

Pine Mountain Middle School 6th Grade Experience Handbook



Our Mission

One Team, One Goal -- Student Success!

Our Vision

Prepare students for high school success.

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6th Grade Overview

Welcome to middle school! 6th grade is a big transition year as students adjust to the middle school way of life. During the school day, students rotate through 5 academic classes and 2 Connections classes. All students are enrolled in on-level classes unless they qualify for the advanced or AC (advanced content) classes. In addition to advanced and AC classes, we also offer small group and co-taught settings for students receiving special education services. The information below provides a brief description of the content studied in 6th Grade.

English Language Arts

In sixth grade English language arts, students continue to develop an appreciation of written and spoken language. Throughout the year, students will read a variety of informational and literary texts. Writing skills will focus on argumentative and informative/explanatory analysis essays. Brief or sustained research may be required to support the writing focus. They will study and apply grammar, use, and understand vocabulary, and engage in collaborative discussions.

Math

By the end of math 6, students will divide and multiply fractions, compute fluently with multi-digit numbers and find common factors and multiples. Students will understand ratio concepts and use ratio reasoning to solve problems, apply and extend previous understandings of arithmetic to algebraic expressions, reason about and solve one-variable equations and inequalities. Students will be able to represent and analyze quantitative relationships between dependent and independent variables, solve real-world and mathematical problems involving area, surface area, and volume. Students will develop understanding of statistical variability. Students will apply and extend previous understandings of numbers to the system of rational numbers. The advanced math class will include a unit on integers

Social Studies

The sixth-grade social studies curriculum is part of a world studies program. It encompasses geography, history, government, and economics, and their influence on the civilization of particular countries. Skills such as map reading, data analysis, and research skills are integrated throughout the curriculum. Through this course of study, students will gain an awareness of cultural diversity and their role in the global community.

Science

The sixth-grade earth science curriculum provides students with the necessary knowledge and skills in earth science. The course is designed to provide students with an overview of the common concepts in earth science including but not limited to meteorology, geology, astronomy, hydrology, and impact of humans on the earth, resources utilization and conservation. These concepts are investigated through observing, collecting, summarizing, analyzing, and presenting the results of scientific investigations and fieldwork so students can develop the appropriate skills in science as inquiry.

Reading/ Literacy Apps

In sixth grade, all students will take a Reading or Literacy Apps class based on their reading. Proficiency. This class will focus on close reading of texts as students develop an understanding of how key details support a text's center idea. Through this class students will develop reading strategies and reading stamina to support their learning in all academic classes.

Connections

Students attend two periods of connections each day. Chorus, band, and orchestra are year-long, and students will not be moved from these classes without director permission. Other connection classes change each quarter to give students the opportunity to be exposed to different disciplines.

Chorus (year-long)

Chorus is a year-long, performance-based class. All course objectives pertain to the experience of performing choral music. Students will learn to read music at sight (sight-reading), notate music, use proper breath support, use appropriate posture for singing, use good diction, sing in a head voice with appropriate tone, and light choreography. They will experience music of all genres and many different cultures.

Band (year-long)

The purpose of the band program is to give students a solid foundation in the basics of music and to provide the opportunity to enhance this knowledge through performance. The following topics will be covered as our skills develop throughout the year: proper posture, breathing techniques, characteristic tone quality, rhythmic studies, articulation, major scales, musical terms, music theory, music history and band literature.

Orchestra (year-long)

The following topics will be covered as our skills develop through the year: characteristic tone quality of string instruments, rhythmic studies, bowing technique development, left hand finger patterns, scales and arpeggios, ear training, music reading, music vocabulary, shifting, vibrato, music theory, music history, composer study, orchestral literature, and musical creativity.

Physical Education (year-long)

Students who are not enrolled in a music class may have a year long PE class. Our goal is for all students to be introduced to and learn about a variety of physical activities, team and individual sports, as well as to increase overall fitness and health.

