Welcome to 7th Grade Orchestra! We are thrilled to welcome you as part of Saline’s long tradition of excellence and part of a big orchestral tradition around the world. Learning to play an instrument is a lot of fun and hard work. Through hard work comes the pleasure of being able to express yourself through your instrument – a skill that can last a lifetime!

Classroom Expectations
Everything you do in class should promote quality music education for you and the ensemble. This means respecting all people and things and following the rules in the student handbook. It also means that it is your responsibility to ask for help when you need it, and to help your fellow classmates when they need it.

Be respectful. Be responsible. Be kinder than necessary.

Google Classroom
This year we will use Google Classroom to interact and turn in several assignments. To enroll in your class, either accept the electronic invitation in your inbox or complete the following steps:
1. Go to classroom.google.com and sign in with your school email and password.
2. If there is a welcome message, read it and click accept.
3. Click I’m a Student
4. Click Get Started
5. Click Add +
6. Enter the following code: 7A – rdkskk 7B - gkvwon □ We did this in class.
Grades:

**Playing Tests / Homework Checks / Worksheets: 20%**

Orchestra is an interactive experiential learning environment. Group success is dependent on the continuous musical improvement of each student.

- **Playing Tests** determine your chair order. There will be at least one playing test for chair placement each trimester. Playing tests may be retaken for a better grade.
- **Homework Checks** do not determine chair order but are based upon current music in your folder and will happen on a monthly basis. Homework checks may be retaken for a better grade.
- **Worksheets** are designed to help understand the technical aspects of our music. All written assignments are available online and may be redone as many times as needed for a better grade.

**Trimester Technique Requirements: 20%**

Each trimester you will be given a sheet of technique requirements to perform individually. You will have the entire trimester to pass these off. This portion of your grade is pass / fail.

**Public Performances / Demonstration of Skills: 35%**

All of our concerts play an important part in each individual student’s musical development. Additionally, every orchestra member’s success is interdependent on one another. We work very hard to avoid school conflicts when planning the concert schedule. It would be appreciated if parents could help students resolve any outside conflicts that might occur. If a conflict cannot be resolved and you must miss a concert, notification must be received in writing AT LEAST ONE WEEK before the concert. If your director excuses the absence, you must schedule a time to perform the entire concert for the director, watch the concert, and write a review in order to make up the concert grade. Students have two weeks from the date of the concert to schedule and make up the grade. If the absence is not excused, or the student does not come to the performance, the student may not make up the grade. It is understood that emergencies and illnesses will occur. In these cases, a parent phone call or e-mail will be necessary for consideration of an excused absence. If the absence is excused, the student will have 2 weeks to make up the concert.

**Rehearsal Skills / Participation: 15%**

Every student will receive 10 points at the beginning of each week. Points will be deducted as follows:

- Forgotten Instrument: 5
- Missing Music: 3
- Missing Pencil: 1
- Talking, Inappropriate Behavior, Posture or Effort: determined by director

**Projects: 10%**

Another goal of the Middle School years is for students to appreciate music and come to a realization that music is much more than just notes and rhythms. To accomplish this goal, students will have a project assigned to them each trimester that will help students further explore music.

**Extra Credit Options**

Students may do as many of these activities as they would like to make up for missing points, or to try to get an “A+”. All make-up work must be completed and turned in by the end of the marking period. A form will be passed out in class that you can fill out in return for extra credit. Extra credit options include:

- Private lessons on your class instrument.
- Private lessons on piano or any instrument you don’t play in orchestra.
- Perform with another musical group (church or extracurricular group).
- Attend a concert by a high school, college, or professional musical group and write a brief essay about the concert.
- Perform an approved solo or ensemble piece for the class.

**Practice**

Excellence is achieved through persistence and hard work. In addition to working in class, orchestra students are expected to practice their instruments outside of class. Our experience has shown that students who practice regularly are successful and happy with their orchestra experience because they feel successful with their instrument and the class material. In lieu of practice records, grades will be performance based in order to ensure mastery of playing concepts.

**Tips for Practicing**

- Set up a regular time to practice regularly. Daily practice is best.
- Establish a routine:
  - Warm-up – 1 to 3 minutes
  - Play a fun, familiar piece – 3 to 5 minutes
  - Work on a new or difficult piece – 5 to 10 minutes
• Work on technical requirements (scales or other technique builders) – 5 minutes
• Play something fun to end your practice session

Remember that learning happens in stages. Sometimes you will work on something for a long time with no improvement and then something will suddenly click. Other times, learning happens very quickly. The important thing to remember is that consistent practice will always yield results.

Private Lessons
Private lessons are recommended for students at any level of progress or ability. They serve to supplement and enhance the learning your student is already engaged in. One-on-one attention can increase your child’s confidence on his or her instrument and make it more fun. A list of private teachers in the area is posted on the orchestra website.

