemblies of God are not responsible for assuring that all material included in students' film productions is in compliance with existing copyright laws. It is the responsibility of the students, parents, and youth leaders to be completely legal and ethical in their conduct regarding copyrighted material used to create an entry for the NFAF. Students must obtain either the copyrights or explicit written permission for use of all software, graphics, parodies, recorded music, and/or sound files included. Students may not copy another filmmaker's work or claim another individual or company's work as their own. See pages 20 and 21 for additional lists of guidelines.

6. Credits must be included and count toward the overall time limit of 3 minutes.

7. Model Release policy: Assemblies of God Youth Ministries and The General Council of the Assemblies of God are not responsible for assuring that all use of human subjects included in students' film productions are in compliance with existing model release laws. It is the responsibility of the registrants, authors, creators, students, parents, and youth leaders to be completely legal and ethical in their conduct regarding the use of people's images and likenesses used to

create an entry for the NFAF. Students must obtain either a model release or explicit written permission (not required to present to evaluators) from each actor or appropriate parental consent. See page 20 for complete License statement.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Christian message—must present a clear Christian message; overtly religious subjects, symbols, or themes are not required.
Script development—fresh and creative script; not tired or cliché.

COMMUNICATION
Body communication—actors effectively and believably communicate with body language and facial expression.
Directing—choice of camera shots, angles, and movement that help communicate mood and emotion.
Imagery—the use of color, reflections, shadows, shapes, or icon images effectively enhance the mood and message.
Music—contributes to mood and helps communicate the message.
Originality—use of original and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.
Verbal communication—dialogue/narrative flows naturally and communicates effectively while moving the story and message forward.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Appropriate shot—appropriate shots are used for the specific situation (wide, medium, close-ups, pans, zooms, dolly, crane, etc.).
Audio mix—balanced and clearly understood audio; voices and voice-overs can be clearly heard and understood above the music.
Balanced lighting—consistent lighting with appropriate balance between foreground and background.
Color balance—appropriate color/temperature light is used for the specific situation.
Color correction—shots in the same scene are similar in color balance, contrast, and appearance.
Editing—edits and the pace of edits contribute to an overall sense of visual impact and ministry/event promotion.
Flow and pacing—frames flow together into a cohesive story; edits do not cause the story to be jumpy or to drag.
F/X and Foley—natural and appropriate use of audio and visual effects.
Hook—opening sequence immediately grabs the attention of the audience.
Lighting—effective use of light; develops mood and nuance.
Open/close—title and credits are appropriate for the production.
Proper framing—camera shots have proper headroom and nose room.
Storytelling—shots and the sequence of editing are selected for effective storytelling or ministry/event promotion.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Message effectiveness—evokes a viewer response appropriate to the promo.
Production effectiveness—an overall cohesiveness of production technique, editing, style, and genre.

puppetry

Information

Black lights (if used) must be brought by participants, as well as any necessary extension cords. Each entry must provide individuals to turn room lights off and on. The NFAF cannot guarantee there will be a complete blackout for any presentation due to conference center security reasons. For rules and/or guidelines pertaining to blacklight use in entries for your district festival, contact your district youth director or district Fine Arts coordinator.

NFAF puppet stage dimensions are listed on the Provided Equipment List posted on faf.ag.org. The puppet stage dimensions may not be adjusted. Contact your district coordinators for stage dimensions provided at your district festival.

Rules

1. Puppetry Group/Solo is the art of presenting a puppet ministry for the purpose of communicating a biblical message in a presentation geared toward children ages 5–10.

2. An entry in Puppetry Group may consist of 2 to 10 eligible students.

3. A time limit of 5 minutes is allowed for Puppetry entries. There are 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.

4. A Puppetry entry is not required to be original, but originality is encouraged.

5. Participants are not permitted to bring their own puppet stage and are not permitted to alter the dimensions of the stage, move, add onto, or change the stage in any way. See Room Configuration, page 14.

6. No interaction between live presenters and puppets is permitted.

7. The placement of props and signs in and around the puppet stage is permitted as long as the 90-second setup and teardown times are not exceeded. All other aspects of the entry must take place within the boundaries of the stage. Students may not throw items (candy, prizes, etc.) into the audience area.

8. Neither flammable nor liquid props or elements are permitted in Puppetry entries.

9. The entire presentation must consist of only hand-manipulated puppets; full-body costumes (such as human mascots/characters) are not permitted in Puppetry entries.

10. Ventriloquism is not allowed in Puppetry categories.

11. Introductory comments are required. See page 19.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty; appropriate for intended audience.
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message with ministry effectiveness in mind.
Originality—use of inventive and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Character development—a full realization of who the character(s) become(s) throughout the production.
Choreography—smooth, crisp, and varied.
Content/message—the intended message of the piece clearly portrayed throughout the presentation; a clear message that is easily followed.
Focus—puppets maintain good eye contact with both the audience and other characters in the presentation.
Objective—presents a central truth easily grasped by the audience.
Presentation—scene additions, props, signs, and lighting must enhance rather than detract from presentation and message.
Physical energy—engaging, consistent presence throughout the presentation.
Vocal clarity—appropriate use of volume and proper pronunciation.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Delivery and timing—demonstrates understanding of the pace of scene in order to generate a response; body movements must relate to the rhythm of the music.
Entrances and exits—use of the "stairs" using 3 or 4 bounce steps; use of the full depth of the stage.

Grouping and group dynamic—purposeful use of each puppet and effective relationships.

Height and positioning—puppets must be at belly-button height. Sinking puppets and excessive height will affect the evaluation.

Lip synchronization—puppet's mouth must move in sync with the words as they are spoken or sung; the puppet's jaw must open 1 time per syllable.

Mouth action—dropping of the jaw, not the whole head.

Posture—puppets must be straight and have good posture; puppets must not sink out of sight, lean on the stage, etc.

Rod arm/human arm technique—appropriate rod arm/human arm movement.

Staging and blocking—puppets must be appropriately placed with plenty of room, making the best use of the stage space.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.

Preparation—an apparent effort of time and thought in preparation.

Relevance to audience—appropriate and effective for the entire audience.

Understandable concept—the combination of script selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

short film

District Festival Delivery Instructions

For district festival rules and guidelines pertaining to the evaluation process, delivery instructions, and deadlines for Short Film entries, contact your district youth director or district Fine Arts coordinator.

NFAF Delivery Instructions

Short Film entries must upload entries to uploads.faf.ag.org. The NFAF does not accept any other form of submission. Short Film entries registered for, but still not received by the NFAF on July 1, 2026, are considered canceled and no attempt is made by the NFAF to obtain the entries.:

Every Short Film entry must have a PDF file of the credit line (information page) uploaded with the entry. If the credit line is not present or is missing any information, the entry receives a 2-point rule violation per evaluator. The credit line must include the following information as listed in the order given below:

- Participant(s)
- Grade(s) (All Kappa Tau entries should list "Post Secondary" on this line)
- Category (must use official category name as stated on page 37)
- Video Title
- Explanation of medium (Explain how the piece was created in technical terms by stating processes, software used, equipment used, etc.)
- Church name, city, state

NFAF Information

The Short Film participant is not required to be present at the NFAF.

Short Film participants not attending the NFAF in person must meet registration deadlines and pay the full registration fee.

Rules

1. The creation of a Short Film is the art and process of producing a film containing a combination of visual images and sounds to communicate effectively a mood, emotion, and/or message by 1 to 10 eligible students.

2. Entries must be an original work of the registrants, including both script and storyline, and not submitted to any previous Assemblies of God Fine Arts Festival (with the exception of the festival[s] the entry advanced from)

3. In the Short Film category, the following genres are accepted:

   animation   comedy   documentary   drama   fiction/live action
   music video

4. Entries in Short Film have a time limit of 5 minutes.

5. The creator(s)/producer(s) of the film must meet the NFAF age or grade requirements and must register as participants. Adults may not serve as the primary director(s) or editor(s) of the film being submitted by the participant(s). However, those appearing in the film or supporting the production (actors, grips, lighting, boom operator, etc.) do not need to meet age requirements nor register as participants.

6. Copyright and AI policies: Assemblies of God Youth Ministries and The General Council of the Assemblies of God are not responsible for assuring that all material included in students' film productions is in compliance with existing copyright laws. It is the responsibility of the students, parents, and youth leaders to be completely legal and ethical in their conduct regarding copyrighted material used to create an entry for the NFAF. Students must obtain either the copyrights or explicit written permission for use of all software, graphics, parodies, recorded music, and/or sound files included. Students may not copy another filmmaker's work or claim another individual or company's work as their own. See pages 20 and 21 for additional lists of guidelines.

7. Credits must be included and count toward the overall time limit of 5 minutes.

8. Model Release policy: Assemblies of God Youth Ministries and The General Council of the Assemblies of God are not responsible for assuring that all use of human subjects included in students' film productions are in compliance with

existing model release laws. It is the responsibility of the registrants, authors, creators, students, parents, and youth leaders to be completely legal and ethical in their conduct regarding the use of people's images and likenesses used to create an entry for the NFAF. Students must obtain either a model release or explicit written permission (not required to present to evaluators) from each actor or appropriate parental consent. See page 20 for complete License statement.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Christian message—must present a clear Christian message; overtly religious subjects, symbols, or themes are not required.
Script development—fresh and creative script; not tired or cliché.

COMMUNICATION
Body communication—actors effectively and believably communicate with body language and facial expression.
Directing—choice of camera shots, angles, and movement that help communicate mood and emotion.
Imagery—the use of color, reflections, shadows, shapes, or icon images effectively enhance the mood and message.
Music—contributes to mood and helps communicate the message.
Originality—use of original and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.
Verbal communication—dialogue/narrative flows naturally and communicates effectively while moving the story and message forward.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Appropriate shot—appropriate shots are used for the specific situation (wide, medium, close-ups, pans, zooms, dolly, crane, etc.).
Audio mix—balanced and clearly understood audio; voices and voice-overs can be clearly heard and understood above the music.
Balanced lighting—consistent lighting with appropriate balance between foreground and background.
Color balance—appropriate color/temperature light is used for the specific situation.
Color correction—shots in the same scene are similar in color balance, contrast, and appearance.
Flow and pacing—frames flow together into a cohesive story; edits do not cause the story to be jumpy or to drag.
F/X and Foley—natural and appropriate use of audio and visual effects.
Hook—opening sequence immediately grabs the attention of the audience.
Lighting—effective use of light; develops mood and nuance.
Line of action—shots do not cross the line of action.
Open/close—title and credits are appropriate for the production.
Proper framing—camera shots have proper headroom and nose room.
Setting and set—setting and location for the story being told is appropriate and the set is believable. The set must carry both dimension and depth.
Storytelling—shots and the sequence of editing are selected for effective storytelling.
Transparent editing—edits are unnoticeable and do not detract from the story.
Wardrobe—wardrobe selections are appropriate for the roles played by the actors as well as scene setting.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Acting effectiveness—the presentation of the actors is effective overall (i.e., were they believable?).
Climax—believable plot reaches a climax that resolves the conflict.
Conflict—conflict clearly established.
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Introduction—time, setting, and main characters are quickly revealed.
Message effectiveness—evokes a powerful viewer response appropriate to the film's message.
Plot development—develops toward a climax.
Production effectiveness—an overall cohesiveness of story, casting, production technique, style, and genre.
Resolve—the story ties up loose ends. If the audience is left hanging, it is intended. A hanging end must not be the result of poor scripting.

short sermon

Rules

1. Short Sermon is the art of verbally communicating a biblical message that includes Scripture quotations or readings presented by 1 eligible student.

2. Scripture reference must be cited with all Scripture quotations or readings.

3. Short Sermon entries have a time limit of 5 minutes. There are 60 seconds for setup and 60 seconds for tear down.

4. Entries must be original material, not just a memorization of someone else's sermon. Participants are permitted to use illustrations, personal testimonies, statistics, stories, etc. Sources must be cited.

5. Participants are allowed to use notes. The sermon does not need to be memorized.

6. Participants may only use a Bible, notes, and a podium. Small handheld props are allowed in Short Sermon entries. Props are limited to what presenters can carry by hand into the presentation space. Neither flammable nor liquid props are permitted.

7. All aspects of the sermon must take place within the boundaries of the stage, including use of props.

8. Costumes, costume makeup, and masks of any kind are not permitted.

9. The use of audio or audiovisual devices is not permitted.

10. Presentations must be given with due reverence for God and His people, and must not be a cynical or satirical portrayal of any form of the ministry.

11. Introductory comments are required. Short Sermon, Spanish may be introduced in Spanish or English. See page 19. Include main text Scripture reference(s) in the introduction for this category.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Christian message—presents a solid biblical perspective with ministry effectiveness in mind.

COMMUNICATION
Expression/body language—use of nonverbal communication (i.e., facial expressions, hand and arm gestures) that enhance the delivery of the sermon.
Originality—use of original and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.
Posture—effective stance appropriate for public speaking, stage presence, and proper breath support.
Stage presence—command of stage; control, confidence, and comfort.
Timing—the ability to move from point to point smoothly, and with a sense of pacing; effective use of allotted time spent on opening, main points, and conclusion.
Vocal clarity—appropriate volume for audience; proper pronunciation of words with appropriate tone and inflection.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Elicits response—demonstrates purpose of sermon with a question for a response in conclusion.
Opening/conclusion—use of quote, question, illustrations, or story is used to capture the audience's interest in sermon topic; the conclusion recaps the main points and calls for a final response.
Structure of content—effective, logical organization of thoughts communicated for understanding, believability, and remembrance.
Transitions—statements that bridge the main points of the sermon.
Use of illustrations—incorporates vivid image, examples, testimony, statistics, or quotations as reinforcements to sermon topic with proper recognition of sources.
Use of Scripture—scriptural text/quotations foundational to overall presentation; reference(s) cited.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Preparation—an apparent effort of time and thought in preparation.

Relevance—appropriate and relevant application.
Understandable concept—the sermon selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

spoken word

Rules

1. An entry in Spoken Word is for the art and ministry of communicating poetry that is specifically composed for presentation before an audience.

2. Entries must be an original work of 1 student and not submitted to any previous Assemblies of God Fine Arts Festival (with the exception of the festival[s] the entry advanced from).

3. There is a time limit of 3 minutes for all Spoken Word entries. There are 60 seconds for setup and 60 seconds for tear down. Time begins when the participant does or says anything to indicate the beginning of the presentation after the introductory comments.

