



ROCHAMBEAU

THE FRENCH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

MON ENFANT ENTRE EN 6^{ème}



MY CHILD IS STARTING 6 Grade



aefe
Agence pour
l'enseignement français
à l'étranger

Your child will be entering sixth grade. The beginning of middle school marks a pivotal moment in his or her academic life. The changes that occur at this point in a student’s life should not be underestimated. Your child will need to learn how to manage many new experiences, both on a personal level and also in terms of pace and approach to schoolwork.

SIXTH GRADE: A TRANSITION YEAR

The sixth grade is the first year of middle school but also the last year of a learning cycle that began in CM1 (fourth grade). The following table provides you with a way to visualize how this grade fits into your child’s educational program parallel to the American system.

PRIMARY			MIDDLE SCHOOL			HIGH SCHOOL
CYCLE OF CONSOLIDATION - 3			CYCLE OF DEEPENING - 4			FINAL CYCLE
CM1	CM2	6EME	5EME	4EME	3EME	2-1-T
4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10-12
U.S. PRIMARY SCHOOL		U.S. MIDDLE SCHOOL			U.S. HIGH SCHOOL	

School rhythm

The start of sixth grade can cause an upheaval in a child’s life. It’s important to be involved in your child’s experience in this new step in his or her education. More time each day is devoted to academics: students have 30 hours of class each week plus up to 4 additional hours if they choose an elective. The school day starts at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. for students who do not choose an elective or don’t participate in extracurricular activities.

From schoolbag to locker

Sixth grade students have a personal locker located in the middle school hallway. The sixth grade student must use the locker to store materials needed for that day (textbooks, notebooks, binders, etc.) and bring home any items needed for homework. In order to organize the locker, the school encouraged students to bring a small shelf to keep all school material easily accessible. Student access to the locker is limited to certain times of the day. Also, remembering what to bring to school and what to take home can be difficult at the start of the year. It is important to take time every evening to help your child prepare his

or her schoolbag based on the next day’s schedule. Monitoring the weight of your child’s school bag on a regular basis is also important. If you think the bag is too heavy and your child needs additional help deciding on what to bring to and from school each day, you should contact your child’s homeroom teacher.

Subjects

In sixth grade, students have at least eleven different teachers in various subjects, as shown in the table below. Adapting to different teaching methods and expectations is necessary.

SUBJECT	HOURS
Homeroom	1
Physical Education and Sports	4
Art	1
Music	1
French	5
History and Geography	3
History and Geography International section ¹	4
English	5
English International Section	6
Second Language: Spanish, German or Arabic (LV2)	2
Mathematics	5
Science: life and earth science, physics, chemistry, technology	3
Electives: Ancient civilizations	2
Further Electives: Arabic ²	2
TOTAL	30 to 34 hours / week

Homework

In sixth grade, students have more homework. On some days students may be assigned over an hour of individual work. The ends of the trimesters are busier due to trimestral evaluations.

All homework is posted on Pronote. At the beginning of the year, parents should verify what’s on Pronote with their child. Encourage your child to be proactive and review lessons regularly and systematically. In general, parents should help manage homework, but not help their child complete his or her homework. If an assignment seems too difficult or is not well understood, we encourage families

¹ See below

² These options are available based on the number of students registered. For scheduling reasons, some electives cannot be combined.

to contact the teacher. In sixth grade, students also have a paper assignment planner (the “When 21”) to learn how to manage homework by themselves.

New technology

During the first trimester, sixth grade students will receive an iPad, which they may take home. This iPad is for daily schoolwork and serves an instructional purpose.

Many textbooks are installed on the iPad in order to limit the weight of student’s backpack.

Students will receive a Rochambeau email address to communicate with their teachers and classmates.

Use of a personal email address is not allowed. Students and families who receive an iPad must sign an agreement³ for the appropriate use of the device and follow five golden rules set by the school.

Use of the iPad in class is at the teacher’s discretion; however, the use of cell phones is strictly prohibited in the classroom, except at the teacher’s request.

School supplies

Purchasing school supplies and hard copy books are the family’s responsibility. These may be purchased via the school’s portal and can be picked up at the Rochambeau store at the start of the school year. You will receive additional information from the school about books and supplies. All students must have a uniform for physical education and sports (EPS). This includes a T-shirt with the school’s logo. The uniform is also available at the school store. Students must wear specific clothing on field trips: **a buttoned up white shirt, navy blue or black pants and the Rochambeau tie (provided at the start of the school year) and dress shoes.**

THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Schedule

Children must be able to adapt to a schedule that changes every hour for each subject and requires moving between classrooms without being late for class. They will need to be organized and bring the appropriate supplies to each class. This process takes time. At home, it’s important to develop a homework and bedtime routine. Timetables are distributed on the first day of school. We suggest making copies and putting one in the child’s room, in his or her locker, on the refrigerator or on the main door to the house.