Saline 7th Grade Orchestra Calendar of Events 2018 - 2019

Items in **Bold Type** are required Performances

*Information is also available on a Google Calendar on our website at [www.salineschools.org](http://www.salineschools.org)*

Please check this calendar with your child’s other activities, such as sports, scouts, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>September</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>MSBOA All-State Band &amp; Orchestra Registration Deadline</td>
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<tr>
<th>October</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>MSBOA All-State Registration Deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Instrument Rental and Exchange Night 5:00-8:00pm Heritage</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>6th, 7th, 8th Grade Orchestra Concert 7:00pm MS Auditorium</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>MSBOA Solo &amp; Ensemble Registration Deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Zombie Bash SMS</td>
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<tr>
<td>26-27</td>
<td>MSBOA All State Orchestra Auditions SHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>SHS Orchestras Costume Concert 7:00pm HS Auditorium</td>
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<tr>
<th>December</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7th, 8th and Chamber Orchestra Concert 7:00pm SHS Auditorium</td>
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<tr>
<th>January</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24-26</td>
<td>MSBOA All-State Ensemble Weekend Grand Rapids</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Blue Lake Scholarship Auditions during school</td>
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<tr>
<th>February</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Blue Lake Scholarship Auditions during school</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>MSBOA Middle School Solo &amp; Ensemble TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>7th &amp; 8th Grade Pre-Festival Concert 7:00pm MS Auditorium</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Possible MSBOA Festival Date – actual date and times TBA</td>
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<th>March</th>
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<tr>
<td>1,2,7,8,9</td>
<td>Possible MSBOA Festival Date – actual date and times TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>String Fling! 7:30pm HS Gymnasium</td>
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<th>June</th>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7th &amp; 8th Grade Orchestra Concert 7:00pm MS Auditorium</td>
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Concert Uniform
*The school does not provide this uniform. Please contact us for financial assistance obtaining a uniform.* The first time you will need this uniform is at the Orchestra Concert on October 9.

**Top:** Black dress shirt or blouse with a sleeve

**Bottom:** Solid black dress slacks/skirt (*no jeans, skirts comfortably cover knees when seated*), black low-heeled dress shoes (*no tennis shoes or boots*), and black socks/nylons/tights.
Music
Each orchestra member will receive a music folder and one copy of each piece. Please keep the music in your folder, but do not store the folder in your instrument case (doing so can damage your instrument). It is your responsibility to keep track of all the music and have it at each rehearsal. You will also receive a book that you must return at the end of the year in good shape. If you lose this book or do not return it at the end of the year, you will be charged the replacement cost.

Orchestra Equipment
All students will use school equipment of some kind in orchestra whether it is an instrument, a music stand, or other equipment. Approximately 300 students use the orchestra room every day, so students must help keep the facilities orderly and clean. Your instrument case should be closed and stored properly when you are not using it, and it should be labeled with your name. For security reasons, please take your instrument home with you every night.

Shar Music (866) 742-7261  www.sharmusic.com  2465 S. Industrial in Ann Arbor
If you order anything through Shar Music (rosin, up-size, etc.), it will be delivered on Thursday afternoons. If you ever need to send your instrument in, you will need to leave it in the Orchestra Room with a repair ticket by Thursday morning.

Required Materials to be provided by the student:
- **Instrument and Bow** in good working condition (see section on “instrument maintenance”) correctly sized for student.
- **Shoulder Rest** (cello / bass only) (Preferably Kun or Everest brand) correctly sized for your instrument.
- **Rock Stop** (cello / bass only) Keep in-at-home instrument case if using school instrument at school. Bring to concerts. The strap type is highly recommended as the disc type does not always work well on some floors.
- **Rosin** Keep this in your case at all times.
- **Cloth** To clean your instrument daily (a washcloth or bandana will do). Keep this in your case at all times.
- **Pencil** - At your music stand at all times during class. Keep multiple pencils in your orchestra folder at all times.
- **Concert Uniform** for concerts. See handbook section on Concert Uniform.

Recommended Materials
- **Music Stand** (for home practice) and/or a folding stand for taking to the String Fling concert.
- **Violin/Viola:** Extra set of strings (kept in case).
- **Metronome** with a tuner for practicing at home. Smart phone apps are acceptable (Mr. Culver recommends TE Tuner).

Parent Responsibilities
There is nothing that will assure your child’s success at learning to play an instrument more than your sincere interest and participation. Here are some the most important practices that will help:
- Set aside a regular time and suitable place for your child to practice that is distraction-free.
- Make sure your child has all the supplies they need to practice successfully, such as a music stand.
- Help your child keep up with their practice goals assigned in class.
- Make certain your child is on time for all school performances and rehearsals.
- Contact Mr. Culver with questions or concerns regarding your child’s performance in Orchestra class.
- When possible, contact Mr. Culver if your child is experiencing a situation that is causing them emotional difficulty so that Mr. Culver can be sensitive to their needs in class.
- Attend all concerts and show your enthusiasm for your child’s accomplishments.
- If financially possible, obtain private lessons with a qualified instructor.
- If financially possible, purchase your child a higher quality instrument as their ability grows.
- Make it clear to your child that you and your family are investing in their participation in orchestra through your time and money, and that they can honor your investment with their responsibility to try their best at all times.

