

John T. Baker Middle School Grade 6



2020 - 2021 Course Bulletin

We prepare our course bulletin early in the year, therefore changes may occur. Please refer to the course bulletin on the Baker website to view any changes and/or updates for the 2020-2021 school year.

www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/bakerm/

John T. Baker Middle School

25400 Oak Drive, Damascus, Maryland 20872

www.bakerms.org

Dear Parents,

Welcome to another exciting year at Baker Middle School! You will find that this is one of the finest middle schools in all of Montgomery County! Baker offers your child a wide range of academic possibilities. We pride ourselves in being responsive to all of our children's needs. Our programs offer courses for gifted and talented, special education, and on-level students in every subject area. In all classes, students are challenged to perform at a level commensurate to their ability and intellectual growth.

Our goal at Baker is "to improve student achievement by promoting high expectations, developing a strong student work ethic, and increasing academic rigor." Giving our students the academic tools and organizational habits that will prepare them to pursue future goals is a responsibility of all of us. This begins by making wise choices for your child's academic program. I am hoping that you will review the choices outlined within this booklet, attend the informational parent meetings, and make decisions based on what is best for your child. Proper placement of children ensures that they will be encouraged to work to their potential without being defeated by unrealistic goals. The school counselors will be willing to help in any decision you need to make.

I look forward to joining with you and your family in a close working partnership to ensure your child's academic success while providing a pleasant and productive experience for you at Baker.

Sincerely,

Principal, John T. Baker Middle School

Dr. Louise Worthington

BAKER'S MISSION

John T. Baker Middle School seeks to be an exemplary learning community school. We build the foundation of this community through meaningful relationships, relevant and engaging learning, and effective communication. We challenge ourselves to be better than we think we can be, and advocate for the greater good of our community. Our success in this mission will build lifelong, confident learners, who have the tools necessary for success in a changing world.

[ADMINISTRATION 240-207-2440](tel:240-207-2440)

[Dr. Louise Worthington, Principal, Dr. Vaughn Bradley, Jr., Assistant Principal](#)
[Ms. Melanie Pique, Assistant Principal](#)

[SCHOOL COUNSELORS 240-207-2410](tel:240-207-2410)

[Ms. Lori Headdings, Resource Counselor and 8th Grade,](#)
[Ms. Corinne Whited, 6th Grade, Ms. Lindsey Buffum 7th Grade and Ms. Caleine Ajusma, All Grades](#)

BAKER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Registration Procedure for Students **2020-2021**

REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR RISING 6th GRADE STUDENTS Course Bulletin for all grades are available on-line at the website listed below:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/bakerms/>

The counselors have met with students and given them a registration form and course information. Each registration form is specific for the student. Students will be registered for the course level that is recommended by their teacher.

The Baker MS course bulletin is available on-line at the above website. (If you do not have computer access, printed copies of the course bulletin are available in the counseling office.) Please review the registration form with parents/guardians. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Baker counseling office at 240-207-2410. If a registration form is lost, you can download and print a blank copy, found on the BMS webpage (the above website).

THE DUE DATE FOR STUDENTS TO RETURN THEIR COMPLETED REGISTRATION FORM BACK TO THEIR 5th GRADE TEACHER IS JANUARY, 17th. Registration forms must be completely filled out and must have the parent's/guardian's signature. Baker Middle School counselors will review the completed registration forms for accuracy and completeness.

Choosing electives must be done thoughtfully and based on interest. We cannot honor changes after the start of the school year. We base the number of classes we offer on what you choose now.

Classes are heterogeneously grouped for 6th graders in Historical Inquiries in World Studies, Advanced English and Investigations of Science. Within these classes, teachers will differentiate at the following levels: Advanced/Above level, On-Level and On Level with Support. Only students with an IEP and teacher approval will be placed in the supported On Level classes. After reviewing the students' current semester grades/performance, MAP-R and MAP-M scores, teachers will determine proper levels.

