

Nashville Notes Handbook
2026-27



2026-27 Handbook

Student Motto:

“Be a Blessing Everywhere You Go!”

Contents

- Section 1. History, Mission, & Vision**
- Section 2. General Information**
- Section 3. Safety and Security**
- Section 4. Expected Behavior and Conduct**
(a.k.a. “Safety Continued”)
- Section 5. Electronic Devices**
- Section 6. Attendance Policy**
- Section 7. Disciplinary Procedure**
- Section 8. Practice Time Outside of Rehearsals**
- Section 9. Communication**
- Section 10. Free Time and Lunches**
- Section 11. Emergency Situations, Illness, & Inclement Weather Policy**
- Section 12. Dress Code: General & Concert**
- Section 13. Parent Volunteer Requirements**
- Section 14. Tuition Fees, Fee Schedule, Refund Policy**
- Section 15. Registration**
- Section 16. Calendar**
- Section 17. Fundraising**
- Section 18. Band Opportunities Outside of NN**
- Section 19. Choir Opportunities Outside of NN**

Section 1. History, Mission, & Vision

Welcome to Nashville Notes!

HISTORY

Nashville Notes is a fine arts program dedicated to the education of students in middle Tennessee and neighboring communities. What began in 1995 with one concert band is now a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, offering multiple ensembles and academic classes.

MISSION

Our mission is to create community through high-quality music and arts instruction by expanding access for homeschooled and nontraditional learners, fostering confidence, joyful expression, leadership, and personal growth through collaborative ensemble experiences.

VISION

Our vision is to be a full arts education program for home educated students, expanding to include the visual and theater arts, as well as the technological and production elements. Our goal is to have a campus, designed for optimum education; including rehearsal spaces, class rooms & music practice rooms, all suitable for rehearsals and studies in the arts – music, visual, theatre, drama, and dance. We envision not only teaching the arts, but also the production side, such as sound engineering, stage management, costume design, etc.

*Nashville Notes Handbook
2026-27*

Section 2. General Information

Rehearsals and Classes are in session every Wednesday at:

Gateway Community Church
584 Franklin Rd.
Franklin, TN 37069

**Fall Semester: 8/12/26 – 11/18/26 Every Wednesday
(No Fall Break)
11/19/26 CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

**Spring Semester: 1/13/27 – 4/28/27 Every Wednesday
Spring Break: 3/17/27
4/29/27 SPRING CONCERT**

Mailing address:

Nashville Notes
P.O. Box 680102
Franklin, TN 37068

Phone Number: 615-478-0850

Website: www.nashvillenotes.org

Email: director@nashvillenotes.org

All Instructors' email addresses can be found in the Course Catalog in their course description, or on the [Staff and Faculty](#) page on the website: nashvillenotes.org with their picture and bio.

BOARD of DIRECTORS

Jean Miller, President and Founder
Jodie Parker, Secretary
Meagan Roberts, Treasurer

Roland Barber
Sholeen Wuest

Section 3. Safety and Security

UPON ARRIVAL

Check in / Check out

All students will be provided their own identifying lanyard with a barcode. These are to be scanned upon arrival and when leaving the building. Anyone not enrolled (family members or guests) wear a provided lanyard as well so they are easily identified as part of the NN community while on campus. (Not a requirement for young children.)

Drop off / Pick up for the younger children

- ♫ **Younger Students (Play & Learn Track, and Grace Notes Track) are dropped off and picked up at the door of their rehearsal/class room.**
- ♫ **These younger students must be picked up on time.** Directors have a very tight schedule with no room to child sit while waiting on parents. If a child is enrolled on a seamless track, with no break in between classes, parents may drop off at the beginning of the first class and pick up at the end of the last class. **If a parent is habitually late picking up their child at the end of their child's track, a fine of \$1/minute will be applied.**

Hang out Spaces for People & Belongings

- ♫ Upon arrival, instruments and lunch bags may be dropped off in the designated area in the Fellowship Hall noted as "The Holding Tank".
- ♫ The Fellowship Hall is open for families to eat lunch, play games, fellowship, etc.
- ♫ **All children under 12 must have parental supervision when not in class.**

Parents are always welcome to stay and enjoy fellowship with other parents, observe classes, etc.

