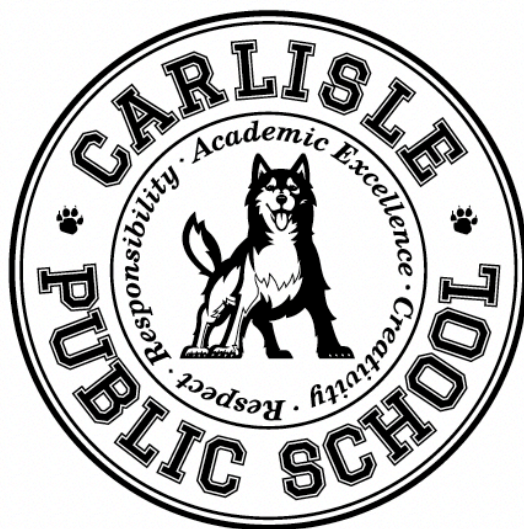


# Carlisle Middle School



## Program of Studies

Curriculum Guide

Grades 5-8

2026-2027

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# Middle School Program of Studies Overview

The Carlisle Middle School Program of Studies reflects the course offerings and instructed curriculum, aligning with the learning standards articulated by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) [Curriculum Frameworks](#), as well as numerous national standards.

Carlisle Middle School is a fifth through eighth-grade school incorporating a team-based structure to support early adolescent learning and foster educator collaboration. We know from research and our experience with children how important it is for them to feel safe, welcomed, and connected to their peers and teachers so that they can perform at a high level daily. Our faculty and staff invest time to build these strong, caring, and respectful relationships. As a school, we work collaboratively and diligently to engage, support, and challenge our children academically, socially, emotionally, and behaviorally.

Each middle school student in grades 5-8 is a member of a grade-level academic team and attends daily academic classes in English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, science, social studies, advisory, homeroom, and a variety of specials. At Carlisle Middle School, these specials include health, art, physical education, and world languages. Each of these specials meets one time per week, while World Language offerings (French, Spanish, and Chinese or Mandarin) meet three times per week. Additionally, middle school students have the opportunity to participate in music-based ensembles, such as grade-level choir and/or band. Lastly, student social-emotional learning is supported by a middle school advisory, which promotes a positive classroom culture as well as a positive school climate.

Carlisle Middle School embraces a philosophical approach that focuses on the whole child as a growing, thinking individual. The emphasis is on a process approach to teaching and learning, with the belief that the product of a successful school experience is a student who values learning and can think and make connections.

As students experience a core of common knowledge and acquire fundamental skills, including the ability to analyze, draw inferences, and solve problems, they strive to become increasingly independent, responsible, and accountable. Our efforts focus on fostering satisfaction in accomplishment and on teaching students the value of collaboration, cooperation, and competition. Students are formally assessed using a traditional letter-based grading system on a trimester basis, and feedback is also provided via interim assessments at the midpoint of each trimester regarding student progress toward learning expectations. Assessment and grading are intended to enhance

growth as students learn to deal with successes and failures and to initiate, develop, and follow through with tasks involving individual expression.

## **Mission, Vision, and Portrait of a CPS Graduate**

Carlisle Public Schools cultivate balanced learners who can stand confidently with one foot in the field and the other in the future.

We create a nurturing and individualized experience for our students and highly value personal relationships. We prioritize social-emotional and physical health. We include a project-based approach to help students develop their knowledge, skills, and interests. We provide multiple ways for students to demonstrate understanding and mastery, de-emphasizing state standardized assessments. Students engage in the classroom and in the community, with educators, local experts, and Carlisle's natural resources to understand how their studies can be applied to civic life to help solve local and global problems. We break down barriers between traditional subjects and create opportunities for students to develop their understanding of the world and extend their perspective and thinking beyond our town borders.

### **A CPS Graduate is:**

- A resilient and adaptable lifelong learner who is empowered to pursue their interests.
- A self-aware and reflective individual who takes responsibility for their actions, outcomes and learning.
- A caring, kind and engaged global citizen who works to forward identified goals.\*
- An advocate for social justice who acts with skill and courage against prejudice and towards equity.
- A creative and competent problem solver, appreciative of diverse thinking.
- An independent thinker, willing to question the status quo and weigh the evidence.
- An effective communicator & collaborator who can work with diverse teams, listen and articulate thoughts and ideas persuasively.

\*Current goals are aligned with UN Sustainable Development goals.

# English Language Arts (ELA) Curriculum

The philosophy of the middle school English Language Arts (ELA) department is to foster a lifelong impact on students by helping them grow into compassionate, empowered individuals. We aim to develop well-rounded, critical thinkers who can empathize with others and connect deeply with themselves, their histories, and the world around them. Through literature, we expose students to diverse walks of life and challenge them to reflect, interpret, and relate their learning to real-world situations. By fostering a love of reading and learning, we empower students to access their world and develop skills that will keep doors open as they continue to grow.

Our program emphasizes building a reflective community of readers, writers, listeners, and speakers, where students learn to express themselves effectively and listen with empathy to others. We help them develop the skills and confidence needed to discover and use their unique voices. We strive to help students find the courage to communicate their thoughts, understand varied perspectives, and foster meaningful connections. In language arts, students unlock their ability to express themselves, learn more about their place in the world, and make stronger connections as global citizens.

In addition to inspiring academic growth, we prioritize character-building and resilience. We encourage students to embrace challenges with a growth mindset, recognizing that progress often comes from persistence and collaboration. By nurturing empathy, grit, and a commitment to uplifting one another, our department helps students build a supportive community that values growth and mutual respect, laying the foundation for positive relationships and lifelong learning.

## Grade 5 ELA

The objectives of the fifth-grade language arts program are: to develop (or reinforce) a love of reading and fluency with writing; to continue growing as readers by practicing skills and strategies that enable them to read more complex texts with greater comprehension, and to dig more deeply into the meaning of texts (theme, symbolism, characterization, etc.); to continue growing as writers by practicing skills and strategies that enable them to generate and organize ideas, elaborate on those ideas, and write across different genres with different audiences; to participate in an invigorating learning community where self-expression, identity celebration, goal-setting, and cooperation are valued; to become a more confident speaker, analytical thinker, and careful listener; to develop understanding around English language grammar rules, spelling patterns, and morphology; and to develop vocabulary, increase skills of finding the meaning of unknown words, and begin to incorporate more advanced vocabulary into their speaking and writing. Below are the core units of the instructed curriculum in grade 5 ELA.