MyMCPS Parent Portal –

This school year, MyMCPS Parent Portal replaced Edline as the primary home-to-school communication vehicle for schools to share information regarding Student Emergency Contacts, Grades, Attendance, Scheduling and more. The MyMCPS Parent Portal is live for all parents and students! During the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year, letters were mailed. This letter gave instructions on how to access the Parent Portal with assigned Login Access Codes.

Currently, the Parent Portal is closed for parents to make changes to Student Contact and Emergency/Medical. The Parent Portal will re-open sometime in Spring/Summer of 2021.

Pride Program – Grades 6/7/8:

The Pride Program is an intervention program at Baker Middle School. Students are identified at grade level team meetings for entry into the program. Criteria for identification include, but are not limited to, factors such as attendance, grades, and other academic concerns such as study or organizational skills development. Pride offers academic support and reinforcement of basic skills for the students in the program. In addition, time management, organization, self-management and study strategies are supplemental areas of focus. The program is intended to promote and reinforce those skills necessary for a smooth transition to upper grades and high school.

Reading/Math Intervention Programs:

Reading is an intensive intervention for students who are reading below grade level and have an IEP. MCPS uses the decoding strand combined with comprehension practice. Students take a placement test to determine an appropriate instructional level. This program helps students who have trouble identifying words, who don't understand how the arrangement of letters in a word relates to its pronunciation, and who struggle with reading fluency. Students participate in tightly sequenced, carefully planned lessons that give them the structure and practice necessary to become skilled, fluent readers.

Read 180/Read 180 Flex is an intensive reading intervention program designed to help students make measurable gains in reading achievement. Students are assigned to the course based on a variety of assessments, including MAP-R and teacher recommendation. The program consists of nine different workshops using high-interest non-fiction and fiction texts. The duration of each workshop is a minimum of three weeks. Each workshop provides instruction in reading skills, vocabulary development, writing and grammar skills, and “real-life” functional reading skills.

Math 180 is a math intervention program that will take the place of an elective for students who could benefit from additional math support. Students are assigned to this course based on a variety of assessments including MAP-M and teacher recommendations.

Special Education Programs:

The special education program at Baker Middle School supports the inclusion of students with special needs in the comprehensive school program, to the fullest extent possible in order to meet the individual needs of students identified for special education services. Programs are driven by a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), and classes are selected according to the goals and objectives on the IEP. Teachers then provide the consistent application of instructional methods and adaptations throughout the student's day so that IEP goals and instructional objectives can be met. The optimal learning environment may be the general education classroom, with special education services delivered within that classroom; however, specialized instruction can also be delivered in a more structured setting. Services are also provided by a speech pathologist, occupational therapist and physical therapist. Student services in these areas are provided within the regular education classroom during instruction, in small groups or individual settings. These service providers consult with the school staff in order to identify ways to effectively work with students within their areas of expertise to best support instruction.

ESOL Program:

StudySync is a comprehensive English Language Arts curriculum that is designed for today's learners just like your student. StudySync combines print books with a digital platform for reading and writing. Your student will have their own online digital binder where they will receive their assignments, store their writing, and receive teacher and peer reviews. Each grade level is broken down into 6 Units of study.

Lessons within StudySync are designed to build your students' ability to work both collaboratively and independently. Multimedia such as the StudySync® TV episodes model for your student how to participate in a critical discussion of literature, how to support their viewpoint with text evidence, and how to skillfully use academic vocabulary – all while collaborating with their peers.

StudySync's digital platform ensures equitable access for all students. Lessons can be customized for each learner's needs. Students are supported each step of the way with a variety of scaffolds, with passages in supplemental languages, audio of each text with highlighting to follow along, and slide-in sentence frames to support written responses.

