

Slauson Orchestra

8th Grade Syllabus

Sara Gibson
Gibsons@a2schools.org
419-304-4378

Paul Bailey
Baileypl@a2schools.org

OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

As a member of the Middle School Orchestra you will continue to develop technical skills on your 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 several concerts throughout the year and opportunities for performing in chamber ensembles or working on solos.

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 8, you will be able to perform or explain the following:

- Expanding our range and sight reading abilities
- 2 Octave Major Scales in D, G, C, A, E, F, B flat, E Flat, A flat, Blues scales, minor scales in a, e, b, d minor.
- New rhythms and time such mixed meter, 6/8 meter, eighth notes, dotted notes, sixteenth notes, and syncopation
- Shifting $\frac{1}{2}$, III, IV positions
- A variety of repertoire from different genres and musical periods- including Blues, Jazz and improvisation
- Basic music history
- Key signatures, time signatures, and note values
- Following a conductor
- Proper rehearsal and performance etiquette

The music we perform is selected for its educational value, technical training, and musical component and will prepare you for the High School Orchestra.

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% of the total grade.
- 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. Google Classroom work is included.

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 Solo and Ensemble.

Concerts and Performances:

The 2019-2020 performance schedule is in the Google Classroom. 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 turning in extra practice sheets. 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 weekly with the items we will rehearse in orchestra class. Your reflection on the practice planner will help you gain discipline and help you to achieve your goals as a musician. Writing skills practiced for private lessons is also recommended.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Essential Technique Book 3 (green)
- Rosin
- Shoulder Rest or Rock Stop
- Extra set of strings
- Cleaning Cloth
- Pencil

HIGH SCHOOL AUDITIONS

Pioneer has four high school orchestras. Varsity, Concert White, Concert Purple and Sypmphony. Students wishing to enter either Concert Orchestra or Symphony will be required to demonstrate specific skills and abilities in an audition. Audition information will be handed out at the end of January. Auditions will take place in April. Please visit [The Pioneer Orchestra Website](#) for more information.

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- MSBOA All State Middle School Orchestra auditions take place in the fall. If selected, you will perform with the best string students from all over Michigan to perform at Michigan Music Conference in January.
- Solo and Ensemble Contest is held in January. Students can perform a solo and/or ensembles for a judge and a rating.
- COMP Lesson scholarships due in October.
- Summer camp opportunities: Ann Arbor Music Scholarship (Deadline before Winter Break) Blue Lake Scholarship Auditions (End of January) MASTA camp scholarship due by the end of April.
- Pioneer Orchestra Camp is strongly encouraged! All AAPS HS music students are given the opportunity to attend a week long camp at Interlochen. Save the date: August 4-11. Registration information will go out in April.

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.

INSTRUMENTS

All students who play the violin or viola are requested to rent or purchase their own instrument. In cases of demonstrated need, the use of an AAPS violin or viola 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. Most music stores have qualified staff to help you determine the correct size. Mrs. Gibson and Mr. Bailey will also advise you.

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! 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.

Instrument Music Dealers:

Shar Products

2465 S. Industrial, Ann Arbor

www.sharmusic.com

1-800-248-7427

Baroque Violin Shop

www.baroqueviolinshop.com

contact Robin Bloomberg