



IN BETWEEN PERFORMANCES, David Morris (above) tried to find a song for a fellow student on the keyboard so she could practice singing before going in front of a judge. Allie Moore (below) practiced on the trumpet before taking a lunch break.

Music fills air at high school

The room was abuzz with students running in and out, practicing their pieces on their flutes, trombones and trumpets and singing.

It was the annual music festival at Decatur Community High School, and the hometown students were ready.

With 41 entries, the musicians were well represented, and they received high marks for their performances. Teacher Susan Nelson said seven students received II ratings and the rest received I's, the highest mark possible.

The students who received I ratings, she said, will get to go to the State Music competition in Concordia on Saturday, April 26.

After the winter break, she said students in choir and band select solo pieces they want to perform for the event. Vocal students do two solos, band students one, and the choirs also perform.

Once they've picked a piece, students have weekly lessons with Mrs. Nelson or band teacher

Deanne Spanier.

The Kansas High School Activities Association and the Kansas Music Educators Association sponsor the regional and state contests, said Mrs. Nelson. Twenty schools from northwest Kansas participate. The association provides judges, but the Oberlin teachers have to work out the schedules, send them to the other schools and set up the rooms. It is a pretty involved process, she said.

The event had a little extra excitement this year when the fire alarm went off a little after lunch. Students who were performing stopped in the middle of songs and filed outside with families and other students.

Police Chief Wade Lockhart said the alarm had been pulled by accident and there was no fire.

Mrs. Nelson said she was pleased with how well the students performed. The Oberlin students always perform well, she said, because they are well prepared.



NOTE CARD IN HAND, Sarah Olson (left) gave her song to David Morris so he could find it on the keyboard. Brent Smith, (above) waited for the nod to begin before singing his two solos in the vocal room.

Photos and story by Kimberly Brandt