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GREEN ACRES SCHOOL

6th Grade Curriculum Statements 2019-2020

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Language Arts

Teachers: Marcia Balmadier

Class Time: Five classes per six-day rotation

Class Size: 9-11 students

Skills and Concepts:

- Grammar – Review parts of speech, parts of a sentence and sentence types
- Vocabulary – Decipher word meanings through contextual clues and dictionary usage
- Spelling – Individual spelling routines designed to challenge all levels of spellers
- Reading (Free choice and required)
 - Comprehension
 - Concrete and abstract thinking
 - Connection of reading to the outside world, other texts, and students themselves
- Writing
 - Creative and expository (e.g. stories, poetry, essays)
 - Comparative and persuasive writing
 - Journal entries
 - Letter writing – business and friendly
 - Poetry
 - Writing process (brainstorming/drafting/proofreading/editing/publishing)

Text and Supplementary Materials:

- *The Crossover* by Kwame Alexander
- *The Giver* by Lois Lowry
- *Biography Unit* (nonfiction selections)
- *Taste of Salt* by Frances Temple
- *Grammar & Punctuation 6* Workbook
- *Write on Course 2020* Handbook
- *180 Days of Spelling and Word Study*

Units of Study:

The language arts curriculum coordinates with many of the units in social studies.

- Communities
- Utopian societies
- Cultural exploration

Ongoing Activities:

- Mini research projects
- Creative writing
- Sentence Mechanics and structures
- Reading personal choice selections
- Book Clubs

Social Studies

Teacher: Michael Simzak

Class Time: Four classes per six-day rotation

Class Size: 10 students

Skills and Concepts:

- Understanding cultural concepts, making inferences, and drawing conclusions
- Reading and analyzing text materials
- Extracting, organizing, and interpreting information from various sources
- Cooperative learning and group decision-making
- Learning note-taking and daily organizational skills
- Thinking deeply and making connections between cultures
- Practicing proper research techniques including proper citations
- Public speaking skills

Text and Supplementary Materials Used:

- United States History: Beginnings to 1877
- Various videos, books, etc. from the Green Acres library
- Online resources such as PBS Kids, BBC, United Streaming through Discovery, etc.

Units of Study

- Geography
- Economics
- Civics and Government
- Local Area Geography and History
- Early United States History (Founding through 1787)

Assessments and Projects

- Current Events Presentations
- A variety of writing assignments, including (but not limited to) compare/contrast essays, creative pieces, document-based expository writing, and self-reflections
- Differentiated assessments based on choice and skill level, including (but not limited to) mock debates, persuasive speeches, podcasts, blogs, mock news presentations, music videos, oral presentations, skit writing and production, etc.

Math

Teachers: Marylouise Bracho

Class Time: Five classes per six-day rotation

Class Size: 9-11 students

Common Core Standards:

- Understand ratio concepts and use ratio reasoning to solve problems
- Apply and extend previous understandings of multiplication and division to divide fractions by fractions
- Compute fluently with multi-digit numbers and find common factors and multiples
- Apply and extend previous understandings of numbers to the system of rational numbers
- Apply and extend previous understandings of arithmetic to algebraic expressions
- Reason about and solve one-variable equations and inequalities
- Represent and analyze quantitative relationships between dependent and independent variables
- Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving area, surface area, and volume
- Develop understanding of statistical variability
- Summarize and describe distributions

Essential Questions:

- What are numbers?
- What do effective problem solvers do?
- What is a reasonable answer?
- How do you use math to communicate?
- What mathematical process should I use?
- How is mathematics used to represent the world around us?
- What strategies can you use to observe and describe patterns and relationships?
- How do we calculate, measure, or model objects?

Texts and Supplementary Materials Used:

- Envision e-text
- Engineering challenges/labs
- Math Olympiad Contests
- Think Tanks and Perplexors
- Strategy games and computational games (“24,” Quarto, etc.)

Keystone Project:

The Bridges Project is a ten-day math lab that makes math meaningful and real by allowing students to apply learned algorithms and geometry to design, plan, and build model bridges out of toothpicks. Working in small groups, students simulate architectural firms to create a strong, economical bridges, as well as accounts for construction costs. Building bridges offers a “hands-on” approach for students to learn and apply abstract concepts, such as stress, fulcrums, the law of gravity, and the strength of different geometric shapes. Students will learn to write checks, balance accounts, maintain a task schedule, and work with others to accomplish a common goal. Completed bridges will be judged for economy of design, neatness, and accuracy of their plans and strength.

In-class work consists of investigations, labs, homework revision, direct instruction, practice problems, and discussion. Math labs include hands-on explorations and cooperative projects. Frequent incorporation of apps for textbook use, drills and supplementary exploration are mixed with enrichment activities.

