

Berkshire Middle School  
Sixth Grade Course Catalog  
2023-2024



21707 West Fourteen Mile Road  
Beverly Hills, MI 48025

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# 2023 - 2024 Course Descriptions- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

## **REQUIRED COURSES**

*All required courses will be held daily all year, except the Encore Rotation.*

### **Social Studies**

Social Studies is the integrated study of the social sciences (history; geography; civics; economics). Topics of study include: Civilizations of the Ancient World, World Religions, The Middle East, Africa, Asia, Greece and Rome. Current events will be incorporated naturally as a way to connect present issues to the past.

### **Language Arts**

Sixth Grade English Language Arts is the integrated study of reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing skills. Students will increase their ability to analyze and synthesize information, increase their independent reading and become more proficient at writing independently.

### **Science**

Students will have the opportunity to experience introductory units on the particle nature of matter in chemistry, water's role in Earth's changes, organisms and ecosystems, as well as light and energy. While actively investigating these concepts, students will engage in the behaviors of scientists by building models and constructing explanations about their experiences.

### **Mathematics**

This program is a broad, concept-driven curriculum that reflects the full breadth of relevant mathematics in our society with connections to real life and its interrelationships with technology. The program is built on five overall goals for students:

- Learning to value mathematics
- Becoming confident in their ability
- Becoming a mathematical problem solver
- Learning to communicate mathematically
- Learning to reason mathematically

The sixth grade curriculum will expand students' knowledge of numbers, computation, estimation, measurement, geometry, fractions, patterns and functions, and the fundamental concepts of algebra.

### **Encore Rotation-{each course will be held daily for 10 weeks}**

All students will take 10 weeks of:

- Art
- Skills for Living
- Physical Education
- Engineering Technology

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## **ELECTIVE COURSES**

*All elective courses will be held all year, every other day.*

### **World Language (Spanish-1A, French-1A, or Chinese-1A)**

Students have the opportunity to learn a world language during their sixth, seventh and eighth grade years. In order to study a world language at the seventh and eighth grade levels, students are required to take that same language in the sixth grade. Depending on their area of interest, sixth graders may continue learning Spanish or they may select beginning French or beginning Chinese. Sixth grade languages will concentrate on cultural awareness and the basics of speaking, reading, listening and writing of their selected language. Studying a world language in grades six through eight is important for students who plan to benefit from taking an AP language course in high school.

### **Physical Education**

Sixth grade students will spend time developing and improving upon previously learned skills in lifetime sports such as flag football, speedball, swimming, ultimate Frisbee, softball, volleyball, soccer, floor hockey, bowling (bowling field trip), and basketball. Throughout the course, sixth graders will be exposed to numerous, creative, and fun team-building activities such as: "Hot Lava," "Build the Dome," and "Survivor". A variety of fun filled fitness activities are also incorporated throughout the year.

### **Reading Enrichment**

Reading Enrichment is for students reading above grade level. The purpose of this course is to give upper and advanced students a challenging reading program. This class is an extension of the curriculum with emphasis on reading comprehension, research skills and critical thinking while incorporating 21<sup>st</sup> century learning and technology.

### **Music Options**

#### **Band**

This class is available for sixth grade students who have 0 – 1 year of experience playing a band instrument. Band is a fun and engaging class where students will learn about and refine the foundations of music performance. Students will have the opportunity to perform at both the Winter and Spring Concert. **Daily practice is expected and attendance is required at all performances.** Students with no experience on a band instrument are strongly encouraged to take band and can email Mr. Smith if they have any questions at [ssmith2@birmingham.k12.mi.us](mailto:ssmith2@birmingham.k12.mi.us)

#### **Orchestra**

Sixth Grade Orchestra is open to all students. **Playing in orchestra promotes critical thinking, creativity, teamwork and discipline while learning about and enjoying music!** Students will participate in approximately four (2) performance opportunities throughout the year. **Class requirements include: averaging fifteen (15) minutes of practice daily, some written assignments, bi-weekly playing tests, and attendance at all performances.** If you enjoy music, this class is for you! Any student that wishes to join the orchestra and has no previous experience is welcome!

