



January 2017

Dear NH Instrumental Music Student,

This quick note is to thank you personally for your interest in auditioning for NHBDA (New Hampshire Band Directors Association) Middle Level Honor Band Festival.

As is the case with anything competitive and desirable, not everyone who tries out for NH Middle Level Honor Band makes it in. You should be aware that some of the very best instrumental music students in the state tried out for this festival. Many very good auditions were submitted by very good players, some of whom might be considered among the best in their own schools. If you didn't make it into this year's festival, it doesn't mean that you're not good at playing your instrument or even that you sent in a poor audition. It just means that someone sent in an audition where they were judged to have played better. If we receive 20 excellent alto sax auditions, but only have room in the festival ensembles to take 12 alto saxes, that means that 8 excellent players aren't getting into the festival – but it *doesn't* mean that they aren't excellent. And I know that the band directors of those players are proud and happy to have them in their band.

So, no matter whether or not you made it into this year's festival, keep up the good work! You probably do some of the following already, but ways to work on your musicianship and playing, in addition to regular practice, include taking private lessons, getting extra help from your band director, listening to recordings, attending live music performances, reading about music in general and your instrument in particular, and getting together with friends to practice and play. Music is important enough to make that kind of commitment. *You* are important enough to your school band director for them to have supported you in your application for this festival, and that means quite a bit. If you're in 8th-grade, you won't be eligible for this festival next year, but high school offers lots of opportunities for committed and dedicated young musicians. If you are in 6th- or 7th-grade, you should know that many of the students who are participating this year auditioned last year or the year before without making the festival, and this year their hard work has paid off.

I wanted to let you know that I value your commitment, and your effort, and your love of playing music. I hope that you have a great second half to the school year. With any luck, we'll be hearing back from you next November!

Best wishes,

Vincent Duval
Coordinator, NH Middle Level Honors Festival
New Hampshire Band Directors Association