CENTENNIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL

GRADE 8 COURSE GUIDE



middleschool.isd12.org
763-792-5400

CENTENNIAL
MIDDLE SCHOOL
CENTENNIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 12



WELCOME

WELCOME TO CENTENNIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL!

Centennial is a vibrant community where students are encouraged to be engaged, empowered, and empathetic learners.

Middle school is such an important time of discovery and growth, when young people begin to learn more about themselves and consider the kind of young adults they want to become. Our staff is excited to walk alongside your child as they begin this stage of their educational journey.

At Centennial School District, our goal is to inspire students to create their own future. We believe every learner should finish their school years with the confidence to think bigger, achieve more, and collaborate in meaningful ways. At Centennial Middle School, we provide opportunities for students to explore who they are as learners and as members of our Cougar community.

Our mission is to ensure that every student develops the academic skills, social understanding, and emotional resilience they need to succeed—while also discovering personal interests and finding joy in learning.

To get a closer look at the learning, growth, and community spirit happening at our school, we invite you to follow along in our weekly school newsletter, *News from Centennial Middle School*, visit the Centennial School District website (**isd12.org**) for news updates and follow the District Instagram account (centennial.isd12) for a peek into all the great things happening in our schools across the district.

We look forward to welcoming you and your child into the Centennial Middle School family. If you need any assistance with the enrollment process, please don't hesitate to reach out to our office. We are eager to partner with you in the years ahead!



Sincerely,
Principal Stevens

WE BELIEVE

- Middle school is a time of growth, exploration, and preparation for young adulthood.
- Students should be encouraged to take ownership of their learning and discover their passions.
- A safe, inclusive, and caring environment helps students build confidence and resilience.
- Academics, activities, and social opportunities all play an important role in developing well-rounded learners.
- Partnerships between families and school staff are essential in guiding students through this important stage.
- Every student has the ability to achieve, contribute, and prepare for a successful future.

CONNECT WITH US

Centennial Middle School
399 Elm Street
Lino Lakes, MN 55014
763-792-5400

Office hours:	**Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m.-3:15 p.m.**
Website:	**middleschool.isd12.org**
Grades 6-8	
Enrollment:	**1,634**
School day:	**8:05 a.m.-2:55 p.m.**
Principal:	**Bob Stevens**
Assistant Principal:	**Andrea Krueger**
Assistant Principal:	**Amy Smalley**
Counselors:	**Adriana Lee**
	Corinna Morse
	Dawn Westanmo
Lead Teacher	**Kristen Fleming**

ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

At Centennial Middle School, our work is guided by the Centennial School District Strategic Plan, developed through collaboration with students, families, staff, and community members. This plan reflects the values of our community and ensures every student experiences a safe, supportive, and high-quality education that prepares them for the next stage of learning and beyond.

DEDICATED STAFF
Our staff is committed to the success and growth of every student. The majority of our teachers and staff have served at Centennial Middle School for many years, and a significant portion grew up in the community, choosing to return to work and raise their families here. This shared commitment honors the district's strategic plan and the "desired daily experiences" of our students, families, and staff.

CONNECTING. ACHIEVING. PREPARING.

The Centennial School District's formula for continued success is simple. We start with relationships - loving and caring for every learner who walks through our school doors. Then, we raise the bar with high expectations - a belief that each learner can and will discover success in all that they do. The result? Confident, capable learners who are prepared to accomplish their dreams and impact our community and the world.

The Centennial School District promise to every learner and family:
With an expectation of high academic performance coupled with loving and caring relationships, each learner will be seen for who they are and given what they need to find success in all that they do.

CENTENNIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION

OUR CORE PURPOSE

By providing high quality educational opportunities, emotional support, and social development, Centennial School District prepares learners for excellence in their future.



CONNECTING.

Centennial School District 12 connects the communities of Blaine, Centerville, Circle Pines, Lexington and Lino Lakes through its nine exceptional schools. Centennial is the pride of our five communities with 92% of resident students choosing Centennial-one of the highest percentages in the metro.

A SENSE OF BELONGING

Feeling connected and included is central to student success. We cultivate an empathetic, inclusive, and supportive school culture where every student is known, valued, and supported. Social-emotional learning and community-building activities are embedded in daily school life.

ENGAGED FAMILIES & COMMUNICATION

Families are essential partners in their child's education. Families stay informed and engaged through:

- *News from Centennial Middle School,* a weekly newsletter, and classroom emails.
- Campus Parent Portal for attendance, grades, and reports.
- Conferences, phone calls, and volunteer opportunities.

COMMUNITY & PARENT PARTNERSHIPS

Strong partnerships with our Centennial community enhance programming, support innovative teaching, and foster a vibrant school environment for student success. Parent Association programs and events. Community foundation grants supporting innovative teaching. Collaboration strengthens student success and school culture.

