



Fall 2018

Dear 6th grade Families,

Welcome to the 2018 - 2019 school year at Claremont Middle School! We are excited to introduce ourselves to you as the 6th grade team and look forward to building relationships with your students. You can meet us in person and learn more about the learning in each of our classrooms on September 13 at Back to School Night.

**Introductions**

**Greetings!** My name is **Lacy Lefkowitz**, and I will be the **Dean of 6th grade**. This is my twelfth year at Claremont. I am excited to work with students, families and teachers to ensure ALL students are successful this year! If you have any **comments, thoughts or concerns**, I will be your **FIRST** point of contact. Please feel free to send me an email of introduction!

“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go!”-Dr. Seuss  
**Lacy Lefkowitz, 6th grade Dean, lacy.lefkowitz@ousd.org**

**Ms. Sam Youts**  
**Science, Room 1**  
**samantha.youts@ousd.org**

*Hello and welcome to the Claremont Community! This is my first year with Claremont Middle School, and my twentieth year teaching science. I am from Texas, and have a degree in Marine Biology from Texas A&M University. I moved to California a few years ago to pursue graduate studies in Human Rights, and I love living, hiking, and camping in and around the Bay Area. This year, I am looking forward to teaching, learning, and building an inclusive community in our classroom!*

“The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.”-Coretta Scott King

**Ms. Jhunehl Fortaleza**  
**Social Studies, Room 4**  
**jhunehl.fortaleza@ousd.org**

*This is my fifth year at CMS, and I’m looking forward to working with the incoming 6th graders! I was born and raised in Oakland and attended UC Davis for my undergrad and Loyola Marymount University for my Master’s degree. In the evenings and on weekends, I also teach group exercise classes for various gyms around the Bay Area. I’m so excited to teach students about ancient civilizations, to be avid readers and writers, and to engage in rigorous academic discussions. Welcome to our wonderful school community!*

“If you’re not willing to learn, no one can help you. If you’re determined to learn, no one can stop you.”-unknown

**Ms. Gina Lozito**  
**English, Room 2**  
**gina.lozito@ousd.org**

*This is my first year at Claremont, but my 4th year teaching here in the district. I have a BS in Child and Adolescent Development from Cal State Northridge. I’m excited to be a part of the Claremont community, share in your child’s learning with you, and teach middle school students! I am a proud Oakland native and an alumni of OUSD. Please feel free to reach out with any questions for me via email.*

“Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does.”  
-William James

**Ms. Mika Zelig**  
**Math, Room 5**  
**mika.zelig@ousd.org**

*Hello Claremont families! I am excited to be a part of the Claremont community this school year. I have been teaching in OUSD since 2009 but this is my first year at Claremont. I am looking forward to a productive and rewarding 6th grade math experience this year, as we work together in meeting the learning goals and needs of our students. I graduated from the University Of California, Berkeley with a B.S. in Anthropology and a minor Ethnic Studies.*

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”-Nelson Mandela



The Claremont P.E. team would also like to welcome students. Our goal is to provide a safe, healthy and fun environment for students to develop lifelong fitness and wellness habits. In order to be successful, learners will have to be dressed and participate daily. We will share more information around expectations in our syllabus and at Back to School Night.



My name is Ari Brown and I am thrilled to be entering my third year as music teacher at Claremont. This year I will be teaching band to every 6th grader, band to 7/8th graders, and a before school jazz band open to all grades. All of my classes are performance based learning environments in which students get hands-on experience preparing and performing challenging music literature. I place high value on student creativity and challenge musicians to express themselves from even the beginning stages of musicianship. Students will find success by entering each day with an open mind, a respect for the feelings of peers when they take risks, and a willingness to try new things. While some families provide their students with instruments and the related supplies, no child who wishes to make music will be turned away.

