

2010 WLHS Grade School Piano Festival Information

1) What is the Wisconsin Lutheran Grade School Piano Festival?

This is an opportunity for grade school students to play before a judge and receive comments on their performance. This is similar to the WSMA and Federation contests. They will receive oral and written comments and a medal. The ratings for their performance will be I, II, or III (from highest to lowest). Students entered in the Advanced and Intermediate levels will be eligible to be considered for the Piano Honors Recital. Those students who give an outstanding performance are selected by our adjudicators and will be awarded a *I rating and are invited to perform at the honors recital on Saturday, March 13th (7:00p.m.).

2) Who is eligible for this?

All piano students from grade 4 through grade 8 who study with a teacher who is a member of a WELS congregation or who teaches piano at a WELS school may enter the festival.

3) Where is this held?

Wisconsin Lutheran High School is located in Milwaukee, four blocks north of Hwy. 94 on 84th Street, just south of Bluemound Road. Visit www.wlhs.org for directions.

4) When?

The festival will be held Saturday, March 13th between 8:00a.m. and 5:00p.m., with the honors recital at 7:00p.m. Each child will receive a specific playing time from their piano teacher.

5) What are the costs?

There is a non-refundable registration fee of \$7.00 for solos and \$5.00 per person for duets and trios. You are also responsible for providing the judge with an **original copy** of the piece you are performing. If you are playing from memory, you may give the judge your study copy. If you are playing from music, you will need a second copy. **NO PHOTOCOPIES ARE ALLOWED.** We encourage all performers to obey the copyright laws of this country and not photocopy music. The only exception is if you have a copied page to help with page turns.

6) What is the purpose of this festival?

We want to encourage our keyboard students to prepare a piece to competition level. This will develop their God-given talents and provide them with valuable experience to prepare them for future performance opportunities.

We want to encourage students in their performance to give their best. The comments by the judge should serve as a reinforcement of their teacher's comments. Sometimes hearing it from another person makes the coaching more effective. We want to encourage students who are showing promise. This will hopefully serve as an encouraging experience to those students who have strong gifts in music.

7) How does this work?

Before the festival, number each of the measures on your judge's copy. You will be told by your piano teacher the week before the festival what your time is.

On the day of the festival, you should be at your assigned room 15 minutes before your scheduled time. You will wait in the hall until the room monitor opens the door. You are allowed to listen to other players and others are allowed to listen to you. You may not request the room monitor to empty the room. This is as much for your protection as anything. When it is your time to play, or if no one is there and the judge is waiting, you tell the room monitor who you are. When it is your time to play, give the judge your judge's copy. Make sure you adjust the bench so it is comfortable. Play a few notes (not your whole solo!) so that you can feel what the piano is like. If you are using the sustain pedal, make sure that you try that as well. When your judge says that she/he is ready, you will play your piece. When you are done, it is customary for anyone in the room to give you applause. You are not expected to bow. Take your music and go to the judge's table. You will hear the comments about the performance. Remember to take your judge's copy when you are done. You will then wait where the results are posted. Students selected for the Honors Recital will receive a *I rating. Full results will be posted at Headquarters and on our web site - www.wlhsband.org . This is a free recital and you are encouraged to invite friends and family to attend.

After the festival, your written comments will be delivered to your teacher so that she/he can talk to you about them.

8) What should I play?

For the Piano Festival, no official list of compositions has been required, but it is recommended that you select a piece with your teacher from either the WSMA or the Federation contest list. The Federation list is available in most music stores; the WSMA list is online at www.wsmamusic.org. You need to prepare only one piece. Your teacher will indicate the difficulty of your piece on the registration form. There are three categories – Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced. We use the Alfred/Faber Piano Methods Books as a reference point in deciding the difficulty level. Your piece may come from any publisher though – not just Alfred. Generally any pieces equivalent to an Alfred Primer through Level 3/Faber levels 1-3A are considered Elementary. Intermediate starts during Alfred Level 4/Faber 3B and continues through the Bastian Piano Literature Book III and the WSMA Class C list. Advanced repertoire is equivalent to the WSMA Class A & B lists. Most of the students will be in either Elementary or Intermediate.

9) How are we judged?

The judges use a standard critique form that rates your performance in several areas. This will include:

Did you play correct notes and rhythms?

Did you play at a good speed – not too fast, not too slow?

Did you use dynamics (louds and softs) and other musical techniques (such as ritardandos)?

If you are using the sustain pedal, was that done well?

Did you have good balance between the hands? Could we hear the melody easily?

Did the notes speak evenly?

Obviously, the more difficult pieces have more to be commented on.

10) Who are the judges?

The judges are being selected for their ability to understand the development of the young piano student and their ability to relate and encourage someone of grade school level.

11) How do we dress?

This is a performance, and you should dress up for this. The way you present yourself communicates to the judge your attitude about playing. This is especially true for the honors recital. However, if you are using the sustain pedal, make sure that your shoes will work well for this. Try it out before your time. Sometimes high soles prevent you from pedaling well. Jangly bracelets and excessive rings should be avoided so that you can perform at the top of your ability. Make sure that nails have been trimmed so you can use good hand position and not have any distracting sounds occur during your performance.

If you have any further questions, please see your piano teacher or contact Mrs. Marjorie Flanagan, Piano Festival Coordinator - (414)453-4567 ext. 2373 or email: marjorie.flanagan@wlhs.org

Special thanks to Mrs. Valerie Floeter for developing this information packet.