Look for news stories on the web at **middleschool.isd12.org**

Follow Centennial Schools on Instagram at **centennial.isd12**.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

We encourage all students to check out our Community Education programming and participate in co-curricular / activities!

Centennial Community Education offers a variety of after-school programs designed to support your child's growth, learning, and well-being and provide enriching experiences beyond the classroom.

Youth Enrichment Classes: Seasonal classes in areas such as S.T.E.M., fine arts, athletics, and activities, designed to complement your child's interest and support their development.

Childcare: Fee-based program before and after-school as well as non-school day options.

Summer Kids Club C.A.M.P.: Programming from June to August, providing full-day care with activities and weekly field trips.

Learn more at **communityed.isd12.org** to explore programming and to register.

1,178 student participation
in after-school activities offered through Community Education for Centennial Middle School students.



ACHIEVING.

Centennial students consistently perform at high levels in academics, athletics, and activities.

INSIDE CENTENNIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL

Teams: Students are assigned to a Team of core teachers so that they can build positive relationships with peers and teachers can provide academic and social-emotional supports across the team.

Classes: Students take core academics + exploratory courses such as Art, Design & Make, Intro. to Theater, Physical Education, Music/Band/Choir, and Spanish.

Chromebook: Provided to students and used as a learning tool. Students utilize Schoology, Google, and Campus Portal to manage coursework, grades, and assignments.

Infinite Campus Parent Portal: Allows parents/guardians to better understand, monitor, and participate in the educational process with real-time access to student information for the current school year. Parents and student access announcements, assignments, attendance, fees, grades, report cards, schedules, and food service, and more.

Schoology: An integrated learning management tool that provides a digital classroom hub for communication, collaboration, work flow, and digital resources. Parent accounts allow parents/guardians the ability to stay up-to-date and "shadow" their student's coursework and activity. Much of the daily classroom experience such as course updates, content, assignments and assessments are found in Schoology.

Cell Phones: Cell phones must remain in a student's locker during the school day. Cell phones are not used during lunch, in hallways, restrooms, or classrooms.

ENROLLMENT & REGISTRATION

At Centennial Middle School, all students are placed on a Team for their core academic subjects. Placement in accelerated classes or academic support services is thoughtfully determined using a variety of factors. Families will be informed directly if their child is selected for advanced coursework or additional academic support. Core subjects, Middle School Success, Art and Physical Education are scheduled automatically—no action is needed for general registration.

In eighth grade, students help shape their schedule by choosing electives such as: Spanish, Band, Choir, Art or STEM. A registration process will be shared with students during school to select their preferred electives.

OPEN ENROLLMENT

- Options for families outside the district to attend Centennial Schools.
- Includes eligibility, application process, and deadlines.

Learn more at **isd12.org/enroll-today**.



PREPARING.

STUDENT SUPPORT

- Cougar Connect / FLEX time - Academic support, extension, enrichment opportunities.
- Counseling and social-emotional supports.
- Family collaboration to support individual student growth.

Centennial offers engaging learning opportunities, emotional support, and social development for each of our students to help them prepare for whatever is next and beyond.



CORE ACADEMIC CLASSES FOR GRADES 6-8

Grade 6:
Math, Language Arts, Earth Science, Minnesota Studies (Teams 601, 602, 603)

Grade 7:
Math, Language Arts, Life Science, US History (Teams 701, 702, 703)

Grade 8:
Math, Language Arts, Physical Science, Global Studies (Teams 801, 802, 803)

ADDITIONAL SPECIALIST ELECTIVE COURSES

Grade 6:
Choir, Band, Physical Education, STEM, Art, Middle School Success

Grade 7:
Choir, Band, Physical Education, STEM, Art, Health

Grade 8:
Choir, Band, Physical Education, STEM, Art, Spanish

8TH GRADE SCHEDULE

Core Academic Classes: **Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies** *(Every day, all year)*	
Cougar Connect / FLEX	
Elective Choice: Spanish *-or-* STEM Semester + Art Semester *(Every day, all year)*	
Elective Choice: Band, Choir, STEM Extension, Art Extension *(A/B days with PE)*	**Phy Ed** *(A/B days with Elective Choice)*

LANGUAGE ARTS

ADVANCED ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS PLACEMENT
At Centennial Middle School, we are committed to helping each student thrive by placing them in courses that inspire growth and spark academic curiosity. For placement in Advanced English Language Arts, we take a thoughtful, data-informed approach each spring. Our review includes MCA results, FastBridge and CoGAT scores, classroom achievement, current coursework, and teacher insights. By looking at the whole picture, we aim to match students with learning opportunities that challenge their thinking and nurture their strengths at all levels.

