

Slauson Orchestra

6th Grade Syllabus 2022-23

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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. Save the dates:

- Thursday, November 10 AM Field Trip to Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra
- Wednesday, December 14 6:30pm 6th, 7th, & 8th Grade Orchestra Concert
- Thursday, May 25 6:30pm 6th Grade Band, Choir and Orchestra Concert

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 or practice club
- 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.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

By the end of the Grade 6, you will be able to learn and demonstrate the following: Proper posture and bow hold, practice techniques, expanding range and note reading abilities, 2 Octave Scales in D, G, C major. Simple rhythms: quarter, eighth, half and whole notes. Beginning shifting to new positions and extended position for cello players. Bowings: detache, legato, staccato, slurs, hooked bowing. A variety of exercises and repertoire including but not limited to: World music, pop, rock and/or folk songs including fiddle style and improvisation. Other areas covered: basic music theory and composition, music history, collaborating with peers, evaluating music performance, proper virtual classroom behaviors, rehearsal and performance etiquette. Measures of Success and Essential Elements Book One are some of the resources used in class. If your rental package includes a method book, please choose one of those.

HOW WILL I BE GRADED?

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:

Weighted Categories: colors match Powerschool categories

***Daily Learning** in class is worth 60% of the total grade.

You will be graded on your motivation to formulate goals, complete activities, and remain engaged in processing feedback from yourself, instructors or peers.

***Playing Tests, Assignments and Special Projects** are worth 20%.

You will be graded based on your process of achieving the set goals you, the instructor or peers determined for playing tests. Assignments are straightforward in grading, such as completing a worksheet. 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.

***Concert Performances** make up 10% of the grade.

Please reserve Wednesday, December 14, 2022 and Thursday, May 25, 2023 as concert dates. Students are required to arrive at 6:00 pm for tuning and warm up. Concerts begin at 6:30 pm and last no more than 1 hour. Concert dress is also required (black from the waist down, white from the waist up).

***Reflective Practicing** is worth 10% of the total grade

You will be graded on your ability to set goals, improve based on virtual feedback from an application, instructor, self, or peer. You will be expected to track your time practicing in a practice planner. The practice planner will be due weekly.

GET INVOLVED

Students may be able to attend Practice Club which may be held on Mondays and Thursdays after school. Students from Pioneer HS come to coach. We make practicing fun and also include social time. Another way to get involved is to view 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

- Rosin
- Shoulder Rest (Kun or Everst brand) for Violin/Viola players
- End pin strap (Xero brand) for Cello/Bass players
- Cleaning Cloth
- Pencil
- Plastic Pocket folder
- Concert Dress: All AAPS Middle School ensembles wear concert dress as it is a symbol of unifying the ensemble. The desired look is to wear black from the waist down and white from the waist up. Performing is a special occasion. Please no athletic wear (this includes shoes). An example would be black dress shoes, black socks, black dress pants and a white button up oxford shirt or blouse. If you need assistance in selecting Concert Dress, please contact Ms. Gibson.

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:

Marshall Music

<https://www.marshallmusic.com/rentals>

Shar Products

<https://www.sharmusic.com/instrument-rentals>

Baroque Violin Shop

<https://www.baroqueviolinshop.com/newrental>