4. The entire presentation must be memorized.

5. The use of additional media is not permitted.

6. Neither live nor recorded music nor singing by the student is permitted.

7. Costumes, costume makeup, masks, and props of any kind are not permitted.

8. Introductory comments are required. See page 19.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival in subject and taste.
Originality—unique use of original and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Development—full development of ideas and expressions throughout the piece.
Diction—choice and arrangement of words.
Flow of thought—connectivity and progression of ideas.
Fresh imagery/word play—figures of speech, sound devices, and linguistic effects achieved through various patterns and variations in diction.
Freshness of expression—avoidance of clichés; creating fresh and vivid imagery.
Sound devices—assonance, alliteration, consonance, rhyme, repetition, etc.
Writing style—command of lyrical, narrative, or dramatic conferences.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Clarity/style—demonstrates a distinctive mode of expression.
Energy—appropriate physical, emotional, and audible connectivity to the subject and theme of the piece.
Movement—if used, movement is intentional and enhances content.
Posture/facial expression—use of nonverbal communication to enhance the impact and presentation of the piece.
Rhythm/musicality—audible experience of the written work including sound devices, rhythm, and the way sound complements the meaning and intent of the piece.
Stage presence—command of stage; control, confidence, and comfort.
Timing/delivery—demonstrates an understanding/execution of pacing, movement, and tone.
Voice—unique presence of the creator of the piece; not necessarily the speaker in the piece but a recognizable presence of a distinctive author behind and inside everything in the work.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident connection—overall impact of the piece combining writing, communication, and presentation.
Evident message—understandable concept; evident impact.
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Preparation—apparent effort of thought and time in all elements of presentation.
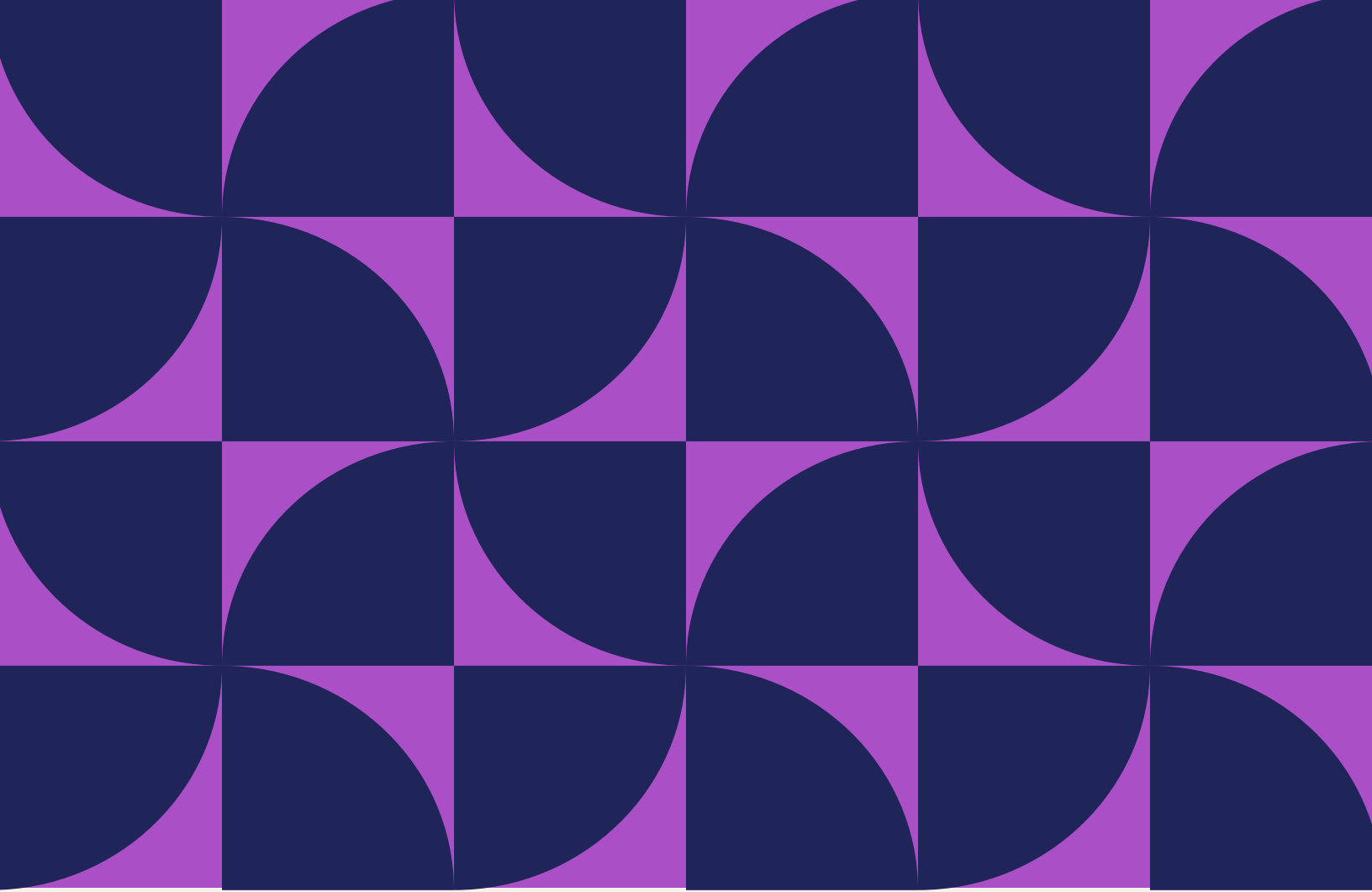
dance division

dance division

categories

Registrants in the Dance Division may submit entries in the following categories:

Hip Hop Dance Crew
Hip Hop Solo
Praise Dance Troupe
Step Troupe
Worship Dance Solo, Jr.
Worship Dance Solo, Sr.
Worship Dance Troupe, Large
Worship Dance Troupe, Small

Kappa Tau Hip Hop Solo
Kappa Tau Worship Dance Solo

information

Read the General Information and General Rules on pages 13–23.

Entries in the Dance Division must be presented in the accepted genres defined as follows:

Ballet (Worship Dance): An artistic form of dance characterized by formally precise steps and poses. A basic vocabulary of recognized ballet technique is used as criteria for the evaluation of entries in the ballet genre.

Contemporary (Worship Dance): An expressive style of dance that combines elements of several dance genres including modern, jazz, lyrical, and classical ballet. Contemporary dance may be presented to many different styles of music.

Jazz (Worship Dance): A high-energy form of dance that is characterized by a profusion of forms.

Liturgical (Praise Dance): A form of dance used in to enhance a worship service.

Praise (Praise Dance): A form of dance characterized by movements expressing praise and adoration of God.

Step: A contemporary form of dance characterized by the incorporation of percussive sounds and movements.

Hip Hop: Also known as "street dance"; incorporating the various rhythms, techniques, and skills of hip-hop.

Kappa Tau category participants must meet Kappa Tau Participant Requirements on page 14.

Categories designated as Jr. are open to students enrolled in grades 6–8 during the 2025–2026 school year (or at least age 12 per participant requirements above). See page 14.

Categories designated as Sr. are open to students enrolled in grades 9–12 during the 2025–2026 school year. See page 14.

Categories not designated as Jr., Sr., or KT fall under the Fine Arts Participant Guidelines ages and grades found on page 13.

dance

Rules (apply to all Dance Division categories)

1. A Dance Division entry is for the art and ministry of communicating a story or message, and expressively and worshipfully interpreting music using recognized dance technique.

2. Step and Hip Hop Dance Crew entries may consist of 2 to 10 eligible students.

3. Worship Dance Troupe, Small may consist of 2 to 4 eligible students. Worship Dance Troupe, Large may consist of 5 to 10 eligible students.

4. Praise Dance Troupe may consist of 2–10 eligible students.

5. All Dance entries have a time limit of a 2-minute minimum to a 4-minute maximum. Time violations will only be assessed if the entry is shorter than 2 minutes or longer than 4 minutes.

6. The musical track that accompanies a Dance entry may or may not contain lyrics. Spoken words may be present in Dance entries but must not be predominant. Mouthing lyrics/lip syncing is not permitted.

7. Lyrics for all Dance categories may be in English, Spanish or both. Praise Dance entries may be in any language(s).

8. Live accompaniment is not permitted.

9. Modest attire must be worn. Clothing must be appropriate for effective interpretation, intended audience, and a worshipful atmosphere. Leggings must be worn under all costumes. Low-cut tops, open-front shirts, backless shirts, tight apparel, extremely baggy pants, and tights are never acceptable. If any shorts are worn, leggings are still required.

10. Dancers may choose to wear or not to wear shoes.
    *Note: The NFAF cannot guarantee that every venue will have flooring conducive to pointe technique.

11. Fine Arts Festival holds a high standard and does not permit suggestive movements, music, or attire. Any movement, music, or attire that is deemed inappropriate may receive either Selection or Effectiveness point deductions or rule violations.

12. The use of percussion instruments is not permitted.

13. The use of streamers, ribbon, banners, and flags is permitted for Praise Dance, but must not become the focal point of the presentation at the expense of recognized and legitimate dance technique. No other props are permitted.

14. The use of a director during the presentation is not permitted.

15. Dance entries are evaluated based on the criteria for the category entered. Dances must demonstrate specific skills, movements, and elements of the chosen style.

16. The splicing of up to 3 songs is allowed but not required. Entries may have more than 3 splicings as long as there are 3 songs maximum. Voice-overs and sound effects do not count toward the 3-song limit. See page 20, "Copyrighted Material."

17. Introductory comments are required. See page 19. Include full Scripture reference(s) in the introduction for this category.

Praise and Worship Dance Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty; appropriate attire for genre with ministry effectiveness in mind.
Originality—use of original and creative movement to create artistic effect.
Style—complements the music; keeps with genre.

COMMUNICATION
Choreography—use of levels, group work, and variety of movements to support dance style.
Expression—use of both facial expression and body language.
Staging—use of formations (with correct spacing); use of creative transitions and movement from a formation to another; seamless transitions.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE

Alignment—proper lines according to arms and feet positions, legs, and body composition.
Artistry—connection and interpretation of song.
Difficulty—incorporation of challenging movements/and or skills (leaps, turns, kicks, extensions, and floor work).
Execution of technical skill—proper execution of technical elements and movements (turns, leaps, jumps, kicks, extensions, and floor work); includes basic fundamentals (posture, turnout, initiation of movement, and control).
Group execution—uniformity (use of all dancers throughout entirety of troupe routine).
Musicality—execution of movements throughout the routine, complementing the beats and rhythm of the music.
Synchronization—precision of arm and body placement; group timing with the music.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Overall effect—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparing the selection; memorization.
Stage presence and projection—ability to connect with audience during presentation (includes genuine expression, emotion, and energy).

Step and Hip Hop Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION

Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate attire for genre with ministry effectiveness in mind.
Creativity—use of style or combination of original hip-hop movement.
Style—movement complements the music.

COMMUNICATION

Choreography—use of levels, group work, variety of movements to support dance style.
Expression—use of both facial expression and body language.
Staging—use of formations (with correct spacing); use of creative transitions and movement from a formation to another; seamless transitions.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE

Body control and strength—demonstrates proper support from core to deliver intentional movement; energy evident in all movements throughout presentation; energy levels must parallel energy of music.
Body placement—isolations and fluidity, angles in tutting.
Difficulty—incorporation of challenging movements/and or skills (jumps, freezes/stalls, partner works, and floor work), footwork, and variety of styles.
Execution of technical skill—proper execution of hip-hop technical elements (freezes/stalls, tutting, tricks).
Group execution/uniformity—use of all dancers throughout entirety of troupe routine.
Musicality—execution of hip-hop movements using rhythmic variations; accents beats and sounds in music through movement.
Synchronization—precision of arm and body placement; group timing with the music.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Overall effect—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparing the selection; memorization.
Stage presence and projection—ability to connect with audience during presentation (includes genuine expression, emotion, and energy).
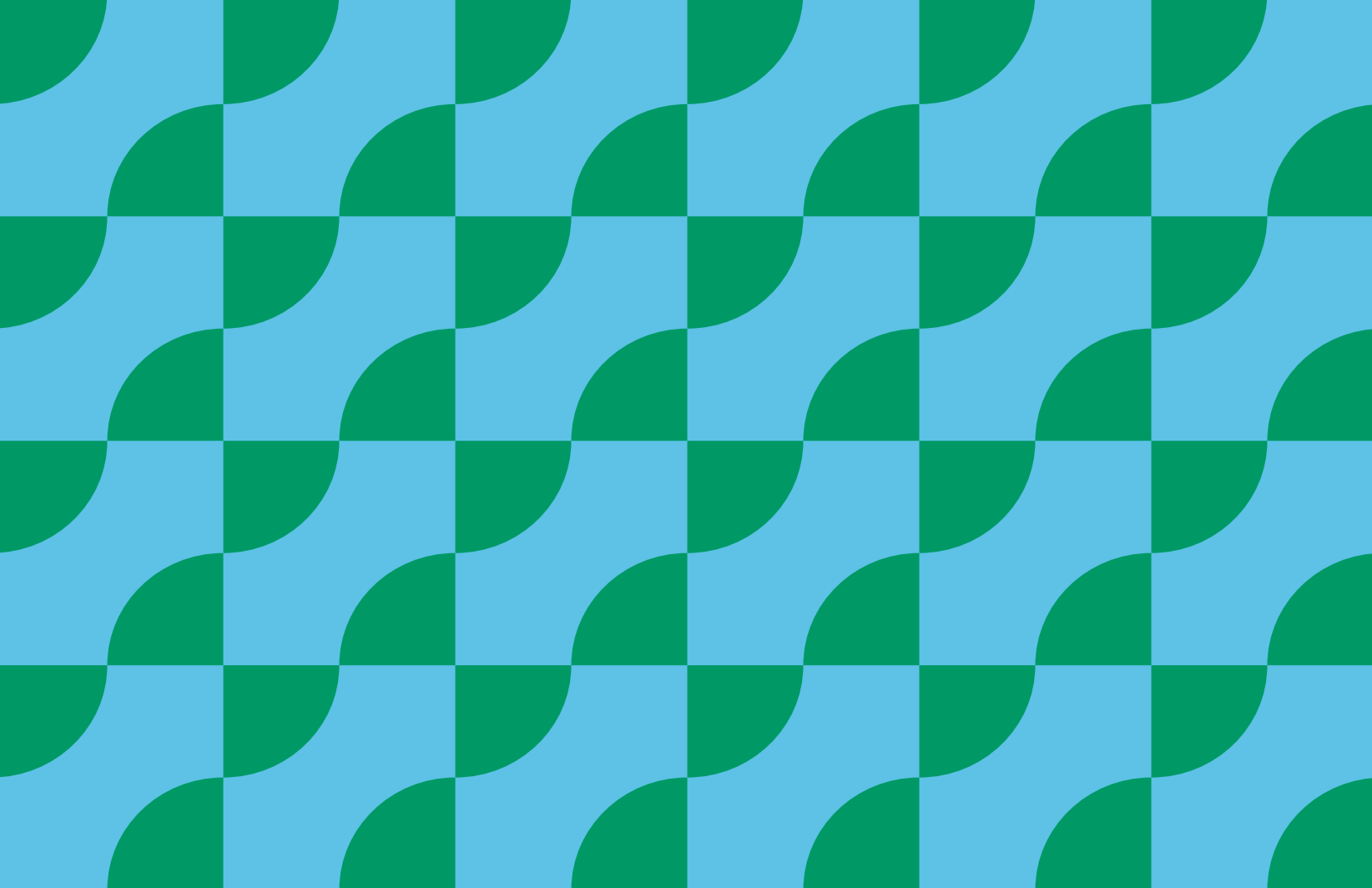
drama division

drama division

categories

Registrants in the Drama Division may submit entries in the following categories:

Drama Ensemble, Large
Drama Ensemble, Small
Drama Solo
Dramatized Quoting, Solo
Dramatized Quoting, Ensemble
Human Video Ensemble, Large, Jr.
Human Video Ensemble, Large
Human Video Ensemble, Small
Human Video Solo, Jr.
Human Video Solo, Sr.
Musical Theater, Ensemble, Small
Musical Theater, Ensemble, Large
Musical Theater, Solo, Jr.
Musical Theater, Solo, Sr.
Readers Theater
Stand-Up Comedy

Kappa Tau Drama Solo
Kappa Tau Dramatized Quoting, Solo
Kappa Tau Human Video Ensemble
Kappa Tau Human Video Solo

information

Read the General Information and General Rules on pages 13–23.

