Audition Guidelines

In order to be placed in a Jazz Combo (including the Dakota Combo), students are invited to audition. Auditions will be held by submitting virtual representations of your best playing. This the chance for you to display your current level of musicianship and potential to succeed in our unique learning environment. This also gives us the chance to place you in a combo with your peers, in which you can grow.

The MacPhail jazz program embraces and values all musical styles, so you should perform a piece that you are comfortable with and that displays your strengths as a musician. Select a piece that highlights what you feel represents your best abilities rather than a piece you think the audition team wants to hear.

Please record videos of your playing and upload them as unlisted videos to YouTube. Please email all links to Christopher Rochester at rochester.christopher@macphail.org. Please also include your completed Student Information Form which you can download from MacPhail’s website.

NOTE... The following instructions serve as a guide to what an audition might entail. Be aware that is recommended to prepare as much of the following for your particular instrument but is NOT MANDATORY.

Prepared Piece
All students should prepare of two contrasting pieces of their choice for their audition.

Your prepared piece should be:
- performed live
- three–five minutes in length
- performed on your primary instrument (the instrument you select when you submit the application form).

Some examples that may help with your selection include the following:
- A tune from a well-known artist or band
- A standard or jazz tune with your own improvisation
- A composition from the instrumental/voice repertoire or a movement, sonata, concerto, or etude
- A transcription of a well-known artist's solo

Percussion
In addition to a prepared piece, please demonstrate your ability to perform examples from the following list of grooves:
- Swing
- Jazz Shuffle
- Funk
- Rock
- Bossa Nova
- Afro-Cuban 12/8
Bass
In addition to a prepared piece, please demonstrate your ability to perform bass lines in various styles of standard chord progressions.
- Swing
- Jazz Shuffle
- Funk
- Rock
- Bossa Nova
- Afro-Cuban 12/8

Chordal Instruments (Piano, Guitar, Vibes)
In addition to a prepared piece, please demonstrate your ability to ‘comp’ in various styles of standard chord progressions.
- Swing
- Jazz Shuffle
- Funk
- Rock
- Bossa Nova
- Afro-Cuban 12/8