

# 6<sup>TH</sup> Grade Course Description Booklet 2020



**Silver Creek Middle School**  
**3701 Saul Rd.**  
**Kensington, MD 20895**  
**Main Number: 240-740-2200**



**Course Offerings Booklet  
2019 – 2020  
Welcome to Sixth Grade**

## **Registration**

Building upon the knowledge and skills acquired in previous years, students are encouraged to pursue a rigorous program of studies based on their individual interests and abilities. The **2020-2021** Course Description Booklet contains information on the instructional program that will be offered. It is designed to be a guide for parents and students as they register for the next year.

The Course Description Booklet contains a complete listing of courses available, information on academic grouping and student placement criteria, descriptions for courses offered, and any specific course requirements. Some classes may require nominal laboratory, project, or materials fees. Please note: the classes offered next fall for **ELECTIVE COURSE OFFERINGS** are determined during the summer and **are based on student enrollment and staffing availability**.

Parents and students should give special attention to the selection of courses during registration. **The master schedule of classes and the allocation of staff is based on your initial registration. After the registration period, schedule changes will be made in exceptional cases only.** Requests for changes by a student or parent must be for educationally sound reasons and submitted in writing. A parent/ counselor/ team meeting will then be scheduled to discuss the request. Course selections must be done with great care and preplanning.

# Course Descriptions

## ~ Mathematics ~

**Mathematics 6 (301600)** :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. Through this course, students will do the following: • Reason about multiplication and division to solve ratio and rate problems about quantities. • Use the meaning of fractions, the meanings of multiplication and division, and the relationship between multiplication and division to understand and explain why the procedures for dividing fractions make sense. • Understand the use of variables in mathematical expressions. • Build on and reinforce the understanding of number, to develop the ability to think statistically. • Reason about relationships among shapes to determine area, surface area, and volume.

**Applied Investigation in Math 6: (Applied IM) (300600)** Applied IM extends students' understanding of mathematical concepts aligned with Common Core State Standards (CCSS), accelerating the pace of instruction while diving deeper into concepts at an equal level of intensity. This course compacts all of the Grade 7 Common Core State Standards and much of the Grade 8 Common Core State Standards into a single year. However, this is much more than an accelerated mathematics course as the program offers access to many academic competitions and the opportunity to conduct fieldwork. Students work with an academic cohort to conduct independent inquiries using mathematics computer science, and the scientific process to solve real-world problems



## ~ Language Arts: English, Reading, & ESOL ~

### **Advanced English 6**

Students in Advanced English 6 will use the StudySync curriculum. 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. Lessons within StudySync are designed to build your students' ability to work both collaboratively and independently. StudySync's digital platform ensures equitable access for all students.

Unit 1 Testing Our Limits, focuses on fiction.

Unit 2 You and Me, focuses on poetry.

Unit 3 In the Dark, focuses on fiction and informational text.

Unit 4 Personal Best, focuses on argumentative text.

Unit 5 Making Your Mark, focuses on fiction and nonfiction.

Unit 6 True to Yourself, focuses on realistic fiction.



### **Digital Literacy 1**

The Digital Literacy 1 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 both 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.

## Middle School Reading Intervention Courses

Silver Creek Middle School is committed to improving the reading ability of all students. Reading is the most basic skill that adolescents need to develop for success in school and in preparation for life. Reading interventions support and improve the performance of students who are reading below the proficient level. Students are placed into a reading course based on data and recommendations.



### **Basic Reading**

This course is for students reading several grades below \_\_\_\_\_ grade level who need to focus on phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, and encoding. Basic Reading provides systematic instruction through a standardized reading intervention that addresses the needs of struggling readers through differentiated instruction needed to help students become college and career ready. The reading program, System 44, helps students master the foundational reading skills as well as providing explicit instruction in comprehension and writing and a personalized learning progression driven by technology. Students participate in small group rotations of teacher-led instruction, independent reading with leveled books, and daily practice on the adaptive computer program.

### **READ 180**

Read 180 is an intensive reading intervention program designed to meet the needs of students whose reading achievement is below the proficient level. The program directly addresses individual needs through adaptive and instructional software, high-interest literature, and direct instruction in reading and writing skills. Students rotate between a small-group, teacher-directed lesson, a computer station for reinforcement and practice, and an independent reading center where students read books at his/her reading level. This course requires two class periods and provides approximately 90 minutes of instruction. The program is designed to rapidly accelerate student achievement, with the goal of bringing them to grade level. READ 180 (Single Period)

### **MS Academic Literacy**

This course is for students who are reading below grade level and need to work on the critical areas of literacy - decoding, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing. Through direct, systematic instruction, in a standardized reading intervention, students use informational text to practice decoding skills, increase their fluency, and focus on vocabulary, comprehension, and writing. Students follow a consistent routine which allows them to prepare for reading by practicing decoding skills on multisyllabic words. Students increase their knowledge of Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary words, which helps to increase their background knowledge. They develop close reading skills and enhance their critical thinking skills. This program teaches students to restate questions and include key vocabulary in short answers. It also teaches them to plan and then write a paragraph which include evidence from text to support a claim. The lessons are all taught for mastery with the intention of bringing students up to grade-level.

