HIGHLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL

6th Grade Course Guide 2026-2027

Highland Middle School
3515 W. Hawthorne Rd.
Spokane, WA 99208

Mead School District, 2323 E Farwell Rd, Mead, WA 99021

Highland 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 the following areas: ● Art ● General Music ● Leadership ● Digital Literacy ● STEAM	Four quarter-long classes

Highland Middle School
6th Grade Course Descriptions

REQUIRED COURSES

ENGLISH

English 6 The six 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 classic and contemporary novels along with nonfiction essays, speeches and articles. 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, information and argument. 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, 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.

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 multi-digit division and multi-digit operations.

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 take their understanding of unit rates and proportional relationships to a new level, connecting these concepts to points on a line and ultimately using them to solve linear equations that require them to apply algebraic reasoning as well as knowledge of the properties of operations. Students will also expand their understanding of numbers beyond rational numbers. Students will be evaluated for placement in this class.

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 and space science in this course. Topics covered include components of weather and climate, 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.

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.

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. There is a required 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. There is a required uniform purchase. This is an audition-based choir and will be a year-long (two semester) commitment.

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. There is a required uniform purchase. This is an audition-based choir and will be a year-long (two semester) commitment.

Beginning Orchestra This course is for students with little or no Orchestra experience and a desire to explore the joy of making music with others. Instruments and materials will be provided for students, but you are welcome to get your own as well (please contact me before buying so I can support this process). Students will learn body position, music reading and music performing ensemble skills. There will be a few concerts during the year. Grading is based on daily participation, preparation and performance attendance. Grade Level 6, 7.

Intermediate Orchestra This course is designed for the Intermediate string student with 1-2 years of playing experience, and already established body position, music reading and music performing ensemble skills. Students will refine fundamental skills while exploring new techniques and playing more advanced music in 5 part harmony. New more advanced techniques such as vibrato, shifting will be learned. There will be several concerts during the year demonstrating synthesis of musical Performance Targets and newly learned techniques. Grading is based on daily participation, preparation and performance attendance. Student placement will be by the teacher based on playing skills. Grade Level 6, 7, 8.

Chamber Orchestra This course is for string students who already have a solid foundation in string playing and have played for 2+ years. Students will learn to use vibrato and shifting consistently in their daily playing. They will explore new key signatures, rhythms and bow technique that will be incorporated into their grade 2-3 level songs for String Orchestra. They will continue to grow in their understanding and abilities to artistically express themselves through studying composers of a variety of time periods and styles. They will both perform at school, for community events and for competition. Student placement will be by the teacher based on playing skills. Grade Level 6, 7, 8.

GENERAL ELECTIVE COURSES (Quarter Long)

Art Students will be introduced to the Elements of Art, using a variety of mediums for both two-dimensional and three-dimensional work. There is a $10.00 supply fee per quarter.

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 elective includes topics which promote healthy teen lifestyles. Being drug-free, developing refusal skills, exploring the importance of personal decision-making and responsibility are the core principles presented. Teen Choices uses curricula including Project ALERT substance abuse prevention program information and activities, Scholastic's *Choices* Magazine, *Character Counts!* character development, and various community and law enforcement members as speakers.

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.

STEAM 6 Students will enter the Highland Makerspace where they will learn about Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math. Students will learn how to create technical sketches and use woodworking tools to create multiple creative projects. We will develop as critical thinkers, and problem solvers, and build the foundational skills to help students succeed in the other Makerspace classes at Highland.

SUPPORT COURSES

Reading Strategies 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.

Math Strategies The goal of the class is to help your student strengthen their mathematical reasoning and comprehension skills so that they are successful in their Math course. Students will be assigned to this class.

Study Skills This course helps students improve their organizational, note-taking, research, presentation, interpersonal, problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. Students work on binder organization, goal setting and group academic work. Students will be assigned to this class.

MULTILINGUAL SUPPORT

Following Washington's Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Frameworks, Highland is committed to building equality for Multilingual (ML) students. This Multi-Tiered approach involves the delivery of universal instruction for all students, including the ML student. Additional support will be provided for the ML student, if necessary, by utilizing the ML teacher push-in model into the general education classroom. For those students who require intensive support, the ML teacher will provide sheltered instruction to further address the student's needs.

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.

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.

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.

Life Skills The course goal is to teach the functional skills that a student needs to become a productive and independent family member, citizen, employee, and a participant in a variety of vocational and leisure time activities. Consequently, they will be taught to develop healthy self-concepts, attitudes, and behaviors necessary to become productive citizens.

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 focuses 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

The Mead School District complies with all federal rules and regulations and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or handicap. This holds true for all students who are interested in participating in educational programs and/or extracurricular school activities. Inquiries regarding compliance procedures may be directed to the school district's Title IX/RCW 28A.640.