

Everything You Wanted To Know About Sixth Grade

**Common Questions
of
Sixth Grade Parents**

**North Salem Middle School
North Salem, New York**

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SIXTH GRADE

Q. How can I get in touch with teachers?

A. You can call the middle/high school main line (914-669-5414) and leave a voicemail message for any teacher. The extensions are listed in the district calendar and on our web page. The teacher will be happy to return your call. You can also email teachers via the North Salem webpage at www.northsalemschools.org (emails are first letter of first name then last name @northsalemschools.org. For example jdoe@northsalemschools.org)

Q. Is there any other way for me to communicate with the school?

A. Yes, there are many ways to keep in touch. Feel free to write a note to any faculty or staff member. Call the middle school guidance counselor, Mrs. Galligan. Schedule a parent / teacher conference.

Q. How will my child be helped with the transition between elementary school and middle school?

A. The first few days of the school year are devoted to a “crash course” in “Being a Middle School Student”—providing students with tools and experiences to promote their success in the upcoming school year and an introduction to our District Mission. During this time period, no “academic” classes are taught—rather, students follow a special schedule designed to orient them to their new environment. Student’s experience: basic organization, study skills, library orientation, introduction to computer, creative and critical thinking and school discipline and handbook awareness as part of our “6th Grade University”. All team teachers are involved in the facilitating of our university and students have the opportunity to get to know each other and their teachers. It is the goal of our 6th Grade University to help students make sense and meaning from what is being taught, and to be more successful as they progress through their middle school experience.

Q. How can I schedule a meeting with my child’s teacher?

A. The easiest way is to call the teacher directly to arrange a convenient time. Mrs. Galligan, our middle school guidance counselor, can also set up a meeting with the entire sixth grade team of teachers. She can be reached at 669-5414, ext. 2036. Conferences can be arranged at any time during the school year. There is no need to wait for Parent-Teacher Conference Day.

Q. Who can help me with other school-related problems?

A. Mrs. Galligan is an excellent resource person who can put you in touch with tutors, out-of-school counselors and other support services. You can also call Mrs. Nancy Diaz, school psychologist (ext. 2040); and our school nurse Mrs. Rita Driscoll (ext. 2017).

Q. What should I do if my child is absent?

A. It is very important for you to call the Attendance phone line at 669-5414 ext. 2165 or email mshsattendance@northsalemschools.org to report an absence. Also, please send an absence note with your child when he/she returns to school. It is important for you to review the district attendance policy with your child which you can find on our website.

Q. How does my child make up work when absent?

A. It is possible for students to receive credit for work missed due to legal absences from school. Students can call a friend for homework or ask the teacher upon return to school. Missed work must be completed according to the schedule arranged between child and teacher. If a child was in school when a test or assignment was announced and is then absent on the due day, he or she should be prepared for the test or assignment on the day of return to school. Many teachers also post homework assignments on our web page. Students whose absence is considered illegal are ineligible to receive credit for work missed. Please see our attendance policy for detailed information.

Q. What should I do if my child will be out of school for an extended period of time due to illness?

A. If your child will be out of school for three (3) consecutive days due to illness, we can arrange that homework be sent home. Please call the office at 669-5414, ext. 2028.

Q. Will my child have access to a locker throughout the year?

A. Yes. All sixth graders are assigned a locker as well as a gym locker. The sixth grade teachers are encouraging students to plan ahead so they go to the locker periodically during the day and carry only the books they need rather than a large book bag. It would be helpful if students used a pencil pouch to bring pens, pencils, and supplies to class.

Q. How can I check on my child's grades, assignments, and work missed?

A. We are a Google school. Teachers use Google Classroom and parents have access to ParentPortal which provides current grades, assignments completed/owed as well as attendance, discipline, and progress and report cards.

Q. What are Progress Reports?

A. Progress Reports are written communications used by teachers to inform parents of student progress during the period of time between report cards. Progress Reports are available to you electronically through ParentPortal; dates are listed on the district calendar. Directions for registering in ParentPortal were sent with opening of school information and can be found on our MSHS Homepage under the Parents tab.

Q. How and when do students receive report cards?

A. Report cards are also sent electronically through Parent Portal. Days indicating the end of the marking period are listed on the District Calendar; the posting of report cards and progress reports are announced through Tuesday Newsday and the District Calendar.

Q. What sports programs are available for sixth grade students?

A. According the New York State regulation, sixth grade students cannot participate on interscholastic teams.

Q. What other co-curricular activities are available for sixth grade students?

A. Students in sixth grade are encouraged to participate in such activities as the Middle School Student Forum, the Sixth Grade Class Government (Student Forum), the MS Drama Club, the Musical, the Munch Bunch, the MS Art Club, the Memory Book Club, Book Club, and Club Español. Other activities are arranged based on student interest and availability of chaperones and advisors. The complete list of co-curricular activities is available on the district web page.

Q. How can my child run for sixth grade Student Forum class office?

A. The class meeting is held during the opening weeks of school. Duties and responsibilities of class officers are discussed. Students are asked to think about running for office. Students voice a desire to run and petitions are distributed. The need to petition class members for support is explained. Candidates are introduced and allowed to seek signatures. Campaign speeches are given. Posters are hung in the middle school and election is by secret ballot.

Q. How can my child get extra help from a teacher?

A. All teachers are available at least two days a week, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday from 2:15 p.m. to 2:55 p.m. for extra help. Teachers are also available during student lunch periods through the SGA (Small Group Assistance) program.

Q. How can my child get home if he or she stays to participate in after-school activities?

A. Students can take the 3:45 p.m. bus if they are remaining with a teacher after school. This bus is available on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Parents often arrange to pick up their children after school. In all cases, students must be with a teacher or chaperone when staying beyond the regular school day. Students remain in the cafeteria, supervised, until late buses are available.

Q. When is detention held and how is it assigned?

A. Detention is assigned by either the classroom teacher or a building administrator as a consequence of student behavior that violates school rules. Sixth grade students may be assigned detention during their lunch period or after-school detention. Students receive 24-hour notice if required to stay after school.

Q. Who can attend middle school parties, dances, and other middle school events?

A. These middle school events are open to students in grades 6 - 8 only. They are chaperoned by teachers, administrators, and sometimes PTO parents, and are generally held from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. unless noted. Middle school students are not invited to attend high school dances, nor can high school students participate in middle school events. Occasionally, high school students sponsor middle school events as a service project under the supervision of a teacher or adult advisor. The cost of the event is advertised in school through posters and the morning announcements. Students can also purchase snacks at the events. Parents are asked to pick up students at the announced close of the activity.

Q. How are classes organized in the 6th grade?

A. All classes are heterogeneously grouped with students of all abilities. There are also special classes based on the individualized needs of special education students.

Q. Are there opportunities for acceleration in 6th grade?

A. There are no accelerated classes in 6th grade. There are opportunities for enrichment, however, within the regular classroom and through the Gifted and Talented Program.

Q. Where can I get additional information about school programs, practices and policies?

A. At the start of the school year, you will be asked electronically to review and accept various policies through Family ID. The Middle School Parent - Student Handbook and the Middle School Curriculum Guide is available through the district website. These documents together with the district calendar will serve as excellent references throughout the school year.

Q. How can I learn more about what is happening at the middle school/high school?

A. Tuesday/Newsday continues at the middle/high school to keep parents updated on school events. Invitations to meetings, information and special activities are all posted on the district website on Tuesday. The website is also an excellent source of information celebrating the achievements of students and faculty. For those of you who follow Twitter our school can be found @NS_Tigers

