

CHRISTENSEN MIDDLE SCHOOL

2020-2021

SIXTH GRADE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

SIXTH GRADE CORE: The sixth grade core program consists of three instructional periods covering the content areas of reading, language arts and social studies. In the **Reading/ Language Arts** component, students are introduced to major literary genres such as novels, plays and short stories. Students are encouraged to personalize these experiences through oral discussion and creative writing. In addition, students are instructed in the basics of written language: sentence construction, spelling, punctuation and other areas of language mechanics. Vocabulary development, comprehension and organizational skills are also emphasized.

In the area of sixth grade **Social Studies**, students study the history and geography of ancient civilizations. The cultures and history of Mesopotamian, African, Greek, Roman and Hebrew civilizations are covered. Topics are explored in depth through use of the text, special projects and oral presentations. Critical thinking, group participation, and basic study skills are emphasized.

SIXTH GRADE MATH ** Math placement will be determined using the LVJUSD Math Placement Matrix. This matrix uses information from multiple student data sources including CAASPP Scores (previous 2 years), Placement Assessment (MDTP), Grades from T1 & T2 and Teacher Recommendation to determine the best math placement. Additional data used (if needed) for determining math placement: Grade from T3, Score from End of Course exam, 2020 CAASPP math result. This course is designed for students who are performing at the average grade level. Students in Math 6 have the knowledge and skills to access grade level standards but may at times need additional support to understand new concepts or skills.

SIXTH GRADE SCIENCE: Sixth grade students participate in a yearlong science class. They will learn and demonstrate knowledge of the scientific method by participating in hands-on labs throughout the year. The curricular focus in the sixth grade is Earth Science. Students will learn the structure of the Earth and how it has changed over time through studies of tectonics, earthquakes, volcanoes, weathering, and erosion. Students will explore weather and worldwide climates as well as oceanography.

SIXTH GRADE PHYSICAL EDUCATION: Students in 6th grade physical education participate in a wide range of endurance, physical conditioning, and individual and team sport activities. Social skills and responsibility are the focus, while motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities are introduced. Students also are introduced to a drug awareness, peer pressure, and social responsibility program called *Project Alert*.

BEGINNING MUSIC (BAND/ORCHESTRA) is a full year class that meets daily for students who intend to continue in music. Objectives are learning to read standard music notation, learn proper tone production, and prepare appropriate grade level literature for performance. Grading emphasis is on participation, performances, and a willingness to learn. Band and orchestra students will be expected to provide their own instrument.

Band students will receive instruction on the core instruments: flute, clarinet, trumpet, and trombone. Depending on class size, progress, and instrumentation, students may be offered the opportunity to play alto saxophone, baritone, and tuba. Depending on class size and instrumentation, a limited number of students may play percussion. Students interested in percussion must audition into the section.

Orchestra students will receive instruction on cello, viola, and violin. Depending on class size, progress, and instrumentation, students may be offered the opportunity to play string bass.

Beginning Band and Orchestra students will have the opportunity to “try-out” each of the instruments at the beginning of the year before choosing an instrument. Students should not rent or purchase an instrument until instructed by the teacher. Class size and instrument choice are not guaranteed and may be limited; however, we will make every attempt to provide instruction on the instrument of choice.

Students enrolled in 6th grade band or orchestra have their physical education class at “0” period (7:30-8:20 a.m.) on either Monday/Wednesday/Friday or Tuesday/Thursday/Friday.

If your student is interested in a music class, please be sure to mark the line on the Registration Form.

Sixth Grade Instrumental Music Program Information

GOT INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC!

Sixth graders at Christensen Middle School have the opportunity to participate in instrumental music (band and orchestra) during the 2020/2021 school year. **No experience needed!**

Students wanting more information about the 6th grade music program at CMS can contact me at CMS (contact information at the bottom), visit the CMS music website, come to our spring concerts, or hear us perform at the **CMS Open House**.

Parents and incoming 6th graders are invited to attend any of our spring performances to see what part of our program might be of interest. We have a flourishing music program that consistently receives top marks at festival and our concerts are a great way to expose your student to the musical options at CMS.

