

*William Byrd Band*

# *Recipe for SUCCESS*

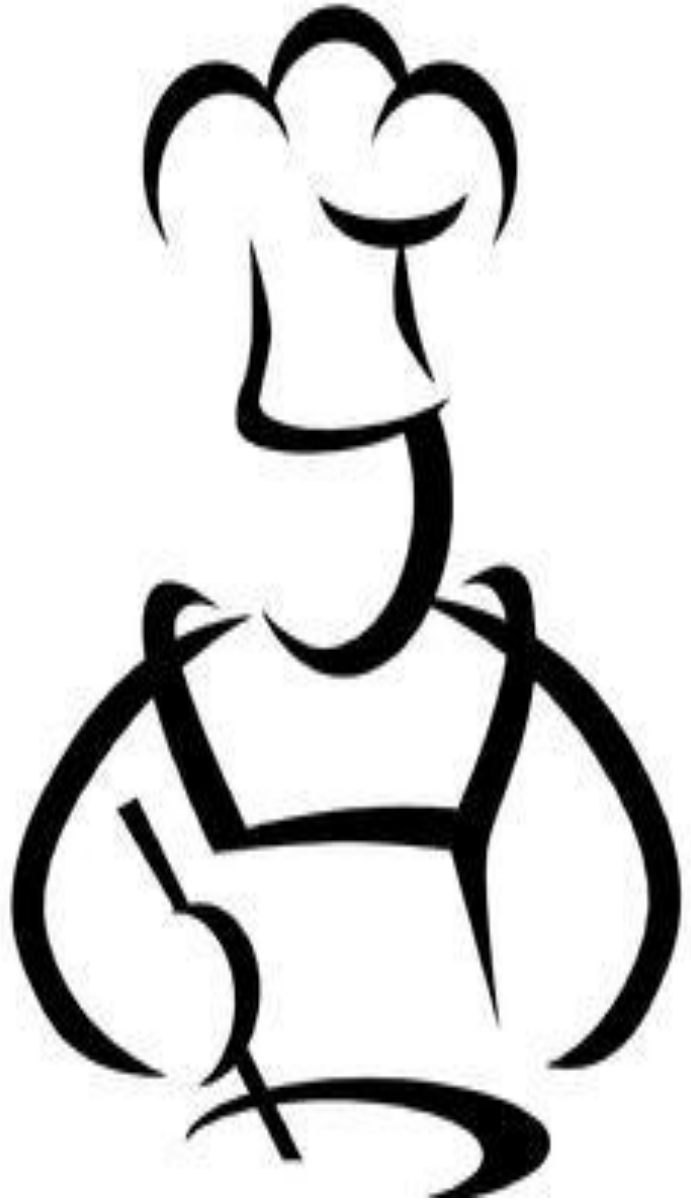
*-Fun-loving students*

*-Quality instruments &  
Supplies*

*-Enthusiastic teacher*

*Directions: Let rise for  
one school year and  
you'll be amazed at  
what can happen!*

*See the supply list on the back  
for recommended quality  
instruments and supplies.*



# Frequently Asked Questions about getting a Band Instrument

Buying or renting a band instrument isn't a one-size-fits-all process. Getting the best deal for your individual needs involves shopping around and asking questions. I hope that this information will help you make a decision that you and your child will be happy with in the long run.

## Should I rent or buy?

It depends. Purchasing an instrument is a big commitment. Many students, despite their enthusiasm about their instrument at first, decide that they want to switch to special instruments second semester. A few students may not decide to take band in seventh grade. Renting an instrument gives you the option of returning it if necessary. Only some music stores allow you to return purchased instruments for a partial refund (they may call it "buying back months." If the store gives the option of returning the instrument at the end of the semester or year for a partial refund, this can be a very cost-effective alternative to a rental. An out-right purchase with no option to return can be very risky!

## Where should I rent or purchase an instrument?

Would you purchase a car at a grocery store? Would you purchase a refrigerator at a shoe store? Then why would you purchase a band instrument anywhere other than a music store? *Good* music stores offer quality instruments and supplies, staff who have training on band instruments, repair services, maintenance contracts on instruments, and many other specialized services that you cannot receive at other types of stores that offer enticing low prices.

## Which music store should I go to?

Band Instruments cost as much or more than household appliances. You don't replace an appliance without shopping around to compare merchandise and services do you? Then why would you do that for a band instrument? Your child's success and happiness in band will largely depend on the quality of the instrument he or she plays and what condition it is in!

Simply comparing music stores' flyers is not enough to find the best value or service. Comparing fliers is sometimes like comparing apples to oranges. To make sure you are comparing apples to apples, and to save you some frustration later, here are some questions I recommend that you ask the stores as you shop around:

- What are your rental/purchase plans?
- Do you offer a maintenance contract? How much extra does cost?
- What's the bottom line? At the end of this school year, how much will I have paid to use this instrument and how much more will I pay to keep it?
- If I pay up-front for the instrument and return it at the end of the semester or year, will I get any money back?
- When I bring an instrument in for a repair, will my child receive a reliable loaner instrument to use while his/her instrument is in the shop?
- Are repairs handled in-house or shipped out of town? How long will you have my instrument for a basic repair? More extensive repair?
- What repairs are you equipped to perform on-site?
- For the success of my child the teacher requests very specific brands of instruments and supplies. Will I be provided the precise materials on the supply list or **will alternate brands be substituted without my knowledge?**

### **What if I have access to a used instrument?**

Sometimes used instruments can be a great deal. If you do get one it is VERY important that you take it to a music store/repair shop to have maintenance done on it and to make sure it is in good playing condition. If you do not do this your child may fall behind the other children in class and will feel frustrated and unhappy. Also, if you get a used instrument, please make sure the brand name is listed on the supply list and that all peripherals (mouthpieces, reeds, slide grease, valve oil, etc.) are the correct brands. This will likely require some additional purchases upfront, but can still be a great deal!

### **Why shouldn't I substitute items on the supply list for cheaper ones?**

My main goals are for your child to be successful and have a great time. I have done a lot of research to find the best equipment for the money. Cheaper brand names on instruments will often cost *more* in the long-run because of the amount of repairs they require. Many often sound bad and lower the students' confidence and self-esteem. Having an inferior mouthpiece will have the same effect on the student's sound. Quality maintenance supplies (valve oil, slide grease, etc.) will protect the instrument and help keep it out of the shop.

### **I want my child to take band, but we cannot afford an instrument right now. What should we do?**

Please contact me and I will help you find an alternative to renting or buying an instrument.

### **When should I get the instrument?**

Students will have to have their instruments by Thursday September 5. I suggest getting it at your earliest convenience, but I recommend that you store it out of your child's sight. If the child plays with it before learning how to handle it properly, or if little siblings get a hold of it, a lot of damage could be done! As soon as school starts I ask that instruments be brought to school and stored in the band room until further notice.