

# Arkansas School Band and Orchestra Association



## Minutes from the General Business Meeting at All-State Music Conference

Saturday, February 21, 2026

*Draft Updated – 2/23/2026*

Call to Order – Ralph Brody

Moment of Silence – Invocation –

Roll Call:

Ralph Brody, President 2025-2026; Erica Hann, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President;

Brian Pearson, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President; Jon Shultz, Rachel Loretz, and Mark Bailey Board Members; Greg Bruner, Parliamentarian;

Dewayne Dove, Executive Secretary-Treasurer; Scott 'Rudy' Villines, Immediate Past President; Casey Buck, State Orchestra Chair;

Region Chairs –Jennifer Michaels – South Orchestra; Logan Mabry – North Orchestra; Daniel Cooper – 1; Brian York – III; Rusty

Hart – IV; Kim Webb – V; Jacob Lehman – VIII; Stephanie Huffmaster – IX

Executive Advisory – Greg Bruner, Matt Teague, Tammy Sangster, Doug Blevins, and Keith Matthews, Scott Villines, and Ralph Brody

Past Presidents –

Explanation of Voting Procedure – Parliamentarian explains the voting process.

Mr. Bruner informs the group of voting procedures.

## AGENDA

### Committee Reports

Honor Ensemble Committee – Kara Reynolds, Chair

Congratulations to Fouke Paulette Smith Middle School, Kara Compton Director and Don Tyson School of Innovation Middle School Symphonic band, John Vinzant Director for great performances Friday as the JH Honor Ensembles.

2026 applications will be EEE and EEEE for performance at the 2027 All-State Convention.

### Still in Committee

O.1.24 Amend Article I, Section H, point 14 to read "All Region Chairs will be elected for a period of two years. Regions I, III, V, VII, and IX will hold elections on odd numbered years and II, IV, VI, and VIII on even years. (Revised 1996) The North Orchestra Region Chair will be elected at the All-**State Region** Clinic by a majority vote of the North Region members on ~~odd~~ **even** numbered years. The South Orchestra Region Chair will be elected at the All-State Clinic by a majority vote of the South Region members on even numbered years."

Proposed by: Anthony Verge/Mike Burkepile

FOR: 21 AGAINST: 0 ABSTAIN: 0

*Rationale - Orchestra regions do not have a Spring Region meeting in March/April like the bands do. More orchestra directors, especially those who only teach MS/JH, attend the Fall Meeting in November at All-Region Orchestra Clinic than the Orchestra Region Meeting at the All-State Music Conference in February. The newly-elected Region Chair will take over duties on March 1 (per the Constitution). The North and South Region Chair elections will still happen in different school years.*

**Region Recommendation: DO PASS**

**Motion to send back to the Orchestra for clarification.**

**Proposed by: Julia Reynolds/Kara Reynolds**

**FOR: 23 AGAINST: 0 ABSTAIN: 1**

*Rationale – During discussion, there was confusion on whether this was to also affect the South Orchestra Region. The board felt like this needed to be sent back for clarification.*

**9.4.24 Have the Executive Advisory Committee investigate increasing the fee of the All-Region Band clinic to cover the cost of a 5<sup>th</sup> clinician (for example: percussion ensemble clinician.)**

**Proposed by: Matt Hines/Scott Strickland**

**FOR: 41 AGAINST: 0 ABSTAIN: 0**

*Rationale – Region level events are not allowed to operate at a loss. All of the clinicians should be fairly compensated without risking the event running at a loss. Raising the fee by \$2.00, for example, should more than allow for a 5<sup>th</sup> clinician to be paid the same rate as the other four clinicians we currently budget for.*

**Region Recommendation: DO PASS**

**Board Recommends: DO PASS (to send to committee)**

*Rationale – The board agrees that this needs to be studied by the Executive Advisory Committee.*

**Still in Executive Advisory Committee**

**6.5.25 Proposal: Alternative Performance Option for Band Assessment**

**Bands that choose to perform a complete multi movement piece that is:**

- 1. At least a total of 17 minutes of playtime (5A-7A) or 13 minutes (1A-4A), and**
- 2. At least one grade level above their minimum requirement, may forfeit their third piece and be assessed on the multi movement selection along with the required march.**

**Proposed by Tim Hendrix/Nick Moore**

**FOR: 24 AGAINST: 0 ABSTAIN: 9**

**Rationale –**

**Objective: To allow bands the opportunity to showcase advanced musicianship and musical depth by performing a multimovement work of extended length in lieu of the traditional three-piece performance requirement.**

