

Welcome to the Orchestras of Neuqua Valley High School



Mr. Kevan Kosobayashi, Director
Chamber Strings, Symphonic Orchestra

Mr. Brad Pfeil, Director
Concert Orchestra, Concert Strings
Wildcat Fiddlers

Mr. Greg Schwaegler, Director
Chamber Orchestra, Symphonic Strings, Symphonic Orchestra
Neuqua Valley Symphony Orchestra

Welcome to the Neuqua Valley High School Orchestras!

Dear Incoming 9th Grade Students & Parents,

Welcome to Neuqua Valley High School! We are excited you are joining us, and we know you will enjoy your time as a member of the NVHS orchestras. Included in this packet are portions of the Neuqua orchestra handbook and examples of four student schedules. We hope that this information will be helpful as you make your high school course decisions.

Please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Pfeil, Mr. Kosobayashi, or Mr. Schwaegler with any questions you may have. You may also visit neuquamusic.org for the latest information on auditions and classes. We have helped many students figure out how to make their schedules work and we'd love to help you too!

We look forward to seeing you at the 8th grade orientation nights at Neuqua. Please stop by the music department table and introduce yourself.

See you all soon!!!

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Orchestra Curricular Offerings at NVHS

Freshman Building offerings:

At the Freshman Center, we currently have three orchestra classes: Concert Orchestra period 1, Concert Orchestra period 2, and Concert Strings.

- **Concert Orchestras** are the two non-auditioned freshman ensembles. These groups are for the student who is developing vibrato, excellent tone production, and shifting. These groups will provide the foundations of excellent instrumental playing and prepare students for the transition to the orchestras at the main campus.
- **Concert Strings** is the auditioned freshman orchestra. These students are highly encouraged to study with a private teacher, are encouraged to do ILMEA auditions and will be expected to participate in the solo and ensemble festivals. This group plays challenging music and moves at an accelerated pace. Assignments in technique class are also challenging and require rigorous practice outside of class.

All Concert String and Concert Orchestra students will perform at least five times during the year. We give concerts at the main campus in October, January, March, May and we perform at the Fine Arts Festival. There are also opportunities for students to work together as part of a string quartet or to form other chamber ensembles.

Concert Strings and Concert Orchestra students have technique classes that meet during the students' lunch period. The 22 minutes that they spend are a great time for us to address technical skills, answer questions they have, and work on instrument specific issues. Technique class is 30% of the grade in all NVHS orchestra classes, so it is very important that your student attends their technique class every week.

ALL STUDENTS should select **CONCERT ORCHESTRA** when registering for high school courses. The high school orchestra directors will communicate with the guidance counselors after auditions are over to place students in the proper orchestra for freshman year.

Main Campus Offerings:

There are five orchestras at the Main Campus: Symphonic Orchestra period 1, Symphonic Orchestra period 8, Symphonic Strings, Chamber Orchestra and Chamber Strings.

- **Symphonic Orchestras** are the non-auditioned orchestras at the Main Campus. They are open to students in 10th-12th grades. These groups are perfect for students who are continuing to work at refining their playing while performing music covering the full gamut of musical time periods and styles.
- **Symphonic Strings** is an auditioned orchestra at the Main Campus. It is open to students in 10th-12th grades. Symphonic Strings provides sophisticated instrumental experiences through study and performance of masterworks for string and full orchestra. Members are expected to advance their musicianship through completion of technique classes.
- **Chamber Orchestra and Chamber Strings** are the two most selective auditioned groups at the Main Campus. Students who are accepted into these ensembles are required to be taking weekly private lessons on their orchestra instrument.

**Incoming 9th grade students may be invited to audition for Chamber Orchestra and/or Chamber Strings in late-January. They will need to do both the Concert Strings and the Chamber Orchestra/Strings audition if they are interested in being considered for membership in either Chamber Ensemble.

Co-Curricular Opportunities:

The following groups are open to students involved in the NVHS orchestra program.

