



The Fifth Grade Handbook



2026-2027

Baird Middle School

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW...AND MORE!

Welcome to Baird Middle School

5th Grade

Dear Parents,

Hello from “The Fab 5” at Baird Middle School! We would like to welcome you and your child to an exciting year in Fifth Grade. We are very happy to have your child in our classes and look forward to working with you to have a successful year.

This Fifth Grade Handbook has information and guidelines for you and your child. Please take the time to read and discuss it together.

Fifth Grade Teachers:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| • Mrs. Alvarado – Social Studies | Elly.Alvarado@fresnounified.org |
| • Mrs. Jensen – Science | Alyssa.Jensen@fresnounified.org |
| • Mr. Turner – Physical Education/Math | Bryan.Turner@fresnounified.org |
| • Mr. Mertens – English | Edward.Mertens@fresnounified.org |
| • Mr. Karian – Math/Physical Education | Paul.Karian@fresnounified.org |

Baird’s “Guidelines for Success”:

- B – Be Prepared
- A – Achieve Academically
- I – Include Everyone
- R – Respect yourself, your school, and others
- D – Do the Right Thing

Citizenship grades are determined by the “Baird Way Citizenship Rubric.” These grades are arguably even more important than academic grades because they are an indication

A Successful Student:

- Uses their Planner
 - Writes homework/tests for each class daily
 - Writes when major projects are due
 - Checks Planner at home every day and completes assignments
 - Gets Planner signed by parent each night (first quarter only)
- Turns all assignments in on time
- Asks questions in class
- Prepares and studies for all tests
- Does homework the night it is assigned
- If absent due to illness, vacation, or school activity (music, sports, clubs, etc.):
 - Gets missing assignments prior to or immediately following the absence (during Academic Support Time (AST))
 - Completes and turns in assignments in a timely manner.
- Checks grades on ATLAS at least once a week
- Finds two or more study buddies from each class to call if help is needed
- Makes school a priority

Successful Parents/Guardians:

- Checks child's Planner daily
 - Checks for homework
 - Checks to see all assignments are complete
 - Checks for tests and major projects and helps child manage time
 - Signs the Planner AFTER all the above has been completed
- Provides a quiet place for homework
- Establishes a daily homework routine
- Provides and checks for materials and supplies weekly
- Homework:
 - Expect approximately one hour of homework daily in addition to two hours of independent reading per week (we recommend that your child read 30 minutes each night Monday-Thursday, but their reading can also be done on the weekends). Homework should be written in planners day.
- Monitors child's grades on ATLAS weekly. If any work is missing, please see that your child turns it in the next day during AST. Hold your child accountable and provide rewards and consequences.

Common Challenges for 5th Graders:

- Organization
 - Transition to having 6 teachers
 - Poor work/study habits
 - Not completing classwork/homework on time
 - Not turning in missing assignments in late for partial credit
 - Not preparing for tests
 - Not bringing materials and supplies to school
 - Not checking grades on ATLAS
- Please note: Along with Baird's high expectations, the curriculum is much more rigorous than in 4th grade.

Grades:

Check ATLAS weekly.

- Look for zeroes, absences, low grades, and work not turned in
- Progress Reports go home at 4 weeks and Report Cards at 8 weeks. Please sign and return the next day. You will receive a copy to keep for your records.

Missing Assignments:

It is important for ALL assignments to be turned in on time. Incomplete or missing assignments will receive a grade according to teacher's syllabus. Although some assignments may not have an effect on academic grades in Atlas, they might impact citizenship grades. Missing assignments must be turned in by the end of the grading period (Progress Reports/Report Card).

We feel it is very important to ingrain accountability in our students. They are responsible for getting their work done and turned in on time.

- If work is missing due to an excused absence, full credit is given.

Citizenship Grades:

Students can earn citizenship grades by demonstrating the Baird Way in each of their classes. There are possible five citizenship grades.

O – Outstanding (students who earn all O's will receive highest honors at awards assemblies and a special luncheon with three friends.)

