

# INSTRUMENT CHOICES

A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT IS A WONDERFUL INVESTMENT AND WILL BRING YOU MANY YEARS OF ENJOYMENT. CHOOSING THE CORRECT INSTRUMENT TO START ON CUTS DOWN ON A LOT OF FRUSTRATION. WE HAVE GONE THROUGH A DEMONSTRATION OF EACH INSTRUMENT DURING THE FIRST FEW DAYS OF BAND CLASS, AND THEY ARE PROBABLY GETTING AN IDEA OF WHAT THEY WANT TO PLAY. TO HELP YOUR STUDENT WITH THIS DECISION, HERE ARE SOME BASIC GUIDELINES:

**\*KEEP IN MIND HOW YOU WILL TRANSPORT THE INSTRUMENT**

Some of the biggest instruments cannot be taken on the school bus.

**\*DOES YOUR STUDENT NEED EXTENSIVE DENTAL WORK?**

Brass instruments are a bit harder to play with braces, but many students have no problem at all adjusting.

A pronounced over or under-bite can cause problems with any wind instrument.

**\*DOES YOUR STUDENT HAVE PROBLEMS WITH ASTHMA?**

Believe it or not, the flute probably uses more air than any instrument. Then, as you would expect, large instruments require a lot of air.

**\*CAN YOUR STUDENT “CARRY A TUNE”?**

If you can sing tunes and match pitches with your voice without any one else singing with you, you will be successful on any instrument, but especially the **brass instruments**.

**\*THERE ARE NO EASIEST OR HARDEST INSTRUMENTS**

Go with what you would like to do, but the following is highly recommended:

- If you like **woodwind instruments**, it's best to **start on flute or clarinet**. They are easy to carry, are the least expensive to rent or purchase and they have the least expensive accessories. They are very logical instruments and you will be successful right away. After starting on a flute or clarinet it is relatively easy to switch to the more complicated and expensive woodwind instruments like bass clarinet, oboe, bassoon and saxophone. My experience has shown that around 6 months work on flute or clarinet makes for a better transfer to the other woodwind instruments. If you want to play saxophone and you already have access to one, talk to Mr. McGary and together we'll determine if we can start you on saxophone.
- If you like **brass instruments**, it's best to **start on trumpet or trombone**. They are the least expensive to rent or purchase. After you learn brass basics on the trumpet or trombone, you can switch quickly to the more specialty brass instruments like french horn, baritone horn or tuba. Some students can make the switch in as little as one month.
- If you like **percussion instruments**, you start by using a “percussion kit” that is rented from local music stores. It is highly recommended that percussion players **know treble and bass clef note names already and can play piano with two hands playing independently**. Percussionists will be playing on the drum pad as well as the bell set during class (2 instruments when everyone else is just performing on 1). Solid music knowledge is best or it will be very frustrating to learn percussion at the rate of the rest of the band.

**Instrument List: (\* means available through district only, \*\* means NOT available through district)**

**Woodwind** – Flute, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet\*, Alto Saxophone\*\*, Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone\*, Oboe, Bassoon\*.

**Brass** – Trumpet, French Horn\*, Trombone, Baritone Horn\*, Tuba\*

**Percussion** – Percussion Kit\*\* (contains: drum pad, bell set, stand, drum sticks, bell mallets)

# Types of Instruments

## Woodwinds

Clarinet



Flute



Saxophone



Bassoon



Oboe



## Brass

Trumpet



Trombone



French Horn



Tuba



Baritone

## Percussion



Students will learn various types of percussion, starting with the kit (bells & practice pad)