³ http://rochambeau.finalsite.com/uploaded/PORTALS/SECONDAIRE/REGLEMENT/Tech_Conduct.pdf

The Common Core of Knowledge, Skills and Culture

The common core of knowledge, skills and culture defines the material that students must master by the end of compulsory education in order to continue their education further, build their personal and professional future and succeed in life. It provides the framework for instruction. The common core includes these areas:

- Languages for thinking and communicating
- Tools and methods for learning
- Educating students as citizens
- Natural and technical systems
- Representations of the world and human activity

Instructional requirements

Each subject area has a curriculum defined by official French guidelines and adapted to the North American context, for example, in teaching English. The sixth grade program can be found online in French version⁴. With the exception of electives, all courses are mandatory.

French: The program aims to consolidate learning from elementary school. The spoken language receives particular and specific attention. In reading comprehension, the program aims to help the student acquire significant independence. Activities in French are diverse: reading, writing, speaking, language study (grammar, spelling, vocabulary). Reading and writing are practiced daily. The study of literature is an essential part of French instruction in sixth grade. This study of literature uses major themes: monsters, adventure tales, creation tales and poetic creativity, etc. French language is the language used in all classes at the exception of English class and other world languages classes.

English: At Rochambeau, students are grouped based on their language proficiency. Activities focus on these skills: listening and comprehension / reading and comprehension / speaking continuously / writing / responding and conversing / discovering cultural aspects of the language.

More advanced or bilingual students begin the study of literature. English is often referred as Langue Vivante 1 or LV1 (World Language 1)

Another world language: Spanish or German or Arabic⁵ may be chosen as a third language. In Spanish, students are grouped based on their skills. In German and Arabic, there are no groupings for these

⁴ http://www.education.gouv.fr/pid285/bulletin_officiel.html?cid_bo=94708

⁵ Arabic and German are offered only if the class size is large enough

classes. Activities focus on these skills: listening and comprehension / reading and comprehension / speaking continuously / writing / responding and conversing / discovering cultural aspects of the language

Art: Art classes let students develop their potential for invention and creativity, while refining their analytic abilities through developing artistic projects based on intentional plans and closely analyzing their own work as well as that of classical and contemporary artists. During the course, students will experiment with materials, tools, and forms as a function of their art project.

Music: Education in music aims to develop skills of perception and musical performance. Students listen to and analyze musical works and learn to move beyond their own tastes. Performance is based on vocal expression and techniques. Instructor-led projects focus on producing musical performances.

Physical education and sports: Physical education and sports (EPS) helps students learn to consider their own health and well-being and introduces them to sports. The program is divided into different learning areas: athletics, artistic performance, and team or individual games with or without using balls.

History-Geography: Students approach history and geography through several themes and subject areas. In history, the program covers the period from early human civilization to the end of the ancient period. In geography, the program is built around the study of various regions (metropolitan areas, sparsely populated places, coastlines) and the distribution of the world's population. Whenever possible, the program explores the relationship between France and the United States/North America.

Science and technology: The program aids in building knowledge, skills and the ability to take a scientific approach. The following subjects are covered: physics (matter, movement, energy, information), life and earth sciences (life and its diversity), technology (equipment, technical subjects), the earth (the earth and living things in their environment).

Mathematics: Sixth grade mathematics is focused on deepening what was learned in elementary school. Themes cover a variety of areas: counting, calculation, measurement, and geometry. Problem solving, in several areas, is central. There are several instructional themes:

- Representation of large whole numbers, fractions and decimals
- Calculating with whole numbers and decimals
- Geometric size (area, volume, angle)
- Location in space

- Knowledge of geometric figures and solids (description, representation, etc.)
- Recognition and use of geometric relationships.

The International Section

At the beginning of the 2019 academic year, Rochambeau opened an international section (SIA). In the International Section, students will have:

- 6 hours of English
- 4 hours of History-Geography, including two hours taught in English by an English-speaking teacher

English is taught according to a specific program in which the proportion of literature is significant. In History-Geography, the program is a bilingual and bicultural program, which will follow the French Official curriculum with some modifications, where appropriate, to establish links to the history and geography of the United States of America.