LVEF Band Festival	- April 1, 2020, 7 pm in the Livermore High School Gym
LVEF Orchestra Festival	- April 2, 2020, 7 pm in the Granada High School Gym
Open House	- May 13, 2020, 6 pm in the gym @ Christensen Middle School
Spring Orchestra Concert	- May 27, 2020, 7 pm in the gym @ Christensen Middle School
Spring Band Concert	- May 28, 2020, 7 pm in the gym @ Christensen Middle School

Schedule (currently):

Sixth grade music students go to music every day during the normal school day for a full period. Sixth grade music students attend PE three times a week during “0” period, either Monday/Wednesday/Friday, or Tuesday/Thursday/Friday (7:30–8:20 a.m.).

Registering:

Music students are placed in one of three core classes, which means space in 6th grade music is limited. If you are not sure, sign up! You can always drop later. Once the classes are full, it is hard to add. There will be a waiting list. However, it is hard to start music 2 weeks behind!

IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO SIGN UP FOR MUSIC.

Contact Brian Scharmann, CMS Office, 606-4702, ext. 6575.

Instrument instruction/offering:

We will make every attempt to provide instruction to students on their first choice of instrument. However, for beginning students to be successful learning music in a mixed instruments environment, the number of each instrument must be balanced for the size of the class, which may mean limiting the number of students on a particular instrument. Too many students on one type of instrument will prevent other students from receiving adequate instruction time.

Selecting an Instrument:

Students will have the opportunity to try **all** the instruments offered (a music “Petting Zoo”) during the first two weeks of class. Students will prioritize their choice of instrument. Based on their success and interest, the teacher **and** student will determine which instrument that student is best suited for and would like to play.

To start the year, **band students** will receive instruction on **flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, baritone, and tuba**. **Percussionist** will be selected by audition only (piano players make good percussionist)! **Orchestra students** will learn **violin, viola, cello, or bass**.

Students are expected to provide their own instrument, but should not rent one until we have finished exploring the different instruments (unless currently studying privately).

Specialty Instruments/Private Lessons:

Because of the difficulty and size issues with some of the other instruments, students who want to play an instrument not listed above, i.e., French horn, oboe, bassoon, etc., should really consider getting a head start over the summer by taking private lessons. **However, students should check with their middle school music teacher about instrument selection and where to go for lessons.**

Students that **study privately, on any instrument**, will be encouraged to continue on their current instrument.

Logistics:

The music building is opened at 7:30 am every morning and closes 3:15 pm after school. (The Music Building closes at 1:40 pm on Wednesdays.) Students going to PE can drop off their instruments in the music room before school or before going to PE.

Students on their non-PE days can come in and practice between 7:30 am and 8:25 am (much more fun with friends than by yourself) or can sleep in!

Instruments can stay in the music room all day. Instruments can be picked up after school and should go home daily unless arrangements have been made with the music teacher.

School Instruments:

We do provide certain large and expensive instruments (i.e., tuba, baritone, French horn, bass clarinet, percussion, string bass). The types and number of these instruments offered is based on class size and progress, financial need, school inventory, and the needs of the band. We generally do not provide flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, violin, or viola.

Renting/Buying Instruments:

I strongly recommend renting an instrument for the first 3 months. Do not be tempted by “Great Deals” over the internet, online auction sites, or large discount stores. The prices are cheap because the instruments are cheap. A cheap instrument is difficult to play and will usually break. Music stores often refuse to fix low quality instruments because the repairs are worth more than the instrument! Go to a quality music store! I will provide a list of reputable stores at the beginning of the school year (or contact me for the list).

Pros/Cons of 6th Grade Instrumental Music

Pros:

- the only way for 6th graders to take an elective
- can dress for PE before leaving for school on PE days
- can practice at school with friends (counts as practice time for grade)
- PE class consists of mainly 6th grade music students!
- placed in a core class with other 6th grade music students
- music building open before and after school (quasi-music daycare!)

Cons:

- have to get up early 3 days per week **for 6th grade only** (during 7th/8th grade, music and PE scheduled *during* the school day).
- limited to approximately 80 students (band and orchestra combined total)

Contact Info:

Mr Divita, Music Director, CMS

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web-page,

http://chms.schoolloop.com/divita?no_controls=t

or; <http://chms.schoolloop.com/>

Quick Links to “Music Department”