Kappa Tau category participants must meet Kappa Tau Participant Requirements on page 14.

Categories designated as Jr. are open to students enrolled in grades 6–8 during the 2025–2026 school year (or at least age 12 per participant requirements above). See page 14.

Categories designated as Sr. are open to students enrolled in grades 9–12 during the 2025–2026 school year. See page 14.

Categories not designated as Jr., Sr., or KT fall under the Fine Arts Participant Guidelines ages and grades found on page 13.

drama

Information

Entries in Drama categories must be presented in the accepted genres defined as follows:

Play: A selection where all focus is strictly on-stage or off-stage (not both) and presented as if the audience is not present.

Combination: A selection where a combination of both on- and off-stage focus is used at appropriate places within the presentation.

Presentational: A selection where all focus is off-stage and interaction with the audience is acceptable.

Rules

1. A Drama Ensemble/Solo presentation is the art of telling a culturally relevant story through verbal communication and action.

2. Drama Ensemble, Small entries may consist of 2 to 4 eligible students. Drama Ensemble, Large entries may consist of 5 to 10 eligible students.

3. A time limit of 5 minutes is allowed for Drama entries. There are 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.

4. Drama entries do not have to be original but originality is encouraged.

5. The entire presentation must be memorized.

6. No recorded or electronic sound effects are allowed. Neither sound tracks nor live background music is allowed.

7. All aspects of the drama must take place within the boundaries of the stage, including use of props.

8. Chairs may be used as props. However, standing on chairs is not allowed and may result in disqualification. The only chairs allowed are the chairs available on-site in the presentation room. Participants and groups may not bring their own chairs to the NFAF.

9. Props are allowed in Drama Solo and Ensemble entries. Props are limited to what presenters can carry by hand into the presentation space and set or struck within the allowed setup and teardown times. Neither flammable nor liquid props are permitted.

10. Costumes are permitted in Drama entries. Costume makeup and masks of any kind are not permitted.

11. Introductory comments are required. See page 19.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message with ministry effectiveness in mind.
Originality—use of inventive and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Character development—a full realization of who the character(s) become(s) throughout the presentation.
Expression—nonverbal communication (i.e., facial expressions, gestures, posture) that enhances mood of the presentation.
Posture—use of whole body to enhance character.
Stage presence—command of stage; control, confidence, and comfort.
Vocal clarity—appropriate volume; proper pronunciation of words with effective tone and inflection.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Action—natural movement of the actor(s) that is both original and creative, enhancing the idea of the presentation.
Actor's focus—to whom or where is the actor speaking? Ability to remain in character; if multiple characters are being played by a single actor, transitions must be clear, distinctive, and creative.
Blocking—proper staging; movement with purpose; staging that best allows full view of actor's face and body placement with appropriate spacing to provide a clean and uncluttered stage picture.

Characterization—believable representation of human motives, thoughts, actions, and emotions.

Delivery—strong delivery of lines using proper pronunciation of words to help develop an effective mood and tone of the line.

Timing/dialogue—understanding and excellent execution of the pacing of the scene and the delivery of the lines.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.

Interpretation—a conclusive voice stating the overall message.

Memorization—strong knowledge of the lines and action of the piece.

Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.

Understandable concept—the combination of script selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

dramatized quoting

Rules

1. Dramatized Quoting is the art of telling a story through verbal communication and action by the direct quote of a Scripture portion of the Bible

2. Dramatized Quoting, Solo entries must consist of 1 eligible student. Dramatized Quoting, Ensemble entries may consist of 2 to 10 eligible students.

3. A time limit of 5 minutes is allowed for Dramatized Quoting entries. There are 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.

4. The Scripture portion used must be memorized, presented from consecutive verses, and quoted word perfect. The version used is the choice of the student.

5. At the assigned presentation time, 3 typed copies of the selected Scripture portion must be presented to the evaluators. Typed Scripture pages must be in black Arial or Times New Roman 12-point font, double-spaced, and include complete version, book, chapter, and verse references.

6. All aspects of the drama must take place within the boundaries of the stage, including use of props.

7. Chairs may be used as props. However standing on chairs is not allowed and may result in disqualification. The only chairs allowed are the chairs available on-site in the presentation room. Participants may not bring their own chairs to the NFAF.

8. Props are allowed in Dramatized Quoting entries. Props are limited to what presenters can carry by hand into the presentation space and set or struck within the allowed setup and teardown times. Neither flammable nor liquid props are permitted.

9. Costumes are permitted in Dramatized Quoting entries. Costume makeup and masks of any kind are not permitted.

10. Introductory comments are required. See page 19. Include full Scripture reference(s) in the introduction for this category.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—the selected portion must provide adequate opportunity for the actor(s) to explore and effectively interpret the words and actions of multiple characters in a range of settings. Appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty. Scripture portion used is substantial enough for full setting, character, and story development.
Originality—use of inventive and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Character development—a full realization of who the character(s) become(s) throughout the presentation.
Expression—nonverbal communication (i.e., facial expressions, gestures, posture) that enhances the mood of the presentation.
Memorization—word perfect recitation of the selected Scripture portion.
Posture—use of whole body to enhance character.
Stage presence—command of stage; control, confidence, and comfort.
Vocal clarity—appropriate volume; proper pronunciation of words with effective tone and inflection.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Action—natural movement of the actor(s) that is both original and creative, enhancing the idea of the presentation.
Actor's focus—to whom or where is the actor speaking? Ability to remain in character; when multiple characters are being played, transitions must be clear, distinctive, and creative.
Blocking—proper staging; movement with purpose; staging that best allows full view of actor's face and body placement with appropriate spacing to provide a clean and uncluttered stage picture.
Characterization—believable representation of human motives, thoughts, actions, and emotions.
Delivery—strong delivery of Scripture using proper pronunciation of words to help develop an effective mood and tone.
Timing/dialogue—understanding and excellent execution of the pacing of the scene and the delivery of the lines.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Interpretation—a conclusive voice stating the overall message.
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.
Understandable concept—the combination of Scripture, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

human video

Rules (for all Human Video Ensembles and Solo)

1. A Human Video Ensemble/Solo presentation is the art of telling a story easily understood by the audience through a nonverbal drama presentation that accompanies a musical track.

2. Human Video Ensemble, Small entries may consist of 2 to 4 eligible students. Human Video Ensemble, Large entries may consist of 5 to 10 eligible students.

3. The musical track that accompanies Human Video entries must include song lyrics. Voice-overs may be present in the recording but may not completely replace the lyrics.

4. Lyrics for all Human Video categories may be in English, Spanish, or both.

5. A participant may enter the same human video concept and/or music in more than 1 Human Video category. However, a student or group of students may not enter the same category twice (e.g. a student may be in both Human Video Ensemble, Large, Jr. and in Human Video Ensemble, Large, but not two Human Video Ensemble, Large).

6. The Human Video technique of "lip sync" is foundational to the genre and must be woven throughout the presentation.

7. The splicing of up to 3 songs is allowed but not required. Entries may have more than 3 splicings as long as there are 3 songs maximum. Voice-overs and sound effects do not count toward the 3-song limit. See page 20, "Copyrighted Material."

8. Live accompaniment is not permitted in Human Video presentations.

9. No live vocal communication of any form from the actor(s) is permitted.

10. A time limit of 5 minutes is allowed for Human Video, Solo entries. There are 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.

11. A time limit of 7 minutes is allowed for Human Video, Ensemble entries. There are 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.

12. All aspects of the Human Video must take place within the boundaries of the stage.

13. Safe gymnastic elements and/or cheer-type mounts are acceptable Human Video techniques but must fit believably within the storyline or be vital to character or story development.

14. No student may have more than 1 person on his/her shoulders.

15. Chairs are the only allowed prop. Standing on chairs is not allowed and may result in disqualification. The only chairs allowed are the chairs available on-site in the presentation room. Participants and groups may not bring their own chairs to the NFAF.

16. Costumes, costume makeup, and masks of any kind are not permitted.

17. T-shirts in various colors are not considered costumes unless they are added, removed, or manipulated to portray a new place or character.

18. Before beginning the presentation, participants must introduce their music selection(s) by stating the title(s), name of the artist/composer, and arranger (if known). If the piece was composed or arranged by the student, that must be stated. Entries may be introduced in Spanish or English. See page 19 for complete requirements and format.

Human Video Ensemble, Large, Jr. Rules

1. A Human Video Ensemble, Large, Jr. is open to students enrolled in grades 6–8 during the 2025–2026 school year (or at least age 12 per participant requirements). See page 14.

Human Video Ensemble, Large, Rules

1. A Human Video Ensemble, Large is open to all students meeting Fine Arts Participant requirements. See page 13.

2. At least one eligible Sr. participant is required. Eligible Jr. participants are allowed, but not required. See page 14.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message with ministry effectiveness in mind.
Composition quality—quality and unaltered sound; splicing must flow easily with a clear connection between selections.
Originality—use of original and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Body language—appropriate gestures and body movement for individual character(s).
Character development—a full realization of who the character(s) become(s) throughout the presentation.
Facial expression—facial expressions convey the character's disposition/mood and include lip sync of song's lyrics.
Physical energy—demonstrates the emotion with exaggerated energy of character(s).
Stage presence—command of stage; control, confidence, and comfort.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Action—natural movement of the actor(s) that is both original and creative to enhance the idea of the presentation.
Actor's focus—to whom or where is the actor speaking? Ability to remain in character; if multiple characters are being played by a single actor, transitions must be clear, distinctive, and creative.
Blocking—proper staging; movement with purpose; staging that best allows full view of actor's face and body.
Characterization—believable representation of characters' motives, thoughts, actions, and emotions.
Development—complete, understandable, and believable development of the storyline and characters.
Mounts—mounts, object-building, gymnastic, or cheer-type elements fit believably within the storyline or character development.
Presentation of storyline—well-developed and recognizable storyline; actor(s) successfully convey intended purpose of character(s) throughout presentation (with facial expression, motion, body language, and action).
Timing/delivery—understanding and excellent execution of the pace of the scene(s).
Uniformity—uniform body movements; uniform lip sync between multiple characters (ensemble).

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Interpretation—actual conveyance of the message of the song through the overall presentation.
Memorization—strong and evident knowledge of the lyrics.
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.
Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

musical theater

Information

Musical Theater licensing is often more stringent than most other types of performance. To assist participants in being ethical and legal, more information is available at mtishows.com/general-information-on-licensing.

Rules

1. Musical Theater, Ensemble/Solo is the art of presenting 1 scene/song from a published musical theater work, from purchased or rented scripts and musical scores, with the required elements of acting, singing, dancing, and blocking/staging used throughout.

2. An entry in Musical Theater Ensemble, Small may consist of 2 to 4 students. An entry in Musical Theater Ensemble, Large may consist of 5 to 10 students. All students participating in the piece must play active roles in the scene which may include acting, singing, and dancing when appropriate. There may be no ensembles in which 1 person acts/sings and the rest simply react.

3. A time limit of 7 minutes is allowed for both Ensemble and Solo Musical Theater entries. There are 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.

4. Costumes and makeup are allowed for entries in the Musical Theater category. Costumes must be appropriate for effective presentation, but modest in presentation and appropriate for this festival and effective communication of the story.

5. The dialogue and lyrics for Musical Theater entries may not be altered and must be presented in the way in which it was published. Dialogue preceding or following the musical selection may be incorporated into the presentation but it is not mandatory.

6. The entire presentation must be memorized.

7. Props are allowed in Musical Theater entries and must be set and struck within the allowed setup and teardown times. Neither flammable nor liquid props are permitted.

8. Accompaniment:
   - An accompanist is not considered part of the entry.
   - The accompanist may be an adult or student.
   - Accompanists are allowed to use music.
   - A piano is the only accepted form of live accompaniment and is provided by the festival.
   - If an accompaniment track is used, it may not contain any vocals.

9. Musical Theater licensing is different than purchasing sound tracks and all participants must take extra care to avoid liabilities. The entry cannot be copied and transcribed from what has been heard or seen in a theater, on YouTube, or elsewhere.

10. If an accompaniment track is used and if the selected scene contains dialogue prior to the song, the individual or group must provide an individual to begin the track on cue.

11. The use of a conductor or director is not permitted. Rhythm, balance/blend, cut-off cues, etc., from anyone in the audience is not allowed and will result in a rule violation.

12. The actor/actors may not play or transition to multiple characters within the scene unless the original piece was intended to be played in that way.

13. All aspects of the scene must be visible to the audience and take place within the boundaries of the stage or presentation space, including use of props.

14. Chairs may be used as props. However standing on chairs is not allowed and may result in disqualification. The only chairs allowed are the chairs available on-site in the presentation room. Participants and groups may not bring their own chairs to the NFAF.

15. Introductory comments are required. See page 19. Include the Musical title, act, and/or scene title in the introduction for this category.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Arrangement—well-rounded, cohesive musical/theatrical statement.