G – Good (students who earn all G's or better will earn a week of extra recess at the end of each quarter)

S – Satisfactory

N – Needs Improvement

U – Unsatisfactory (students with U's will need to complete a parent / teacher conference)

Absences:

- Clear all absences with a phone call or note before your child returns to school
- Check to make sure missing work gets completed and turned in the following day
- Appointment/leaving early – with a phone call or note from you, your child may go to the office before school to receive a pass stating they may leave class at a certain time. This will help lessen classroom interruptions. If your child knows they will be missing a class, they need to request work from teachers ahead of time. Please try to schedule all appointments after school hours.

School Hours:

Students are NOT to be on campus until 8:50 AM. Exceptions are made for students who are in clubs or who have a special appointment with a teacher.

- Students are expected to leave school each day at 3:30 PM unless involved in sports or activity.

Projects:

Parents can expect projects to be assigned each quarter. These projects will be explained thoroughly and due dates will be clearly written in the Planner. Projects have the unique ability to teach responsibility and encourage creativity, while providing an opportunity for deeper learning. Please support these experiences and encourage your child to do quality work and to turn them in on time.

Some projects are: Three Sisters, Wildfire week, Ethnic eats, Immigration Dolls, Native American Projects, State Floats, “Home” Geometry, Diabolos, Book Projects.

How to contact us:

Email is the easiest as we are unable to talk on the phone during the school day. You can find our email addresses above or on the Baird Website. Click on the Academics tab, then click on 5th grade.

Thank you for coming to Back to School Night!!

The FAB 5 =)



5th Grade Supply List

Do not purchase the following items because they will be provided at the beginning of the school year for \$20 per student:

1.5 inch 3 ring binder

White block eraser

Binder dividers

One red pen

Pencil pouch

5 sharpened #2 Pencils

Composition book (English)

3 highlighters of different colors

Spiral notebook (Math)

Colored pencils

Please purchase the following items:

- ☐ Backpack in approved school color (a rolling backpack is highly recommended)
- ☐ Reusable water bottle (label with name)
- ☐ If you purchase headphones (not required- they will be provided), please make sure they are wired headphones and not wireless.

Please ensure your child has their district provided laptop and charger labeled with their name each day.



Fifth Grade English

2026 - 2027

Mr. Edward “Alex” Mertens

Edward.mertens@fresnounified.org

<https://fresnounifiedsites.org/1060595/>

**Baird Middle School alumnus
Fresno City College Honors Program
Master of Arts: Education (Technology)
BA Political Science**



Course Description

This course is devoted to developing literacy skills: reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language. The curriculum aligns with the current California State Standards. Students will develop language, reading, speaking/listening and writing skills in small group, whole class, and one-on-one settings. AVID strategies that develop critical thinking and organization skills are used throughout the course. Students are expected to write in their planners daily and read 2 hours per week (or 30 minutes each night Monday – Thursday).

Students will need to be able to use Microsoft Applications including Teams, Word, PowerPoint, and Excel. “Quest Lists” are assigned quarterly and provide ample personalized opportunities for

extending literacy skills. Students will create a portfolio website that showcases skills/standards mastery. A district laptop is essential.

Although I use Atlas Connect to send text messages to the grade level, please respond via email (if you want me to respond) because I am unable to respond back to some parents on Atlas Connect for unknown reasons.

Grading

The English grade is composed of language, reading, speaking/listening and writing assessments such as: spelling / grammar practice and assessments, writing notebook responses, Socratic seminar, peer editing/feedback reflections, reading log reflections, process writing, Standards Mastery assessments, Flipgrids, presentations, etc.

Grading Scale:

All assignments are graded on a 4 point scale, with some assignments being multiplied to represent importance of the assignment (for example, a process writing paper might be worth 2 or 3 times more than a writing notebook response).

A 4 represents exceeding grade level mastery, a 3 represents meeting grade level mastery, a 2 means approaching mastery, a 1 indicates that the assignment has critical pieces missing / incorrect, a 0 is entered for missing work.

Progress report and report card grades are generated based on the following scale:

- A – 93 percent and higher
- B – 74 percent and higher
- C – 54 percent and higher
- D – 34 percent and higher
- F – Less than 34 percent

Please note that because of the 4 point scale, an “A” means a student consistently turns work in that “exceeds” grade level mastery. Students who earn a “B” consistently demonstrate grade level skills. Students must be “approaching” standards (2’s) on all assignments and demonstrate mastery (3) on at least one assignment for a C, and a student who consistently turns in work earning 1’s and 2’s will earn a D.

