

Welcome to the Sixth Grade!

2022- 2023

Overarching Philosophy

Welcome to Sutton Middle School! In a society that places increasing demands on its citizens to become lifelong learners and active members of society, Sutton Middle School must prepare its students to meet these demands in a positive and creative way. At all times, we should base our actions on a commitment to the self-worth, talents, and development of our individual students. We recognize that a solid parent-teacher and community-school partnership in the education of any student is necessary to ensure success. Therefore, the cooperation and involvement of parents, as well as the community at large, in the life of the school must be actively sought. Finally, we also recognize its primary responsibility to provide opportunities for academic achievement and positive peer socialization through in-school and extracurricular activities. These experiences, which lead to a sense of self-worth, belonging, and school spirit, must accommodate a wide range of student interests.

Student Open House - August (date to be determined)

Parent/Caregiver Open House - September (date to be determined)

Parent Conferences -

- **Held in November:**
 - Scheduling begins after October progress reports
 - Scheduled on a first-come-first-served basis
 - We encourage school-home communication - these conferences are designed to address any concerns early on!
 - **On conference day**, check in at the main office
- **1 to 1 format is used.**
- **Main goal of the conference is to ensure the academic success of your child!**

Report Cards/ IParent - PLEASE SIGN UP FOR IPARENT

- **Select Middle School on the website**
- **Under "for parents tab" - click on the IParent Information link and follow the directions**
- **If you already have an IParent account and need to add your 6th grader - Call Kim Andrade in the office**
- **Do not create a second account**
- **Once you are registered, you can log into IParent.**

Grading System

- Report card format and distribution:
 - Uses traditional letter grades: A, B, C, D in place of 1 - 4 marking system
 - Grade range is listed on the bottom of the report card
 - Progress Reports - issued halfway through the quarter. You will receive an Alert Now message to check grades online (IParent)
 - Report Cards - at the end of quarters 1, 2, and 3, students will be given their report cards in school.
 - Fourth quarter report cards are mailed home within one week of school closing.

- Suggestions to help your student:
 - Transition from 1 to 4 system to grades A - F system may be concerning for your student. Discuss the expectations for your student's grades with him/her.

Schedule

All sixth graders will have five core courses: English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Computers. In addition to this, they will have a third period special and a seventh period class. Unlike the elementary school, students rotate from class to class for six periods a day (dropping one class daily).

Period 1 Core

Period 2 Core

Advisory

Period 3 Special (Art, Music, PE, Science & Technology, Research Skills)

Period 4 Core

Period 5 Core

Period 6 Core

Period 7 Band, Chorus, Academic Support, and/or Communications

Advisory/Snack

All students have a daily advisory period (9:23-9:48). During advisory, students can take a break, do homework/study, see teachers for extra help, make-up assignments, socialize with friends, and eat a snack. Breakfast/snack is available in the cafeteria daily in the morning before school and at advisory. **A healthy snack is highly encouraged. Drinks should have a lid or cap, and soda is prohibited. Students may bring water bottles to class.**

Band

Band is scheduled during Period 7 and is considered an academic class. Students are obligated to follow through in their band commitment throughout the year. Additionally, as a band member, students are required to participate in the lesson program. Lessons occur throughout the day and are scheduled to rotate through different periods on a weekly basis. Opportunities to make up work are not provided during the school day. Therefore, it is imperative for band students to make arrangements with their teachers during advisory or after school to make up work/tests/quizzes missed due to lessons.

Chorus

6th grade students have the opportunity to join the chorus! Chorus is also considered an academic class and students are obligated to fulfill their commitment throughout the year.

School Day Drop off/ Pick up Procedures

Parent drop off and pick up is in the circle, then students should enter the school cafeteria. The cafeteria is open and available to students at 7:00 with supervision beginning at 7:15. There is no before care available at the middle school. Students will be released from the cafeteria at the start of the day, which is 7:25. At the end of the day, students are asked to exit the same door to find their ride. It is the responsibility of the parent and students to make arrangements prior to the end of the day. There is no need to notify the school office unless there is a change of plans that arises during the school day. If a student arrives past 7:30, he/she needs to report to the middle school office to sign-in for the day. If a student needs to be dismissed, a parent/guardian must come into the office to sign him/her out. There is no after care available to students, and there is no late bus.

School Emergencies

If there is ever a school emergency, parents will be contacted via an Alert Now message. Parents are asked to verify the numbers and emails on the salmon colored student biographical sheet that is given to students at the beginning of the year. If there are any changes that occur during the school year, please contact the office.