Project Lead the Way (quarter-long)

The purpose of Project Lead the Way is to develop technological literacy as part of all students' fundamental education through an activity-based study of past, present, and future technological systems and their resources, processes, and impact on society.

Art (quarter-long)

Students will participate in both written and studio production activities which include; **art history, art criticism, aesthetics, and art production**. Through looking at, talking about, and making art, students can develop a positive appreciation for the arts as well as an informed understanding of the art process. We also offer a high school art class to 8th graders that is based solely on teacher recommendation.

Spanish (quarter-long)

This class is designed for the novice Spanish speaker. Students will build skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing during instructional lessons. Gradually students will begin using Spanish to respond to questions, ask questions, make requests, and navigate through basic introductory conversations. Additionally, the culture, perspectives, practices, and products of various Spanish-speaking countries will be explored.

Physical Education (quarter-long)

Our goal is for all students to be introduced to and learn about a variety of physical activities, team and individual sports, as well as to increase overall fitness and health.

Health Education (quarter-long)

In the health education class students learn about factors that affect health and how the choices they make can impact their health.

CLIMB

At Pine Mountain Middle School, our core values are represented with the acronym: CLIMB. Pine Mountain students show **C**ommitment, exercise **L**eadership, demonstrate **I**ntegrity, are **M**indful, and maintain **B**alance. These expectations are taught to our students at the beginning of the school year and reviewed throughout the year. By acknowledging positive student behavior through our core values, our faculty and staff strive to create and maintain a learning environment that maximizes instructional time, increases student achievement, and fosters a productive and safe learning environment. **We Never Stop Climbing!**

Grades

GRADING SCALE: A 90-100 B 80-89 C 74–79 D 70–73 F 0 - 69

PMMS breaks the school year into four, nine-week grading periods. Report cards are issued electronically at the end of each quarter. Progress reports are available between report cards. ParentVUE is available for parents/guardians and students to access grades and attendance 24/7. Weekly updated grades will be available each Thursday. As a result, progress reports and report cards are not printed and distributed to families.

Communication with Teachers

1. Students can use their school e-mail to communicate with teachers, however, teachers may not check their e-mail after school hours, so a message sent in the evening would be answered the next day.
2. Remember that most of your teachers teach more than 100 students. Including your class period, and the name of the assignment that you're e-mailing about in an e-mail makes it easier for the teacher to help you.
3. **Be as specific as you can**

"I don't understand how to find area., Can I come to a help session?" not "I don't get math."

"I need another copy of the study guide" not "I left my notebook on the bus."

"Can I make up the quiz I missed Friday morning?" not "I wasn't here."

How Promotion/Retention Works at Pine Mountain Middle School

The staff members of Pine Mountain Middle School work hard every day to ensure that all students receive the best education possible during their three years at our school. The assignments and assessments that students are asked to complete allow teachers to determine what students understand and can do in the subject areas taught. Completing these tasks will prepare students for high school success. Failing to complete assignments negatively impacts student grades. The best thing you can do to maintain your grades is complete and turn in every assignment.

For a middle school student to pass from grade level to grade level, they must meet certain criteria each school year. The Cobb County School District promotion and retention policy states that students must meet all the following criteria to earn promotion to the next grade level:

- (1) Students must pass math, English/language arts and one additional core subject for the year or demonstrate minimum proficiency on the appropriate state-adopted assessment in math, English/language arts and one additional core subject.
- (2) Students must earn a combined overall passing average for all scheduled courses for the year.
- (3) Students must demonstrate an appropriate level of reading comprehension.

Students that meet all the criteria above are promoted to the next grade level. Those who do not meet all the requirements above are either placed or retained. A student is placed in the next grade level if a student does not meet one of the criteria, but the school believes the student is still ready to move on with their educational career. A committee, including teachers, administrators, and counselors, meet to determine if you are ready to move on to the next grade level or not. If the committee decides that a student is not ready to move on, the student is said to be retained. A student is retained if they fail to meet two or more of the requirements set to pass to the next grade level.

