

July 1, 2010

Northside Christian School has chosen to alter its curriculum to better prepare our 5th and 6th grade students for middle school. After studying various programs and curriculums, we are modeling our program after the top academic institutions in the nation. The new model allows children more time for social development, has been proven to improve attendance and children in the program had fewer discipline issues in addition to producing higher academic scores.

We are blessed to have three of the strongest, most experienced teachers plugged into 5th and 6th grade to ensure we raise the level of academic excellence as well as improve the emotional and spiritual growth of our 5th and 6th grade students. Christy Kelly, Lonni Aucremann, and Jodi Hackett have at least 10 years of teaching experience at Northside Christian School, and they will be teaching the core classes in which they are certified.

I will be the administrator for 5th and 6th grade, but I will be working closely with my upper school counterpart, Gina Burkett as this is truly a transitional program. 5th and 6th grade students will eat lunch with middle school students and some of the electives offered to 5th and 6th grade students will be housed in the middle school hallway.

For those of you who have students who excel in either athletics or Fine Arts, they will not be restricted to a 6th grade team or band. They are welcome to try out to be a part of a Junior Varsity or Varsity team or play in the orchestra of our annual drama production. For your convenience, I have included a Frequently Asked Question document. On behalf of the 5th and 6th grade team, we appreciate your support, and we are looking forward to partnering with you and working with your child(ren) to ensure they are achieving academic, spiritual and emotional success.

Sincerely,

Louise Crowder-Neri

Louise Crowder-Neri
Elementary Principal



Northside Christian School 5th and 6th Grade Division

What is a 5th and 6th Grade Division?

Northside Christian School is instituting a new curriculum for 5th and 6th grade students in the Fall of 2010. It is designed to better prepare students academically and socially for the challenges they will face in a junior high/high school environment.

Why is Northside Christian School making this change?

In an effort to help our students achieve higher academic scores, we studied various programs and curriculums. We discovered that the 5th and 6th Grade concept currently utilized by several top academic institutions allowed more time for social development, better attendance and fewer discipline issues in addition to producing higher academic scores.

Where will 5th and 6th grade students be located?

5th and 6th grade students will use a new 4-plex classroom facility we recently acquired from St. Petersburg College. Three of the rooms will house our three core classrooms teachers and the fourth will be a gathering/hang out room for our 6th grade students.

Who are the teachers?

There will be 3 core teachers: Mrs. Christy Kelly, Mrs. Jodi Hackett, and Mrs. Lonni Aucremann. All three teachers have at least 10 years teaching experience at Northside Christian School, are certified, and will be teaching in their area of expertise.

Will students have electives?

5th and 6th grade students will have electives, including but not limited to Art, Band, Choir and PE.

How many students will be in a class?

Class size will vary based on the subject. Each grade will have two sections for each core class. Core classes will utilize ability grouping. Research has shown that by grouping students based on their abilities; they reach learning milestones quicker, therefore scoring higher academically than students who participated in a pull-out program for "gifted" students.

Will the 5th and 6th grade students eat with 7th and 8th grade students?

Yes. 5th and 6th grade students will eat lunch in the cafeteria with 7th and 8th grade students. This is part of the transition process and it will also allow students to have more responsibility by allowing them more food choices.

Will 5th and 6th grade students be eligible to compete in athletics?

Yes. There is a movement countywide to create 6th grade athletic teams. 6th grade teams already exist at area private schools for basketball and volleyball. The benefit is 6th grade students are less likely to be cut from middle school teams, they enjoy more playing time and therefore develop their skills in a game situation. 5th grade students will have the opportunity to try-out for a position on a 6th grade team. However, if a student has never played the sport before they have the option of participating in our Junior Mustang program instead.

What is the uniform policy for 5th and 6th grade students?

5th and 6th grade students will follow the middle school dress code. The only exception is no flip flops. 5th and 6th grade students will not be dressing out for PE so the shoes they wear to school must be suitable for PE.

Will 5th and 6th grade students follow a bell schedule?

5th and 6th grade students will follow the middle school bell schedule most of the time. However, on some block days 5th and 6th grade may deviate from the schedule to spend more time on core curriculum.

Will 5th grade students have the opportunity to be safety patrols?

Yes, 5th grade students will still be given the opportunity to apply for a safety patrol position. In addition, 6th grade students will be eligible to run for Student Government giving them an opportunity to take on a true leadership role.

Will 5th and 6th grade students have more homework?

You will see an increase in academic work given to your student. However, your child will not have busy work for homework. Many of the homework assignments will be integrated into projects designed to improve critical thinking skills as well as improve your child's planning and organizational skills.

What do you see as the primary benefit of this new program for 5th and 6th grade students?

The teachers in this program are Bridge Builders; working together to create individualized plans for each child to improve their study habits, organizational skills and create an environment that fosters independent learning.

Who will be the principal?

Louise Crowder-Neri, Elementary School Principal, will be responsible for 5th and 6th Grade students.