Section 4. Expected Behavior and Conduct **(a.k.a. “Safety Continued”)**

Behavior Expectations

As a Christian organization, committed to glorifying God in everything we do, all students and siblings are expected to show respect and honor to each other, walking in love towards each other, as brothers and sisters in Christ.

“Be kind to one another.” Eph 4:32

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.” Phil 2:3

We are also committed to being careful of what comes out of our mouths when enjoying fellowship with other NN families.

“And never let ugly or hateful words come from your mouth, but instead let your words become beautiful gifts that encourage others; do this by speaking words of grace to help them.” Eph 4:29 TPT

Knowing that our thoughts will eventually leak out of our mouths, consider adding this to your Wednesday drive to NN:

“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” Phil 4:8

Obviously bullying will not be tolerated, but even behavior considered less serious, but nevertheless disrespectful and dishonoring, will also not be tolerated. Nashville Notes students have established a long standing tradition of friendliness and helping each other whenever needed and that will continue.

Courtship, dating, and “public displays of affection” (PDA) are not activities conducive to the mission of Nashville Notes. Regardless of each family’s rules and standards, anything even hinting at a “relationship” (Facebook definition) must be saved for times outside of Nashville Notes. Violation of this policy will not be tolerated.

In order to maintain safety and integrity, students are not to be in a room with the door closed unless the door has a window. The only exception is when with their parent.

The Bullet Point Version:

- Disrespectful and poor attitudes are not tolerated.
- Public Displays of Affection (PDA) on Wednesdays or at any NN event are not tolerated.
- No bullying of any kind.
- Students are not permitted to wander halls or be in rooms where their presence is not required. They should be in their classroom, Fellowship Hall, restroom, or on their way to one of these places.
- Church property that we have permission to use (such as tables and chairs) is to be handled carefully and with respect.
- No weapons, drugs, alcohol, or tobacco including E-cigarettes are allowed on campus.
- No screens of any kind (computers, tablets, phone, etc.) See Section 5 for exceptions.

Nashville Notes Handbook
2026-27

- Foul language is not allowed.
- Skateboards and rollerblades, including shoes with wheels are not allowed on campus.
- Parents and students are not to be in undesignated places on campus.

Violations of these rules could result in suspension or expulsion from the program with a forfeit of tuition.

Specific Conduct Expectations for the YOUNGER musician:

- Attendance is expected at weekly rehearsals and all concerts.
- Drop off on time! Learning begins when class begins; late arrivals are disruptive.
- Pick up on time! Please remember that directors have other responsibilities after class.
- Use the restroom *before* class.
- Come to classes and rehearsals with empty hands and empty mouths. Leave toys, jackets and accessories with parents. No food or drink of any kind, in any rehearsal.

Specific Conduct Expectations for the OLDER musician (choirs 12+, and all instrumental ensembles):

- Be present. Ensembles are performance-oriented; attendance at all concerts and rehearsals is expected.
- Be prompt. Remember, "Early is on time, on time is late, late is unacceptable."
- Be prepared. **Choristers** - Come to rehearsal with your music binder and pencil; **Instrumentalists** – Come to rehearsal with your music binder, method book, instrument, music stand, and pencil. You are expected to have completed the week's assignment and are ready to learn. (Hint: If you gather everything Tuesday night and put it in the *correct* vehicle, you'll have it Wednesday morning! But do NOT put your instrument in a car overnight. Most instruments cannot handle the climate changes.)
- Be polite. Show respect for your director and fellow musicians --do not talk when the director is teaching and interfere with the learning of others. Show respect for our rehearsal space--no food, gum, or candy. Choristers are encouraged to bring a water bottle *with their name on it*.
- Be involved. Listen attentively, stay focused, and always give your best effort.

Section 5. Electronic Devices - cell phones, tablets, computers, etc.

Wednesdays at Nashville Notes are very interactive whether making music together in ensembles, discovering exciting music concepts in class, or enjoying friendships in the Fellowship Hall. Please leave all electronic devices at home for 2 reasons:

1. So that we may focus on the NN mission.
2. So that we may honor each family's boundaries regarding what their children are exposed to.

