

**Avondale Middle School**  
**6<sup>th</sup> Grade**  
**Curriculum Guide**  
**2025-2026**



**Katie Gomez, Principal**  
**Arryn Schneider, Assistant Principal**  
**Sherisse Echols, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Counselor**

## Sixth Grade

An Avondale Middle School 6<sup>th</sup> grade schedule consists of 6 academic class periods in a year. The school year has two semester marking periods. All students are also assigned to a daily 32 minute advisory period.

Sixth grade students are required to take 4 periods of core courses. Students also have 2 periods of exploratory courses. These exploratory courses consist of semester grading periods. Based on whether the student selects a Full-Year elective determines exploratory offerings during the 6<sup>th</sup> grade year.

Required Core Courses	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Math 6 or Advanced Math 6 (Based on NWEA and Placement Testing*)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Science
<input type="checkbox"/>	English Language Arts or Advanced ELA 6 (Based on NWEA and Placement Testing*)
<input type="checkbox"/>	World Geography

6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Exploratory Course Offerings	
Full-Year Elective Students	Non-Full-Year Music Students
Choose one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Band</li> <li>• Choir 6</li> </ul> —AND— Take 2 of the following**: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art 6</li> <li>• Drama</li> <li>• French 6</li> <li>• Spanish 6</li> <li>• Physical Education 6</li> <li>• STEM</li> <li>• Intro to Tech</li> <li>• Graphic Literature</li> <li>• Skills for Successful Learners</li> </ul>	Take 4 of the following**: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art 6</li> <li>• Drama 6</li> <li>• French 6</li> <li>• Spanish 6</li> <li>• Physical Education 6</li> <li>• STEM</li> <li>• Intro to Tech</li> <li>• Graphic Literature</li> <li>• Skills for Successful Learners</li> </ul>
Remediation in reading and math may be recommended for students who would benefit from these classes based on standardized test scores and screeners in reading and math. Students who are placed in those classes will replace electives (above) with the appropriate Lab class.  *Advanced Math and English placement testing will be based on minimum cut score on NWEA. Anyone who does not meet the criteria, may take the end of the year math test at the end of May to be held at Avondale Middle School (Date TBD).  **All courses will run based on enrollment numbers. Some courses may be canceled due to low enrollment numbers.	

## Sixth Grade Course Descriptions

### **Advisory - Year Long**

All students at AMS have a 32 minute advisory period referred to as “Mustang Roundup”. Student advisory groups are made up of grade level students that are led by teacher mentors. The goal of Mustang Roundup is to provide a personalized connection to our learning environment where all students will be well known by at least one adult advocate. This relationship and connection to school is fostered through intentionally scheduled lessons, group activities, and one-to-one interactions with the advisor. The structure of this program will provide opportunities for character education, bullying prevention lessons, positive behavior support, independent reading, academic monitoring, organizational meetings, school wide initiatives, and fun cooperative activities.

### **CORE COURSES**

#### **English 6 - Year-Long**

Over the course of 6th grade, the curriculum follows state and county standards, which include implementing strategies to deepen reading comprehension of various genres of literature and informational text. Writing skills will be woven throughout instruction to include personal narrative, argument, literary, and informational writing. Students will utilize technology to create, publish, and collaborate on written work. Additional skills will be obtained through the use of word study and oral presentations.

#### **Advanced English 6\* - Year-Long**

***Students are placed in this course through a set of placement criteria.*** This course teaches students to be analytical consumers of informational and literary texts and provides a critical foundation in reading and writing narrative, informational, and argument texts. Through analysis and production of texts in these three modes, students become more adept readers, thinkers, and writers. Students are encouraged to be independent, engaged, and empowered learners who value close reading, idea generation, use of textual evidence, drafting, and revision. In reading, students are introduced to texts of increasing levels of difficulty. Using narrative texts, students practice and improve their skills in recognizing basic literary elements and terms, as well as compare literary themes, and identify the author's purpose and perspective. They monitor their reading by pausing, self-correcting, questioning, and reflecting. Students explore a wide range of literary genres including the short story, memoir, mystery, poetry, historical fiction, autobiography/biography, and informational text. A year-long Independent reading program focuses on reading stamina, close reading strategies, and oral communication skills. Students are expected to independently read a minimum of three books per quarter. Analytic and expository writing assignments provide the main vehicle for the development of composition skills, although expressive writing is also explored. Writing instruction targets the awareness of audience and purpose and the development of tighter focus, thoughtfully developed organization, more specific language, and more sophisticated sentence structure. Writing experiences include personal narrative, compare and contrast, literary text analysis of short stories, and research. Students write a 3-4 minute speech; oral communication skills are advanced through the delivery of this speech. Vocabulary study includes direct instruction as well as application of proper usage of words in all their variant forms and the utilization of context clues to convey and interpret meaning. Grammar instruction is also directly taught and students are consistently held accountable for use of proper writing conventions throughout the year.

