

Ron Thiele, Superintendent

March 1, 2020

Dear Incoming 6th Grade Parents:

The purpose of this letter is to explain the Issaquah School District's advanced and accelerated options in English Language Arts, Math, and Science for students in middle school whose personal goals, interests, and abilities would benefit from these options. Families interested in Advanced Language Arts, or skipping a year of science or math content should consider the following guidance.

Students choosing advanced/accelerated courses should:

- reflect student's interest and aspirations in that course of study
- have excellent study habits and organizational skills.
- have strong communication and reading skills for engaging with rigorous material.
- demonstrate motivation, maturity, perseverance and stamina for learning challenging material.
- be active participants in all aspects of the classroom, including discussions, group or individual projects, and labs.
- consider the increased time commitment to studies outside of the school day. Please consider all responsibilities, including sports, music and club affiliations.
- consider the possibility that grades could be lower than if students took the typical course sequence(s).
- consider the possibility that by skipping courses in math and science your student may have some gaps in content knowledge.

This is an important decision for students and families. In Language Arts, this decision will be made yearly. However, for math and science, once a student starts a path above grade level it is not possible to change course without repeating content at some point in time. Below is additional information to consider as you make your course selections. The readiness criteria is designed to serve as a guide. The SBA scores are from 4th grade and may not reflect your student's current academic performance and abilities.

Advanced Language Arts Readiness Criteria	CC7/8 Math Readiness Criteria (skipping content)	Science Pathway 2 Readiness Criteria
4 th grade SBA in ELA score: Level 4	Common Core 6 Mastery Assessment: 80% or higher	4 th grade SBA in ELA: Level 4
5 th grade Report Card Grade in Reading and Writing: 4	4 th Grade SBA in Math: Level 4	4 th grade SBA in Math: Level 4

The following pages have more information to consider when choosing middle school math and science placement.

Board of Directors

Harlan Gallinger • Marnie Maraldo • Anne Moore • Sydne Mullings • Suzanne Weaver

Families should be aware that high school level credit courses taken in the 2019-2020 school year or LATER will automatically be added to the student's transcript, this is in accordance with District Regulation 2410. Students can request to have the course transcribed only for credit toward graduation and not include the grade in the student's high school GPA calculation. Students can also request to have these credits removed completely from their transcript. Students should consult with their counselor to make this request, which must be done no later than the end of their junior year of high school. **Please note that once the grades and/or credits are deleted from the high school transcript, the grade and credit cannot be added back and will permanently be excluded from the student's grade point average.** This will impact students that choose to skip CC6 in math and pathway 2 in science.

The course selection form will be used for course placement. **Please complete and return the Course and Elective Selection forms to your student's fifth grade teacher by March 18, 2020.**

Sincerely,

Rich Mellish
Executive Director
Teaching and Learning Services

PLEASE RETURN TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL WITH YOUR REGISTRATION MATERIALS

Fall 2020 / School Year 2020-2021

Course Selection Form

Advanced /Accelerated Selection for Current 5th Grade Students

Student Name (printed)

Elementary School

Middle School

_____ Regular 6th Grade Language Arts **OR** _____ Advanced 6th Grade Language Arts

_____ CC6 Math **OR** _____ CC7/8 Math (Skipping Content)*

*Please reference the Readiness Criteria in the Math Pathways document included in this packet.

_____ 6th Grade Life Science **OR** _____ 7th Grade Earth and Space Science*
(Science Pathway 1) (Science Pathway 2)

*Please reference the Readiness Criteria in the Science Pathways document included in this packet.

I affirm that I reviewed the course selection materials to make the above choices.

