

Slauson Orchestra

6th Grade Syllabus

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OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

As a member of the Middle School Orchestra you will begin to develop technical skills on your own instrument and learn musical elements essential to quality musicianship. You will perform a wide array of music representing different periods, styles, and cultures. You will continue to learn the basic theory skills that accompany traditional western art music. There will be concert performance and concert attending opportunities throughout the year.

As our classes are yearlong, there may be times when music is exciting as we prepare for concerts and other events. During the winter months or as quarter changes approach, there may be a lull in students' participation. If your child is becoming frustrated or bored, there may be numerous things we can do to help them on their musical journey.

SLAUSON SUPPORTS YOUR MUSICAL ENDEAVORS

Choosing a year-long music option at the secondary level requires an enhanced commitment from student musicians and families. Throughout the year, music selections, performances, and rehearsals are contingent on the consistency and continuity of a full ensemble. We are a team and losing musicians mid-year challenges our ability to grow a strong program and support the individual growth of all students. While there may be unforeseen circumstances that require a student to consider whether fulfilling the year-long commitment is possible (i.e. student injury, balancing academic & practice expectations, etc.), we are here to support all musicians here at Slauson. In collaboration with the Counseling Department, we will work with students and families using the following process when challenges of any nature arise:

- Contact the Ms. Gibson via email or phone call
- Have your student come in for extra help during advisory
- A change of instrument may engage them
- Seek private lessons
- If you feel your child should not continue for the full year, please contact Ms. Gibson first, and then you may be directed to the counseling center for further assistance.

EDUCATION STANDARDS

By the end of the Grade 6, you will be able to perform or explain the following:

- Proper Posture and bow hold
- Practice techniques
- Expanding our range and note reading abilities
- 2 Octave Scales in D, G, C major
- Simple rhythms: quarter, eighth, half and whole notes

- Bowings: detache, legato, staccato, slurs, hooked bowing
- A variety of exercises and folk songs including Fiddle Style and improvisation
- Basic music theory
- Proper rehearsal and performance etiquette
- Beginning shifting to new positions

The music we perform is selected for its educational value, technical training, and musical component and will prepare you for the Seventh Grade Orchestra. In addition to music performance, students will use ipads in class for tuners, metronomes, note reading, music videos and other online work in the Google Classroom. Students will be expected to visit the Google Classroom on occasion for music listening and rehearsal reflection.

GRADING

Playing in an orchestra requires cooperation and dedication from every member. Each member directly affects the success and progress of the entire orchestra. Your grade will be calculated and assigned every quarter and shall be based upon the following factors:

- Daily Performance in rehearsals is worth 60% of the total grade.
- Playing/ Written Tests and Special Projects are worth 20%.
- Concert Performances make up 10% of the grade.
- Practicing is worth 10% of the total grade

Daily Performance (daily, sectional, extra). Orchestra is the elective course you have chosen and the rehearsals are an important part of the class requirements. Points will be deducted for not having appropriate supplies, improper posture, inability to perform at an acceptable level, and failure to strive to improve identified weak playing aspects.

Playing / Written Tests are held weekly. Students who want to receive high test scores should study and practice on a daily basis.

Special Projects may or may not occur during each quarter. You will have the opportunity to compose some of your own music, learn fiddle tunes, and participate in various other activities.

Concerts and Performances:

The 2019-2020 performance schedule is attached, located in the Google Classroom and on the Slauson Music Department Website. Please add these dates to your existing calendar. Attendance at all performances is required in order to pass orchestra.

Excused absences include:

- Death in the family
- Illness
- Observance of religious holidays
- Emergencies

If you are absent from a concert, your parent must call or text to notify the orchestra director about your absence (419-304-4378). **Calls should be made prior to the performance.** A written note or e-mail from a parent stating the reason for the absence is also required. E-mail gibsons@a2schools.org

All missed performances (excused and unexcused) will require a make up assignment. The make up assignment will consist of watching or listening to a recording

of the concert and writing a short review. The make up assignment will be graded. Failure to complete the make up assignment will result in an incomplete.

Rehearsal Planners

Rehearsal planners are handed out monthly. They include the songs and skills we will be working on for each lesson. You can see what is going to be played and prepare ahead of time. You are responsible for filling out, having a parent sign, and turning in the sheets every month. We will be checking rehearsal planners in class, so please keep them in your orchestra folder. Your reflection on the practice sheet will help you gain discipline and help you to achieve your goals as a musician.

GET INVOLVED

Students can attend Practice Club which will be held on Tuesdays after school in the music department. Students from Pioneer HS come to coach. We make practicing fun and also include social time and snack. Another way to get involved is to attend the 7th and 8th grade concerts or attend a concert at Pioneer, UMS, or Ann Arbor Symphony.

Parents can get involved by paying dues to PTSO or donating money to the music department, and/or volunteer their time to chaperone an event. Please let Ms. Gibson know if you would like to help in some way.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Essential Elements Book 1 for your instrument
- Rosin
- Shoulder Rest or Rock Stop
- Extra set of strings
- Cleaning Cloth
- Pencil

INSTRUMENTS

All students who play the violin or viola are requested to rent or purchase their own instrument. Cello and Bass players are encouraged to rent as well. AAPS does provide cellos and basses to be used at school because these large instruments are not permitted on busses. In cases of demonstrated need, the use of an AAPS instrument may be permitted.

Obtaining a String Instrument:

When renting or purchasing a stringed instrument, it is important to obtain the correct size. An instrument that is too large can cause poor playing position and will impede progress. The first two days of school, Orchestra students will report to Orchestra

class during their assigned hour. They will be sized. The next step is to obtain an instrument. **Shopping online for stringed instruments is not a good idea.** Typically, they are of low quality and playing/ tuning the instrument are difficult. It is best for your child to learn on a quality sounding instrument.

Rent-to-Own:

All of the listed music stores offer a rent-to-own plan. Advantages to renting includes trading up sizes and investing over time for the purchase of a higher quality full-sized instrument. Ask the following questions when comparison shop:

- What is the quality of the instrument?
- How much of the rental fee goes toward the purchase of the instrument?
- What is the repair and insurance policy?
- What materials and equipment are included in the rental?

Purchasing Used:

Buyer beware! **Again, shopping online for stringed instruments is not a good idea.** Here are some tips for purchasing used instruments:

- Learn the price of a NEW student instrument before you shop used.
- Music store purchases are practical if they offer a warranty.
- The internet is NEVER the place to find good quality stringed instruments. Often times the cost for set-up, initial repairs, and additional equipment to make the instrument playable is not worth the savings you may find.
- If you purchase from a private party or friend, consider borrowing the instrument or leaving a deposit. Bring it to a music teacher or music store to be inspected.

String Instrument Music Dealers:

Shar Products

2465 S. Industrial, Ann Arbor

www.sharmusic.com

Baroque Violin Shop

www.baroqueviolinshop.com

contact Robin Bloomberg