Outdoor and Environmental Education:

As part of the science curriculum, every Grade 6 MCPS student has the opportunity to participate in outdoor and environmental learning through authentic, engaging, and interdisciplinary experiences at the Residential Outdoor and Environmental Education Program. The course of study does the following:

- Provides students with field experiences where scientific processes are used to investigate the environment, and where components of the MCPS Grade 6 curriculum are taught in a real-world setting. Students actively participate in Chesapeake Bay watershed lessons, including stream quality analysis and an in-depth study of predator-prey relationships. Using the natural world as both a laboratory and classroom, literacy and mathematical skills are integrated into the outdoor education experiences.
- Engages students in learning experiences during which they apply classroom knowledge and practice problem-solving strategies.
- Fosters inquiry, collaboration, and thinking in an atmosphere that utilizes various learning modalities and allows for informal and formative assessment.
- Builds positive interpersonal relationships as students learn and practice positive human relations skills with their peers and teachers.
- Encourages students to be active stewards of the environment in their daily life. Students will participate in a MCPS required SSL lesson/project. Upon completion of the SSL project students will receive 10 SSL hours at the end of the quarter. MCPS requires a minimum of 75 SSL hours for graduation.

At the Grade 6 Outdoor and Environmental Education Program, students stay in dormitory-style housing. There is a fee charged for this program, set by the Board of Education, but funds exist for any student who may have difficulty meeting the financial requirements of the program. All students are strongly encouraged to attend the residential outdoor and environmental education experience.

6th Grade Course Descriptions 2020-2021

Mathematics 6

Math 6 extends students' understanding of whole number and fraction concepts developed throughout the elementary grades. Instruction at this level will focus on four areas: (1) connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; and (4) developing understanding of statistical thinking. The content of Math 6 focuses on the Standards for Mathematical Practice to build a climate that engages students in the exploration of mathematics. The Standards for Mathematical Practice are habits of mind applied throughout the course so that students see mathematics as a coherent, useful, and logical subject that makes use of their ability to make sense of problem situations.

Investigations into Mathematics

Investigations into Mathematics (IM) extends students' understanding of mathematical concepts developed in Mathematics 6 and accelerates the pace of instruction to prepare for Algebra 1. This course compacts all of the Grade 7 Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and much of the Grade 8 CCSS into a single year. Students who successfully complete IM are prepared for Algebra 1 in Grade 8. The remaining Grade 8 CCSS are compacted into the Algebra 1 course. Instruction for IM will focus on four critical areas: (1) developing a unified understanding of number, recognizing fractions, decimals (including both those that have a finite or a repeating decimal representation), and percents as different representations of rational numbers; (2) using linear equations and systems of linear equations to represent, analyze, and solve a variety of problems; (3) comparing two data distributions and reasoning about differences between populations; and (4) analyzing geometric relationships in order to solve real-world mathematical problems. IM focuses on the Standards for Mathematical Practice to build a climate that engages students in the exploration of mathematics. The Standards for Mathematical Practice are habits of mind applied throughout the course so that students see mathematics as a coherent, useful, and logical subject that makes use of their ability to make sense of problem situations.

Advanced English 6:

Advanced English 6 for StudySync Schools

This course integrates the five English/language arts processes (reading, writing, listening, speaking, and viewing) and the two contents (language and literature) in a thematic organization of six units. Rigor and challenge are essential components of the instructional approach to English 6, and instruction in reading and writing strategies, grammar, and vocabulary is embedded in every unit. Students read, analyze, and study different genres related to each of the themes and complete required common tasks. The common tasks focus primarily on the writing process for three types of writing—argument, narrative, and informative/explanatory—and they include the use of information, word processing, and presentation technology to address a variety of language skills. Students have opportunities to present their work orally and through various technology tools. All students develop portfolios and revisit their compositions as they work to strengthen their writing skills.

Digital Literacy:

Digital Literacy The Digital Literacy curriculum focuses on developing critical and creative thinking through reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing in a 21st Century approach. Working through a problem-based process, students learn to define real world problems of interest, research the causes of those problems using real-time global texts and then create solutions to address the problems. Students will advance their understanding of comprehension, analysis and evaluation of text as well as vocabulary acquisition through reading complex informational and argumentative texts in a technology-rich medium. Students will collaborate regularly through the research and the solution phases of their investigations. Students' curiosity and motivation will engage the students in their investigations while learning and refining the processes that will enrich all other courses and prepare them for college and career projects.