Fiddle Club: Explore a mix of fun, rhythmic music and continue to be a part of the Saline fiddling tradition! Expanding on techniques learned in orchestra, students will explore fiddling from all around the world with Mr. Culver. The 7th & 8th Grade Fiddle Club is for music students in 7th & 8th grades with playing experience on violin, viola, cello, bass, guitar, mandolin or banjo. Fiddle Club will perform with the Saline Fiddlers Philharmonic at their Hometown Shows. Students enrolled in Saline Middle School orchestra, choir, or band are eligible to participate. Please specify instrument and t-shirt size at time of registration. The fee for Fiddle Club is $165. Further information can be found at www.salinecommunityed.com (Class ID 4002).

Jazz Band: All students enrolled in Saline Middle School Band, Orchestra or Choir are eligible to participate in 7th and 8th Grade Jazz Band. All band instruments, guitar, bass, piano and drum set are included. *Special note for guitar, bass, piano and drum set players: Space for these instruments is limited. An audition may be necessary to determine who will get the available positions. Guitar and piano players must read music and be able to play their instrument before they register. Guitar and piano players do not need to be enrolled in a middle school music class. The fee for Jazz Band is $165. Further information can be found at www.salinecommunityed.com (Class ID 4004).
**Saline Music Boosters**

The purpose of the Saline Music Boosters is to promote and support the enthusiastic interest in Saline Area School’s Band, Orchestra and Choir programs from 5th to 12th grades. We provide financial assistance and other support including volunteers, resources and equipment. We fund trips, camp scholarships and other activities to support the highest quality of musical development for the Saline Music Department. We strive to provide communication and information in conjunction with the directors to families, supporters and the community about events and activities. Parents are invited to attend monthly meetings at Liberty Room 33 and volunteer at fundraisers.

We are very fortunate to have the responsibility for providing volunteers for concessions during the football games, where each year we net close to $20,000 to use toward our objectives. We encourage all music families to sign up at [http://www.salinemusicboosters.org](http://www.salinemusicboosters.org) to assist with this important fundraiser!

For up-to-date information and contacts visit [www.salinemusicboosters.org](http://www.salinemusicboosters.org).

Email [salinemusicboosters16@gmail.com](mailto:salinemusicboosters16@gmail.com),

Like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/salinemusicboosters](http://www.facebook.com/salinemusicboosters), or

Follow us on Twitter @SalineBoosters

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**About Mr. Culver**

Originally from Chelsea, Michigan, Ben Culver began his training on violin at the age of three and has studied with Debbie Stanton, Geri Arnold, and Stephen Shipps. In addition to his work with students at Heritage, Saline Middle and Saline High School, he served as Artistic Director for the Saline Fiddlers for ten years from 2003 - 2013. Under his direction, the fiddlers released four CDs and performed in 28 states and four countries.

Mr. Culver's creative instinct and optimism have distinguished a reputation widely sought across the nation as a versatile teacher, performer, composer, producer, audio engineer, and clinician. Having taught at conferences, workshops, camps, and stage productions in 50 states and many countries, his career has wandered through many facets of the music business, and there isn't much in the hands-on world of performance, production and touring that he hasn't encountered over the years.

Mr. Culver earned a Bachelors degree in Music Education from the University of Michigan and a Masters degree in Arts Management from Eastern Michigan University. He began teaching with Saline Area Schools in 2000. Mr. Culver is a member of the National Association for Music Education and the American String Teachers Association.

In his spare time Mr. Culver enjoys spending time with his wife Jen and their dogs Duncan and Olive, playing live music in bands and orchestras, photography, and woodworking.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Mr. Culver (734) 401-4658 culverb@salineschools.org

More information can be found on the orchestra website: [www.salineschools.org](http://www.salineschools.org)
Saline 7th Grade Orchestra 2018 – 2019
Student / Parent Contract

Student Name: __________________________________________

Tasks to Complete:
☐ I have added all of the Orchestra events to my family calendar.
☐ I have added myself to the appropriate Google Classroom Orchestra Class (for students)

Volunteer Opportunities
During the year we will ask for assistance in the following areas. We will contact you via e-mail about each event. Please consider the following opportunities to help.
☐ Concert Set-Up / Tear Down
☐ Photography / Videography
☐ I want to get more involved with Music Boosters!

e-mail address: ____________________________________________

STUDENT
I have read and understand the orchestra guidelines and will make a positive contribution to my ensemble by obeying the rules and procedures explained, and by meeting the rehearsal and performance obligations listed and that I may receive.

____________________________________________________________________

Student Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________

PARENTS / GUARDIANS
We have read the Saline Middle School Orchestra class responsibilities and understand the student’s responsibilities for class participation, performance participation and performance attire. As parent / guardian, I will help my son/daughter meet all the rehearsal and performance obligations and any they may receive.

____________________________________________________________________

Parent / Guardian Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________

Please return this form by Thursday, September 13. Thanks!