Acceptance into the International Section is based on different criteria:

- Proficiency in English language.
- Writing sample
- Recommendation of the 5th grade teachers (organization, work capacity, etc.).

Elective courses

All elective courses are offered based on 2 hours of weekly instruction.

- Ancient cultures: This class is an introduction to the Greek and Latin worlds. Study includes written texts, ancient culture and history.
- Arabic: for students who wish to take a fourth language.

ACADEMIC RESULTS AND EVALUATION

Grades out of 20 points

GRADE OUT OF 20 POINTS	AMERICAN EQUIVALENT
16-20	A+
15	A

14	A-
13	B+
12	B
11	B-
10	C+
9	C
8	C-
7	D+
6	D
5	D-
4-0	E

Teachers grade students on a regular basis. Grading is based on a 20-point scale. These grades correspond to the American grading system as presented in the following table:

Three times yearly, parents receive a report card via Pronote. This report card includes:

- The student's trimestral average by subject
- The student's overall average for all subjects combined
- Individualized comments from each teacher
- An overall comment
- Opinion as to the student's readiness to move to the next grade level (in the third trimester report card).

In the last trimester, the parents receive a certificate of skills attesting to the fact that all specified skills for the cycle have been acquired.

Class Council , Conseil de Classe

Class Council is a body that meets three times during the year, at the end of each trimester. It includes teachers, a School Life representative, the Head of School or their representative (usually the Academic Director and the Director of the Secondary School), representatives of parents and students. During Class Council meetings, the team discusses the progress of the class and the children. In the third trimester, the Class Council issues an opinion on moving to the next grade level. Parents who want the

Council to address specific issues must go through parent representatives, who will relay these requests to the Council. Following Class Council meetings, the parent representatives provide a report. This report does not include information on individual students.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

Tutoring

High school students may help sixth grade students with short-term learning needs as part of their Community Service. It's the homeroom teacher who liaise with the tutoring services.

Personalized assistance - Student Learning Support

In sixth grade, personalized assistance is provided for students who have academic difficulties or are not completely at ease with the mastery of the French language. This assistance helps students reach the required levels and acquire methods to deepen and consolidate knowledge and skills through specific projects and is provided by specially trained teachers.

Study hall

Rochambeau provides two types of paid homework assistance:

- Directed small group study with personalized assistance by a certified teacher (ratio: 8 students maximum / teacher)
- Supervised large group study that provides silent time for students. Hours are from 3:45 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

The Rochambeau Portal

The secure Rochambeau portal lets families keep up to date with school news (www.rochambeau.org). Families can access calendars, health forms and general information, information on transportation, etc. Families will receive login information at the beginning of the school year for accessing the portal.

Pronote

Pronote is an interface that lets families follow a student's progress. In sixth grade, we encourage families to check Pronote every day with their child. On Pronote, families will find:

- The student's class schedule

- Absences and late attendance
- Warnings and detentions
- Grades (grades are posted online on Mondays)
- Homework
- General correspondence

The Assignment Planner (l'agenda "When 21")

In paper format, students can note assignments and instructions from teachers. It does help students familiarize themselves with the tool and take responsibility for becoming more independent.

Meetings with families

The first meeting with the entire instructional team and parents will include a presentation of the year's goals by subject. Two other meetings will take place during the year (November and March). These meetings let families meet individually with teachers. The date and time of these meetings are communicated at the beginning of the school year and parents are invited to provide the name of the teacher with whom they want to meet. These meetings include a brief (5 minute) update on the child's successes and challenges. If parents would like a more in-depth meeting, an individual appointment with specific teachers must be made.

Involvement with the school and the class

Representatives

Elected parent representatives are members of the School Council, which meets three times a year. Through those representatives, parents participate in the operation of the middle school and receive information, assistance and advice during the school year.

Similarly, parents in each class elect parent representatives at the beginning of the school year to participate in Class Council and represent the families in the class.

Parent Association (PAR)

The Rochambeau Parent Association (PAR) works in partnership with the Lycée to implement a number of activities within the school that benefit our entire community. PAR volunteers play an essential role in organizing school celebrations and managing projects like the Yearbook. Through the PAR and its parent volunteers, students in CM1, CM2, middle school and high school can order sandwiches for lunch twice a week. The Parent Association (PAR) is a not-for-profit organization registered with the State of Maryland.

