

# Florida School Music Association

## Accommodations Framework for Students with Disabilities

### Purpose

The Florida School Music Association (FSMA) is committed to ensuring that all students, including those with disabilities, have equal access to state-sponsored events such as Music Performance Assessments (MPA) (e.g., Marching, Solos and Ensembles, Concert, Jazz, Auxiliary). Accommodations are intended to remove barriers while maintaining the integrity and rigor of the event.

### Guiding Principles

- Equity, not advantage — Accommodations provide equal opportunity, not preferential treatment.
- Universal Design — Proactive strategies benefit all participants and reduce the need for individual adjustments.
- Individualization — Requests are considered on a case-by-case basis and tailored to the specific student.
- Collaboration — Directors, district chairs, FSMA staff, and adjudicators work together to implement approved accommodations.

### General Disability Categories

For the purposes of this framework, “disability” includes, but is not limited to:

- Learning disabilities (e.g., affecting reading, writing, math, or processing speed)
- Physical or mobility impairments
- Sensory impairments (vision or hearing)
- Attention-related conditions (e.g., ADHD)
- Autism spectrum disorders
- Medical conditions (permanent or temporary)
- Mental health conditions

Specific medical or diagnostic details are not required for committee review; documentation should be provided by an appropriate school or district official.

### Universal Design Strategies for FSMA Events

- Provide schedules, room locations, and warm-up procedures well in advance.
- Use multiple formats for event instructions (written, verbal, visual).
- Allow for flexible warm-up and performance timing when possible.
- Ensure performance areas are accessible for mobility and sensory needs.
- Provide clear sightlines and amplification when needed.
- Include accommodation awareness in adjudicator training.

## **Examples of Accommodations**

### For Performances

- Additional warm-up time or alternate warm-up location
- Modified set-up (e.g., seating arrangement, instrument positioning)
- Accessible performance space (ramps, clear pathways, adjusted lighting)
- Quiet or reduced-distraction environment
- Use of assistive technology (e.g., screen reader, magnifier, audio playback)
- Alternative format for sight-reading (e.g., enlarged print, Braille)

### **Request Process**

- Initiation — The Director completes the FSMA Accommodations Request Form and submits it to the district chair at least 30 days before the event (or as soon as a need is identified).
- Documentation — Verification from the school/district confirming the student's need for accommodations (no medical details required).
- District Review — District chair reviews and approves/denies within 5 business days of receipt; decisions are shared with event adjudicators and site coordinators.
- State Oversight — FSMA maintains oversight to ensure consistency and address concerns.

### **Appeals Process**

- Step 1 — If a request is denied, the director may submit a written appeal to the FSMA Accommodations Committee within 5 business days of receiving the decision.
- Step 2 — The committee reviews the appeal and responds within 10 business days.
- Step 3 — If disagreement remains, the appeal is forwarded to the FSMA Executive Board for final review and decision.

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

- Director — Initiates requests, communicates with families, and ensures compliance with deadlines.
- District Chair — Reviews and approves/denies requests, coordinates local implementation.
- Event Host — Ensures physical and logistical accommodations are in place.
- Adjudicators — Adheres to accommodations without bias; focuses on performance standards.
- FSMA — Oversees process, maintains records, provides training, and ensures equity.

### **Training & Awareness**

- All adjudicators and district chairs will receive training on FSMA's accommodation policies.
- Training will include examples, confidentiality requirements, and non-biased practices.

**Additional Resources**

- LD Online – [www.ldonline.com](http://www.ldonline.com)
- Learning Disabilities Association of America – [www.ldanatl.org](http://www.ldanatl.org)
- Center for Universal Design in Education – [www.uw.edu/doiit/CUDE](http://www.uw.edu/doiit/CUDE)

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