Nashville Notes Handbook
2026-27

Cell Phones

If a cell phone must come with a student (i.e. student drivers), their device is to be checked in at the sign-in table upon arrival. Students are absolutely not allowed to have a cell phone in rehearsals, classes, Fellowship Hall, bathrooms, or hallways.

Parents – if you need to get in touch with your son/daughter, please call the NN number: 615-478-0850. With hall monitors stationed throughout the church and armed with walkie-talkies, it doesn't take long to get you connected to your blessing. If your son/daughter needs to get in touch with you, they may come to the sign-in table to ask for their phone and then they are to text or call you from there.

If a student violates this policy, their electronic device will be confiscated and must be retrieved by their parent at the end of day.

Computers/Tablets/Phones

We realize that some students need electronic devices in order to complete their academic work. This can be accomplished 1 of 2 ways:

1. Use the study space near the check-in table.
2. With direct parental supervision.

Thank you in advance for being attentive to this very important policy so that we can keep our students safe and focused on the Wednesday mission!

Section 6. Attendance Policy

With only one weekly rehearsal, attendance is critical to the success of the ensembles and classes. When a student misses, everyone is affected.

Should an absence be unavoidable, parents should text: 615-478-0850 *or* email: director@nashvillenotes.org There is a system in place to then get the message to instructors and directors so they can better plan for rehearsals.

Excused Absences include:

- Illness
- Major contest, academic, sports, music, etc. event with another organization (prior notice required on first day of semester)
- Major Family Situations
- *Prior Commitments

*Any prior commitments, such as a family vacation, are to be communicated to teachers on the first day of the semester.

Nashville Notes Handbook
2026-27

Students will be allowed and encouraged to represent Nashville Notes at outside events such as Mid-State, All-State, Solo/Ensemble contests, performances, field trips, long distance trips, etc., ***provided they are in good standing in all of their ensembles and classes.***

“**Good Standing**” is defined as the following:

- The student does not miss class for unexcused reasons as defined by the handbook or teacher.
- The student turns in ALL homework and assignment sheets in a timely fashion.
- The student fully participates in classes.
- The student’s behavior is above reproach.
- The student follows NN rules, classroom rules and procedures.
- The student has not missed any required rehearsals or performances for unexcused reasons.
- The student’s attitude is respectful and honoring toward teachers and peers.

The amazing benefits reaped from participation in an ensemble demand a high level of trust amongst its members. Repeated absences are a breach of that trust and negatively impact the group in all ways musically, academically, socially, and more. Academic classes also suffer when students miss class. If a student receives more than 1 unexcused absence, they risk not being allowed to participate in any NN classes, ensembles, or events for the following year.

Section 7. Disciplinary Procedure

The seriousness of the violation will determine the consequence. The instructor or monitor witnessing the incident will write up a disciplinary form and send the student to the administration desk.

If a student is not immediately expelled,

1. The administrator will confirm the situation and the student will need to take the form home to be signed by a parent and returned by the next week.
2. If the student receives a second disciplinary form (in the same semester) for any reason, the student will be removed from the program without tuition reimbursement.
3. At the discretion of the instructor/director, the student may return the following semester but will be on probation, wherefore if student receives a single disciplinary form the following semester, he/she will be removed from the program for the remainder of the year and potentially the following year.

Disciplinary Appeals

Students may submit a written appeal, signed by both student and parent, to be reviewed by the administrator and program director. They will decide if the decision still stands or if the student may receive a warning.

Section 8. Practice Time Outside of Rehearsals

Because rehearsals are held only 1 day a week, it is IMPERATIVE that all instrumental ensemble and older choral students are dedicated to practicing the minimum required time at home each week. (The specific requirements for each ensemble can be found in the Ensembles & Class Descriptions.)

Section 9. Communication

Nashville Notes is blessed to have a dedicated and esteemed faculty serving middle Tennessee homeschooled students. They are committed to partner with parents to give each student a quality music education.

