

The Art of **TEACHING** the Arts

Program 4: Choosing Instructional Approaches **Music**

SEGMENT 1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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14 years teaching

About the School

Arts High School

Perpich Center for Arts Education
Golden Valley, MN

Type:

Statewide residential program/
Arts-focused public high school

Grades:

11-12

Students:

300
Very mixed socio-economic status

Majors:

Dance, Literary Arts, Media Arts, Music,
Theatre, and Visual Art

About the Music Program

Faculty:

5 (2 full-time, 3 part-time)

Students:

75-80

Facilities:

Above Average in the Area

- Performance hall
- 2 music classrooms
- Choir rehearsal room
- 10-station keyboard/midi lab
- 14 soundproofed rehearsal rooms
- Recording studio
- Sound booth with 3 isolation rooms

Audition:

Admission involves both academic and
artistic evaluation.

Required Courses:

Participation in four seminar classes per
year including Electronic Music, Theory,
Interdisciplinary Studies, World Music,
Composition, History, Technique,
Improvisation, Vocal Performance, and
the Role of Music in Culture. Students
also must participate in four ensembles
and one Interim class lasting three
weeks.

Elective Courses:

Music Theory, Guitar Theory,
Composition, Improvisation, Electronic
Music, Music History, European Music,
American Music (Blues), World Music,
Music Business, Career Investigations,
Architecture and Music, Music
Ensembles, and Choir

About the Featured Classes

Ear-Training:

Students develop the ability to hear
musical patterns of pitch and rhythm and
reproduce them through singing and
notation in this daily skill-building class.

Students must take three quarters of ear-
training a year.

Course Requirements:

Students take a pre-test each year to
place them in one of four ear-training
levels.

Student Motivation:

Mixed. Those who will pursue music in
college understand that ear-training is a
necessary evil, while others consider it a
waste of their time. This perception
changes throughout the year, as students
gain more skills and understand how
those skills can enhance their music
understanding and performance.

Student Level:

Mixed

Student Ensembles:

All music students participate in four
ensembles per year, choosing their
members, their style of music, and specific
pieces of music to prepare for concerts.

Student Motivation:

High. Students are motivated by
accountability to their fellow ensemble
members.

Women's Choir:

The Arts High School choir is the school's
only large, conducted ensemble. Students
volunteer to participate in it and do not
earn extra credit for doing so. The choir
offers students a chance to develop
rehearsal techniques and problem-
solving strategies that they can carry into
their own ensemble rehearsals.

Student Motivation:

High

Student Level:

Mixed

In the Teacher's Words***What do the numbers on the
chalkboard refer to?***

*The series of numbers are scale
degree numbers and refer to the
placement of notes in the scale.
They are similar to "do-re-mi," but
I use 1-2-3 instead.*