

MOUNTAINSIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL

**6th Grade Course Guide
2026-2027**



Mountainside Middle School
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Mountainside Middle School

6th Grade Courses

Sixth grade required courses

Math	2 semesters
English (see course descriptions for options)	2 semesters
Social Studies	2 semesters
Science	2 semesters
Physical Education	2 semesters

Sixth grade elective courses (students choose one of the following)

Band	Year-long class
Choir	Year-long class
Orchestra	Year-long class
General Electives – a different class each quarter in each of the following areas:	Four quarter-long classes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Art● General Music● Leadership● Digital Literacy	

Mountainside Middle School

6th Grade Course Descriptions

REQUIRED COURSES

ENGLISH

English 6: The sixth grade English course focuses on reading, writing, speaking and listening, and research skills that are all taught and reinforced through our core curriculum program called *Collections*. Students read a variety of novels, fiction and nonfiction selections, and poetry. Reading comprehension and vocabulary study are foundational in all English classes. Writing is taught throughout the core curriculum and focuses on the three modes: narrative, informational, and argumentative. Students learn structure, organization, word choice, idea development, and conventions as they deepen their understanding about how to communicate through writing.

Honors English 6: This course uses the same core curriculum program as English 6, *Collections*, but the activities take students deeper into the content. Students will also read more complex texts that may be above grade level. This course is designed to offer an enriched and challenging sequence of study for students who may be advanced in reading and writing. This is an advanced course that is open to all students; however, students should thoughtfully consider enrollment in an honors course.

Resource English 6: Students with IEPs will be placed in Resource or Inclusion English, depending on individual student needs. Inclusion English placement is based on Team decision and student performance/readiness. See description below.

MATHEMATICS

Math 6: This course will follow the Washington State Standards of Learning for Grade 6 Mathematics. The course has two major clusters for student understanding: ratios and proportional relationships and algebraic expressions and equations. Additional course study will center around geometry, signed numbers in the four quadrants, and statistics.

Advanced Math 6: This course will follow the Washington State Standards of Learning for all of the Grade 6 standards and some of the Grade 7 standards. In addition to the four major Grade 6 mathematical concepts of ratios and proportional relationships, algebraic expressions and equations, and multi-digit operations, student will also deepen their understanding of ratio and proportions as well as their understanding of operations with fractions to add, subtract, multiply and divide rational numbers. Students will be evaluated for placement in this class.

Advanced Math 7: Students will take their understanding of unit rates and proportional relationships to a new level. By connecting these concepts to points on a line and ultimately solving linear equations, students will apply algebraic reasoning and their knowledge of the properties of operations. Students will be evaluated for placement in this class.

Resource Math 6: Students with IEPs will be placed in Resource or Inclusion Math, depending on individual student needs. Inclusion Math placement is based on Team decision and student performance/readiness. See description below.

If you would like to have more information regarding the various Math pathways please see the links below:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YEYXK4BK-larauByqAGxpg4E8fl1MbG6/view?usp=drive_link
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-EDMb6PF4oZ8lpJKq5YgJXZM8PuERZdz/view?usp=drive_link

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Health and Fitness Education: This course emphasizes team and individual sports, lifetime activities, and health and fitness concepts. Students will participate in a wide variety of activities, as well as gain an understanding of how to plan their own lifelong health and fitness.

SCIENCE

Science 6: Students learn about Earth systems science in this course. Topics covered include interactions between the hydrosphere and geosphere, components of weather and climate, geoscience processes and their impact on the Earth, as well as human interaction with the environment and natural resources.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social Studies 6 (World Civilizations): Sixth graders deepen their understanding of the Earth and its peoples through the study of history, geography, politics, culture and economic systems of world civilizations. They consider why ancient civilizations developed and why they declined or thrived. Additionally, through the study of world history, students will evaluate the enduring contributions of ancient societies, recognizing the links between the historical and contemporary societies. In addition, students will explore current world and local issues and events that affect students' everyday lives.

CONTINUING MUSIC ELECTIVES (year-long courses)

Beginning Band: Beginning Band is for the student who has little or no band experience. There will be performances during the school year. Students will be graded on performance, preparation, participation in class and attendance at additional rehearsals and events. Students are responsible for providing their own instruments. The band instructor will guide this process during the first week of school. Students will be placed in the appropriate band.

Cadet Band: This course is for students with band experience. Along with music fundamentals at the individual level, students will learn group techniques in an advanced band

setting. This band has a number of performances during the school year. Students will be graded on performance, preparation, participation in class and attendance at additional rehearsals and events. Students will be placed in the appropriate band.

Symphonic Band: This course is for advanced students with band experience. Along with music fundamentals at the individual level, students will learn group techniques in an advanced band setting. This band has a number of performances during the school year. Students will be graded on performance, preparation, participation in class and attendance at additional rehearsals and events. Students will be placed in the appropriate band.

Jazz Ensemble I: Jazz I is an elective class for the most advanced students who have auditioned and been selected as members of the ensemble. Students in Jazz I are required to also have a concert band as their elective unless their instrument is piano or bass. The curriculum consists of advanced jazz techniques such as ensemble playing, style, feel, jazz theory and improvisation. This band has a number of performances throughout the year.