Orientation takes place on the first day of rehearsals and classes. Parents should plan to be present for the full meeting at lunch and for each class where instructors will communicate what parents can expect from them, and what will be expected from students.

Section 10. Free Time and Lunches

Between Ensembles

Parents, and students ages 12 and up, are invited to enjoy time with their fellow musicians in the Fellowship Hall while waiting on their next ensemble or class. All students are expected to either be in an ensemble, a class, with a parent, or in the hang out space while on campus. We have a strict “Be a Blessing Everywhere You Go!” policy and insist that all students follow that. Numerous scientific studies have shown that engaging in music enhances brain activity and we have found this to be so. In this specific example, students need only ask themselves the question, “*If I _____, would my actions be a blessing?*” and their answer will lead them to make the right choice! If any student feels the need to wander and explore the building, they must first ask permission... and the answer will be “no”.

Lunch Policy

The only place in the building where lunches may be eaten is in the Fellowship Hall.

Nashville Notes is a **peanut and tree nut free** organization.

Please remember this when packing a lunch or snack for your student. All beverages should be contained with a lid. There is a microwave available to use in the Fellowship Hall.

Please clean up after your lunch and put all trash in the trash can.

Section 11. Emergency Situations (NO NUTS!), Illness, & Inclement Weather Policy

Allergies or Medication

Nashville Notes is a **peanut and tree nut free** organization. Please remember this when packing a lunch or snack for your student.

It cannot be emphasized too much the serious nut allergies some of our students have! Not only is it critical to bring **ABSOLUTELY NO NUTS OF ANY KIND** on site, but **if you've had peanut butter on your toast at breakfast, or were snacking on nuts on the way to NN, you should come in looking like a surgeon after scrubbing for surgery – elbows bent, hands up, not touching anything, and heading straight through the Fellowship Hall to the restroom to wash your hands.** Even hand sanitizer does not kill the proteins left on skin. It must be soap and water. And plenty of it! Thank you for being cognizant and considerate of ALL our blessings! We'd like to keep them all alive and out of an ambulance!!

Thank you for making the Nashville Notes' staff aware, when you registered, of any serious allergies that your student has or any medication that they need to take during the time they are at Nashville Notes. Any updated information should be emailed to: director@nashvillenotes.org

Bad Weather

In cases of inclement weather, Nashville Notes will notify parents via text. In general, NN follows Williamson County Schools weather decisions. In the event that a day cannot be made up, there will be no refunds for classes missed.

Illness or Injury

Please don't bring your child to rehearsals if they have had a fever within 24 hours. If a child becomes ill or is injured while on site, we will call the number entered on the registration form. A First-Aid kit will be on the premises at all times.

Section 12. Dress Code: General & Concert

Parent & Student Dress Code

Parents & students must obey dress code rules while on NN campus or at NN events.

Our goal is to be modestly dressed so we may focus on classes and not clothing.

Clothing should be appropriately sized and modest. Parents should assist students in determining what is “appropriately sized” and acceptable.

- Clothing must not be inappropriately short and must be without holes inappropriately located.
- No strapless tops, tops with large armholes, spaghetti straps, off-the-shoulder, cut-out designs, low-cut shirts, bare-back, sheer or mesh clothing that does not have an appropriate blouse or shirt underneath, no low-cut tops or tops revealing the middle section of the body.
- Undergarments, including straps, are to be covered.
- If leggings are worn, the top must be long enough to cover the entire rear-end.
- To determine the appropriate length of shorts, skirts, dresses, etc.- when arms are hanging to the side, fingertips should not touch skin.
- No sagging pants
- Clothing with offensive, suggestive, obscene, etc. are not permitted.
- Items of apparel, jewelry, or grooming that are considered an extreme in dress or that advertise illegal substances or alcohol or that could be associated with gang related activities will not be worn.

The administration has the final decision about dress code of students and parents.

Concert Dress Code

Grace Notes Choir

White top, black on bottom. Skirts must be lower than the knees when sitting down.

Novice Band, Prelude Strings, Andanté Strings, Bridge Choir

White, long sleeve top, full length black on the bottom, the hemline within 5 inches of the floor, black socks/stockings and shoes.

