

2013-2014

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PLEASE PRINT AND RETURN THIS PAGE



## Checklist

Please check off each section as you review it with your child. When the handbook has been read and reviewed in its entirety, and all items below are checked off, please \*print, sign, and return this page (*ONLY this page*) to your child's homeroom teacher by **Wednesday, August 21<sup>st</sup>**.

*\*Printing the **entire** document is not required, but we do highly recommend that you save this file to your computer so that you can refer to it, if needed, throughout the school year.*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Curriculum*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Classroom Expectations*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Homework*

\_\_\_\_\_ *Other Information*

*We have reviewed and understand the information included in this packet.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student signature)



# Curriculum



## Language Arts



### Reading

The goal of the sixth grade reading program goes far beyond developing better readers. Through the use of a variety of resources (including the Harcourt Trophies reading program, literature studies, Jr Great Books, McCall-Crabbs, and more), along with varied teaching methods and a focus on several reading techniques, each student will receive a curriculum tailored to meet their needs.

#### **This year our students will:**

- become more fluent readers.
- learn strategies to decipher new vocabulary words.
- increase their comprehension and retention of what they read.
- define and identify elements of literature (literary elements)
- identify writer's craft (symbols, symbolism, foreshadowing, theme, author's message, etc.)
- analyze and evaluate literature.
- relate literature to their own lives.
- understand the many applications of and the importance reading will play in the rest of their lives.
- develop life-long appreciation and love ♥ for reading.

### Reading Logs

Every student will be responsible for completing a monthly reading log. Students will be required to read a minimum of 20 pages outside of school Monday – Friday (weekends highly recommended). At the end of the month students will total their pages, which must meet or exceed 500, have a parent sign their log, and turn it in by the specified due date. Students can count in-school reading from novels. In order to push all students to meet their potential, some students may be assigned more pages.

### Important Notes

→ At times, your child will be assigned literature books for which he/she will be accountable. It is important that your child bring this book to school **every day**.

→ Every student will be required to have an independent reading book at school, at all times. This is a book of your child's choice and it is their responsibility to make sure it is at school each day.

## **Language/Writing**

Writing doesn't just happen during Writing class anymore! Your child will be creating multiple forms of writing *across the curriculum*: expository and functional in Science, literary responses in Reading, and research in Social Studies and Science.

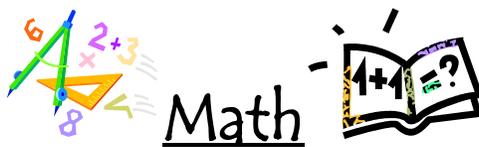
During our daily writing block, students will be reviewing the writing process in the beginning of the year and will then be expected to use those steps during the creation of every writing project. Students will also be studying the 6 traits (voice, conventions, word choice, sentence fluency, ideas, and organization) but on a deeper level than they have done in the past. Not only will students continue to learn how to improve their own use of the 6 traits but will also be developing refined editing skills as they critique, evaluate, and justify their appraisals of sample writing from across the board. Students will complete four writing projects, one per quarter, that will be graded using the six-traits holistic rubric or may focus more specifically on certain traits (which is what the AIMS switched to last year). Students will also engage in responses to literature, poetry, functional pieces, and essays. Grammar and language will be taught on a daily basis using a comprehensive language arts program designed with a spiral model of incremental development and continual review. A quiz will be given every 5 lessons to assess student proficiency. Students that are not proficient in particular area(s) will receive extra support and practice.

All students will have a "Writer's Notebook". This will be used for responses to daily prompts and the pre-writing stage of the writing process. They will be handed in periodically for a notebook check.

## **Spelling**

Students will be responsible for studying a weekly list of spelling words. Students will receive a double-sided spelling sheet (from the Trophies program) each Monday, containing the spelling words for the week and several activities to be completed. Students will be responsible for having this sheet completed by Thursday and to be prepared for their weekly spelling test (given on Friday).