Historical Inquiries in World Studies 6:

Students learn about the rich cultures and history from the earliest human settlements of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, and China to great civilizations of the year 1000 CE. Students are challenged to analyze archeological evidence, ask questions to further their knowledge, and understand history as an ongoing investigation. They are introduced to historical thinking skills including sourcing, close reading, corroboration, and research as they analyze primary and secondary documents. This course lays a foundation for students to understand key principles of cultural, political, economic and geographic systems both in the past and today.

Historical Inquiry into Global Humanities 6 (2120) (available at all middle schools except for the MSMC, King, Eastern)

This course is built around the core Grade 6 social studies curriculum, Historical Inquiry in World Studies 6, that includes historical content from early civilizations, the empires of Greece and Rome, the dynasties of China, and civilizations of the first millennium. Cohort students will go beyond this core as they learn additional content, explore deeper connections to today, engage in investigative inquiry to strengthen their writing through Document Based Questions, and enhance their learning through relevant literature connections. They will also participate in a culminating Model UN simulation at the end of the year.

Investigations in Science 6 (IS6):

IS6 is a problem/project-based curriculum. Instruction is interwoven around a relevant problem/project to allow a focus for student learning. Students engage in minds-on inquiry and hands-on explorations, productive discourse, and purposeful reading and writing. Units studied in IS6 center around topics related to matter and its interactions, ecosystem dynamics, human impacts on the environment, energy, and waves. Students engage in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) in order to propose solutions to identified problems.

Students are awarded 10 SSL hours at the completion of Grade 6 Science for their full participation in SSL activities.

Dissection is one of the many instructional methods that may be used in middle school science. Students may request one of the teacher's alternatives to dissection in these classes. Alternatives may include such materials as websites, charts, diagrams, and textbook overlays.

Physical Education 6:

Middle school physical education instruction focuses on standards-based content that has been categorized into three measurement topics: health-related fitness, movement skills and concepts, and personal and social responsibility. The learning tasks in physical education emphasize and teach problem-solving and decision-making skills. Middle School student participate in learning tasks that are organized into personal development and tactical games activities. These activities provide opportunities for student to learn specific criteria aligned to each measurement topic. Personal development activities center on creative expression or individual gains through participation in learning tasks. Tactical games activities concentrate on the application of tactics and strategies to the learning tasks.

Health Education Grade 6:

The Health Education 6 course has been updated to reflect the 2014 Montgomery County Public Schools Secondary Health Education Curriculum Framework. In Grade 6, students will receive instruction in the following units: Mental and Emotional Health; Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs; Personal and Consumer Health and Safety and Injury Prevention. * Mental and Emotional Health Unit topics include analyzing influences, accessing information, interpersonal communication, decision making, goal setting, self/stress management, personal wellness, emotions, and advocacy. * Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs Unit topics include benefits of a drug free lifestyle. * Personal and Consumer Health Unit topics include hygiene and health care products. * Safety and Injury Prevention Unit topics include media/technology harassment, cyber bullying, bullying, personal safety (pedestrian and other methods), and first aid and emergency response.

6th Grade Electives 2020-2021:

Students have the opportunity to sign up for one of the following classes in 6th grade. Choosing electives must be done thoughtfully and based on interest. We cannot honor changes after the start of the school year. We base the number of classes we offer on what you choose now.

BAKER MUSIC PROGRAM

MS Chorus 1, (Full Year)

MS Chorus 1 for 6th grade is open to any student who enjoys singing regardless of previous choral singing experience. Students will develop their vocal skills by practicing and performing various choral literature pieces at a beginning level. Emphasis is placed on musicianship skills, ear training, as well as rhythmic and melodic sight reading proficiency. Students perform in concerts for the school and community as well as in festivals as a requirement of this course. Students participating in Chorus are eligible to audition for MCPS Honors Chorus.

MS Band 1 - 6th Grade Band (Full Year)

This class is made up of students with prior band instrument experience. Students without band experience or students who are interested in changing instruments should contact the director before registering. This group gives three or four mandatory evening concerts per year.

