



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Approved K-12 Course Codes and Descriptions
for CHORAL *and* INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Revised June 2023



MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION



Approved Choral and Instrumental Music Courses

The Mississippi Department of Education's *Approved Courses for the Schools of Mississippi* offers a wide variety of courses for elementary, middle, and high school students, beginning with grade seven and continuing through grade twelve. The purpose of the *Approved Courses for the Schools of Mississippi* is to help educators select the courses that are best for students.

Students in grades 7-12 are ready for challenging repertoire in choral and instrumental music, large and small ensembles, and in some cases, solo performances. Students are also ready to employ music technology applications, basic knowledge of music theory, and performing technique on their respective instruments. This is a time to polish individual performing skills and to evaluate individual or ensemble performances. Instrumental and choral ensembles often participate in festivals and competitions in addition to school performances. The circle of music experience in school broadens to include a wide variety of repertoire, performing groups, and performance types.

Grading and Carnegie Units

Proper assessment of student growth and proficiency is imperative to a student's musical development. Music specialists need to have authority to assess student performance in the classroom.

Elementary/Middle - In the elementary and middle general music classroom, the music teacher can influence the entire campus since they teach every student each week. The administrator should provide the music specialist with a clear understanding of assessment in the music classroom, whether a number grade or letter grade that reflects the student's mastery of the [Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards for Music](#).

Secondary - In the secondary general music classroom, the music teacher/director teaches an ensemble or other class. Teachers of these courses will assign students a numerical grade, and any student who successfully completes a music course will meet the minimum graduation requirement needed toward their arts Carnegie Unit for graduation. Students enrolled in music courses at the secondary level should be following the appropriate course progression that reflects their interests and proficiency level that reflects the student's mastery of the [Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards for Music](#).

Note: Students enrolled in grades 7 – 12 may be awarded a Carnegie unit credit provided the course is a Carnegie unit bearing course code. Please refer to the current edition of the *Approved Courses for Secondary Schools of Mississippi Manual*. Miss. Code Ann. § 37-16-7, Miss. Admin. Code 7-3: 36.2-36.4, State Board Policy Chapter 36, Rules 36.2 through 36.4.

In addition, only one (1) elective unit in physical education including participation in interscholastic athletic activities, choral performance courses for show choir (i.e. Choral, Music-Choral-Ensembles), instrumental performance courses (i.e. Band, Music Instrumental Ensembles, Strings), dance performance courses or JROTC that meet the instructional requirements specified in the Fitness through Physical Education Framework and that are sanctioned by the Mississippi High School Activities Association may be applied each year to the minimum 24 required Carnegie units. If a local district has graduation requirements above the state requirements, the district may award additional units as outlined in the local school board policy or in the [Mississippi Public Accountability Standards](#). In addition, courses offered for 1/2 Carnegie Unit Bearing must cover all the required performance standards; courses earning 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing should cover the same performance standards in greater depth.

Grade of student	Course Name	Course Code	
6-8	Music-General-Middle	500901	➤ Non-Carnegie Unit Bearing
7 th or higher	Music-General-9-12	500971	➤ 1/2 or 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing

Course Selection Example

*This example applies to any course that offers the Carnegie Unit Bearing options.

Proficiency Considerations

In some schools, students participate in choral ensembles, performing ensembles, or instrumental ensembles (harmonizing instruments) prior to 9th grade. In schools where choral ensembles are offered, there are two introductory skill levels found in the music standards: Novice and Intermediate. Novice is the term used to identify standards for students in grades 5-7 who have begun to specialize in a specific type of music performance. Intermediate is the term that identifies standards for students in performing ensembles or harmonizing instruments ensembles through 8th grade.

Although course codes will reflect the general course performance standards, take into consideration a student’s proficiency level to provide appropriate instruction using the standards that align with their proficiency (Proficient, Accomplished, or Advanced). Please refer to the [MS CCR Arts Learning Standards for Music](#).

Music Teacher License Categories

Districts are strongly encouraged to employ certified music specialists for music instruction.

The following endorsement codes are licensed by MDE:

- 125 Music (K-12) Performing Arts
- 165 Music Education Instrumental (K-12)
- 166 Music Education Vocal (K-12)
- 641 Music Theory, Advanced Placement

Music (Elementary/Middle/High School)

Choral and Instrumental Music Courses

Music - Elementary (Grades K-5)

Course Code: 509904 Non-Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 116, 117, 120, 125, 151, 152, 153, 165,-166, 167

Music (Grades K-5) course enables students to create and perform music, listen and respond to musical compositions, and incorporate their musical experiences with other activities and subjects. Course content usually involves understanding music as creative expression and communication, developing skill with voice and/or musical instruments, and refining the ability to discern and critique. Specific course content conforms to any existing standards for grades K-5.

