

## Union Band Practice Tips for Parents

4<sup>th</sup> Grade Band Parents:

As parents, I believe that you hold the key to your child's success in all areas of their academic life, including playing a musical instrument. One of the most important activities in learning to play an instrument is practice at home. Below, I have listed some important things to remember when encouraging your child to practice his or her instrument.

**1. Make Music Practice a Priority** – I know that it is impractical to expect your child to practice every single night, 365 days a year. Events come up in our busy lives that require us to be away from home and make it impossible to find time to practice. But your child needs to practice his/her instrument at least 20 minutes, 5 nights a week. This is the bare minimum to improve their skills on their instrument. Schedule a consistent practice time (as soon as they get home from school, right before or after dinner) and stick to it whenever possible. **MAKE PRACTICE A HABIT!**

**2. Provide a Practice Space** – In order to practice in a productive manner, students must have a comfortable practice area. Students should have a designated area in which to practice on a consistent basis. The area should be quiet. It should be in an area of the house that the student will not be interrupted or distracted. Finally, outfit this area with all of the tools that your child will need to be successful (a music stand, a metronome, a comfortable chair, etc.)

**3. Use Encouraging Words** – This is especially important when your child is beginning something new. You may not always be impressed by the sounds coming from the practice room. Keep in mind that this is the reason we practice. If your child could play everything perfectly the first time, there would be no need for practicing. Use encouraging words with your child, but be sincere. As they work through their weekly lessons, helpful phrases include: “You’ve almost got it,” or “I know you can do it.” Also see the attached sheet of “100 Ways to Say Good Job.”

**4. Sign Practice Record Weekly** – The practice record in the front of your child's book is a tool for you and your child to use to keep track of effective practice habits. It is also a tool for me to use during their weekly lessons. It is important that your child sees you taking an active role in their musical journey. Your child should be marking the times that they practice each day and asking you to sign. Please sign this practice record each week and send it with your child to their weekly lessons! You can also keep track of how they do in their lessons at school by checking their weekly grading chart in the back of the book.

**5. Enjoy!** – Watching your child learn and grow into a musician can be just as much fun for you as it is for them to learn. Share the joy of music with your child. The rewards can be great for both of you!