#### **Choir**

This beginning choir is open to all students; previous elementary school choir experience is not required. This choir prepares students for the 7<sup>th</sup> grade and 8<sup>th</sup> grade choir programs. A wide variety of music including world, classical, pop and Broadway will be studied. Participation in the MSVMA Choral Festival (as a group) is required at this level. There will be a moderate performance schedule with two concerts during the year. **Attendance is required at all choir performances.** There may be a field trip to the Michigan Opera Theatre or a Broadway in Detroit performance.

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### **COURSES RECOMMENDED BY TEACHERS**

#### **Literacy (semester, every day or all year, every other day)**

Literacy provides an opportunity for students to learn and practice reading strategies through teacher modeling, cooperative learning, and independent practice. In this strategy-based course, students will benefit from this additional practice by using reading strategies for comprehension, decoding, and fluency when reading fiction and non-fiction text. **Elementary Instructional Specialist/Reading Specialist recommendation is required.**

#### **Math Lab (all year, every day or all year, every other day)**

Math Lab is taken in conjunction with College Prep Math (two math classes per day). This class is designed to support and pre-teach concepts and skills that are being taught in the college prep class. **Fifth grade teacher recommendation is required.**

#### **Language Arts for Emerging Bilinguals A (all year every day)**

Language Arts for Emerging Bilinguals A is a class for newcomers to the U.S. Students learn English in the four domains: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students learn interpersonal communication skills and begin developing the academic language needed to be successful in their content area classes. This class is based on English level rather than grade level, and students may be in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

#### **Language Arts for Emerging Bilinguals B (all year every day)**

Language Arts for Emerging Bilinguals B is a language arts class that is aligned with the BPS language arts curriculum, with modifications to meet the needs of English language learners. Students work on the same reading and writing strategies, genres, literary analysis, and themes and skills as their native English-speaking classmates. The goal of this class is to help students develop increased fluency in their reading and to read increasingly difficult texts in English for multiple purposes. This class focuses on the application of multiple reading strategies in a variety of genres, the continued learning of high-frequency vocabulary, note-taking in academic settings and further development of listening and speaking skills. Students develop increased skill in the use of more complex grammatical conventions, such as identification of all parts of speech, singular and plural nouns, verb usage in past, present and future, subject-verb agreement, and compound and complex sentences. Writing skills are developed from the paragraph to the essay level using various organizational patterns. Students increase their proficiency in the use of multimedia as tools for language development. This class is based on English level rather than grade level, and students may be in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

#### **Language Arts for Emerging Bilinguals C (all year every day)**

Language Arts for Emerging Bilinguals C is aligned with the BPS language arts curriculum, with modifications to meet the needs of English language learners. Students work on the same reading and writing strategies, genres, literary analysis, and themes and skills as their native English-speaking classmates. The goal of this class is to help students develop increased fluency in their reading and to read increasingly difficult texts in English for multiple purposes. This class focuses on the application of multiple reading strategies in a variety of genres, particularly with a focus on their ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information and increase their independent reading. Furthermore, students continue to develop their mastery of academic vocabulary, note-taking in academic settings and more extensive listening and speaking skills. Students develop increased skill in the use of complex grammatical conventions, such as more sophisticated verb usage, comparatives and superlatives, prepositions, dependent and independent clauses, and compound and complex sentences. Writing skills are developed at the five-paragraph essay level using various organizational patterns. Students increase their proficiency in the use of multimedia as tools for language development. This class is based on English level rather than grade level, and students may be in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

#### **Language Arts for Emerging Bilinguals (LAEB) Tutorial (all year every day)**

Language Arts for Emerging Bilinguals (LAEB) Tutorial is an elective offered to English language learners in ESL A, B, or C. In this class, students receive help with their content area classes such as science, social studies, math, and language arts. The staff works in conjunction with the mainstream teachers to provide additional support. Tutorial may also be used for more instruction in the English language or in American culture.