

**Middle School Orientation**  
**Thursday, August 27, 2026**  
**8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

Dear Parents,

We at Houghton Middle School realize that in all of their years of school, students may face no harder transition than moving from elementary school to middle school. Mrs. Rundman, the 6th -9th grade School Counselor, has visited the classrooms and addressed the students' questions and eased their worries about the move from the elementary to the middle school.

We know that the changes are so great--from having one teacher to having several; from a base in a classroom desk to a base in a locker in the hallway--that it is no small wonder that many new sixth graders begin their middle school years filled with anxiety and apprehension.

Middle School Orientation is a half day session where incoming sixth graders and their parents will have a chance to "learn the ropes" of middle school life. Students will have the opportunity to:

- Meet their teachers and other staff
- Receive their schedule
- Find their classes
- Practice their locker combination
- Review important policies & procedures

Parents who attend will:

- Review important policies & procedures
- Meet their teachers and other staff
- Discuss "The Middle School Brain"
- Review the curriculum & daily schedules
- Tour the school
- Have the opportunity to purchase math supplies (calculator & template)
- Hear about Band & Choir opportunities
- Ask questions
- Review bus routes

**Middle School Orientation will begin at 8:30 a.m. in the auditorium with registration starting at 8:10 and it concludes at 11:30.**

Attending Middle School Orientation should help make the transition to middle school easier for you and your soon-to-be sixth grader! **See you on Thursday, August 27!**

The 6th Grade Middle School Team

## 6th Grade Course Selection Form

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Required Core Courses:**

Math 6  
 Language Arts 6  
 Science 6  
 World Geography 6  
 S.T.A.R.

**Required EnCore Classes:**

*EnCore class offerings are subject to change.*  
 Art 6  
 F.A.C.S. 6  
 Physical Education 6  
 Tech Explorations 6

**Study Hall/Band/Choir**

Band, Choir and study hall are offered during third hour. If a student signs up for both Band and Choir, the student will not have a study hall. If nothing is selected, a study hall will automatically be assigned. **Schedule changes for Band and/or Choir will only be allowed during the first two weeks of school and the week prior to the new semester in January.**

Choose 1	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<input type="checkbox"/> Study Hall every day ( <u>no</u> Band or Choir)	Study Hall	Study Hall	Study Hall	Study Hall	Study Hall
<input type="checkbox"/> Band (Mon/Wed/Fri) and Study Hall (Tues/Thurs)	Band	Study Hall	Band	Study Hall	Band
<input type="checkbox"/> Choir (Tues & Thurs) and Study Hall (Mon/Wed/Fri)	Study Hall	Choir	Study Hall	Choir	Study Hall
<input type="checkbox"/> Band (Mon/Wed/Fri) and Choir (Tues & Thurs)	Band	Choir	Band	Choir	Band

**I understand and agree with the above course selections.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent/Guardian Signature      Date

**Please return with your registration packet.**

## Sixth Grade Core Classes

### **Math 6**

This course is a continuation of the Chicago School Mathematics Project curriculum presented in grades 1-5. Topics will include data collection; formulas and graphing; rational number uses and operations; scientific notation; rates; ratios and probabilities; and algebra and geometry topics. In addition, games and projects will help students expand their mathematical thinking and problem-solving skills.

### **Language Arts 6**

Language Arts emphasizes the connections between reading, writing, speaking, listening, and grammar while covering the two main genres, fiction and nonfiction, and their subgenres. Within each genre, the author's use of literary terms will be introduced and student writing will reflect the understanding of these terms. Writing will include poems, personal narratives, stories, journals, research papers, letters, and other creative writing. Students will use the writing process when working towards final drafts. A variety of oral presentations and speeches will be given.

### **Science 6**

This course covers life, physical, and earth science concepts. The focus of life science is ecology. Physical science deals with forms of energy and changes of state. Earth science concepts include the rock cycle, soil formation, and plate tectonics.

### **World Geography 6**

In World Geography 6, students will focus their studies on geography, civics and government, and economics. Within these areas, students will be further developing their inquiry and decision-making skills in order to gain a deeper understanding of historical and geographical topics. Students will also be learning how to appropriately use disciplinary concepts and tools, as well as evidence from evaluated sources to draw conclusions and take informed action on civic issues.

### **S.T.A.R. (Self-Awareness, Teamwork, Academic Support, and Responsible Decision-Making)**

All sixth-grade students participate in S.T.A.R., an advisory class that helps students build responsibility, organization, study skills, and positive relationships.

During **STAR A**, students have recess, complete their planners, and get organized for learning. During **STAR B**, students focus on teamwork, goal setting, and other important life and learning skills. Students may also earn Reward Recesses for positive behavior and work completion.

Beginning in the second marking period, students participate in **Prime Time** twice each week. This instructional time strengthens reading, math, vocabulary, study, and organization skills to support student success in middle school.

## **Sixth Grade EnCore Classes**

### Full Year Classes

#### **Band 6 (Full year - Monday, Wednesday, Friday)**

This class is open to anyone with a genuine interest in playing a band instrument. We will perform a minimum of three concerts per year. Each student is required to practice their instrument in order to be successful. The emphasis during class is building good playing habits while studying a variety of styles of band literature.