#### **Math 6 - Year-Long**

Math 6 is designed to help students transition from the study of numeracy and computation in elementary school to the study of algebra and functions. The course develops a deep conceptual and procedural understanding of mathematics. There are five critical areas of study: (1) connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using algebraic expressions and equations; (4) developing understanding of statistical thinking; and (5) reasoning about relationships among shapes to determine area, surface area, and volume.

### **Advanced Math 6\* - Year-Long**

***Students are placed in this course through a set of placement criteria.*** This is a rigorous pre-algebra course designed for students who learn at an accelerated pace. Students enrolled in our advanced math pathway will complete 3 years of standards in 2 years and will take Algebra 1 in 8th grade which is a high school course. The course develops a deep conceptual and procedural understanding of mathematics. The critical areas for Advanced Math 6 are: (1) connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; (2) completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; (3) writing, interpreting, and using algebraic expressions and equations; (4) developing understanding of statistical thinking; (5) reasoning about relationships among shapes to determine area, surface area, and volume; (6) developing understanding of and applying proportional relationships; and (7) developing understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with algebraic expressions and linear equations. \*Advanced Math 6 placement details will be communicated during the 5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom visits hosted by Avondale Middle School Administration and a Counselor. Incoming 6<sup>th</sup> grade students will be placed in math courses based on Winter NWEA MAP Percentile scores. Students will automatically be placed in Advanced Math 6 if they score 233 or better. If students do not meet that cutoff score, families may contact AMS administration to consider Spring NWEA Scores.

Students who have not maintained a grade of 80% or above by the conclusion of marking period one will be placed into Math 6 for the remainder of the school year. Students will be placed into Advanced Math 7 after successful completion of Advanced Math 6 (earning 80% or better each card marking).

### **Science 6 - Year-Long**

Sixth grade science uses a curriculum called Mi-Star. Students are solution builders as they use science and engineering practices to address a real-world challenge that spans each unit. Science class is no longer about just memorizing all the content needed for a test. Students show their scientific understanding through investigation and scientific modeling. Emphasis will be placed on addressing real-world phenomena, collaborative teams with students sharing their ideas, and defending their scientific arguments with evidence. It is a highly interactive and project-based curriculum. In order for students to be prepared for tests and quizzes, they must participate in class discussions and activities to learn the scientific concepts.

### **World Geography 6 - Year-Long**

World Geography 6 is a geography-based course that pushes students to take a global view of their world. It introduces students to the physical and human geography of the world. Students explore patterns of natural and human characteristics and use case studies to examine how the physical environment has provided both benefits and obstacles to human society. In doing so, students explore how humans have used, adapted, or modified their environment and the consequences. Students examine a variety of global issues that come from human activities such as migration and settlement, culture and cultural diffusion, population and demographic changes, resource use, and increasing networks of trade and economic interdependence. Students will investigate how local, national, and international governmental and non-governmental organizations respond to contemporary issues. The different regions of the world will be used to illuminate examples of how these global issues or problems affect people in places around the world. They will deepen their understanding of the disciplines of history, geography, economics, and political science. Students will explore how all of these social studies fields are both complementary and interdependent.

## **EXPLORATORY CLASSES**

Every sixth-grade student will have 2 exploratory hours/classes in their schedule. \*Students may choose Band or Choir 6 as a full year exploratory course AND 2 semester electives (below) OR if they are not interested in the Full-Year course option, they will be scheduled into 4 semester long exploratory courses listed below.

### **6<sup>th</sup> GRADE SEMESTER EXPLORATORY COURSES**

#### **STEM 6- Semester-Long**

Students will incorporate the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) module “Computer Science for Innovators and Makers”. In this course, we will be exploring physical computing systems, programming logic, and introductory electrical circuits. Students will design and develop a physical computing device, interactive art installation, and plan and develop code for microcontrollers that bring their physical designs to life.

#### **Intro to Technology 6-Semester-Long**

An introduction to basic computer and technology concepts, this course provides opportunities for students to innovate and construct creative electronic design solutions while becoming familiar with computer software. During the course activities students develop computer file management skills and become proficient with a variety of applications (Google Drive, Docs, etc.). In addition, the course is designed to cultivate supplemental competencies such as keyboarding, internet safety, digital citizenship and general computer use.

#### **Art 6 - Semester-Long**

This class is an introduction to Middle School Level Visual Arts Curriculum including experiences in a variety of 2D and 3D media. No Prerequisite Required. Students will participate in concentrated efforts to apply design elements and principles in organization, creation, reflection and self-evaluation of all projects. Extensive explanation, instruction, demonstration and skill practice prior to major project work. Students will explore visual examples of various designs through world and art history, contemporary work, multi-disciplinary connections and problem solving. Minimal homework required. Please be prepared for rigorous thinking, problem-solving and art-activities in this middle school level art class.

