

## BERESFORD INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Dear Parents,

There's a new trend in the music industry that may affect you as you shop for an instrument for your child. As a music educator, I want to offer you information and recommendations that may save you time, money and, most importantly, save your child from frustration and heartache.

Some major retailers along with online classified advertising and auction sites are now offering what are, in my opinion, sub-par new instruments. These "instruments" are marketed for beginning musicians, but based on performance and functionality, are inferior and not suitable for a child to properly learn on.

The seasonal influx of instruments in chain stores and from unfamiliar online sellers may be convenient or have an initially low cost to your wallet, but the hidden price will strike you and your child soon after purchase. Children who attempt to learn to play on one of these instruments will experience at least one, if not all, of the following problems:

**Difficulty Playing** – "Stuffy" blowing instruments produce poor sound quality and increase student frustration.

**Out of Tune Instruments** – The manufacturing process has been refined for many years by reputable companies. Through this refinement, manufacturers know exactly where keys and tone holes need to be placed in order for instruments to play in tune. Cheaply made instruments do not utilize these manufacturing principles making the instruments play out of tune.

**Instrument Breakdown** – Inferior quality leads to higher likelihood of malfunction, resulting in lost practice time and interference with group performance levels.

**Service Problems** - Poorly made instruments have inferior parts such as weak and flimsy brass substitutes, rendering the instruments unserviceable. Therefore they do not perform as well as those from reputable companies. Lack of local service, available parts, and loaner programs increases drop-out rates and interfere with student progress.

Your child has already accepted the challenge of learning to play an instrument. To help your student avoid struggling with a sub-standard instrument, I encourage you to purchase/rent an instrument from a reputable service-oriented school music dealer. From them you will receive a guarantee of quality instruments, and be assured of repair services and available parts. You will also be supporting a community business that supports our local music programs.

While I respect your right to purchase an instrument wherever you choose, please keep in mind that every student contributes to the overall quality of our music program. Supporting our local music dealer and investing in your child's musical experience will benefit your child, their musical peers and the future of our school music program.

Sincerely,

Michael Jones

*"The bitterness of poor quality remains  
long after the sweetness of low price is forgotten."*