

# **John Long Middle School**

**Grade 6**

**Course Description Booklet**

**2018 – 2019**



John Long Middle School  
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Grafton, WI  
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[www.grafton.k12.wi.us](http://www.grafton.k12.wi.us)

## ACADEMICS AND PROGRAMMING FOR JOHN LONG MIDDLE SCHOOL

### Making Course Choices

#### **How can we make the best choices for our child(ren)?**

Consider your child's interests, strengths, and areas that need further exploration or work. Consult with your child's current teachers; what do they advise? Don't hesitate to talk with the middle school counselor; the counselor has an excellent overview of the entire middle school program, as well as what is being offered in the high schools. Make the course selection based on your child's interests.

#### **Does what my child takes in middle school affect high school?**

Middle school courses may help a student identify areas of interest to them that they'd like to pursue in high school, particularly in related arts subjects. The Grafton School District requires that a student have 22 credits to graduate from high school. This includes the following requirements:

- |                   |             |
|-------------------|-------------|
| 1. ENGLISH        | 4.0         |
| 2. SOCIAL STUDIES | 3.0         |
| 3. MATH           | 3.0         |
| 4. SCIENCE        | 3.0         |
| 5. PHYSICAL ED.   | 1.5         |
| 6. HEALTH         | 0.5         |
| 7. ELECTIVES      | remainder__ |

It's also not too early to consider post-high school plans. Looking ahead can help ensure that students have the flexibility to take the courses that best meet their interests and plans.

### Meeting Special Needs

#### **How will children's special needs be met?**

The middle school program is designed to provide support within the school for students with special needs. Special education teachers, special education aides, library aides, RISE coordinator, school counselor, and school psychologist are all available.

#### **Are accelerated math classes available?**

Yes. All students are eligible for accelerated math by teacher recommendation and multiple data points. When placement is warranted, families will be notified.

### **What if my child struggles academically?**

The first response should be to work closely with your child's classroom teachers to ascertain what the problem is and to develop some steps towards improving achievement. If more help is needed, support in the middle school includes the following:-

- **Intervention**  
Students scheduled in a math or reading intervention course receive prescriptive instruction based on individual needs. School personnel determine placement in these courses and communicate with parents to notify them.
- **Special Education Needs**  
Students with identified special needs, including those with cognitive, physical, speech, learning or emotional disabilities, have individual education plans which outline the types of assistance they need. Special education teachers or aides may work with these students within a class or, at times, in small groups or individually.

### **What is the grading scale for middle school students?**

The following is the grading scale used by our teachers in all subjects

A	93 - 100	C+	77 - 79.99
A-	90 - 92.99	C	73 - 76.99
		C-	70 - 72.99
B+	87 - 89.99	D+	67 - 69.99
B	83 - 86.99	D	63 - 66.99
B-	80 - 82.99	D-	60 - 62.99
		F	59 and below

### **Making the Adjustment to Middle School**

#### **When will my child register for sixth grade classes?**

In February, registration packets will go home with your child. Paperwork will be taken home by the student, completed and signed by a parent and returned to your child's fifth grade teachers.

- Students will choose band, choir or general music

#### **Will my child have a chance to visit school before classes begin?**

The fifth grade students have a planned visit to the middle school in May. They will spend time at the middle school receiving a short presentation from administration and school counselor, and tour the building. Taking a summer school class at the middle school is also a nice way to help your child make the transition. Tours of the middle school are available upon request if necessary. Parents and students can schedule an appointment with the principal, associate principal or school counselor to visit the school.

**My child is concerned about knowing where to go. How can I reassure him/her?**

Leaving the familiar elementary school for a bigger middle school, and being among the youngest students again, is a common concern for both students and parents. Be sure that you and your child come to our 6<sup>th</sup> grade orientation. Additionally, teachers will take time the first week of school to help students understand their schedules, to teach them how to use their lockers, to show them around the building, and in general, to do everything possible to make them feel comfortable.

**How can parents become involved?**

The middle school has an active parent group. The John Long Parent Teacher Group (PTG) sponsors a variety of activities including student activity nights and a teacher luncheon. Volunteers are always welcome. In addition, parents are actively involved as volunteers for events like the musical, chaperones on field trips, and help with other school projects. Watch the Falcon Flyer for information on how to volunteer or contact the school principal.

**Sixth Grade  
Course Offerings**

*Required Courses*

*Daily*

English Language Arts (ELA)

Math

*Alternate Days*

Science

Social Studies

Physical Education - *Every other day/all year*

*Required Related Arts Courses*

*Every other day/all year. (Choose one option)*

Band, Choir, General Music

*Trimester - Daily*

STEM

Art

Digital Communications 1

*Placement in these courses is determined by school personnel.*

Advanced 1 Math

Advanced 2 Math

Reading Intervention

Math Intervention

## Course Descriptions for Sixth Grade

### CORE OFFERINGS

#### Earth Science 6

Science is about using inquiry-based learning to help understand the world around us. Students will be learning by doing hands-on labs, using various forms of technology, working in groups to solve problems, reading and evaluating scientific information, and using critical thinking skills to connect the classroom to our everyday lives.

Labs are an essential part of every science classroom. They can be used as inquiry to discover what is going to happen, apply their knowledge and critical thinking skills in a practical way, and as an assessment of student understanding of the concepts. Labs may be done virtually or hands-on in class.