- **Summary Writing:** Students learn to concisely summarize fictional stories with a focus on characterization, main events, key details, and central themes. Through this process, students acquire a stronger understanding of narrative structure, which strengthens their reading comprehension and critical thinking abilities. They also practice their speaking, listening, and presentation skills through the creation of a slideshow that showcases their summaries.
- **Narrative Writing:** Students engage in narrative writing by crafting stories from different perspectives and points of view, allowing them to explore how various characters experience the same events. They learn to consider each character's thoughts, feelings, and motivations, while ensuring that the overall plot remains consistent. Collaboration with peers plays a key role, as students work together to align storylines, maintain coherence in events, and ensure that different perspectives complement one another. This process fosters their creativity, communication, and collaboration skills, while deepening their understanding of narrative structure and character development.
- **Close Reading with ["Notice and Note" Signposts](#):** Students learn to identify and analyze "Notice and Note" signposts in fictional stories as a strategy for uncovering the deeper themes within the text. These signposts help students recognize significant moments in the narrative that reveal important lessons or insights about life. By actively looking for these signposts, students practice critical thinking and analytical skills, making connections between characters' actions and the broader message of the story. This process enhances their ability to interpret themes and understand the author's purpose.
- **Empathy & Anti-Bias Book Clubs:** Students use the "Notice and Note" signposts during this unique book club unit to engage deeply with characters of various backgrounds and walks of life. Students use strategies to dig deeper into identifying themes, analyzing characterization, and exploring literary devices. As they make inferences about the text, they partake in speaking and listening activities that help them infer messages from both the story and their peers. This holistic approach strengthens their ability to analyze and connect with literature, while fostering empathy and critical thinking as they engage in meaningful discussions with peers about bias, diversity, and inclusion.
- **Informational Essays:** Students learn to write informational essays by synthesizing information from multiple sources about the same historical event. They focus on identifying and utilizing nonfiction text features, recognizing main ideas and supporting details, and distinguishing between fact and opinion. As they engage with complex vocabulary, students also practice essential note-taking and research skills, paraphrase quotations, and organize their findings into well-developed paragraphs. Through this process, they learn to structure cohesive arguments, using evidence to support their ideas, while refining their ability to present information clearly and accurately.

- **Climate Change Action Research Project (Interdisciplinary):** In this interdisciplinary unit, students work to master research skills. After choosing a subtopic related to climate change, they begin by finding and evaluating sources for reputability and identifying relevant key terms. Using research and note-taking strategies they have learned thus far in the year, students gather and organize information, planning a visual display on a trifold to clearly communicate their findings. As they synthesize the information to teach others, students engage with guest speakers to gain additional insights and expertise. The project culminates in a gallery presentation, wherein students showcase their work to family and community visitors, sharing their research and raising awareness about climate change.

Through their experiences with reading, writing, speaking, and listening, fifth-grade students will develop a rich academic vocabulary and broad background knowledge. Students will have the opportunity to practice and ultimately demonstrate a command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage and to use their knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. Carlisle's curriculum is designed for students to meet or exceed the English Language Arts standards outlined in the Massachusetts Frameworks.

**Reading:** novels, short stories, poems, picture books, nonfiction books and articles, short films, nonfiction short books, short stories, short passages, a variety of materials on decoding, vocabulary, syllables, fluency, inferences, text structures.

**Writing:** summary writing, narratives, suspenseful stories, short reading analysis paragraphs, informational essays, poetry, explicit lessons on word choice, organization, parts of speech, punctuation, capitalization, dialogue, text features, text structures, sentence structure (how to avoid run-ons), paragraphing.

## Grade 6 ELA

The objective of the sixth-grade language arts program is to help students grow as readers, writers, speakers, and listeners in an environment that builds self-confidence, promotes acceptance, and rewards academic risk-taking and intellectual bravery.

The sixth-grade reading program is designed to encourage a love of reading and language, stimulate imagination and creativity, strengthen world and cultural knowledge, and increase empathy toward others. Sixth-grade students will read a range of challenging fiction and nonfiction books, traditional stories, poetry, magazine articles, and online passages. While reading books of their choice and assigned texts, students will continue to develop their fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and

analytical skills. Sixth-grade readers will be expected to read closely, paying attention to unfamiliar words, literary elements, figurative language, author's craft, and text structures. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the texts by answering questions, sharing examples, citing textual evidence, and contributing to class discussions.

Through a writer's workshop model, sixth graders will write for a variety of authentic purposes and develop the understanding that authors make deliberate decisions based on purpose and audience. The instructional focus will be on the creation, refinement, and organization of ideas; word choice and vivid language; sentence fluency and variety; voice; grammar; and conventions. Mentor texts will be used as models and the author's craft will be highlighted. Sixth graders will employ a variety of fiction, expository, and poetic genres to tell stories, to explain or persuade claims, to express feelings, and to analyze complex ideas. While writing across a variety of genres, students will develop independent composition, revision, and editing skills and strategies. Students will use word processing and multiple media formats for writing and publishing.

Speaking and listening experiences are planned in sixth grade so that students will further develop the skills and confidence to communicate effectively in different situations. To that end, students will have opportunities to work on their speaking and listening skills while participating in activities such as delivering oral presentations; performing to entertain; asking and responding to questions; brainstorming; collaborating; and listening to inform, relate, appreciate, and critique.

Through their experiences with reading, writing, speaking, and listening, sixth-grade students will develop a rich academic vocabulary and broad background knowledge. Students will have the opportunity to practice and ultimately demonstrate a command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage and to use their knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. Carlisle's curriculum is designed for students to meet or exceed the English Language Arts standards outlined in the Massachusetts Frameworks.

**Reading:** novels, short stories, poems, picture books, Junior Scholastic magazine articles, Notice & Note signposts, short stories; a variety of materials on decoding, syllable types, word study, spelling, and vocabulary including materials from Megawords, Wilson, and SPIRE.

**Writing:** Through a variety of assignments including paragraph responses, letters, expository literary essay, research writing, poetry, an informational picture book, and narratives, students are explicitly and systematically taught: writing process, composition skills, genre form & features, organization, word choice, parts of speech, sentence variety, grammar, and conventions with an emphasis on capitalization, end punctuation, and some comma rules.



## Grade 7 ELA

The objective of the seventh-grade language arts program is to help students grow as readers, writers, speakers, and listeners in an environment that builds self-confidence, promotes acceptance, and rewards academic risk taking and intellectual bravery.

