Trumpet and Trombone Mutes

As a member of a Dake or Irondequoit High School band, your part occasionally requires you to use a *plunger mute* or *straight mute*. We wanted to provide you with some information and resources so that you can purchase a mute of your own to use at school or at home*.

PLUNGER MUTES:

A plunger mute is literally just that: a plunger without the stick. These are used primarily in jazz music, but recently have been prescribed by composers for concert band literature. A plunger creates a very muffled sound, but can be open and closed over the bell while playing to create a sort of "talking" sound (if you've ever seen a "Peanuts" t.v. show, the voice of Charlie Brown's teacher used this effect on trombone).

You can get plungers at any home-improvement store. For trumpets, look for the smaller, sink-sized plunger, not the larger, toilet size. For trombones, choose the larger, toilet-size plunger. For both instruments, keep it simple: look for the cheap, pliable, reddish-colored plungers, and avoid rigid or unnecessarily "complex" plungers. You might even find you don't have to buy the stick!

STRAIGHT MUTES:

These mutes muffle and often brighten the sound to create a more nasal, cutting effect. For the best sound, we recommend that you purchase a mute made of metal and avoid mutes that are made of a compressed paper material, even if the label says it is "stone-lined" (those mutes are often painted red and white).

Denis Wick and **Tom Crown** are popular metal mute brands for trumpet ($25-40) and trombone ($40-55). One or both of these brands are carried at the following area music stores (both deliver to Dake and IHS), but you're welcome to purchase them wherever you'd like:

Atlas Music, Inc.
1764 Empire Blvd.
Webster, NY 14580
671-2020

Music and Arts Center
3349 Monroe Ave, Suite 8
Rochester, NY 14618
586-2766

As always, if you or your parents/guardians have any questions, please contact your band director. Thanks very much for considering these important pieces of equipment!

*Occasionally, other mutes may also be required by literature (cup, Harmon, etc.), but WICSD will provide those if needed. You don't need to purchase them.