

“Today is a great day to learn something

# Welcome to Sixth Grade!

August 28, 2014

Welcome Back!

## Inside this issue:

Rules	2
Management	2
Notes to School	2
Birthday Treats	3
Agenda Book/Reading	3
Friday Folders	3
Web 2.0 Tools	4
PTO	4
Sign & Return	5

AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, please do TWO things...

1) Visit our 6th grade website @ [blog.elanco.org/brgrade6/](http://blog.elanco.org/brgrade6/) and “Subscribe to E-mails” (on the lower right hand side) This will be an important tool in our communication to you regarding what we are working on!

2) Text “81010” with the message “@f6f5d” to receive reminders regarding upcoming events and tests!

We have had a fabulous start to the year! Students have worked cooperatively in many activities with an emphasis on building a strong learning community. We have completed science, math, writing and reading activities that have infused teamwork and cooperative learning. We also have reviewed our school rules and had some good conversations about bullying.

As a sixth grade team, our goal is to meet the individual needs of each student. We are continually using and analyzing formal and informal assessments to drive our instruction. As indicated via the letter from Mrs. Andersen, our sixth graders will be grouped based on their skills in both reading and math. On Thursday, students practiced this switch in the afternoon. During this time, they met with their math teacher and classmates. On Friday morning students switched in the morning for Language Arts, again meeting their teacher and classmates. We have seen great success

with skill based grouping in the past and look forward to this format. It is important to us that students and parents understand that while our math groups are differentiated every class covers the same curriculum. Look for more information to come home soon regarding some differentiated grouping within these classes, referred to as a Hybrid model. Next week, we will also be easing the students into the idea of switching classes for math and reading as we build community in each of these settings. Look for a full implementation of the model to start the following week.

Students will continue to work with our Pearson reading curriculum. As seen last year, this curriculum includes story vocabulary and strategy work in whole group and small group settings.

We will begin the year with Social Studies (later switching to Science). Topics will include the foundations of our Country, Constitution, and Washington D.C..

## Meet the Teacher Night—Tuesday, September 2nd

This night is informal and informational! Please meet in the gym @ 6:30. We encourage you to attend this school wide event with your children (siblings welcome!) and allow them to show you their classroom, introduce you to their teachers and walk around the

school to visit the specialists. In our classroom, you will be able to browse through our curriculum, participate in a quiz with your child, watch a PowerPoint presentation on our sixth grade curriculum, see our class-

room (if you haven't already!), and more!  
\*Please be sure to visit all three sixth grade classrooms!

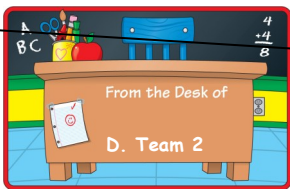
We hope to see you there!



# Classroom Rules & Management

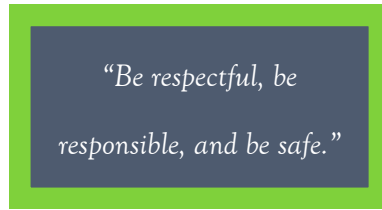
In the classroom each student is expected to follow the rules of the school and classroom and take responsibility for their behavior. This is to ensure that no student disrupts his or her own learning or the learning of anyone else. Classroom management is the key for the day to run smoothly and to ensure a safe environment for the children. Each of the students in sixth grade received a list of expectations to review with their families. Thank you so much for taking the time to talk to your children about *your* expectations for them at school.

We will continue to work hard in sixth grade to establish social skills such as holding the door, allowing a person to get through when there is a long line of students, apologizing for accidentally bumping into someone, starting and holding a conversation (asking questions about others) passing people on the right hand side of the hallway, saying “excuse me”, etc. These are important skills to reinforce at home as well.



## Notes & Being Picked Up:

If your child is being picked up at the end of the day, or needs to be picked up at an earlier time, please send in a note. I will then forward the note to the office so that both the office and classroom teacher are aware. Students who are being picked up at the end of the day will be dismissed before the buses (approximately 3:25). Pick up is on the cafeteria side (right) of the building. Please, as you exit the parking lot, do not enter the area where the buses are loading students.



