Date: November 7, 2022

To: Board of Education

From: Justin Valla, Director of Orchestras

        Megan Anderson, Chippewa Orchestra Director

Re: Orchestra Instruments Purchase

Background

The May 2019 bond included an instrument budget for each secondary school. Chippewa Middle School has reviewed their instrument inventory and has identified a need for approximately 50 new orchestra instruments to replace and/or supplement their existing inventory. The cost to purchase this group of instruments is above the annually established Michigan Department of Education bid threshold therefore a competitive bid was conducted.

RFP Results

| Shar Products Co., Model 1 | $33,585 | Sweetwater Sound | $36,606 |
| Shar Products Co., Model 2 | $71,310 | Marshall Music Company | $37,320 |

Recommendation

Marshall Music is a local company that we have done business with in the past. Their customer service is excellent and they repair instruments we purchase through them for free, for years following the initial purchase. They even send a representative to the school to collect and return repairs. Because they are local, we were able to go and try the instruments to see if they were of good value. The Eastman instruments they proposed have carved tops and laminated backs. The carved tops offer great tone, and the laminate backs mean that they are sturdy; these two traits are exactly what we want in a student-level instrument for middle school musicians.

During our review, we noticed that both Shar bids did not include the three 1/2-size basses. So, they are unable to fulfill the whole order. As for the Sweetwater bid, the instruments (although also made by Eastman) are not the same quality as the ones proposed by Marshall Music. In addition, Sweetwater is a company in Indiana that would not be able to offer the same level of service for repair and maintenance that Marshall Music can. While Marshall Music has the highest bid for the level of instruments we need, we recommend moving forward with the purchase from them due to the other reasons as noted above.

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