

# Welcome to Sixth Grade, Bursley Students and Families!

We hope that this letter finds you enjoying the last few weeks of summer vacation and beginning to prepare for the year ahead!

Sixth grade is going to be a memorable year, filled with exciting challenges and rewarding experiences. A primary focus for our year together will be growing in the areas of organization, responsibility, and moral character. Strategies to be successful in these areas, combined with high academic expectations, will (we believe) prepare your sixth grader for Junior High and beyond.

It is our hope that this packet will answer many of your questions about sixth grade, and will help you prepare for our year together. We look forward to meeting you at Open House next week and answering any questions that remain.

Enjoy the rest of your summer!

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## Sixth Grade Staff and Schedule

Mr. Huck and Mrs. Steele are the sixth grade classroom teachers. Regardless of homeroom placement, all sixth graders will spend time with both Mr. Huck and Mrs. Steele each school day.

Mr. Huck is beginning his second year at Bursley after teaching sixth grade Language Arts for seven years in Milan, Michigan. Mr. Huck and his wife have two sons, Louis and Harrison. Mr. Huck is a graduate of the University of Michigan and teaches reading groups, writing, and science to Bursley sixth graders.

Mrs. Steele is beginning her second year in sixth grade at Bursley, after teaching fifth grade for seven years. Mrs. Steele and her husband have one daughter, Tessa Mae. Mrs. Steele is a graduate of GVSU and teaches morning math groups, math lab and vocabulary, and social studies to Bursley sixth graders.

Mrs. VanDyken is an important member of our sixth grade teaching team too, supporting our students and their families through her role as an Intervention Specialist. Mrs. VanDyken and her husband have two children, Trenton and Alexa. Mrs. VanDyken is a graduate of GVSU and teaches Fusion reading to Bursley sixth graders. Mrs. VanDyken also supports students in math and writing.

Our primary goal as a teaching team is to meet the needs and challenge the talents of each of our students to the very best of our ability. To help make this happen, sixth grade students will be placed on teams with peers of similar academic ability for much of our math and language arts instruction. Students will be part of either the Green Team or the White Team, and their team placement may change as the year progresses and we encounter different units of study. Groupings will be based on pretests given at the beginning of each unit.

Sixth graders will spend some time in their homeroom groups, too. Each day homeroom groups will attend read aloud and science with Mr. Huck, and social skills and social studies with Mrs. Steele. Students will also attend their "specials" with their homeroom class, following the schedule below:

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>H6 Homeroom</b>	Spanish (11:30-12:20)	Music (11:30-12:20)	Band, Orchestra, Tech Lit – "BOTL" (2:05-2:55)	Art (11:30-12:20)	PE (1:15-2:05)
<b>S6 Homeroom</b>	Music (11:30-12:20)	PE (1:15-2:05)		Spanish (11:30-12:20)	Art (11:30-12:20)

## About the Attached Documents

We have attached five documents to share additional information with you. Below is a brief description of each.

### Bursley 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Supply List

This supply list was sent home with fifth graders on the last day of school in June, but we know that sometimes they can get misplaced when backpacks are cleaned out for summer adventures. Please take a look at the requested school supplies and optional donations.

### Bursley Sixth Grade Classroom Effort Rubric

As a teaching team, we strive to communicate students' level of effort in the classroom with parents on a regular basis. We also believe that work ethic and classroom behavior should be a separate score than that shown on an assignment or assessment. To make this happen, we have created the attached Classroom Effort Rubric to summarize our expectations for sixth grade work ethic and behavior.

Each sixth grader will begin the school year at a level 2 (Meets Expectations) for each row of the rubric, and for each subject of their school day. As students demonstrate effort that exceeds expectations in a given area, they will move up to a level 1. If effort in a given area becomes inconsistent or becomes a concern, the student's score for a given row of the rubric will be changed to a level 3 or 4. Current scores will be accessible to parents for each subject, at any time, by accessing your child's PowerSchool Gradebook account.

### Bursley Sixth Grade News, August Edition

Our teaching team will send home a newsletter biweekly, the weeks that the Bursley Buzz is *not* sent home by our office staff. We have attached an "August Edition" that summarizes units of study for the year ahead, and includes some important dates and reminders. Copied on the back of this newsletter is an overview of a typical week in sixth grade for anyone curious as to how our schedule all fits together. Please take a look!

### Connect with us using Remind.com

Check out this handout for more information about a unique way for parents to stay updated on homework expectations, special events, due dates, and topics being studied.

### Mark Your Calendars

We have a busy semester ahead! Fundraising and preparing for Sixth Grade Camp leads to many due dates and deadlines. Check out this summary, and consider adding these dates to your family calendar or posting this page somewhere in your home.

## Final Notes

We will be giving the sixth graders a "working snack time" each morning. We ask that you only send healthy snacks to be consumed during this time, as we are trying to fuel our bodies and minds for learning. Great healthy snacks include fruits and vegetables, graham crackers or goldfish crackers, pretzels, dry cereal, fruit snacks, or cheese and crackers.

Last but not least, we have one request. We have put together an online **Family Information Survey** that we would like to have completed before the start of the school year. We will have this available on laptops at Open House, but we invite you to complete it in advance by visiting the website listed below and answering a few questions. All responses will be kept confidential and will only be seen by Mr. Huck, Mrs. Steele, and Mrs. VanDyken. Thank you, in advance, for your help!

**<http://goo.gl/hLBWMZ>**