



2026-2027

MISSISSIPPI

JUNIOR HIGH & SENIOR HIGH

CHORAL ART FESTIVAL

INFORMATIONAL MANUAL

MHSAA / MMEA Choral Art Festival

Date: March 23, 2027

Location: Ridgeland High School

Site Coordinator: Jana Smith

Stone High School

1268 McGregor Drive

Wiggins, MS 39577

C 601.408.7976

jsmith@stoneschools.org

General Information

1. MMEA is responsible for the Choral Art Festival and will continue to offer it as an alternative to the State Performance Assessment for the choice of **Ratings** or **Comments Only**.
2. The purpose of this festival is to provide new and developing choral programs, grades 7th-12th, and choral directors with a positive, non-threatening, non-competitive choral experience that will ultimately lead to their participation in the State Performance Assessment.
3. **Participation** in one MHSAA sanctioned event (SPA or CAF) **is required** of all MHSAA member schools with choral programs. Choral groups **may NOT** participate in both MHSAA sanctioned festival events; they must choose the Choral Art Festival or the State Performance Assessment.
 - a. a choral director who wishes to request exemption from the Choral Art Festival must submit an **Exemption Request Letter** along with **FORM 1** to the MHSAA Office by **September 15**
 - b. request letters must be composed on school letterhead by the requesting choral director's principal
4. To participate in the Choral Art Festival:
 - a. a choral director's school **must** be an employee of an MHSAA member school
 - b. a choral director **must** be registered with MHSAA (**FORM 1**)
 - c. choral students and small ensemble students **must** be recognized by school authorities and meet MHSAA eligibility requirements (DragonFly Max)
 - d. a choral director is **not** required to be a member of MMEA or NAFME
 - e. a choral director **must** complete an approval application (**FORM 8**) and submit it to the **Choral Art Festival Site Coordinator by December 01** (see the form)
5. MHSAA provides catastrophic insurance for 7th – 12th graders.
6. There are no restrictions on performance/stage combinations for 7th - 12th grade participants
7. The choral director may choose either numeric **Ratings** OR **Comments Only** for the concert portion and the sight-reading portion of CAF.
 - a. regardless of a choral director's choice, each choral group will receive a 10–15-minute on-stage clinic following their stage performance
 - i. the on-stage clinic is provided by one of the three stage performance adjudicators / clinicians
 - ii. instruction and comments will be constructive and student-centered
 - b. choral groups who opt for **Comments Only** for sight-reading will spend the allotted time working with the sight-reading clinician
 - i. the clinician will focus on teaching effective practices and techniques to help the choral groups better understand the expectations of the adjudication process
 - ii. the overall goal of the sight-reading clinician will be to build the students' confidence and set each choral group on a path to successful music reading and development
2. A choral director who is feeling overwhelmed should immediately begin communicating with the Choral Art Festival Site Coordinator.

Registration Forms and Fees

1. Choral Art Festival registration fees are set by MMEA.
 - a. registration fees are \$5.00 per student, per adjudicated group. Example: The total registration cost for a student who sings in an SATB Choir, SSA Choir, & Sextet is \$15.00.
2. Participation in the Choral Art Festival is by approval application only (**FORM 8 - REQUIRED**).
 - a. applications are open to all choirs and ensembles based on the specifications listed on FORM 8
 - b. the CAF Coordinator will contact each choral director regarding their approval status
3. Following the approval process of FORM 8, registration forms (**FORM 9**) and fees (**copy of P.O.**) are due to the CAF Coordinator by the **Winter Business Meeting**. Be diligent.
 - a. **registration fees are non-refundable**
 - b. **registration fees must be paid in full prior to the festival**
 - c. registration fees for additional students not listed on the original registration form must be paid in full prior to the festival event
4. **Schools will not be placed on the concert schedule until completed registration forms and a copy of their school's purchase order have been received by the CAF Coordinator.**

Music Requirements

1. Choral groups **should** perform two selections from memory, chosen by the choral director. **There are no prescribed list requirements for the festival**; however, pop, and patriotic music should be avoided. For helpful lists of graded literature, see the following prescribed lists:
 - a. Florida Prescribed List (FPL) <https://fva.net/mpa/music-list/>
 - b. Texas Prescribed List (TPL) <https://www.uiltexas.org/pml/>
 - c. Mississippi Prescribed Music List (MPS) <https://msmea.org/high-school-division/ms-prescribed-music-list-2/>