Furthermore, all assessments can be redone and resubmitted. Students receive regular opportunities for “tier 2 intervention” in class which will either help them boost their skills (and scores). The highest grade is always the grade that stays in the gradebook. Redo opportunities vary between resubmitting an assignment on teams, visiting AST, or other methods which match the initial assessment.

Special Grade notes:

If an assignment says “Excluded” in Atlas, this means that the grade is entered for reference only and does not impact the grade. Some examples are turning in permission slips or other forms. Students raw fluency scores also show “excluded” and are only in the gradebook for reference.

Textbooks and Curriculum:

Wonders by McGraw Hill Education

Reading / Writing Workshop by McGraw Hill Education

Write Tools

Supplemental texts:

Holes (class set provided)

The Way of the Warrior Kid (feel free to purchase if you would like)

Common Core Exemplar Texts

Parent Involvement

All cleared and fingerprinted parents / guardians who would like to assist with centers are welcome (as soon as I receive a green light from FUSD). I have assigned a parent interest form to your child's Teams assignments. Please fill that out if you are interested.

5th Grade Mathematics Syllabus
Mr. Karian

My fifth grade math class has an emphasis on operations with whole numbers through the billions and decimals/fractions through the thousandths. Students will be learning how to add, subtract, multiply and divide wholes, decimals, and fractions this year. And as we move forward in the year, students will begin to apply their computational understandings of these operations.

The first semester of my class will have a strong focus on operations and computational fluency. Much of the time, we will be doing work that looks very traditional in nature. As we move into the second semester, we will move into application of these operations and much of the work your child brings home will reflect a more critical thinking approach to learning. It is my hope that your child develops a deeper understanding of the concepts we will cover during the second semester.

Please email me whenever you have a question or any other need at paul.karian@fresnounified.org. I try very hard to return emails within 24 hours.

Overview of concepts to be covered..

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Quarter 1 | Number systems, place value of wholes and decimals, operations with wholes and decimals, rounding wholes and decimals, using base ten exponents, order of operations, interpreting expressions. |
| Quarter 2 | Continuation of previously taught concepts; operations with fractions and mixed numbers. |
| Quarter 3 | Continuation of previously taught concepts; graphing on the coordinate plane, line plots, geometrical thinking, attributes of two-dimensional figures, area and perimeter, understanding volume of rectangular prisms. |
| Quarter 4 | Continuation of previously taught concepts; deepening understanding of concepts, measurement conversion (customary and metric) relating decimals and fractions to percent. |

Grading Scale:	Grading break down:
A = 100% - 90% B = 89% - 80% C = 79% - 70% D = 69% - 60% F = 59% and below	Assessment – At least 60% of the overall grade will come from quizzes and tests. Homework and Classwork - Between 30% and 40% of the overall grade will come from these categories.

Grades: Please check ATLAS at least once a week. If you have questions about a grade, please discuss with your child before contacting me. We want our students to take responsibility for their grades and to help you understand.

Assessments: I will be giving short assessments frequently. These are called “Checking for Understanding” assessments that allow me to see which students need further support to gain mastery of a particular skill or standard. Students will be able to retake these quizzes once for a higher grade after they have gone through intervention and reteaching.

I will also be giving larger unit assessments once or twice each quarter. **These assessments cannot be made up for a higher grade.**

Any student who is caught cheating on an assessment will be given a grade of zero with no opportunity for a re-take.

Homework: I will be assigning weekly iReady homework lessons. Students will have to complete one lesson per week. iReady lessons are assigned based on how well each student performed on the iReady diagnostic test. The diagnostic test will be given at school.

Planners/Binders/Supplies: Planners and binders are crucial to student success here at Baird. It is advisable to check your child's planner and binder regularly to see if they are maintaining them. The planner should be written in daily so students can check homework assignments. The binder also should be kept neat. If you see loose papers in your child's binder, please encourage your child to file them behind the correct tab. **DO NOT CLEAN OUT YOUR CHILD'S BINDER WITHOUT THEM.** We need our students to take ownership of their binders so they can learn good organizational and study skills. Your child needs to have their charged tablets, at least 3 sharpened pencils, a red pen, their math notebooks, binders, and planners (agendas) every day in my class.

