

NORTHFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL

Course Summary

Grade 6

Grade 6 is divided into two teams. Students will receive core instruction from their team teachers. 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: Art and Physical Education

Period 4: Science

Period 5 : English

Period 6: Selected class

Period 7: Study Hall or Selected class

The following course descriptions are subject to change.

Math 6: This course covers the 6th-grade Minnesota State Math Standards. Students will explore a wide variety of math topics that lay the foundation for pre-algebra in 7th grade. Students will build collaborative and critical thinking skills as they learn math through problem-based learning. Topics and focus skills include: (1) Conversions and operations between different forms of rational numbers. (2) Estimating and calculating angle measurements, surface areas, and volumes. (3) Solving and writing expressions, inequalities, and equations. (4) Creating sample spaces and understanding the difference between 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. Please know that this course requires more challenging assignments than those in Math 6. Just like Math 6, students will build collaborative and critical thinking skills as they learn math through problem-based learning. Students who continue this accelerated track will take Algebra 1 in 7th Grade.

English: This course is designed to strengthen students' reading, writing, and communication 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. Core Program: Arts & Letters, a knowledge-building English Language Arts curriculum that combines reading, writing, speaking, and listening with science, history, and the arts. It uses high-quality texts to build knowledge, foster critical thinking, and improve literacy skills.

Social Studies: It's all about Minnesota in 6th grade Social Studies! Students study history, civics and government, geography, ethnic studies, 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.

Visual and Media Art 6: 6th-grade is an introductory course that builds upon elementary art concepts. This course will introduce students to Visual Arts and Media Arts. This includes but is not limited to drawing, painting, sculpture, graphic design, digital illustration, video production, and photography. Students will learn how to effectively communicate their unique perspectives through both traditional and digital art media. The goal is to help students increase confidence in creating and building problem-solving skills. This course will help kick-off their Middle School art experience and prepare students for future art courses.

Physical Education: Students are expected to wear tennis shoes and change into clothes that allow them to move and are appropriate for the weather. Students will be participating in lifetime sports (tennis, badminton, ping-pong, weightlifting, dancing, and other recreational activities), and team sports (football, volleyball, basketball, floor hockey, soccer, speedball, and softball). Students can request a locker to store items. Written quizzes & skills tests will be assessed throughout the school year in most activities.

Additional Classes

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.

Band 6: 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 ten 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.

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.

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.

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, 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.