Student Name (printed)

Parent Name (printed)

Date

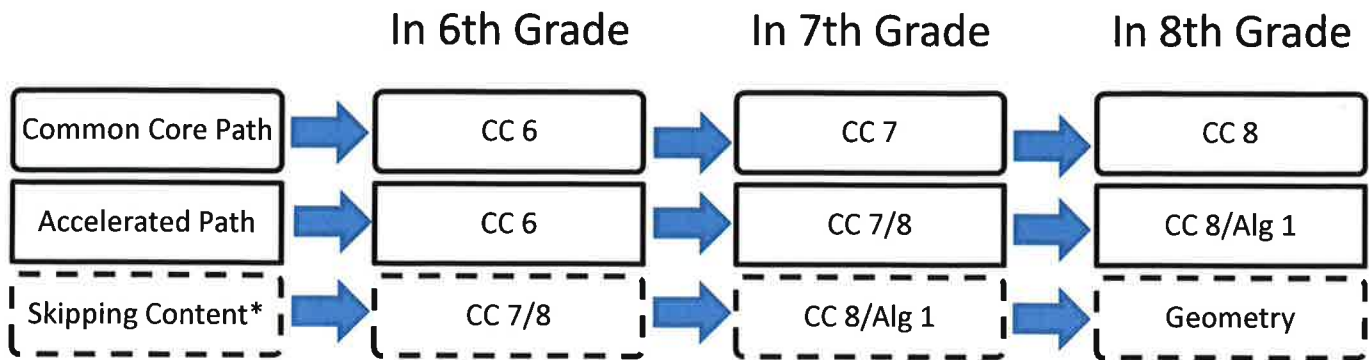
Student Signature

Parent Signature

Questions? Please contact the Beaver Lake Middle School Registrar, Diana Henneuse, at (425) 837-4160 or henneused@issaquah.wednet.edu.

Please return your Course and Elective Selection forms to your 5th grade teacher by **Wednesday, March 18.**

MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH COURSES



* Selecting this option means that your child will SKIP 6th grade math **and** choose COMPACTED PACING through middle school. Students are responsible for mastery of CC6 math skills and concepts.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO NOW?

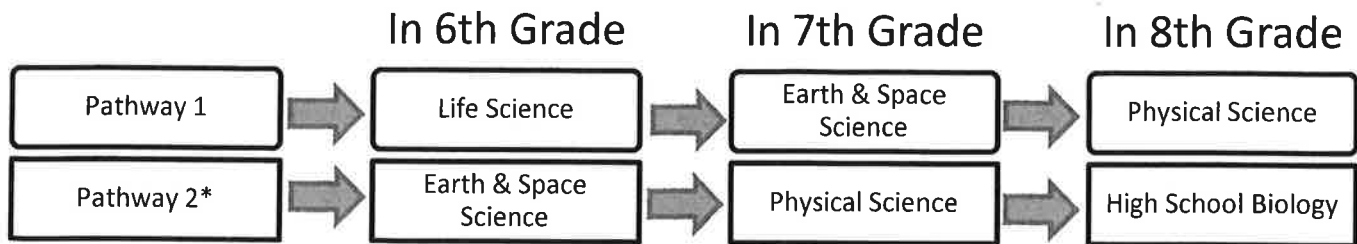
- MOST STUDENTS WILL BEGIN MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH IN CC 6.** Unless you are considering skipping this course, **select the CC 6 option** on your child's math placement form and return it to your child's fifth grade teacher. You will have the opportunity to decide between **Common Core Grade Level Pacing** vs. **Compacted Pacing** at the end of 6th grade.

IS MY CHILD READY FOR CC 7/8? The only decision to be made in the spring of 5th grade is considering whether your child can demonstrate sufficient mastery of 6th grade Common Core math skills and concepts to indicate readiness to skip **CC 6** and begin middle school in **CC 7/8**. Selecting this option means that your child will SKIP 6th grade math and choose COMPACTED PACING through middle school.

- MASTERY OF 6TH GRADE COMMON CORE CONTENT STANDARDS:** Some students may be able to demonstrate sufficient mastery of **CC 6** skills and concepts to begin middle school in **CC 7/8**. To evaluate whether your student may be ready to skip **CC 6**, please visit <http://www.issaquah.wednet.edu/academics/core/math/cc6masterytest.htm> and have your student take the online **Common Core 6 Math Mastery Assessment**. (A score of **80% or higher** would provide evidence of sufficient mastery.)
- STANDARDS FOR MATHEMATICAL PRACTICE:** Common Core expects much more than just procedural skill and fluency. Students are expected to achieve deep conceptual understanding, to demonstrate critical thinking skills, to make connections, to persevere in problem-solving, to apply their learning to solving problems in real world contexts, to justify their reasoning, and to clearly communicate their math thinking. Read more about the *Standards for Mathematical Practice* at <http://www.corestandards.org/Math/Practice>.
- COMMITMENT TO COMPACTED PACING:** Be aware that students who skip **CC 6** will continue with **Compacted Pacing** and should be prepared for the increased rigor and vigorous pacing of this sequence.
- READINESS CRITERIA:** Families who wish to select this placement should consider the Readiness Criteria below. The Readiness criteria is designed to serve as a guide. The SBA scores are from 4th grade and may not reflect your student's current academic performance and abilities.
 - A score of **80% or higher** on the online **Common Core 6 Math Mastery Assessment**.
 - A score **Level 4** on the **4th grade SBA in Math**.

