Welcome Back
We have had a great start to the 2017-2018 school year! It was terrific to see strong participation from 6th grade families at our Open House and Back to School Night. We are looking forward to a good year as students prepare for new challenges next year and beyond. We have settled in to a daily routine, and things are running smoothly as students learn to switch classes just like in middle school. Below, you will find out what curriculum topics we are tackling this month and see some reminders of important events.

Language Arts
We are busy setting up reading and writing classroom routines, doing beginning of the year reading and writing assessments to find areas of strength and focus, and looking at reading strategies. This year the sixth grade is focusing on improving student writing, so you can expect your child to be writing several times per week— with sustained periods of writing to build stamina and fluency. Our first reading unit is Fiction Book Clubs, and our first writing unit is Memoirs. Students will have Reading as one of their daily rotations and Writing will be held in each homeroom. Students can expect a variety of whole class instruction, small group instruction, and individual reading and writing conferences.

Math
Students in Math 6 have already completed their first unit on learning about integers, absolute value and the concept of exponents. During the second unit, students will learn about ratios and investigate relationships among fractions, decimals and percents. Being able to visualize all three forms of a number as a ratio will help them make sense of changing from one form to another. Building fluency with adding and subtracting fractions and decimals is also part of this unit. Students in Math 7 have been learning about operations with integers. In the next unit, some of the big topics are properties, scientific notation, and negative exponents. Students will also have an opportunity to practice simplifying expressions that include variables having exponents.

Science
In science, students have set up and personalized their science binders. They have spent some time learning to think and act like scientists. The first quarter of science will focus on experimental design, scientific investigations and Astronomy. Experimental design and scientific investigations is a year-long focus and will be embedded throughout the year in all science units. The 6th grade Astronomy unit provides students with a basic understanding of the organization of the solar system and the relationships among the various bodies that comprise it. Students learn how discoveries in space exploration illustrate the Nature of Science. Students investigate the regular motions of objects in the solar system to account for many well-known phenomena. By manipulating models, they develop an explanation for the seasons, night and day, moon phases and the relative positions of the planets.
History

Mr. Batsel, our sixth grade History teacher, has been working with students setting up binders and activating prior knowledge about civics and geography. We have completed a short civics unit about the Constitution and have been learning about the geography of North America, as well as Native American people and culture, in preparation for our first unit on early America history. Students will be learning about US history from the early explorers and colonization up into the Civil War. The first quarter focuses on Geography, Early Americans, and European exploration. All classes will be using primary sources, Document Based Questioning, and critical thinking lessons to explore this exciting period! Check out our “Preamble Video” on Blackboard.

October Important Dates

4  International Walk to School Day
9  Columbus Day Holiday (no school)
10  Dining for Dollars—Social Burger
12  PTA Meeting 7:00 PM
19  Fall Picture Day (Individual & Classroom)
20  Bingo Night