- 1. Encouraging Advanced Repertoire**  
Multimovement works often provide significant opportunities for musical growth, requiring students to master a wide range of styles, techniques, and interpretative skills within a single piece.  
By allowing this option, the policy incentivizes bands to push their technical and artistic boundaries by selecting repertoire beyond their standard requirement.
- 2. Time Considerations**  
Traditional assessments require bands to perform two selections and a march. A multimovement work with a total playtime of 17 minutes (6A-7A) or 13 minutes (All other ensembles) or longer, paired with a march, would often meet or exceed the duration of the traditional program. This adjustment ensures time efficiency without compromising the depth of assessment.
- 3. Educational Benefits**  
Multimovement pieces demand:  
Sustained focus and endurance.  
Comprehensive understanding of contrasting movements.  
Collaboration to achieve cohesion across movements.  
These skills enhance student musicianship and contribute to their overall music education.
- 4. Artistic Integrity**  
Many multimovement works are written as cohesive units designed to be performed in their entirety. Forfeiting the requirement to perform an additional piece allows bands to present the complete work as intended by the composer, fostering a deeper appreciation for musical form and artistry.
- 5. Flexibility in Assessment**  
This alternative recognizes the diverse strengths of different bands. While some may excel in breadth by performing three shorter pieces, others may shine by demonstrating depth in a longer, more challenging work. We already do this, but in reverse.

**Region Recommendation: DO PASS**

**Motion to send to the Music Materials Committee.**

**Proposed by Julia Reynolds/Brian Pearson**

**FOR: 24 AGAINST: 0 ABSTAIN: 0**

**Action: Sent to committee**

*Rationale – The board felt like this would need to be studied by the committee. They also felt like if this were to pass, there would need to be a list of music created that meets these requirements.*

**Still in Music Materials Committee**

**SC 8.1 CD Tracks** should be made available in the senior high drum set room that have, for each etude it has, separate tracks for each rehearsal mark with a count in start with beginning and ending at first rehearsal mark. Subsequent rehearsal mark start with count off to next rehearsal mark end. Etudes must have rehearsal marks notated in the sheet music.

*Rationale: Every year the choices for cuts is very difficult. The stress of starting the CD in a "drop the needle" fashion is not beneficial to the student or judge. It sets itself up for inconsistencies. Mistakes are often made with the judge counting them in. It is not fair to any student if the judge "nails it" on one count off for the auditioning student and messes it up for another. Starting over with the count in is too time consuming.*

Dustin Chambers/Crystal Reeves

**FOR: 49 AGAINST: 0 ABSTAIN: 4**

**Board Recommendation:**

**Motion: Send to the State Jazz Committee to investigate including copyright.**

Greg Bruner/Kara Reynolds

**FOR: UNANIMOUS**

Still in State Jazz Committee

SC 8.1 -

The committee has unanimously voted for this proposal to stay in committee so each of the members can discuss this with ASBOA members from each region who have judged jazz drum set auditions. After collecting the data from those members, we will have a clearer idea and understanding of how this has or has not affected auditions in all regions or at the state level in recent years.

**Action: Still in State Jazz Committee**

**Proposal 5.2.25** – To replace the improvisational exercises for drumset with a solo format that will better reflect a real-life soloing situation that a drummer in a jazz band would experience, while at the same time allowing the all-region and all-state process to evaluate the drum set players on skills that are not addressed with the current soloing format.

**Proposed by: Ben White/Eric Watson**

**Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

**For: 5 Against: 1 Abstain: 2**

*Rationale: The jazz committee feels that the proposal for the senior high drum set improvisation material will help students be more accurately and effectively judged in region and state auditions. This format will provide the students with more opportunities to truly improvise versus what is currently in place where they are generally playing another lead sheet exercise that doesn't provide many (if any) opportunities to improvise.*

**Note:**

The solo sheets will not require a track and will replace the Aebersold improvisation tracks for drum set. See attached.

**Action: No Action** – Must provide the board the music 15 days in advance of the vote, and the membership 8 days in advance of the vote.

This will be voted on at All-State.

**Board Recommends – DO PASS**

**19 – FOR, 0 – AGAINST, 0 – ABSTAIN**

*Rationale – The board agrees with the jazz committee's rationale.*

**Action: DO PASS**

**4.6.25** To preserve the spirit of jazz and advocate for authentic Improvisation in auditions...have the ASBOA Jazz Committee look at and study the concern of a growing number of students it's Jazz auditions with the same solo for the improvisation section of jazz auditions. These "improvised" solos are performed identically, note-for-note, rhythm-for-rhythm, across instrument families. While this may be done with good intentions, it fundamentally undermines the core of jazz music while also hindering students' growth as creative, independent musicians. Another concerning aspect of students playing the same solo is that it interferes with the integrity of the audition process. A judge can identify if a student is theirs, or not theirs, when multiple students play the same "improvised" solo.