Choral Art Festival Expectations

1. Each school must arrive at CAF 30 minutes prior to their first scheduled event.
2. Envelope preparation for the day of CAF
 - a. the choral director must provide the concert adjudicators with **(3) original copies** of their **performance repertoire**, all

- measures numbered
 - b. the choral director must provide the concert adjudicators with **(3) completed copies of FORM 10**
 - c. the choral director must provide the concert adjudicators with **(3) completed copies of FORM 11**
 - d. the choral director must provide the sight-reading adjudicator/clinician with **(1) completed copy of FORM 12**
2. All choral groups are encouraged to attend the stage performances of other choral groups and quietly observe the clinicians' work throughout the day.
 3. No one will be permitted to enter or leave the adjudication area while a performance is in progress.
 4. Children under the age of 6 will not be allowed in the adjudication area. Please advise parents.
 5. Conduct: The choral director and principal of each school will be held responsible for the proper conduct of all persons representing their school. Begin teaching / training behavioral expectations early in the school year.

Sight-Reading Expectations & Guidelines

1. All students must sight read at the Choral Art Festival. Choral directors may choose to combine all singers into one choir or divide students by separate choirs, provided there is adequate time in the schedule. If a school enters only ensembles, then those ensembles will sight read together.
2. A tiered sight-reading program is to be employed for each voicing. The sight-reading example will be eight measures long and written in unison, two-part, three-part or four-part harmony. The choral director may choose the level and voicing of the sight-reading exercise.
3. Each sight-reading exercise will include three portions:
 - a. An eight-measure melodic passage that will count for 60% of the score.
 - b. An eight-measure rhythm passage that will count for 30% of the score.
4. The final 10% will be on work ethic.
5. Selections will be sung utilizing the performing group's preferred method of melodic reading i.e. numbers, words, solfege, neutral syllables etc.
6. There is only one sight reading adjudicator, not three as in concert adjudication.
7. A suggestion is to begin teaching sight reading on the first day of school.

Sight-Reading Procedures

1. The choral director will arrange students with the least amount of confusion prior to entering the sight-reading room.
2. The choir will enter quietly, focused on the task at hand.
3. Each school shall provide its own accompanist.
4. The choral director will verify the requested level and voicing with the adjudicator.
5. The adjudicator will distribute the sight-reading selection to the choral director, the singers, and the accompanist.
6. Singers must keep the music face down or by their side until they are instructed by the adjudicator to view the selection.
7. The choral director may change the key of sight-reading material as appropriate.
8. The group has eight minutes to study the music including a run through with the accompaniment. The director may use any or all the eight minutes to prepare both the melodic and rhythmic portions.
9. During the eight minutes of time, you may:
 - a. Receive the keynote from the piano and have the choir sing the scale and I-IV-V7-I cadence in blocked chords or arpeggios without accompaniment.
 - b. Point out key and time signatures, difficult rhythms, difficult intervals or any other markings in the music.
 - c. The choir may speak, clap or tap rhythms.
 - d. The choir may say the syllables, solfege, or numbers in rhythm.
 - e. The choir may work in groups on each part.
 - f. The choir may ask and answer questions.
10. At no point during the study period shall anyone in the room vocally produce a pitch.
11. At the end of the eight minutes, the accompanist will give the starting pitches, which each vocal section may sing, utilizing their preferred method.
12. The choral director may sing the starting pitches with each vocal section.
13. After the choir has sung its starting pitches, the choral director is permitted no further warm-up or musical instruction of any kind, other than the use of verbal counting to initiate the reading. Violations will result in lowering the score.
14. The selection will be sung with piano accompaniment, without stopping, utilizing the group's preferred method of melodic reading.
15. The choral director should provide an audible beat throughout the reading by clapping, snapping, or tapping.
16. The melodic exercise is to be sung a cappella a second time using the choir's preferred method of intervallic reading.
17. If it is necessary for the choral director or adjudicator to stop the choir during the singing of the piece, pitches may be obtained and singing will resume from that point. This will result in the lowering of the score.
18. Students will pass the music to a location designated by the adjudicator who will then dismiss the choir.
19. The choral group will exit the room quietly and in an orderly fashion as directed by the adjudicator.

