

## **Penn-Delco Hosts PMEA Band Fest and Song Fest**

The Penn-Delco School District was honored to host two prestigious musical events in early March. District music directors Douglas Raines, Darren Hazlett, and Michael Stadnicki hosted the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) District 12 Band Fest at Sun Valley High School, while District choral director Elizabeth Hazlett hosted the District 12 Song Fest at Northley Middle School.

Band Fest was composed of 107 5th and 6th grade students from 35 elementary and middle schools representing 11 school districts in Delaware County. Students were nominated by their directors and chosen based on ratings, experience, and seat availability within such a large ensemble. Students were asked by the PMEA directors to share their experience and positive attitude of leading by example with their home schools. The Band Fest ensemble was led by guest conductor Dr. Andrew Shanefield. Dr. Shanefield serves as both an instrumental music teacher for the School District of Haverford Township and as a faculty member in the Department of Music and Dance at Swarthmore College.

Over 100 singers from 17 Middle schools gathered to sing in the PMEA District 12 Song Fest at Northley Middle School on March 4. Participating directors selected their top students to represent their schools in this event. Students worked diligently all day in rehearsal and put on a spectacular concert that evening. The chorus sang a variety of challenging pieces from various time periods and genres. Selections included “Sing We and Chant It,” and Renaissance madrigal by Thomas Morley, “Dreams of Thee,” a delicate setting of a poem by Shelley, and “Famine Song,” a stirring a cappella composition inspired by the struggles of the Sudanese people. Host director Elizabeth Hazlett welcomed guest conductor Mr. Matthew Dickinson, who teaches at Lower Dauphin Middle School in Hummelstown, PA.

“Each young performer took away within themselves an understanding of self-discipline, how to meet difficult challenges, teamwork with people they did not know, and an amazing sense of accomplishment through performing advanced concepts and literature,” stated Penn-Delco Music Coordinator and teacher Mr. Douglas Raines. “It was a great opportunity for the students who participated and the Penn-Delco School District.”



*Guest Conductor Dr. Andrew Shanefield rehearses with Band Fest students.*



*Penn-Delco students who participated in Song Fest.*