COMMUNICATION
Character development—a full realization of who the character(s) become(s) throughout the presentation.
Choreography—use of levels, group work, and variety of movements to support dance style if used.
Communicative skill—ability to connect with audience.
Expressiveness—both facial expression and use of body language; nonverbal communication (i.e., facial expressions, gestures, posture) enhances the mood of the presentation.
Posture—relaxed body stance for proper breath support and management.
Stage presence—command of stage; control, confidence, and comfort.
Unity—demonstrates ensemble cohesiveness.
Vocal clarity—appropriate volume; proper pronunciation of words with effective tone and inflection.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Action—natural movement of the actor(s) that is both original and creative, enhancing the idea of the presentation.
Actor's focus—to whom or where is the actor speaking? Ability to remain in character.
Artistry—connection to and interpretation of song(s).
Blend—creating a balanced sound.
Blocking—proper staging; movement with purpose; staging that best allows full view of actor's face and body placement with appropriate spacing to provide a clean and uncluttered stage picture.
Breathing—proper breath management.
Characterization—believable representation of human motives, thoughts, actions, and emotions.
Delivery—strong delivery of lines/songs using proper pronunciation of words to help develop an effective mood and tone of the line/scene.
Diction—proper enunciation of words.
Dynamics—effective use of contrasting volumes for excellent line/song interpretation.
Execution of technical skill—if dance is used, proper execution of technical elements and movements (turns, leaps, jumps, kicks, extensions, and floor work); includes basic fundamentals of dance (posture, turnout, initiation of movement, and control).
Intonation—ability to sing in tune.
Musicality—execution of vocals and dance combined throughout the scene.
Phrasing—completeness of a lyrical statement.
Staging—excellent use of presentation space; use of formations (with correct spacing); use of creative transitions and movement from a formation to another; seamless transitions.
Timing/dialogue—understanding and excellent execution of the pacing of the scene and the delivery of the lines and execution of songs and dance.
Tone quality—ability to produce clear and pleasant tone.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Demonstration—demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Memorization—strong knowledge of lines and lyrics and melody of song.
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparing the selection.
Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

readers theater

Rules

1. An entry in Readers Theater is for the art of communicating a story through a dramatic presentation in which the lines are read and the story is communicated by oral expressions and vocal characterization rather than costumes or blocking.

2. An open script must be used either in hand or on a lectern.

3. An entry in Readers Theater may be comprised by 2 to 10 eligible students.

4. A time limit of 5 minutes is allowed for each entry. There are 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.

5. Characterization through vocal expression is foundational to the genre. Actors must not just read the script, but must interpret the character's words through effective oral expression and vocal inflection.

6. Only vocal sound effects produced by actor vocalizations are allowed. No recorded or electronic sound effects are allowed. Neither sound tracks nor live background music is allowed.

7. Chairs are provided for the readers/actors. Standing on chairs is not allowed and may result in disqualification. The only chairs allowed are the chairs available on-site in the presentation room. Participants and groups may not bring their own chairs to the NFAF.

8. Costumes, costume makeup, masks, props, or blocking of any kind are not permitted.

9. Introductory comments are required. See page 19.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message with ministry effectiveness in mind.
Originality—strong script adaptation; use of inventive and creative ideas.

COMMUNICATION
Character development—through oral expression a full realization of who the character(s) become(s) throughout the presentation.
Expression—nonverbal communication (i.e., facial expressions, gestures, posture) that enhances the mood and message of the presentation.
Imagery—images creatively suggested through oral expression, vocal inflection, texture, and delivery; ability to draw the audience into an imagination space.
Stage presence—command of seating/presentation area; control, confidence, and comfort.
Vocal clarity—appropriate volume; proper pronunciation with effective tone and inflection; interesting experimentation with and interpretation of language.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Actor's focus—actors must not directly or physically interact with each other except by voice; actors must demonstrate the ability to remain in character and deliver lines; if multiple characters are being played by a single actor, transitions must be clear, distinctive, and creative.
Blocking—there can be no conventional full-body blocking; actors must deliver from a seated or standing position using only upper-body blocking. Simple actor movement may be creatively used for character or scene transitions.
Characterization—believable representation of human motives, thoughts, actions, and emotions using only oral expression and vocal texture.
Delivery—strong and interesting delivery of lines to help develop an effective pace, mood, and tone of the presentation.
Sound effects—use of actor vocalization to creatively produce sound effects to enhance the effective telling of the story.
Timing/dialogue—understanding and excellent execution of the pace of the scene and the delivery of the lines.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Interpretation—a conclusive voice stating the overall message.

Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.

Understandable concept—the combination of script selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in telling a story.

stand-up comedy

Rules

1. Stand-Up Comedy is the art of telling stories, jokes, and/or one-liners to an audience with the purpose of eliciting laughter and provoking thought. As ministry, Stand-Up Comedy intends to bring the listener to a point of hearing a gospel message by tying together themes found in the comedic monologue.

2. Stand-Up Comedy is a solo presentation.

3. A time limit of 5 minutes is allowed for Stand-Up Comedy entries.

4. Stand-Up Comedy is to be comprised of original material.

5. The entire presentation must be memorized.

6. All aspects of the stand-up routine must take place within the boundaries of the stage.

7. Costumes, costume makeup, masks, and props of any kind are not permitted.

8. Presentations must be given with due reverence for God and His people, and must not be a cynical or satirical portrayal of any form of the ministry.

9. Introductory comments are required. See page 19.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival.
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message with ministry effectiveness in mind.
Originality—use of inventive and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Expression—nonverbal communication (i.e., facial expressions, gestures, posture) that enhances the communication of the monologue.
Physical—humorous use of the body to enhance the monologue or intentional gestures to illustrate and punctuate the jokes.
Stage presence—command of stage; control, confidence, and comfort.
Vocal clarity—appropriate volume; proper pronunciation of words with effective tone and inflection.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Action—natural movement of the comic that enhances the communication of the joke.
Focus—the comic must speak to and address the audience.
Blocking—proper positioning; movement with purpose; staging that best allows a full view of the comic's facial expressions.
Delivery—strong delivery of lines using proper pronunciation of words and a strong vocabulary.
Elicits response—provokes laughter, applause, or a similar reaction from audience.
Timing/dialogue—understanding and excellent execution of the pacing of the monologue and the delivery of the lines so that the punch line is clearly communicated.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Interpretation—a conclusive voice tying together the jokes into a final thematic ministry statement.
Preparation—strong knowledge of the monologue and actions of the piece.
Understandable concept—the combination of word economy, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a laughter response.
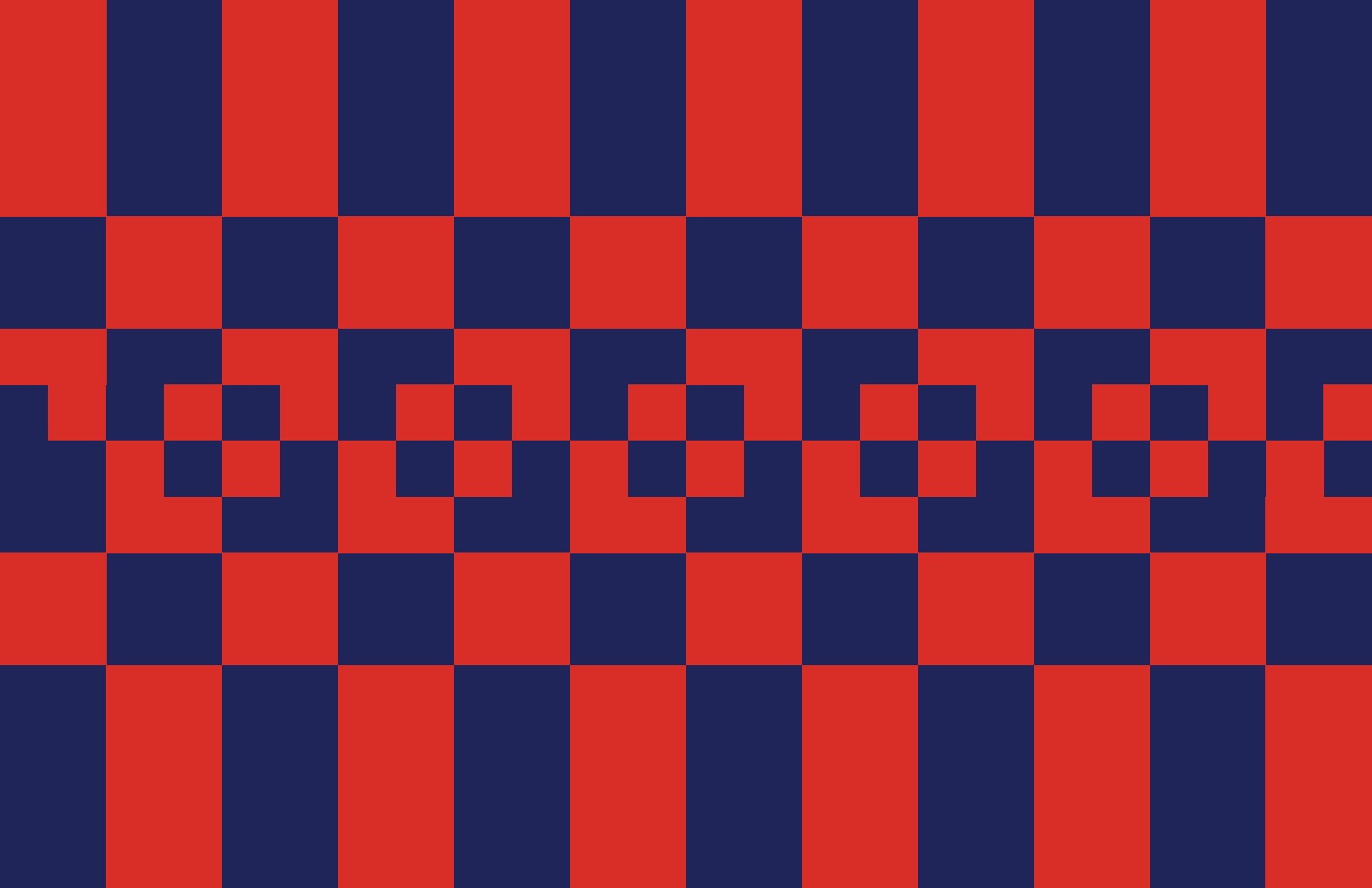
exhibition division

exhibition division

categories

Registrants in the Exhibition Division may submit entries in the following categories:

Music Production   Kappa Tau Music Production

information

Read the General Information and General Rules on pages 13–23.

Kappa Tau category participants must meet Kappa Tau Participant Requirements on page 14.

Categories not designated as Jr., Sr., or KT fall under the Fine Arts Participant Guidelines ages and grades found on page 13.

The Exhibition Division was created to allow participants to be evaluated in areas that may become categories in the future. Exhibition Division participants are given the opportunity to give their presentation once for evaluation and scoring. Callbacks are not conducted for Exhibition Division entries.

music production

Information

Entries in the Music Production category must be presented in the accepted genres defined as follows:

Hip Hop/R&B: Involves a rhythmic pattern of drum sounds accompanied by soulful expressive melodies and/or lyrics.

Pop/Ballad: Involves a rhythmic pattern commonly used in popular music genres and often incorporates electronic sounds and synthesizers with strong rhythms, repetition of key phrases, and rhymes.

Global: Involves a rhythm or tempo that is shared across cultures and regions around the world.

House/Techno: Involves synthesized melodies and experimental percussive elements. It often features a repetitive structure and a tempo of around 120–130 beats per minute.

Live Sounds/Rock/Jazz/Worship: Involves a rhythm that incorporates sounds typically heard in a live performance, such as drums, guitars, and vocals.

Electronic/Bass Music/EDM (Electronic Dance Music): Involves rhythmic patterns produced using electronic instruments, technology, and sound effects. It typically features a tempo of 140–160 beats per minute and draws influence from dubstep, UK garage, and other bass-heavy genres.

Cinematic/FX: Involves a musical rhythm that incorporates elements of sound effects and cinematic music to create a dramatic and atmospheric sound. It is often used in film and video game soundtracks to enhance the emotional impact of a scene.

Rules

1. Music Production is the art of producing a complete project with rhythmic and melodic components. This may include a combination of sampling, recorded original sounds, and digital instrumentation (VST).

2. Music Production entries may consist of 1 to 5 eligible student producers. All students participating as producers and engineers must meet the age or grade requirements of the NFAF and must register as a National Youth Conference attendee. Instrumentalists and vocalists do not need to meet the age or grade requirements for NFAF.

3. Digital audio workstations (DAW) and software must be used to create, splice, edit, engineer, and manipulate sounds, samples, and loops for a completed project. The following DAWs are accepted.

Ableton	Adobe Audition	Cubase	FL Studio	GarageBand
Logic Pro X	Pro Tools	Reason	Studio One	

4. All music production projects have a time limit of 1-minute minimum to 3-minute maximum. There are 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.

5. Introductory comments are required. See page 19. Participants may not exceed 2 minutes for introductory comments. Participants may show their project file during the introductory comments. Introductory comments must include.

    - Participant(s)
    - Church name, city, state
    - Grade
    - DAW (Digital Audio Workstation)
    - Genre(s)
    - Number of tracks used
    - Description of Project File, including use of samples, vocals, instrument/live sounds, and VSTs (Virtual Studio Technology)
    - Names of non-participant instrumentalists and vocalists
    - Explanation of process by stating techniques, manipulations, dynamics, equipment used, etc.

6. All music production projects must have a minimum of 10 tracks. There is no maximum.

7. The complete music project must be exported and presented as a MP3, M4A or WAV file by plugging either a mobile device or laptop into the provided 3.5mm (⅛") audio plug. Participants are responsible to bring audio adapters if

necessary.

8. Copyright policy: Assemblies of God Youth Ministries and The General Council of the Assemblies of God are not responsible for assuring that all material included in students' music productions is in compliance with existing copyright laws. It is the responsibility of the students, parents, and youth leaders to be completely legal and ethical in their conduct regarding copyrighted material used to create an entry for the NFAF. Students must obtain either the copyrights/licenses or explicit written permission for use of all software, recorded music, samples and/or sound files included. Students may not unlawfully copy another musician's work or claim another individual's or company's work as their own. See pages 20 and 21 for additional lists of guidelines.

9. Model Release policy: Assemblies of God Youth Ministries and The General Council of the Assemblies of God are not responsible for assuring that all use of recorded vocals and/or instrumentalists included in students' productions are in compliance with existing model release laws. It is the responsibility of the registrants, producers, students, parents, and youth leaders to be completely legal and ethical in their conduct regarding the use of personal/intellectual property used to create an entry for the NFAF. Students must obtain either a model release or explicit written permission (not required to present to evaluators) from each actor or appropriate parental consent. See page 20 for complete License statement.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate music for genre(s).
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message with ministry effectiveness in mind.
Style—originality of music and rhythm.
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.

COMMUNICATION
Expressiveness—appropriate musical interpretation.
Arrangement/composition—a well rounded, cohesive production statement.
Producing/composing—choice of sounds, effects, and arrangement that help communicate mood and emotion.
Creativity—diverse production skills and sound quality.
Interpretive skill—interprets the overall musical intent (i.e., emotion, energy, musical line, personal involvement/connectivity to theme of the production).

