

NORTHFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL

Curriculum Highlights

Grade 6

Grade 6 is divided into two teams. Students will receive core instruction from their team teachers. Exploratory classes are taught by faculty experienced in working with sixth graders.

Students will be placed on each team in a manner that will provide the highest quality and equitable education for all Northfield Middle School sixth graders. Many factors will be considered when placing students. Information received from fifth grade teachers, parent requests based on educational needs, equal placement of students with special needs, gender, and ability level will all be factors considered.

An example of a sixth grade schedule:

Period 1 Core class: math

Period 2 Core class: social studies

Period 3 Explore 6 and physical education

Period 4 Core class: science

Period 5 Core class: reading

Period 6 Core class: writing / elective

Period 7 Music electives, study halls, and/or Amistades 6

The following course descriptions are subject to change.

Required Core Classes

Math 6A: This course covers the 6th grade Minnesota math standards. Students will be exploring different forms of rational numbers; including operations and comparisons with fractions and decimals. As the year goes on, math will become more abstract. This includes topics involving Geometry, Pre-Algebra, and Probability.

Math 6AA: This course also covers the 6th grade Minnesota math standards at a faster pace than Math 6A. Students will master topics including operations with rational numbers, Geometry, Pre-Algebra, and Probability within the first 3 quarters of the year. In the final quarter, advanced Pre-Algebra topics will be explored. NOTICE: This course will often have larger and more challenging assignments than Math 6A.

**7th-grade math placement will be determined in May based on class performance, work ethic/completion, test scores, teacher recommendation, and student input.*

Reading: Students receive instruction through the Reader's Workshop model. Lessons focus on elements of literature, word analysis/vocabulary acquisition, and comprehension strategies. Independent reading is also a critical component of this class. A variety of texts are used including fiction and nonfiction literature, poetry, and student-selected independent reading materials.

Supplemental grade 6 reading resource: All 6th grade reading students will use the individualized, online program Reading Plus in addition to the regular curriculum.

Social Studies: It's all about Minnesota in 6th grade Social Studies! Students study history, geography, civics and economics through the lens of Minnesota's past and present, learning how these disciplines work together to tell the story of Minnesota and its people. Our text, Northern Lights: The Stories of Minnesota's Past, provides accounts of real people who transformed, and have been transformed by, the place we call Minnesota. These stories include triumph, injustice, perseverance, heartbreak and ingenuity. Learning our state's history helps students to connect stories of themselves and their communities to the larger world, preparing them for the study of broader historical topics in the years to come.

Science: Units that are taught include Plate Tectonics & Rock Cycling, Weather & Climate, Water Cycling, Natural Hazards, Earth's Resources & Human Impact, and Earth in Space. We use the OpenSci Ed program, which includes digital resources but not a digital or hard copy textbook. This incorporates the NGSS (Next Generation Science Standards) which is aligned with the new Minnesota Science Standards.

Writing: LAUNCH is intended to assist students in the transition from elementary school to middle school. This class will incorporate effective techniques that support success in all of the 6th grade classes and beyond. These include a variety of skills such as time management and organization, using technology tools, and self-advocacy.

Physical Education: This course meets every other day all year. Students will be participating in individual sports (tennis, badminton, ping-pong, weightlifting and other recreational activities), and team sports (football, volleyball, basketball, floor hockey, soccer, speedball, and softball). Students should change into clothes that allow them to move comfortably and are appropriate for the weather. A locker with a lock will be assigned to each student.

Explore Art 6: In this course, students will be exposed to a wide range of art concepts and materials. Students' skill set will be expanded through drawing, painting, sculptural and digital art experiences that incorporate the elements of art and principles of design. Students will have the opportunity to think creatively and build on their previous artistic knowledge. Academic productivity skills utilizing student iPads, Schoology, Notability and Google Drive will be embedded at intervals throughout the school year.

Elective Classes

Orchestra: Sixth grade orchestra meets for a full year on alternating days. The class is designed to be a learning experience as well as a time for preparing for performances. Students learn and review scales, etudes, rhythmic patterns and study music in a variety of styles. Scheduled orchestra lessons are part of this program. Evening concerts are presented during the school year.

Prerequisite: Students with at least one year playing experience in orchestra are welcome to register. Students interested in beginning a string instrument should meet with the instructor and enroll in Level 1 Strings.

Level 1 Strings: This course is designed for students who have never played a string instrument and wish to learn. This course is open to students entering 6th, 7th and 8th Grade. Instruction will be given on the following instruments: violin, viola, cello or bass. This course meets for the first semester only, on alternating days. At the completion of Quarter 2, students in this course will transfer to their grade level ensembles.

Choir: Sixth Grade Choir is for students with any level of experience and skill in singing. This vocal music course is for students who have a desire to learn, sing and perform music. Students will learn the fundamentals of music, develop more independence in learning and singing music, become more confident singers and develop a deeper appreciation for music. Choir is a year-long class with stage performances and events throughout the school year! Our 6th Grade Choir performs at evening concerts, Winter Walk, and the District Choral Festival, which takes place during the school day. We also collaborate with the high school choirs, elementary choirs and other guest musicians. Choir is a great place to make new friends. Both beginners and experienced singers are always welcome. If you have any questions about choir at NMS please contact Ms. Michelle Bendett at mbendett@northfieldschools.org.

Band: Sixth grade band meets for a full year on alternating days. Students continue learning basic music theory and instrumental techniques while becoming exposed to a wide variety of musical selections of increasing difficulty. Evening concerts are presented and students receive a band lesson every eight school days with the band instructor. Students are expected to stay in band for the entire year, and practice for at least 60 minutes each week at home in addition to the full band rehearsals. Prerequisite: Participation in 5th grade band. Students that were not in 5th grade band and are interested in beginning a Band instrument should meet with the instructor and enroll in Level 1 Band.

Level 1 Band: This course is designed for students that have never played a band instrument and wish to learn. This course is open to students entering 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. This course meets for the first semester only, on alternating days. After the completion of Quarter 2, students in this course will transfer to their grade level ensembles.

Amistades 6: Students who were in the Compañeros program in elementary school may enroll in the Amistades 6 elective. Amistades 6 is not an immersion course, but rather a one-period elective class (this class meets on an every-other-day schedule), in which students study Spanish language and culture. Students who complete Amistades 6 will be eligible to enroll in the Amistades 7 course in seventh grade. Prerequisite: Participation in Compañeros or a similar program in another school system.

Drop/Add Policy: Withdrawal from courses requires parental and teacher consent. Transfer requests will generally only be approved when moving from a larger section to a smaller section.