## **Basic Reading**

This course is for students reading far below grade level, who need to focus on phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, and encoding. Basic Reading provides explicit and systematic instruction in a standardized reading intervention. The program used is aligned with the foundational reading skills in the Common Core State Standards. Students participate in small groups that follow a consistent routine which provides repeated practice and immediate corrective feedback. Students are assessed prior to the start of the program to determine which of the three levels they place into. Each level has its own unique focus, with the higher books incorporating skills from the lower books. Lessons are taught to mastery.





## **English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)**

The goal of the ESOL program is to have English language learners (ELLs) develop proficiency in the academic English needed to be successful in school, college, the work place, and as citizens.

### **Level 1**

This course is designed to teach English as a new language to *Entering* ESOL students. The four skill areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking are integrated as they practice oral and written language in an academic context. Students have various learning activities that emphasize vocabulary development and oral fluency. This course meets for a double period every day.

### **Level 2**

This course is designed to teach English as a new language to *Emerging* ESOL students. Students continue to develop proficiency in four skill areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking and are integrated as they practice oral and written language in a variety of academic contexts. Learning experiences are provided to support students as they read informational and literary texts. Students also learn to respond to factual questions and write paragraph summaries about their readings. This course meets for a double period every day.

### **Level 3**

This course is designed to teach English as a new language to *Developing* ESOL students. The four skill areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking are integrated as students practice oral and written language in an academic context. Students at this level of language proficiency understand basic vocabulary dealing with everyday home and school life. Students learn to analyze reading passages and respond to both factual and inferential questions as they read and discuss both literary and informational texts. Students practice speaking fluency, applying editing skills to their writing, and composing different types of paragraphs using grammatical structures that have been taught. This course meets for a single period every day.

### **Level 4**

This course is designed to teach English as a new language to *Expanding* ESOL students. The four skill areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking are integrated as students practice applying language using a variety of academic functions, academic vocabulary, and grammatical structures in context, both orally and in writing, for a variety of academic purposes in discourse. Students practice using various reading strategies while reading a variety of literary and informational texts. Students practice writing single-text and multiple paragraph essays. In this course, they review known text structures (problem and solution, sequence, main idea and detail, comparison and contrast); study text structure as a guide to increased comprehension; and focus on cause and effect as a structure. Students study poetry, its elements, and its interpretation as they read, analyze, and respond to poetry. They discuss and write comparisons of related ideas in two forms— poetry and prose. This course meets for a single period every day.



## ~ Science ~

### Investigations in Science 6

Welcome to Investigations in Science for 6<sup>th</sup> Graders. This curriculum is a unique problem/project based curriculum. The learning is student-centered with the teacher acting as a facilitator. Instruction is woven around one main problem within each unit of study, and students will be presented a request for proposal (RFP) at the start of each unit. Minds-on inquiry and hands on explorations, productive discourse, purposeful reading and meaningful writing will guide the students through this exciting Science course! Students engage in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) in order to propose solutions to real world problems. They will then use a design-folio throughout the quarter to research, develop, design and evaluate their proposal.

### Units of Study

Unit	Title	Content Focus
1	Matter and Its Interactions 	Students will discover that all matter is made of atoms, that there are different types of atoms called elements, and that elements can be combined in various ways to make compounds that range in size from two to thousands of atoms. They will identify states of matter and phase changes that occur as a result of gaining or losing energy. They will explore simple chemical reactions and determine what happens to the chemical reactants and the products they create. All of this information will be collected in their design folios. They will apply their understanding of chemistry to a real-life situation and design a solution.
2	Ecosystems Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics 	Students will discover the many factors that affect ecosystems. They will learn that organisms compete for limited resources. They will explore the biodiversity of different ecosystems. They will use models to demonstrate the flow of matter and energy in ecosystems. They will use this information to create and maintain a habitat for a local species.
3	Human Impacts on the Environment  GO GREEN	Students will discover that natural resources are used by living things in a variety of ways. They will investigate how human activity and resource use impacts the geosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, and biosphere. They will model a solution for a variety of environmental problems created from natural resource use.
4	Energy and Waves 	Students will discover how alternative energy sources can be used to solve real world problems and design a solution. They must consider the ideas of electricity, magnetism, electrical energy production, conversions of different types of energy, in order to debate and choose the best source of alternative energy. Students will discover that electrical current moving through a wire produces a magnetic force on materials placed near the wire. They will also investigate electrical energy and conclude it can be generated from a variety of sources and transferred into almost any form of energy. They will identify that waves are able to transfer energy from one place to another, wave properties, and wave behavior.