Select Band, Jazz Band, String Ensemble, Joyful Harmony Choir

Full length, ALL black. Hemline (either skirt or pants for the women), is to be within 5 inches of the floor, black socks and shoes, men in a button down, collared shirt.

Modesty is key! No plunging necklines or extremely tight clothing.

Note: If your child is performing in an ensemble that requires a white top and in another ensemble that requires a black top, they should defer to the all-black ensemble. No need to change clothes during the concert.

Section 13. Parent Volunteer Requirements

Nashville Notes is very service and relationship oriented. The required parent volunteer positions are a way to accomplish both and keep the organization strong. There are a myriad of details and jobs that need to be done, and not all need to happen on Wednesdays. Thank you for your service to each other, the students, Gateway Community Church, and the directors!

A few committees made up of parents is the backbone to keeping this community strong! However, we realize that not all parents are able to assist for various reasons. Therefore, there are 2 options:

1. Sign up for a committee.
2. Opt out by paying a one time \$200 fee to cover the cost of paying someone else to cover those positions.

Section 14. Tuition Fees, Fee Schedules, Refund Policy

Information about the Registration Process, Tuition, Fees, Fee Schedules, Refund Policy, and more can be found on pages 21-27 in the Course Catalog.

Section 15. Registration

Registering early is strongly encouraged for 3 reasons.

First, some classes have very limited space and will close early. If a class you've chosen is closed when you register, your name (dated and time stamped) will be put on a waiting list.

Second, instructors are planning for the next year and NN is purchasing materials. The sooner we know how many students to expect, the better prepared we can be for your student(s).

Third, the earlier registration is done, the more volunteer options are available to choose from.

Before you register

1. To enroll in ensembles and/or classes needing instructor approval, please reach out to that instructor or contact Sholeen at director@nashvillenotes.org or at 615-478-0850.
2. The online enrollment forms are not long, but be sure you have time to complete them. These forms will not save information to come back to at a later time.
3. Both students AND parents need to know what's expected at Nashville Notes. Reading the Handbook will remove all mysteries as to why you have to come in and retrieve a confiscated cell phone!

Process for registering online

1. Fill out the Family Registration Form:
NOTE: You will choose your Volunteer position through Sign-Up Genius. There will be a link on the registration page. Be sure to do this while you are on the registration page! These slots are first come/first serve.

Section 18. Band Opportunities outside of NN

MTSBOA BAND INFORMATION

Nashville Notes is a member of the Middle Tennessee State Band & Orchestra Association (MTSBOA), the Tennessee Music Educators Association (TNMEA), the National Association for Music Education (NAfME), and Middle Tennessee Vocal Association (MTVA). The purpose of these groups is to provide activities that enhance the quality and scope of instruction in area school music programs by providing appropriate opportunities of enrichment and achievement through competition and clinics/concerts.

These events are optional and available to any student that wishes to advance their musical training and experience. Each event requires a high level of commitment and study.

The dates for all events are not available until late August. We will send those on as soon as we receive them.

Midstate Ensemble Auditions - Select Band, Jazz Band, String Ensemble

7th/8th, 9th/10th, 11th/12th grade divisions

Eligibility: 7th - 12th grade

Cost: Registration fee – \$10.00; if accepted, Participation fee: \$40

Staying at a nearby hotel is optional.

Dates: TBD

Clinic/Concert - a Thursday evening-Saturday in January.

Description: Auditions consist of 3 parts: a prepared excerpt chosen by MTSBOA, sight-reading, and scales. The requirements vary depending on the grade level. Students play for a judge behind a screen to ensure non-bias. If chosen, they will rehearse for a weekend in January, ending with a morning or afternoon concert on Saturday. Any student interested in participating in this event should see their director.

If students achieve a high enough score, they will be accepted into the All-State Band. All-State clinic/concert is typically in April.

Fees: Audition \$10
Midstate Clinic and Concert \$40
All-State \$60

SEPA - Solo & Ensemble Performance Assessment

Cost: \$10/student per entry

Students may prepare a solo and/or an ensemble with other students to be played for a judge who will give them written feedback and a score. A “Superior” or an “Excellent” will result in a medal. SEPA is offered in the fall and in the spring. Students should see their director for details.

