



6TH GRADE ORIENTATION

June 2024-

A MESSAGE FROM THE NURSE

Students entering the 6th grade are required by the state of NJ to submit up to date immunizations (Meningitis and Tetanus) prior to attending in September. Any questions please contact the nurse at Ptrava@mpsnj.org

If anyone has the shots already you can submit now and you will be taken off of 'the list'.

Agenda:

1:1 Chromebooks-

- What Parents need to know

6th Grade Program -

- Departmentalization
 - Electives
 - Marking Period Specials Classes
 - Online Gradebook
 - Mentor Program
 - Expectations for a Successful Year
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6th grade chromebooks:

All students in 6th grade get a chromebook to bring back and forth from Home to School - **no cost to students**. (Your child actually has already been allowed to do this as 5th graders.)



Student Expectations and Responsibilities

- Students bring their Chromebook to School **CHARGED** every single day.
 - If constantly not charged we will keep the Chromebook in school.
 - Students travel with their chromebook in the **provided case**.
 - **This is a district computer and should be treated as such.** It is to support our students educational program.
 - IMPORTANT: Students should use the chromebook in a manner that supports the signed acceptable use form. **Students are monitored through our security software to the best of our ability.** They are accountable for what they do on the computer in school and at home. (**We did not buy the Chromebooks so students can play games on them or search funny pictures.**)
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The most important thing you can do as a parent with not just chromebooks, but all your child's technology . . .

Check what your children are doing on the internet: (I have a 17, 14 and 10 year old in my house)

- What messages or e-mails are they sending?
- What sites are they looking at? (**Internet History**)
- Do they have social media profiles?
- If so what information is on them, who are they talking to?



The Big Question - What if the Chromebook breaks?



Normal Break (accidental damage/normal wear and tear)

- Student brings chromebook to the tech office and they will be given a loaner chromebook until theirs is repaired.
- Our Warranty through the school covers this type of repair.

Non-Accidental Break:

- Student purposefully breaks a chromebook or is negligent in the treatment of a chromebook
- They (student and parents) will be charged the cost of repair.

Lost or Stolen?

LOST

Lost Chromebooks are the responsibility of the student, just like a lost textbook.



STOLEN

If stolen a police report must be filed and a copy of the report must be provided to the school.

Unfortunately the student is responsible for replacement

We can lock and track stolen Chromebooks

Questions About 1:1



Class of 2024

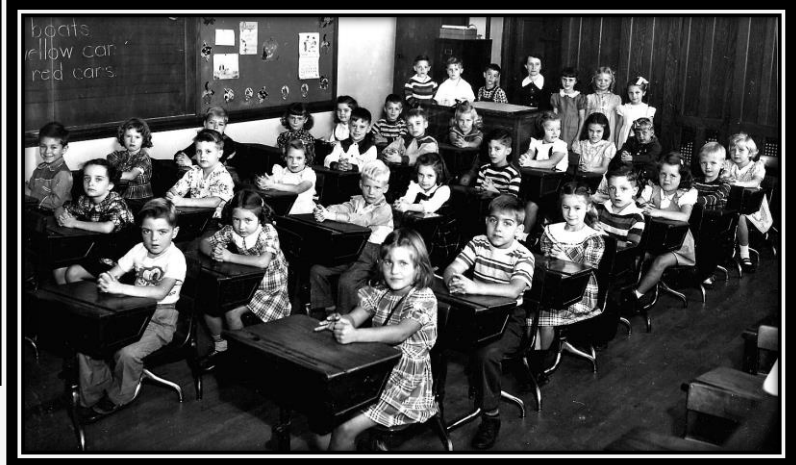
Always learning from the year before



We learned a lot this year and are adjusting:

- 6th Grade Philosophy
- Changes to the Schedule
- Accountability
- Parents role
- Questions

Room 201 in Highland



6th Grade is a big change Academically and Socially

That is why we have this orientation

Shifting from 5th to 6th:

- **Developmentally-** Continued shift from concrete to abstract thinking. (ex. start understanding sarcasm). Students also desire more independence and autonomy in their social life and their learning.
 - **Academically-** 6th Grade is not considered elementary school
 - K-5, 6-8, 9-12 models of education are still the most prevalent.
 - State testing grouped by grade bands and development : 3, 4-5, 6-8, 9-12
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What are we trying to do here?