Intermediate Ms Orchestra 1 - 6th Grade Orchestra (Full Year)

This class is designed for students who have had previous elementary school experience with a string instrument (violin, viola, cello, or string bass). Students without orchestra experience or students who are interested in changing instruments should contact the director before registering. Several evening performances are a required part of this class.

FINE ARTS ROTATION

Sixth grade students begin their introduction to the arts through a quarterly rotation of nine week courses. The Arts Program is a sequential, general study of the arts designed to expose students to various subject areas. Students selecting this elective option will randomly receive four of the following courses. Course offerings are determined by staffing allocations.

Computer Science Discoveries 1 (Quarter)

Problem Solving and Computing is a highly interactive and collaborative introduction to the field of computer science, as framed within the broader pursuit of solving problems. Students will practice using a problem solving process to address a series of puzzles, challenges, and real world scenarios. Next, they will learn how computers input, output, store, and process information to help humans solve problems. The unit of study concludes with a project in which you design an application that helps solve a problem of your choosing. If time allows, Scratch Programming is introduced.

General Music 6/Keyboarding (Quarter)

This Music class is an extension of the elementary general music curriculum addressing the unique needs, interests, and abilities of the mid-level student. Through sequential and spiral instruction, sixth graders acquire, revisit, and apply the music and aesthetic skills that allow them to become increasingly independent music makers. Instructional activities will include units which will include beginning theory of music, keyboard, as well as an introduction to the World Music Drumming curriculum. Students will also explore the varied styles of popular music, history, and culture.

MS Studio Art 1 (Quarter)

Grade 6 Art introduces students to art materials, creative processes, vocabulary, and art room safety. Students will investigate the arts and crafts of other cultures, identify art careers and begin to apply criteria for recognizing quality in works of art. Materials fee to be determined (not to exceed \$3)

Creative Family and Consumer Sciences -(FACS) (Quarter)

Sixth grade Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) programs focus on processes and skills that enhance individual, family, and societal well-being. Programs reflect the National Standards for FACS Education and integrate math, science, English and social studies along with textiles and foods. An inquiry-based curriculum encourages students to investigate and solve authentic problems.

Materials fee to be determined (not to exceed \$3.75).

MS Theatre 1 (Quarter)

The purpose and goal of this class is to develop effective communication skills. Structured activities will provide opportunities to develop skills in listening, following directions, cooperation, concentration, critical thinking, problem solving and imagination. Students in Theatre classes do the following:

- Recognize and describe the development of a variety of dramatic forms over time and the aesthetic qualities they reflect.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history, traditions, conventions, dramatic texts and other literature of the theatre, and how diverse theories and theatre forms satisfy cultural needs—past and present.
- Explore the creative process through theatrical activities and to apply theatrical knowledge, principles, and practices to collaborative theatre presentations.
- Identify, analyze, and apply criteria for individual and group contributions to the collaborative theatre process, dramatic texts and other literature of the theatre, and theatrical performances and productions.

****Keep in mind, the following courses are High School credited classes in which good study skills are essential. These courses will take the place of the Digital Literacy course for 6th graders.**

Full Year Spanish 1A:

Students selecting will need to meet the following criteria as a minimum.

- This class is for students who have a minimum 1230 Lexile score on Fall MAP-R.
- This class is not recommended for Spanish Native Speakers.
- As and Bs in 5th Grade Reading.
- The Level 1A emphasis is on vocabulary development and conversations through simple grammatical structures taught as a means to understand the language and produce meaningful utterances. The next course in the sequence is Full Year Level 1B to be taken in grade 7.

(Disclaimer: a minimum of 20 students need to register, in order for the class to open)

Full Year French 1A:

Students selecting this must meet the following criteria as a minimum.

- This class is for students who have a minimum 1230 Lexile score on Fall MAP-R.
- As and Bs in 5th Grade Reading.
- The Level 1A emphasis is on vocabulary development and conversations through simple grammatical structures taught as a means to understand the language and produce meaningful utterances. The next course in the sequence is Full Year Level 1B to be taken in grade 7.

(Disclaimer: a minimum of 20 students need to register, in order for the class to open)