Each week's spelling words are included in the newsletter so that you may review them with your child to prepare them for Friday's test. Lists and practice activities can also be found at [www.spellingcity.com](http://www.spellingcity.com).



Math instruction this year will be presented primarily through the “Math Connects” district adopted math program. However, other supplemental materials will all be used to teach and reinforce math concepts. Some of the major skills to be focused on this year are algebraic functions, geometry, percents, decimals, and fractions, and much, much more.

There will be math homework daily; however students who use their class time wisely may often find their homework done before the end of the school day. Rarely should a student come home and not have their math homework started by the end of the school day. If this becomes a normal occurrence in your home, it would be reasonable to assume your student is not efficiently using provided class time. Homework is an opportunity for students to practice and master skills taught that day as well as, throughout the year. It is perfectly acceptable for a parent, friend, or relative to assist a child having difficulty with a problem(s), but please make sure the student understands the concept. If at any time you notice your child consistently having trouble with a specific type of problem please let me (Mr. Gooding) know, so the skill can be reinforced/re-taught. Because of the many high level math problems your child will be doing this year, we require them to show their work. A problem with a correct answer, but with no work displayed, will receive zero credit.

The math grade will be made up of 50% from tests, 30% from daily quizzes, and 20% from homework. Homework is graded as a Pass/Fail assignment. Work must be displayed showing the process of solving the problem and must be completed in full for credit. All students will have one opportunity to retake a test during lunch. However, the two scores will be averaged. For example, if a student receives 70% on the first test and 80% on the second test, then the effect in the grade book will be 75%. A significant amount of support can be found on the publisher’s website [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com)—including tutorials, and practice tests.

## Science

Science will be taught through a “hands on” approach. We will be using the same FOSS (Full Option Science System) science program the students have been exposed to in third, fourth, and fifth grade. This program is designed to be implemented using a cooperative group setting- with heterogeneous groups of 4-5 students. Students are regrouped every quarter.



Two major units will be taught this year- 1) Water and Weather and 2) Diversity of Life. Each is an 18-week unit. Each of the two units is broken down quarterly into approximately nine Ideas/Concepts. For the most part, the same teaching methods are applied to each concept so that students gain a sense of routine and familiarity. There will be at least one hands-on experiment or investigation (usually more), several group

activities in which the students discover the concept or apply knowledge of the concept, at least one PowerPoint (sometimes more)—These serve as a guide for teaching the entire concept-start to finish. They contain in-class activities, questions for discussion, vocabulary, diagrams, illustrations, links, directions for setting up and executing in-class investigations, etc. Notes will be posted on my website once they have been introduced to the students and they have conducted the experiment.

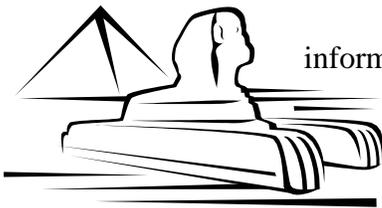
Students are required to take notes from various sources during each concept topic. The notes come from PowerPoint's, video clips, readings, experiments, and other sources. If a student is absent, it will be their responsibility to get the notes from a classmate or the teacher.

Each concept/topic will conclude with a quiz. Students will have advance notice of the quiz and will be expected to use all of their resources to study.

After every couple of topics, there will be a cumulative test that connects concepts. I will outline info covered with students prior to so they know what to expect 😊

## Social Studies

The majority of information in social studies will be presented through the Glencoe program; however we will also use a variety of other materials and resources to present



information and concepts. Major units that will be focused on this year include the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Rome, Greece, and China. During each civilization students will focus on: constructing an overall timeline of each civilization highlighting important events (to give them an idea of the vast length of

each civ), describing the factors that influenced that civilization to settle in that particular area, discovering the type of government/ruling pertaining to that civilization and compare it with those of other civilizations, pointing out the achievements and inventions of each civilization and interpret how each impacted our society today, researching prominent figures of that time, and taking the knowledge gained and utilizing/applying it to a cumulative quiz, test, and/or project.

