



2026 Minnesota NATS

Student Auditions Handbook

Minnesota NATS Board of Directors

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General Information

Event Schedule (tentative)

FRIDAY, November 6, 2026 – Bemidji State University, Bemidji, MN

- **8:00AM: Adjudicators Meeting.** This meeting is required for all members whose first judging assignment begins before 11:00am.
- **8:30AM: Preliminary Auditions begin** for all categories.
- **12:30-1:45PM: Members Lunch and Minnesota NATS Fall Business Meeting**
- **2:00-8:00PM: Preliminary Auditions continue** for all categories

SATURDAY, November 7, 2026 – Bemidji State University, Bemidji, MN

- **7:30-8:15AM:** Coffee and Chat
- **8:00AM-9:45PM:** Workshop with Jennifer Olson
- **10:00AM-12:00PM:** Musical Theater Finals
- **12:00AM-1:00PM:** Lunch on your own
- **1:00PM onward:** Classical Finals

Member Lunch and Chapter Business Meeting

Our business meeting will be Friday November 6 at 12:30PM. A lunch buffet will be offered with vegetarian and gluten free options. The price is \$20 per lunch, payable during online registration. Members may also purchase lunch(es) for their collaborative pianist(s). Students are not allowed.

Please email all business meeting agenda items to the Minnesota NATS President Karen Wilkerson at wilkerso@stolaf.edu.

NATS Copyright Policy Resources

NATS encourages its members, their students, accompanists and the general population to become educated about, and to comply with, all applicable copyright laws. Reproduction of a copyrighted work constitutes copyright infringement unless a license to reproduce such work has been obtained, the use is considered fair use, the work is in the public domain, or a valid exception to copyright infringement exists.

NATS requires students, teachers, and other participants in NATS affiliated events, auditions, and competitions to affirm their compliance with the [NATS Copyright Policy](#), and to use only published original sheet music/scores or authorized reproductions of copyrighted works.

More questions about this policy? Read the [FAQs on Copyright](#) on the www.nats.org.

Collaborative Pianists

Singer Limits/Maximum Registrations

Pianists may accompany up to 10 total registrations in the student auditions. Please be aware that *one* participant (singer) can register for *multiple* categories; in this scenario, the participant will count toward their pianist's limit according to the number of registrations they make. For example, a singer who registers for CL 7 and MT 7 will count as *two* registrations toward the pianist's limit of 10.

Using iPads and other Tablets

- The use of iPads and tablets for musical scores during all levels of NATS auditions has been approved and are held to the same standards of copyright as any other musical score used for auditions.
- As long as the singer and pianist affirm they are in compliance with the NATS Copyright Policy, the pianist may use a personal tablet to display a stored electronic version of sheet music. However, obvious copyright infringement will not be allowed, and may result in disqualification from the student auditions.
- **Adjudicators are not copyright investigators. This is solely the job of the Audition Chair.**

Member Attendance/Adjudication Requirement

Members who register students are required to serve as an adjudicator on both days of the student auditions. If you cannot adjudicate, you will be charged **\$150** to register students. This fee is assessed even if you must miss a portion of the weekend. No exceptions.

Consistency and Equity in Adjudicating Assignments

Because several categories will have high numbers of registration, the categories must be broken into different sessions for adjudication. To help scoring across the entire category be consistent and equitable for all participants, the same adjudicators will be assigned to all sessions of those categories in the preliminary rounds.

Singing in Multiple Categories

Participants may register in multiple categories for which they meet the age and level of study requirements. Remember that each registration counts toward the collaborative pianist's limit.

Adult (Avocational) Masterclass

Participants in CL 11 and CL 12 Adult Classical (formerly "Avocational") will sing in a Friday Masterclass. Prize money is not awarded to these categories.

Format of the Auditions

- Each singer entered in the same category is allotted the same amount of time to perform, e.g. 8, 10, 12, or 15 minutes. See [Category Time Limits](#).
- Time begins when the singer introduces themselves and/or begins their first selection, whichever happens first.
- Singers will perform their audition repertoire in the order they choose. The audition panel does not select the order of performance.
- Time continues to run between selections.

