**PRACTICE TIPS FOR WOODWINDS AND BRASS**

1. Several short periods of work are better than one long period

 - Minimum: (5) 30 minute practices weekly OR (4) 40 minute practices weekly

 - Concentrate on troublesome spots

 - Isolate 2-3 hardest notes and practice them SLOWLY

 - Then practice hard spot with notes around it; follow with whole phrase

 - Prepare ALL material and SCALES up to the SAME proficiency level

 - Don’t waste time on spots you can already play

2. Set a regular daily practice time

 - Uninterrupted – NO distractions

 - Open on both ends – Does not overlay with another activity

 - Buy a folding music stand; don’t prop music on home furniture

3. Listen to yourself play

 - Use a cassette recorder and play back for your own evaluation

 - Identify weak spots; practice them two times SLOW and one time at tempo

4. Set realistic goals regarding

 - All-County Tryouts

- Class Tests

 - Chair Placement Tests

5. Practice to improve details

- Correct Notes and Rhythms; set tempo, tap foot and count; carry accidentals through the measure

 - Correct Articulation; tongue and slur as marked; vary accents, tenuto, staccato

 - Correct dynamics; look under the notes; exaggerate markings for musicality

6. Quality of Sound

 - Get a good tone on every note in all registers

 - Use fresh reeds to avoid flat high notes (old worn reeds have weak tips)

 - Use a good mouthpiece and rotate three good reeds (broken in)

 - Keep instrument in good repair (tenon corks, bridge key adj., crows foot adj., ring height, replace bad pads)

7. Scales

 - Memorize hard scales early; play the scale, then play it with eyes shut

 - Know the required octaves for each scale

 - After you learn the scale, increase speed

8. Practice some music other than tryout exercises

 - Concert music; short sight-reading excerpts; solos

9. Simulate Tryout Conditions

 - Mock tryouts at school are very beneficial

 - Find opportunities to play in front of others

 - Arrange times to practice with your competitors

10. Suggestions for Advanced Players

 - Practice technical parts at different rhythms and articulations at a SET TEMPO

 - Return to ‘As Written’; the passage should sound smoother

 - Blow BETWEEN the notes; push air from the end of one note to the beginning of the next note

 - Check required tempo markings with a metronome

 - Use a metronome to identify problems with rushing or dragging

 - Be accurate; don’t go too fast

 - A big, centered sound is more important than speed

11. Practice with a tuner

 - Fill out a tuning chart using a friend (ask your teacher) and analyze the tendencies of your instrument on different notes

 - Play a passage and FREEZE on a note – check the tuner

 - Play a note at different volumes to see what happens to the pitch and learn to compensate