Units of study focus on the development of skills in the following areas:

- **Reading:** Students at the end of seventh grade will be able to process and understand a wide range of texts across genres in both print and online texts. The seventh grade reading program is designed to encourage a love of reading, to develop students' vocabulary, comprehension, and analytical skills, and to expose readers to a wide variety of literature. Materials include fiction and non-fiction works, including novels, poems, short stories, and informational texts. Titles include student-chosen independent reading books, as well as teacher-assigned core literature. In any given year, assigned reading may include books such as: *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*; *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*; *The Outsiders*; *Other Words for Home*; *American Born Chinese*; *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*; and *Stargirl*.
- **Writing :** Seventh-grade writers will develop a deeper understanding of writing for many purposes and audiences. Seventh-grade writers will become more consistent in their use of conventions. They will self-evaluate and take more risks as writers. Seventh-grade writers will employ a variety of fiction, nonfiction, and poetic genres to tell stories; to explain, to persuade or inform readers; to express feelings; and to perform practical tasks. They will deepen their experience with the writing processes of developing and organizing ideas, drafting and revising, and sharing their work. Seventh-grade writers will increase their ability with technology for both writing processes and publishing.
- **Speaking and Listening:** Speaking and listening experiences are planned in seventh grade so that students will further develop the skills and confidence to communicate effectively in different situations. To that end, students will have opportunities to work on their speaking and listening skills while participating in things such as delivering oral presentations, both individually and with others; performing to entertain, persuade, and/or inform; asking and responding to questions; brainstorming; collaborating; and listening to inform, relate, and appreciate, and critique.
- **Language:** Through their experiences with reading, writing, speaking, and listening, students will develop a rich academic vocabulary and broad background knowledge. Students will have the opportunity to practice and ultimately demonstrate command of the

conventions of standard English grammar and usage and to use their knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

## Grade 8 ELA

The objective of 8th grade ELA is to create a dynamic and brave community of readers, writers and thinkers who use literature to make empathetic connections between themselves, their identities and the changing world. Throughout the year, eighth graders use the following essential questions to shape their understanding and inspire meaningful conversations: What does it mean to be human? What is the role of the individual within a group? How do our biases shape the way we view the world? What are basic human rights? Why should we remember the past? How do we define ourselves, and how do others define us? How do we make ethical decisions? What are basic human rights? What is a just society? Eighth grade language arts is a writing-intensive, discussion-oriented course that focuses on critical thinking and brave communication. Students learn the art of civil discourse and are reminded daily to speak from the heart, listen with empathy and make connections that make the world a better place.

**Reading:** Besides reading choice books that span a diversity of perspectives, voices, and genres, all eighth graders will read among the following novels that explore ideas of society and power: *The Giver*, by Lois Lowry, *Animal Farm*, by George Orwell, *Fahrenheit 451*, by Ray Bradbury, *Brown Girl Dreaming*, by Jacqueline Woodson, *The House on Mango Street*, by Sandra Cisneros, *Night*, by Elie Wiesel, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, by William Shakespeare and excerpts from the *Facing History and Ourselves* sourcebook. Students practice critical thinking and close reading skills through daily annotations, personal journaling and essay writing. By the end of their eighth grade year, students should be proficient in the ability to write a cohesive five-paragraph essay that expresses their ideas about literature.

**Writing:** 8th grade ELA is a writing-intensive class where students practice daily literary analysis. Throughout each unit, students express their understanding of texts through note-taking, paragraph responses, journal reflections and five-paragraph essays (analysis of text, compare and contrast). Students learn how to create and support a thesis statement, how to create a topic and conclusion sentence, and how to provide details from the text as evidence and weave that evidence into their analysis. Students also are instructed to write in a variety of creative genres, including poetry, memoir and short fiction. Students receive explicit instruction on revision and editing, and in each unit they take a related writing project through the writing process.

**Listening and Speaking:** 8th grade ELA teaches the art of civil discourse by modeling a safe environment for listening and speaking. Students receive direct instruction on the following aspects of dynamic conversation: how to listen with empathy and demonstrate that you have heard another person's perspective, how to show appreciation for another's bravery in discussion, how to speak with the intention to communicate rather than persuade, and how to speak from the head (using theories, observations and analysis) and from the heart (using personal experiences, feelings and values). Daily discussions (with partners, small groups and the whole classroom community) allow students to experiment with different kinds of communication and expressive leadership.

**Ties to Social Studies:** Because the literature in 8th grade Language Arts focuses on ideas of society and justice, we often tie our curriculum to topics and concepts covered in 8th grade social studies class. For instance, students use John Locke's natural rights theory to analyze texts and argue about the legitimacy and efficacy of the societies we study as well as our own world. While we study Jacqueline Woodson's *Brown Girl Dreaming*, we make connections to lessons on slavery, the civil rights movement, the great migration and African American history. When we read *Night* by Elie Wiesel, we link to social studies lessons on the Holocaust and use Facing History and Ourselves methods to help students look deeply at their own experiences of identity, bias, discrimination and belonging.

**Anti Bias Curriculum -** The 8th grade language arts curriculum is designed to help students think critically about all aspects of belonging in our society. We use literature to examine our own experiences and histories as well to become better equipped to stand as allies for people in our societies, who have been historically silenced.

# Mathematics Curriculum

The middle school math department believes that mathematics is not just a collection of numbers and formulas; it embodies a profound love for learning and exploration. At its core, math challenges us to persevere through complexities, nurturing resilience in the face of difficulties. This journey of discovery encourages collaborative learning, where students come together to share insights and strategies, fostering a community of support and shared success. By emphasizing perseverance, we cultivate positive attitudes toward learning, transforming potential frustrations into opportunities for growth and understanding.

Moreover, developing a strong number sense is essential for interpreting real-world situations and making informed decisions. When students confidently engage with mathematical concepts, they unlock the ability to analyze data, recognize patterns, and solve problems that impact their lives. This confidence not only enhances their academic performance, but also equips them with critical thinking skills applicable beyond the classroom. By creating an environment where inquiry is celebrated and every challenge is seen as a stepping stone, we inspire learners to become adaptable problem solvers who embrace the beauty of mathematics in the world around them.

## Curriculum Programs for Math:

Grade 5: [Bridges in Mathematics](#) and selected [Continental Math League \(CML\)](#) problems

Grade 6: [CPM Core Connections Course 1](#)

Grade 7: [CPM Core Connections Course 2](#)

Grade 8: [CPM Core Connections Algebra](#), and [Phillips Exeter](#)

## **Math Class Levels for Grades 6-8:**

### **Guided Math Level**

In a guided math class, the teacher takes an active role in directing the lesson, providing clear structure and support for students as they navigate new concepts. The pace allows ample time for thorough explanations and discussion of key ideas. Students are encouraged to take detailed notes, with the teacher emphasizing important points and modeling effective note-taking strategies. To reinforce understanding, the teacher provides a variety of examples that illustrate the application of concepts, prompting students to engage in guided practice as they work through problems together. Additionally, the teacher incorporates more differentiation by tailoring activities and support to meet the diverse needs of learners, ensuring that all students can engage meaningfully with the material. This supportive environment fosters confidence, enabling students to ask questions and seek clarification while building a solid foundation for their mathematical skills.