#### **Choir 6 (Full year - Tuesday, Thursday)**

Beginning choir is open to anyone with a genuine interest in learning how to sing and read music.

### 7th hour Classes

#### **Art 6**

This is an introductory art course where students will explore a variety of two and three-dimensional forms of visual expression with a focus on the “elements of art”: line, form and shape, texture, color, pattern, composition, and movement. Students will learn skills in evaluating, judging, and appreciating art as well as learning how to express their individual feelings through skillful handling of a variety of art media. Included will be drawing, painting, and weaving.

#### **F.A.C.S. 6**

In this Family and Consumer Skills class, sixth graders will cover simple food preparations and basic hand sewing skills will be introduced.

#### **Physical Education 6**

Activities will include the President’s Challenge Fitness Testing for strength and endurance, cardiovascular endurance, flexibility, and skill-related fitness; personal conditioning including rowing, swimming, introduction to weight and resistance training; and outdoor skills such as cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and hiking. Students will also play a variety of individual and team sports as well as water sports.

#### **Tech Explorations 6**

This class will allow the students to improve on their computer skills. Students will learn the basics of Google Drive and discuss digital citizenship.

# **FAQS ABOUT 6th GRADE BAND AND CHOIR**

## **1. What if I've never played an instrument or sang a note before?**

Don't worry. This is why we have band and choir. I can teach you.

## **2. How much will band cost?**

Instruments fall into two categories. School owned instruments are baritone, tuba, oboe, tenor sax, baritone sax, French horn, percussion, and string bass. Individually owned instruments are flute, clarinet, alto sax, trumpet, and trombone. School owned instruments are \$100 per year, every year. Individually owned instruments are \$100 three times per year, guaranteeing that you will own the instrument once it is paid in full. If your instrument takes more than one year to pay in full a 20% fee is added to the total cost. If you choose to pay it in full by the end of the first year, there will not be an extra fee. Scholarships are available for those in need.

## **3. Will band and choir require homework?**

If you think that practicing your instrument or voice is homework, then yes these students will have homework. We are learning a new instrument and are gathering a valuable experience that we are not going to get anywhere else.

## **4. Can my child do both band and choir and be successful?**

Of course! Both classes require approximately 15 minutes of practice per day. If a child is struggling to meet these goals, practice can be pushed until the weekend.

## **5. Can my child join later (at the semester) if we are unsure now?**

They can, but this is challenging. Everyone is starting at the same place right now, and we are going to have fun listening and learning from each other. If one starts later, they will be behind and less likely to succeed.

## **6. What if I join and then we change our mind and want out?**

Students are required to complete one academic year if they choose to sign up.

## **7. Will we have an opportunity to try the instrument of choice?**

I will send an email to the listserv for instrument fittings in August. If a conflict arises, we can fit you during the first week of school.

## **8. When do we get our instruments?**

Most instruments will be ordered as soon as possible. Instruments usually come in during the third week of September.

## **9. What if I need to talk to the teacher?**

Kelly Fontaine is the 6-12 grade band director and grade 6 choir teacher. Please contact me by email [kfontaine@hpts.us](mailto:kfontaine@hpts.us) or phone at 906-482-0450 ext. 1530. I look forward to having your child in the band and choir programs at Houghton. We strive for excellence here. We will make you proud.

*Please email Mrs. Fontaine with your instrument choice and if you will need to rent an instrument from the school or not. If you won't be renting, Mrs. Fontaine needs to see the instrument you have to inspect the playing condition.*

# Class of 2033

# Newsletter

WE ARE ALL  
GREMLINS

WE'RE EXCITED TO HAVE YOU  
HERE NEXT YEAR!



6th Grade Homeroom Teachers



## IMPORTANT REMINDER

Complete your schedule request by **Friday, May 22**. The link is shared by your child's teacher. They have one choice to make:

- Take Study Hall (SH) only
- Take Band and Study Hall
- Take Choir and Study Hall
- Take both Band and Choir (No SH)

*Band meets on Mon., Wed., and Fri.  
Choir meets on Tues. and Thurs.*

## ESSENTIAL SUPPLY LIST

**A math binder will be provided.**

- 3 sturdy pocket folders for Lang Arts, Science, and World Geo
- Pencils - need each hour, daily
- 1 pair personal headphones or earbuds

For PE:

- Shorts, t-shirt, gym shoes
- Jacket for outdoor activities
- Swimsuit (no bikinis)

Suggested: Locker shelf, magnetic mirror, pencil case

*More information will be shared at  
Orientation.*

## SAVE THE DATES

**Thursday, August 27, 8:30 to 11:30 AM**

**6th Grade Orientation:** This experience is for students and parents/caregivers to prepare you for success at Houghton Middle School. Meet the teachers, tour the building, open your locker, and more.

**Wednesday to Friday, Sept. 23 to 25:**

The 6<sup>th</sup> grade overnight camp experience is in Crystal Falls at Fortune Lake Camp. Build skills and teamwork, enjoy nature, and have fun. More details will be shared this fall.

*Fee = \$75. Scholarships available.*