Language Arts 8

This course supports the continued development of reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills as outlined by the Minnesota Common Core Standards. Students will engage with a variety of texts and writing tasks to build content knowledge, strengthen communication, and develop critical thinking. Emphasis will be placed on understanding diverse perspectives, becoming self-directed learners, and practicing responsible digital citizenship. Core instruction will focus on reading a wide range of sources, writing to inform, argue, and persuade, and effectively communicating and collaborating through speaking, listening, viewing, and exchanging ideas.



MATH

ACCELERATED MATH PLACEMENT

At Centennial Middle School, we believe math should challenge students while building their confidence and skills. Each spring, we carefully evaluate a range of data to guide placement into Accelerated Math. This includes MCA scores, FastBridge results, CoGAT data, current and past math performance, and teacher insights. Our goal is to ensure students are placed in a math course that pushes their thinking, matches their readiness, and supports continued growth throughout the year.

Algebra 8

This course offers an in-depth study of algebraic concepts aligned with the Minnesota Academic Standards. Students will build essential skills in solving equations and inequalities, working with linear functions, and analyzing mathematical relationships. Emphasis will be placed on problem-solving, critical thinking, and applying algebra to real-world situations. Through direct instruction, collaborative learning, and targeted practice, students will develop a strong foundation for success in higher-level mathematics.

Intermediate Algebra 8

This course provides a comprehensive study of algebraic concepts aligned with the Minnesota Academic Standards. Students will deepen their understanding of linear functions, polynomials, equations, and inequalities, using both symbolic and graphical methods. Key topics include factoring, simplifying radicals and rational expressions, and an introduction to quadratic and exponential functions. Students will also explore data analysis, draw conclusions from data, and examine the role of sampling in experimental design. Emphasis is placed on real-world application, critical thinking, and preparation for higher-level mathematics.



SCIENCE

Physical Science 8

This Physical Science course introduces students to foundational concepts in physics and chemistry through hands-on investigations, aligned with the Minnesota Academic Standards. Students will explore the properties and states of matter, forces and motion, energy transfer, and basic chemical reactions. Emphasis will be placed on applying the scientific method and connecting scientific principles to real-world situations, building a strong foundation for future studies in the physical sciences.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Global Studies 8

The course focuses on world regional geography, integrating key concepts from contemporary world history, economics, citizenship, and government. Through interactive lessons, collaborative activities, and critical thinking exercises, students will explore units including An Introduction to Geography, United States and Canada, Latin America, Europe and Russia, Africa, Southwest and Central Asia, Monsoon Asia, Oceania, and Antarctica. Aligned with Minnesota Common Core Standards, the curriculum emphasizes global awareness and the connections between geography and current world events to deepen students' understanding of diverse cultures and global issues.



BAND

Band 8

Eighth Grade Band continues to develop students' skills on their chosen instrument, focusing on more advanced techniques, challenging rhythms, and an extended range. This engaging, performance-based course meets every other day throughout the school year and prepares students for more complex music in a variety of styles, including concert band literature, jazz, and contemporary genres. Students will perform in multiple concerts and have opportunities to participate in extracurricular groups such as Jazz Band, Pep Band, and Solo & Ensemble festivals. The course emphasizes musicianship, teamwork, and personal growth, building a strong foundation for high school band participation.

CHOIR

Choir 8

Eighth Grade Choir is an engaging and dynamic music course where students deepen their exploration of singing and music-making within a group setting. This course builds on foundational vocal techniques and music theory while fostering the joy of collaborative performance. Students will develop their vocal skills, musicianship, and confidence throughout the year as they prepare for three after-school concerts, with performance dates provided at the beginning of the year. The course emphasizes teamwork, creativity, and a continued appreciation for choral music.



STEM

8th STEM Extensions

The 8th Grade STEM Extensions course engages students in hands-on learning through Project Lead the Way's Automation and Robotics curriculum. Using a project-based approach, students work in teams to design, build, and automate mechanical systems with programmed input/output devices. The course builds on prior experience with Autodesk design software, introducing Fusion 360 to prepare students for high school engineering pathways. Students also explore careers through self-assessments and develop 4- and 10-year academic and career plans. Later in the year, units in Audio Engineering and Video Production offer additional creative and technical experiences.

8th Grade STEM Elective

In this hands-on, project-based course, students explore a variety of STEM and engineering topics through creative design and problem-solving activities. Projects may include Aero Flight, Digital Photo Editing, Mouse Trap Cars, Graphic Design, CADD, Crash Test Car safety and design, 3D additive manufacturing using rubber molds, CNC design and processing, LouVee Car development, structural engineering challenges, and 2D design for laser engraving. Students gain experience with real-world tools and technologies while developing critical thinking, collaboration, and technical skills across multiple disciplines.