### **Independent Math Level**

In an independent math class, students engage in high-intensity problem-solving activities that challenge their critical thinking and analytical skills. The emphasis on solid computational skills allows them to tackle increasingly difficult problems with confidence, fostering a deep understanding of mathematical concepts. As they grasp new ideas, students are encouraged to make connections to real-world situations and other subjects, enhancing their ability to apply math in diverse contexts. In this dynamic environment, the teacher acts more as a facilitator than a direct instructor, guiding students as they explore concepts and encouraging collaboration among peers. High expectations are set for all learners, pushing them to develop their skills and cultivate an enthusiasm for the subject. The faster pace of the class and the escalating level of difficulty not only stimulate intellectual curiosity, but also empower students to take ownership of their learning, fostering a sense of accomplishment as they navigate complex challenges.

## **Grade 5 Math**

In the 5th-grade math curriculum, students work independently and collaboratively on complex problems, take risks, and embrace struggles. They use manipulatives to make visual models in order to build and demonstrate understanding. Further, students are given the opportunity to discuss and write about different ways to solve problems. Students also learn to have conceptual understanding, or the ability to make sense, reason, and understand math concepts and ideas. Moreover, 5th grade students develop procedural fluency (i.e., know their facts and compute accurately) and are encouraged to gain capacity (i.e., the ability to solve problems in different contexts).

One key skill for fifth graders is working with fractions and mixed numbers - finding equivalents, adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing. Another key skill is applying the standard algorithms for multiplication with both whole numbers and decimals. Students use the partial quotients method for division with whole numbers and decimals, and they interpret remainders in story problems. Students also learn to find the area and volume of regular and irregular shapes. Finally, not only do students learn to read, create charts and graphs, and use coordinate pairs, but also they learn about place value and rounding numbers to the nearest thousandth.

## **Grade 6 Math**

The most productive grade 6 math classrooms are those in which students are working on complex problems, taking risks, embracing struggles, and feeling productive about their problem-solving skills. Students grow in mathematical maturity and expertise throughout the middle school years to become powerful thinkers who make connections, think logically, and use space, data, and numbers creatively.

Students explore and investigate new concepts by using concrete objects, visual models, drawings, and/or representations to build their understanding. They are asked to solve a diverse set of real-world and other mathematical problems using multiple methods, both in collaboration with their peers and independently. Students are given frequent opportunities to discuss and write about various approaches to solving problems.

The middle school mathematics curriculum is based on the 2017 Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks along with the Standards for Mathematical Practice. The Standards for Mathematical Practice describe expertise that students should seek to develop as well as ways in which to engage with the subject matter as they grow in mathematical maturity.

The standards include:

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

Below is a list of the major concepts covered in this class:

- **Number Systems:** Multiplying and Dividing Fractions, Greatest Common Factors, Greatest Common Multiples, Multiplying and Dividing Decimals, Prime Factorization, Integers, Plotting points on both a number line and coordinate grid, and Ordering rational numbers.
- **Numerical and Algebraic Expressions and Equations:** Constructing and evaluating numerical and algebraic expressions with exponents, Understanding the relationship of variables, Understanding the relationship of independent and dependent variables, Applying the distributive, commutative and associative properties, Constructing and solving one-variable equations and inequalities.
- **Ratios and Proportional Relationships:** Understanding the concept of ratios and unit rates, Applying their understanding of ratios to tables, graphs and other visual representation.
- **Geometry:** Calculating the area of triangles, trapezoids and composite figures, Calculating the volume of a rectangular prism with a fractional edge lengths, Calculating the length of a line on a coordinate plane, Calculating the surface area of prisms and pyramids.
- **Statistics and Probability:** Recognizing a statistical question, Recognizing and Calculating the best measure of center (mean or median) and best measure of the spread (mean absolute deviation and interquartile range) and Creating displays based on their numerical data (dot plots, histograms, box plots, venn diagrams or bar graphs).

## Grade 7 Math

The 7th-grade math curriculum provides students with a solid understanding of key mathematical concepts through collaborative learning experiences. By engaging in group activities, students actively work together to solve problems and discover how math applies to real-world situations. The class encourages active participation, with students often standing at vertical whiteboards and solving problems alongside their peers. Below is a list of the major concepts covered in this class.

- **Proportional Relationships:** Use tables, graphs, equations, and diagrams to analyze proportional relationships. Learn how to identify and apply unit rates. Use percentages to solve real-world problems.
- **Expressions and Equations:** Solve multi-step equations. Work with radicals and use exponent rules to simplify expressions. Independent section only: Learn various methods to solve systems of equations.

- **Geometry:** Explore concepts of surface area and volume. Learn how to apply various angle relationships. Explore rigid transformations and dilations in the coordinate plane. Use the Pythagorean Theorem to solve real-world problems.
- **Statistics:** Use random sampling to make inferences about populations. Analyze and interpret data by comparing measures of center.
- **Functions** (Independent Section Only): Develop a strong understanding of functions. Compare and analyze different types of functions, using tables, graphs, and equations.

This class emphasizes developing a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts rather than relying on rote memorization of formulas. Students often uncover formulas through problem-solving and critical thinking. "Algebra Tiles" are utilized to strengthen their understanding of solving equations. By manipulating these tiles, students can visualize abstract concepts, making it easier to isolate variables and comprehend the solving process.

Throughout the year, students will engage in projects highlighting real-world math applications. In the "Math Carnival," they'll design and run their own carnival games, applying theoretical and experimental probability. Another key project is the "Grocery Store Container Redesign," where students use their knowledge of surface area and volume to create a container with a larger volume and smaller surface area. These projects make math more engaging and allow students to see the practical value of the concepts they learn.

## Grade 8 Math

The Grade 8 Algebra 1 course follows the Massachusetts Mathematics Curriculum Frameworks, which emphasize both procedural fluency and conceptual understanding. This course is designed to introduce students to the foundational principles of algebra, while preparing them for high school-level mathematics. Throughout the year, students will explore key algebraic concepts such as solving equations and inequalities, analyzing functions, and understanding linear and quadratic relationships. The course emphasizes real-world applications, encouraging students to think critically and solve problems using algebraic reasoning.

### Unit 1: Functions

Understanding functions as relationships between inputs and outputs is a central focus of this unit. Students will explore the concept of a function, learning to identify, interpret, and represent them in various forms such as tables, graphs, and equations. Function notation will be introduced as a way to represent and work with functions algebraically.



## **Unit 2: Linear Relationships**

In this unit, students will delve deeper into linear equations, inequalities, and their representations. They will learn to graph linear equations on a coordinate plane, interpret the slope of a line as a rate of change, and understand the significance of the y-intercept.

