

# 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: Math
- Period 2: Social Studies
- Period 3: Launch and Physical Education
- Period 4: Science
- Period 5 : English
- Period 6: Exploratory class

The following course descriptions are subject to change.

**Math 6:** This course also covers all the 6th-grade Minnesota State Math Standards. Students will be exploring and applying a wide variety of math topics that lay the foundation for pre-algebra in 7th grade. Topics and focus skills include: (1) Conversions and operations between different forms of rational numbers including whole numbers, decimals, fractions, ratios, and percents. (2) Estimating and calculating geometric measurements, including angle measurements, perimeter, area, surface area, and volume. (3) Solving and writing expressions, inequalities, and equations. (4) Creating sample spaces and calculating both experimental and theoretical probability.

**Pre-Algebra 6:** This is an accelerated course designed for students who have greatly exceeded grade-level expectations in 5th grade. This course will be rigorous and fast-paced as it will cover both the 6th and 7th grade Minnesota State Math Standards. Students taking this course can expect longer and more challenging assignments than those in Math 6. Students will delve into negative numbers right away and will be engaging in math discourse to promote critical thinking and problem-solving. Students who stay on this accelerated track will take Algebra 1 in 7th Grade and Algebra 2 in 8th Grade.

**English 6:** This course is designed to strengthen students' reading and writing skills. A variety of texts are used, including fiction and nonfiction, poetry, and student-selected independent reading materials. Students will also write for multiple purposes throughout the year.

**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.

**LAUNCH :** 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, organization, using technology tools, communication, social emotional learning, and self-advocacy.

**Physical Education:** 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.

### **ExploratoryClasses**

**6th Grade Explore Art:** In this course, students will have the opportunity to engage in a variety of hands-on art projects, covering a wide range of art concepts and materials. As students progress through the school year, their art knowledge will expand through drawing, painting, sculpture, and digital art experiences that incorporate the elements and principles of art and design. This will allow all students to think creatively, build on previous art knowledge and improve their academic productivity skills.

**Orchestra:** 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 of playing experience in orchestra are welcome to register. Students interested in beginning a string instrument should meet with the instructor.

**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](mailto:mbendett@northfieldschools.org).

**Band:** 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.

**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.