Each civilization will grant students valuable note-taking opportunities (which is an incredibly important life-skill). There are 3-4 sections in each chapter followed by a quiz, and a comprehensive test is given at the conclusion of the unit.

In addition to stated components used, other various activities (not from the book) are incorporated throughout the units to maximize student engagement and comprehension. Students will have the opportunity to complete multiple project based learning projects throughout the year.😊

# Technology



Technology is an increasingly crucial component of today's society and workplace. In conjunction with Legend Spring's STEP program & Project 2021 we will not only be exposing students to a variety of technology during the learning process but also engaging the students in understanding and using this technology.

We realize that the technological abilities vary widely from student to student, which proves advantageous when students are working collaboratively on projects using a variety of technology. Students will not only be gaining knowledge from their teachers but also from their peers.

Our objectives for this year include:

- Students will learn how to create, modify, and edit a word doc.
- They will be able to add clip art, tables, pictures, video, and hyperlinks to a word and/or PPT
- Students will become be able to organize their files on the server and understand how to use a jump/flash drive.
- Create classroom presentations using powerpoint
- Successfully research on the Internet (become knowledgeable in regards to search engines, search queries, trust-worthy sites, etc).



## Interactive Student Notebooks



This year, students will be using Interactive Student Notebooks (ISN's) on a daily basis in Science, Reading, and Social Studies. This is a great way for students to systematically organize as they learn. We do approximately 90% of all notes, class work, and homework in the ISN; therefore it is crucial that your child comes to class prepared daily with completed work in the notebook. ISN's will be collected and graded throughout each quarter. Students will know ahead of time when they will be collected. A Table of Contents will be on each teacher's website as a reference.

This is a great way for students to check that all requirements are in the notebook.

## Departmentalization

Being a "departmentalized" sixth grade, your student will have more than 1 teacher. Listed below are the 6th grade teachers and their subject of expertise:

Mr. Caccavale- Reading

Mr. Gooding- Math

Mrs. Stafford – Science

Below is the schedule that will be followed. During the first week of school, your student will be assigned what subjects they have for each hour.

# Schedule

<u>Time</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
8:45 - 8:55	DLR	Homeroom
8:55-9:40	Specials/Writing	Specials OR Homeroom Teacher (if Writing, Read 180 out)
9:40-10:25	Specials/Writing	Specials OR Homeroom Teacher (if Writing, Read 180 out)
10:25-11:30	Hour 1	Stafford/Gooding/Caccavale (Reading SAGE out/Read 180 continued)
11:30-12:30	Social Studies	Homeroom Teacher
12:30-1:10	LUNCH	☺
1:10-1:30	DEAR/SSR/Other	Homeroom Teacher
1:30-2:30	Hour 2	Stafford/Gooding/Caccavale
2:30-3:30	Hour 3	Stafford/Gooding/Caccavale (Math SAGE out)

# Classroom Expectations

*We are here to learn; therefore, I will do nothing to prevent or inhibit the teacher from teaching, nor anyone, myself included, from learning.*

This simple statement is an accurate depiction of how we expect our students to behave in sixth grade.

Our rules too are very simple; simply stated, if at any time your actions or conduct are not in accordance with the above statement, **you are breaking the rules**. These basic guidelines, if followed will ensure that you and those around you are able to learn in a safe and positive environment:



- respect yourself and others
  - Do and/or say nothing to yourself or others (people or property) that could even be mistaken as insulting, harmful, or hurtful in any way.
- be responsible
  - Remember the only person in this world that controls what you do is YOU! Own the actions that you make as yours and be prepared to accept the consequences, positive or negative, attached to those actions.
- display strong work ethics
  - Exercise good study habits by completing work **and turning it in** a timely and neat manner.
  - Be organized. Good organization will not only make the process of completing and turning in work much easier, but will help to keep you prepared for class.

