

Etiquette Guidelines

For Attending Fine Arts Performances

The South Dakota High School Activities Association promotes observing the following audience etiquette guidelines while attending fine arts performances. These guidelines provide the basis for expected audience behavior at SDHSAA sponsored fine arts activities, including choral, band, and orchestra concerts, region music contests, and theatrical performances. These etiquette guidelines reflect expected behavior that assures courtesy to the performers and other audience members alike.

Please adhere to the following guidelines to help you become a better audience member:

- ✓ Concentrate your attention fully on the performance.
- ✓ Do not talk during a performance.
 - We want you talk about the performance, but discuss it after the performance is over.
 - Respect those around you, including children, adults, and performers.
- ✓ Applaud courteously at the end of the performance.
 - (During a concert) Applause between movements of a work is not appropriate.
 - Whistling and yelling are not appropriate at a performance.
 - If you feel that you observed a particularly exceptional performance, a standing ovation is an appropriate acknowledgment.
- ✓ Do not take photos during the performance (including videos of the performance). Why?
 - This is a distraction to the performers as well as the other members of the audience
 - Flash photos can temporarily visually impair the performers
- ✓ Avoid making motions or noises which might distract other audience members or performers. Examples of distractions include, but are not limited to, audible foot tapping, bubble blowing, passing notes, “conducting,” the rustling of candy/cough drop wrappers, and jingling of jewelry.
 - Turn off cellular devices and pagers (please even turn off the “vibrate” feature!).
 - Take your cap or hat off while in the auditorium. You are not at a sporting event!
 - Remember, a chair or theatre seat is to sit on; it is not a footstool.
- ✓ Most facilities for performances prohibit food or beverages inside the performance hall, and participants will respect this rule, whether or not it is posted.
- ✓ When entering or exiting the performance hall, do so only between performances.
- ✓ Observe and listen for the artistic mastery of the performers and the performance, not the mistakes. Following the performance tell the performers what you enjoyed about their performance.
- ✓ When attending a fine arts competition, do nothing that will interrupt or distract a judge or contest official from their duties. Allow them to focus their full attention on the performances. Enforce a quiet area around judges during the time between performances when the judge is completing their evaluations.