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Rhythmic feel—the rhythmic feel of the beat, often created by the placement and timing of percussive or rhythmic elements.
Contrast/variation—variations and contrasts in the harmonic structure, melodic lines, and rhythmic elements.
Sound design—the selection and manipulation of individual sounds within the project, such as the choice of sound samples, effects, processing, and synthesis.
Arrangement—the organization and structure of the project including the placement and duration of different sections, such as verses, choruses, bridges, etc.
Time frame/development—development of the overall structure that fits into a proportional time frame where one section is not emphasized to the detriment of another section.
Dynamics—the use of volume, panning, and other effects to create a sense of movement and variation within the project.
Sampling—the use of pre-existing audio recordings or live instruments to create unique sounds and textures within the project.
Transparent editing—clips, splices, and edits are unnoticeable and do not detract from the overall project.
Mixing and mastering—the process of balancing and enhancing the individual elements of the project to create a cohesive final product that sounds polished and professional.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Overall effect—the combination of music production and presentation and technique to achieve overall effectiveness.
Relevance—production is in a form that connects with the listener.
Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness.

instrumental division

instrumental division

categories

Registrants in the Instrumental Division may submit entries in the following categories:

Bass Solo	Percussion Solo, Traditional, Sr.	Kappa Tau Guitar Solo
Brass Solo	Percussion, Unconventional	Kappa Tau Piano Solo
Guitar Solo	Piano Solo, Classical	
Instrumental Ensemble, Contemporary	Piano Solo, Jr.	
Instrumental Ensemble, Traditional	Piano Solo, Sr.	
Instrumental Solo, Folk	String Solo	
Percussion Ensemble, Traditional	Woodwind Solo	
Percussion Solo, Traditional, Jr.		

information

Read the General Information and General Rules on pages 13–23.

Kappa Tau category participants must meet Kappa Tau Participant Requirements on page 14.

Categories designated as Jr. are open to students enrolled in grades 6–8 during the 2025–2026 school year (or at least age 12 per participant requirements above). See page 14.

Categories designated as Sr. are open to students enrolled in grades 9–12 during the 2025–2026 school year. See page 14.

Categories not designated as Jr., Sr., or KT fall under the Fine Arts Participant Guidelines ages and grades found on page 13.

Bass Solo may use only a bass guitar.

Brass Solo may use instruments from the Brass list under General Rules.

Guitar Solo may use instruments from the Rhythm/Alternate Strings list under General Rules, except for a bass guitar.

Instrumental Ensemble, Contemporary may use any of the instruments from any of the Approved Instrument Lists under General Rules. Additional percussion instruments and accessories are permitted as long as setup and teardown time limits are not exceeded.

Note: Ensembles wishing to present a folk entry are encouraged to enter the Instrumental Ensemble, Contemporary category.

Instrumental Ensemble, Traditional may only use instruments from the Brass, Keyboards, Traditional Strings, and Woodwinds lists under General Rules or from the following:

Mandolin	12-String Guitar	Dulcimer	Banjo	Acoustic Guitar	Ukulele

Note: Instrumental Ensemble, Traditional entries may not use electric guitar, electric bass, or drums. The aforementioned instruments are neither allowed nor provided for this traditional category. Students desiring to use contemporary instrumentation may enter the Instrumental Ensemble, Contemporary or Christian Band categories.

Instrumental Solo, Folk may use instruments from the Folk list under General Rules.

Percussion Ensemble/Solo, Traditional may use instruments from the Percussion list under General Rules.

Piano Solo and Piano Solo, Classical may only use the piano provided by the festival.

String Solo may use instruments from the Traditional Strings list on page 23.

Woodwind Solo may use instruments from the Woodwinds list on page 23.

instrumental

Rules

These apply to all Instrumental Division categories and are the only rules for:

Bass Solo

Brass Solo

Guitar Solo

Instrumental Ensemble, Traditional

Instrumental Solo, Folk

Piano Solo (Jr., Sr. and Kappa Tau)

String Solo

Woodwind Solo

Piano Solo, Classical has its own rules section.

1. An Instrumental Ensemble/Solo is the art of presenting a musical composition using only musical instruments.

2. An Instrumental Ensemble may be comprised by 2 to 10 eligible students.

3. A time limit of 5 minutes is allowed for Instrumental entries (except for Percussion Ensemble categories). There are 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down (except for Instrumental Ensemble, Contemporary). The instrumentalists may use this time to tune their instruments or conduct a brief warm-up.

4. Music must be memorized for all solo entries, except Woodwind Solo and Brass Solo. Presenters are encouraged to present sheet music to the evaluators, but are not required to.

5. Ensembles do not have to memorize their music. Using the musical score does not affect the evaluation.

6. A conductor or director is not permitted. Rhythm, balance/blend, or cut-off cues from a person in the audience are not allowed.

7. To ensure consistent sound level, microphones, if used, are set prior to the festival by an official sound technician. Participants may not ask for special sound settings. It is the responsibility of the participants to make sure the microphones are turned on and to move microphones to accommodate blend and volume.

8. Sound track levels may be adjusted to compensate for different recording levels.

9. A participant may play more than 1 instrument in an Instrumental entry as long as the setup and teardown time limits are not exceeded.

10. Use of preprogrammed or prerecorded loops/software is not allowed; any looping or sequencing technology must function only in response to manual and live hands-on control.

11. Piano Solo and Percussion entries are not allowed accompaniment (neither live nor recorded).

12. Click tracks, metronomes, or other rhythmic stability assistance devices or technology are not allowed.

13. Introductory comments are required. See page 19.

14. Accompaniment:
    - Instrumental entries may choose to have or not to have accompaniment (except for Instrumental Ensemble, Contemporary, Piano Solo/Piano Solo, Classical and Percussion).
    - The accompanist is not considered part of the entry.
    - The accompanist may be an adult or student.
    - Accompanists are allowed to use music.
    - Only a piano, keyboard, or acoustic guitar may be used for live accompaniment. (Guitar may not be used to accompany a Guitar Solo.) Only a piano is provided by the festival.
    - If an accompaniment track is used, the instrument(s) played by the student(s) cannot be predominant on the accompaniment track.
    - Neither live nor recorded background vocals are permitted.

Bass and Guitar Solo Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION

Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.

Arrangement/composition—a well-rounded, cohesive musical statement.
Originality—use of original and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Communication—ability to connect with audience.
Communicative skill—interprets the overall musical intent (i.e., emotion, energy, musical line, personal involvement/connectivity to theme of arrangement).
Expressiveness—appropriate musical interpretation; both musical and facial expression.
Posture—conducive for presentation.
Stage presence—command of stage and instrument; control, confidence, and comfort.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Control—command of the instrument to produce desired tone and effect.
Dynamics—effective use of contrasting volumes.
Fingering/fingerplaying/picking/slapping, etc.—smooth and consistent dexterity in chords, scales, arpeggios, and patterns in chosen technique(s).
Intonation/tuning—accurate pitch of the instrument, maintaining correct intervals.
Phrasing—produces complete musical sentences.
Pocket/groove (Bass Solo)—playing in time with consistent and reliable motion in the music.
Precision/accuracy—skillful exactness of the presentation.
Rhythmic stability—evenness of rhythm.
Tone quality—clarity and accuracy of pitch, volume, and timbre.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Memorization—strong knowledge of the arrangement, melody, and movements of the song(s).
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.
Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

Brass Solo/ Instrumental Ensemble, Traditional/ Instrumental Solo, Folk/ Woodwind Solo Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Arrangement/composition—a well-rounded, cohesive musical statement.
Originality—use of original and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Communication—ability to connect with audience.
Communicative skill—interprets the overall musical intent (i.e., emotion, energy, musical line, personal involvement/connectivity to theme of arrangement).
Expressiveness—appropriate musical interpretation; musical and facial expression.
Posture—standing or sitting comfortably; conducive for presentation.
Stage presence—command of stage and instrument; control, confidence, and comfort.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Blend—achieves balance between instruments (ensemble).
Breathing—proper breath management.
Control—command of the instrument to produce desired tone and effect.
Dynamics—effective use of contrasting volumes.
Fingering—smooth dexterity in chords, scales, arpeggios, and patterns.
Intonation—accurate pitch of the instrument, maintaining correct intervals.
Phrasing—produces complete musical sentences.
Precision/accuracy—skillful exactness of the presentation.
Rhythmic stability—evenness of rhythm (timing, vibrato, etc.).

Tone quality—pleasing pitch, volume, and time line.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Memorization—strong knowledge of the music (for solo entries only; ensembles do not require memorization).
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.
Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

Piano Solo Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Arrangement/composition—a well-rounded, cohesive musical statement.
Originality—if written or arranged by the student, use of original and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Communication—ability to connect with audience.
Expressiveness—appropriate musical interpretation.
Interpretive skill—interprets the overall musical intent (i.e., emotion, energy, musical line, personal involvement/connectivity to theme of arrangement).
Posture—conducive for presentation.
Stage presence—command of stage and instrument; control, confidence and comfort.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Chording technique—if the piece is improvised, skillful use of various chords, progressions, inversions, etc., to enhance the arrangement.
Control—command of the instrument to produce desired tone and effect.
Dynamics—effective use of contrasting volumes.
Fingering—smooth dexterity in chords, scales, arpeggios, and patterns.
Modulating technique—accurate key changes (if it is improvised, the effective use of chords, progressions, scales, and arpeggios, etc., in making key changes).
Phrasing—produces complete musical sentences.
Precision/accuracy—skillful exactness of the presentation.
Rhythmic stability—evenness of rhythm.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Memorization—complete knowledge of the piece from memory.
Overall effectiveness—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.

String Solo Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Arrangement/composition—a well-rounded, cohesive musical statement.
Originality—use of original and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Communication—ability to connect with audience.
Communicative skill—interprets the overall musical intent (i.e., emotion, energy, musical line, personal involvement/ connectivity to theme of arrangement).
Expressiveness—appropriate musical interpretation; musical and facial expression.
Posture—conducive for presentation.

Stage presence—command of stage and instrument; control, confidence, and comfort.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Control—command of the instrument to produce desired tone and effect.
Dynamics—effective use of contrasting volumes.
Fingering—smooth dexterity in chords, scales, arpeggios, and patterns.
Intonation—accurate pitch of the instrument, maintaining correct intervals.
Phrasing—produces complete musical sentences.
Precision/accuracy—skillful exactness of the presentation.
Rhythmic stability—evenness of rhythm (timing, vibrato, etc.).
Technique—if bowed, proper bow hold; if plucked, proper tension and control.
Tone quality—a musical sound having a definite pitch, volume, and timbre.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Memorization—strong knowledge of the melody of the song(s).
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.
Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

instrumental ensemble, contemporary

Rules

1. Instrumental Ensemble, Contemporary entries may present as folk ensembles, jazz ensembles, world music ensembles, lyricless Christian Band, and/or other non-traditional ensembles.

2. Instrumental Ensemble, Contemporary entries have a time limit of 5 minutes with 2½ minutes for setup and 2½ minutes for tear down.

3. Selections do not have to be original but originality is encouraged.

4. A conductor or director is not permitted. Rhythm, balance/blend, or cut-off cues from a person in the audience are not allowed.

5. All individuals who present live in an Instrumental Ensemble, Contemporary must meet the age or grade requirements of the NFAF, register as participants, and pay the appropriate registration fee.

6. Instrumental Ensemble, Contemporary entries do not need to be memorized. Using the musical score does not affect the evaluation.

7. A keyboard is provided; any additional keyboards must be provided by the participant. Any use of preprogramming or sequencing of keyboards is not allowed; the keyboard must function only in response to manual, hands-on control.

8. Introductory comments are required. See page 19.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message with ministry effectiveness in mind.
Originality—creative in its concept and structure; use of creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.
Overall arrangement—well-rounded, cohesive musical statement.

COMMUNICATION
Communication—ability to connect with audience.
Communicative skill—interprets the overall musical intent (i.e., emotion, energy, musical line, personal involvement/connectivity to theme of arrangement).
Expressiveness—appropriate musical interpretation; musical and facial expression.
Posture—conducive for effective presentation.
Stage presence—command of stage and instrument; control, confidence, and comfort.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Control—command of the instrument(s) to produce desired tone and effect.
Dynamics—effective use of contrasting volumes.
Fingering—smooth dexterity in chords, scales, and patterns.
Intonation—accurate pitch of the instrument, maintaining correct intervals.
Phrasing—interesting melodic and instrumental phrasing.
Precision/accuracy—skillful exactness of the presentation.
Rhythmic stability—evenness of rhythm (timing, vibrato, etc.).
Tone quality—clarity and accuracy of pitch, volume, and timbre.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Interpretation of clear thought—consistent interpretation of the musical style and lyrical line throughout the song.
Relevance—music is in a style and form that connects with the listener.
Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness.

percussion

Percussion, Traditional Information

The following will be provided at the NFAF for Percussion Solo/Ensemble, Traditional, entries:

Solo—1 standard drum set   Ensemble—2 standard drum sets

Percussion, Traditional Rules

1. A Percussion Ensemble/Solo, Traditional entry is the art of presenting a musical entry using traditional orchestral percussion instruments and techniques.

2. A Percussion Ensemble, Traditional entry consists of 2 to 10 eligible students.

3. Instruments from the approved Percussion list on page 23 may be used to create the Percussion, Traditional entries.

4. Personal drum sets may not be brought to the festival.

5. No talking or singing is permitted in this category.

6. A time limit of 5 minutes is allowed for Percussion, Solo entries. There are 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.

7. A time limit of 5 minutes is allowed for Percussion Ensemble, Traditional entries. There are 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.

8. Introductory comments are required. See page 19.

Percussion, Unconventional Rules

1. Percussion, Unconventional is the art of presenting a musical entry in which sound is produced by striking or tapping an object upon another.

2. Clear and discernible rhythmic pattern by percussion must be present throughout the entire presentation.

3. Percussion technique must be the primary focus for an entry in this category. It must be the composition and presentation of percussion techniques incorporating alternative and creative items such as trash cans, pipes, sticks, etc.

4. Neither flammable nor liquid elements are permitted in Percussion, Unconventional presentations. The entirety of the presentation must remain within the stage area and must not cause damage to any person or property. No items may be thrown or projected into the audience.

5. Speaking and singing is allowed but must not be predominant. See Approved Languages on page 19. While story and drama elements may be included, they will be evaluated in the Communications criteria portion only, and should not be the main focus of this percussion entry.

6. Standing on chairs, tables, and any prop is not allowed and may result in disqualification.

7. Safe gymnastic elements and/or cheer mounts and/or dance type movements are acceptable but must be presented and coordinated into the current rhythmic pattern being presented.

8. A Percussion, Unconventional entry consists of 1 to 10 eligible students.

9. Percussion instruments from the Traditional Percussion list may be incorporated into the entry but must be provided by the participant. A drum set is not provided for Percussion, Unconventional.

10. A time limit of 5 minutes is allowed for Percussion, Unconventional entries. There are 2½ minutes for setup and 2½ minutes for tear down.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Arrangement/composition—a well-rounded, cohesive musical statement.
Originality—use of original and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION

Communication—ability to connect with audience.

Communicative skill—interprets the overall musical intent (i.e., emotion, energy, personal involvement/connectivity to theme of arrangement).

Expressiveness—appropriate musical interpretation; musical and facial expression.