- **Wildcat Fiddlers:** Wildcat Fiddlers is a group open to any 9th-12th grade orchestra students. The fiddlers perform several times each year. Their performances include the Spooktacular Concert, Fiddle Fest, Fine Arts Festival, as well as other community outreach concerts. Fiddlers rehearse on Tuesday evenings at the main campus and are directed by Mr. Pfeil.
- **Neuqua Valley Symphony Orchestra:** The Neuqua Valley Symphony Orchestra is an auditioned group based on the same instrument ratio used by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. This ensemble includes a full complement of wind and percussion instruments and plays the standard orchestral repertoire. The NVSO performs at the Spooktacular concert, Crystal concert, as well as a finale concert in April that features student soloists performing concertos with the orchestra.

- **ILMEA District and All State Festivals:** Interested students will audition for the District 9 Orchestra. Students who are accepted into the orchestra will participate in an all day festival with a guest conductor and students from area high schools. Students who place highly in the District 9 orchestra may be selected to participate in the All State Festival. The All State Festival takes place in Peoria during the Illinois Music Educators Conference in January.
- **District 204 Solo & Ensemble Festival:** Students will prepare a solo or small ensemble entirely outside of class. A minimum of four sessions with their director must take place in order to participate. Students must also meet with their piano accompanist. During this festival students will have a 10-minute session with a guest clinician. There are no ratings or scores from this festival. All students will be expected to attend the Honors Recital at 7 pm on the evening after the festival.
- **Jazz Bands:** Orchestra students are eligible for membership in the NVHS Jazz bands. String bass players and pianists are encouraged to try out for these outstanding groups. Jazz begins in September and meets on Wednesday evenings.
- **Steel Drum Band** is open to all music students. You do not need to be a percussionist to audition for the group. There are several general sessions in the fall to teach you the basics followed by an audition. This is also an opportunity for students who play electric bass. Watch for information at the beginning of the school year.
- **Chamber Singers** is a co-curricular ensemble open to all female students of the NVHS music department who are not in *WildScats*. Students must be enrolled in a curricular music ensemble to participate. Auditions will be held in early-September in the Freshman Campus Choir Room. The group meets once a week and performs at curricular concerts as well as throughout the community. *Chamber Singers* is directed by Mrs. Kasprzak and rehearses on Wednesday evenings from 5:30-7:15 pm in the choir room at the Freshman Campus.
- **Color Guard** Color guard is a section of the marching band that is part of the visual interpretation of the music. Anything listed as a marching band event will include the guard. Performances include the Labor Day and Memorial Day parades, home football games, selected pep rallies and school events, marching band concert, and festival performances.

Private Lessons:

Private lessons are strongly encouraged to help reinforce and develop great musical habits. Private lessons are offered both at school and in the Naperville area. A list of school-endorsed private instructors can be found on our website, neuquamusic.org.

Traveling Opportunities:

The Neuqua Valley High School Orchestras travel internationally once every three years. In the past, the orchestra has toured England, Austria, Germany, the Czech Republic, Italy, and Spain. These trips present a wonderful opportunity for our students to perform and to sightsee. Our large trips are open to any student enrolled in a curricular orchestra.

We also take smaller trips which vary by year and by group.

Orchestra Parents Association:

The Neuqua Valley High School orchestra program could not function without its outstanding parent organization. The parent organization is comprised of all the orchestra parents and is directed by an executive board. All meetings are open to any orchestra parent and we would surely invite all of you to be involved with the orchestra parents association. The orchestra parents assist in many ways throughout the year. Orchestra parents make possible our fundraising efforts, the Fine Arts Festival, the Crystal Concert and help with our travel plans and uniforms. Please consider volunteering for at least one of our committees.

Auditions

Auditions for the Concert Strings will take place in early February. Music will be available at neuquamusic.org before winter break. Students will also be required to perform a solo piece of their own choosing.

Playing at the audition determines entrance into Concert Strings. Auditions are not required for placement in either Concert Orchestra. Placement in Concert Orchestra, period 1 or 2, is based on middle school teacher recommendations.

Students interested in auditioning for the Chamber level orchestras should meet with their middle school director.