

Northshore Christian Academy

A Ministry of Northshore Christian Church ~ www.northshorechristianschools.org

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May 3, 2011

Dear Family of Fifth Graders,

As your child finishes their final year in elementary school, I want to welcome you into the middle school program! This letter will keep you informed on the upcoming details of middle school. We take seriously the responsibility of helping our students navigate the channel between the relatively quiet harbors of elementary school and the broader currents of high school and beyond. During this transition, students benefit enormously from a Biblically-integrated program, the nurturing of a small class environment, an intellectually stimulating curriculum, the fostering of friendships, and the guidance of a caring and talented faculty.

Here are future topics that will be communicated to you or your child in the next several months:

- May- Student Council nominations and elections, Band/Orchestra/Choir selection, Core Supplement (elective) selection.
- June- Move-Up Day Orientation, Supply list, Uniform list, September orientation dates, summer sports clinics.
- August- Welcome letter from the sixth grade teaching team, October middle school retreat information, coed soccer team registration, Washington D.C. trip fact sheet (optional trip in the spring), service hours fact sheet, immunization requirements.

We are planning a challenging and supportive year for your middle school student! Here are some details about our program.

- **The new building** will be completed in August. The students in 7th and 8th grades will have all of their core classes in the new building. Sixth graders will have their science and history classes in the new building.
- **Changing classes:** Every sixth grader will have three core teachers who work as a teaching team for each sixth grader. They teach Bible, English, Science, Math and History. Those classes are organized so that we maximize learning and reduce moving from class to class. Generally, they will change classes 4-5 times a day. Sixth graders will have two periods a day for Core supplement (elective) classes.
- **Core Supplement Classes:** Every sixth grader will have a 9- week rotation of core supplement classes. In the previous years these classes have included Art, Robotics, Computers and Spanish classes. Next year's schedules will be finalized at the end of May. Sixth graders will also have PE twice a week.
- **Music program:** Sixth graders may choose a music track. Choir, Orchestra and Band.
- **6th – 8th grade Core Supplement Choices:** A variety of other classes are offered during 7th period. A survey form will be sent home in May. Your student will indicate their first and second choice of electives. Eighth graders have first priority in many of these. During 7th period, we also offer a Reading Lab class and a Math Lab class. These classes teach advanced learning strategies in the area of reading and math.
- **Reading to Learn:** Secondary and college education requires extensive and advanced reading skills in order to master the material. As your student advances through 6-12th grade, they will be required

to read and master large amounts of material. In sixth grade, our program builds the many skills required to be strong secondary students (speed, vocabulary, comprehension, accuracy, endurance) Students will be challenged to build their reading proficiency, note-taking strategies, and study skills.

- **Independent and Responsible Learners:** Our sixth grade program coaches students on using assignment books, time management strategies and study skills. They will experience more deadlines on assignments, end of course exams and writing assignments. Of course all assignments will be posted on the classroom white board, Parent Web homework site, and in a weekly email.

Sports: In the fall, our new sports program will begin. This new program will provide separate opportunities for the developing athlete (all-comers) to those who are ready for the competitive league sport teams (try outs). Also, there will be a separate league for sixth graders and a separate league for seven and eighth graders. This is due to regional league rules and regulations.

- Middle school sports require a current sports physical on file with the school. Consider getting the physical at the same time you schedule a doctor's appointment for the required 6th grade immunizations.
- Sports clinics are scheduled for the summer through the summer enrichment program. This is a great way to prepare for the middle school sports program or just learn a new sport.

Spiritual Focus Events: We have unique and inspiring events throughout the school year as well as dynamic Bible classes and weekly Chapels. Special events include Fall Retreat, Spiritual Emphasis Week, Missions Month, Character Quality recognition, and school leadership projects.

Events: Pep Rallies, School Spirit Week, Semester Social Event (skating, bowling, Aqua Sox game, Mariners game), Best of the Middle School, and a Washington D.C. trip.

Clubs: After school clubs, tutoring and lessons will continue to be offered by the Northshore School of the Arts and Enrichment. Classes offered this year include: Chess Club, Dave Ramsey Financial Management Classes, various Art classes, Science Classes, Babysitting Certification Class, Sports Clinics, and various music lessons (guitar, violin, piano, drums, horn, and clarinet).

We are looking forward to a partnership with you in this new season of growth that your child will undertake. It is full of new experiences and challenges. We have many years of experience in mentoring young people into a highly successful bridge into high school.

We are very fortunate to have Mr. Mike Thornton lead our middle school program. Mr. Thornton brings a wealth of expertise to NCA including years of leading a large high school and teaching secondary classes. He holds two master degrees in school administration as well as Biblical studies. His leadership and understanding of preparing students for college success shapes our program. Also, our middle school faculty is highly trained with many years of experience. They have helped hundreds of students navigate through the tricky waters of adolescence. They are highly talented teachers as well as very caring for our students.

"Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you {our students} will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" Philippians 1:6

In His Service,



Mrs. Holly Leach
Principal



Michael Thornton
Middle School Vice-Principal

6th Grade Core Supplement (Elective) Classes

All 6th graders will take part in a rotation of four classes during 6th hour. Every nine weeks the students will switch rooms to go to another exploratory class. These will include: Computers, Robotics, Basic Spanish, and Art.

In addition, 6th grade students will choose from the following:

Intermediate Band: taking the next step in instrumental instruction, this band builds on skills learned in Beginning Band and prepares our musicians for the challenges of Advanced Band and Jazz Band

Advanced Band: Woodwinds, horns, guitars and drums. It's all here! (requires teacher approval)

Beginning Strings: The beauty of chamber music. This is where it all begins! Violins, violas, cellos and more!

String Ensemble: Continuing from the lessons of our beginning class, these students will perform at special events and holiday celebrations here at Northshore

Art: Artists will express themselves with Sharpie markers, pencils, watercolors, oil pastels, watercolor pencils, and cut paper, using new and traditional art techniques.

Yearbook: Working with our adult staff to create next year's edition. Students will learn the basics of photography and page layout

Business Education: Students will be introduced to these key business concepts: establishing goals, understanding a target market, budgeting, obtaining and managing inventory, marketing products, merchandising product, and proper records maintenance.

Beginning Choir: We have marveled at the performance of this group in the past. All 6th grade singers are welcome.

Web Design: Provides students with the skills necessary to plan and create web sites using Expression Design and Web

Game Design: Provides students with the skills necessary to plan and create basic video games. Complement to the Web Design class.

Peer Counseling: Introduces techniques aimed at improving interpersonal communication, practicing academic pair/share techniques and how to spiritually encourage classmates

Beginning Drama: Exposing young people to introductory concepts involved in theatrical productions

Student Aide: assisting elementary staff with basic classroom operations

Career Exploration: Learning about different career options through interest surveys, guest speakers and research projects

Reading Lab: Gaining additional practice in building vocabulary, learning to predict, analyzing, summarizing, and reviewing written material.

Math Lab: Receiving extra time to encouraged to work on and ask specific questions about problems and concepts for which they need help.

Pre-Driving: Preparing students for future Drivers Education classes by helping them understanding the basic systems of automobiles and the issues involved in safe motoring

Organization Skills Lab: Availing students of opportunities to improve the organizational structures of their world, including time management, study skills and home systems management

Study Hall: Helps our busy students get it all done!

Student Aide: Students assist our busy K-2nd staff with basic tasks aimed at increasing academic achievement for our younger students and at the same time in acquiring better organizational skills for themselves!

Android Apps: Design your own apps for Android phones. Could this be the launching pad for the next "Angry Birds?"