## Class Meetings :

We will be having weekly class meetings to discuss and address difficulties inside and outside of our classroom. This year, Mrs. Horbal will be joining us every Monday to help run our class meetings. Our hope is that by building a strong classroom community we can avoid some of the drama that sixth graders sometimes participate in :)

## Checkbook Behavior System:

All students in sixth grade keep a checkbook ledger with account balances indicating a reward system in the classroom. Students receive deposits for test scores, good behavior, compliments, making good choices,

## Birthday Treats:

Birthday treats are always welcome. In fact, it doesn't even have to be your birthday and all three of us like chocolate...j/k... We would appreciate if you could send a note in a day or two in advance giving us a heads up that your child will be bringing a treat. **Individually wrapped treats are appreciated** and are easy for the students to hand out to others. Please feel free to send in pencils, stickers, etc. instead of a food. Please note that our school has become a “nut free” zone (no pun intended) due to some very serious allergies of some of our students. \*If your

etc..(withdrawals are required for the opposite). Can you help us? Please ask to see your child's ledger, ask them questions about their deposits and withdrawals and help us to keep an eye on students adding and subtracting correctly.

## Conduct Cards:

By this time, your child and you have experienced many different teachers and teaching styles. For this reason, we want to include a note about behavior sheets.

If your child comes home with a **conduct card** that needs signed, this is a big deal to us! Please discuss with your child their inappropriate behavior and alternative choices that should or could have been made before returning it with student and parent signatures. Conduct cards include a \$150 withdrawal from their account.

If you have questions regarding the conduct card, please do not hesitate to call the classroom teacher.

child has a summer birthday, they are welcome to celebrate their “half birthday”!

25-30 birthday treats would give each students in the classroom a treat as well as a few extra for your child to hand out!

**Attention! We have a severe allergy to LATEX in our classroom this year. Special ERASERS have to be ordered used. No balloons, etc.**

**Birthday Invitations:** Please be courteous, do not send birthday invitations to the classroom to be handed out unless each student in the classroom is invited.

# Combination Locks, Agenda Books, Reading Logs Homework Passes & Friday Folders & Randomness...

Thank you so much to those who purchased items from our beginning of the year supply list. We truly appreciate your support!!

**Combination Locks:** Each morning, students unlock their lunch choices which are housed on their lock. Why? We have found that one thing students are anxious about, as they transition to the middle school, is being able to open their lockers. So, every day in sixth grade the students will have the chance to practice in a stress free environment.



**Agenda Books:** Students have agenda books in the rings of their binders. This book, as well as their binders should come home every night. Each day students are given time to write their assignments in their binder and collect needed items. In addition to this, homework assignments are posted on the board or in a teacher agenda book in each classroom that can be referenced at any time. **\*As we start the year and help the students get back into the routine of homework, please be sure to sign the agenda each evening after checking homework.**

While we are talking about binders... please encourage your child to stay organized using the tabs of their binders as intended and cleaning out their "work to go home" often.

**Missing Assignments:** A missing assignment notice will be sent home for any assignments that are missing from the teacher grade book. These notifications are expected to be returned with a parent signature and the completed assignment. The completion of this assignment is the responsibility of the student.



### Reading Logs

It is a sixth grade expectation as well as a district expectation that all students read at home. Students may choose from a variety of genres including fiction, nonfiction, magazines, etc. and will be asked to fill out logs to reinforce reading strategies. Students receive \$5 deposits for completed reading logs, and \$10 withdrawals for incomplete reading logs on a daily basis.

**Friday Folders:** Students will bring home a Friday Folder at the end of the week. This folder may have important papers from the office and classroom. Inside this folder you will find a parent signature page as well as a communication log.