Science

Teacher: Diane Hastings

Class Time: Four classes per six-day rotation

Group Size: 10 students

Skills and Concepts:

Research

- Independent research using both text and Internet sources
- Note-taking and citation techniques

Experimental design

- Asking testable questions
- Creating a hypothesis
- Identifying variables
- Writing an experimental plan to produce a fair test
- Recording observations
- Creating data tables
- Sharing and reflecting on results

Engineering design

- Asking questions
- Imagining and brainstorming ideas
- Planning
- Creating models and prototypes
- Testing
- Improving design

Presentation skills

- Sharing results and research in a variety of media, including technology applications.

Units of Study: Life Sciences

- The Microworld
- Human Body Systems
Health and Nutrition
Ecology: Interactions of Life

Ongoing activities:

Sixth grade science incorporates and expands on concepts from the sixth grade math and language arts curriculum, such as analyzing the relationship between dependent and independent variables; and understanding the physiology of gastrointestinal diseases, malnutrition and cardiovascular disease. Students will engage in lab or inquiry based activities (each 6 day cycle) and maintain a lab journal of their observations, data collection, analysis of results and reflection. Most units also include an engineering component in which a biomedical problem will be presented and students will design and test a solution. In the second half of the year, students will research, develop and conduct their own experiment related to life sciences. They will present results orally and with a short abstract during an in-class life science conference. This project establishes foundational skills for experimental design and research involving several variables presented in seventh grade science.

Spanish

Teacher: Ana Umaman

Class Time: Four classes per six-day rotation

Group Size: 10 students

Conceptual Framework

The Spanish Course for 6th grade continues to use a communicative approach that supports the idea that learning a language successfully comes through having to communicate real meaning. In this approach, the main objective is to present a topic in as natural a context as possible.

The students continue to use and to hear the target language with increasingly sophisticated phrases and sentences. For this reason, language-building activities are presented in context and are purposeful. We continue to engage in activities that have students actively learning and practicing, such as games, role-plays, and problem-solving tasks.

As with 5th grade, the four language skills—speaking, listening, reading and writing—are integrated from the beginning of the class to the end. Grammar and vocabulary are key components in the language-learning process and are used in throughout our communicative practice. The words and grammatical concepts build on their work from last year.

Spanish students also explore Hispanic cultures through texts, videos, songs and projects. This allows them to learn about similarities and differences among Spanish-speaking countries as regards the use of the Spanish language, culture, heritage, and traditions.

Texts & Supplementary Materials

- **Realidades 1** textbook and **Realidades 1** workbook are used in the Spanish class.
- Worksheets.
- Text in Spanish from different sources.

Units

- **Review.** Present tense of regular verbs ended in *-ar*. Pronouns. Adjectives. Plural of nouns and adjectives. Verbs *gustar*, *jugar* (conjugation). Common phrases used in the classroom. Description of people and places. Asking questions. Talking about personal information.

From the Book **Realidades 1**

- **Topic 3: La Comida. Chapter 3A ¿Desayuno o almuerzo?** Vocabulary in context: Foods and beverages for breakfast and lunch. Grammar: Present tense of *-er* and *-ir* verbs. *Me gustan, me encantan.* **Chapter 3B Para mantener la salud.** Vocabulary in context: Food groups and foods on the Food Guide Pyramid. Activities to maintain good health. Ways to describe food. Grammar: The plural of adjectives. The verb *ser*. Chapter
- **Topic 4. Los pasatiempos. Chapter 4A ¿Adónde vas?** Vocabulary in context: Places to go to when you are not in school. Grammar: The verb *-ir*. Asking questions. **Chapter 4B ¿Quieres ir conmigo?** Activities outside of school. Grammar: *Ir + a + infinitive*. The verb *jugar*.

- **Topic 5. Fiesta en familia. Chapter 5A. Una fiesta de cumpleaños.** Vocabulary in context: Families. Parties and celebrations. Grammar: The verb *tener*. Possessive adjectives. **Chapter 5B. Vamos a un restaurant!** Vocabulary in context: Description of family members. Restaurant vocabulary. Table settings. Grammar: The verb *venir*. The verbs *ser* and *estar*.
- **Topic 6. La casa. Chapter 6A. En mi dormitorio.** Vocabulary in context: Bedroom items. Electronic equipment. Colors. Grammar: Making comparisons. The superlative. Stem-changing verbs: *poder* and *dormir*. **Chapter 6B. ¿Cómo es tu casa?** Vocabulary in context: Rooms in a house. Household chores. How to tell someone to do something. Grammar: Affirmative *tú* commands. The present progressive tense.
- **Topic 7. De compras. Chapter 7A. ¿Cuánto cuesta?** Vocabulary in context: Shopping for clothes. Plans, desires and preferences. Grammar: Stem-changing verbs: *pensar*, *querer*, and *preferir*. Demonstrative adjectives. **Chapter 7B. ¡Qué regalo!** Vocabulary in context: Stores. Shopping for gifts and accessories. Things done in the past. Grammar: The preterite of *-ar* verbs. The preterite of verbs ending in *-car* and *-gar*. Direct object pronouns.