Interpretation—actual conveyance of the message of the piece through the presentation.

Posture—posture conducive for presentation.

Stage presence—command of stage and instrument; control, confidence, and comfort.

Unity—demonstrates the art of working together (ensemble).

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE

Blend—achieves balance between instruments or movements of the piece.

Control—command of the instrument(s) to produce desired effects.

Dynamics—effective use of contrasting volumes.

Phrasing—produces complete musical sentences.

Precision/accuracy—skillful exactness of the presentation.

Rhythmic stability—evenness of rhythm.

Tone quality—a musical sound having a definite pitch, volume, or time line.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.

Memorization—strong knowledge of the melody of the song(s).

Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.

Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness attaining a response.

piano solo, classical

Information

Piano Solo, Classical entries may only use the piano provided by the festival.

Rules

1. A Piano Solo, Classical entry is the art of presenting a musical composition for piano from 1 of the standard style periods: Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionistic, and 20th Century/Modern.

2. A time limit of 6 minutes is allowed for Piano Solo, Classical entries. There are 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.

3. The selection must have been composed for piano and not transcribed or altered from the printed score. Repeats may be cut, except where it would lead to a coda.

4. A single movement of a larger work (such as a movement from a sonata) is acceptable. Conversely, multiple movements of suites, sonatas, or other groupings that can be presented as musical units are permitted.

5. At each level of the participation, 3 sets of sheet music of the student's presentation must be hand-delivered to the evaluators.

6. Music must be memorized.

7. A conductor or director is not permitted. Rhythm, balance/blend, or cut-off cues from coaches or directors seated in the audience are not allowed.

8. Piano Solo, Classical entries are not allowed accompaniment (either live or recorded).

9. Click tracks, metronomes, or other rhythmic stability assistance devices or technology are not allowed.

10. Introductory comments are required. See page 19.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Arrangement/composition—a well-rounded, cohesive musical statement.

COMMUNICATION
Communication—ability to connect with audience.
Expressiveness—appropriate musical interpretation.
Interpretive skill—interprets the overall musical intent (i.e., emotion, energy, musical line, personal involvement/connectivity to theme of arrangement).
Posture—conducive for presentation.
Stage presence—command of stage and instrument; control, confidence, and comfort.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Control—command of the instrument to produce desired tone and effect.
Dynamics—effective use of contrasting volumes.
Fingering—smooth dexterity in chords, scales, arpeggios, and patterns.
Phrasing—produces complete musical sentences.
Precision/accuracy—skillful exactness of the presentation.
Rhythmic stability—evenness of rhythm.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Memorization—complete knowledge of the piece from memory.
Overall effectiveness—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique to achieve overall effectiveness.
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.

vocal division

vocal division

categories

Registrants in the Vocal Division may submit entries in the following categories:

Choir	Vocal Solo, Classical, Sr.	Kappa Tau Rap Solo
Christian Band	Vocal Solo, Female, Jr.	Kappa Tau Songwriting
Rap Group	Vocal Solo, Female, Sr.	Kappa Tau Vocal Solo, Female
Rap Solo	Vocal Solo, Male, Jr.	Kappa Tau Vocal Solo, Male
Songwriting	Vocal Solo, Male, Sr.	Kappa Tau Worship Team
Spanish Vocal Solo, Female	Worship Leading, Solo, Jr.	
Spanish Vocal Solo, Male	Worship Leading, Solo, Sr.	
Vocal Ensemble, Large	Worship Team, Large	
Vocal Ensemble, Small	Worship Team, Small	
Vocal Ensemble, Spanish		

information

Read the General Information and General Rules on pages 13–23.

Kappa Tau category participants must meet Kappa Tau Participant Requirements on page 14.

Categories designated as Jr. are open to students enrolled in grades 6–8 during the 2025–2026 school year (or at least age 12 per participant requirements above). See page 14.

Categories designated as Sr. are open to students enrolled in grades 9–12 during the 2025–2026 school year. See page 14.

Categories not designated as Jr., Sr., or KT fall under the Fine Arts Participant Guidelines ages and grades found on page 13.

A participant may enter the same song in more than 1 category. For example, the student may sing a solo version of a song that is used for a Vocal Ensemble. However, a student or group of students may not enter the same category twice.

Synthesizers/keyboards are only provided for Christian Band, Rap, and Worship Team.

A piano or keyboard is provided for Choir, Songwriting, and Vocal Ensembles and Solos.

vocal

Rules (for all Vocal Division categories)

1. Use of preprogrammed or prerecorded loops/software is not allowed; any looping or sequencing technology must function only in response to manual and live hands-on control.

2. Click tracks, metronomes, or other rhythmic stability assistance devices or technology are not allowed. In-ear metronomes are only allowed for drummers in Christian Band and Worship Team.

3. Conductor/Director Rules:

   - Choir is the only Vocal Division category allowed an adult conductor/director as part of the presentation.
   - Neither Vocal Solo nor Vocal Ensembles are permitted to have a conductor/director in the audience.
   - Rhythm, balance/blend, cut-off cues, etc., from anyone in the audience is not allowed.
   - Any cut-off cues for ensembles may only come from a student participating in the ensemble who is on the stage. Remember, if a vocalist is giving cut-off cues, their main priority is communicating to the audience, not directing the ensemble.
   - Personnel will be in the rooms at the NFAF to verify that rhythm, balance/blend, cut-off cues, etc., are not being provided from members of the audience.

4. General Accompaniment Rules:

   - Choir, Rap, and Vocal Ensemble/Solo entries may choose to have or not to have accompaniment, live or on a soundtrack.
   - Accompanists are not considered part of the entry.
   - Instrumental accompanists may be an adult or a student.
   - Accompanists are allowed to use music.
   - A maximum of 4 instruments from the Approved Instrument Lists may be used for live accompaniment (with the exception of Songwriting). A piano is the only instrument that is provided for Vocal Ensemble/Solo and Songwriting entries.

   Consult the rules under each category for further guidelines.

choir

Rules

1. A Choir is for the art of presenting a sacred choral song selection with ministry effectiveness in mind.

2. A Choir entry must consist of 11 to 75 eligible students.

3. Choirs are allowed 5 minutes to present their entry. There are 2½ minutes for setup and 2½ minutes for tear down.

4. Background vocals on sound tracks are not permitted.

5. Sound track levels may be adjusted to compensate for different recording levels.

6. A director is allowed and may use music.

7. Introductory comments are required. See page 19.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Arrangement—well-rounded, cohesive musical statement.
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message with ministry effectiveness in mind.
Display of vocal range—demonstrates a wide vocal range.

COMMUNICATION
Communicative skill—ability to connect with audience.
Expressiveness—both facial expression and use of body language.
Posture—relaxed body stance for proper breath support and management.
Stage presence—command of stage; control, confidence, and comfort.
Unity—demonstrates ensemble cohesiveness.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Articulation—executes clear and coherent phrases (i.e., "staccato"–short, "marcato"–marked, "legato"–connected).
Blend—creating a balanced sound.
Breathing—proper breath management.
Diction—proper enunciation of words.
Dynamics—effective use of contrasting volumes.
Harmony—knowledgeable and effective use of unison and multipart harmony.
Intonation—ability to sing in tune.
Phrasing—completeness of a lyrical statement.
Rhythmic precision—ability to internalize the pulse.
Tone quality—ability to produce clear and pleasant tone.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Memorization—strong knowledge of the lyrics and melody of the song(s).
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparing the selection.
Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

christian band

Rules

1. The Christian Band category is the art of presenting Christian music by students whose focus is on originality in the presentation.

2. Christian Band entries may consist of 2 to 10 eligible students.

3. Entries in this category must include both music and lyrics.

4. Christian Bands have a time limit of 5 minutes with 2½ minutes for setup and soundcheck and 2½ minutes for tear down. Participants may have assistance with setup.

5. All individuals within a Christian Band entry must meet the age or grade requirements. No adult accompanists or vocalists are allowed.

6. Original songs are encouraged though not required, but if a cover song is presented, evaluators will be looking for originality with arrangement, instrumentation, vocalization, etc.

7. All music must be memorized.

8. Additional instruments, equipment, and/or percussion accessories are permitted but must be provided by the participants and only if the additions can be set up and torn down within the allotted time limit. Individuals are not allowed to bring their own drum sets.

9. Students must refrain from any actions that may be deemed offensive or inappropriate. Inappropriate actions include, but are not limited to: improper gestures or moves, stage diving, and language unbecoming of a Christian. Any festival equipment damaged as a result of inappropriate actions is the responsibility of the students to replace. Failure to adhere to this standard results in disqualification.

10. Sound engineers are provided by the festival.

11. In-ear metronomes are only permitted for drummers.

12. Introductory comments are required. See page 19.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Arrangement—consistent with genre.
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message with ministry effectiveness in mind.
Originality—use of original and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Communicative skill—interprets the overall musical intent (i.e., emotion, energy, musical line, personal involvement/connectivity to theme of arrangement).
Expressiveness—musical and facial expression; use of body language.
Stage presence—command of stage and/or instrument; control, confidence, and comfort.
Unity—cohesiveness of vocalists and instrumentalists.
Vocal clarity—articulation; enunciation of words, projecting with the correct inflection and control appropriate for the presentation.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Blend—creates a balanced sound.
Breathing—proper breath management.
Dynamics—effective use of contrasting volumes.
Energy—demonstrates vitality appropriate for the selection.
Intonation—ability to sing and play in tune.
Musical transitions—flow of music.
Phrasing—completeness of a musical statement.

Rhythmic precision—ability to internalize the pulse.

Tone quality—vocally consistent with genre; musically, a sound having a definite pitch, volume, and texture.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.

Interpretation—actual conveyance of the message of the piece through the presentation.

Memorization—strong knowledge of the chord progressions, lyrics, and movements of the selection.

Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.

Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

rap

Rules

1. Rap is the urban art of communicating through rhythm and rhyme.
2. A Rap Group entry may consist of 2 to 10 eligible students.
3. Rap entries have a time limit of 5 minutes. There are 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.
4. Entry lyrics must be an original work of the student(s) and not submitted to any previous Assemblies of God Fine Arts Festival (with the exception of the festival[s] the entry advanced from).
5. Any previously created beat or musical hook samplings taken directly from other presenters used to create the Rap entry for this festival must be given proper credit on the lyric sheet under "Credits."
6. At each level of participation, 3 sets of lyric sheets must be hand-delivered to the evaluators. Lyric sheets must be typed with the lyrics divided into the sections of the song (chorus, verse, bridge, etc.) and must have a title page or heading that includes the following information as listed in the order given below:
   - Title
   - Category (must use official category name as stated on page 83)
   - Lyricist(s)
   - Credits
   - Church name, city, state
7. A keyboard and standard drum set are provided. Students wishing to use drum machines must provide their own equipment and adhere to the setup and teardown time limits.
8. Rap entries that include additional "beat-box" or "hype-man" members are considered group entries. All participants must meet the age or grade requirements of the NFAF and register as participants.
9. Background vocals are allowed for solo entries. Background vocals are not allowed for group entries. If background vocals are used on the soundtrack of a solo entry, they must not be predominant, but must be complementary.
10. Entries must be memorized.
11. A maximum of 4 instruments may be used for accompaniment (either recorded or live).
12. All students who present live at the NFAF must meet the age or grade requirements of the NFAF. Students presenting live as accompanists do not need to register as participants. No adult accompanists or group members are allowed.
13. Introductory comments are required. See page 19.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Arrangement—creative structure of verse and/or chorus with music and vocals.
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message with ministry effectiveness in mind.
Originality—use of original and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Clear concept—understandable concept of lyrical message.
Expression—facial expression and body language that reflect the tone and intent of the lyrics.
Interpretation—overall effectiveness/impact of the message.
Stage presence—command of stage and/or instrument; control, confidence, and comfort.
Vocal clarity—enunciation of words, projecting with the correct, clear inflection, and control appropriate for the presentation.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Control—maintaining quality sound with appropriate volume.
Creativity—unique physical response to rhythm and rhyme.
Energy—demonstrates the emotion with exaggerated energy for the lyrics.

Motions—hand and arm gestures that enhance the presentation.

Phrasing—employs creative and innovative wording rather than trite or cliché.

Precision/stability—lyrics, motions, and music complement each other.

Synchronization—multiple vocalists' gestures or movements in proper rhythm with each other and the music (ensemble).

Timing—allows for lyrical delivery and audience response.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.

Memorization—strong knowledge of the lyrics and melody of the song(s).

Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.

Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

songwriting

Information

Entries in the Songwriting category must be presented in the accepted genres defined as follows:

Presentation: An original piece written for presentation.

Worship: An original piece written for corporate/congregational singing.

Modern Hymn, Chorus: A public domain hymn with a new chorus or bridge.

Modern Hymn, Melody: A public domain hymn lyric set to a completely new melody in any style.

Songwriting entries are not evaluated on the presentation of the presenter(s). However, the presentation of the song can either strengthen or weaken the entire presentation. The criteria used to evaluate Songwriting entries will not support Rap entries, therefore Rap entries are not allowed.

Rules

1. Songwriting is for the art of writing an entirely original song including both music and lyrics, or rewriting a traditional hymn by adding modern elements.

2. Songwriting entries may consist of 1 to 5 eligible student writers. All students participating in writing the song must meet the age or grade requirements of the NFAF and must register as a National Youth Conference attendee.

3. Entries are allowed 5 minutes to present their selection. There are 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.

4. At each level of participation, 3 sets of lyric sheets in the form of chord charts must be hand-delivered to the evaluators. Lyric sheets must be typed with the sections of the song clearly marked (chorus, verse, bridge, etc.), must have the chord listed above the lyrics, and must have a title page or heading that includes the following information as listed in the order below:
   - Title
   - Category
   - Composer(s)
   - Genre
   - Public domain lyrics and/or hymn tune used (Modern Hymn only)
   - Church name, city, state

5. Songwriting entries must be an original work of the student(s), with the exception of blended public domain lyric and melody elements, and not submitted to any previous Assemblies of God Fine Arts Festival (with the exception of the festival[s] the entry advanced from).

6. Songwriters are not required to present. The presenting student(s) must be registered as a National Youth Conference Attendee or as a Fine Arts Participant (in a different category) and must be listed as the vocalist on the Songwriters' registrations. Any student vocalist who did not participate in writing the song does not need to pay the $25 category fee. For district festivals, contact district office for payment information as it may different from NFAF.

7. Only 1 instrument may be used for accompaniment (either prerecorded or live). The accompanist may be an adult or student. Any student accompanist who did not participate in writing the song does not need to pay the $25 category fee.

8. Participants wishing to present Songwriting entries with a full band are encouraged to register for both of the following categories: Songwriting (with 1 instrument) and Christian Band (with 2 or more instruments).

9. Accompanists may choose any 1 instrument from the Approved Instrument Lists under General Rules. The NFAF only provides a piano/keyboard, guitar amp, and 1 direct box.

