

Brooks Fine Arts' Department 7th/8th Grade Music Tour
Proposal for St. Louis Tour 2014
May 16th-18th, 2014

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Purpose & Objectives:

- To perform in a regional music festival, bringing together students and accredited music adjudicators in a positive learning environment that inspires students to strive not only for excellence, but to make music a lifelong activity. Our Gwendolyn Brooks Middle School band, chorus, and orchestra ensembles will perform, be critiqued and scored, assessing the groups' performance, focusing on both the ensemble's strengths and weaknesses. Recorded comments are provided for each director to share with their students for additional feedback and musical improvement. Additionally, our students will also have the opportunity to hear and interact with other participating school music groups from across the Midwest, bringing an awareness of the global music community and shared musical lives of middle school students outside of Oak Park and Illinois.

- To visit the St. Louis' "Gateway Arch to the West", a national landmark and engineering marvel. Students will watch a documentary film on the building and engineering of the Gateway Arch concluding with a ride up to the top of the Gateway Arch for a bird's eye view of the St. Louis Metropolitan Area. Students will also have time to tour the Gateway to the West Museum, which features a Lewis & Clark exhibition and history of westward migration. Cross-curricular lessons will take place in preparation for the trip's museum tours but to also cover the history (i.e. jazz) and musical influence behind St. Louis' music scene.

- To strengthen social bonds and build camaraderie as ensemble and school music program by preparation and participation of the music festival trip. Students set a positive image of Gwendolyn Brooks Middle School and the Oak Park Community by displaying appropriate behavior and actions towards each other and as well as people outside of our group (i.e. hotel staff & guests, festival staff, restaurant staff, and other people we may interact with during our trip.) Our experiences with past trips (2008, 2010, 2012) have been very positive and have had other adults come up to compliment on how well our students carry themselves.

- To visit the St. Louis City Museum, a modern and artistic architectural structure that holds an eclectic mixture of children's playgrounds, funhouse, and a surrealistic pavilion made out of unique, found objects. Truly a large scale, aesthetic and visual representation of how individuals and separate parts (musicians) can come together harmoniously (ensemble) to create something truly spectacular and "out of this world."

- To celebrate by spending time visiting the Six Flags – St. Louis Amusement Park to attend the awards ceremony for the music festival involving all the participating school music groups. After distribution of trophies and awards, students will have the opportunity to celebrate our accomplishments among friends, to relax and enjoy the park attractions before departing back home to Oak Park.

Supervision & Safety:

- Supervision needs are directly based on the number of participating students on this music tour opportunity. The number of certified D97 staff needed will depend directly on the number of buses needed for our group's transportation to and from St. Louis. Since this trip is an out-of-state and overnight trip, the request is to have at least one certified D97 staff member per bus to help supervise and be available in emergency situations that may arise. Based on our last trip in 2012, having 5 certified teachers (3 music staff & 2 other D97 certified teaching/admin staff) proved to be essential in order to properly cover the supervision needs of all 5 buses.
- Along with teacher supervision, parent chaperones will also be used to help supervise students throughout the entire trip. The number of male/female chaperones will be based on the number of male/female students participating in the trip with a maximum of 12:1 student/adult ratio.
- Arranged through our travel company, Bob Rogers Travel, security guards will be used for overnight security in the hotel stay. Security guards would be solely dedicated to our group's safety needs for our Gwendolyn Brooks Middle School students and adults throughout the night.
- A parent who is a certified health professional or a designated teacher will supervise dispensing of all prescription medication of students with medical needs. Strict adherence to district health policies will be enforced and students will be required to receive any medication through this designated adult. All participants will submit a medical release form and insurance information needed in case of a medical emergency.

Cost:

- Families of participating students are responsible for paying for the total cost of the trip. Trip expenses will depend on the number of participating students on this music tour opportunity (See attached Bob Rogers Proposal/Itinerary). In addition to the outlined (see attached) trip expenses, other small incidental expenses needed for providing this trip and a Music Tour 2014 t-shirt will be added to the total cost of each participating student. The approximate cost of the trip for 200 participants would be \$440.00.
- Fundraising opportunities will be available for students and their families that are looking for financial assistance to help pay down their costs.
 - Students can raise money through the Annual Pie Sale in October.
 - Students can raise money through the Fine Arts Department Poinsettia Fundraiser.
 - January fundraiser opportunity (i.e. raffle, bowl-a-thon, etc.).
 - Students that may qualify for the federally reduced school lunch program may apply for a grant through the Oak Park Youth Township Association.

Conclusion

Over the years, this music tour opportunity has proven to be a very important and influential part of the growth and success of our Gwendolyn Brooks Middle School music program. The learning and performance opportunities that our students experience is often the biggest highlight of their middle school experience in District 97. Our students often grow personally from this experience by participating in group travel that takes them to new destinations throughout the U.S. and outside of the Chicago metropolitan area. Students have been great ambassadors of the District 97 schools by displaying excellent musicianship and personal character to those people we interact with during these trips and have brought regional attention as to the quality of music education and artistry of our music programs, positively reflecting on our school district and the Oak Park community at large.

Please let us know if there are any questions or concerns pertaining this wonderful opportunity for our students.

Sincerely,

Martha Albers, Jayme Barnard, Fernando Carrillo
Gwendolyn Brooks Middle School Music Staff