General Music (Grade 6-8)

Course Code: 500901 Non-Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166. 167

Music (Grade 6-8) course enables students to create and perform music, listen and respond to musical compositions, and incorporate their musical experiences with other activities and subjects. Course content usually involves understanding music as creative expression and communication, developing skill with voice and/or musical instruments, and refining the ability to discern and critique. Specific course content conforms to any existing standards for the respective grades 6, 7, or 8.

General Music (Grade 9-12)

Course Code: 500971 .5 or 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

General Music (Grades 9-12) course includes basic instruction in music performance, music theory, and music literature. In addition, connections between music, other arts, and other subject areas are made. The course enables students to create and perform music, listen and respond to musical compositions, and incorporate their musical experiences with other activities and subjects. Course content usually involves understanding music as creative expression and communication, developing skill with voice and/or musical instruments, and refining the ability to discern and critique. Specific course content conforms to any existing standards for the respective grades 9, 10, 11, or 12.

Instrumental Music with Course Descriptions

Band-Elementary (K-5)

Course Code: 509905 Non-Carnegie Unit Bearing
ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

Band-Middle (Grades 6-8)

Course Code: 500903 Non-Carnegie Unit Bearing
ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

Music-Band (Grades 9-12)

Course Code: 509901 .5 or 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing
ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

This large ensemble performance course is designed to include brass, wind, and percussion instruments. Individual student progress is often determined by repertoire selection, individual instruction, and accomplishment of stated progress requirements. Students who elect to play in high school band during successive years are expected to master proficient competencies and then pursue advanced competencies.

General Band

General Band courses help students develop techniques for playing brass, woodwind, and percussion instruments and their ability to perform a variety of concert band literature styles. These courses may emphasize rehearsal and performance experiences in a range of styles (e.g., concert, marching, orchestral, and modern).

Concert Band

Courses in Concert Band are designed to promote students' technique for playing brass, woodwind, and percussion instruments and cover a variety of band literature styles, primarily for concert performances.

Marching Band

Courses in Marching Band are intended to develop students' technique for playing brass, woodwind, and percussion instruments and cover appropriate band literature styles, primarily for marching performances.

Small Group Jazz Improvisation Middle (Grades 6-8)

Course Code: 500910 Non-Carnegie Unit Bearing
ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

Small Group Jazz Improvisation Grades (Grades 9-12)

Course Code: 500912 .5 or 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing
ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

These courses are offered to choral and instrumental students, including strings and keyboard performers, who wish to develop jazz improvisation skills. Students may perform in individual or ensemble settings as they develop competencies at proficient and advanced levels. Teachers may wish to audition individual students to determine appropriate placement.

Strings-Elementary (Grades K-5)

Course Code: 500976 Non-Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

Strings-Middle (Grades 6-8)

Course Code: 500977 Non-Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

Strings-Proficient (Grades 9-12)

Course Code: 500979 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

Strings-Advanced (Grades 9-12)

Course Code: 500980 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

These courses are intended for students who are continuing their study of string instruments or who wish to begin studying a stringed instrument. Instruction may be in small or large groups. Classes may be divided by instrument type (e.g., cello, guitar, violin) or may include a mixture of instruments. Students with different performance and experience levels may be included in the same class. Students who elect to study string instruments in high school during successive years are expected to master proficient competencies and then pursue advanced competencies.

Strings

Strings courses provide students with an introduction and develops their understanding of the fundamentals of music and string instrument techniques, and many include more advanced techniques. These courses teach students the appropriate care, handling, and maintenance of music instruments. Formal and informal performances are included as part of string instrument instructional programs.

Orchestra

Orchestra courses help develop students' technique for playing strings along with woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments. These courses may emphasize collaboration through rehearsal and performance experiences.

Ensemble – Instrumental Middle (Grades 6-8)

Course Code: 500927 Non-Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

Ensemble – Instrumental (Grades 9-12)

Course Code: 500926 .5 or 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 165, 166, 167

These courses are intended for students who choose to perform in a particular instrumental ensemble. A wide variety of instrumental ensembles may exist in a single school (e.g., symphonic band, orchestra, brass choir, steel drum). Students are often required to audition for instrumental ensembles. Groups may be large or small; they may focus on specific types of repertoires or music genre. Students who elect instrumental music ensemble courses in successive years are expected to master proficient competencies and then pursue advanced competencies.

NOTE: Audition may be required.