10. All live music presented by the presenter must be memorized. If an accompanist is used, the accompanist is allowed to use music.

11. Introductory comments are required. See page 19. Include public domain lyrics and/or hymn tune if used..

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty; modern hymns are appropriate for congregational worship.
Arrangement—well-rounded, cohesive musical statement; modern hymns support and underline the lyrical content.
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message with ministry effectiveness in mind.
Originality—original in its concept, lyrics, and/or melody; demonstrates a fresh approach and not cliché even when blended with public domain elements.

COMMUNICATION
Clear message—reveals a message that is clearly understood by the listener.
Lyrical hook—new content is composed around a lyrical concept/phrase that is restated or woven throughout the selection.
Rhyme scheme and arrangement—new lyrical content follows a rhyme scheme that is unique in its wording.
Use of poetic language—employs poetic language, such as similes and metaphors; modern hymns employ theological concepts and poetic language.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Clear theme—overall concept and melodic motif clearly developed.
Contrast/variation—variations and contrasts in the harmonic structure and the melodic line.
Harmonic structure—original harmonic structures of the song must follow acceptable musical principles and must be enriched beyond the primary chords of I, IV, and V.
Introduction/song length—an introduction that sets the mood of the song; a song or hymn that is not too long or too short.
Melodic development—variations in the melody after being stated in its initial form.
Memorable tune—melody is memorable and singable.
Phrasing—melodic and lyrical phrasing follows the concept of the song.
Song form—structure of the composition is in "song form" (e.g., introduction, verse, chorus, verse, chorus, bridge, modulation into chorus, coda/tag).
Time frame/development—development of the overall harmonic structure that fits into a proportional time frame where 1 section is not emphasized to the detriment of another section.
Use of figurative language—creative and effective use of descriptive words; creates a mental picture.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Interpretation of clear thought—consistent interpretation of the musical style and lyrical line throughout the song.
Relevance—music and lyrics are in a style and form that connects with the listener.
Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness attaining a response.

vocal ensembles and solo

Rules

1. An entry in a Vocal Ensemble/Solo category is for the art of presenting a vocal song selection with ministry effectiveness in mind.

2. A Vocal Ensemble, Small may consist of 2 to 4 eligible students.

3. A Vocal Ensemble, Large may consist of 5 to 10 eligible students.

4. A Vocal Ensemble, Spanish may consist of 2 to 10 eligible students.

5. Bilingual entries are not permitted.

6. A time limit of 5 minutes is allowed for all vocal solos and ensembles. There are 90 seconds allowed for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.

7. Music must be memorized.

8. A Vocal Ensemble/Solo must not contain worship leading elements. The intent of a Vocal Ensemble/Solo is to present a song meant for performance to an audience, rather than leading congregational music.

9. Participants may not ask for special sound settings. To ensure consistent sound level, microphones are set prior to the festival by an official sound technician. It is the responsibility of the participants to make sure the microphones are turned on and to move microphones to accommodate blend and volume.

10. Sound track levels may be adjusted to compensate for different recording levels. Background vocals are allowed for solo entries. Background vocals are not allowed for group entries. If background vocals are used on the soundtrack of a solo entry, they must not be predominant, but must be complementary.

11. Introductory comments are required. Spanish Vocal Solo, Female, Spanish Vocal Solo, Male, and Vocal Ensemble, Spanish may be introduced in Spanish or English. See page 19.

Vocal Ensemble Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Arrangement—well-rounded, cohesive musical statement.
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message with ministry effectiveness in mind.
Display of vocal range—demonstrates a wide vocal range.

COMMUNICATION
Communicative skill—ability to connect with audience.
Expressiveness—both facial expression and use of body language.
Posture—relaxed body stance for proper breath support and management.
Stage presence—command of stage; control, confidence, and comfort.
Unity—demonstrates ensemble cohesiveness.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Articulation—executes clear and coherent phrases (i.e., "staccato"–short, "marcato"–marked, "legato"–connected).
Blend—creating a balanced sound.
Breathing—proper breath management.
Diction—proper enunciation of words.
Dynamics—effective use of contrasting volumes.
Harmony—knowledgeable and effective use of unison and multipart harmony.
Intonation—ability to sing in tune.
Phrasing—completeness of a lyrical statement.
Rhythmic precision—ability to internalize the pulse.
Tone quality—ability to produce clear and pleasant tone.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Memorization—strong knowledge of the lyrics and melody of the song(s).
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparing the selection.
Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

Vocal Solo Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Arrangement—well-rounded, cohesive musical statement.
Christian message—presents clear Christian message with ministry effectiveness in mind.
Display of vocal range—demonstrates a wide vocal range.

COMMUNICATION
Communicative skill—ability to connect with audience.
Expressiveness—both facial expression and use of body language.
Posture—relaxed body stance for proper breath support and management.
Stage presence—command of stage; control, confidence, and comfort.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Articulation—executes clear and coherent phrases (i.e., "staccato"–short, "marcato"–marked, "legato"–connected).
Breathing—proper breath management.
Diction—proper enunciation of words.
Dynamics—effective use of contrasting volumes.
Intonation—ability to sing in tune.
Phrasing—completeness of a lyrical statement.
Rhythmic precision—ability to internalize the pulse.
Tone quality—ability to produce clear and pleasant tone.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Memorization—strong knowledge of the lyrics and melody of the song(s).
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparing the selection.
Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

vocal solo, classical, sr.

Rules

1. An entry in a Vocal Solo, Classical, Sr. category is for the art of presenting a classical vocal song selection.

2. Vocal Solo, Classical, Sr. is open to 1 student enrolled in grades 9–12 as of September 1, 2025.

3. A time limit of 5 minutes is allowed for presentation. There are 90 seconds allowed for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.

4. Vocal Solo, Classical, Sr. entries may present Italian, German, French, Latin, or English art songs as well as sacred song selections and oratorio arias.

5. Music must be memorized. At least one original score must be given to the evaluators. Non-original copies or photocopies must be accompanied by proof of public domain or a receipt of digital purchase.

6. Accompaniment:

   - Vocal Solo, Classical, Sr. entries are required to have accompaniment unless the piece was intended to be sung a capella.
   - Accompanists are not considered part of the entry.
   - The accompanist may be an adult or student, but students may not accompany themselves in the Classical category.
   - Accompanists are allowed to use music.
   - Piano is the only accompaniment instrument allowed (live or soundtrack). A piano is provided by the festival.

7. Introductory comments are required. See page 19.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this category; appropriate level of difficulty; appropriate attire for a classical category.
Arrangement—well-rounded, cohesive musical statement.
Display of vocal range—demonstrates a wide vocal range.

COMMUNICATION
Communicative skill—ability to connect with audience.
Expressiveness—both facial expression and use of body language.
Posture—relaxed body stance for proper breath support and management.
Stage presence—command of stage; control, confidence, and comfort.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Articulation—executes clear and coherent phrases (i.e., "staccato"–short, "marcato"–marked, "legato"–connected).
Breathing—proper breath management.
Diction—proper enunciation of words.
Dynamics—effective use of contrasting volumes.
Interpretation—ability to connect with, understand, and vocally interpret the meaning of the text especially for selections presented in Italian, German, Latin, or French.
Intonation—ability to sing in tune.
Phrasing—completeness of a lyrical statement.
Rhythmic precision—ability to internalize the pulse.
Tone quality—ability to produce clear and pleasant tone.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Memorization—strong knowledge of the lyrics and melody of the song(s).
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparing the selection.
Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

worship leading, solo

Rules

1. A Worship Leading, Solo entry is for the art of leading others in worship by simultaneously playing an instrument and singing. This may include additional vocalizations or sung prayers not in the lyrics, encouraging the audience to raise their hands, or choosing a piece or set that is intended for congregational worship.

2. Worship Leading, Solo entries may consist of 1 eligible student.

3. Worship Leading, Solo entries have a time limit of 7 minutes with 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down. Participants may have assistance with setup.

4. No accompanists or additional vocalists are permitted.

5. Piano and guitar are the only acceptable instruments. Only a piano is provided by the festival.

6. All music must be memorized.

7. Introductory comments are required. See page 19.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Arrangement—well-rounded, cohesive musical statement.
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message with worship leading in mind.
Musical transitions—thoughtful flow of music; theme unity (holiness, the Cross, etc.); smooth flow from one song to the next.
Originality—use of original and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Communicative skill—interprets the overall musical intent (i.e., emotion, energy, musical line, personal involvement/connectivity to theme of arrangement).
Expressiveness—both facial expression and use of body language to lead in worship.
Posture—relaxed body stance for proper breath control.
Stage presence—command of stage and/or instrument; control, confidence, and comfort.
Vocal cues—the ability to give clear and strong vocal cues to help the audience know where the worship experience is going; demonstrate the ability to draw out a worshipful response.
Worshipful lyrics—appropriate lyrics for application of audience; avoiding trite expressions.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Articulation—executes articulate phrases (i.e., "staccato"–short, "marcato"–marked, "legato"–connected).
Blend—creates a balanced sound between voice and instrument.
Breathing—proper breath management.
Diction—proper and clear enunciation of words.
Dynamics—effective use of contrasting volumes.
Energy—demonstrates vitality appropriate for the selection(s).
Intonation—ability to sing and play (if using guitar) in tune.
Phrasing—completeness of a musical statement.
Rhythmic precision—ability to internalize the pulse and keep rhythm while singing alone and playing an instrument.
Tone quality—ability to produce clear and pleasant tone.
Worship set—ability to put an arrangement of songs together that is thematic, directs the audience's attention toward God, and elicits a worshipful response.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion; able to draw out a worshipful response.
Memorization—strong knowledge of the lyrics and melody of the song(s).

Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.
Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

worship team

Rules

1. A Worship Team entry is the art of leading others in worship.

2. Worship Team, Small entries may consist of 2 to 4 eligible students.

3. Worship Team, Large entries may consist of 5 to 10 eligible students.

4. Worship Team entries have a time limit of 7 minutes with 2½ minutes for setup and soundcheck and 2½ minutes for tear down. Participants may have assistance with setup.

5. All individuals within a Worship Team entry must meet the age or grade requirements. No adult accompanists or vocalists are allowed.

6. Worship Team entries must consist of both vocalists and instrumentalists. Small entries are required to have at least 1 vocalist. Large entries are required to have more than 1 vocalist.

7. All music must be memorized.

8. Lyrics may be in English, Spanish, or both.

9. Additional instruments, equipment, and/or additional percussion accessories are permitted but must be provided by the participants, and only if the additions can be set up and torn down within the allotted time limit. Individuals are not allowed to bring their own drum sets.

10. In-ear metronomes are only permitted for drummers.

11. Introductory comments are required. See page 19.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Arrangement—well-rounded, cohesive musical statement.
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message with ministry effectiveness in mind.
Musical transitions—thoughtful flow of music; theme unity (holiness, the Cross, etc.); smooth flow from one song to the next.
Originality—use of original and creative ideas; demonstrates a fresh approach.

COMMUNICATION
Communicative skill—interprets the overall musical intent (i.e., emotion, energy, musical line, personal involvement/connectivity to theme of arrangement).
Expressiveness—both facial expression and use of body language to lead in worship.
Posture—relaxed body stance for proper breath control.
Stage presence—command of stage and/or instrument; control, confidence, and comfort.
Unity—cohesiveness of vocalists and instrumentalists.
Vocal Clarity—appropriate volume for audience; proper pronunciation of words with appropriate tone and inflection.
Worshipful lyrics—appropriate lyrics for application of audience; avoiding trite expressions.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Articulation—executes articulate phrases (i.e., "staccato"–short, "marcato"–marked, "legato"–connected).
Blend—creates a balanced sound.
Breathing—proper breath management.
Diction—proper enunciation of words.
Dynamics—effective use of contrasting volumes.
Energy—demonstrates vitality appropriate for the selection(s).
Harmony—knowledgeable and effective use of unison and multipart harmony.
Intonation—ability to sing and play in tune.
Phrasing—completeness of a musical statement.

Rhythmic precision—ability to internalize the pulse.
Tone quality—ability to produce clear and pleasant tone.

Worship set—ability to put an arrangement of songs together that is thematic, directs the audience's attention toward God, and elicits a worshipful response.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion; able to draw a worshipful response.
Interpretation—actual conveyance of the message of the song through the overall presentation.
Memorization—strong knowledge of the lyrics and melody of the song(s).
Preparation—an apparent effort of thought and time in preparation.
Understandable concept—the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

writing division

writing division

categories

Registrants in the Writing Division may submit entries in the following categories:

Book Chapter, Jr.

Book Chapter, Sr.

Children's Literature

First Person Essay, Jr.

First Person Essay, Sr.

Flash Fiction

Mini Saga

Poetry, Jr.

Poetry, Sr.

Kappa Tau First Person Essay

Kappa Tau Poetry

information

Read the General Information and General Rules on pages 13–23.

Kappa Tau category participants must meet Kappa Tau Participant Requirements on page 14.

Categories designated as Jr. are open to students enrolled in grades 6–8 during the 2025–2026 school year (or at least age 12 per participant requirements above). See page 14.

Categories designated as Sr. are open to students enrolled in grades 9–12 during the 2025–2026 school year. See page 14.

Categories not designated as Jr., Sr., or KT fall under the Fine Arts Participant Guidelines ages and grades found on page 13.

district festival delivery instructions

For rules and guidelines pertaining to the evaluation process, delivery instructions, and deadlines for Writing Division entries for your district festival, contact your district youth director or district Fine Arts coordinator.

nfaf delivery instructions

Writing entries must be uploaded (with the exception of Children's Literature) to uploads.faf.ag.org. Writing entries registered for, but still not received by the NFAF on July 1, 2026, are considered canceled and no attempt is made by the NFAF to obtain the entries.

Writing entries are not returned to participants.

Writing entries (except Children's Literature) must be submitted as one PDF attachment per category (inclusive of title page, summary [Book Chapter], entry).

nfaf information

A Writing entry participant is not required to be present at the NFAF.

Writing entry participants not attending the NFAF in person must meet registration deadlines and pay the full registration fee.

Children's Literature entries must be picked up **before noon on Friday, July 31, 2026**. All entries not picked up are considered discarded as of 3 p.m. on Friday, July 31, 2026 and no further attempt to return to participants is made.

writing

Rules (apply to all Writing Division categories)

1. Entries must be an original work of 1 student and not submitted to any previous Assemblies of God Fine Arts Festival (with the exception of the festival[s] the entry advanced from). Entries may not be adaptations of another's concept.

2. Entries (except Children's Literature, see page 103) must be submitted as a PDF, typed in a 12-point, black, Times New Roman or Arial font, double-spaced with at least 1-inch margins on all sides, and may not contain art, WordArt, borders, etc. See NFAF Delivery Instructions on page 103.

