

The Business Side of Teaching School Music: Preparing an Instrument Replacement Plan

Consider yourself lucky if you walk into a new job as a director and find adequate equipment in good shape. *You were chosen to direct the music education program* in this school. Most superintendents and school boards do not know the importance of *balanced instrumentation*. It is up to you to draw up a clear, simple picture of the organization you want to build for your students, and the approximate cost. School boards are composed of people who want *programs built and organized on a sound foundation*.

4 Steps to Preparing a Proposal for Your Principal, Superintendent and Board of Education for Equipment Purchase or Lease

Step 1. Begin by **evaluating all of your instruments** for condition and value. Using the Inventory Record Template Guide (Exhibit 1), prepare a list of school-owned equipment. List the make of the instrument, condition, approximate age and repairs needed, and estimate its replacement cost and present value. (This value is the trade-in value on new equipment.) You will find your school music dealer representative to be of great assistance in this activity.

Exhibit 1 – Inventory Record Template Guide

Instrument	Inventory Number	Make	Serial Number	New	Date Purchased	Present Value	Present Condition	Remaining Life

Step 2. From the Inventory Record that you have prepared, **prioritize a list of the instruments that should be replaced within the next five years**. Also, add instruments that personnel will require in future years. Keep in mind the probable growth of your department in estimating cost of repairs as well as music supplies and equipment. Use the following guide (*Typical Instrumentation for Bands of Various Sizes*, Exhibit 2) showing suggested instrumentation of various sizes of bands to help choose the proper instruments to purchase.

Exhibit 2 – Typical Instrumentation for Bands of Various Sizes

Instrument	Size of Band				
	35–40	40–50	50–60	60–75	75–90
Flute	4(d)	6(d)	7(d)	10(d)	12(d)
Oboe	1	1	2	2(e)	3(e)
English Horn	1	1			
Bassoon	1	1	2	2	2
B-Flat Clarinet	8	10	12	16	20
Alto Clarinet	0	1	1	1	1
Bass Clarinet	1	1	2	2	2
Contra Bass Clarinet	1	1			
Alto Saxophone	3	5	6	8	9
Tenor Saxophone	1	1	1	2	2
Baritone Saxophone	1	1	1	1	1
Cornet-Trumpet	6	8	8	8	10
French Horn	4	4	4	5	6
Trombone	3	4	4	6	7
Bass Trombone	1	1	1		
Baritone Horn (Euphonium)	2	2	3	3	4
Sousaphone					
Tuba	2	2	2	2	3
Percussion (including Timpani)	3	4	4	5	6
Total	40	50	60	75	90

(d) One doubling Piccolo (more for marching bands)

(e) One doubling English Horn

Step 3. Write up a complete five-year plan in a clear, concise manner. The first sheet should be an explanation. Do this in your own words, but be sure to address the reason for the purchase (needs analysis) and how this purchase will help students. Present this rationale to the appropriate supervisor. You may be asked to present the plan to the superintendent or to the school board. If so, have plenty of copies of your proposal available. Refer to the Sample Rationale (Exhibit 3) and make changes to fit your own five-year plan (Exhibits 4 and 5).

Exhibit 3 – Sample Rationale

1. What most likely will be the growth of the band and orchestra in the next five years?
2. What additions must be made to the inventory to satisfy the demand for instruments that will result from this growth?

3. What instruments in the present inventory will need to be replaced?

4. What other materials will be needed in order to provide the students with a quality sequential music education program?

At the end of the five-year period, there will be 60 to 65 instruments in the band inventory, which will allow for increased student participation. To have a balanced instrumentation and offer maximum contribution to school and community activities, this plan would allow for the addition of the following instruments to the inventory:

1 Piccolo	2 Double French Horns
1 Euphonium	1 Oboe
1 Baritone Saxophone	1 Bassoon
2 Mellophones	1 Xylophone
1 Chime	

This plan would also permit the replacement of the following instruments now in the inventory:

1 Double French Horn	1 Tuba
1 Bass Clarinet	1 Tenor Saxophone
1 Euphonium	1 Drum Set
1 Pair Cymbals	1 Marching Snare

The cost for the first three years of the five-year plan is higher because there is an immediate need for several instruments. The last two years show a decline in spending. In making this investment, the school will be able to accommodate the needs of all of the students who choose to be a part of the band program.