STUDY TIPS and STRATEGIES

Learning how to properly manage your time is a skill that will serve you well here at Pine Mountain, and as you move into high school, college and the workplace. You have 7 periods a day of 50 minutes each, and in addition to that you can expect roughly an hour a week of homework in each class. You may need additional study time. Below are some tips and techniques to get you started on the right track.

1. Use your class time wisely. The more work you complete in class, the less homework you will have.
2. Find a space for homework where you can be focused and productive.
3. Identify the best time for you.
 - Some students like to complete their homework right after school, while they are still in “school mode”
 - Other students need a break after school and focus better later in the evening after some down time.
 - If you’re a morning person you might prefer to get up early and spend an hour completing homework or studying before you get ready for school.**Find what works for you and stick with a routine.**
4. Write down your homework assignments and tests on a calendar or in an agenda.
5. Show your completed homework to your parents and turn in your work on time.
6. Come to school every day unless you are ill. If you miss a day of school, ask your teachers for the make-up work that you missed. It is your responsibility to make a plan to catch up, including scheduling a time to complete missed tests or quizzes.
7. Check CTLS Learn daily for assignments and updates.
8. Monitor your grades in StudentVUE frequently. StudentVUE is an online resource that allows students to stay aware of their attendance, assignments, and grades. Parents also have access to a version known as ParentVUE.
9. Our counselors are available to assist you with your study skills and academic progress. Make an appointment if you need help!
10. Before / after school tutoring is available by contacting teachers through email or CTLS.

What are CLIMB Days?

At Pine Mountain Middle School CLIMB days are regularly scheduled days, with time dedicated to addressing Remediation, Enrichment, Advisement, and Rewards for meeting CLIMB Behavior Expectations.

Remediation and Enrichment periods allow teachers and students to revisit and reteach skills to students who need additional help, or to extend and develop additional skills for students who have demonstrated mastery. These periods focus on student mastery of subject-specific priority standards and provides students with a guaranteed, viable curriculum that will prepare them for next grade level success.

During advisement periods we teach students about their middle school experience, advise students about setting and achieving goals, and monitor and provide feedback about student academic progress. Students will work with teachers and PMMS's Support Staff to focus on specific needs related to their academic success. Attendance, academic performance, and behavioral needs will be supported through students having an adult advocate in the building. Resources, such as *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens*, may be infused into this portion of CLIMB Days.

We want to reward students who consistently demonstrate Pine Mountain Middle School's CLIMB values; Commitment, Leadership, Integrity, Mindfulness, Balance. One way we do this is through Fresh Air Fridays and other special activities that students earn by meeting our behavior expectations. Keep CLIMBing and make it a great day.

PMMS Clubs

ASL Club -The middle school sign language club is an excellent opportunity for students to learn American Sign Language (ASL) and connect with the deaf community. Through interactive activities and group discussions, students will improve their communication skills and better understand deaf culture. The club welcomes students of all skill levels.

Beta Club - National Junior Beta Club is a student group dedicated to academic excellence, mentoring, and community service.. Beta club is a great opportunity for students to get involved, make friends, and grow as an individual through participation. National Junior Beta club is by invitation to student based on their GPA (required GPA this year 3.2)

Chess Club - Chess club will allow students with the common interest of chess an opportunity to gather and play in a calm quiet environment. Chess club will occur meet twice a month.

CREW- CREW is a club where students are chosen by their teachers for the leadership and social skills. We work to further develop these skills through club activities, including opportunities to learn from community members.

CSLA: Cobb Student Leadership Academy - CSLA is an opportunity for students to grow as leaders in their school and community. A district sponsored organization, school teams are tasked with creating and executing community service projects, attend leadership events throughout the school year, and participate in bi-weekly meetings at Pine Mountain Middle School.

Debate Club - The purpose of our club is to work with students on public speaking and higher order thinking with a focus on formal debate. Clubs help students become and remain a part of their school and help prepare them for future high school success.

