



**School Year 2026-2027**

**6th Grade Newsletter**

[6th Grade Fall Schedule](#)

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**October 15, 2026**

### **ADVISORY**

6th graders have settled into permanent advisory groups for the year and we are excited to strengthen our connections with students and families. Please reply to your child's advisor's recent email so we can gather a little more information about students before conferences at the end of the month. 6th graders voted for our Associated Student Body (ASB) representatives yesterday (President, Vice-President and Secretary). Students now have the chance to consider joining this student leadership committee. We will elect two Class Representatives next week; Dean Rob and advisors will support any students interested in running for these positions.

### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA)**

6th graders recently wrapped up their unit on *When You Trap a Tiger* with their first test of the school year, along with a mini-essay. For the remainder of the month and beyond, students will explore spooky, Halloween-themed short stories and creative projects while beginning our Dystopian Societies unit with *The Giver*. As students read *The Giver*, they will examine how rules, norms, values, and systems of organization shape groups and communities. This will provide a strong connection to Social Studies and create opportunities for collaboration during 6th grade HUMLAB.

### **MATH**

6th graders just completed their first unit assessment on polygon area and polyhedron surface area. After receiving their initial scores, they'll have the chance to retake any questions they missed to improve their final score. This is an essential part of our learning process. Mistakes and inaccuracies are commonplace and expected in math; analyzing errors and making corrections is part of a cycle of mastery we want to normalize in our classroom. Our second unit focuses on ratios. We'll learn how ratios relate to fractions, decimals, and percents while exploring their practical use with real-world comparisons, measurements, and proportions. For a quick at-home connection, find a simple recipe and ask your child to double it, halve it, or adapt it to a different number of people or servings.

## **SCIENCE**

In 6th grade science the students have completed lab safety, thinking like scientists, and their first formal lab write-up of the year. We are now transitioning into our Astronomy Unit for the remainder of the fall term. Students should expect an increase in course rigor, labs, projects, and homework in the coming weeks. Please continue to ask students what they are learning in science class and checking in with them at home. Check Google Classroom and your student planners for assignments and due dates!

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

6th graders have been completing their final drafts of their neighborhood maps. 6th graders did a beautiful job including all the parts of a map as well as including their own creative flair with color or added icons. In addition, students have been working alone or with a partner to research and create a presentation for an assigned "landform". Students will teach the class about their landform while their peers take notes. After all presentations are complete and we've reviewed the information, students will take a quiz about the various topics such as mountains, plateaus, canyons and peninsulas! Our next unit will be about early humans and hunter/gatherer groups.

## **SPANISH**

6th grade has been working on practicing our greetings, learning to greet folks with different levels of formality. The students chose Spanish names and have been working on using them to speak to each other in class. Students have begun learning vocabulary related to everyday objects in the classroom. Students have used the verb *Gustar* to express likes and dislikes. Classroom activities include games centered around listening, speaking and responding to directions in Spanish.

## **STEM LAB**

The 6th graders have been hard at work on their sock puppets. While some finishing touches remain unglued, we are now moving on to drafting scripts for our epic sock puppet shows, coming in a couple of weeks! They've been paired with a partner or group and tasked with writing and acting out a short story involving their puppets.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION /GO (GET OUTSIDE!)**

After recently concluding our Ultimate Frisbee unit, dodgeball has taken center stage in PE classes. As we learn and play different versions of this classic game, students are encouraged to emphasize fair play and risk-taking over competitive results. Ask your child why catching balls is more advantageous than throwing them at opponents. We also have a parkour station set up on stage so students can practice vaulting and hurdling skills during breaks from dodgeball. Our next teamsport unit, handball, is coming soon! This was very popular with students last year and we're excited to introduce this unsung sport to 6th graders.

## **VISUAL ARTS**

6th grade artists have begun their first project, where they break a simple line drawing into lots

of little pieces, then shade each piece with a full gradient in different directions to create a stunning visual effect! This is great practice for shading, pencil control, and pressure control, which will be a huge help as we continue to build a strong foundation of art skills and knowledge.

## **DRAMA**

6th grade Drama continues our study of Tableaux, expanding our understanding of single stage pictures to include series-based storytelling with Geo Rutherford's *Spooky Lakes* as inspiration. Toward the end of the month we will work on character voice and choice with a script reading of the radio play *Maureen*, originally produced by Youth Theatre Northwest.

## **VOCALS**

6th grade vocal students are transitioning from exploring who they are as singers and instrumentalists and sharing those stories with the class to discovering their personal singing abilities. They will start their singing exploration through learning the chorus from the song "Rhythm Of Life", a 3 part canon style song. Next they will learn a 300 to 400 year old 5 part round from England.