## **Unit 3: Expressions, Equations, and Inequalities**

The course begins by building on students' prior knowledge of arithmetic operations and extending it into the realm of algebraic expressions. Students will learn to simplify expressions and apply the distributive property. Word problems will be incorporated to help students translate real-world scenarios into algebraic models.

## **Unit 4: Systems of Equations**

Students will learn how to solve word problems by writing a pair of equations called a system of equations. Students will develop ways to solve different forms of systems and will learn how to recognize when one method may be more efficient than another. By the end of this chapter, students will know multiple ways to find the point of intersection of two lines and will be able to solve systems that arise from different situations.

## **Unit 5: Sequences**

This unit provides students an opportunity to review and strengthen their algebra skills, while learning about arithmetic and geometric sequences. Early in the chapter, students will find themselves using familiar strategies, such as looking for patterns and making tables to write algebraic equations describing sequences of numbers.

## **Unit 6: Exponential Functions**

This unit expands on the concept of nonlinear functions by introducing exponential growth and decay. Students will learn to identify exponential relationships in real-world contexts, such as population growth and financial interest, and will represent these relationships using equations and graphs.

## **Unit 7: Quadratic Functions and Equations**

This unit introduces quadratic functions and their properties. Students will learn to recognize the standard form of a quadratic equation and explore how these functions are graphed as parabolas. They will investigate the vertex, axis of symmetry, and intercepts of a parabola. Additionally, students will solve quadratic equations using methods such as factoring, completing the square, and the quadratic formula.

Throughout the course, students will engage in the **Standards for Mathematical Practice**, which emphasize problem-solving, reasoning, and communication. They will be encouraged to persevere in solving complex problems, make sense of abstract concepts, and model real-world situations with algebra. By the end of the year, students will have developed a strong foundation in algebraic concepts, preparing them for success in higher-level math courses, particularly Geometry and Algebra II.

# Science Curriculum

The overall goal of the science department is to foster curiosity about the natural world and to develop a deep understanding of scientific concepts and processes, while building the skills necessary for scientific literacy and informed citizenship. Students in grades 5-8 follow a “learning-by-doing” approach that engages students as active learners and makes science come alive in ways that research has shown best supports the broad range of learners. Students investigate questions relevant to their own daily lives by conducting investigations, collecting and analyzing data, developing and using models to explain phenomena, and engaging in evidence-based discussions.

## Grade 5 Science

Students in grade 5 use the [Know Atom Interactive Science Curriculum](#), building on what they learned in grades 3 and 4. The program aims to help students develop creative, analytical, and evaluative skills through hands-on learning. Grade 5 science class meets daily. The core units of the curriculum in grade 5 science include:

- **Earth & Space Science Units:** Students learn that all matter is made up of different combinations of atoms formed from chemical reactions. They conduct experiments to identify differences between chemical reactions and mixtures / physical changes. They analyze how patterns are formed by the relative positions and movements of the sun, moon, and Earth, including shadows and the length of day / night. They learn about how different geologic processes change Earth’s surface over time and identify where volcanoes and earthquakes are most likely to occur. Students trace the rock cycle and conduct tests to identify different minerals based on their properties. They identify how water is distributed on earth. Lastly, students identify and explain the steps in the water cycle and investigate what causes hurricanes.
- **Life Science Units:** Students analyze how living things interact with one another and their environment for survival. They identify the parts of a food web/chain. They trace the movement of energy and of matter through an ecosystem. Students learn how plants gather energy and nutrients. Finally, they discuss how environmental changes impact the ability of organisms to survive and thrive.

Fifth graders also take part in an award-winning rare species conservation program through ZooNewEngland. Students care for a pair of Blanding's turtles, visit the habitat twice, and are visited by turtle biologists during the year. The 'headstart' these hatchlings get greatly increases their chances of survival once released in the spring.

- **Physical Science Units:** Students explore kinetic, electrical, light, and sound energy. They apply what they learn about forces and motion to design and build a roller coaster. They build different types of electrical circuits and identify similarities and differences between them. Students model sound waves with kazoos and slinkies. They explore how different materials absorb and transmit sound in order to design and build sound-absorbing walls. Lastly, students investigate how light moves when it interacts with different kinds of matter.

## Grade 6 Science

In sixth grade science, students explore a combination of Earth, Life, and Physical sciences that include concepts of exploratory learning and spiral these concepts throughout grades 6 -8. The core units of the [IQWST](#) curriculum in grade 6 science include:

- **Physical Science Unit: Can I Believe My Eyes?** Students investigate light waves and their interaction with matter. Through activities and modeling, students study how light moves through space, what happens when it meets matter, how eyes detect light, how colors of light can be perceived, and that some light is non-visible. Students learn the crosscutting concept that light can make things happen.
- **Chemistry Unit: How Can I Smell Things from a Distance?** Investigating the phenomenon of smelling odors, students learn about matter, properties, and phase changes. Students' model of matter, which is represented both as a drawing and a written explanation, represents a conceptual understanding that "all matter is made of particles in constant motion."
- **Life Science Unit: Where Have All the Creatures Gone?** This ecosystem unit focuses on organisms' needs for survival and what happens when those needs are not met. Students learn why food is important, what structures different organisms have in order to eat and reproduce, what the possible relationships are between organisms (e.g. competition, predator/prey, producer/consumer) and what abiotic factors affect ecosystems.
- **Earth Science Unit: How Does Water Shape Our World?** Students learn where water can be found on, above, and below the Earth's surface. They learn how water moves, how rocks are formed, and the properties of different types of rock. Finally, they examine the effects of water on the land by investigating weathering, erosion and deposition. To do so,

students build their understanding of energy and the particle nature of matter as both apply in the study of Earth science.

## Grade 7 Science

In seventh-grade science, middle school students continue to explore a combination of Earth, Life, and Physical sciences that include concepts of exploratory learning and hands-on learning. The core units of the [IQWST](#) curriculum in grade 7 science include:

- **Chemistry Unit: How Can I Make New Stuff From Old Stuff?** This unit focuses on making new substances, specifically making soap from two unlikely substances: fat and sodium hydroxide. Students further their understanding of substances and properties and explain what happens when substances interact (i.e., chemical reactions). In that process, they also explore the core idea of the conservation of mass and the crosscutting concept of systems.
- **Physical Science Unit: Why Do Some Things Stop While Others Keep Going?** Students begin this unit by exploring several surprising apparatuses up close, some of which stop quickly while others continue moving without showing signs of stopping. What follows is an exploration of different types of energy and as a result, students gain a deeper understanding of how energy is involved in everything in the world, how it can be transformed from one type to another, and how it is transferred between systems.
- **Earth Science Unit: What is Weather, Climate, and Climate Change?** Students learn about the difference between weather and climate by investigating daily, seasonal, and annual weather patterns, and analyzing and interpreting data on these conditions both locally and around the world. They also investigate the impact of the sun's angle in determining climate patterns. Regarding climate change, students study the evidence for it, the science behind its cause, and the actions humans can take to address it.
- **Life Science Unit: What's Going On Inside of Me?** Students investigate organization in body systems and the role of the body's cells in these systems, identifying energy-releasing chemical reactions occurring within cells to release the energy from food. Students investigate the link between increased oxygen intake with increased activity and obtain evidence that oxygen is also used at the cellular level in these reactions. The unit concludes with an investigation of how body systems are coordinated and the consequences of disruption to various body systems.