## Behavior Card

We will be using a behavior card system very similar to the one the students were exposed to in the fifth grade. All students will carry a behavior card which will remain in their binder **at all times**. Students will earn positives and negatives on their card on a regular basis. For the students to participate in the end-of-the-quarter rewards, they must acquire double the amount of positives as negatives. It is important to frequently check the ratio of positives to negative, because if a student waits too long, it might be too late to earn enough positives. Certain extenuating circumstances may also result in a revoking of a quarterly reward (i.e. referral(s), suspensions and/or severe behavioral issues). Upon the teacher's discretion and severity of actions, students can earn more than one negative at a time and those actions may also result in other actions such as calls home, referrals, or recess/lunch detention. In your student's weekly folder will be a place to confirm that you have seen this behavior card on a weekly basis

## **BULLYING**

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students directs written or verbal expressions or physical conduct against another student and the behavior results in harm to the student or the student's property, places a student in fear of harm to him/herself or their property, or is so severe that the child no longer feels safe at school.

As teachers we recognize the severity of such acts and we take all reported instances of bullying seriously. We will do everything in our power to ensure that each child does feel comfortable and safe at school. We have developed a bullying incident report form and during the first week of school students will be shown where these can be found in each classroom. When possible we will protect the identity of the harassee- but this depends on the severity and occurrence. Please feel free to email us (the 6th grade teachers) to make us aware of bullying whether at or outside of school. 9 times out of 10 bullying happens out of sight and earshot of any adults, so if we are aware we can monitor. When emailing please include all 3 of the teachers and if applicable Mr. Rayhorn, so that we are all in the loop. ☺



## Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Parents, we realize that in an effort to keep in close contact with your children that many students have and bring cell phones to school. However, cell phones (and other electronic devices) are not conducive to creating a distraction free learning environment, and we will follow district policy should any electronic device be seen or heard during school hours. First offense = confiscation and student pick-up, second offense = confiscation and parent pick-up, any following offenses = confiscation, parent pick-up, and three day suspension. (Please refer to your DVUSD Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.) Remember that if needed, you can get in touch with your child(ren) through the front office. IPODS are also not permitted and should stay at home.

## Gum

Students caught chewing gum will be given two negatives for their first offense. For a second offense, students will receive two negatives and lose their next recess. The third offense will be a referral to the office.

# School Work

## Homework vs. Class Work

Students will receive homework on a regular basis. The purpose of homework is to practice, reinforce and master skills, enrich subject areas, prepare for tests and quizzes, make up missed work, and learn responsibility and organizational skills. Please set aside 45 minute each day away from distractions, for homework to be completed. Concentration is a must to produce quality work and to do so in



a timely manner. Homework should typically take approximately 45 minutes, unless time in class was not used properly or if large/long-term projects are coming due that require more attention and **effort**.

There will be two types of work assigned to students, class work and homework. Class work is expected to be completed during school hours in class and ample time will be provided for children to do so. Any class work not completed during class will become homework. Homework is an opportunity for students to practice and reinforce skills they are learning at school. Parents, brothers, sisters, etc. are welcomed and encouraged to help students with their homework if they are having difficulties, but please make sure the student understands the concept. **Any work (class work or homework) not completed and turned in on time will receive a zero and the work must still be completed. However, all work is expected to be turned in whether it receives a grade or not.**

## Guidelines

- Homework not completed and turned in on due date will receive a zero (exceptions are long term projects and they will lose credit if late).
- Papers without a name may be docked **as much as a full letter grade**
- Correct heading is mandatory (right upper corner). Papers without it will be docked **a minimum of 5%**

First **and Last Name**

Student homeroom number and Teacher Initial

Date

- Work must be completed in a neat and legible manner!
- Do not do any work to be turned in on paper from a spiral notebook. No raggedy edges are permitted ☺

## Late Work

Homework not completed and turned in on the due date will receive a **zero**.