#### ELA (English Language Arts)

The sixth grade content literacy and communication arts curriculum focuses on the development of reading, writing, communication, and critical thinking skills. This course uses the reading and writing workshop model. In literacy class students work on reading independence, participate in book club groups, and develop speaking skills through discussion groups. In communication arts class students work on narrative, informational, and opinion writing skills, along with development in vocabulary and in speaking.

#### Math 6

The emphasis in sixth grade math is mastery of the basic operations using integers, fractions, decimals, and percents. Students will solve straightforward numerical equations, and will write and solve word problems for all concepts covered. The class will explore algebraic expressions and solve two step equations. Statistics and data displays will be part of our work as well. When students answer problems on homework, tests and quizzes, they will be required to show the detailed steps that led them to their answer. They will also be encouraged to explain concepts and to apply them. Organization and self-evaluation will be underlying themes.

#### Math - Advanced 1

All students will be developing their problem solving skills. Students will be encouraged to strive for success independently and as a member of a group or the class. Some students will be stretching themselves by trying to figure out ways to apply the concept that is being introduced. Others will be trying to find a way to make something that is clear to them understandable to someone else, and in doing so they will inevitably deepen their understanding of a concept and its application in the real world.

#### Math - Advanced 2

The purpose of mathematics education is to build the high levels of mathematical skills, processes, thinking and problem solving necessary to meet the challenges of the 21st century. This Advanced 2 Math course is designed as a preparation for Algebra. The topics covered include equations, transformations, angles and triangles, graphing and writing linear equations, systems of linear equations, functions, real numbers and the Pythagorean Theorem, volume and similar solids, data analysis and displays, exponents and scientific notation, inequalities, constructions and scale drawings, circles and area, surface area and volume, and probability and statistics.

## **Social Studies 6**

The social studies course is a survey of world history, focusing primarily on the Western Hemisphere. Students receive an introductory unit on map and globe skills and will then utilize those skills while discussing the primary areas of Canada, Africa, and Latin America. In addition, students will learn about the geography, cultures, and history of these areas and how today's world has been shaped by what has occurred in the past, and how we can understand and learn to appreciate the differences in all people.

## **RELATED ARTS OFFERINGS**

### **Art**

At the end of Art 6, the student will have an understanding of the elements of art, creating meaningful artwork and techniques with a wide range of art mediums. The focus of this course is to explore a wide range of art mediums (painting, drawing, ceramics, etc.) through creativity, practice and collaboration. In Art 6, students will learn and demonstrate proper tool and material care.

### **Band**

Band provides students with the opportunity to study an instrument (brass, woodwind, percussion, string or keyboard) both individually and in a large group setting. This group is open to any student regardless of level of experience; beginners are welcome. Students participate in a variety of performances from formal concerts to parades. Most performances occur outside of the regular school day. The literature used exposes students to a variety of musical genres while paying specific attention to developmentally appropriate musical elements. Students participate in weekly small group lesson instruction in addition to large group rehearsals every other day.

### **Choir**

Choir provides the opportunity for students to study vocal music, with public performance as an end result. The literature used exposes musical styles as well as instruction in musical elements. Concert etiquette is stressed. Students will participate in concerts and performances outside the regular school day.

### **Digital Communications I**

In this technology-based course, students will develop their digital literacy skills, which are a necessity in preparing for college and career readiness. Units explored through various fun activities include: word processing and formatting skills, introduction to spreadsheets and charting, multimedia topics, communication and presentation skills and continued Internet safety activities. The digital literacy skills developed will be used by students in their other courses and then continued with advanced concepts in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Digital Communications II course.

### **General Music**

Students will participate in a variety of activities in a survey of music. Daily journal entries will be made analyzing a musical listening example. Students will also research musical concepts and prominent musicians and report their findings to the class. Performance activities will include playing guitars and keyboards. Students will also write a musical composition and study various styles and genres. All activities will build a basic understanding of music while also reading and writing music, playing instruments and critical listening.

### **Physical Education/ Health**

Our department emphasizes age appropriate instruction and maximum activity for all students, while developing motor skills and health enhancing fitness. Our curriculum allows students to become competent in their ability to assess oneself while building a vision for the future where they can enjoy an active and healthy lifestyle. Our comfortable and supportive atmosphere allows students to feel good about themselves while understanding and respecting others and their differences.

In 6th Grade, our primary focus is on sports exposure & teamwork. Units are designed so exposure and game play can be maximized. Students will be assessed daily on their level of participation. Students will also be given written performance assessments to check for understanding.

The health component of this class is designed to promote student learning with regard to health issues that affect their immediate and long-term health. Maintaining a healthy way of living requires a balance of physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being. Health education provides students with knowledge and skills necessary to confront health related issues and make a smooth transition from puberty to adolescence. The curriculum will emphasize development of decision making skills related to the essential areas of self- esteem, peer pressure, nutrition, disease prevention, human growth and development, conflict resolution, substance abuse, group membership, and goal setting.

### **STEM**

This 12-week course in applied knowledge and problem-solving includes general and machine specific safety procedures, linear measurement technique, engineering principles, solid modeling techniques within mechanical drafting and SolidWorks, and application of the design-to-product process through modular engineering challenges and include both hot and cold metal forming processes. Energy exploration centers on applied electromagnetics for the 6th grade level, and applied engineering design includes individual and collaborative learning opportunities. A \$5 consumables fee, 4 gig flash drive and appropriate safety gear including closed-toed shoes and z87+ eye protection is required for this class.