FLY (Front Line Youth) - FLY is a club open to all students that encourages them to take their place on the front line of issues that youths face in middle school. It is sponsored by North Star Church and it has a Bible study component that meets on Wednesdays. There is also an active component where students are encouraged to play sports, learn leadership skills, and discuss problems that middle schoolers face

International Culture and Cuisine Club - ICCC meets to share food, music, language, and ideas from around the world. We also host an International Night from the Pine Mountain community each year. Come eat, talk, laugh, and learn with us!

Journalism Club - Extra, Extra! Read All About It! The Pine Mountain Middle School Journalism creates one publication each semester. The club provides a great opportunity for students who are interested in writing, reporting and multimedia production to hone their skills and grow their portfolio. Requirements: The ability to display a passion for the written word and a drive to cover stories near and dear to the Mustang community!

Media Mustangs - This program is an opportunity for students who enjoy working in the Media Center. Responsibilities include shelving books, maintaining media center computers, and more! Applications are taken in August and January; members must maintain a B average and all satisfactory conduct grades. Training is provided. Students will be assigned a day of the week to work from 8:50 until 9:10am.

News Team - A daily broadcast is presented each morning at 9:15am. Students must apply for a position on the team and be able to arrive at school by 8:30 a.m. during their training period.

Science Club – Do you like science? If so, this is the club for you. Perform cool experiments! Build Rockets! Learn 3-D Printing! This is the club for anyone who has a passion for science.

Show Choir – Get ready to put on a show! Students develop their vocal and choreography skills by rehearsing and performing. Come sing with us.

Sources of Strength - Peer leaders and caring adults/advocates to impact their world through connection, hope, help, and strength. Helps prevent suicide, violence, bullying and substance abuse by training peer leaders on signs to look for and what do when things are reported to them.

Student Council - Student Council-Open to all grade levels, this club is a project-based school improvement organization for students to positively impact our school.

PMMS Intermural Sports

Students have the opportunity to participate in intermural athletics at Pine Mountain Middle School before school from 8:15-8:50. Intermural offerings change throughout the year and may include basketball, soccer and football

Jr. Mustang Sports and Summer Camps

In CCSD, sports programs are not run through middle schools. Opportunities for sports are available through junior programs at the high schools. For more information, visit the Kennesaw Mountain H.S. website and go to the **Athletics** tab to find your preferred sport.

- KMHS Jr. Mustangs Football
- KMHS Jr. Cross Country
- KMHS Middle School Girls Volleyball
- KMHS Middle School Cheerleading
- KMHS Jr. Mustangs Basketball
- KMHS Jr. Lacrosse
- KMHS Fastpitch Softball
- KMHS Wrestling
- KMHS Cheerleading
- KMHS Soccer Camp

My Middle School Planner

Develop a Schedule

Determine how you spend a typical 24 hour day, by estimating the hours you spend on each activity. Then consider where you can find more time for homework if you need it.

- ___ School
- ___ Sleeping
- ___ Work/Volunteering
- ___ Exercise/Sports
- ___ Studying
- ___ Family Commitments
- ___ Personal Care / Grooming
- ___ Meal Preparation / Eating / Clean up
- ___ Transportation (school, activities, etc.)
- ___ Relaxing / TV / Video Games (alone)
- ___ Socializing / Entertainment (with friends)
- ___ Other

1. How many classes do students at Pine Mountain Middle School have? _____

2. Where and when do you plan to do homework and study?

3. What classes must you pass to avoid the possibility of being retained in 6th grade?

4. Name 4 clubs that Pine Mountain students can participate in.

My Middle School Goals

Grades: Please put your goal grade and actual grade for the subject areas below.

	Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual
ELA								
Social Studies								
Math								
Science								
Reading / Literacy								
Connection 1								
Connection 2								

Personal Goals

Please write one personal goal for each of your middle school years and high school

6 th Grade	7 th Grade	8 th Grade	High School