Art

Teacher: Shellie Marker

Class Time: Two classes per six-day rotation for one semester

Class Size: 10 students

Concepts:

- What is art? Who gets to say what is art and what is not?
- What is the purpose of art?
- How is art connected to other disciplines?
- How is art an important part of our daily lives?
- How does art reflect the culture and society in which it was created?

Visual art skills/concepts

- observation/drawing skills (contour drawings)
- elements of design (line, shape, color, form, texture)
- model three-dimensional form
- printmaking
- creative communication of ideas
- understanding the language of art
- cultural diversity/history as inspiration

Skills:

- compare/contrast works of art
- analyze/summarize
- research
- record ideas and processes in sketchbook
- communicate expressively through visual art and writing
- reflect/contemplate
- use iPad/ iMovie to document and reflect on work
- work collaboratively and independently

Texts and Supplementary materials, evaluations

- Use of sketchbooks throughout the semester. Self-evaluation and reflection. "Videolicious" or iMovie clip reflecting completed artwork during the semester
- Use of art DVDs, Internet, school library
- Teacher chosen Internet clips illustrating the lives of artists and the art of different cultures.
- critiques
- self-evaluations

Units and Activities (possible themes/projects)

This year students will learn about art from other cultures including Mexico, Haiti, and Japan. They will create art informed by what they learn about these cultures, while making the art personal to their own lives and interests:

- Drawing Skills: Students learn facial proportions for self-portraits; perspective for landscapes; line quality
- Painting: Students develop different techniques to create expressive paintings in a variety of styles
- Printmaking: Students learn about positive and negative space, repetition, and color by carving and printing a rubber block.
- Sculpture: Students use a variety of materials to create 3-dimensional forms.
- Art History: Students study art/artists from different historical periods and create a work of art that reflects what they learned while also incorporating personal ideas and reflections.
- Art from Different Cultures: Students study different cultures and create art, such as collages, masks, bowls and other artifacts.

Music

Teacher: Chip Carvell

Class Time: Two classes per six-day rotation for one semester

Group Size: 10 students

Skills and Concepts:

Essential questions for the year are:

- How is **sound organized** to create music?
- How is **melody** created?
- What does **harmony** add to music?
- What is the purpose of **rhythm**?
- What makes music a **universal** language?
- How is music **notated**?

Skills developed in music class will include:

- Aurally identifying characteristics of popular music genres from the 20th and 21st centuries
- Collaborating effectively and compassionately with peers towards creative ends
- Knowledgeably discussing the historical context and key musicians of popular musical genres
- Performing, solo and within an ensemble, various elements of popular music genres

Texts and Supplementary materials used:

- Singing, keyboard, guitar, drums, and percussion
- Multiple library and music resources, records, sheet music, and videos

Units and Activities:

Throughout the semester, we will explore and learn about American Popular Music beginning in colonial times and progressing through to modern popular music. We will focus on how elements from global music came together and influenced each other to create a unique American musical form. Students will investigate music from their families' cultural backgrounds at the start of the semester, and then progress through the 19th and 20th centuries, focusing on Blues, Jazz, Country, Folk, R&B, Rock, and Hip Hop as well as various intersections of these genres. We will learn to perform songs representative of these genres and will prepare a culminating performance to present at the end of the semester.

Drama

Teacher: Paul Hope

Class Time: Two classes per six-day rotation for one semester

Group Size: 10 students

Performance-Based Class

Students will explore physical theatre techniques and devise a Commedia dell'arte scenario.

Skills and Concepts:

- **Ensemble Building:** Students will play games and work on tasks designed to build dramatic collaboration, trust, and observational skills.
- **Movement:** Students will develop skills in physical storytelling both individually and as a group, and will explore tableaux and characterization through movement.
- **Stagecraft:** Students will learn basic stage technique such as stage direction, projection, and performing open to the audience.
- **Character Building:** Students will explore objective and tactics through a variety of games and activities.
- **Text Analysis:** Students will explore dramatic structure through a variety of historical texts.
- **Performance:** Students will memorize lines, take direction, and make choices about blocking and character as part of a rehearsal process towards performing their play at the end of the semester.

