

Happy Summer All,

I hope the end of your school year was or is smooth and uneventful. In other words, completely different than the last fifteen months. As president elect of NEMFA I am pleased to inform you that we are planning to return to a live and full festival in March of 2022. In addition to my position on the NEMFA Board, I am also pleased to be hosting the festival at my school (Lewis S. Mills High School) in Burlington, CT. As anyone who has hosted the festival before knows, the toughest part of host responsibilities is the housing. Under normal circumstances it is a daunting task at best. In what we hope is the waning days and weeks of Covid-19 it has become impossible to secure housing. People who would normally be willing to take in students are not now willing to commit. It has become clear to me that anyone who would be willing to take in students will not commit until after school begins and has had no problems for a period of time. In some cases people have told me that they would not commit at all until after the 2021-22 school year. With the knowledge that I have based on my past experience in hosting three previous NEMFA festivals, I know that there is no way that I would be able to secure the space I would need to effectively house the students who are selected for the concert festival. In discussion with the rest of the members of the board in our meeting on June 5, it was decided that for **one year and one year only** it would be necessary to secure hotel space for all of the participating students. This option was always open to any school/sponsor who was interested.

While we don't have all of the details and are nowhere near ready to commit to a cost we do know that it will be more expensive than the \$100.00-\$110.00 it has been in past years. More details will become available in the fall as we will have had the opportunity to secure space and negotiate prices. Every effort is being made to keep the costs to a minimum with the goal of keeping the cost to \$200.00 or below. Please remember that we cannot commit to a definite cost until sometime this fall. The entire rehearsal and meal schedule as well as the performances will take place at Lewis S. Mills High School, and students will be bussed to and from their hotel.

The decision to plan this way for one year was not an easy one but a necessary one to insure the success of the festival and return to a full and live event. I would like to thank you in advance for your understanding and support.

Sincerely,

John Deeb

2002 NEMFA Concert Festival Host
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