Assessment Ratings

1. Adjudication of choirs and ensembles will be on a performance basis with ratings of **Superior (I) & Excellent (II)**. Plus and minus signs will not be used
2. For choral groups who choose **Ratings** for the concert portion, each adjudicator will give a score & rating.
3. For choral groups who choose **Ratings** for the sight-reading portion, the adjudicator will give a score & rating.

- The tabulator (CAF Site Coordinator) assigns the appropriate composite score based on those ratings. See the chart below for possible composite scores.
- Certificates are awarded to choirs and ensembles for **Superior** and **Excellent** rated scores in concert and sight-reading.

ADJUDICATION SCALE BY RATING
ADJUDICATION SCALE BY SCORE

Superior = I
 Superior = 85-100

Excellent = II
 Excellent = 70-84

Composite Rating	I	II
	I I I	I II II
	I I II	II II II

MHSAA / MMEA CHORAL ART FESTIVAL
SIGHT READING VOICING & LEVEL

PARTS	VOICING	LEVEL
Unison	Treble	Level I
Unison	Bass	Level I
Unison	Treble	Level II
Unison	Bass	Level II
2 - Part	SA	Level III
2 - Part	CB	Level III
2 - Part	SC	Level III
2 - Part	SBar	Level III
2 - Part	SB	Level III
3 - Part	SSA	Level IV
3 - Part	T'TB	Level IV
3 - Part	SAT	Level IV
3 - Part	SAB	Level IV
4 - Part	SATB	Level IV

Rhythm Patterns

Level I

- 4/4 Meter Only
- Notes: Whole, Half & Quarter
- Rests: Whole, Half & Quarter

Level II

- 3/4 & 4/4 Meter
- Notes: Add Dotted Half & Beamed Eighth (2)
- Rests: Same as Level I

Level III

- 3/4 & 4/4 Meter
- Notes: Add Dotted Quarter & Single Eighth
- Rests: Same as Level I

Level IV

- 3/4 & 4/4 Meter
- Notes: Add Beamed Sixteenths (4) & Syncopation (Eighth/Quarter/Eighth)
- Rests: Same as Level I

Melodic Patterns

Level I

- Voicing: Unison
- 4/4 Meter Only – no pickup notes
- Notes: Whole, Half & Quarter
- Rests: None
- Key: C Major Only
- Pitches: Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol
- Motion: Diatonic Steps

Level II

- Voicing: Unison
- 4/4 Meter Only – no pickup notes
- Notes: Same as Level I
- Rests: Half & Quarter
- Key: C Major Only
- Pitches: Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La
- Motion: Add Skips in the Tonic Triad with some diatonic passing tones

Level III

- Voicing: 2-Part Homophonic
- 3/4 & 4/4 Meter – no pickup notes
- Notes: Add Dotted Half & Beamed Eighth (2)

- Rests: Same as Level 2
- Key: C & G Major
- Pitches: Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Ti, Do (Octave)
- Motion: Add P5 Skips & Inversions with some diatonic passing tones

Level IV

- Voicing: 3-Part & 4-Part Homophonic
- 3/4 & 4/4 Meter – no pickup notes
- Notes: Add Dotted Quarter & Single Eighth
- Rests: Same as Level 2
- Key: C, G & F Major
- Pitches: Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Ti, Do (Octave)
- Motion: Add P4 Skips & Inversions with some diatonic passing tones