**Valentine's Day...**just a heads up since Walmart puts their Valentine's Day cards on the shelves shortly after Thanksgiving (lol), sixth grade does not celebrate Valentine's Day...for obvious reasons!! No cards will be exchanged but stay tuned for a way we will incorporate candy into our day :)

**Sixth Grade Auction:** As part of our checkbook behavior plans, students get the opportunity to trade their dollars into tickets for a chance to win some really cool prizes. While our homeroom moms will divvy up the responsibility to contacting local businesses for donations (ie fishing poles, gift certificates, games). We appreciate ANY donations or connections you may be able to provide (hand sanitizer, sports equipment, packs of gum, etc.). If you have a donation, please feel free to send it in at any time and please accept our thanks (and our husbands) for keeping the cost down for us. Our first auction will be at the end of January.

“There are only two lasting bequests we can hope to give our children. One of these is roots; the other, wings”  
~Hodding Carter~

- 
- 
- Tech Tools:
- 
- We are excited to announce that each student in sixth grade has their own laptop assigned to them in the classroom. Learning how to use the computer properly, taking care of the computer, and use the Internet appropriately will help bridge their learning as they will each receive their own computer next year in seventh grade. Contrary to the middle school, our computers are housed in our classroom, and will *never* be brought home.
- 
- Over the next year, we will be introducing your children to a variety of tech tools to enhance their learning. Some of these items include; Blogging, , Digital Storytelling through sites such as Little Bird Tales, Diigo, Symbaloo, Edmodo, Achieve, ST Math, Compass Learning, Stixy, Wordle, GoogleMaps, Skype, and work within our Elanco Google Accounts. Yes, this is where you might pause and reflect on how learning has changed since you were in school!!! While technology is an exciting addition to the classroom, we believe that it is only useful when properly used as a tool to learn.
- We look forward to welcoming Mrs. Hilt, our Elementary Technology Coach, into our classrooms throughout the year. We look forward to her first visit to introduce blogging and help students to develop their digital portfolio.



## PTO

A special thank you to the parents who serve on our PTO and support our students in their education. Consider attending a PTO meeting. The times/dates of the meetings can be found on the district calendar or by calling the school. PTO usually meets in the Library, the first Monday of every month. The PTO coordinates many benefits throughout the year including field trips and assemblies at every grade level.

With a teacher representative and building principal in attendance, parents and staff join together to brainstorm and discuss ideas to better the education and experiences of our children!

## DC Reminder...

If you would like to join us a chaperone for the DC trip, please submit your clearances ASAP. It takes several weeks to get the clearances back from the state our trip is on October 9th!

## Please Welcome...

**Miss Rachel Foley** is our Grade 5/6 Emotional Support teacher. Last year she served as the Grade 3/4 ES classroom. Miss Foley works closely with the staff at Brecknock to include students from her classroom into the regular education classroom. We look forward to working with Miss Foley and welcoming her to our grade level and her students into our classrooms.

**Mrs. Donna Horst** joins our classrooms for push in reading and mathematics support. Mrs. Horst’s three sons attended Brecknock and have recently graduated from our district. She is a familiar face to the staff and parents at Brecknock!

**Mrs. Sue Grigas** is our Learning Support teacher and has been with our school district for several years. Mrs. Grigas pushes in to the classroom for both Reading and Mathematics.

# Please sign & return this sheet only!

Please return this sheet as a recognition that you have received this newsletter. We **appreciate** you taking the time to read through the “beginning of the year odds and ends”. Please share your e-mail address to receive communication throughout the year.

Your Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Child’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments/Questions:

In the digital age, e-mail is a fast and convenient way to communicate. Please include your e-mail address below for parent/teacher communication throughout the year...and PLEASE remember to visit our classroom blog at [blog.elanco.org/brgrade6/](http://blog.elanco.org/brgrade6/) and SUBSCRIBE to our e-mails, and text “81010” with the message “@f6f5d” to join our “Remind-101” group!

\_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_ (mother and/or guardian)

\_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_ (father and/or guardian)

