

June 5, 2026

To the parents and guardians of students entering grades 6-8,

Congratulations on successfully shepherding your child through the past year of school, and congratulations to your children for their outstanding work. They have earned a break, and hope your family's summer is filled with just the right balance of excitement and relaxation.

This fall, I will teach ELA and history to students in grades 6-8, and I would like to give you an overview of what to expect:

- History 6: Students will study the emergence of civilization as humans transition from hunter-gatherer to agrarian societies. Students will come to understand that while civilizations emerged independently, they followed common patterns as they relate to language, religion, government, art, and architecture.
- History 7: Students will study the next stage in civilization as they examine the Roman Republic, the Islamic World, China, and Japan. We will also study the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the emergence of modern democracy.
- History 8: Students will focus on U.S. history, from the first peoples and the earliest cultures in Mesoamerica to the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors and the pilgrims. From the Revolutionary War to World War II, students will study the nation's transition from isolationism to imperialism, as well as the constant re-examination of who is allowed to participate in democracy and who is not.
- ELA 6: Students will read and examine their texts as they consider character traits, mood, atmosphere, theme, and setting, and how each relates to the other to create the narrative.

- ELA 7: Students will consider how perspective shapes narrative, and the choices made by the author regarding how he or she presents the narrative.
- ELA 8: Students will consider social and cultural issues as they both read and complete research projects.
- All students in grades 6-8 will have biweekly lessons in Wordly Wise, a schoolwide program that fosters vocabulary acquisition.

In addition to teaching ELA and history, I am the sixth-grade homeroom teacher. This means that my room is where students come in the morning. I take attendance and confirm their breakfast and lunch orders. Sixth graders keep their backpacks, coats, books, musical instruments and other items in my room as they move from classroom to classroom throughout the day.

Please ensure that your child is prepared for the first day of school with the following supplies:

- Student planner for assignments
- Lined, loose-leaf paper. Please do not use a notebook in which pages are torn out, as the torn-out bits of paper make a bit of a mess.
- Pencils
- Erasers
- Highlighters
- Independent reading book
- A reusable water bottle with a top that seals so that when knocked over it does not spill. Please avoid Stanley travel mugs, or Stanley-style travel mugs with a plastic or rubber straw that sticks out from the top. While very popular, the narrow base —

relative to the height and the weight — make it quite precarious when placed on a desk. Because the top does not seal, when it does fall over, it spills out through the straw. Because they contain so much water, when they do spill, the mess is extensive.

- One 3-ring binder for ELA and history
- One 3-ring binder for science and religion
- One 3-ring binder for math

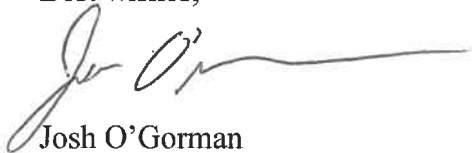
Alternatively, some students prefer to keep one large binder. On one hand, everything is in one place. On the other hand, carrying one large binder back and forth between home and school can be a burden. Please talk with your child to best assess their needs.

In addition, I ask the parents and guardians of my sixth-grade students to please send their children to school on the first day with a box of tissues, a bottle of hand sanitizer and a roll of bleach wipes. These items are shared among the students in the classroom and are intended to keep students healthy during the school year.

If you have any questions during the summer, please send me an email at jogorman@allsaintsvt.org. I will be checking my email and responding weekly, typically Monday morning.

Have a great summer, and I look forward to seeing you all in August!

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Josh O'Gorman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Upper School ELA and History