Buses

Bus passes will be distributed to all students during the second or third week of school. There is no bus fee for sixth graders who ride the bus, per Massachusetts state law. When a student enters the seventh grade, parents who would like to purchase a bus pass for their student must do so before the cut-off date, which is posted on the website. Students may only ride **their** bus and may **not** take another bus to go to a friend's house. Students must have their bus pass in their possession to ride the bus. The bus driver has the authority to maintain orderly behavior of students on school buses. The bus driver will report any student who does not comply with the rules and regulations below. In general students are required to follow the same rules that apply during school hours. The rules and regulations for the privilege of riding a school bus are the same as if students are at school. Students must conduct themselves in a respectful and safe manner such as not to distract the driver or endanger other students. Bus rules are found in the student handbook. Please note: ***Depending on the severity and frequency of a student's misconduct on the bus, that student may be suspended from riding the bus for a period of time.***

Nurse

The nurse is available to students throughout the day. She will only distribute Tylenol, Advil, and antacids if they have turned in their over the counter permission form, which is part of the school opening paperwork (found on the school website under the "For Parents" tab. Parents/guardians will be contacted by the nurse if she determines that a student should be dismissed. Students should not text or call parents directly to be dismissed due to illness. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the nurse due to any student medical concerns.

Contacting Teachers

Teachers may be contacted through the voicemail system or by email. All extensions are available on the school website. The preferred method to contact teachers is via email. All email addresses are on the school website.

Website

The [school website](#) is a great way to find information. The middle school administration uses Alert Now messages and the school website as tools to communicate with parents. Parents are encouraged to visit the website on a weekly basis. Parents may also find information regarding homework, projects, tests, and quizzes on the grade level web pages/teacher Google Slides.

The sixth grade team has created a site for students and parents/guardians to access daily agendas, homework assignments, and after-school extra help schedules. It is recommended that students and parents use this site daily.

Link: <https://sites.google.com/suttonschools.net/6thgrade/sixth-grade>

Homework Expectations

Homework should take approximately twenty minutes per subject each night. Based on our drop schedule, it is possible that students may have more than twenty minutes of homework for one subject. An occasional note by a parent/guardian stating that homework was not done due to a family emergency will be accepted. If a situation arises, please contact the teachers directly. As homework is part of a student's academic grade, missing homework should be made up. All homework assignments should be written in the agenda for every subject. If students have no homework they will write in NHW. Also, all homework assignments are found on the school website under the sixth grade tab. If teachers find that a student is consistently missing homework, parents will be notified. Parents/caregivers are expected to regularly track student progress on iParent.

As a way to ensure that your child does not fall behind, students should use the homework page to keep up with their assignments.

Clubs and Sports

At the middle school, students may join a middle school athletic sports team starting in the seventh grade. Sixth graders are not allowed to participate due to the MIAA rules regarding J.V. and Varsity teams. Sixth grade students may participate in any clubs offered in the middle school such as ski club, edible art club, wiffle ball club, etc. The only sport available to sixth graders is the middle school cross country team.

Agendas

At the beginning of each school year, students are encouraged to purchase a student agenda at a low cost. Agendas in the sixth grade are part of the classroom routine. It is expected that all sixth graders will write their assignments in the agenda. In order to maintain a flow of communication between the teacher and home, teachers will typically use the agenda as a communication tool and has been found to be helpful in resolving student issues.

Binder Organization

At the sixth grade level, organization is a staple to a child's success. Teachers require binders as part of a student's supplies and materials. The 6th grade supply list will be posted on the school website.

Lunch Program - Please sign up!

At the middle school, we continue to use the Titan system. This system will provide convenient 24/7 access to prepayment service, account balances, and recent purchase history information. Parents will be able to manage the entire family's school lunch accounts from home or office and help empower children to make healthy lifestyle choices.

POS (POINT OF SALE SYSTEM) is a computerized system for school meals that has been used successfully since 2006. Students have their own personal lunchroom account based on their 4 digit student ID # and will be issued an ID card with a barcode. Students access their accounts using their ID cards which are scanned at every register. Ala carte items are separate and have varied costs.

Additionally, all menus and nutritional information are listed on the school website under the 'food service' tab.

Lockers

In the sixth grade, students are assigned a locker for the year. The sixth grade team will teach students how to operate the locks on their lockers during the first two weeks of school. Additionally, in their physical education rotation, students are encouraged to bring a lock with them on a daily basis so that they can lock up their clothes while participating in gym. Students should not bring in any valuables and place them in their lockers.

Student Absences

School attendance is essential to students' academic success. Students are expected to be punctual and prepared for all school responsibilities. Tardiness, absences, and dismissals will be verified. Any student who has been absent from school, tardy after 10:30 am, or dismissed prior to 10:30 am, is not eligible to participate in any extracurricular activity that is scheduled for the same day. A student arriving to school after 7:30 must report to the office and present his/her written note to receive a tardy pass. Students will not be admitted to their first period class without a tardy note after 7:30 am. Upon the fifth (5th) unexcused tardy in a given quarter and each subsequent tardy, the student will receive a detention. Parents will be notified on the fourth tardy. Examples of unexcused tardies include: missing a bus or leaving the house late, oversleeping, finishing homework or socializing. When a student is absent from school, a parent/guardian must call the middle school office before 9:00 am on the morning of the absence. Parents/guardians may call during non-school hours (581-1630) to report an absence. **For absences longer than three (3) consecutive days, parents/guardians must send a note from a health care provider to the school.**

Work Due to Absences

When absent, students and families are encouraged to use the sixth grade home page to keep up with any missed assignments as feasible. Parents/guardians may call the **middle school office** before 9:00 am on the second day of absence to request homework and missed classwork. As a general rule, students have one day for every day absent to complete missed assignments. All absences interfere with learning, and sustained absences can have a negative impact on students' achievement. Sutton Public Schools discourages parents/guardians from taking students for vacations during school time. Such absenteeism will disrupt the continuity of learning.