- The audition ends when the singer performs all repertoire entered OR when the audition time limit is reached, whichever comes first.
- During the audition, selections are to be sung in their entirety as prepared by the student and required by the NSA Regulations, without edits from adjudicators. Examples of prohibited edits include, but are not limited to: (1) requesting a singer start at the B section of a *da capo* aria, (2) suggesting a student skip a prepared recitative and start with the aria, or (3) stopping a student in the middle of a piece and asking them to move on to the next selection.
- Repertoire is heard as the time limit allows. If exceeding the audition's time limit, all repertoire will not be heard. An audition reaching the time limit will end when the time limit is reached even if a selection is in progress. Teachers should inform their students of this possibility. Adjudicators may not end an audition early, if any entered repertoire remains yet to be heard—even if insufficient time remains to hear a significant portion of any remaining songs or arias.
- When an adjudicator or timekeeper calls or signals "stop," the audition is completed and will end promptly. Singers and pianists must exit the audition room.
- Adjudicators respond in scoring and written feedback **without merit or penalty** for meeting, exceeding, or not filling the time limit required. Teachers/students are encouraged, but are not required, to select repertoire that fills the time limit assigned to the category entered.

Preliminary Round Results and Advancement to Finals

All categories will audition in the preliminary round on Friday, November 6. The top three scorers from each category will advance directly to the Finals on Saturday. There will not be any semi-finals in this year's auditions. Tie breakers will be used to ensure that only a maximum of three singers will advance to the Finals.

Finals will take place on Saturday. Finalists will choose one selection from their audition repertoire to perform in finals, and finalists will be ranked 1st, 2nd, or 3rd according to ballots cast by the entire Minnesota NATS membership in attendance.

Prizes and Awards

CATEGORY NUMBERS	PLACE	AMOUNT
CL 2, CL 3A, CL 3B, CL 4 MT 2, MT 3A, MT 3B, MT 4	1 st 2 nd 3 rd	\$100 \$75 \$50
CL 5A, CL 5B, CL 6A, CL 6B MT 5, MT 6	1 st 2 nd 3 rd	\$125 \$100 \$75
CL 7A, CL 7B, CL 8A, CL 8B MT 7, MT 8	1 st 2 nd 3 rd	\$175 \$150 \$125
CL 9, CL 10	1 st 2 nd 3 rd	\$225 \$175 \$150

Categories, Repertoire, and Terminology

Category Number/Name, Length of Study, Ages, and Time Limits

CATEGORY NUMBER AND NAME ▪ Treble: Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Contralto and Countertenor ▪ TBB: Tenor, Baritone, and Bass		LENGTH OF STUDY	AGE Maximum	TIME in minutes
Youth Categories				
MT 2	Youth Musical Theatre – All Voices	11-14 years old; 6 th –8 th grades	14	6
CL 2	Youth Classical – All Voices	11-14 years old; 6 th –8 th grades	14	6
High School Categories				
MT 3A	Lower HS Musical Theatre – Treble Voices	No Limit – all high school	19	8
MT 3B	Upper HS Musical Theatre – Treble Voices	No Limit – all high school	19	8
MT 4	HS Musical Theatre – TBB Voices	No Limit – all high school	19	8
CL 3A	Lower HS Classical – Treble Voices	No Limit – all high school	19	8
CL 3B	Upper HS Classical – Treble Voices	No Limit – all high school	19	8
CL 4	HS Classical – TBB Voices	No Limit – all high school	19	8
Lower Post-High School Categories				
MT 5	Lower Musical Theatre – Treble Voices	1-2 years, post high school	22	10
MT 6	Lower Musical Theatre – TBB Voices	1-2 years, post high school	22	10
CL 5A	1 st Year Classical – Treble Voices	1 year, post high school	20	10
CL 6A	1 st Year Classical – TBB Voices	1 year, post high school	20	10
CL 5B	2 nd Year Classical – Treble Voices	2 years, post high school	22	10
CL 6B	2 nd Year Classical – TBB Voices	2 years, post high school	22	10
Upper Post-High School Categories				
MT 7	Upper Musical Theatre – Treble Voices	3-5 years, post high school (not grad)	25	12
MT 8	Upper Musical Theatre – TBB Voices	3-5 years, post high school (not grad)	25	12
CL 7A	3 rd Year Classical – Treble Voices	3 years, post high school	23	12
CL 8A	3 rd Year Classical – TBB Voices	3 years, post high school	23	12
CL 7B	4 th & 5 th Year Classical – Treble Voices	4-5 years, post high school (not grad)	25	12
CL 8B	4 th & 5 th Year Classical – TBB Voices	4-5 years, post high school (not grad)	25	12
Advanced (Post-Baccalaureate) Categories				
CL 9	Advanced Classical – Treble Voices	4+ years, post high school	30	15
CL 10	Advanced Classical – TBB Voices	4+ years, post high school	30	15
Adult Categories				
CL 11	Adult Classical – Treble Voices	No Limit	None	15
CL 12	Adult Classical – TBB Voices	No Limit	None	15