## Grade 8 Science

In eighth-grade science, middle school students study a combination of Earth, Life, and Physical sciences that include concepts of exploratory learning and hands-on learning. The core units of the [IQWST](#) curriculum in grade 8 science include:

- **Earth Science Unit: How Is the Earth Changing?** Students investigate how the Earth has changed in the past and continues to change today, learning how the theory of plate tectonics was developed through the social processes of evidence gathering, modeling, and explanation in the scientific community. Students explore the modern explanation for why plates move on Earth's surface by applying their understanding of convection to the Earth's mantle. They uncover how these internal earth processes drive plate motion and how that motion leads to events, such as earthquakes and eruptions, and shape major surface features on Earth, including volcanoes, mountain ranges, islands, and oceanic trenches.
- **Physical Science Unit: How Will It Move?** This unit focuses on forces and motion in a variety of contexts: tug-of-war, baseball, planetary motion, chemical bonds, and others. Students generalize from specific examples to construct principles commonly known as Newton's laws of motion. The differences between force and energy are emphasized and the crosscutting concepts of system models, energy and matter are addressed. The unit integrates several focal scientific practices: planning and carrying out investigations; data gathering, organization, and analysis; developing and using models; constructing explanations, and engaging in argument from evidence.
- **Life Science Unit: Why Do Organisms Look The Way They Do?** Students study how similarities and differences between individuals and populations are influenced by the inheritance of traits. Students examine how changing environmental conditions can influence variation in a population. Students generalize their explanations to develop a model of natural selection as defined by naturally occurring variation in inherited traits, changing environmental conditions and differential survival, addressing most notably the crosscutting concepts of patterns, and of stability and change in systems.
- **Chemistry Unit: How Does Food Provide My Body with Energy?** Students study chemical reactions and the energy transformations associated with them and address their relevance in their own lives and to their own bodies. Students investigate food at the molecular level and explore how cellular respiration, as a chemical reaction, allows organisms to use the energy in food. They also examine photosynthesis as the chemical reaction in which plants transform light energy into chemical energy to store in food. Finally, following the flow of matter and energy, students consider what happens in a system during cellular respiration and photosynthesis.

# Social Studies & History

The philosophy of the Carlisle Middle School department centers on fostering critical thinking, civic engagement, and cultural awareness. We believe that students should understand the past to navigate the present and shape the future. Our curriculum will emphasize inquiry-based learning, encouraging students to ask questions, analyze sources, and draw their own conclusions about historical and contemporary issues.

We are committed to creating an inclusive classroom environment that values diverse perspectives and experiences, reflecting the rich tapestry of our community and nation. Collaboration and discussion will be central to our teaching practices, promoting respectful dialogue and understanding among peers. By integrating current events with historical context, we aim to make social studies relevant and engaging for every student.

## Grade 5 Social Studies Curriculum

The objectives of the fifth-grade social studies curriculum are: to develop critical thinking and analytic skills, to make history come alive through interactivity and multi-modality, to understand how and why certain stories are told, to synthesize & interpret historical events in order to understand short- and long-term causes and effects, and to translate lessons from history into informed action today.

In 5th grade, students build the skills necessary to think like historians by learning to analyze primary and secondary sources, make inferences about the past, and evaluate multiple perspectives on historical events. As they study the establishment of Colonial America, they trace the journey from early colonization and settlement through to the Revolutionary War. Along the way, students examine the causes and effects of key events, identify patterns of change and continuity, and understand the social, political, and economic factors that shaped early America. This historical inquiry approach fosters critical thinking and a deeper understanding of how the past informs the present. Below are the core units of the instructed curriculum in grade 5 history.

- **Thinking Like a Historian:** Through the lens of both the Harlem Renaissance and the Civil Rights Movement, students build a foundation of using observation, inference, and questioning skills to examine primary and secondary sources, while fostering empathy and understanding for the marginalization and disenfranchisement of African Americans in the United States. By studying the African American Civil Rights Movement, students will study how it served as a model for civil rights movements of other groups. The themes of activism

and agency will be introduced and be at the heart of this year-long study of United States history.

- **The Rise of Colonialism:** We investigate the collisions and interactions of European, Indigenous, and African peoples with a focus on the 17th and first half of the 18th centuries. Students deeply examine the driving forces behind European exploration along with the consequent cultural, geographic, and political impact of colonization on various indigenous nations. They construct an understanding around the competitive establishment of European power in the “New World.” Students understand that their nation has diverse roots and origins.
- **Early Settlements:** Students explore and compare the early settlements of the Lost Colony of Roanoke, Jamestown, and Plymouth, examining the unique challenges and successes of each. As part of this study, students also analyze the interactions between settlers and indigenous nations, focusing on the conflicts that arose due to differing perspectives on land, resources, and culture. Students thereby gain insight into the complexities of early colonial life and the lasting impact of these encounters on American history.
- **Slavery:** Students learn about the origins of slavery in America, starting in 1619 when the first enslaved Africans arrived in Jamestown. They explore the transatlantic slave trade, the brutal conditions enslaved people faced, and the role slavery played in colonial society. This study helps students understand the deep impact of slavery on American history and its lasting legacy.
- **Metacom’s Rebellion/King Philip’s War:** Students study this war to understand one of the most significant conflicts between Native Americans and English colonists in the 17th century. They explore the causes of the war, including tensions over land, cultural differences, and the colonists’ expanding settlements. Students learn about Metacombet, or King Philip, a Wampanoag leader who united several Native American tribes to resist colonial encroachment. By examining the major battles, strategies, and outcomes of the war, students gain insight into the devastating consequences for both Native Americans and colonists, including the destruction of villages, loss of life, and the shift in power that heavily favored English expansion in New England. This study deepens their understanding of early American history and the lasting impact of colonial-native relations.
- **The French and Indian War:** Students learn about this war as a key conflict between the British and French, both of whom allied with different indigenous nations. They explore the causes of the war, its major battles, and its significant outcome—the British gaining control of much of North America. This war sets the stage for growing tensions between the British and the American colonists, eventually leading to the Revolutionary War.
- **The American Revolution:** Students focus on the events that led to the colonists’ fight for independence and explore key battles. This study helps students understand the causes,

major events, and outcomes of the Revolution that ultimately shaped the birth of the United States. Students learn how the 13 North American colonies of Great Britain became the United States of America and established a government for the new nation.

