

6th Grade Course Catalog

2025-2026

1300 Derby Rd.
Birmingham, MI 48009

6th Grade Course Descriptions= pages 2-4; Course Selection Sheet and Note= pages 5-6

REQUIRED COURSES-ALL YEAR

Language Arts

Students will continue to develop reading, writing, speaking, listening and following direction skills. Students will increase their ability to analyze and synthesize information, increase their reading ability and become more proficient writers through a variety of genres including informational, narrative, and argumentative. Grammar and mechanics will be taught in connection to an anchor text where the student will learn from analyzing published authors. Each text will end with an accompanying capstone writing piece. IN-class presentations will strengthen student speaking and listening skills.

Social Studies

Throughout this year, students will engage in a deeper understanding of ancient history through the study of various river valley civilizations and Afro-Eurasian empires. They will explore the different types of evidence that social scientists use to learn about humans in the distant past. Students will, also, examine the world's five major religions--Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam--in order to better understand people and their cultural beliefs. Finally, students will investigate historical and contemporary global issues that have significance for the student and are clearly linked to the world outside the classroom.

Mathematics

Students attend a daily class period of Math 6 or Accelerated Math 6/7. Some students will also be placed in a support class, Math Lab.** Placement is based on a district math rubric composed of several factors, including 5th grade teacher recommendation, standardized test scores, Birmingham grade level tests, student motivation, effort and commitment.

Science

Students will have the opportunity to experience introductory units on the particle nature of matter in chemistry, water's role in Earth's changes, organisms and ecosystems, as well as light and energy. While actively investigating these concepts, students will engage in the behaviors of scientists by building models and constructing explanations about their experiences.

Required Rotation

All students will rotate through the following 10 week courses:

Art (10 weeks)

The sixth grade art program is a ten week class designed as an exploration of art technologies, skills, artists, and careers. Two and three-dimensional art will be studied throughout this rotation. Art projects will include: Zentangle Portfolios, Bleach Painting, a study of Art History, Rubber Carving and Water Based Printmaking, and Sculpture. The highlight of this class will be a metals project.

Engineering Technology (10 weeks)

6th Grade Engineering Technology is a ten week course. The purpose of the course is to introduce students to engineering in a fun and engaging manner. Using a hands-on approach, students are taught the fundamentals of design and manufacturing. Math, Science, Technology and Safety are introduced through a variety of activities; Students will experience Rocket and Rocket Stand construction, Grid Conversion Drawings, Computer Aided Design, T-shirt design and Computer Bridges.

Skills for Living (10 weeks)

Students will be introduced to kitchen safety, measurement, and cooking skills with opportunities to apply these skills in lab situations. Basic life skills are stressed and include working cooperatively, caring for equipment, nutrition, and following directions. Students will also learn basic hand sewing techniques and complete a sewing project in class.

Physical Education (10 weeks)

Students will participate in seasonal team and individual sports as well as curriculum-related games and team building activities. Swimming and physical fitness will also be covered.

THE FOLLOWING ELECTIVES MEET ONE PERIOD FOR THE ENTIRE SCHOOL YEAR ON AN ALTERNATING DAY BASIS (i.e. Even and Odd Days (EOD)

PLEASE SELECT <u>ONLY 2</u> OF THESE OPTIONS!

MUSIC:

Orchestra

Orchestra will focus on building a larger repertoire of string playing skills and techniques through the performance of a variety of classical and alternative styles of music. String instruments include violin, viola, cello, and double bass. The orchestra will perform two major concerts during the school year. The group will plan several social events throughout the school year to build camaraderie within the group and develop teamwork concepts.

**PLEASE NOTE: previous playing experience is not necessary. For more information about the Derby Orchestra Program, please e-mail Mr. Jeroudi, Orchestra director @ SJeroudi@birmingham.k12.mi.us*

Band

Band will focus on building on a larger repertoire of basic skills for the selected instrument. Band will also perform two major concerts during the school year and have the opportunity to perform at one community event. The band will have several social events throughout the school year to build camaraderie within the group and develop teamwork concepts. The Derby Band program is recognized as one of the top band programs in the State of Michigan.

Students that did not play a band instrument in 5th grade and would like to start in 6th grade should contact Mrs. Barclay for guidance on instrument selection.