Text/Supplementary Materials Used:

- A devised scenario based on classic Commedia dell'arte .
- Sourced material on the history of comedic performance
- Various materials on the history of performance

Techexplorations

Teacher: Marcia Balmadier

Class Time: Two classes per six-day rotation for one semester

Group Size: 10 students

Concepts

- *Are robots useful in helping populations affected by natural disasters?*
- *How can we help young students learn coding?*
- *How do toy companies use technology to enhance their products?*

Skills:

Computational Thinking

- **Decomposition:** Breaking down data, processes, or problems into smaller, manageable parts
- **Pattern Recognition:** Observing patterns, trends, and regularities in data
- **Abstraction:** Identifying the general principles that generate these patterns
- **Algorithm Design:** Developing the step by step instructions for solving this and similar problems

Design Process

- Defining a problem
- Brainstorming, researching and generating ideas
- Identifying criteria and constraints
- Developing a design
- Building prototypes
- Testing and evaluating a model
- Refine the design
- Communicate results

Introductory Computer Programming (coding)

Students will be introduced to the computational thinking and design processes by investigating the essential questions using *Sphero and Ozobot* robots, and the *Micro Bit* microprocessor.

- **Block programming:** Students manipulate colorful descriptive blocks to write code eg. Ozoblockly, Scratch, Scratch Jr., Javascript Blocks

Physical Education

Teachers: Derek Edwards (lead) and Jennifer Simmons

Class Time: Four classes per six-day rotation (including one held jointly with the 5th grade)

Class Size: 20 students

Skills and Concepts:

- Individual skills are taught and refined for each sport with a partner providing token pressure.
- These skills usually include passing and receiving, dribbling, ball handling, shooting, and communicating with teammates.
- Restarting play from dead ball situations with more emphasis placed on successful restarts.
- Reviewing rules taught in the 5th grade and adding more advanced intermediate rules.
- One vs. one, two vs. one, two vs. two and four vs. four situation play to give students opportunities to use their individual skills in simulated game conditions.
- Reviewing the concept of “wall passing” (also known as the “give and go” pass).
- Reviewing the concepts of “time and space,” and introduction of the concepts of “width” and “depth” as they relate to using skills in game situations.
- Reviewing footwork and movement patterns within a sport: including jab steps, crossovers, reverse pivots, and different feints involving weight shifts.
- Introduction of basic tactical applications involved in game situations.
- Reviewing proper safety practices while acquiring skills in every unit.

Text and Supplementary materials used:

- Bulletin boards using photos, diagrams, checklists, and color-coded rosters.
- Handouts describing rules and regulations of the sport, as well as a brief history.
- Quizzes on those handouts.
- Videotapes of skill demonstrations and game footage.
- iPad applications using skill demonstrations and instructions.

Units and Activities

- **Year round:** Physical Fitness activities including stretching, jogging, jumping rope, and President’s Physical Fitness testing, large group games (dodgeball, tag, etc.)
- **Fall:** Soccer, Frisbee skills, football skills, basketball, floor hockey
- **Winter:** Basketball, volleyball, floor hockey, gymnastics, new games
- **Spring:** Softball skills, lacrosse, bowling

Advisory

Advisors: Michael Simzak and Marylouise Bracho

Class Time: Three classes per six-day rotation

Group Size: 10 students, some whole-grade activities

The overarching goals of the advisory program are to ensure that each student is known well, feels a part of the overall community, and finds ways to be academically and socially successful. The advisory program engages students in discussion and activities of important life issues generated by both students and advisors.

Skills/Concepts/Topics:

- Welcome to 6th grade
- Study Strategies
- Self-image
- Peer relationships; problem solving/conflict resolution; peer pressure
- Digital Citizenship with a focus on social media
- Values and character education
- Social-Identifiers
- Family life: Adolescence and puberty--changes and expectations
- Substance abuse
- Health (mental, physical, nutritent, etc.)
- Reflection and preparation for Student-Led-Conferences

Activities:

- Team building activities
- Conference preparation
- Kid Talk
- Multiple intelligence activities
- Service Projects
- Role playing
- Presentations

Texts and Supplemental Materials:

- *The Green Acres Middle School Advisory Handbook*
- *Advisory Plus! Standards-Based Sessions with Character Education, Learning Styles, and Assessment Components* by Imogene Forte and Sandra Schurr
- Unitedstreaming.com through Discovery
- YouTube videos
- Other videos/reading materials from the Green Acres library

Class Meetings:

In addition to meeting in small advisory groups, there will be regularly scheduled single-gender meetings to discuss both issues pertaining more to girls or boys and to discuss the gender dynamics of the whole grade-level group. There will also be occasional full 6th grade class meetings for the students to discuss concerns with all of their peers. These meetings will be facilitated by teachers but will be student-driven.