- ❑ **First and foremost** -- we want students to be good people and healthy.
 - ❑ We want students to be able to compete academically with their peers from the surrounding area.
 - ❑ We want to prepare students for the changes that are going to take place academically and socially so it is a smoother transition to the Jr./Sr. High School.
 - ❑ We want the schedule, academic expectations, and opportunities to cultivate an appropriate 6th grade experience for our students.
 - ❑ None of this means it will be easy all the time.
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What students will see next year:

- ❑ **Departmentalized Schedule**- ensures curriculum is being met across all core subjects- Science, Social Studies, ELA, Math (More content less time) 45 minute periods, with some rotating blocks worked in.
- ❑ **Classes Redistributed**- Students do not stay with the same cohort all day.
 - ❑ *We redistribute for Specials & Electives (no more walking with teachers = more independence, but more responsibility)*
 - ❑ *Will have different friends in their class (please no friend requests)*
- ❑ **Lockers**- 1 full size locker with a lock
- ❑ **Honor Roll and Principals List**: Academic recognition
- ❑ **Marking Period Classes**-
 - ❑ To cut down on course work each marking period students have rotating marking period classes.
 - ❑ Music, Health, Gym and French are full year (once per week)
 - ❑ Health, Interactive Media, Art, and Computers are ¼ classes (have them 4x per week for 1 MP)
 - ❑ *Electives are five days a week for a marking period.*

Electives:

- Each elective is 1 Marking period ($\frac{1}{4}$ year) -
 - Students will get a choice between 8 -10 electives. They will get 4 on their schedule.
 - *Problem Based Learning, Writers Workshop, Creative Math, Personal Finance and Business, STEAM (Science, Tec, Engineering, Art, Math), Video Editing (Morning Show), Robotics, Fundamentals of Math, Theatre, Fundamentals of ELA, Simple Wood Working, Work habits, (Music Appreciation is being written and approved)*
 - Students will choose 2-3 and then the teachers and I will choose 1-2.
 - Sometimes, if a student needs it, we choose a class for them; i.e work habits
 - Electives empower students in their learning.
 - Students will choose courses via Google Form survey to be e-mailed TO THE PARENTS. Students will log in with their account and choose electives.
 - There is a deadline, it takes about 3 full days to place electives. Those who do not choose an elective will be simply placed into electives by the school. (Email on or about June 12th)
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Different things students will see next year (cont.)

Student Support Period:

- 2x per week – Extra Help, HW, Make-up time, and SEL. (always trying new things with this)
- Student Services; speech, enrichment, etc (as to not interfere with academic classes)

Interactive Media- Students create their own music (produce Music), Podcasts, etc.

Mentoring Program-

- I may need your help with this-- very important.
- CTC Mentoring Program (12 students)

Technology-

- Student Access to PowerSchool Portal - On-line gradebook : <http://highland.mpsnj.org/>
 - Google Apps for Education - Teacher classrooms (already doing this in 5th grade)
 - HW On line: <https://classroom.google.com/c/NjlxMjl1MTI1MDU4>
 - 6th Grade Clubs: Math, Science, **Yearbook**, Pen Pal Club, Musical, Stage Crew, Art Club, Student Council, Ball Room Dancing, Digital Photography, Intramurals, Newspaper, Literary Magazine, Penpal, (fitness club (Spring) are all for the 6th grade.
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Grade 7 Honors

- Grade 6 students, depending on how they do academically next year, will have an opportunity to take Middle School Honors courses for grade 7 ELA and Math.
 - Students are measured based on a number of criterion; grades (5th and 6th), entrance exam scores, NJSLA scores, teacher recommendations, motivation, etc.
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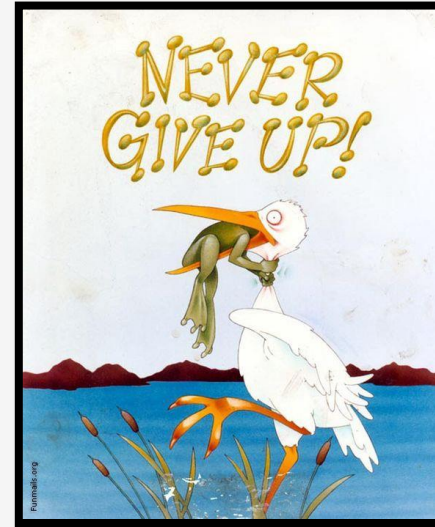