Section 19. Choir Opportunities Outside of NN

MTVA HONOR CHOIRS INFORMATION

Nashville Notes choirs are members of the Middle Tennessee Vocal Association (MTVA) and the Tennessee Music Educators Association (TNMEA). The purpose of these groups is to provide activities that enhance the quality and scope of instruction in area school music programs by providing appropriate opportunities of enrichment and achievement through competition and clinics/concerts.

These events are optional and available to any student that wishes to advance their musical training and experience. Each event requires a high level of commitment and study.

The dates for all events are not available until August. We will send those on as soon as we receive them.

MIDDLE SCHOOL HONOR CHOIR

Eligibility: 7th - 8th grade

Cost: Registration fee - \$6.00

Music – \$20.00

Dates: Audition - October; Clinic/Concert – January

Description: For audition, students prepare a choral piece, learning their vocal part. Music and learning tracks will be provided. Students will sing their part to be recorded by Mrs. O'Dell. A panel of Middle TN directors will listen to the recordings and select students from across Middle TN for the Honor Choir. Selected students will learn approximately 5 pieces (learning tracks will be provided) then come together in late January for a day-long rehearsal under the direction of a well-known conductor, followed by an evening concert. This clinic/concert day takes place at the same time and location as the Elementary Honor Choir.

FRESHMAN HONOR CHOIR

Eligibility: 9th grade

Cost: Registration fee - \$10.00; if accepted, Participation fee: \$15.00

Music – \$20.00

Dates: Audition - October; Clinic/Concert – November

Description: To audition, students prepare their vocal part of a selected choral piece. The auditions for Freshman Honor Choir occur at the same time as Mid-State Honor Choir auditions. There will be a panel of five Middle TN directors to judge each voice part and select students from across Middle TN for the Honor Choir. These auditions are live, but “blind,” meaning students will stand behind a curtain when they sing so that they are not seen by the judges. Students may use their music during the audition. Music and learning tracks will be provided. In addition, students will sight sing a short (6-8 measures) exercise. Selected students will learn approximately 5 pieces (learning tracks will be provided) then come together in late November for a Monday evening and Tuesday rehearsal under the direction of a well-known conductor, followed by a Tuesday evening concert. This clinic/concert takes place at the same time and location as the Mid-State Honor Choir.

Nashville Notes Handbook
2026-27

Mid-State Honor Choir

Eligibility: 10th-12th grade

Cost: Registration fee - \$10.00; if accepted, Participation fee: \$15.00

Music – \$20.00

Dates: Audition - October; Clinic/Concert – November

Description: To audition, students prepare their vocal part of a selected choral piece. There will be a panel of five Middle TN directors to judge each voice part and select students from across Middle TN for the Honor Choir. These auditions are live, but “blind,” meaning students will stand behind a curtain when they sing so that they are not seen by the judges. Students may use their music during the audition. Music and learning tracks will be provided. In addition, students will sight sing a short (6-8 measures) exercise. Selected students will learn approximately 5 pieces (learning tracks will be provided) then come together in late November for a Monday evening and Tuesday rehearsal under the direction of a well-known conductor, followed by a Tuesday evening concert. This clinic/concert takes place at the same time and location as the Freshman Honor Choir.

ALL-STATE HONOR CHOIR

Eligibility: 10th-12th grade

Cost: Convention Registration fee - \$60.00

Hotel & Food – varies

Music – \$20.00

Dates: 2nd Tier Audition – January; Clinic/Concert – April

Description: This honor choir is made up of students from East, Middle and West TN. The audition for Mid-State Honor Choir serves as the initial All-State audition. Students accepted into All-State Honor Choir will learn all All-State music (approximately seven pieces) before the 2nd tier audition, where they will sing, in an octet, a portion of each piece for a panel of Middle TN directors. Learning tracks will be provided, and students may use their music during the audition. Selected students will come together in April for Wednesday evening, Thursday, and Friday rehearsals and a concert on Friday evening under the direction of a well-known conductor. The All-State clinic/concert happens concurrently with the TN Music Educators Association annual conference.