**Proposed by Alford/Ashley**

**FOR: 21 AGAINST: 0 ABSTAIN: 5**

*Rationale – The heart of this proposal is to reaffirm the value of true improvisation in our auditions, allowing students to explore, create, and express themselves within the genre's authentic traditions, while maintaining the integrity of the audition process.*

*Jazz, by its very nature, is rooted in spontaneity, individual expression, and personal voice. When directors/teachers write out solos that students memorize and repeat:*

- 1. It Limits Creative Development. Improvisation teaches students how to think musically, take risks, and listen deeply. Pre-written solos, especially those not written out by the students themselves, rob students of the chance to develop these essential skills.*
- 2. It Creates a Performance Over Learning Environment. While performance is important, jazz education should prioritize the process over the product. Prioritizing solos that are written out for students to memorize often shifts focus away from creativity and exploration and towards gathering points.*
- 3. It Misrepresents the Genre. Calling a pre-composed, memorized solo that another person gives you "improvisation" distorts the meaning of the word. Students learn that there is a "right way" to solo, when in reality, jazz celebrates unique interpretation and real-time decision-making.*

4. *It Disengages Students from the History and Culture of Jazz.* Jazz was born from the African American experience—a tradition of resilience, expression, and innovation. Sanitizing improvisation undermines its cultural integrity and educational power.

**Recommendations**

1. *Talk with your Students About the Difference Between Sharing Musical Ideas and Playing the Same Solo.* We want to encourage our students to work together and collaborate during the learning process without crossing boundaries and preparing the same solo. There will be similarities when students collaborate to practice improvisation, but the solos will not be identical. Just like when an English class writes an essay on one topic. There will be similarities with the other essays, but the words and ideas will not be exactly the same.

2. *Encourage Scaffolded Improvisation.* Instead of handing students a written solo, provide tools: scales, chord changes, call-and-response exercises, and listening sessions. Let them build solos from the ground up.

3. *Create Safe Spaces for Exploration.* Foster a classroom culture where risk-taking is celebrated and “mistakes” are part of the learning process.

4. *Use Transcriptions as a Learning Tool, Not a Final Product.* Learning classic solos by ear is an essential step in jazz education, but students should then be encouraged to adapt and build upon them, not simply recite them. Improvisation is not just a skill—it’s the heart of jazz. By keeping improvisation in its rightful place in the audition process, we empower students to become not just better musicians, but more confident, creative, and expressive individuals.

*Proposed steps to take when students are playing the same solo at the audition ....*

1) *If a judge begins to hear students playing the exact same solos during the improvisation section of the audition, they need to write down the audition numbers of those students.*

2) *After they are done judging, the judges should alert the Region Chair about which students came into the room playing the exact same solo and give the chair the audition numbers of those students.*

3) *Working with the tally room supervisor, the Region Chair will investigate the problem (talk with the director(s) of the students/talk with the students/talk with the judge(s)).*

4) *The ASBOA executive secretary will be notified and if necessary, an investigation can be opened and the rules committee contacted.*

**Region Recommendation: DO PASS**

**Motion to send to the All-State Jazz Committee.**

**Proposed by: Jon Shultz/Keith Matthews**

**FOR: 19 AGAINST: 3 ABSTAIN: 2**

**Action: Sent to Committee**

*Rationale – This will need to be studied by the committee to see if this is feasible and to create a plan of action.*

**Sent to Rules Committee**

#### Old Business

**Motion:** To clean up the wording in the percussion proposal passed on July 31, 2025 concerning the high school keyboard tryout – At the region level, regions may choose to use either the 2-mallet or the 4-mallet exercise. At the state level, only the 4-mallet exercise will be used. Only one exercise will be used during the tryouts.

**Proposed by: Sean Lane/Chris Johns**

**To be voted on at All-State.**

**Board Recommends – DO PASS**

**19 – FOR, 0 – AGAINST, 0 – ABSTAIN**

*Rationale – This cleans up the wording to be the intent from the percussion committee. This makes keyboard have the same amount of weight as the snare and timpani.*

**Action: DO PASS**

#### New Business

**No new business**

**Motion to adjourn by Brian Pearson/Josh Jackson**

**Action: DO PASS**