

Waukee Community School District

Middle School 6th Grade Course Descriptions

REQUIRED YEAR LONG CLASSES

****6th Grade Math***

Sixth grade math is a balanced curriculum that focuses on the six strands of skills and concepts:

- Operations and computation
- Numeration
- Patterns, functions, and Algebra
- Data and chance
- Measurement and reference frames
- Geometry

Students link past experiences with new learning to create a solid structure of skills and concepts.

****Language Arts***

Our 6th grade middle school language arts course utilizes the standards and benchmarks of the Iowa Core to develop essential reading, writing, language, speaking and listening skills. These standards and benchmarks will be achieved through exposure to various forms of literature and informational text infused within units of study. Students will be involved in active exploration of reading and writing through personal and authentic opportunities to explore vocabulary, conventions, and craft within the Iowa Core standards. This two period language arts course is differentiated through instruction that includes, but is not limited to, increased rigor and appropriate pace for the learner.

****Science***

Sixth grade science in Waukee exposes students to content and concepts from the four areas of the Science Iowa Core Curriculum: Physical Science, Life Science, Earth and Space Science, and Engineering, Technology and Applications of Science. Students will use inquiry, collaborative practices, and creative problem-solving as they interact with the following units:

- 1) Population & Resources,
- 2) Matter & Energy in Ecosystems
- 3) Weather Patterns
- 4) Ocean, Atmosphere, & Climate
- 5) Phase Change
- 6) Phase Change Internship
- 7) Chemical Reactions
- 8) Earth's Changing Atmosphere
- 9) Earth's Changing Atmosphere: Engineering Internship.

Students will explore each unit through the lens of a scientist and the natural phenomena that occur around them. In addition to science practices, students will interact with various scientific and

engineering jobs.

****Social Studies***

In sixth grade, students will focus on geography, history, and culture in global regions. Students will analyze regional, physical, and cultural characteristics of places. Students will connect learning across multiple global regions and cultures. The analysis will show how these factors influenced people who lived there and how the people and characteristics have changed over time. Students will identify and define culture, recognize similarities and differences among many cultures, compare and contrast various aspects of regional, physical and cultural characteristics, and analyze the impact of leadership in various regions.

****Physical Education (Meets every other day)***

In sixth grade, students will explore physical fitness and set goals for personal growth to build a foundation for a physically active lifestyle. Students will be provided an opportunity to safely and respectfully participate in multiple movement opportunities and experiences including fitness concepts, lifetime fitness activities, and team/individual sports.

REQUIRED SEMESTER CLASSES

****Art***

Students will call upon their imagination, envision the end product, and build their problem solving skills to create works of art. Students will establish a firm understanding of how to use art techniques and will explore a variety of materials. Some of those materials include colored pencils, paint, paper manipulation, digital art and clay.

****Health***

Sixth grade health focuses on helping students build the tools to make healthy lifestyle choices and how these choices impact them, their family, and their community. Units include Healthy Behaviors, Digital Drama, Interpersonal Communication, Nutrition, and Health Advocacy.

In 6th Grade Health students will...

- Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health
- Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology and other factors on health behaviors.
- Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.

****Smart Skills***

The first half of this course focuses on leadership skills such as being effective, having a positive attitude, and some organization and responsibility basics. The second half of the course focuses on financial literacy including, budgeting, financial goal planning, career and college planning, and

understanding debt.

****Speech/Drama***

In sixth grade Speech/Drama students develop their communication skills while working on good listening practices. Students are offered a variety of experiences performing in large and small groups as well as performing as individuals. During the nine-week session, students will participate in communication activities, write and perform speeches, and listen, view and evaluate works. They will also create performances based on folklore and original story ideas.

****World Languages***

World Languages is a course which introduces students to languages and language learning. Students acquire listening comprehension and speaking competence of basic vocabulary and conversational phrases in both the German and the Spanish languages through actions, hands-on activities, interactive games, and songs. Students apply this learning by creating commands and stories using the target language vocabulary and phrases that they have acquired. They also explore the history of each language, and learn some of the geography, history, customs, and cultural events associated with the German and Spanish-speaking countries.

****Technology & Communications***

Most students have probably had experiences communicating online and coding. In this course students will focus on being positive digital citizens. The class also works on developing successful habits for life such as perseverance, curiosity, & adaptability through coding skills.

****6th Grade Band (Optional)***

Enrollment is open to all Waukee 6th grade students. 6th Grade Band is a continuation of skills and techniques learned in 5th Grade Band. The course focuses on proper playing technique on a chosen band instrument, tone production, reading of music notation and symbols, music composition, and proper ensemble performance practice. Grades will be based on periodic performance assessments. These may include: scales, method book exercises, solo & ensemble literature, honor band audition material and concert music check-off. In addition to the regular band program, students will have the opportunity to participate in honor band and solo/ensemble contests.

****Band Basics (Optional)***

This course is designed to help any 6th or 7th-grade student become successful with the basic skills needed to perform in a large-group Band ensemble. The objective of Band Basics is to help students gain enough skills to confidently perform in an ensemble with their grade-level peers. Students will engage in guided practice in the following areas: instrument position and posture, embouchure (mouth formation), breath support, music notation, rhythmic notation and steady beat, and note-reading in correlation with fingering/slide position recall. This course is designed for students who meet one or more of the following criteria:

- New to the Band experience and have not previously participated in a curricular Band

- Switching to a new instrument from the one played in a previous year (particularly flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, or euphonium)
- Recommendation of 5th Grade Band or current instructor

NOTE: This course is viable with a minimum of 12 students enrolled. If projected enrollment is lower, students may be moved to 6th or 7th grade Band and will receive differentiated support through lessons.

****6th Grade Choir (Optional)***

Enrollment is open to all Waukee 6th grade students. Students will participate in a choral ensemble in which they will be learning techniques appropriate for the middle level learner. Students will have the opportunity to sing a variety of choral literature during the school year, and will be involved in two formal performances in which they will celebrate their skills and talents with the community. Students enrolled in curricular 6th grade choir are eligible to participate in additional co-curricular activities outside of the school day, such as honor choir(s) which are available to 6th graders through an audition process.