## ~ Social Studies ~

### Historical Inquiry in World Studies 6

In Grade 6 students engage in the study of the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Athens, Rome and China. As part of this, students study how geography, economics, political structures and culture have influenced human settlement. Students are introduced to basic historical thinking skills including analysis of primary source texts and visuals which allows students to engage in inquiry based discourse to develop a deeper understanding of historical context over time. Students are also introduced to the use of Document Based Inquiry (DBI) to develop historical writing.

#### Unit 1: Patterns of Settlement in the Ancient & Modern Worlds

- Water and the World
- Rivers of Time
- The Roots of Civilization
- The Wheel of Civilization
- Research: The Egyptian Civilization Project



#### Unit 2: The Impact of Economics in Ancient and Modern China

- Foundations of Economics
- A Mandate to Rule
- Dig Deeper: Patterns in Ancient China
- Modern China: To Market, To Market

#### Unit 3: Citizenship and Governance in Classical & Modern Times

- Government How it Works
- Greece: The Birthplace of Democracy
- Rome Builds a Republic
- Roman Empire: New Patterns of Governance

#### Unit 4: Cultural Systems: The First Millennium and Today

- What is Culture?
- Religion: A Foundation of Culture
- Culture in the First Millennium
- Data Research: Culture Changes in the Second Millennium

### Historical Inquiry into Global Humanities 6

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.

**Note:** Student performance data will be used to determine placement in this course (CogAT, PARCC, MAP-R Growth). Once winter testing is complete and further direction is provided by the MCPS Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs, student data will be analyzed to determine placement. Letters will be sent home informing students and parents of the recommendation to participate in this new course.

## ~ Physical Education ~

The middle school physical education program focuses on health-related fitness, movement skills and concepts, and personal and social responsibility. Each physical education unit challenges students to better understand the benefits of physical activity toward fitness, fundamentals of efficient movement in physical activity and sport, and the essentials of responsibility in a movement setting. The learning tasks in physical education emphasize and teach problem-solving and decision-making skills. Students participate in games and activities that promote fitness, develop tactical awareness, and indoctrinate social qualities.

By the end of Grade 6, students should know and be able to do the following:

### ■ Health-related fitness:

- Define and compare the health-related fitness components, including aerobic capacity/cardiorespiratory fitness, muscular strength, muscular endurance, and flexibility.
- Define the exercise principles of overload, specificity, and progression.
- Develop a personal fitness plan using the Frequency, Intensity, Time, and Type (F.I.T.T.) formula.
- Define and calculate target heart rate.

### ■ Movement Skills and Concepts

- Perform fundamental movement skills essential to physical activity and sport.
- Demonstrate creative skill combinations, such as tumbling sequences and dances.
- Create a personal movement (practice) plan.

### ■ Personal and Social Responsibility

- Perform tasks effectively with others in physical activity settings.
- Acquire and maintain relationships that develop a sense of community in physical activity settings.
- Establish and modify personal goals.



## ~ Health Education ~

Comprehensive Health Education promotes positive health-related attitudes and behaviors that support self-reliance and self-regulation while developing health literacy and lifelong wellness. The health skills emphasized throughout the program include analyzing influences, accessing information, interpersonal communication, decision-making, goal-setting, self-management, and advocacy. This nine-week course includes the following four units of instruction: mental and emotional health; alcohol, tobacco and other drugs; personal and consumer health; and safety and injury prevention.



## ~ World Languages ~

The goal of the world languages program in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is to prepare students to be linguistically and culturally competent in languages other than English. The ability to communicate in a culturally appropriate manner with speakers of other languages is the key to success in the increasingly diverse global community of the 21st century. As students develop proficiency in world languages and an understanding of the underlying values and beliefs of other cultures, they gain the skills that are essential to meaningful communication.

All world languages courses are **designated high school level courses**. Students are required to take quarterly assessment to determine their progress in speaking, reading, and writing in the target language they are studying. World language grades earned at Silver Creek Middle School will appear on student's high school transcript.

Students begin to learn to communicate orally and in written form about daily life. Emphasis is on vocabulary development, simple grammatical structures, and the basic culture of the people. Students are encouraged to use the language beyond the school setting and keep informed of current events in countries where the target language is spoken. **Only those students not recommended for a reading course are eligible to enroll in a world language.**

### Level 1A/B (Full Year Course)

#### Spanish or French

This is a high school credit-bearing course. Students begin to learn to communicate orally and in writing in a culturally appropriate manner about topics related to daily life. They interpret basic information when listening and reading. Vocabulary and basic grammatical structures are taught within the context of these familiar topics. Culture is embedded throughout the course. Students who successfully complete both semesters of 1A/1B earn one foreign language credit toward graduation.

