



JOHNS CREEK HIGH SCHOOL ORCHESTRA

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April 20, 2022

Dear Parents,

I am pleased to announce that the Johns Creek High School Chamber Orchestra has been selected to perform at the prestigious 76th Midwest Clinic-an International Band & Orchestra Conference in Chicago, Illinois this winter. This will be our Johns Creek High School's third time performing at such prestigious event.

As you may have heard that the orchestra is "eligible" to send in the audition materials every five (5) years. The orchestra then must go through a most rigorous selection process to get selected. Annually, the Midwest selects between five to six high school string orchestras across the country to take part in this annual event. So, this is much honor for our school and for our state.

This year, the conference will be held from Monday, December 19 – Thursday, December 22 in the McCormick Place West Convention Center in Chicago. We will receive specific date and time of performance by end of June. For those of you who are not familiar with this event, please allow me to explain this to you.

The Midwest Clinic in Chicago is the largest instrumental music education conference in the world. This conference draws over 17,500 participants from all fifty states and over thirty foreign countries. Not only is it the largest music education conference in the world but also the most prestigious. The very best bands and orchestras, through rigorous screening and competitive procedures, are selected to perform. Some of the orchestras and bands that have performed in the past include groups coming from as far away as Japan, Belgium, China, and Spain. Past performers include: Chicago Symphony Orchestra Brass, Eastman Wind Ensemble, Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra, Doc Severinson, Wynton Marsalis, various United States Armed Forces bands, such as the United States "President's Own" Marine Band, the United States "Ground Forces" Army Band, and the U.S. Air Force and Navy Bands.

The Midwest Clinic is considered the most prestigious performing venue in the country and perhaps in the world. Therefore, being selected to perform at this conference is a huge honor for our school, our community, and our state. The Fulton County Board of Education is very familiar about this event and is extremely proud of our achievement.

I am enclosing a past Midwest experience notes (from my former students of Centennial High School and Johns Creek High School), and other pertinent Midwest-related information. In addition to my Chamber orchestra students, the parents of the Chamber

Orchestra students, and some of my Sinfonia/Philharmonia Orchestra students may be allowed to travel with us, given that there are still spaces available. If you (parents) plan to travel independently, please let me know in advance, so that I can issue you and your guests with the convention passes. These passes will allow you to attend all performances, clinics, and exhibit halls.

Because of its prestige and important nature of this event, there will be a great deal of time and commitment required on our part to ensure success. Personally, it is very assuring to know that competent and experience parent volunteers will assist me in this endeavor. You will hear from them sometime soon.

My first Midwest Clinic attendance experience goes back to the year 1998.... Prior to my first Midwest attendance, I have heard so much about the Midwest Clinic and of its rich history and glamour. I knew some of the best groups and clinics were offered for the music educators at this convention. But, I had no idea to the extent in which it has affected me as a music teacher. Attending Midwest Clinic in December of 1998 gave me a totally different perspective about music education. Meeting face to face with the legends in the field of music education inspired me to become a better music educator.

One of the groups that I heard that particular year (1998) profoundly inspired me for the rest of my life. It was the Plano Senior High School Orchestra from Plano, Texas, led by Kathleen DeBerry-Brungard. The concert blew me away! I was so inspired, challenged, and enthused about teaching as a result of hearing that performance! I could not wait to go back to my students. I wanted to share my enthusiasm, excitement, and information with my students at Centennial High School. I also had a renewed energy and aspiration to elevate my students' level of musicianship.

Several years have passed since my first visit to Midwest Clinic.... Kathleen DeBerry-Brungard, the person that has inspired me, became one of our GMEA Large Group Performance Evaluation judges. She heard my Centennial High School Orchestra at the GMEA LGPE Festival. Upon hearing my group, she suggested that I bring my orchestra to the Midwest Clinic. Ms. DeBerry-Brungard told me that the Midwest experience would be a life-changing experience for my students. Thus with Ms. Brungard's blessings and her encouragement, we applied to perform at this prestigious venue in year 2005.

Incredibly, on our first try (usually it takes several tries), we got accepted to the 59th Midwest Clinic conference in Chicago! And, Ms. Kathleen DeBerry-Brungard was right! My students at Centennial High School had the most memorable and the best experiences ever! To further enhance our experience, Chris Martin, the Principal Trumpeter with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (now he is the Principal Trumpeter with the New York Philharmonic), agreed to play with my high school orchestra at Midwest as a guest soloist. A person of his stature would typically play with some of the best professional orchestras in the world. Wow!

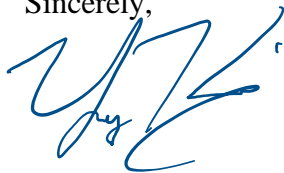
I have been attending the Midwest Clinic every year since my first visit of 1998. There are so many wonderful clinics and performances that offer for the attendees.... Both the teachers and the students have the opportunities to listen to wonderful groups and attend innovative clinics to get inspired and learn. They can then take back this renewed enthusiasm and ideas back to their local schools.

I am so pleased and thankful that our Johns Creek High School Orchestra will be among the very best orchestras in the world to participate in this prestigious 76th Midwest Clinic in Chicago. I am proud to announce that this will be this school's third time performing at this prestigious venue. We are thrilled and honored that our performance may inspire and touch lives of many young teachers and students, as the Midwest performances in the past have inspired others.

The Johns Creek High School Orchestral program, going into its fourteenth year, has achieved so much.... We have been invited to perform in major venues such as three times performing at the Georgia Music Educators Association Conference (2011, 2015, 2020); NafME Conference in Atlanta; performance/trips to Universal Studios in Orlando, Florida (2011, 2017); and the invitational performance at the National Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington, D.C. (2012); Two European tours (Italy 2014/Austria & Czech Republic 2019) and many more.... Now, we are excited about taking on this new challenge of performing at the Midwest Clinic- International Band & Orchestra Conference in Chicago.

Please be assured that we will work very hard to prepare for the Midwest Clinic. We will do all we can to proudly represent our Johns Creek High School, this community, Fulton County Schools, and the state of Georgia at this important and prestigious venue. I am very confident that the students will step up to meet this incredible challenge. As always, we appreciate your support, enthusiasm, and encouragement. Thank you so much for all you do for your child and for this program. I look forward to another great year!

Sincerely,



Young K. Kim
Director of Orchestras
Johns Creek High School

PS. There will be a Midwest Trip Parent Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, May 4th at 7:00pm in the JCHS orchestra room. Much Midwest trip information will be shared.