Contemporary Music Ensemble

Formerly known as contemporary band, Contemporary Instrumental Ensemble courses help students perform a variety of contemporary styles, such as traditional jazz, jazz improvisation, and rock. At the same time, these courses cultivate students' technique on instruments appropriate to the style(s) performed—brass, woodwind, string, percussion instruments, and/or electronic. These ensembles emphasize instrumental music but may include vocal music. Advanced coursework provides students with opportunities for growth through rehearsal and performance, improvisation, or creating and performing their own compositions.

Small Ensemble

Formerly known as Instrumental Ensemble, Small Ensemble courses help students perform a variety of musical styles (e.g., traditional chamber music, jazz, and rock). At the same time, these courses help cultivate students' technique on instruments appropriate to the style(s) performed—brass, woodwind, string, percussion instruments, and/or electronic. Courses typically range in size from 2 to 20 performers.

Culturally Influenced Ensemble

Culturally Influenced Ensemble courses help students perform a variety of cultural music styles such as Mariachi band, steel drum band, Indian gamelan, or African drumming ensembles. At the same time, these courses help students develop techniques on instruments appropriate to the style(s) performed—brass, woodwind, string, percussion instruments, and/or electronic. Courses emphasize instrumental performance, improvisation, or creating and performing original compositions.

Music-Keyboard-Elementary (Grades K-4)

Course Code: 500933 Non-Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

Music-Keyboard-Middle (Grades 6-8)

Course Code: 500932 Non-Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 167

Music-Keyboard-Individual or Class (Grades 9-12)

Course Code: 500931 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

These courses are designed for students who wish to obtain or increase keyboard performance skills. Instructional methods will be determined in part by available equipment in the local school setting. In schools where only one piano or electronic keyboard is available, students will receive private or small group instruction. In settings where multiple keyboards are available in a technology laboratory, instruction may be individualized within keyboard classes for up to 20 students. Teachers may wish to screen individual student music and/or keyboard knowledge to determine acceptance and placement into keyboard classes.

Musical Performance-Elementary Middle Choral and/or Instrumental (Grades K-5)

Course Code: 500991 Non- Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

Students at the elementary and middle school levels who choose to pursue middle school performance will receive music instruction to strengthen their foundational knowledge around performance practices in the areas of choral and/or instrumental performance. Students should have opportunities to gain experience in making repertoire selections, creating and performing original music, rehearsing, and refining the fundamentals of choral and/or instrumental music techniques. This course will typically include formal and informal performances as a way to foster musicianship.

Musical Performance-Middle Choral and/or Instrumental (Grades 6-8)

Course Code: 500992 Non-Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

Students at the elementary and middle school levels who choose to pursue middle school performance will receive music instruction to strengthen their foundational knowledge around performance practices in the areas of choral and/or instrumental performance. Students should have opportunities to gain experience in making repertoire selections, creating and performing original music, rehearsing, and refining the fundamentals of choral and/or instrumental music techniques. This course will typically include formal and informal performances as a way to foster musicianship.

Performing Arts Special Course (Instrumental Music)

Course Code: 509906 .5 or 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

This course is intended to provide specialized instrumental music instruction in a specific category within the field of music (e.g., African drumming, instrumental/ensemble, blue grass band). The course draws upon the musical expertise or knowledge of an individual teacher; therefore, it should be used to deepen students' knowledge in an independent study format and not as an appreciation study.

Music—Independent Study

Music—Independent Study courses, often conducted with instructors, professional musicians, or voice/instrumental coaches as mentors, enable students to explore music-related topics. Independent Study courses may serve as an opportunity for students to expand their expertise in a particular form or style, to explore a topic in greater detail, or to develop more advanced skills.

Music—Workplace Experience

Music—Workplace Experience courses provide students with work experience in a field related to music. Goals are typically set cooperatively by the student, teacher, and employer (although students are not necessarily paid). These courses may include classroom activities, as well as involving the further study of the field or discussion regarding experiences that students encounter in the workplace.

Music-Theory and Harmony/Literature (Grade 9-12)

Course Code: 500952 .5 or 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 165, 166, 167

This course examines the basic elements of music theory and music literature. Previous choral or instrumental music performing experience is a prerequisite for this course. The analytical study of scales, keys, chords, and composition elements complements other high school music performance courses. In addition, a survey of music literature will broaden student knowledge of music as an art form and will aid understanding of the connection between music theory and music literature. The study of music literature will also involve the historical and cultural background of the various genres of music.