Please feel free to reach out to me if I can be of any assistance via email at [ariel.brown1@ousd.org](mailto:ariel.brown1@ousd.org)



**Max Washburn**  
**Computer Science, Room 10**

Hello! My name is Max Washburn and I am the Computer Science teacher at Claremont. This is my first year teaching at CMS. All 6th graders will take computer science with me, and I will teach a 7th/8th grade class as well. All of my classes are project based learning environments in which students get hands-on experience problem solving and programming. I place high value on student creativity and challenge students to express themselves within the work they participate in.

Students will find success by entering each day with an open mind, a respect for the feelings of peers when they take risks, and a willingness to try new things.



**Jill Mammano-Neely**  
**Resource Specialist, Room 3**  
**[jill.mammano-neely@ousd.org](mailto:jill.mammano-neely@ousd.org)**



Hello, my name is Jill Mammano-Neely and I am excited to join the Claremont community this school year! I have been a special education teacher in Oakland for twenty years. I have a BA degree in Sociology from UC Davis and a Mild/Moderate Education Specialist teaching credential from the University of San Francisco. I am a proud parent of two children who were born and raised in Oakland. My role as the 6th grade Resource Specialist will be to support students based on individual needs, giving them strategies to help them be successful in school, providing each student with the foundation necessary to experience confidence and enjoyment in their education. I look forward to collaborating with Claremont Middle School staff to ensure that our student's individual goals are being met.

**Wendy Baty**  
**Math Specialist**

Hello 6th grade families! I am thrilled to be joining Claremont! I live in the neighborhood and my 3 year old son will one day go to CMS! This is my 14th year working in Oakland middle schools as either a math teacher or instructional coach. I received my BS from the University of Georgia and teaching credential from USF. I will be supporting the 6th graders' needs in mathematics to ensure every student feels successful!

**Supply List (in addition to the registration list)\***

- 1 One-inch binder, with clear pocket covers on front and pockets on inside
- 5 dividers
- 1 Three-holed notebook (to fit in binder)
- 2 three-holed two-pocket folder
- One notebook with unlined, blank paper (computer science)

\* If obtaining these supplies is an issue, please let one of us know.

## **Classroom Rules and Expectations - these apply to all 6th grade classrooms**

1. Follow directions
2. Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself
3. Listen attentively to the speaker
4. Use positive and constructive language
5. Food, drink, gum, headwear and electronics (such as phones, smartwatches and headphones) put all away at all times (except water bottles)
6. Do your very best

## **Classroom Redirection Procedure - these apply to all 6th grade classrooms**

<b>Student Action</b>	<b>Teacher Action</b>	<b>Description</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> need for redirect	Reminder of preferred behavior	Student's name goes on board or clipboard
2 <sup>nd</sup> need for redirect	2nd reminder of preferred behavior	Check mark next to name "Move seat" or "1:1"
3 <sup>rd</sup> need for redirect	3rd reminder of preferred behavior Start of behavior documentation	2 <sup>nd</sup> check mark Contact home
4 <sup>th</sup> need for redirect	<i>Referral</i> to the office	Name circled Student goes to office with referral which goes on record
<p>** "Don't argue with the ref" If a student chooses to have a conversation about a redirection in the moment, they will earn another redirection.</p> <p>*** Egregious behaviors will result in immediate administrative action.</p> <p>****Students begin each day with a fresh start.</p>		

## **Tech Exchange**

Tech Exchange provides low cost, sometimes free, computers to Alameda county students. OTX also partners with charter to offer very low cost internet. If you do not have a computer at home, please find a time to see Mr. Leal for details or visit <https://www.techexchange.org>. Parents, please feel free to contact Mr. Leal(daniel.leal@ousd.org) directly regarding this program at any time. Additionally, if you know other families in Oakland who might benefit from Tech Exchange, please pass on the website and Mr. Leal contact information.

## **Ways to Support at Home**

1. Ask your child what they learned in school that day and check their planners for homework and due dates.
2. Regularly check Aeries to monitor your child's grades.
3. Encourage your child to read at least 30 minutes every evening.
4. Use Khan Academy at home with your child to help them practice mathematical concepts.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions. We look forward to the 2018-2019 year with your student.

Sincerely,  
The 6th Grade Teachers and Support Staff