#### **Drama 6 -Semester-Long**

Do you break out in a cold sweat at the thought of getting up in front of an audience? Then Drama class is for you! Do you love being the center of attention? Then Drama class is for you too! This class will teach you the skills you need to successfully speak in front of groups of people-something you'll need in school and in almost any career you choose. You will have the opportunity to slowly ease into performing onstage, giving you time to get used to speaking in front of a small, safe group. The last few weeks of class you will help produce a mini-play performed on camera.

#### **French 6 - Semester-Long**

Students are introduced to the French culture and language in this course. The emphasis is on listening, reading, writing and speaking in the target language. The curriculum will change each year so that students can take it in 6th and 7th grade and learn new material. We play games, do activities and end the course with a “fête” (party).

#### **Spanish 6 - Semester-Long**

Students are introduced to the Spanish culture and language in this course. The emphasis is on listening, reading, writing and speaking in Spanish. The curriculum will change each year so that students can take it in 6th and 7th grade and learn new material. We play games, do activities and end the course with a “fiesta”. IMPORTANT: This class is for students who are new to Spanish and do NOT already speak Spanish at home.

#### **Physical Education 6 - Semester-Long**

Students participating in sixth-grade physical education will be challenged to become physically literate while developing lifelong healthy habits. Students will develop skills to be used to play a variety of team sports along with a basic understanding of team sport rules. Indoor and outdoor activities include; basketball, volleyball, soccer, floor hockey, and other various group games. Students will also participate in fitness testing. Sportsmanship, teamwork and leadership are emphasized.

### **Graphic Literature - Semester-Long**

The Graphic Novel course allows students to explore the increasingly popular graphic novel format. In this class students will explore the uniqueness of the graphic novel, including how to read this style of story, the specific parts of a graphic novel, authors' and illustrators' styles and techniques. Through book clubs, students will explore sub-genres of graphic novels, including memoirs, comic books, and novel adaptations. Students will also be engaged in writing and illustrating their own graphic short stories/chapters.

### **Skills for Success Seminar - Semester-Long**

Students participating in Study Skills Seminar will learn organizational and executive functioning skills to help them be successful in middle school. The course will help students utilize their agendas, communicate effectively with their teachers, plan and study for tests and assignments, and monitor their grades. The course will also provide reflection on balancing school, extracurriculars, and social obligations to maintain a healthy schedule. This course will help set students up for success!

### **6th GRADE FULL YEAR EXPLORATORY COURSE OPTIONS \***

\*Year-long music classes may not be dropped – this is a year-long commitment.

### **Band - Year-Long**

We offer beginning, intermediate, and advanced band classes.

**Beginning:** In this class, students will learn music, basics pertaining to rhythm, tone, intonation, theory and terminology as well as instrument care and maintenance. This class will start from the most basic components of music, and no previous experience is required. Students will have the opportunity to learn how to play a wind instrument or percussion instrument. Students will start on one of the following instruments: flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, baritone or percussion. Students who participate in band will need to rent or purchase a quality instrument. Enrollment in Band constitutes a commitment of the student to participate in all scheduled performances. This is a full-year class

**Intermediate:** Intermediate Band is a performing ensemble that will focus on intermediate-level skills, techniques, and concepts in music comprehension and performance, as well as preparation to participate in the Avondale High School Concert and Marching Bands. The prerequisite for this band is successful completion of Beginning Grade Band. Additional placements are determined by audition. This class will include at least four performances, including MSBOA District XVI Solo & Ensemble Festival. Participation at all performances is required.

**Advanced:** Advanced Band (Wind Ensemble) is a performing ensemble that will focus on advanced-level skills, techniques, and concepts in music comprehension and performance, as well as preparation to participate in the Avondale High School Concert and Marching Bands. The prerequisite for this band is successful completion of Intermediate Band. Additional placements are determined by audition (If new to the district or band program). This class will include at least four performances, including MSBOA District XVI Solo & Ensemble Festival. **Participation at all performances is mandatory.**

**OR**

### **Choir- Year-Long**

Choir is designed for students who are interested in studying singing and learning to read music. In this class, students will learn music basics pertaining to rhythm, tone, intonation, theory, and terminology as well as specific skills in the art of singing such as proper posture, breath support, and vowel placement. This class will start from the most basic components of music, and no previous experience is required. Enrollment in Choir constitutes a commitment of the student to participate in all scheduled performances. This is a full-year class.

*You may contact the Avondale Middle School Counseling Department if you have any questions:*  
Sherisse Echols, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Counselor, 248-537-6315 or [sherisse.echols@avondaleschools.org](mailto:sherisse.echols@avondaleschools.org)