

NORTHGATE HIGH SCHOOL INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Band Camp and 2011 Marching Band Season

Spring 2011

Welcome to the Northgate High School Bronco Marching Band and Auxiliary Units. **BOSS (Band and Orchestra Student Staff) and I have been working hard to plan and prepare a great Band Camp and fall season for all of you.** Marching Band is a completely voluntary ensemble and activity. Through the dedication of the members of this ensemble, we are able to help keep this tradition alive! It is hard work, involving commitment and sometimes sacrifices, but most veteran members and graduates will tell you that it is one of the best groups to which a student can belong. Freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors learn to travel, work, and play together. High school becomes less frightening because of Band Camp and familiar faces. You will apply this dedication and self-motivation as you face the demands and challenges inherent in striving to be your very best. We are looking forward to a great year for the Marching Band and Auxiliary Units.

Listed below is what you need to **bring on the first day of Band Camp** and every time we have rehearsal. Among the things you should have are:

- Instrument and all music, or all auxiliary gear!!**
- Pencil**
- Comfortable athletic shoes (NO sandals, heels, or skate shoes)**
- Drillmaster marching shoes (not required until acquired)**
- Cool clothing (shorts, tee shirts, etc.), a hat, sun screen**
- A water bottle**

You will also need to **purchase a Music Lyre and Flip Folder** (which attaches to your instrument and holds your music). These items can be purchased at the local music stores (C & L Music, Rockin Robbie's Music Emporium/East Bay Music, and Countrywood Music). I recommend that you call ahead to be sure that the items you need are in stock before venturing to the store(s).

What is Band Camp? Band Camp is two weeks of training for the fall marching season. The students will learn the fundamentals of marching, the multiple vocal commands used in marching, and how to play music and do a routine while marching. However, the most important aspect of Band Camp is the camaraderie, the unity, and family ties you develop as you work together. Every member will learn from one another, and help each other towards the common goal of excellence; that is expected of this ensemble. Yet band camp is not just about hard work. There are fun activities, and time for all members to get to know each other better. All members are strongly encouraged to also attend the afternoon, evening, and weekend activities, which will take place during band camp. These are cool activities designed to develop a strong social element within the band and auxiliary (the friends you make during band camp are friendships that you will have during the school year, for all your years at Northgate, and perhaps for a lifetime). Parents of freshmen may have reservations about allowing their son or daughter to participate in these social activities with older students. The upper classmen know that the purpose of these events is to welcome and help the new members feel comfortable and feel like they belong. All of these events will be chaperoned, so your student will always be supervised.

Please understand that Band Camp is a requirement for students who will be in marching band. Every member must attend the rehearsals (unless arrangements have been made with the band director). I encourage all of you to make every effort possible to attend every day of camp. Every member of the ensemble is a critical piece of the puzzle. One missing person makes marching that much more difficult on the person next to them, in front of them, and behind them. The musicians are a part of a section as well, and each part is critical. Each auxiliary member needs to be there to perform their part in the routine that was designed with them in mind. Members also need to arrive early or on time so that rehearsals go as scheduled, and students don't miss vital instructional time or information. Band camp will be held on weekdays from August 15-26 (8am to 4pm) at Northgate. Uniforms will be issued and marching band shoes will be ordered during the first week of camp. The uniforms will become the students' responsibility until they are turned in near the end of the first semester. Uniforms will not be issued to students who have not paid for Marching Band or set up a payment plan with the NIMB treasurer. Group and individual **photos are taken in uniform** during the second week of band camp. **Students are not allowed to participate in band camp without the medical and band camp forms, so please turn them in on the first day of band camp!** Forms are available on the NIMB website.

During the marching band season Wednesday rehearsals will take place from 3:30 pm to 6:45 pm at Northgate. The rehearsals will start on Wednesday, August 31. The season will end on November 12, 2011. Musicians will receive most of the music that they are playing in the spring semester prior to the marching band season. Our march is "Bonds of Unity" by James Swearingen and there are several other pieces of music that they will play. All musicians must practice the music over the summer and **memorize the march** before band camp begins. **Number each measure** on the march with a pencil, so that the rehearsals will run smoothly. After the march is memorized, memorize the other pieces. Memorization can be difficult for some students, but don't give up! Start with one measure, then one phrase; learn a section at a time until you can play the entire song. Memorization is a mental and physical endeavor and **repetition is the key**. Work consistently and diligently on your music to have it prepared for the first day of Band Camp. **It is essential that you memorize your music** because we do not march with lyres or music of any kind.

What is a Band Review? Every year the band attends four band reviews at various locations. At the band reviews, the students will use the skills they develop during band camp and Wednesday after school rehearsals, in competition with other bands from around Northern California. "Bonds of Unity" by James Swearingen is the march we will play in competition. Auxiliary units will learn routines to this music and compete against the auxiliary units from the other schools as well. **Band and Auxiliary members will not be allowed to attend any of the band events without turning in a completed medical form and appropriate permission slips.** Performances include the Walnut Festival Twilight Parade, band reviews, Homecoming, a demonstration at Walnut Acres Elementary School, football games, and the March-a-thon fundraiser. The students will travel by bus to events held away from campus.

Once again, welcome. We are looking forward to seeing all of you on Monday, August 15, 2011 at the freshman breakfast at 6:00 am. Or at 8:00 am sharp in the music room! Many thanks to the BOSS members and parent volunteers for your hard work and dedication to the Northgate High School Bronco Marching Band and Auxiliary Units.

Best Wishes, and have a safe and restful summer vacation,

Greg Brown,

Northgate High School Performing Arts Chairperson and Director of Instrumental Music

NIMB Website: <http://www.norhgatehs-pfc.com/nimb.html>