This one-semester course partners with Art for the opposite semester



ART

Art Extension 8

Art Extensions is a year-long, project-based elective that meets every other day and offers students extended studio time to explore a variety of art materials, genres, and styles. Through hands-on projects, students will experiment with different techniques and creative processes while developing their artistic skills and personal expression. Each project is rooted in specific areas of study, providing opportunities for deeper exploration and growth in the visual arts.

Art Elective 8

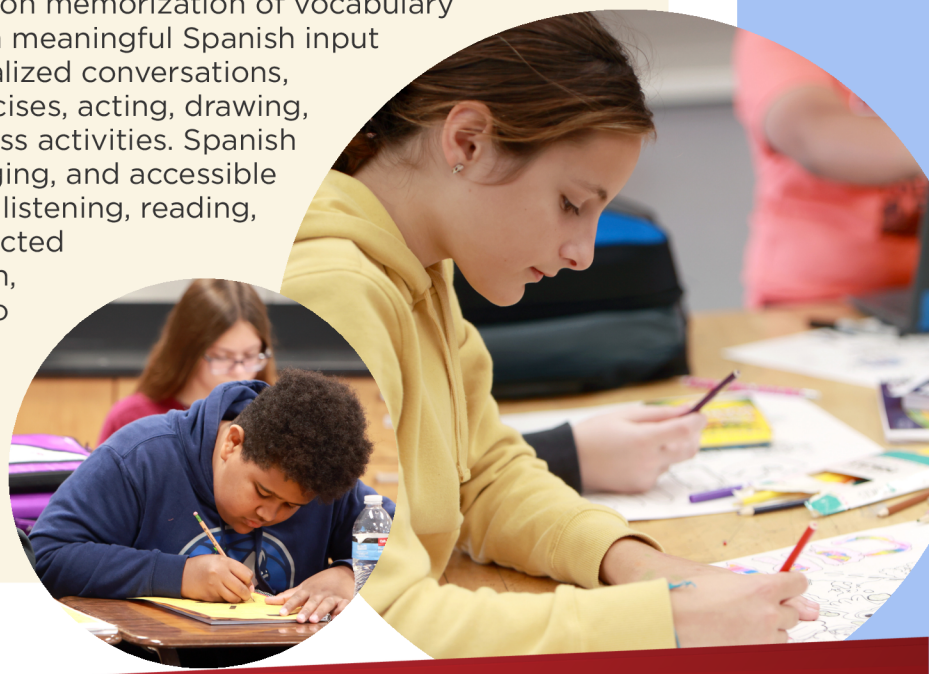
Art Elective Rotation is a one-semester, project-based course for 8th grade students that meets daily and provides extended studio time to explore a variety of art materials, genres, and styles. With a foundational focus on the elements of art, students will experiment with different techniques and creative approaches as they complete a range of hands-on projects. This course encourages personal expression, artistic growth, and an appreciation for visual arts through structured practice and exploration of original works and reflect on their artistic process.

This one-semester course partners with STEM for the opposite semester

SPANISH

Spanish 8 *(every day all year)*

This high school Spanish course is designed for true beginners and employs innovative, research-based methods—Comprehensible Input (CI) and Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS)—to support natural language acquisition. Instead of relying on memorization of vocabulary or grammar rules, students engage with meaningful Spanish input through interactive storytelling, personalized conversations, daily readings and comprehension exercises, acting, drawing, writing original stories, and dynamic class activities. Spanish is spoken from day one in a clear, engaging, and accessible way that builds confidence in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Active participation is expected throughout the course. By its conclusion, students will understand and respond to everyday Spanish, communicate about familiar topics such as school, family, and hobbies, read and write beginner-level stories, and establish a strong foundation for continued language learning.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education 8

This course provides students with opportunities to develop a range of physical skills while focusing on overall fitness and well-being. Emphasis is placed on health-related and skill-related fitness components through daily participation and active engagement. Students will build strength, endurance, coordination, and teamwork skills in a supportive and inclusive environment.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SERVICES
This program supports English Language Learners through dedicated English Language Development (ELD) classes and co-teaching in content-area classrooms. In ELD classes, students receive targeted instruction in speaking, listening, reading, and writing to build the academic language skills needed for success. Instruction is aligned with the WIDA English Language Development Standards and delivered in small groups by licensed English Language teachers. Co-teaching provides additional support by integrating language development with grade-level content, allowing students to strengthen both academic and language skills. Students remain in the program until they meet language proficiency criteria.





#Centennialproud

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