3. Submissions must include a title page on page 1 of the document (except Children's Literature where it is required at the beginning of the book). The following information is required in the order given below on the title page for every entry. See individual category rules for additional requirements:

   - Title
   - Category (must use official category name as stated on page 100)
   - Author
   - Grade (All Kappa Tau entries should list "Post-Secondary" on this line)
   - Church name, city, state
   - Word count (not required for Mini Saga or Poetry)
   - Line Count (Poetry only)
   - Illustrator(s) (Children's Literature only)
   - Explanation of medium (how the illustrations were created) (Children's Literature only)

4. AI policy: Assemblies of God Youth Ministries and The General Council of the Assemblies of God are not responsible for assuring that all material included in students' work is in compliance with existing copyright laws and the AI policy. It is the responsibility of the students, parents, and youth leaders to be completely legal and ethical in their conduct. Students may not copy another writer's concept or claim another individual or company's work as their own. See page 21 for an additional list of guidelines.

   Consult the rules under each category for further guidelines.

book chapter

Rules

1. The Book Chapter entry is for the submission of the first chapter of either a fiction or nonfiction book for a target audience of teens to adults.

2. The first chapter of the book submission must be 1,500–1,800 words.

3. The writer must include a summary of the book of no more than 150 words.

4. The chapter must communicate a Christian message.

5. Submissions must include a title page on page 1 of the document, the summary on page 2, and the Book Chapter beginning on page 3. See page 101 for Title Page requirements.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message.
Originality—unique use of original and creative ideas; demonstration of a fresh approach.
Style—keeps within genre.
Title selection—interesting title.

COMMUNICATION
Development—strong incorporation of key components (plot, character development, and conflict).
Flow of thought—connected ideas and flow.
Freshness of expression—avoidance of clichés; creating fresh and vivid imagery.
Use of language—proper usage and easily understood components of the English language.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Grammar—correct verb tenses, usage of pronouns, etc.
Mechanics/spelling—correct word spelling.
Punctuation—correct use of commas, semicolons, apostrophes, etc.
Sentence structure—proper placement of phrases and words.
Transitional elements—consistent flow of topics from paragraph to paragraph.
Unique wording—excellent word selection; avoidance of repetitive or common vocabulary.
Visual elements—cover sheet, spacing, margins, and word count.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Effectiveness—overall ability of the writer to capture interest and impact the reader.
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Preparation—an apparent effort of time and thought in preparing the piece.
Understandable concept—combination of the selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

children's literature

District Festival Delivery Instructions

For rules and guidelines pertaining to the evaluation process, delivery instructions, and deadlines for Writing Division entries for your district festival, contact your district youth director or district Fine Arts coordinator.

NFAF Delivery Instructions

One copy must be hand-delivered to the Art/Film/Writing Check-In Booth by the student or an adult representative of the student following the completion of On-Site Check-In on Monday, July 27, 2026, between **8 a.m. and 6 p.m.** Children's Literature entries are not accepted prior to On-Site Check-In or after On-Site Check-In closes on July 27, 2026.

NFAF Pick-Up Process

Children's Literature entries must be picked up at the NFAF by the participant or an adult representing the participant on Friday, July 31, 2026, between **8 a.m. and noon**. All entries not picked up are considered discarded as of 3 p.m. on Friday, July 31, 2026 and no further attempt to return to participants is made.

Rules

1. Children's Literature is the art of writing and illustrating an entire children's book with a target audience of a toddler or early reader (first to third grades) with words and illustrations that are age appropriate.
2. The Children's Literature entry may be created by 1 to 10 eligible students.
3. Illustrations may take the form of drawing, painting, or full-color computer-generated graphics produced from illustrator software. Clip art is not acceptable.
4. The entry must read like a book; participants may not submit a manuscript with separate illustrations.
5. The creator(s) is not required to be present at the NFAF. However, the registration form must be completed and the appropriate fees paid.
6. The story may not be more than 800 words in length.
7. The children's book must communicate a Christian message.
8. The entry must include a title page at the beginning of the book. See page 101 for Title Page requirements.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty; age-appropriate approach.
Christian message—presents a clear Christian message.
Originality—unique use of original and creative ideas; demonstration of a fresh approach.
Style—keeps within genre.
Title selection—interesting title.

COMMUNICATION
Development—strong incorporation of key components (plot, character development, conflict, and resolution).
Flow of thought—ideas connecting from the beginning to the end of the piece.
Freshness of expression—avoidance of clichés; creating fresh and vivid imagery.
Use of language—age appropriate; proper usage and easily understood components of the English language.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Consistency—consistent use of medium.
Flow—a natural flow of story and images.
Grammar—correct verb tenses, usage of pronouns, etc.
Mechanics/spelling—correct word spelling.
Punctuation—correct use of commas, semicolons, apostrophes, etc.
Sentence structure—proper placement of phrases and words.

Unique wording—excellent word selection; avoidance of repetitive or common vocabulary.
Use of illustrations—excellent development and use of age-appropriate illustrations.
Visual elements—cover sheet, illustrations, spacing, and/or other creative, age-appropriate enhancements.
Visual impact—illustration imagery that is visually compelling; neatness.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Effectiveness—overall impact.
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Preparation—an apparent effort of time and thought in preparing the piece.
Understandable concept—combination of the selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

first person essay

Rules

1. A First Person Essay is the art of writing an essay based on personal experience.
2. A First Person Essay must have a minimum of 500 words and a maximum of 1,200 words, not including the title. Dialogue is allowed.
3. The entry must include a title page on page 1 of the document with the First Person Essay beginning on page 2. See page 101 for Title Page requirements.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Originality—unique use of original and creative ideas; demonstration of a fresh approach.
Style—keeps within genre (nonfiction, written in first person).

COMMUNICATION
Flow of thought—ideas connecting from the beginning to the end of the piece.
Freshness of expression—avoidance of clichés; creating fresh and vivid imagery.
Title selection—definite reflection of the tone and message of the essay.
Unique wording—excellent word selection; avoidance of repetitive or common vocabulary.
Use of language—proper usage and easily understood components of the English language.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Development—strong incorporation of key components (conflict, plot, and resolution involving speaker).
Grammar—correct verb tenses, usage of pronouns, etc.
Mechanics/spelling—correct word spelling.
Punctuation—correct use of commas, semicolons, apostrophes, etc.
Sentence structure—proper placement of phrases and words.
Transitional elements—consistent flow of topics from paragraph to paragraph.
Visual elements—cover sheet, spacing, margins, and word count.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Interpretation—overall conveyance of writer's theme-related idea.
Preparation—an apparent effort of time and thought in preparing the piece.
Understandable concept—combination of the selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

flash fiction

Rules

1. Flash Fiction is the art of writing a compelling fictional tale in few words.
2. Flash Fiction entries are bound by a 600-word maximum, not including the title. Dialogue is allowed.
3. The entry must include a title page on page 1 of the document with the Flash Fiction beginning on page 2. See page 101 for Title Page requirements.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Originality—unique use of original and creative ideas; demonstration of a fresh approach.
Style—keeps within genre (fiction, nonfiction, written in first person, etc.).

COMMUNICATION
Flow of thought—ideas connecting from the beginning to the end of the piece.
Freshness of expression—avoidance of clichés; creating fresh and vivid imagery.
Title selection—definite reflection of the tone and message of the essay.
Unique wording—excellent word selection; avoidance of repetitive or common vocabulary.
Use of language—proper usage and easily understood components of the English language.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Development—strong incorporation of key components (conflict, plot, and resolution involving speaker).
Grammar—correct verb tenses, usage of pronouns, etc.
Mechanics/spelling—correct word spelling.
Punctuation—correct use of commas, semicolons, apostrophes, etc.
Sentence structure—proper placement of phrases and words.
Transitional elements—consistent flow of topics from paragraph to paragraph.
Visual elements—cover sheet, spacing, margins, and word count.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Interpretation—overall conveyance of writer's theme-related idea.
Preparation—an apparent effort of time and thought in preparing the piece.
Understandable concept—combination of the selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

mini saga

Rules

1. A Mini Saga is a piece of writing which has exactly 50 words, not including the title, which can have up to 15 words. A Mini Saga must tell a complete story with a beginning, middle, and end.
2. The entry must include a title page on page 1 of the document with the Mini Saga on page 2. See page 101 for Title Page requirements.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Originality—unique use of original and creative ideas; demonstration of a fresh approach.
Style—keeps within genre (Mini Saga: 50 words exactly).

COMMUNICATION
Flow of thought—ideas connecting from the beginning to the end of the piece.
Freshness of expression—avoidance of clichés; creating fresh and vivid imagery.
Title selection—definite reflection of the tone and message of the essay.
Unique wording—excellent word selection; avoidance of repetitive or common vocabulary.
Use of language—proper usage and easily understood components of the English language.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Development—strong incorporation of key components (conflict, plot, and resolution involving speaker).
Grammar—correct verb tenses, usage of pronouns, etc.
Mechanics/spelling—correct word spelling.
Punctuation—correct use of commas, semicolons, apostrophes, etc.
Sentence structure—proper placement of phrases and words.
Transitional elements—concise and interesting flow.
Visual elements—cover sheet, spacing, margins, and word count.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Interpretation—overall conveyance of writer's theme-related idea.
Preparation—an apparent effort of time and thought in preparing the piece.
Understandable concept—combination of the selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

poetry

Rules

1. A Poetry entry is the art of composing a piece of literature that uses the sounds and layered meaning of words to evoke a feeling or communicate an idea. Poetry is often referred to as the best words in the best order.

2. A Poetry entry may be rhymed, unrhymed verse, metered, or free verse, with a maximum of 30 lines of text.

3. Poetry entries are not required to be double-spaced.

4. The entry must include a title page on page 1 of the document with the Poetry beginning on page 2. See page 101 for Title Page requirements.

Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION
Appropriate—appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
Originality—unique use of original and creative ideas; demonstration of a fresh approach.
Style—keeps within genre (fiction, nonfiction, written in first person, etc.).

COMMUNICATION
Flow of thought—ideas connecting from the beginning to the end of the piece.
Freshness of expression—avoidance of clichés; creating fresh and vivid imagery.
Title selection—definite reflection of the tone and message of the essay.
Unique wording—excellent word selection; avoidance of repetitive or common vocabulary.
Use of language—proper usage and easily understood components of the English language.

PRESENTATION AND TECHNIQUE
Development—strong incorporation of key components (conflict, plot, and resolution involving speaker).
Grammar—correct verb tenses, usage of pronouns, etc.
Mechanics/spelling—correct word spelling.
Punctuation—correct use of commas, semicolons, apostrophes, etc.
Sentence structure—proper placement of phrases and words.
Transitional elements—consistent flow of topics from paragraph to paragraph.
Visual elements—cover sheet, spacing, margins, and word count.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS
Evident ministry—evidence of spiritual motivation demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
Interpretation—overall conveyance of writer's theme-related idea.
Preparation—an apparent effort of time and thought in preparing the piece.
Understandable concept—combination of the selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.

complete category listing

art division

Apparel Design
Fiber Art
Fine Art Photography, Digital Camera, Jr.
Fine Art Photography, Digital Camera, Sr.
Fine Art Photography, Mobile Device, Jr.
Fine Art Photography, Mobile Device, Sr.
Graphic Design
Lifestyle & Ministry Photography, Digital Camera, Jr.
Lifestyle & Ministry Photography, Digital Camera, Sr.
Lifestyle & Ministry Photography, Mobile Device, Jr.
Lifestyle & Ministry Photography, Mobile Device, Sr.
Photography, Film
Visual Art, Three-Dimensional
Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Alternative Media
Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Painting and Drawing, Jr.
Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Painting and Drawing, Sr.
Kappa Tau Fiber Art
Kappa Tau Graphic Design
Kappa Tau Photography, Digital Camera
Kappa Tau Photography, Mobile Device
Kappa Tau T-Shirt Design
Kappa Tau Visual Art, Two-Dimensional, Painting & Drawing

communication division

American Sign Language Group
American Sign Language Solo
Children's Lesson Group
Children's Lesson Solo
Promo Video
Puppetry Group
Puppetry Solo
Short Film
Short Sermon, Jr.
Short Sermon, Sr.
Short Sermon, Spanish
Spoken Word
Kappa Tau American Sign Language Solo
Kappa Tau Short Film
Kappa Tau Short Sermon
Kappa Tau Spoken Word

dance division

Hip Hop Dance Crew
Hip Hop Solo
Praise Dance Troupe
Step Troupe
Worship Dance Solo, Jr.
Worship Dance Solo, Sr.
Worship Dance Troupe, Large
Worship Dance Troupe, Small
Kappa Tau Hip Hop Solo
Kappa Tau Worship Dance Solo

drama division

Drama Ensemble, Large
Drama Ensemble, Small
Drama Solo
Dramatized Quoting, Solo
Dramatized Quoting, Ensemble
Human Video Ensemble, Large, Jr.
Human Video Ensemble, Large
Human Video Ensemble, Small
Human Video Solo, Jr.
Human Video Solo, Sr.
Musical Theater, Ensemble, Small
Musical Theater, Ensemble, Large
Musical Theater, Solo, Jr.
Musical Theater, Solo, Sr.
Readers Theater
Stand-Up Comedy
Kappa Tau Drama Solo
Kappa Tau Dramatized Quoting, Solo
Kappa Tau Human Video Ensemble
Kappa Tau Human Video Solo

exhibition division

Music Production
Kappa Tau Music Production

instrumental division

Bass Solo
Brass Solo
Guitar Solo
Instrumental Ensemble, Contemporary
Instrumental Ensemble, Traditional
Instrumental Solo, Folk
Percussion Ensemble, Traditional
Percussion Solo, Traditional, Jr.
Percussion Solo, Traditional, Sr.
Percussion, Unconventional
Piano Solo, Classical
Piano Solo, Jr.
Piano Solo, Sr.
String Solo
Woodwind Solo
Kappa Tau Guitar Solo
Kappa Tau Piano Solo

vocal division

Choir
Christian Band
Rap Group
Rap Solo
Songwriting
Spanish Vocal Solo, Female
Spanish Vocal Solo, Male
Vocal Ensemble, Large
Vocal Ensemble, Small
Vocal Ensemble, Spanish
Vocal Solo, Classical, Sr.
Vocal Solo, Female, Jr.
Vocal Solo, Female, Sr.
Vocal Solo, Male, Jr.
Vocal Solo, Male, Sr.
Worship Leading, Solo, Jr.
Worship Leading, Solo, Sr.
Worship Team, Large
Worship Team, Small
Kappa Tau Rap Solo
Kappa Tau Songwriting
Kappa Tau Vocal Solo, Female
Kappa Tau Vocal Solo, Male
Kappa Tau Worship Team

writing division

Book Chapter, Jr.
Book Chapter, Sr.
Children's Literature
First Person Essay, Jr.
First Person Essay, Sr.
Flash Fiction
Mini Saga
Poetry, Jr.
Poetry, Sr.
Kappa Tau First Person Essay
Kappa Tau Poetry