Note: Prerequisite choral or instrumental music performing experience

Choral Music Course Descriptions

The Choral Performance program of study serves as a guide to develop curriculum for choral performance classes. The classes aim to include students who choose to pursue choral performance and identify with the sounds of singing and its expressive qualities. The idea of singing for an audience motivates students to work hard for performance goals and students are able to sing in two and three parts. Vocal maturation results in an entirely different singing sound from the earlier grades. This is an excellent time to develop vocal technique, increase music literacy skills, and learn basic elements of music theory. Choral courses allow students to continue music learning through the study of choral performance repertoire. In addition to learning repertoire, students will continue to develop vocal technique, sight singing, and ear training skills.

Choral-Middle (Grades 6-8)

Course Code: 500935 Non- Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

Choral (Grades 9-12)

Course Code: 500939 .5 or 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 166, 167

Choral Music courses allow students to continue music learning through the study of choral performance repertoire. In addition to learning repertoire, students will continue to develop vocal technique, sight singing, and ear training skills. Students who choose to enroll in choral music courses in successive years are expected to master three proficiency levels (proficient, accomplished, advanced) in the high school performance standards.

Ensemble – Choral (Grades 9-12)

Course Code: 500940 .5 or 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 166, 167

This course is an extension of High School Choral Music intended for students who choose to perform in a particular ensemble. Students are often required to audition for choral ensembles. Groups may be large or small; they may focus on specific types of repertoires or music genre. Students who elect choral music ensembles courses in successive years are expected to master three proficiency levels (proficient, accomplished, advanced) in the high school performance standards.

NOTE: Audition may be required.

Voice (Grades 9-12)

Course Code: 500948 .5 or 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 166, 167

This course is designed for individualized instruction in vocal performance. Course content will address vocal technique and music literacy skills. Solo repertoire will be assigned, and individual performance goals will be set. Students who elect to study voice in successive years are expected to master three proficiency levels (proficient, accomplished, advanced) in the high school performance standards.

Performing Arts Special Course (Choral Music)

Course Code: 509906 .5 or 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 125, 165, 166, 167

This course is intended to provide specialized choral music instruction in a specific category within the field of music (e.g., madrigal choir, sign language choir, vocal ensemble). The course draws upon the musical expertise or knowledge of an individual teacher; therefore, it should be used to deepen students' knowledge in an independent study format and not as an appreciation study.

Music—Independent Study

Music—Independent Study courses, often conducted with instructors, professional musicians, or voice/instrumental coaches as mentors, enable students to explore music-related topics. Independent Study courses may serve as an opportunity for students to expand their expertise in a particular form or style, to explore a topic in greater detail, or to develop more advanced skills.

Music-Workplace Experience

Music—Workplace Experience courses provide students with work experience in a field related to music. Goals are typically set cooperatively by the student, teacher, and employer (although students are not necessarily paid). These courses may include classroom activities and involve a further study of the field or discussion regarding workplace experiences that students may encounter.

Music-Theory and Harmony/Literature (Grade 9-12)

Course Code: 500952 .5 or 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 165, 166, 167

This course examines the basic elements of music theory and music literature. Previous choral or instrumental music performing experience is a prerequisite for this course. The analytical study of scales, keys, chords, and composition elements complements other high school music performance courses. A survey of music literature will broaden student knowledge of music as an art form and will aid understanding of the connection between music theory and music literature. The survey of music literature will also involve the historical and cultural background of the various genres of music.

NOTE: Recommended Prerequisite – Choral or Instrumental Music Performing experience

Music-Theatre I (Grade 9-12)

Course Code: 500533 .5 or 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 119, 123, 125, 165, 166, 167, 196

Music-Theatre II (Grade 9-12)

Course Code: 500534 .5 or 1 Carnegie Unit Bearing

ENDORSEMENTS: 119, 123, 125, 165, 166, 167, 196

In Musical Theatre courses, students explore and participate in various aspects of musical theater, including auditioning, singing, acting, and dancing. They review the history and evolution of musical theatre, its literature and artists, and styles of composition and vocal presentation. Students work collaboratively on performances, including solo, duet, and ensemble work. In these performance-based courses, the student receives training in the specialized skills of performing and producing musical theatre.

NOTE: Prerequisite Theatre I and II. These course curriculums must include both music and theatre standards. Districts are encouraged to allow theatre and music teachers to team teach these courses.

Music Program Standards and Resources

The following Music Program links are to resources that will assist Mississippi's music educators to promote high-quality, sequential music education for K-12 students.

- [*The Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Arts Learning Standards for Music*](#) (2017) were patterned after the National Core Arts Standards, published in 2014.
- [Mississippi Arts Instructional Resources for Choral and Instrumental Music](#) Revised June 2023.
- [Recommendations for PreK-12 Grade Health, Safety and Well-Being Considerations for Arts Education](#)