However, the student is still expected to complete the work and will miss lunch recess until



their work is complete. If a student does not complete an assignment, he/she will immediately note it on the back of their behavior card, which will need to be signed by a parent and returned to the teacher the following day.

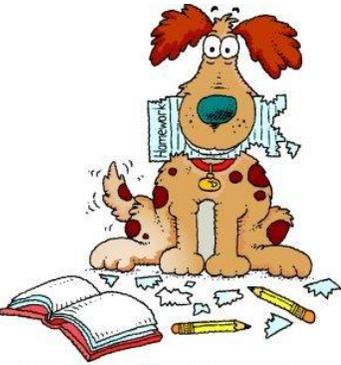
## Make-Up Work

When a child is absent, he/she will be responsible for making up all class work and homework he/she missed during the absence. It is the child's responsibility to make sure they have all work to be made up.



The student will receive one day for day absent, weekends included, to make up their work. If you know your child is going to be absent prior to the absence, the teacher may be able to give them their work before the absence. Hint: Teacher websites are a fantastic resource to get/stay caught up ☺

## Homework Extender



All students will receive one homework extension coupon at the beginning of each quarter. These passes can be used for a one day extension on a single, regular (one night) homework assignment. This pass does NOT excuse an assignment from completion or grade and is not valid on any long term projects such as essays, book reports, spelling packets, etc. Furthermore, assignments not completed and turned in the day after the homework pass is used will receive a zero **and** the student will spend lunch recess completing the assignment.

\*It is the students responsibility (not the teachers) to get the homework turned in the next day.

## Important Message about Homework and Projects

When a parent intervenes in a child's task by taking over or doing it for him, the parent is robbing the child of self-esteem. The message is clear: "You are not capable. You are not competent." Good parenting is like good teaching. The teacher offers guidance and suggestions, but then stands back so that the students can reap the rewards or deal with the consequences of his own actions. Parents need to guide but not take over.

## Grading Scale

Most work completed in 6th grade will be given a traditional letter grade based on a percent of correct answers compared to the number of questions given. Below you will see the district adopted grading scale connecting percentages to the correlating letter grade. However, some assignments may also be graded as "points", ex: + 9/10 or + 4/7 depending upon how each teacher chooses to set up their grading system via Power School.

## Grade Percentage

A+ 98-100%	B+ 88-89%	C+ 78-79%	D+ 68-69%	F 59% and below
A 93-97%	B 83-87%	C 73-77%	D 63-67%	
A- 90-92%	B- 80-82%	C- 70-72%	D- 60-62%	

Each subject has a unique formula when calculating the overall grade. This is dependent upon both the individual teacher and the subject's content. Most subjects in 6th grade are "weighted", meaning that each grade your child receives falls into a *category*, and then the *categories* are each weighted individually, with the total of all categories **equaling 100**. It is important to keep this in mind when reviewing grades on Power School ☺

### Example:

Tests/Quizzes	50
Homework	30
Projects	20

# Other Information

## Weekly Folder



Each student will have their own weekly folder. The purpose of this folder is to keep you, the parent, informed about what your child is learning in class, the grades he/she is receiving, and their behavior while at school. When the folder goes home each week (on Tuesday), it will contain recently-graded work for you to review. Inside the folder will be a form that will have places to check that you have looked over your student's behavior card, read the weekly newsletter, and checked Power Schools for up-to-date grades. There is also a place for your signature, confirming you received and reviewed the folder. Once you have signed the cover sheet, have your child file the papers in the appropriate places at home in their binders and return the folder to school. **FOLDER DUE BACK (signed) BY THURSDAY!**

**Make sure to save ALL returned work until the end of each quarter!** Why is this important you ask?

1. Reviewing graded assignments and quizzes is one of the most helpful ways to prepare for a unit test.

Hint: Occasionally you may see a question taken from a quiz or assignment show up on a test ☺

2. If there is a parental concern regarding a child's performance in a given subject it is incredibly helpful to be able to review/go over that quarters work during parent-teacher conferences. We have found that collaboration and discussion with parents while reviewing the students work from that quarter is tremendously effective in being able to pinpoint the problem/area of concern and from there, figuring out what we will do to remedy this.