**September 17, 2026**

## **ADVISORY**

It's been a joy welcoming our 6th graders to Billings and helping them acclimate to middle school life during advisory. During the first week, we focused on setting community goals and creating our cube sculptures for our annual Convocation ceremony last Friday. We're currently in the thick of planning for our first Exped trip to Deception Pass next week. Students are reviewing their packing list, practicing outdoor protocols like EGGS and Chow Circle, and learning about beach activities, meals, Fort Casey scavenger hunt, and other aspects of our trip.

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA)**

In ELA, students have been working hard to build writing stamina with daily journal entries: Masterpiece Monday, Take a Stand Tuesday, Wonder Wednesday, Throwback Thursday, and Fiction Friday. This has been super helpful as we build toward our first essay on *When You Trap a Tiger*. We are also gearing up for our first test of the school year on the novel. To help prepare for the test and the essay, students worked in small groups on theme and symbol collages, which are displayed outside the classroom. They are creative, artistic, and beautifully decorated.

## **MATH**

In 6th grade math, we're committing to two principles to guide us through this year and beyond: learning math is like learning a new language, and we help each other whenever possible. Learning a new language comes with new rules, symbols, and vocabulary, and the fastest way to fluency is having consistent conversations with peers and teachers. Math is no

different. Our classes are anchored by whole-group discussions and small-group collaboration to grasp new concepts and solve problems. These conversations can continue at home! Please ask your child about calculating the area of parallelograms and triangles. How do you identify the base and height? Why does the triangle area formula require dividing by two or multiplying by one-half? And ask them about Pig, a dice game we played on the first day of school.

## **SCIENCE**

In science, students have started learning about the scientific method and how to think like a scientist. We are learning how to follow the steps of a lab, how to use measurement tools, and how to collect data. Next week, students will learn more about lab safety in order to prepare for their first hands-on lab after their trip. Ask your students about their Scientific Method Comic Projects to see what they have learned so far this year!

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

6th graders created a color mural “map” of themselves to begin the year. Using colored paper, students represented different aspects of their identity with beautiful and interesting results! We are focusing now on the purpose and parts of a map, which includes creating a map of the Billings neighborhood as well as learning about basics of latitude and longitude.

## **SPANISH**

Students have learned and memorized a poem with movement in Spanish. They have learned and memorized the vowels, alphabet, and numbers from 1-100. In addition to this, we have started to work on a group rhyme, greetings and goodbyes, and expressing how we are feeling in Spanish. We have also started our Folkloric dances of Mexico unit. Students are currently learning the basic steps to Son Jarocho and learning the song La Bamba.

## **STEM LAB**

Students designed paper airplanes in their first STEM Lab of the year, competing for distance, accuracy, flight time, and acrobatics. We are now working on creating our sock puppets in anticipation of an epic puppet show in a few weeks - students will begin the process of gluing their materials together next week!

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION /GO (GET OUTSIDE!)**

Students begin PE/GO classes with a mindful breathing ritual with three yoga-pose options: mountain, easy, or (the ever-popular) corpse pose. This brief, quiet moment emphasizes how focus, self-control, and precise technique translate to success in all athletic endeavors. Ultimate Frisbee is our first teamsport unit. The variety of athletic skills, teamwork, and inclusivity it promotes make it a very popular sport in our community. 6th graders are practicing backhand and forehand throwing techniques, learning quirky games like “family photo,” and playing small-sided scrimmages.

## **VISUAL ARTS**

6th grade artists are starting their journey into the elements of art - the building blocks that make up all images - with the element of "value". They discussed what value is and how artists use it, and practiced identifying the range of values used in an artwork. Then, they created their own value scales to hone their ability to see subtle differences between values, try out different types of drawing pencils, and practice controlling their pencil pressure. Soon, we'll get a chance to put all of our shading skills together on our very first project: shattered values!

## **DRAMA**

6th graders have begun to build their own theatre companies! Within these budding new artistic ensembles, students are learning about drama basics through the namesake of our classroom, Frederick Douglass, and the text of the class syllabus. So far, we have explored dramaturgy, consensus building, production meetings, personal connection, and physical exploration. Next up we'll be working on tableaux and vocal expression, while continuing to build on the former skills and concepts.

## **VOCALS**

6th grade vocal students have been exploring who they are as singers and instrumentalists. In upcoming weeks, they will share with each other their singing/musician stories. After each person has the opportunity to share their story, students will transition into intermediate ear training, vocal music studies and singing. The first songs explored in 6th grade vocals are traditional songs from the US and around the world.

## **MUSIC**

Sixth graders kicked off our Instruments of the World unit by exploring the classical orchestra, learning to differentiate between strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion families, and discovering how they sound both as individual sections and together as a full ensemble. While focusing on percussion, students practiced basic hand-drumming rhythms on their desks and even explored creating their own drum beats on their Chromebooks.