

SAM Graduation Listening Guidelines and Suggestions

Dear SAM teachers,

Thank you for contributing your time to be a listener for the Suzuki Association of Minnesota Statewide Graduation Recitals.

We encourage you to keep several things in mind:

1. Listen to at least a portion of each of your YouTube links as soon as you receive them. If you detect a problem, please immediately contact the Graduation Chairs, Phala Tracy or Miya Kunin at phalatracy@gmail.com or miyakunin@gmail.com.
2. Reserve plenty of time before the recitals to listen and evaluate the student's YouTube recording and write positive and encouraging comments on the evaluation form
3. Please do NOT comment on student apparel or the location where the video was recorded (for example, if a student is dressed in pajamas or is wearing blue jeans, it is not appropriate for a teacher to suggest a different style or type of clothing).
4. Please keep comments about posture and student set-up to a minimum, if at all. It is important to prioritize the student's sound and overall performance in our comments.
5. If the performance on the YouTube link generally meets the guidelines for graduation in the SAM Graduation Handbook, but there is wrong note or one passage that is not as well in tune or well articulated, please be tolerant. This may be due to stress of recording, nervousness, or even the age of the student.
6. Not all videos will have fine audio included – this may be due to the technology used. Please keep this in mind when considering the student's tone quality.
7. Write your comments with the student in mind. The student will be reading them. Each student has worked very hard for this Graduation and they are very excited. Your positive, nurturing, and enthusiastic comments will be an inspiration for them as they continue their study.
8. More than one STRONG POINT can be written on the listeners form if you wish.
9. Offer constructive comments, if necessary, in a gentle manner. For example, if you want to suggest to the student to incorporate dynamics into their study you may say: "As you continue studying this piece you might enjoy exploring a greater range of dynamics". When commenting on musical or technical issues, it is helpful to the student and the teacher if you include measure numbers for reference.
10. If, however, you hear that there is consistently inaccurate playing throughout a graduation piece feel free to write specific constructive comments, keeping the age, maturity, and level of the student in mind.
11. SAM Graduation is completely up to the discretion of the studio teacher. When making comments, please keep this in mind. As commenters, we often do not know an important backstory in a SAM graduate's life.

Please remember that the written evaluation forms need to be returned to the teacher on Graduation Day and put in the teachers' folders.

Thank you for participating in Statewide Suzuki Graduation. Your job takes a great amount of effort and care and we do appreciate it.

Sincerely,

Phala Tracy and Miya Kunin
SAM Graduation Co-Chairs