QUESTIONS? Please visit <http://www.issaquah.wednet.edu/academics/core/math/Default.aspx>, talk to your child's middle school counselor or contact Susan Ford, Secondary Math Specialist, at fords@issaquah.wednet.edu or Dawn Wallace, Director of Teaching and Learning, at wallaced@issaquah.wednet.edu.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENCE COURSES



* Selecting this option means that your child will SKIP Life Science.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO NOW?

- **MOST STUDENTS WILL BEGIN MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENCE IN LIFE SCIENCE.** Unless you are considering skipping this course, **select the Pathway 1 option** on your child's science placement form and return it to your child's fifth grade teacher.

IS MY CHILD READY FOR SCIENCE PATH TWO? The decision made in the spring of 5th grade is considering whether your child has maturity, motivation, and desire to accelerate in middle school science. **Selecting this option means that your child will SKIP Life Science.** This content will not be repeated.

- **READING AT LEAST TWO GRADES ABOVE GRADE LEVEL STANDARD:** The Biology textbook used in 8th grade is written at a 10th grade reading level. For many students, this will be their first experience with an academic text. Being able to read for comprehension is important for students to participate in biology class. To evaluate whether your student may be ready to use the **Biology Textbook in 8th Grade**, please consider your student's score on the **4th Grade SBA in Reading**.
- **MATH READINESS TO SUPPORT PATHWAYS IN HIGH SCHOOL:** When considering your child's science pathway, it is important to consider your child's math readiness. Due to the math requirements in high school science classes, selecting certain science pathways may necessitate adding a non-algebra-based (algebra-based sciences include chemistry and physics) science elective during freshman year or accelerating math in high school, if appropriate for your child. To evaluate whether your student may be prepared to take algebra-based science in 9th grade, please consider your student's **4th grade SBA in Math** score.
- **LAB BEHAVIORS:** Students should consistently demonstrate maturity and cautious behaviors in lab situations where chemical use and safety is a concern. Impulsive behaviors will jeopardize a student's safety.
- **READINESS CRITERIA:** Families who wish to select this placement should consider the Readiness Criteria below. The Readiness criteria is designed to serve as a guide. The SBA scores are from 4th grade and may not reflect your student's current academic performance and abilities.
 - A score of **Level 4** on the **4th Grade SBA in Reading**.
 - A score of **Level 4** on the **4th grade SBA in Math**.

QUESTIONS? Please visit <http://www.issaquah.wednet.edu/academics/core/science> , talk to your child's middle school counselor, or contact Lena Jones, Secondary Science Specialist, at jonesl@issaquah.wednet.edu or Dawn Wallace, Director of Teaching and Learning, at wallaced@issaquah.wednet.edu.

Course Title and Description – Year Long Elective Classes

Beginning Band: Students will learn new instruments in a group setting starting with flute, clarinet, trumpet and trombone with opportunities to switch to sax, percussion, double reeds and specialty instruments mid-year. Students are responsible for instrument, two books (CD or tape available) and binder. Home practice is required. Activities include home concerts, assemblies, league solo/ensemble contest and league band festival.

Intermediate/Advanced Band: Advanced Band is a performing class primarily for 7th and 8th graders and is usually split by grade level. 6th graders may enroll with teacher permission. Students are responsible for an instrument, two books (CD or tape available), and binder. Home practice is required. Activities include home concerts, assemblies and league solo/ensemble contest, league band festival.