What we would like parents to understand about 6th grade:

- ❑ This is a perfect time for students to make mistakes - let them learn now, rather than in High School when habits are hard to change. We can't fix everything for them. As young men and women must take accountability for themselves.
- ❑ **Organization is more than half the battle - hand in work, prioritize assignments, don't procrastinate and just do the work.**
- ❑ Team Meetings: Our teachers have team meetings 2-3 times per week to discuss students and compare notes.
 - ❑ If you feel you need a meeting, or the teachers feel a meeting is needed, meetings can be set up during these common planning times.
- ❑ **Absences and Tardies do affect grades**- classroom instruction directly from the teacher is extremely important.

What we would like parents to understand...

- ❑ Online Gradebook is a Powerful tool (can be good and bad)
 - ❑ Give independence until you cannot give independence anymore.
 - ❑ Log into gradebook with your children 1x per week and go over assignments.
- ❑ Know your children's passwords-- we monitor them, but you would rather get to them before we do.
- ❑ If there is an issue academically:
 - ❑ *Student goes to teacher*
 - ❑ *Student can go to guidance*
 - ❑ *Parent contacts teacher*
 - ❑ *Parent contacts Principal*



Accountability: What we would like parents to know

- ❑ Some things about school do not change:
 - ❑ Students must do HW. (much less than what it used to be as philosophies changed).
 - ❑ HW also builds responsibility (They can print out in Media Center from home)
 - ❑ Students must study and hand in assignments.
 - ❑ Students must listen to the teacher and try.
- ❑ Students will get detention if they do not behave ([Code of Conduct](#))
- ❑ They are held to a higher standard now -
- ❑ Students may lose privileges at the end of the year (Promotion, Dance, Field Trips, Bar B Q, etc) - THIS IS THE LAST THING WE WANT TO DO, BUT IT IS NOT FAIR TO THOSE STUDENTS WHO WORK HARD & DO THEIR JOB.
 - ❑ Failing subjects for the year (**THERE IS A SUMMER SCHOOL NOW**)
 - ❑ Attendance issues/Tardy Issues
 - ❑ Behavioral Issues

End of Year Activities: Dance, YMCA Trip, Liberty Science Center, Field Day, Yearbook and yearbook signing, Bar B Q, Clap Out, Promotion.

What we would like parents to know:

- ❑ 6th grade is harder, but it is not anything that has not been done prior to this group of kids.
- ❑ 6th grade team will push your child: they have high, but realistic expectations:
 - ❑ EOY AVG's 22-23- Math-85%, Science-87%, S.S.-81%, ELA-83%
 - ❑ All 4 teachers have different personalities
 - ❑ Have been extremely successful in student growth - Our teachers get your kids to learn.
- ❑ Most student shortfalls are not completing assignments or being lazy (just wanting the answers).
 - ❑ Fail music or Interactive Band or Art?????????

- We have to go back to pre-pandemic expectations.
- There has been an uptick in: (BUT, it has been better this year than last year)
 - ~~Behavior: Talking back to staff, refusing to do work, ignoring directions, saying inappropriate words in school, invading personal space (touching).~~
 - Falling short academically: Not trying/ giving up, stamina, not persevering, not taking school seriously.
 - Attendance concerns: Absences went up over 30% in 2021-2022 from pre-pandemic years. This year we are up 20%, better, but attendance is one of the leading factors to success in school for many of our students.
 - *Excused vs Unexcused absences (but they are all still absences)*

Accountability is a point of focus next year for the entire staff.
HEALTHY FEAR

In the end . . .

I do believe we have a healthy school culture in this building and we provide not only a great education, but continue to build on creating great experiences for students. Students are part of what drives the culture of the school.

We truly want students to to be prepared. When 7th grade orientation hits in 2025, you will see how this

all makes sense.

QUESTIONS ?