

# A PARENT'S GUIDE TO ENHANCING YOUR CHILD'S MUSICAL EXPERIENCE

CONGRATULATIONS! Your decision to provide your child with a quality musical instrument is an investment in his/her future. In making it possible for your child to play an instrument, you are providing the opportunity for self-expression, creativity and achievement.

*Numerous studies indicate parental attitude, support and involvement are important factors in a child's ability to successfully learn to play and to enjoy music.*

These guidelines are designed to assist you in giving your child the best support possible for his or her musical endeavors. Like any skill, *interest* counts far more than talent. With the right support from you, playing music will become a natural part of your child's life.

## **BENEFITS**

### **For Your Child**

Music participation enhances:

- Problem solving
- Teamwork
- Goal-setting
- Self-expression
- Coordination of fine motor skills
- Memory skills
- Self-confidence and esteem
- Concentration
- Poise
- and much, much more!

### **For Your Family**

A child's music study also offers opportunities for shared family experiences, including:

- Music event attendance
- Family music making
- Performing for and with family and friends
- Learning about the lives of composers, performers, and the cultural heritage of many civilizations
- A sense of accomplishment and pride for the entire family

### **Music Study Is Unique**

Band is different from any other class:

- *In size* (Over 50% of GBMS is enrolled in a music class. Our performing groups often have over 100 members.)
- *In scope* (Activities include concerts outside the classroom for audiences of several hundred people. All-city and All-district events, as well as performances out of the area, are part of the band program.)
- *Delayed gratification* is an inherent part of concert preparation.
- *Everyone must produce quality work.* Every child in the group is important and is made to feel they contribute equally with other members.
- *In discipline* (Participation in an activity-based class of our size requires a level of cooperation, and commitment to a group goal, more demanding than the normal classroom setting.)

## **HOW YOU FIT IN**

*Your support is an essential element in your child's success with music study*

### **Schedule Practice Times**

Music achievement requires effort over a period of time. You can help your child by:

- Providing a quiet place for practice.
- Remaining nearby during practice times as often as possible.
- Scheduling a consistent, daily time for practice.
- Praising your child's efforts and achievements.

### **WHAT TO DO**

To give your child the best possible support, you should:

- Encourage your child to play for family and friends.
- Offer compliments and encouragement regularly.
- Expose your child to a wide variety of music, including concerts, shows, and recitals.
- Encourage your child to talk with you about his or her progress.
- Make sure your child's instrument is always in good working condition.
- Allow your child to play many types of music, not just study pieces.
- Listen to your child practice, and acknowledge improvement.
- Help your child build a personal music library.
- Try to get your child to make a minimum two-year commitment to his or her music studies.

### **WHAT NOT TO DO**

Your child's progress will be greatly enhanced if you:

- Don't use practice as punishment.
- Don't insist your child play for others when he / she doesn't want to.
- Don't ridicule or make fun of mistakes or less-than-perfect playing.
- Don't apologize to others for your child's weak performance.
- Don't start your child on an instrument of inferior quality or poor working condition.
- Don't expect rapid progress and development in the beginning.

### **IF YOUR CHILD LOSSES INTEREST**

In the event that your child loses interest in his or her music studies, don't panic.

- Discuss the situation with your child to determine why their interest is declining.
- Talk with your child's band teacher to see what might be done to rekindle their enthusiasm. (Students often regain enthusiasm after their first concert experience.)
- Offer increased enthusiasm and support.

### **WHEN DO WE NEED TO HAVE THE INSTRUMENT?**

Students will need their instruments during the first week of school. To avoid long lines at the music store, many parents secure the instrument before school starts. All music stores which carry band instruments offer flexible and inexpensive rental / purchase plans.

*A very important word of caution:* Do not let your child "experiment" with the instrument before we instruct them in proper care and playing techniques.