**PLEASE NOTE: If you would like to participate in Band as a beginner, please contact Sarah Barclay, Director of Bands; Sbarclay@birmingham.k12.mi.us at Derby Middle School.*

Music Station

Music Station is a hands-on, project and interest-based course that can be taken in addition to (or without) choir, band, or orchestra. Opportunities for song writing, guitar, piano, and/or ukulele instruction are plentiful in this class. No prior experience is needed. All students will have the opportunity to perform or create music of their interest. Hearing from local and/or world renowned artists will also be planned for the course. Music station will strive to nurture the appreciation of the arts in every student.

Choir

Choir will focus on a wide variety of repertoire from classical, musical theater, and pop music. Students will learn musicianship skills and vocal technique necessary to become confident performers through daily vocal warm ups, basic piano notation, small ensembles, and music note reading exercises. Choir will also perform two major concerts during the school year and have the opportunity to perform at community events as well. Students will have the opportunity to perform solos or small groups at concerts. Choir will have several social events throughout the school year which builds camaraderie within the group and develop teamwork concepts. Derby choir consistently receives superior, outstanding, and excellent ratings at our choral competitions every year and is recognized as one of the top choral programs in the State of Michigan. *PLEASE NOTE*: All students are welcome to join choir. If you would like to speak with the director, please contact John Hummel, Director of Choirs; JHummel@birmingham.k12.mi.us*

WORLD LANGUAGES

Students may decide to study world language in middle school. They may select from the following:

- **Introduction to Chinese**
- **Introduction to French**
- **Introduction to Spanish**

These languages will concentrate on the basic skills of speaking, reading, listening, grammar writing skills, and cultural awareness. A textbook and/or district created curriculum will be used accompanied by other supplementary materials.

*PLEASE NOTE: *If a world language is selected in middle school you may not change to a different world language during middle school.*
Chinese/French Grades 6-8 = Level One at BPS High Schools
Spanish Grades 6-8 = Level One and Two at BPS High Schools

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Sixth grade students will develop skills and knowledge in lifetime sports such as soccer, volleyball, basketball, floor hockey, bowling, softball and swimming. Throughout the course, they will be exposed to numerous, creative and fun team building activities such as "Lava" and "SOS". Students will also have the opportunity to attend fitness related field trips.
*PLEASE NOTE: *This is an addition to the required 10 week rotation.*

READING OPTIONS

Reading Enrichment 6 This course is intended for already *strong readers* to enrich their reading skills through class discussions and inquiry-based projects about literature and topics of interest. Each of these inquiry-based projects requires students to read, write, research, and practice their critical thinking skills. Some of the projects that we have previously done include: creating book movie trailers, filming book character interviews, debating topics and books of interest, writing articles for the school newspaper after conducting research on a topic, etc. Students will also be challenged to use critical thinking skills to dig deeper into texts in order to gain a greater understanding of what they are currently reading and/or have previously read. This course *may* require students to read additional novels/texts.

Literacy RS 6 *(Teacher recommendation only)*
Literacy is a small group reading intervention that provides students with an opportunity to strengthen their vocabulary skills, practice fluency and focus on using comprehension strategies (inferring, making connections, questioning, visualizing, etc.) within narrative and informational texts. Students also have an opportunity to strengthen their writing skills through writer's workshop sessions. Students who qualify for this course are typically less than one year below grade level in reading and would benefit from additional reading instruction. There is no additional homework in this class. A certified Reading Specialist, who is a member of the district reading department, will instruct this course.

**Note – Literacy 6 students meet every other day for the whole school year.*

OTHER

Directed Studies 6 *(Teacher recommendation only)*
Directed Studies is a course that is designed to provide students with additional support in their core classes that will focus on organization, study skills, assignment completion, and time management that will promote student achievement. **Note — Directed Studies 6 students meet every other day for the whole school year. Directed Studies 7 and 8 students meet every day for one quarter, or one semester of the school year. (The goal is to give students the skills/tools necessary to achieve and maintain passing grades at an independent level, so they can go into an available elective at the end of Q1, 2, or 3. The class is intended to be exited after one semester, or two at most.)*

****Math Lab** *(by teacher recommendation only)* is taken in conjunction with Math 6 as a separate math class, so two math classes per every other day. This class is designed to support and pre-teach concepts and skills that are being taught in the Math 6 class. There is no additional homework and there are no additional assessments for this course.