Jazz Ensemble II: Jazz II is a “Zero Hour” class for students who have auditioned and been selected as members of the ensemble. Students in Jazz are required to have a concert band as their elective unless their instrument is piano or bass. The curriculum consists of developing jazz techniques such as ensemble playing, style, feel and improvisation. This band has a number of performances throughout the year. Jazz II rehearses Mondays and Thursdays from 7:00 am to 8:00 am. Auditions are held at the beginning of the year.

Concert Choir: For all voices - sixth, seventh and eighth grade - no audition required. Students will learn and improve vocal skills by performing literature from many genres including American, sacred, jazz and contemporary. Students will perform in night concerts and travel to festivals. Students are graded on participation in class, skills-evaluations, and required performances as outlined in the Choral Handbook. This is not an audition-based choir. Required fees include ASB and uniform purchase.

Treble Choir: For Soprano, Mezzo Soprano and Alto voices, advanced singers in mostly seventh and eighth grade, by audition. Students will learn and improve vocal skills by performing challenging literature from many genres. Students will perform in night concerts and travel to festivals. Students are graded on participation in class, skills-evaluations, and required performances as outlined in the Choral Handbook. Required fees include ASB and uniform purchase. This is an audition-based choir and will be a year-long (two semester) commitment.

Symphonic Choir: For Tenor, Baritone and changing voices - sixth, seventh and eighth grade - no audition required. Students will learn and improve vocal skills by performing literature from many genres including American, sacred, jazz and contemporary. Students will perform in night concerts and travel to festivals. Students are graded on participation in class, skills-evaluations, and required performances as outlined in the Choral Handbook. This is not an audition-based choir. Required fees include ASB and uniform purchase.

Jazz Choir: For all voices including Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Baritone, mostly eighth grade advanced singers by audition only. Students will learn and improve classical and jazz vocal skills in particular, performing challenging literature from many genres including chamber and jazz music. Students are graded on participation in class, skills-evaluations, and required performances as outlined in the Choral Handbook. Required fees include ASB and uniform purchase. This is an audition-based choir and will be a year-long (two semester) commitment.

Beginning Orchestra: Beginning Orchestra is a year-long performance ensemble for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students with little or no orchestra experience. Instruments included in orchestra are: violin, viola, cello, and double bass. There will be after school performances during the school year. Students will be graded on performance, preparation, participation in class, and attendance (in class and performances). Students are highly encouraged to provide their own instruments. The orchestra instructor will help guide this process during the first week of school.

Intermediate Orchestra: This course is designed for the intermediate strings student who has had two or more years of playing experience. Students will receive further instruction on the music fundamentals, scales, rhythm, sight-reading and advanced playing techniques. Grade is based on performance, preparation, and participation in class, contests and concerts. Students are highly encouraged to provide their own instrument and accessories, with the exception of cellos and basses, but should have an instrument at home to practice on.

Advanced Orchestra: This orchestra course is designed for the advanced strings student with two or more years of playing experience, or those students with advanced skills on their instrument. Students will receive further instruction on the music fundamentals, scales, rhythm, and sight-reading at more advanced levels. Grade is based on performance, amount of time spent preparing and learning performance skills, and participation in class. Students will be placed in the appropriate orchestra by the instructor based on playing skills.

GENERAL ELECTIVE COURSES (Quarter Long)

Art 6: This project-based course focuses on the elements of art (line, shape, value, space, color, form, and texture) in drawings. Students will learn techniques to improve their ability to draw creatively and technically, with accuracy. No previous experience is required.

General Music: Students will learn about a variety of music topics, such as rhythm and basic composition. Students will have the opportunity to play guitar and explore other instruments. Students are graded on composition, participation, written work and guitar quizzes. No music experience required.

Leadership 6: This class focuses on four main areas: the brain, happiness, decision making, and working collaboratively with others. It is a fast-paced class where students will exercise their brains on a daily basis, and, in the process, work in many different group situations.

Digital Literacy: This is a digital literacy course that introduces students to Google Drive, keyboarding and digital citizenship. STEM (Science/Technology/Engineering/Math) career and educational opportunities are also presented and explored.

SUPPORT COURSES

Reading Enrichment: This course focuses on reading comprehension and vocabulary. Students learn different reading strategies each week that can immediately be implemented in their core classes to help build reading comprehension. Weekly attention is also given to reading fluency and reading rate, as necessary. However, the focus is on reading strategies and vocabulary development to improve understanding of all different types of texts. Students will be assigned to this class.

SPECIAL SERVICES PROGRAMS

Students must be qualified through the Mead School District's Special Services Department. Each student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) services will be determined on a case by case basis. A continuum of services will be provided for each individual student's needs.

Inclusion Class: The purpose of the Inclusion Class is to provide instruction using general education curriculum and individual instruction in the basic skills of reading, written expression, mathematics, and other areas as determined by the IEP team. Inclusion classes are co-taught by a general education teacher and a special education teacher.

Resource Room: The purpose of the Resource Room is to provide specially designed curriculum and individual instruction in the basic skills of reading, written expression, mathematics, and other areas as determined by the IEP team.

Life Skills: The goal of Life Skills is to teach the functional skills necessary to become a productive and independent member of society. Students will be taught how to participate in a variety of vocational and leisure time activities.

Developmental Learning Center: This is a Mead School District program for middle school students who qualify for special education services and who have an Individualized Educational Program (IEP). The curriculum is highly individualized and based on each student's IEP. The program's focus is on functional academics, communication skills, and the development of social and adaptive skills. This is a non-graded program for middle school students.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

Mead School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.