

Appendix 8.4a--For Parents and Caregivers

HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD'S PROGRESS ON THEIR INSTRUMENT

Dear Parents and Caregivers:

You play a very important part in your child's musical development. Your support and encouragement help to make their band experience a positive one. The music that you enjoy together shapes the musical direction of their lives. You can help child's progress in the following ways:

- ✓ **Take them to live performances** of ensembles that include the instrument they play.
- ✓ Make sure **their instrument is kept in good playing condition**. Take care to keep it clean and stored properly, away from younger siblings (or pets).
- ✓ Provide a **place to practice** that has good lighting, a straight back chair for proper posture and a music stand that is always set up, "inviting" them to practice. Be sure your child has the needed lesson books and accessories. Practice mutes and other electronic devices reduce the volume during practice time, so as not to disturb one's neighbors or other family members who are resting.
- ✓ **Encourage them to practice** every day, not just the day before their lesson. Daily practice is essential for reaching a certain skill level. Inquire on how their progress is coming along. With the youngest, require ten minutes a day, five days a week. Once the instrument is out ten minutes, the time is usually unknowingly extended. Whatever the time expectations, as they grow, using a timer or alarm helps gauge the practice time.
- ✓ **Remind them to bring their instrument**, lesson books, pencil and any band music for their lesson or band rehearsal.
- ✓ **If you are aware that there is a performance** on the horizon, look for a notice from the instructor/conductor with details as to dress, rehearsals, location, etc. Uniform would be required for Sunday performances.
- ✓ **Go to your child's school and church performances**. For your children, you are the most important part of the audience. Share in their successes. These performances allow you to see what your child is learning in the instrumental program and give your support.
- ✓ **Look for opportunities for summer instruction**, including attending music camps, playing in special ensembles or taking private lessons. With school out in the summer months, there is more opportunity for personal practice time.
- ✓ **Talk with the band director** or instructor on a regular basis, inquiring as to progress, or if you have questions or concerns. Working together is essential for success. The best time is probably following rehearsals (not during) or by arranging a time to call or visit.