Carlisle's social studies curriculum is aligned to the History and Social Science standards outlined in the Massachusetts Frameworks.

## Grade 6 Social Studies Curriculum

In sixth grade students are introduced to the skills and concepts necessary to understand the social sciences. The skills taught include expository writing, critical thinking, reading for understanding, note-taking, and research skills. These skills are taught throughout the year and are reinforced in subsequent years. The instructed curriculum of grade 6 social studies class is divided into three components:

- **Social Studies Foundation Concepts:** Students begin the year learning about geography. Concepts such as characteristics of place, region, and human environment interaction are areas of focus. Building upon the geographic themes, students are introduced to the concepts of political and cultural regions, which in turn leads to types of socio-political organizations and ultimately to discussions on government and economics.
- **Using Social Studies Concepts to Understand History:** Once students have been introduced to geography, governments, and economics, they are ready to start applying these concepts to the study of history. Students learn about historical sources and how historians go about accessing historical sources. This part of the year culminates with the study of Ancient Mesopotamia.
- **World Geography:** Students focus on learning the individual locations of countries of today's world. This leads to inquiry into regional similarities based on natural criteria and cultural demographics.

## Grade 7 Social Studies Curriculum

Students in grade seven social studies will start the year exploring different types of government and economic systems. After they have acquired that foundational knowledge, they will journey back to the ancient world to explore the connections between our world and the past. There will also be a year-long emphasis on current events.

During seventh grade, students will explore the geography, religions, achievements, political structures, economic systems, and social hierarchies of multiple ancient civilizations. Students will



synthesize information gathered from their units to compare the civilizations with each other and see the similarities and differences they share with our modern society. The seventh grade curriculum is divided into the following units:

- **Unit 1: What Is History?** The first unit of the school year will give students the basics to reading, writing, and thinking about history. In order for students to understand the content discussed in class, they must be able to develop the skills necessary to comprehend the material. Critical thinking and analytical writing skills will be the foundation for their future history courses at Carlisle Public School.
- **Unit 2: Egypt and the Nile River Valley:** One of the most notable ancient civilizations is that of the Egyptians. Known for their elaborate societal and religious practices, students will learn of the Old Kingdom of Egypt and the importance of the Nile River Valley. In addition to the Egyptians, the course will uncover the rise of Kush and the eventual conquest of Egypt by the Kushites.
- **Unit 3: Early Civilizations of Asia:** This unit will be one of the largest units of the year, encompassing India, China, and the Americas. During part one, students will focus on the rise of India's first civilizations that developed along the Indus River. To accompany the study of the early civilizations in India, students will also learn the basics of India's main two religions: Hinduism and Buddhism. Part two of the unit will focus on China, its agricultural roots, and the rise of the Qin and Han dynasties. Students will analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the central governments created during these dynasties.
- **Unit 4: Greece and the Hellenic Period:** After studying the growth of civilization in Africa and Asia, the course will finally move to Europe and see the development of some of the most well known societies in Greece and Rome. After a geographic survey of the Peloponnese, the course will compare and contrast the two city-states of Sparta and Athens. Students will then study the rise of Persia and the attempts to conquer the Greeks, Athenians, and Spartans.
- **Unit 5: The Glory of Rome:** The final unit of the course curriculum will focus on the rise of the Roman Empire and the development of Christianity. Students will discuss the similarities and differences between the governing and social structures of Rome and Greece. In order to understand the rise of the Empire, students will discover the transition and failings of the Roman Republic and why Julius Caesar was able to successfully set up a new government. Following the study of Rome and the rise of their empire, students will then see the effects of the rise of Christianity and how societies began to adopt Jesus of Nazareth's teachings.

## Grade 8 US History & Civics

Students will begin their comprehensive study of US history with early Colonial America and the Origins of American Democracy and then proceed through World War II. There will be a heavy emphasis on current events, critical thinking, and analyzing primary sources throughout the school year. Moreover, we will prioritize developing civic skills, empowering students to become informed and active participants in their communities. Through service projects and civic action initiatives, we will nurture a sense of responsibility and stewardship in our students, preparing them for their roles as engaged citizens in a democratic society. Below are the core units of the instructed curriculum in grade 8 US History and Civics.

- **Unit 1 - Origins of American Democracy:** Students will study the ideas and people behind the foundations of American Government. Philosophers like Rousseau and Locke will be a major focus, as well as critical documents such as the Magna Carta and the Mayflower Compact.
- **Unit 2 - Colonial America to the Revolutionary War:** Students will study the contentious relationship between the American Colonies and Great Britain that eventually led to the Revolutionary War. The ideas of self-government and representative government will be discussed, eventually culminating with an in-depth study of the Declaration of Independence.
- **Unit 3 - Revolutionary War:** Students will study the major events of the Revolutionary War and how the underdog American Colonies were able to pull off one of the greatest “upsets” in world history. Major battles, important figures, and key factors in the American victory will be discussed and studied through students’ Revolutionary War Journal Project.
- **Unit 4 - The US Constitution:** Students will closely study the many parts of the US Constitution, our blueprint for government. A large focus of this unit will be the Bill of Rights and the three branches of government. A Supreme Court Case Research Essay will tie all of these pieces together at the end of the unit.
- **Unit 5 - Westward Expansion:** Students will “Go West” as they study the expansion of the United States in the 1800s and the significant ecological, social, political and cultural impact this era in American history had. They will read and respond to American settlers and Native American perspectives on “Manifest Destiny” in an attempt to better understand how different groups responded to the movement.
- **Unit 6 - Industrial Revolution:** Students will study the rapid growth of the American economy and industry during the Industrial Revolution. They will read and analyze primary sources, which reflect the hardships of the first factory workers, and study the connection between the growth of urban centers and the Industrial Revolution.

- **Unit 7 - Slavery, Civil War, and the Reconstruction:** Students will study the history of slavery and the slave trade and how the conflict over states' rights and slavery eventually led to the Civil War. Primary sources from many perspectives, including slaves, slave owners, slave traders, and abolitionists will be included in activities with the hope that students understand the incredible impact slavery had in the US during this period and even today. Students will also study the important battles, figures, and events of the Civil War and look deeply into the lasting effects of the Reconstruction Era on American Civil Rights.
- **Unit 8 - World War I:** Students will study the role of the United States in the First World War and how the results of this war became a catalyst for the Second World War. Important battles, figures, and events will be the focus of this unit.
- **Unit 9 - Facing History and Ourselves:** Students will study the Holocaust and World War II during this unit. A large emphasis will be placed on the Facing History and Ourselves curriculum, which largely focuses on the Holocaust. Students will look at the events leading up to and during World War II in an attempt to understand the human side of the Holocaust, instead of looking at it simply as an event in history.

