



A Parent's Guide To the Los Altos School District GRADE 6 Course of Study

August 2010

Sixth grade instructional programs in Los Altos schools are committed to helping each child meet the academic and intellectual competencies expected at this grade level and become active, engaged learners in a classroom setting. The following summary of the instructional program provides an overview of the sixth grade year. The sixth grade program builds on skills and knowledge children have learned in preceding years. It encourages critical thinking, creativity, and respect for self and others. Expectations are modified or expanded to meet a child's needs and abilities.

Curriculum standards are what all grade-level students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of a school year. Key concepts and standards of sixth grade education are included. If you would like a complete description of sixth grade standards, they can be downloaded from the [California Department of Education](#) website.

If you have questions about curriculum, please contact your child's teacher.

MATHEMATICS-----

Adopted Programs

McDougal Littell: Mathematics: Concepts & Skills – I

McDougal Littell: Pre-Algebra

Number Sense

Compares & orders positive & negative fractions, decimals & mixed numbers
Interprets and uses ratios in different contexts
Uses proportions and cross multiplication to solve problems.
Calculates percentages
Solves problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication & division of positive fractions
Explains the meaning of multiplication & division of positive fractions
Solves addition, subtraction, multiplication, & division problems that use positive & negative integers
Finds the least common multiple & the greatest common divisor of whole numbers

Algebra and Functions

Writes and solves one-step linear equations in one variable
Applies algebraic order of operations to evaluate expressions
Uses the commutative, associative, and distributive properties to evaluate expressions
Solves problems involving rates, average speed, distance & time
Uses variables in expressions describing geometric quantities

Measurement & Geometry

Understands the concept of a constant, such as π
Knows the formulas for the circumference and area of a circle
Knows common estimates of π & uses these values to calculate circumference & area of circles
Identifies angles as vertical, adjacent, complementary or supplementary
Uses properties of angles & sums of angles to solve problems involving an unknown angle
Draws quadrilaterals & triangles

Statistics, Data & Probability

Computes the range, mean, median and mode of data sets
Understands how the inclusion or exclusion of outliers affects these computations
Represents all possible outcomes for compound events in an organized way
Represents probabilities as ratios, proportions, decimals & percentages

SCIENCE-----

Adopted Programs
Earth Science

Prentice Hall, Focus on Earth
Understands foundations of geology & geophysics; including plate tectonics & earth structure, topography, & energy
Understands resource management & ecology
Formulates hypotheses

SOCIAL STUDIES-----

Adopted Programs

Macmillan/McGraw-Hill, Ancient Civilizations
TCI, History Alive, The Ancient World
Gains knowledge and understanding of the early civilizations of the world, explaining government, economy, religion, philosophy, arts, culture, and science/technology.
Examines critical issues, pivotal events, and important people.
Describes social levels in each culture
Analyze the relationship of technology to social change
Relate geography to economic development
Compare and contrast major religions of early civilizations
Considers why civilizations develop, why they became dominant, and why they decline.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION-----

All children participate in daily physical education aimed at developing sportsmanship, coordination, agility, strength, stamina, enjoyment of physical activity and participation in team and individual sports. All upper grade children have the opportunity to take part in the Los Altos Junior Olympics each spring. A P.E. specialist works with the children twice every week.

FINE and PERFORMING ARTS-----

All upper grade students receive instruction in the arts on a weekly basis. Sixth grade students participate in a year-long music offering from the following choices: Wind Instrument Ensemble, Brass Instrument Ensemble String Instrument Ensemble or Non-Instrumental. Students also participate in three fine arts offerings during the course of the year, each lasting one trimester. Students will take each of the following courses: visual arts, drama and digital design. In addition to the weekly Fine Arts Block, the District provides trained volunteers through an Art Docent program.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

For children who qualify, the District offers programs for English Language Learners, Gifted and Talented, Speech and Language Development, Special Education, Psychological Testing and Counseling, and Home Teaching.