MHSAA / MMEA CHORAL ART FESTIVAL

SIGHT READING RUBRIC

RHYTHMIC				MELODIC							
Level	Meter	Notes	Rests	Meter	Notes	Rests	Voicing	Key	Pitches	Intervals	Motion
Level I	$\frac{4}{4}$	Whole, Half & Quarter 	Whole Half Quarter 	$\frac{4}{4}$	Whole, Half & Quarter 	Half Quarter 	Unison	C	Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol	Seconds M2/m2	Diatonic Steps
Level II	$\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$	Add: Dotted Half & Beamed Eighth (2) 	Whole Half Quarter 	$\frac{4}{4}$	Whole, Half & Quarter 	Half Quarter 	Unison	C	Octave: Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Ti, Do	Add: Thirds M3/m3 Skips Do-Mi, Mi-Sol, Sol-Mi, Mi-Do	Add: Tonic Triad Skips up or down with some diatonic passing tones
Level III	$\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$	Add: Dotted Quarter & Single Eighth 	Whole Half Quarter 	$\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$	Add: Dotted Half & Beamed Eighth (2) 	Half Quarter 	2 Part Homophonic	C & G	Octave: Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Ti, Do	Add: Fifths P5 Skips Do-Sol, Sol-Do & Inversions (P4) Sol-Dol, Dol-Sol	Add: P5 Skips & Inversions (P4) up or down with some diatonic passing tones
Level IV	$\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$	Add: Beamed Sixteenths (4) & Syncopation 	Whole Half Quarter 	$\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$	Add: Dotted Quarter & Single Eighth 	Half Quarter 	3 & 4 Part Homophonic	C, F & G	Octave: Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Ti, Do	Add: Fourths P4 Skips Do-Fa, Fa-Do & Inversions (P5) Fa- Dol, Dol-Fa	Add: P4 Skips & Inversions (P5) up or down with some diatonic passing tones



DATE: August 1, 2026

TO: Choral Directors

FROM: Rickey Neaves, Executive Director

RE: Choral Director Registration**THIS IS IMPORTANT**

In order for choral directors to be registered with MHSAA, and so that plans can be made for the State Performance Assessment, please complete the information listed below. **This form must be submitted to the MHSAA Office by September 15, 2026 or the choral director and the school will not be allowed to participate in MHSAA sponsored choral events, State Performance Assessment or Choral Art Festival.**

1. Choral Director _____ Email _____
2. School Name _____ School Classification _____
3. School Address _____ City _____
4. Zip _____ School Telephone () _____
5. Principal _____ Email _____
6. Superintendent _____ Email _____
7. Total Enrollment of School _____
8. Number of Students in Choral Program: Treble _____ Tenor/Bass _____ Total _____
9. Home Address _____ City _____
10. Zip _____ Cell No. () _____

Each MHSAA member school must circle their DISTRICT NUMBER. If a MHSAA member school plans to participate in a different regional State Performance Assessment, a **Request Letter must be submitted along with this form. Request Letters for Non-Participation** in a regional SPA must also be submitted along with this form. This form and all request letters must be received in the MHSAA office by the above stated date. Request Letters must be **composed by the school's principal and printed on the school letterhead**. Once approved, the **choral director is responsible for communicating the site change to both site coordinators.**

**** CIRCLE YOUR MHSAA DISTRICT - REQUIRED****

I II III IV VI VII V VIII
☐ Northern Districts ☐ Central Districts ☐ Southern Districts

****SPA PARTICIPANTS, ONLY - CIRCLE SITE - REQUIRED****

(Even if requesting a site change)

Northern SPA Central SPA Southern SPA

Submit this completed form by **September 15, 2026** (request letters as well)**Mississippi High School Activities Association, Inc.****LeAnna Dawson, Assistant Director of Activities****P. O. Box 127****Clinton, MS 39056****PH 601.926.4515 (direct to desk)****FAX 601.924.1725**ldawson@misshsaa.com_____
Principal's Signature (Required)_____
Date_____
Choral Director's Signature

MHSAA / MMEA CHORAL ART FESTIVAL

FORM 8

APPROVAL APPLICATION

DEADLINE: December 01, 2026

This form must be completed and submitted by the stated date.

Sixth Grade Students are not allowed to participate in the Choral Art Festival.

School Name _____

Choral Director _____ Cell # (_____) _____ - _____

E-mail _____

Grade Level(s) _____ Voicing _____ Type (Choir or Ensemble) _____ # of Singers _____

Complete one form for each performing group that plans to participate in the Choral Art Festival. All groups must be approved.

Basis for Application: Check all that apply AND include a full explanation below.

