

# NORTHFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL

## Curriculum Highlights

### Grade 6

Grade six is divided into 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/health
Period 5	Core class: reading
Period 6	Core class: writing
Period 7	Music electives, study halls, and/or Amistades 6

The following course descriptions are subject to change.

## Required Classes

**Math 6A:** This course covers the 6th grade Minnesota math standards.

**Math 6AA:** This course also covers the 6th grade Minnesota math standards at a faster pace than Math 6A. Advanced topics will be explored after covering the Minnesota 6th grade standards. This course will often have larger and more challenging assignments than Math 6A.

**Supplemental grade 6 math resource:** All 6th grade math students will use the online program Imagine Math in addition to their regular curriculum.

\*7th grade math placement will be determined in the spring of 6th grade based on performance in Math 6, MCA scores, and Imagine Math pathway progress

**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:** Lessons taught include Minnesota history and government, geography, cultures, current events, and global issues. *Northern Lights: The Stories of Minnesota's Past* written by St. Olaf graduate, Dave Kenney is the text used for this class.

**Science/Health:** Science units that are taught include atoms, matter, energy, sound, light, forces, and motion. There is also a focus on engineering. The Harcourt Science series is used as the basic primary text for this class. In Health we will be teaching Social Emotional Learning through the Second Step Curriculum. 5 Units will be taught throughout the year. The units include: Empathy and Communication, Bullying Prevention, Emotion Management, Problem Solving, and Substance Abuse Prevention. Students will have homework links that will focus on student/parent interaction.

**Writing:** Sixth Graders will develop writing skills through various types of prose and poetry. These include descriptive, narrative, personal, essay, and argumentative writing, poetry, and demonstration speeches. Sixth Graders will use the writing process including prewriting, first draft, revising, editing, conferencing, publishing, and sharing/presentation. Sixth Graders will apply the writing components of ideas, organization, word choice, voice, fluency, conventions, and presentation.

**Physical Education:** This course meets every other day all year. Students will be participating in individual sports (tennis, badminton, ping-pong, weightlifting, swimming, 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 6: Art and Academic Productivity:** Students will be exposed to a wide range of art concepts and materials. Students will have the opportunity to create 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional art work incorporating the elements and principles of art. Students' skill set will be expanded through drawing, painting and sculptural experiences. Academic productivity skills utilizing student iPads, Schoology, Notability and Google Drive will be embedded at intervals throughout the school year.

## Elective Classes

**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 everyday Amistades 7 course in seventh grade.

**Prerequisite:** Participation in Compañeros or a similar program in another school system.

**Choir:** An introduction to the development of basic vocal skills and musicianship is given. Significant music of the past and present will be studied as well as proper singing techniques and sight-reading. Any student who enjoys singing in a group is encouraged to register for choir. Evening concerts are presented during the school year. Individual/small group voice lessons are also introduced. The year ends with the unit: Small Ensembles and/or Solos/Groups. Singers get to pick a pop artist/song (lyrics appropriate) of their choice. Students rehearse, then share with the class or make an appointment to be shared with just the teacher.

**Band:** Sixth grade band meets for a full year on alternating days. Emphasis is placed on basic music theory and techniques. Evening concerts are presented throughout the year with a variety of styles of music being presented. Scheduled band lessons are part of the program. Students are expected to stay in band for the entire year. Students are expected to practice at least 60 minutes per week in addition to the full band rehearsals.

**Prerequisite:** Successful participation in fifth grade band is required. If the student decides to switch instruments after the end of the fifth grade school year, please contact the middle school band instructor. Students having no prior band experience are welcome to contact the director to begin lessons on a band instrument. These students will be included in band rehearsals after they have gained sufficient technique on their band instrument. The percussion (drum) section and saxophone sections are typically at capacity and not available to students beginning or switching instruments in sixth grade.

**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 stringed instrument should meet with the instructor.

**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.