***PLEASE NOTE: *You can only select 2 choices from the Every Other Day Year Long Classes.*

OTHER- *an everyday class for one semester (compared to the every other day, year-long classes listed above)*

AARI**** *(Teacher recommendation only)*

AARI is a semester long, everyday class of intensive intervention that accelerates reading comprehension and critical thinking in informational text. AARI emphasizes small group instruction that meets students where they are and accelerates their reading through instruction built around community, text-based inferencing and critical thinking, question/answer relationships, questioning the author and text structure. There is no additional homework in this class.. This course is taught by a trained AARI instructor. After this course is completed, students may switch to two of the above every other day electives or two of the four rotation classes.

Name_____ **School**_____ **Teacher**_____

Social Studies, Science, Rotation (10 weeks each of Art, Engineering Tech, PE and Skills for Living) and A2 have been pre-selected. Select your other courses by completing steps 1-4. *See note on back!

Return this sheet to your 5th Grade Teacher By:

_____

Step 1 Choose This 6th Grade Language Arts Course

Choose Language Arts (LA6).

	Course Name	Number	Prerequisite Note
☐	Lang Arts 6	LA6	

Step 2 Choose One 6th Grade Math Course

Please follow the recommendation of your current math teacher when selecting the math class for next year.

	Course Name	Number	Prerequisite Note
☐	Math 6/7	Math67	Accelerated math.
☐	Math 6	MA6	

Step 3 Choose 6th Grade Elective Courses

Students must select **TWO every other day** classes. If students select AARI, they must additionally select it below.

	Course Name	Number	Prerequisite Note
☐	Band 6	BAND6	This is an every other day class.
☐	Intro to Chinese	INTCHI	This is an every other day class.
☐	Choir 6	CHOIR6	This is an every other day class.
☐	Intro to French	INTFR	This is an every other day class.
☐	Literacy 6	LITRS6	Teacher recommendation is required. This is an every other day class.
☐	Math Lab 6	MTHLAB6	Teacher recommendation is required. This is an every other day class.
☐	Music Stat 6	MUSIC6	This is an every other day class.
☐	Orchestra 6	ORCH6	This is an every other day class.
☐	PE6 Eod	PE6EOD	This is in addition to your 10 week required PE class in your rotation. This is an every other day class.
☐	Reading Enr6	RE6	This is an every other day class.
☐	Intro to Spanish	INTSPA	This is an every other day class.
☐	Directed Studies6	STRAT6	Teacher recommendation required. This is an every other day class.
☐	AARI	AARI	Teacher recommendation required. This is an everyday class for 1 semester (20 weeks).

Step 4 Choose 6th Grade Alternate Elective Courses

All elective combinations are not possible, so please carefully select **2 NEW** alternates. **DO NOT** include electives already selected.

	Course Name	Number	Prerequisite Note
☐	Band 6	BAND6	This is an every other day class.
☐	Intro to Chinese	INTCHI	This is an every other day class.
☐	Choir 6	CHOIR6	This is an every other day class.
☐	Intro to French	INTFR	This is an every other day class.
☐	Music Stat 6	MUSIC6	This is an every other day class.
☐	Orchestra 6	ORCH6	This is an every other day class.
☐	PE6 Eod	PE6EOD	This is in addition to your 10 week required PE class in your rotation. This is an every other day class.
☐	Reading Enr6	RE6	This is an every other day class.
☐	Intro to Spanish	INTSPA	This is an every other day class.

Parent/guardian signature:_____ Parent/guardian name: _____

Parent/guardian phone #:_____

Parent/guardian email:_____

1/31/25

Dear Dragon family/community,

Upon selecting 6th grade courses for next year on the sheet behind or above this one, please note the following as your signature on the next page is confirmation that you understand and are adhering to these guidelines:

1- **Please carefully follow ALL other guidelines on the page behind this one!**

2- Please note that **we <u>do not</u> do "schedule change requests"** at the beginning of the school year, nor when new semesters and quarters begin **for these reasons:**
***Friends in different classes** ***Wanting a different teacher** ***Wanting a different time of day for a class**

We <u>do</u> schedule changes if there has been an error, or if there is a hole in your schedule/ a missing class. **Please notify your school counselor if there is an error or hole in your schedule as soon as you notice it so it can be corrected!**

Last, if you would like to read paragraph descriptions of the courses, please scan the QR code below or visit the Derby home page and click on Student Life, Counseling, then 6th grade. Thank you! With gratitude, Derby Counseling

(you are already at the QR code since you're using the online version)