- _____ First-year teacher
- _____ New program or group established within the past 3 years. (Date group was established _____)
- _____ Existing group has not performed at JH or HS SPA in the past 3 years
- _____ Existing group chooses not to compete in JH or HS SPA
- _____ High director turnover rate in the program. (Number of directors in the past 3 years _____)
- _____ High student turnover rate in group
- _____ Conflict with the date(s) of JH District Festival or HS SPA
- _____ Other _____
- _____ **Number of years the choral group and current director has participated in the Choral Art Festival**

Provide a full explanation below, including extenuating circumstances.

Submit completed form by **December 1, 2026**

Jana Smith, MHSAA / MMEA Choral Art Festival Site Coordinator

C 601.408.7976

jsmith@stoneschools.org

Carbon Copy **form** to

Mitchell Crawford, MMEA Junior High Choral Division President Elect

mcrawford@columbiaschools.org

The CAF Approval Committee consists of the Executive Board members of both the MMEA Senior High Choral Division & Junior High Choral Division.

_____ Approved _____ Denied Date: _____ CAF Coordinator Initials: _____

Comments: _____

MHSAA / MMEA CHORAL ART FESTIVAL

FORM 9

REGISTRATION FORM

Due Date: Friday, January 22, 2027

DEADLINE: Friday, January 29, 2027

This form and a copy of a P.O. completes registration.

Schools will only be placed on the concert schedule once registration is completed.

School _____ Director _____

School Email _____ Accompanist _____

Travel Time (One Way) _____ Preferred Time _____

Extenuating Circumstances _____

Concert ↓One or the Other↓		Sight-Reading ↓One or the Other↓		Grade Level	Voicing	Type of Group <i>Choir or Ens.</i>	# Partps. in Group	Participant Fee	Total Fee	MHSAA OFFICE USE ONLY
Ratings	Comments	Ratings	Comments							
								x \$5.00 =		P.O.# _____
								x \$5.00 =		P.O. Amount _____
								x \$5.00 =		Date Received _____
								x \$5.00 =		CK# _____
								x \$5.00 =		CK Amount _____
Total Participants →								x \$5.00 =		Date Received _____
Total Amount Due →									\$	Initials _____
(Check made payable: MHSAA, paid in full prior to festival)										

REGISTRATION:

Submit this completed form & a copy of P.O. no later than Friday, January 29, 2027

Jana Smith, MHSAA / MMEA Choral Art Festival Site Coordinator

1268 McGregor Drive

Wiggins, MS 39577

C 601.408.7976

jsmith@stoneschools.org

PAYMENT DEADLINE:

Check made payable to: **MHSAA**

Submit **PAYMENT IN FULL** with a copy of this form to the site coordinator above no later than **Friday, February 19, 2027**.

Principal's Signature (Required)

Date

Choral Director's Signature

INVOICE



Date:

Bill To:

# Singers	Description	Per Partp.	Amount
-	MHSAA/MMEA Choral Art Festival Registration Fee	-	-
		5.00	
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE			

Check Payable: **MHSAA**

Remit Payment To:

Jana Smith, MHSAA/MMEA Choral Art Festival Site Coordinator
1268 McGregor Drive
Wiggins, MS 39577
jsmith@stoneschools.org

MHSAA / MMEA CHORAL ART FESTIVAL
CHOIR INFO ADDENDUM

FORM 10

Director Info:

Name: _____

School: _____

Number of years at this school _____

Total number of years teaching Choir _____

Total School Enrollment: _____

Choral Program Enrollment: _____

Other Courses Taught: _____

Performing Group Info:

Name of Group: _____

Grade Levels of Students: _____

Number of Performing Singers in This Group: _____

Number of Singers Absent Today: _____

Hours of Weekly Rehearsal During School: _____

Hours of Weekly Rehearsal Outside of School: _____

Is this an auditioned group? _____

Did this group sing at SPA/CAF in last 2 years? _____

Additional Information for the Adjudicators:

Revised 03/02/2021

MHSAA / MMEA CHORAL ART FESTIVAL

STAGE PERFORMANCE ADJUDICATION/COMMENT RUBRIC

SCORE / RATING

School / Group Name & Voicing _____

Grade Level(s) _____ Number of Singers _____ Choose One or the Other: Ratings _____ Comments _____

