

**NORTHGATE HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ BAND**  
**Course Information and Expectations 2015-2016**

March 10, 2015

We will continue to offer two Jazz Band classes for the coming school year. All students who audition and are accepted in Jazz Band should sign up for the Jazz Band class. Do not sign up for Stage Band. Once auditions have been held and placement assignments have been made the students will be scheduled into the proper class.

There are a great many expectations that come with membership in Northgate High School Jazz Band I and or Jazz Band II. These are the most challenging courses that the music department offers. The curriculum is on the same level of the highest Math, Science, English, and Social Studies courses offered. The level of thinking skills necessary to absorb and develop the proper aural and psychomotor dexterity is of the highest order. Therefore, one should expect to dedicate a large amount of time to the development of the required skills. Applications of your out of class time include regular listening to jazz music, consistent home practice, and section rehearsals, as well as, school, community, festival, and competitive performances.

Rehearsal time is a time for focused concentration on specific criteria provided by the director or students. One must be ready to receive verbal instructions and act on them in an appropriate manner as they are given. The progress of the ensemble and individuals is entirely dependent upon the ability and willingness of the students to consistently hold themselves responsible for their own learning. When this process is interrupted tensions arise that further hinder the progress of the group and the individual. Such interruptions are obviously inappropriate.

An extremely high level of personal integrity is essential. Without an open and honest atmosphere, communication of the emotional depth of a composition is impossible to achieve. Whenever even the slightest level of dishonesty or mistrust is present the participants' emotions are effected, making it impossible for them to inter-relate and explore the expressive content of a composition or an improvisation together. This point leads to the importance of musical communication among members of the group. There is only one way to experience the level of musical communication and interaction that is hoped for, and that is through sensitive and empathetic concentration on the sounds that others are making on their instruments.

The group often travels to perform off of the school campus. When this occurs itineraries are carefully developed to support the course curriculum, performance preparedness, safety, and comfort of the students. The schedule must be followed. A simple variation may at the time seem inconsequential; however, something as simple as over sleeping, not taking a meal when the opportunity is provided, or not reporting on time can lead to serious safety and/or performance altering consequences. If an unforeseen event becomes evident one should make arrangements to accommodate the schedule. If there seems to be an insurmountable obstacle preventing you from being prepared, see Mr. Brown ahead of time so that proper arrangements can be made. Do not take it upon yourself to alter the itinerary or hinder its progress.

Another consideration is that of maintenance of instruments and equipment. There is basic maintenance that must be handled outside of class time. Examples include: keeping one's instrument clean, oiling valves regularly, greasing slides, maintaining an ample supply of reeds, sticks, and other items necessary to perform. Brass players are expected to own cup, plunger, bucket (JoRal metal bucket style), and straight mutes. Trumpet players are expected to own a JoRal bubble style mute, as well.

Consistent rehearsal attendance is imperative to the progress of the group. Rehearsals must start on time as well. It is tempting to socialize with your friends, many of whom will be in class with you. Rehearsal is not social time. You are expected to get to class early, if possible, and to set up immediately upon entering the room.

Attendance at all performances is expected! Performance schedules are posted on the NIMB website prior to the beginning of the school year and are followed by periodic updates. It should be clear that families must take on the responsibility of checking posted information regularly. Date changes are delivered via e-mail with a request for a commitment to the new date or communication about a conflict. We depend upon timely response to these communications so that we make new commitments only after obtaining complete information from all families.

### Schedule Information

You should expect to participate in six to nine festivals during the school year (four to five for Jazz Band II). A few of these festivals will be overnight trips in which we will stay one or two nights in a hotel.

As the year progresses we are often asked to perform at various community events and activities. We try to honor these requests as representatives of Northgate High School. When a request has been made the existing schedule will be considered and the students will be asked to check their availability. After this check has been made I decide whether or not it is feasible for the group to participate. After the date of the decision the activity is another one of our required performances. Students who report at the time of the check that they have a conflict will not be expected to perform. We will; however explore the possibility of the student participating in both activities before that decision is made.

As you sign up for Jazz Band you must be aware that these expectations and philosophies are requirements of the course. If you audition you are agreeing to adhere to these standards including all requirements listed in the Northgate Course Catalogue. I ask; however, that you sign and return the short form below by the second day of auditions **Thursday, March 12, 2015**. Please keep this document for future reference. Thank You.

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We understand and agree to the expectations and procedures stated above.

Please Print the Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ -- \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_