Academic Support Time: Every morning before school (8:50-9:10) my door will be open for any student who needs to talk to me. Students can utilize "AST" to turn in missing assignments, get help from me, or anything else. I encourage all students to take advantage of this time:

Paul Karian
Baird Middle School
paul.karian@fresnounified.org

5th Grade Science

Alyssa Jensen

alyssa.jensen@fresnounified.org

5th Grade NGSS Science and Engineering Topics

Structure and Properties of Matter:

Particles, Conservation, Identifying Materials, Mixing Substances.

Organisms and Ecosystems:

Energy from the Sun, Plant Growth, Movement of Matter.

Earth's Systems:

How Systems Interact, Distribution of Water, Protecting Resources and the Environment.

Space Systems:

Gravity, Star's Apparent Brightness, Patterns in the Sky.

Engineering:

Defining Design Problems, Finding Solutions to Problems, Carrying Out Tests.

Curriculum

STEM 5 Labs, Labs and Engineering Challenges made by Ms. Jensen

Various Online Articles

Most labs, articles, quizzes, and tests will be assigned through Microsoft Teams.

Student Responsibilities

Be on time and have materials ready for class.

Follow directions and lab safety precautions at all times.

Be a respectful listener while others are speaking.

Take care of and respect the lab materials and technology.

Grades

Lab write ups 20 points

Notes 10 points

Projects 30-40 points

Tests and Quizzes 5-15 points

Homework

Students will only have homework if they do not finish assignments in class. It is the student's responsibility to turn in these make-ups at the beginning of their next block with me. Students should also study for tests at home.

Missing Work and AST

Students should make up missing work due to sports or absences within 1 week of their return to school. I will be available to help any student with their work during AST every morning unless I have yard duty. Students can also make up tests during this time.

Any labs, notes, or projects can be worked on and turned in later for a better grade if a student is not satisfied with what they earned the first time. Tests and quizzes may not be retaken. Late work and redone work will be accepted until one week before the end of each quarter.

Contacting Me

Please contact me for help with assignments, help turning in work, navigating Teams, or if you just want to say hello! I would be glad to help and would love to get to know you better!

I usually return messages by the next school day.

The best way to contact me is through email: alyssa.jensen@fresnounified.org

Social Studies – 5th Grade 2026-2027

Elly Alvarado elly.alvarado@fresnounified.org



A Little About Me:

Welcome to Baird Middle School! I am so happy you have joined the Baird family and hope your child leaves my classroom loving social studies, to read and write, and just as importantly LOVING school! Of all the grade levels I have taught, 5th is my favorite. The students are at an age where they are learning to be independent and self-sufficient, but still love to give and receive hugs =).

I married my high school sweetheart and have three children ages, 26, 28, and 32. Our oldest daughter works as a Nurse Practitioner here in Fresno, our middle daughter works as a Registered Nurse in Denver Colorado, and our

youngest just graduated from law works as an attorney here in Fresno. Go Fresno! Watching our children succeed in college has been one of our proudest moments knowing that all our hard work paid off, but we know we did not do it alone. They had amazing teachers and mentors that supported them along the way, and the teachers here at Baird Middle School will also support and mentor your child throughout their middle school years and beyond.

My goal for your child is that they love school, build strong relationships, and get a solid education that helps them attain a job they love and affords them a comfortable lifestyle.

Course Description:

Social Studies - The Social Studies class focuses on US history and is designed for history to come alive. Lessons will be explored through the eyes and perspectives of the women, men, and children who lived during that time. Topics to be covered:

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
• Geography • Immigration (Festival - Ethnic Eats)	• Native Americans • Exploration	• Colonies • American Revolution (P1)	• American Revolution (P2) • Constitution • State location

Common Core, the C3 Framework, and the CA History-Social Science Framework:

This course will address California's Common Core guidelines for Literacy in History/Social Studies, the

C3 Framework for Social Studies and the California History-Social Science Framework. For more information on these standards, see the links below:

CA Common Core:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/finaelacssstandards.pdf>

C3 Framework:

<http://www.socialstudies.org/system/files/c3/C3-Framework-for-Social-Studies.pdf>