Sincerely,

John or Jane Doe

Band Director

Exhibit 4 - Working Paper Template

Schedule A	1 st Yr	2 nd Yr	3 rd Yr	4 th Yr	5 th Yr
Piccolo					
Oboe					
Other Instruments					
Schedule A Total					

Schedule B	1 st Yr	2 nd Yr	3 rd Yr	4 th Yr	5 th Yr
Misc./Repairs					
Overhauls					
Supplies					
Music					
Schedule B Total					

TIP 8

Exhibit 5 – Estimated Annual Budget for High School Band Program

Schedule A

Instrument	1 st Yr	2 nd Yr	3 rd Yr	4 th Yr	5 th Yr
C Piccolo	XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00				
Oboe		XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00			
Bass Clarinet				XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00	
Bassoon					XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00
Tenor Saxophone	XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00				
Baritone Saxophone				XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00	
French Horn	XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00	XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00	XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00		
Euphonium	XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00		XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00		
Tuba			XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00		
Xylophone	XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00				
Drum Set		XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00			
Cymbals			XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00		
Marching Snare				XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00	
Chimes					XYZ brand \$X,XXX.00
Subtotal	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

Schedule B

Misc./Repairs					
Overhauls					
Supplies					
Music					
Subtotal	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
TOTAL	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

TIP 8

Step 4. On the included Depreciation Chart (Exhibit 6), **add all new instruments to be purchased in the future.** Each year, enter the amount of depreciation. Refer to the Expected Life & Depreciation Estimates for Band Instruments (Exhibit 7) to determine the expected life of

the instrument. Depreciation for each instrument will be figured using the Average Life column, taking the percentage from the Depreciation Schedule multiplied by the original value of that instrument and subtracting that from the current cost of the instrument.

Exhibit 6 – Depreciation Chart

Instrument	Inv. No.	Value Now	Yr #1	Yr #2	Yr #3	Yr #4	Yr #5	Yr #6	etc.
EX: Instrument #1 (est. life of 10 yrs)	123456	\$330	\$1,000	\$800	\$650	\$530	\$430	\$330	

Exhibit 7 – Expected Life & Depreciation Estimates for Band Instruments

Instrument	Should Have an Average Life of	Should Have a Complete Overhaul Every
Flute	15 years	4 years
Oboe & Bassoon	15 years	5 years
Clarinet	10 years	4 years
Alto & Bass Clarinet	15 years	5 years
Saxophone	15 years	5 years
Cornet & Trumpet	10 years	10 years
French Horn	10 years	10 years
Trombone	10 years	10 years
Baritone	15 years	10 years
Tuba & Sousaphone	15 years	10 years
Drums	10 years	10 years

Depreciation Schedule

Year	Estimated Life of 10 Years	Estimated Life of 15 Years
1	20%	20%
2	15%	15%
3	12%	10%
4	10%	8%
5	10%	7%
6	8%	6%
7	8%	6%
8	6%	5%
9	6%	5%
10	5%	4%
11		4%
12		3%
13		3%
14		2%
15		2%

- 1. Longevity depends greatly upon the quality** of the instruments when new. The better-made instruments will stand up and last over a longer period of time.
- 2. The amount of use and care students give the instruments** will have a bearing on the length of usability.

- 3. Keeping the instrument in good condition** through continual minor repairs and periodic overhauls will add to its longevity.

Want more tips for keeping music strong in your schools?

Visit the site devoted to all things music advocacy: www.supportmusic.com

TIP 8