3. There have been a few instances in past where, for whatever reason, technology malfunctions, and grades are erased. This can happen district wide, school wide, or on an individual basis for various reasons. Also (although incredibly rare) it may happen that a grade is mis-entered on the teacher's end. Whether it's a case of transposition or entering another student's score, having these graded papers in your possession will allow a teacher to immediately rectify this with no questions asked! ☺

## Boxtops for Education

By bringing in boxtops, you are helping our school to fund the purchase of resources and valuable technology for classroom use. Our PTA gives so much throughout the year-please help our class do our part ☺ Make sure that you write your name and your homeroom teacher's last name on the back of each donated top so that you may be eligible for prize drawings throughout the year.

# Money



All money turned in to the teacher must be placed in an envelope. On the envelope write what the money is for, your name, and your teacher's name. Students who do this and happen to lose/misplace their money often have a happy reunion, while those who don't....don't ☹ If you do not have an envelope either ask your teacher for one or make one.



## e-Newsletter:

[www.ls6thgrade.weebly.com](http://www.ls6thgrade.weebly.com)

PLEASE READ THIS EACH WEEK! We put a lot of time into drafting this each week because we firmly believe that informed parents play a vital role in creating/maintaining an academically successful student!

In the newsletter you will be informed of this week's (and often next's) curriculum, activities, important dates, scheduled events, and alerted/reminded of upcoming tests/quizzes, project due-dates, etc. The spelling words for the week are also listed within the newsletter so that you may practice these with your child to prepare them for the weekly test (on Friday). The weekly folder insert has a place for you to confirm you have read the newsletter for that week.

*If you would like the newsletter sent to a different email address or multiple addresses please let your child's homeroom teacher know so that they can make the necessary changes to their address book.*

## Dress Code

We adhere to the dress code policy stated in the Legend Springs handbook and students that do not follow the requirements will be dealt with accordingly (see *Consequences* below)

Listed below are the most commonly broken rules:

- Halter tops, spaghetti straps, and strapless tops are not acceptable.
- Straps (on tops) must be 1.5 inches or approximately **2 fingers** wide.
  - Please note: Multiple straps that equal 2 fingers when combined, do not count.
- Clothing that exposes undergarments (**this includes bra straps**) are not allowed.
- Shorts and skirts **must** cover the entire buttocks.
- No inappropriate words or graphics on clothing.
- Students are **NOT allowed** to wear hats inside the building.
  - They are allowed to be worn at recess and PE, but must remain off inside the building.

### Consequences

- If a student is found to be non-compliant with our dress code, he/she will be sent to Nurse Michele for a change or clothes or a cover-up. This can be an embarrassing event for 6th graders that can be completely avoided by monitoring your child's attire and discussing the difference between "school clothes" and "play clothes".
  - © Remember your appearance is the first thing people notice- make it a positive reflection of you!
- Repeat offenders will earn negatives on their behavior card.

## Parent-Teacher Communication

It is our belief here at Legend Springs, that an open line of communication between home and school should be maintained at all times to optimize student growth and success. Therefore, we encourage you to contact us whenever you have any questions or concerns you would like addressed. Emails are typically the easiest and quickest way of contacting us. However you may also contact us via telephone or through a hand-written note, sent in with your child. Should an issue or concern, we ask that resolution be sought through the appropriate chain of command. Please first contact the teacher with whom the concern involves, if after that you do not feel that the issue has been resolved, contact Mrs. Minor. Rest assured that communication, when approached with a calm and clear head, will almost always resolve any questions or concerns you may have.



**We are very much looking forward to working with you and your child this year!!**