CA SS Framework:

5th Grade
Units/Activities

- **Cooperative Games**
- **Frisbee Games**
- **Flag Football**
- **Jump Rope**
- **Indiaca**
- **Kickball**
- **Spikeball**
- **Mushball**

Grade Breakdown

- **50% Assessment (Unit)**
- **20% Participation**
- **20% Social Skills (Dress out/Interactions)**
- **10% Homework (Workout logs)**



Objectives

- ✓ To develop the quality and productivity of each students' life through participation in a comprehensive physical education program.
- ✓ To develop each student's individual physical fitness, lifelong habits, self-respect, sportsmanship, social skills, health, and wellness.
- ✓ To develop students' manipulative skills while interacting with their peers in cooperative and team games.
- ✓ To provide developmentally appropriate activities while meeting the needs of all learners.

State Testing for PE

The state of California has designated the FITNESSGRAM as the PE test for all public school students. Baird Middle School will assess students in the following areas:

- Mile Run
- 20-meter Pacer
- Push-ups
- Curl-ups
- Sit & Reach
- Trunk Lift

**Baird Middle
School
Physical
Education
Handbook
2026-2027**

The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize you with the expectations and procedures that will help you be prepared and successful in your Physical Education experience.

Medical Excuses

- A student is permitted **2 parent excuses** during the school year. The maximum amount of time a student may be excused from activity is 3 consecutive class periods via Parent note.
- A doctor's note must be given to the school nurse, who will then send it to the appropriate teacher.
- A doctor's note for PE also applies to all extracurricular activities, including athletics.

Athletic Game Days

- All student-athletes are required to dress out in their PE clothes and participate on game days.
- Student-athletes may NOT wear a school-issued uniform to PE class.

Electronic Devices

- No electronic devices are allowed in PE class or out in the locker room: cell phones, Air-Pods, cameras, etc.
- Should a student use their cell phone or any other electronic device during class, it will be sent to the Main Office where a parent will be required to pick it up.
- Taking pictures or using social media in the locker room or in class is strictly prohibited and will result in an administrative referral.

Student Expectations

- Be on time to class and report to roll call in proper PE uniform. **Dressing out demonstrates responsibility and encourages safety and proper hygiene.**
- Follow all directions. Treat staff and peers with respect.
- Actively participate in all class activities and demonstrate responsibility in improving personal fitness.
- Bring all needed materials to class.
- Use all equipment and facilities in a safe and proper manner.
- Exhibit proper hygiene by washing PE clothes weekly.
- Check grades on Atlas weekly.

Tardies

- Students must be in the locker room by the time the tardy bell rings.
- Students are given 7 minutes from the tardy bell to be dressed and sitting in front of their lockers.
- Students are given 7 minutes at the end of class to dress for their next class.
- Restroom needs must be taken care of before reporting to designated roll call area.

Item	Cost
PE T-Shirt	\$15
PE Shorts	\$15
PE Set	\$30

- PE clothing may be purchased at Schedule Pickup Night or in the locker rooms during AST.
- Checks made payable to "*Baird Middle School*". Cash accepted.
- Baird spirit wear and sweatshirts are sold via online store (approximately 4 times per year).
- See Page 4 of Handbook for *PE Clothing Requirements*

Baird PE Staff

Doug Wilkins- Zero Period

Bryan Turner- 5th Grade

Lauren Peranick- 6th Grade

Jeanne Sawali- 7th Grade

Tim Walsh- 8th Grade

Baird PE Clothing

Locker Room

- Lockers are assigned for each school year and may not be switched unless a PE teacher has allowed it and recorded the change.
- Lock combinations must be given to your teacher before putting on your locker. If the lock needs to come off the locker for any reason, and student or teacher cannot open it, your lock may be cut off.
- No horseplay or running inside the locker room.
- Students are NOT allowed in the locker room or other facilities during break or lunch.

Lost or Stolen Items

- Any lost locks will need to be replaced. The new code must be reported to your teacher before being placed on your locker. Your code must be kept PRIVATE.
- Lockers must be locked during each class period.
- Bags or any other personal items should not be left out.
- Teachers are NOT responsible for lost or stolen items.
- Anyone caught stealing or performing any other illegal action will be reported to school administration.