### Level 2A/B (Full Year Course)

#### Spanish or French

This is a high school credit-bearing course. Students expand their ability to communicate orally and in writing in a culturally appropriate manner about topics related to daily life. They interpret information when listening and reading. Vocabulary and grammatical structures are taught within the context of these topics. Culture is embedded throughout the course. Students who successfully complete both semesters of 1A/1B earn one foreign language credit toward graduation.

**\*\*Students who are native speakers of French, Chinese, or Spanish, or students who have received comprehensive instruction in one of those languages, may request a placement exam to bypass the initial level of a language course. On your registration card, place a check mark in the box where it says "Request Language placement test".**

## ~ Art/Music/Technology Electives~

*The school reserves the right to change elective courses as staffing and enrollment needs require.*

### Music

#### **MS Chorus 1 (Full year course)**

Students will create, perform, and respond to music in a variety of styles/genres. Students will develop the fundamentals of proper vocal technique and choral singing in relation to posture, breath control, tone, intonation, diction, blending, singing in harmony, music literacy, and sight-singing. **Students will primarily sing state level 2 music.** There will likely be a minimum of two school concerts and students are expected to participate in all performances. This course is open to all students, regardless of music background.



#### **Middle School Band I /Orchestra I (Full year course)**

Students refine skills learned from their elementary Grade 4 and 5 instrumental music programs or in Middle School Beginning Band, String, or Wind and Percussion, and develop more advanced performance techniques. The development of technical skills necessary to perform Grade 1 to Grade 2 Level music is stressed.



Emphasis is placed on developing formal rehearsal decorum, following a conductor, and developing pitch and rhythmic security in preparation for performing an independent part in the traditional band or orchestra ensemble. Students also learn melodic form and construction as they examine and perform more complex folk melodies and melodies from master composers. Students discuss the social and intellectual influences that affected the creation of the music they are studying. They begin to develop aesthetic criteria for measuring the quality of instrumental performance. Students may attend live performances and perform in public.

*Prerequisite: Attainment of outcomes for Beginning Band, String, or Wind/Percussion Instruments in Grades 4–5 or 6–8.*

## Technology and Art

### **Coding and Robotic Design (Paired with an art class)**

In this technology course, students will learn about coding, game development, robotics, design and engineering.



### **Middle School Studio Art 1 (Semester course paired with Coding and Robotic Design)**

Students will explore a variety of traditional student media and techniques including drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, and crafts to create artworks. These units require students to express personal identity, make aesthetic choices, and initiate social action. Students will continue to build their visual literacy and design skills by using the art elements and design principles to analyze the environment and artworks.

### **Middle School Digital Art & Photography 1 (Semester course paired with Coding and Robotic Design)**

This course will provide students with active learning experiences related to computer animations and the use of animation software applications. The animations that the students create will be applied to a web page they design using HTML coding. Students will utilize raster-based digital media and/or digital photography to create artworks



## **~Additional Courses~**

**Alternative 1** – *Placement is determined by individual need in consultation with student's grade level administrator, counselor, and teachers.*

The vision of Alternative 1 is to provide students with the skills necessary to achieve excellence in all areas of their personal and educational development, including attendance, behavior and academics. Alternative 1 provides a comprehensive program to meet the needs of the student in a secure emotional and physical environment, where each individual is treated with fairness, dignity, and respect. Students develop short and long term goals and learn to recognize the connection between their efforts in the present and their opportunities in the future.

## ~ Special Education ~



**Resource Class** - *Placement is determined by individual academic needs in consultation with student's grade level administrator, counselor, and teachers or IEP team as appropriate.*

Students who need intensive support keeping up with grade level work may be recommended to take a resource class. The purpose of the class is to help students to develop and improve education skills such as organization, study skills, and test taking strategies.

### **Placement determined by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team.**

The Special Education Department services students who are identified with an educationally related disability. Services are provided based on the IEP for each student. The main focus is to use the curriculum for each grade and subject to address goals and objectives. Classes are offered as a continuum of services including self-contained and inclusion classes. A variety of strategies and accommodations are incorporated into the program.

### **Learning and Academic Disabilities Program (LAD)**

The Learning and Academic Disabilities (LAD) program serves students who qualify for Special Education services for a variety of reasons including, Specific Learning Disabilities, Speech Language Impairments, or Other Health Impairments. Students in the program receive support in the setting that best meets their academic needs, including self-contained and/or inclusion classes. Special Education staff is trained in strategy based teaching and focus on incorporating the strategies as the students access the general education curriculum.