Repertoire Requirements by Category

CATEGORY NUMBER & DESCRIPTION	REPERTOIRE REQUIREMENT
MT 2	TWO age-appropriate musical theatre selections contrasting by composer, tempo, and text. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or musical theatre song literature.
CL 2	TWO age-appropriate selections from classical repertoire contrasting by composer, tempo, and text.
MT 3A, MT 3B, MT 4, MT 5, and MT 6 High School and Lower Musical Theatre - All Voices	THREE musical theatre selections contrasting by composer, tempo, and text. Only <u>one</u> selection may be chosen from operetta <u>or</u> musical theatre song literature.
CL 3A, CL 3B, CL 4, CL 5A, CL 5B, CL 6A, CL 6B High School and 1 st – 2 nd Year Classical - All Voices	THREE selections from classical repertoire contrasting by composer, tempo, and text. One art song sung in English; English must be the original language. One art song in a language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
MT 7, MT 8 Upper Musical Theatre – All Voices	FOUR musical theatre selections contrasting by composer, tempo, and text. Only <u>one</u> selection may be chosen from an operetta <u>or</u> musical theatre song literature.
CL 7A, CL 7B, CL 8A, CL 8B 3 rd , 4 th , & 5 th Year Classical (not grad) – All Voices	FOUR selections from classical repertoire contrasting by composer, tempo, and text. One art song in English; English must be the original language. One art song in a language other than English. One aria. One additional selection from classical repertoire. At least three languages must be represented.
CL 9, CL 10 Advanced Classical – All Voices	FIVE selections from classical repertoire contrasting in composer, tempo, and text. One art song sung in English; English must be the original language. One art song in a language other than English. One opera aria. One oratorio/cantata aria. One additional selection from the classical repertoire. At least three languages must be represented.
CL 11, CL 12 Adult Classical – All Voices	THREE selections from classical repertoire contrasting by composer, tempo, and text. One art song in English; English must be the original language. One art song in language other than English. One additional art song or aria.

Common Student Auditions Terminology

Aria	An aria is a solo from an opera, oratorio, mass, cantata, zarzuela, operetta, or works titled "concert aria." Oxford Online definitions will be used for the purposes of NATS student auditions. For example, Purcell's selections from the semi-operas and masques are considered songs.
24/26/28 Italian Art Songs and Arias	The repertoire found in the 24/26/28 Italian Art Songs and Arias collections may be counted as an aria or an art song in the high school and lower classical categories. For the singers in the upper and advanced categories, these pieces may ONLY count as an art song, regardless of origin. Any repertoire found outside of these collections will be considered only as the composer intended as an art song OR aria.
Memorization	All repertoire must be performed from memory with the exception of Oratorio, Mass, Requiem, and Cantata Arias. Singers may hold legal copies of music scores for these types of arias as is traditional performance practice.
Original Languages	All selections should be sung in original language or in a published translation that is recognized as an acceptable standard in professional performance practice.
Art Song in English	English must be the original language set by the composer to meet the Art Song in English requirement.
Transposition Classical Categories	Published transpositions are permitted. Singers are expected to retain the composer's intended style of music and to convey the essence of the character portrayed in the larger work. Performances not fulfilling these requirements may result in lower scores from adjudicators. Octave displacement is a transposition.
Transposition Musical Theatre Categories	Published transpositions are permitted, but singers are expected to retain the composer's intended style of music and to convey the essence of the character portrayed in the larger work. Octave displacement is a transposition.
Judicious Cuts Classical Categories	Full, complete selections are required; however, judicious cuts in piano introductions, piano interludes, piano music after the vocal solo is completed as well as internal cuts of opera arias are allowed as is common professional performance practice. Cuts of verse or verses of selections are not allowed. In the case of strophic pieces, all verses should remain that are traditionally included.
Judicious Cuts Musical Theatre Categories	Full, complete musical theatre solos are required; however, as commonly found in professional performance practice: judicious cuts in piano introductions, piano interludes, piano music after the vocal solo is completed, and dance breaks in musical theatre selections are allowed. Brief lines from a second character may be cut. In the case of more than three verses, some verses may be cut.

The complete and official list of Student Auditions Terminology for Classical Categories can be found in the [NATS 2026-2027 NSA Classical Category Guide](#), pp. 12-15.

The complete and official list of Student Auditions Terminology for Musical Theater Categories can be found in the [NATS 2026-2027 NSA Musical Theater Category Guide](#), pp. 12-15.

Questions? Contact the Auditions Co-Chairs

If you have any questions regarding this process, please feel free to contact the Auditions Co-Chairs for Minnesota NATS, Kelly Burns and Holly Janz at minnesotanats@gmail.com.