Women's Chorus: Women's Choir is a performance-based class for students who enjoy singing and learning a variety of music together. Students in the Choir will learn "new" vocal techniques to improve their singing and some music theory and history. Students will have the opportunity to perform at concerts, assemblies, festivals, and community events. Our chorus members will also have the opportunity to participate in league festivals where they will have the option to sing solos and/or participate in small groups.

Boys Chorus: Boys Choir is a performance-based class designed especially for boys who enjoy singing and learning a variety of music. Although we do sing songs as a boys group only, we also combine with the girls in the advanced chorus for concerts and festivals. Being part of this group will allow the boys to learn specific techniques to improve their singing skills while learning theory and history. The Boys Choir will perform at concerts, assemblies, festivals, and community events. They will also have the opportunity to participate in league festivals where they will have the option to sing solos and/or participate in small groups.

Orchestra: Orchestra is a performing class for students wishing to play Violin, Viola, Cello or Bass. No experience is necessary. Many students play piano as well as learn a string instrument. Students wishing to "only" play piano, and learn how to accompany the orchestra, need to have a minimum of 4 years private lessons, sight-read well and comfortably play 8th and 16th notes and chords. Students will have the opportunity to play in large and small groups for concerts, work on arranging and composing on their instrument, and prepare for field trips in 7th and 8th grade. We play a wide variety of music styles including classical, movie music, pop, rock, jazz, and fiddle. Please note on your form what instrument you would like to play (can be changed in September) and if you already have orchestra instrument experience. If you are an advanced player, you can be placed in the 7th grade class with permission from Mrs. Vail.

Advanced Orchestra: Advanced Orchestra is a performing class for 7th and 8th graders and is usually split by grade level. 6th graders may enroll with teacher permission. Students wishing to "only" play piano, and learn how to accompany the orchestra, need to have a minimum of 2 years private lessons, sight-read well and comfortably play multiple notes with both hands. Students will apply the techniques learned in 6th grade orchestra and expand on them (keys, rhythms, bowing styles, styles of music, advanced vibrato, music graded 1.5-4). Students will have the opportunity to play in large and small groups, learn history, theory, and work on arranging and composing on their instrument. We will take trips to the Washington State Fair (Puyallup), other performances outside school in Bellevue or Seattle, and the Eastshore League festivals.

Trimester Elective Rotation: Students will take one trimester of Intro to Leadership, one trimester of STEM Sampler and one additional trimester of Physical Education.

Intro to Leadership: Students will learn the essential characteristics of a leader on both an individual and community level, and have opportunities to practice their skills by putting leadership into action. We will use components of Character Strong. This course will also review skills such as self-advocating, organization, acts of service, and helping with the transition to middle school. Students will learn how to get involved in school beyond the classroom.

STEM Sampler: This exploratory class will introduce pre-engineering concepts to 6th graders. In this class, students will learn about simple machines and propulsion by designing and building their own electric powered windmill. They will explore building and design in our school shop by crafting a fine woods project. Then, as a culminating unit, students will apply their understanding of mechanics and electronics by building and learning how to operate a high performance remote control car. Students who are interested in studying engineering concepts, as a lead-in to our 7th and 8th grade CTE classes, should think about taking this class.

**Beaver Lake Middle School
Elective Course Request Form
6th Grade – School Year 2020/2021**

Name: _____

Course Schedule for 6th Grade

Language Arts – Self Select	Full Year (3 Trimesters)
Social Studies	Full Year (3 Trimesters)
Mathematics – Self Select	Full Year (3 Trimesters)
Science – Self Select	Full Year (3 Trimesters)
PE/Tech Smart/Health	Full Year (3 Trimesters)
Elective/Support	See below

I will **NOT** be attending BLMS next year. Do not schedule me for classes.

You may select 1 full year elective **or** the Trimester Elective Rotation

Full Year Electives – Select 1

____ Beginning Band ____ Intermediate /Advanced Band (only with Teacher permission)

____ Orchestra – Instrument: ____ Violin ____ Viola ____ Cello ____ Bass

Previous Experience in Band or Orchestra? ____ Yes ____ Years ____ No

____ Women’s Chorus ____ Boys Chorus

OR

Trimester Elective Rotation

____ One Trimester each of: Intro to Leadership, STEM Sampler and PE

Note: Final course offerings are dependent on staffing and the number of requests for each course.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____