SCHOOL LIFE – LA VIE SCOLAIRE

Rules

The School Council votes internal rules. It also defines the rules to follow in class and in middle school in general. Such rules may include, for example, the use of facilities, student rights and responsibilities, punishments, etc. This document is provided at the start of the school year and is available at the *Vie Scolaire Office* and on the school website (Parent Portal). The homeroom teacher discusses this with students at the beginning of the school year.

Permission to leave the school

Students are not allowed to leave the school during school hours. If a class is cancelled at the last minute, students may not leave the school without their parents' written permission.

Class Life schedule

Once a week, the homeroom teacher (2) meet with his class and leads an ongoing discussion about the workings of the middle school, the class, etc., between the students in the class or between students and teachers or other members of the instructional team. This is a time for dialogue and discussion. It is also when students prepare for Class Councils.

During this homeroom time, the homeroom teacher also teaches methodology skills to enable student to be more autonomous and better organized.

Student delegates

Each October, students in each class elect two delegates and two alternates. Delegates represent their classmates at the Class Council and during Class Life times. Students who wish to be elected as delegates must have an exemplary attitude.

Community Service

Following the American educational tradition, volunteer service is strongly encouraged. It helps students develop their civic and social skills. Community Service is also strongly encouraged for students who want to go to an American university. At the end of the school year, students who participate in Community Service will receive a certificate of participation. At the end of Ninth grade, in order for the Community hours to be recorded, students must complete after each activity a "Documentation Form" which is available on the site of the school.

Extracurricular activities

After classes are over, Rochambeau provides extracurricular clubs that include arts, cultural and sports activities. Clubs available to students meet after classes, from 3:45 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. Sixteen sessions are planned each semester. Registration is held at the beginning of September for the first semester and at the beginning of January for the second semester. For clubs that meet year-round, one registration in September is required.

Prevention

Vie Scolaire staff with the help of the Guidance Counselor organizes education and awareness sessions on harassment, violence prevention and addictive behavior. These sessions are organized to enable students to develop the psychosocial skills necessary for their personal development.

CONTACT PEOPLE

Madame Le Ber, Director of the Secondary School

The Director of the Secondary School is responsible for everything in the middle and high schools. If there is a significant problem that cannot be dealt with by a teacher or the School Life manager, it is appropriate to make an appointment with her: leberf@rochambeau.org

The Homeroom Teacher

There is one homeroom teacher per class. The homeroom teacher is the intermediary between the teachers, students and families. He or she also monitors class life and the overall atmosphere. He or she keeps families informed of their child's academic or behavioral issues, informs families about class life and prepares Class Council meetings.

Dean of Students

The *Vie Scolaire* team ensures students compliance with the rules and regulations of the school. They controls the entry and exit of students, records delays and absences. In case of absence or delay of a child, it is necessary to prevent *Vie Scolaire* at the following address: liveschool@rochambeau.org. The Dean of Students, Mr. Oloude, can be reached at the following address: oloudem@rochambeau.org

Supervisors

Monitors work with the School Life manager. They are important for students because they monitor study hours, recess and inter-class time.

Librarians

There are two librarians at Rochambeau. They manage the library, called the CDI (Documentation and Information Center). This is a central library for the middle and high schools. It houses books, magazines, documents and computers. Students can use the CDI during recess, at the end of the day and during mealtime.

cdi@rochambeau.org

School Nurse

The school nurse is the health contact person for the middle school. She follows students' health concerns during the school year. She is available for students, verifies their vaccinations, manages emergencies and can provide counseling. Students must all have up-to-date vaccinations to enroll at Rochambeau. The nurse, along with School Life, has an important role in providing information and prevention for at-risk behavior.

The Learning Support Group

The Learning Support Group is comprised of

- The Counselor is in charge of the well-being of students in the institution and is the psychological contact person for the middle school.
- The Learning Support Specialist is in charge of helping students with learning differences.
- The teacher of French as a Second Language (FLSco) is in charge of helping students who still need help mastering the French Language.

OUR FINAL ADVICE FOR STARTING OFF THE SCHOOL YEAR RIGHT!

Here are a few general pieces of advice for starting sixth grade
and having a good school year

Choose a lightweight backpack/schoolbag

Know and understand your child's schedule

Participate in the first parent-teacher meetings

Get to know the institution's key people

Meet the homeroom teacher

Monitor your child's sleep time

Make sure your child eats breakfast

Keep an eye on "screens" (phone, television, iPad, etc.)