Title #1 _____ Composer _____

Title #2 _____ Composer _____

SCORE	POINTS OF ADJUDICATION	COMMENTS
30.0	SOUND QUALITY 15.0 Tone Quality ___ Natural (for this age) ___ Vibrant (has energy) ___ Free (of tension) 15.0 Pitch ___ Accuracy ___ Intonation	
30.0	TECHNICAL ACCURACY 10.0 Technique ___ Attacks ___ Challenge of Music ___ Releases 10.0 Rhythm ___ Accuracy ___ Steady Pulse ___ Tempi 10.0 Diction ___ Pronunciation ___ Enunciation ___ Unified Vowel Formation ___ Concise Consonants	
35.0	MUSICALITY 15.0 Technique ___ Balance ___ Expressivity ___ Sense of Ensemble ___ Communicating with a Sense of Purpose 10.0 Dynamics ___ Use of Full Range (<i>ff-pp</i>) 10.0 Breath Management ___ Phrasing ___ Supports Tone	
5.0	STUDENT STAGE DEPORTMENT ___ Confidence ___ Posture ___ Facial Expression	
	TOTAL SCORE	
		OVER →

Adjudicator's Signature _____ Date _____

ADJUDICATION SCALE BY RATING:
ADJUDICATION SCALE BY SCORE:

Superior = I Excellent = II
Superior = 85-100 Excellent = 70-84

COMMENTS CONT.

MHSAA / MMEA CHORAL ART FESTIVAL

SIGHT-READING ADJUDICATION RUBRIC

SCORE / RATING

School / Group Name & Voicing _____

SR Voicing _____ SR Level _____ Number of Singers _____ Choose One or the Other: Comments _____ Ratings _____

RHYTHMIC COMPONENT

		9-11	12-14	15-17	18-20	SCORE
I	RHYTHM	<40% accuracy	40-74% accuracy	74-89% accuracy	90-100% accuracy	
		4	6	8	10	SCORE
II	FLOW	No constant tempo; No evidence of musical phrasing	Tempo somewhat unsteady; Phrasing is halted or interrupted.	Tempo generally steady with minor discrepancies; Phrasing slightly irregular.	Constant tempo; Phrasing is musical throughout	

MELODIC COMPONENT

		10-14	15-19	20-24	25-30	SCORE
I	PITCH	<40% accuracy overall	40-74% accuracy overall	74-89% accuracy overall; or 90-100% accuracy in some parts with several errors in one or more parts	90-100% accuracy in all parts	
		4	6	8	10	SCORE
II	RHYTHM & FLOW	<40% accuracy overall No constant tempo; No evidence of musical phrasing	40-74% accuracy overall Tempo somewhat unsteady; Phrasing is halted or interrupted.	74-89% accuracy overall Tempo generally steady with minor discrepancies; Phrasing slightly irregular	90-100% accuracy in all parts Constant tempo; Phrasing is musical throughout	
		9-11	12-14	15-17	18-20	SCORE
III	INTONATION AND/OR VERTICAL HARMONY	Intonation not satisfactory Harmonic relationship is missing in some parts	Intonation somewhat satisfactory Harmonic relationship is not clear; errors in several parts	Some parts are in tune throughout with several intonation errors in one of more parts or slight intonation problems overall. Harmonic relationships line up; sense of tonality in some parts	Intonation excellent throughout Harmonic relationship lines up; strong sense of tonality in all parts	

ENSEMBLE PREPARATION

		2	3	4	5	SCORE
I	APPROACH & METHOD	Rhythmic approach and preferred methods of sight-reading are fundamentally lacking	Rhythmic approach and preferred methods of sight-reading are inconsistent most of the time	Rhythmic approach and preferred methods of sight-reading are good, but not uniform much of the time	Rhythmic approach and preferred methods of sight-reading are uniform throughout ensemble	
		2	3	4	5	SCORE
II	USE OF TIME	<40% of the students on task 100% of the time	40-74% of the students on task 100% of the time	74-89% of the students on task 100% of the time	90-100% of the students on task 100% of the time	

TOTAL SCORE	70-84	85-100	TOTAL SCORE
RATING	II = EXCELLENT	I = SUPERIOR	

Comments: _____

Adjudicator's Signature _____ Date _____