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January 4, 2010

Heritage Oak Private School Expands its Instrumental Music Program

Heritage Oak Private School is proud to announce the introduction of a revolutionary approach to elementary music instruction. Building upon the current introduction to music program in preschool and kindergarten, all first through third graders will begin studying the violin during the 2010-11 school year. The children will learn general music theory and history through hands-on experience with age-appropriate, custom-sized violins. This innovative program will empower students to confidently express their individuality while inspiring them to enjoy a lifetime of music.

Heritage Oak not only values the arts but it also cultivates artists. The school believes that the arts serve to develop one's self-esteem and sense of self-worth by providing a safe forum for creative expression and discovery. At a time when funds for art programs in most schools are being cut and obliterated completely, Heritage Oak takes pride in its ability to offer such an exceptional opportunity to its students. Various studies, including a recent study from Harvard, suggest that this program will enhance the students' academic achievement. Through an interweaving of the psychomotor, affective, and cognitive domains of knowledge, the Heritage Oak violin program will offer "minds on" rather than just "hands on" learning.

The talented faculty at Heritage Oak will use this program as part of the focus on teaching critical thinking, problem solving, and global understanding. "We believe that the creativity and multi-dimensional thinking developed through the disciplined study of instrumental music are vital to the acquisition of these necessary skills." Explains Heritage Oak Executive Director, Phyllis Cygan.

Violin study will teach critical thinking as children are guided to apply their own metacognitive abilities to explain the types of strategies used for remembering what musical symbols mean. Violin study will teach problem solving as students are directed through skill mastery and then challenged to evaluate their own work and apply new understanding. Violin study will teach global understanding as students learn how to view the world in a different light through exposure to a variety of diverse musical selections. Heritage Oak students will learn to interpret music based upon an understanding of the cultural and contextual meaning behind the piece.

Heritage Oak's membership in the prestigious Meritas Family of Schools has allowed the school to expand many of its arts programs during the last four years. Just three years ago, Heritage Oak began its instrumental music program which allows children to play instruments of their choice, beginning in fourth grade. A jazz band program began last

year as well as the addition of a full-time performing arts director. The violin teacher will be trained through Meritas and well-versed in the curriculum which other Meritas Schools throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia have already implemented.

Heritage Oak is a traditional school appealing to parents who are seeking a proven curriculum and a safe, nurturing environment. Community awareness, academic achievement, and family values are part of its program that focuses on the development of the whole child.

The U.S. Department of Education bestowed its highest honor upon Heritage Oak when it awarded the school the 1998-1999 "Blue Ribbon" award. The "Blue Ribbon", our Nations most prestigious education award, distinguishes Heritage Oak for its excellence in leadership, teaching, curriculum, student achievement, parent involvement, and community support.