

Beginning Band Family,

Below is some information regarding what your child will need for the instrument he/she has decided to play. It is important to remind you that “instrument-shaped objects” from Wal-Mart, Target, or department stores are not going to be good quality and cannot be repaired by local technicians if they happen to break. I would advise you to stay away from such instruments. There are several good music stores in town that would be a great help to you: The Bandwagon, Robbins Music, AB Stephens, Southeastern Music, and Hallman’s Music.

You must also decide if you prefer to purchase or rent the instrument for your child. Most students do not know in 5th grade if they are going to stick with it or not, so in many cases, it would be better to pay \$40/month for the first year and see if they want to continue for the next few years. However, with some careful shopping, you can find a good used horn for which you may pay \$300 or \$400 (the cost of a year’s rental), and then if they decide not to stick with it, you could sell it to an upcoming 5th grade family next year. Trumpets, clarinets, flutes, trombones, and percussion kits are more inexpensive than instruments such as saxophones or French horns, and it may be harder to come across the latter ones at lower prices. In many ways, it is easier to rent, but you can often come out better by purchasing a used horn for them to use the first couple of years, and then, if they are doing really well, buying them something nicer later. The music stores listed above often times have good used horns for sale as well.

The method book that we will use in Beginning Band is called Accent on Achievement, and you can also find it at any of the above stores. You should get Book 1 for the appropriate instrument. Percussionists should get the one entitled “Combined Percussion.”

Flutes should have:

- a swab / cleaning cloth
- a pad saver

These items can be found in a cleaning kit.

Good brands include Emerson, Yamaha, Gemeinhardt, Vito, Armstrong.

Clarinets and Saxes should have:

- a swab
- a pad saver
- cork grease
- 3 reeds at all times (size 2 or medium-soft to begin with) – students will increase reed strength at my discretion
- A protective reed guard

Most of these items can be found in a cleaning kit.

Good brands include Yamaha, Selmer (not the Prelude line), Vito, LeBlanc (clar.), Bundy (sax), Noblet (clar.), Conn.

Trombones should have:

- a small spray bottle with water
- slide grease
- slide cream
- a snake (cleaning tool)
- a cleaning cloth

These items can be found in a cleaning kit.

Good brands include Holton, Bach, Jupiter, Yamaha, Olds, Conn, Besson, and King.

Trumpets, French horns, baritones, and tubas should have:

- valve oil
- slide grease
- a cleaning cloth
- a snake (cleaning tool)

These items can be found in a cleaning kit.

Good brands include Yamaha, Besson, Holton, Conn, Jupiter, and King.

Baritone/Tuba players who will be using school instruments should still plan to purchase a mouthpiece and the above accessories. Baritone players can get a size 6½ or 7. Tuba players can get a size 18 or 24W.

Percussionists:

Percussionists will be learning 2 instruments specifically, the snare drum and the bell kit. It is not necessary that the students own a snare drum, but they should have the following: a practice pad, a bell kit (with stand), sticks, and mallets. You can find a combo that includes all these items. As they become more experienced, I will encourage them to buy some more expensive mallets and a stick bag. Good brands include Vic Firth, Ludwig, Pearl, and Yamaha.

Feel free to contact me at 256-658-8374 if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Nathan Neely