



Folly Quarter Middle School Bands
Andrew B. Spang, Director

All About All State Band

What is All-State Band?

The **All State Band** is a band made up of the best 7th, 8th, and 9th grade players in the whole state of Maryland. The students get together for three days of intensive rehearsals before performing in a public concert, usually during the Spring Music Educator's Conference. It is usually an overnight experience, with students staying in guest homes or hotels. There is usually some expense associated with this. But the experience of playing with such an advanced ensemble is one that they will remember for a lifetime.

How do I get into All State?

Players tell their school band directors that they are interested in auditioning for All State. They then prepare the audition and perform it in front of judges in early November. The top players are selected by the judges and invited to participate.

What is the Audition Music?

The audition for All State Band has three musical components. ❶ **The Prepared Piece:** This is usually a technical étude or study piece from the Rubank Advanced Method or some similar book. For percussionists, there are separate pieces of music for snare & bass drums, cymbals, tambourine, mallets, *and* timpani. Percussionists must prepare *all six*. The All State music list is published by MMEA in late August and your director can prepare study copies of the selections for you. ❷ **Scales:** each student will be asked to perform a one octave **Chromatic Scale**, except for flute and clarinet players who will perform a two octave chromatic scale. Also, you will need to know your **Major Scales** up to 4 #s and 4 b's. See your director for a copy of these scales, if necessary. ❸ **Sight Reading:** students will be asked to perform a short (approximately 16 measures) excerpt for the judges with only a minute or so to prepare it.

What Happens at the Audition?

Students will be given a specific audition time a cou-

ple of weeks prior to the audition. The times are sent to the school director from the audition coordinators and cannot be given out before they are received. Students should plan on arriving at the audition location about an hour before their scheduled time. They will check in at a reception desk and be escorted to a group warm-up room. This is usually the cafeteria or gymnasium where all of the auditioning students are running through their piece one last time and getting ready to audition. When it is about ten or fifteen minutes before your audition time, a runner (usually a student volunteer from the host school) will come to escort you to the audition room.

You will then stand outside the audition room for up to ten minutes as the person before you finishes their audition. Then, that person will finish and it is your turn. The audition room is often just a classroom with the desks pushed to one side. There will be a chair and a stand waiting for you, and two judges seated at desks in front of you. One of the judges will invite you inside and probably ask if you would like to play a few warm-up notes. Go ahead and play anything you like— run through a scale, play a little of your favorite band piece, whatever you would like. Then you will be asked for either your scales or your prepared piece. The last thing is usually the sight-reading. The whole process takes about ten minutes.

Because there are usually so many flute, clarinet *and trumpet* auditionees, there is a Finals Room. If you are a flute, clarinet or trumpet player, you should be prepared to stay up to 45 minutes longer so that you can repeat the audition process in the Finals Room. Assuming that your first audition goes well, the judges will hand you a slip of paper called a Finals Room Pass. You will then be escorted to the Finals Room where you play the audition again for two different judges. The highest scoring auditioners from the Finals Room will then be asked to participate in the band.

The audition results are mailed to your band director about a month after the audition. Because of the large number of students who try out, being selected for All State Band is a true honor. ■