When a parent/guardian is aware that a student will be absent from school for more than two days, a pre-arranged absence form must be completed. The parent/guardian and student's teachers should complete this form, which can be obtained from the middle school office. Written assignments covering the work during pre-arranged missed absences are not guaranteed. **It is the responsibility of the student to see teachers for missed work.** Work from class may be collected and given to the student upon return. Hands-on activities such as labs, tests, and quizzes need to be made up at advisory or after school.

Office Phone/Cell Phone Use

Students are allowed to use the office phone to make phone calls. All phone calls should be made between classes using the office phone. Students will not have access to their cell phones during the day. If students are allowed to bring in cell phones, they must adhere to the handbook rules. In order to foster and develop student responsibility, students will be encouraged to be prepared to fully participate in the school day and will be discouraged from calling home for assignments, books, instruments, etc. Lastly, please do not send text messages to your student. Contact the main office and we will deliver the message.

Responsibilities & Expectations

As a middle school student, students are expected to be responsible for the following:

- Engage in learning by asking questions and participating in class discussions.
- Gather necessary papers, books, binders, and instruments at the end of the day.
- Complete all homework assignments, which includes studying for tests and quizzes.
- Bring all materials, such as homework, books, binders, and instruments to school.
- Approach teachers for missed assignments, tests, and quizzes.
- Missed assignments should be made up as soon as possible.
- Ask for extra help, if needed.

Computers and Internet Safety

The Sutton Public School District is committed to providing the student body and faculty with a technology rich learning environment. We are committed to ensuring that our students have access to safe and secure learning opportunities and use the appropriate filtering software to keep students safe. All users and parents must sign a policy statement prior to using computers, network, and Internet connections anywhere on school property. Students will be given a school issued Chromebook that they will need to bring with them every day.

Bullying vs. Social Conflict

Bullying is defined as, "A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself." The middle school takes bullying very seriously and investigates all reports. Many times we find that students will have social conflicts with each other and is not considered to be a bullying incident. Social conflict is handled through mediation with the assistance of the administration and guidance.

Discipline

All students are expected to maintain respectful behavior throughout the school day. All school rules can be found in the student handbook, which is posted on the school website. If there are issues in school due to behavior and the administration is involved, a parent/guardian is usually contacted.

Extra Help Procedures

Teachers maintain after school hours from 2:00 - 2:30 two days a week, excluding Monday. Students are encouraged to sign up for after school help if they feel they need extra assistance in a subject. The sixth grade team strongly encourages students to use their school email accounts and/or speak to teachers directly in regards to after school help. Once after school assistance is completed, students may wait in the cafeteria or in the lobby.

Computer Instruction

This is a comprehensive class for sixth grade students. Students are introduced to the Google ecosystem that they will be using through middle school and high school. This includes Gmail, Google Drive, G Suite, and Google Classroom. Other class topics include navigation on the Sutton Public Schools' Network, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Computer Operations, and Effective Searching on the Internet. There are interdisciplinary lessons with World Geography, ELA, Math, Science, and Technology Standards. Students will

also learn more about the Sutton Public Schools' Acceptable Use Policy and copyright laws. Throughout the year, students practice better proficiency in their word processing abilities.

Parent Involvement

If parents would like to get involved, there are many opportunities through the PTO. Use the website to contact them or reach out to suttonmspto@gmail.com, as parent volunteers are essential at TNOs. Also, family members are encouraged to communicate with the teachers for volunteer opportunities.

TNO and TNO Procedures

Each year the PTO, with the assistance of parent volunteers, plan Teens' Night Out (TNO) events to occur throughout the year on Fridays, from 7 - 10 p.m. Parents and volunteers are necessary to make these TNOs happen. The entire middle school is invited to attend. School rules and the dress code will be enforced throughout the event. The entrance fee is \$10.00. Pizza, snacks, and drinks are available for purchase at the event. Student activities during the night include a dance, crafts, board games, open gym, and a movie. At 10 p.m., parents are asked to gather in the lobby of the school to pick up their student.

What should I do if I have problems or concerns?

Many of the concerns regarding the academics of your child are best met by emailing the teacher directly. If you have other school related issues, questions, or concerns, then please contact the office.