



Northwestern Middle School Music Department

NMSperforms.org

Dear 6th Grade Students and Parents,

Welcome to your first year at Northwestern Middle School! There are wonderful opportunities available at NMS, one of which is to become involved in the Northwestern Music Department. Any student who would like to play a band or orchestra instrument or sing in chorus may still sign up this week! There is NO experience required to sign up for a music class, and we will teach students everything they need to know to be successful in their chosen area. Music classes are taught 5 days a week. The music class chosen fills one of the connections classes on your schedule for the year. The other class will change each 9 weeks, rotating students through the other connections/PE selections. It won't be long before students are sharing their musical skills with the school community!

Band, Orchestra and Chorus classes are the first of potentially seven years' worth of music education, and a lifetime of enjoyment! Participation in the music department is a yearlong commitment during school, with only three evening performances. Music students in band or orchestra may be asked to supply their own instruments as well as other instrument related supplies and method books, but we also have school-owned instruments available. Some larger instruments (cello/bass/tuba/etc.) will be available for use during the school day to resolve transportation issues. More information about specific supplies, where to rent or purchase instruments, and uniforms will be distributed at the start of the respective classes. Below are brief descriptions of each area in the music department.

The **Band** includes the woodwind, brass, and percussion families of instruments. Examples of woodwinds are the bassoon, clarinet, flute, oboe, and saxophone. Students interested in brass instruments might select the baritone, French horn, trumpet, trombone or tuba. Percussion instruments include melodic pitched instruments (e.g. bells and marimba) in addition to the snare and bass drums, or drum set. Mrs. Naughton and Mr. Rushing, the band directors, will help you identify your best choice of instrument.

The **Chorus** gives students a chance to develop their voice in a group setting while building musical skills. There are also many opportunities for solos and other activities such as all-state chorus and honor choruses. Choral students perform a variety of musical styles including traditional choral, jazz, classical, musical theatre and pop. Ms. Grant, the choral director, will welcome you into the program no matter your level of experience.

The **Orchestra** is comprised of the stringed family of instruments. These include the violin - the smallest and highest pitched instrument in the string family; the viola - a mellow midrange instrument slightly larger than the violin; the cello - a rich sounding lower register instrument; and the string bass - the largest and deepest in the string family. Mrs. Champion, the orchestra director, will introduce all four instruments to students and assist them in choosing one. All stringed instruments come in multiple sizes to fit any sized student!

Questions? Please contact:

Mrs. Champion, orchestra- champione@fultonschools.org; Ms. Grant, chorus- grants@fultonschools.org

Mrs. Naughton, band- naughtonc@fultonschools.org; Mr. Rushing, band- rushings@fultonschools.org

Please return this form during Connections/Music by Friday, August 12.

Student Name: _____ First Period Teacher: _____

Parent Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Sign me up for the Orchestra! **OR** Sign me up for the Band! **OR** Sign me up for the Chorus!



Northwestern Middle School Music Department



Mrs. Evelyn Champion comes to the Northwestern Orchestra with 22 years of experience. She is the 2011 Georgia American String Teachers Association String Teacher of the Year and the 2012 Georgia Music Educators Association Music Educator of the Year. Mrs. Champion is a 2013 “Woodruff Arts Center Salutes Georgia Arts in Education Leaders” finalist for Music Education. Mrs. Evelyn Champion graduated Magna Cum Laude with High Honors from the University of Georgia in 1994 with a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education, and holds her Master of Music Education and Education Specialist degrees from the University of Georgia as well. Mrs. Champion was recently elected President of the Georgia Music Educators Association (GMEA) and will serve from 2017-2019. Again this year, Mrs. Champion is the statewide organizer for the GMEA All State Orchestras. A freelance violinist, Mrs. Champion performs with the Georgia Symphony Orchestra and is the Co-director of the Encore Orchestra Camp. She lives in Marietta with her husband J. Champion, and sons David, Charlie, and Sam, ages 12, 8, and 5. Her hobbies are gardening, biking, and of course, playing violin!

Ms. Grant came to Northwestern as Choral Director in 2012 from New York City where she lived and worked as a freelance musician and music teacher. Prior to her time in New York, Ms. Grant taught Choral Music at Haynes Bridge Middle School and Centennial High School as well as private voice and piano at The Peggy Still School of Music. She has also taught in Fayette County and Lawton, Oklahoma. Ms. Grant holds a Master’s Degree in Music Education from the University of Georgia where she also finished her undergraduate work after attending Shorter College for 2 years. She is the Choral Fine Arts Support Teacher for Fulton County and currently serves as the Connections Department Head at NMS. In addition to teaching choral music, Ms. Grant gives solo performances, accompanies, teaches private voice and piano, and serves as a guest clinician for honor choirs around the Southeast. In 2014, Ms. Grant and the NMS 8th grade chorus were invited to perform for the annual Georgia Music Educators’ Association In-service Conference. She is a former member of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chorus, and has also served as the Georgia Music Educators’ Association District V Choral Chair.



Mrs. Naughton is the Northwestern Band Director and is in her 22nd year of teaching. A native of Jonesboro, Georgia received her Bachelors of Music Education degree from the University of South Carolina and her Masters of Music Education degree from the University of Southern Mississippi. Previously, Mrs. Naughton was the Director of Bands at Arnall Middle School in Coweta County from 1996-2001 and East Cobb Middle School in Cobb County from 2001-2004. Under her direction the bands received superior and excellent ratings at the District’s Large Group Performance Evaluation as well as the Southern Star Music Festival. In 2005, the Northwestern Middle School’s Symphonic Band won the Southern Star Music Festival ‘Sweepstakes’ Award, also in 2008 with the 6th Grade Band, 2010 with the 7th and 8th Grade Band and 2012 with the 8th Grade Band. In 2014, our 8th Grade Band was chosen as featured ensemble, opening the University of Georgia’s Midfest Band Clinic. Membership in professional organizations include the Music Educators National Conference, Georgia Music Educators Association and Phi Beta Mu. Mrs. Naughton has served GMEA as Honor Band and All-State District organizers. She has worked on staff with Encore! Band Camps. Mrs. Naughton has also served as a flute clinician throughout Georgia. Christy and her husband Dennis reside in Woodstock, Georgia and are the proud parents of their 12 year old son, Matthew, 18 year old son, Alex and 21 year old daughter, Marilyn.

Mr. Steven Rushing is from Lilburn, Georgia and is in his second year teaching Band at Northwestern Middle School. He earned his Bachelor of Music Degree from the University of Georgia in Music Education and his Master’s Degree from the University of South Carolina in Trumpet Performance. In addition to teaching at NMS, Mr. Rushing maintains a private studio of over twenty students, many of which have achieved positions in District Honor Band as well as the Georgia Music Educators Association All State Band, and has served as a trumpet clinician throughout the state. Outside of teaching, Mr. Rushing is a member of the Georgia Music Educators Association and performs with the Northwinds Symphonic Band as principal trumpet.

