

Education is music to ears — of parents

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DENTON — Parents are encouraged to complain about their children hitting sour notes as the youngsters learn to play musical instruments under a pilot program at North Texas State University.

The program, which uses students from the nearby town of Aubrey, involves parents by teaching them to play their child's instrument — or to listen critically when the child practices.

Either way, the parents will become at-home tutors for the child, enhancing regularity and quality of home practice sessions, program developers say.

Two faculty members at NTSU say the pilot program could lead to more parental involvement in education.

Beginning band students and their parents are helping Roger Warner and William May develop the Parental Involvement in Children's Music Learning program.

"We're looking for the development of train-

ing materials that both the parent and the child look at together at home," Warner said. "We have a feeling that band parents would like to help their children with their horns."

Warner and May also want to develop "assertive parenting" to help parents give direction to their child's practice or study hours. May and Warner want to help parents manage time at home so they can help their children succeed at many endeavors.

An NTSU faculty research grant is funding the project this year, Warner said. After the grant expires, they hope to obtain outside funding.

"The superintendent at Aubrey feels that if we can use this program in music, we can apply it to another discipline — math, science or whatever," Warner said.

"I think many people are saying, 'Boy, wouldn't it be neat if we could have some way of involving parents more in the education of their children?' That seems to be a missing link in education," he said.