# World Languages Curriculum

At Carlisle Middle School, our World Language Program is driven by the belief that learning a new language opens doors to understanding and appreciating the world's diversity. We aim to foster the development of a global perspective by encouraging students to recognize and respect different viewpoints and cultures. By participating in language learning, students acquire communication skills and an appreciation for the rich traditions, customs, and histories of the world's cultures.

Students revisit Chinese, French, and Spanish in fourth grade, choosing their focus language at the end of the year. Students begin their sequential study of language of choice in the fifth grade and continue with the same language in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades. Classes meet three times a week, where students embark on an exciting path of language learning and cultural exploration. Our philosophy emphasizes practical communication, ensuring students apply the vocabulary and language structures they learn in meaningful, real-world contexts. Through activities like role plays, skits, songs, games, and classroom drills, students practice communication and pronunciation while building a deeper understanding of global cultures.

The program is designed to nurture curiosity, respect, and empathy. It prepares students for further language study and helps them become confident, compassionate members of the global community. Ultimately, our goal is not only to teach a language, but also to cultivate a lifelong appreciation for the diverse perspectives that shape our world.

## Chinese World Language Pathway

### Overview of the Chinese World Language Program

The Chinese World Language program focuses on helping students build practical language skills, while exploring Chinese culture. From fifth to eighth grade, students engage in hands-on activities, such as cooking, art, calligraphy, and traditional games, enhancing their understanding of the language and its cultural context. Through this balanced approach, students develop key listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. By the end of the program, they are well-prepared for more complex conversations and advanced Chinese studies in high school, with a firm grasp of both spoken and written Chinese.

### Chinese Grade 5: Introduction to Chinese Language, Culture, and Cooking

In 5th grade, students begin their exciting journey into the Chinese language. They will master 40 basic Chinese radicals, which are the building blocks of Chinese characters—just like Lego pieces. Once they know these “pieces,” they can form more complex characters, building a strong

foundation for future learning. Since food is essential in Chinese culture, students will also participate in cooking lessons to explore popular Chinese dishes. Along with cultural activities, such as calligraphy and traditional games, students will practice basic conversations, developing their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

### **Chinese Grade 6: Exploring Chinese Traditions, Arts, and Cooking**

In 6th grade, students deepen their understanding of Chinese culture through traditional stories, legends, and art forms like brush painting. Cooking lessons continue as they learn about famous Chinese dishes and their significance. Since food plays a key role in Chinese culture, these lessons help bring the language to life. Students will advance their language skills by practicing conversations about the stories, art, and food they explore. They will continue to build confidence in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, expressing their thoughts and opinions in Chinese.

### **Chinese Grade 7: Discovering Chinese History, Innovations, and Cooking**

7th grade introduces students to China's rich history, focusing on dynasties, inventions, and their contributions to the world. Cooking remains part of the curriculum, allowing students to discover Chinese culinary traditions, while deepening their understanding of the culture. Students will develop the ability to engage in extended conversations, share opinions, and express thoughts on topics like history and food. Through listening, speaking, reading, and writing, students will continue to improve their language skills, preparing for more advanced learning.

### **Chinese Grade 8: Modern Chinese Culture, Daily Life, and Cooking**

In 8th grade, students explore modern Chinese life and culture, including traditional cooking methods. Since food is central to Chinese culture, cooking lessons provide a hands-on way to connect with daily life in China. Students will practice using Chinese in real-life contexts, such as discussing daily routines and food preparation. They will engage in more advanced conversations, expressing their ideas and opinions with greater detail. By strengthening their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, students will be well-prepared for high school and beyond.

# **French World Language Pathway**

## **Overview of the French World Language Program**

The French World Language program engages students in the language and vibrant cultures of the Francophone world from 5th to 8th grade. Through hands-on activities like projects and games, students enjoy a lively and interactive learning experience. As they progress, they explore French music, literature, and local traditions, deepening their cultural understanding. The program focuses on listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, preparing students to handle more complex conversations and express themselves confidently in French. By the end of 8th grade, students are ready for high school French with a strong foundation in both language and culture.

## **French Grade 5**

The 5th-grade French World Language program introduces students to the benefits of learning a new language through engaging essential questions, such as “In what ways is learning another language beneficial?” Students begin with foundational units, learning to introduce themselves, greet others, discuss family, and describe friends, which helps build practical conversational skills. As they progress, they explore how food shapes daily life and culture, with examples from Haiti and Senegal, broadening their understanding of Francophone communities. Through these interactive lessons, students experience firsthand how learning French can open doors to new perspectives, friendships, and cultural appreciation. By the end of the year, they are equipped with essential language skills and a meaningful connection to French-speaking cultures.

## **French Grade 6**

The 6th-grade French World Language program invites students to explore the essential question: “What do activities and pastimes reveal about a culture?” Through this lens, students examine the activities, hobbies, and traditions that friends in Francophone countries enjoy together, gaining insight into cultural values and ways of life. Throughout the year, students practice asking questions about what people are doing, learning how to communicate in meaningful, interactive ways. As they progress, students begin describing people, focusing on personality, appearance, and interests to create a fuller understanding of social connections within Francophone cultures. This engaging program combines language skill-building with cultural exploration, enabling students to develop practical conversational skills, while deepening their appreciation of French-speaking communities.

## **French Grade 7**

The 7th-grade French World Language program invites students to consider two essential questions: \*What makes a house a home?\* and \*How do major cities tell their stories?\*

inquiries, students explore the French concept of "home," comparing housing styles, family life, and daily routines in Francophone cultures. The journey continues with an in-depth look at Paris, where students "visit" the city through its historical landmarks, neighborhoods, and stories of influential figures, who have shaped its identity. From artists and writers to political leaders, they uncover how these personalities contributed to Paris's legacy and cultural richness. This immersive program strengthens students' vocabulary and communication skills, giving them the tools to discuss homes, communities, and cultural impact in meaningful ways. By the end of the year, students gain both linguistic proficiency and a deeper appreciation for the heritage and stories of the Francophone World.

## **French Grade 8**

The 8th-grade French World Language program encourages students to explore cultural perspectives of daily life through two essential questions: "How is shopping different in other countries?" and "How do people stay healthy and maintain a healthy environment?" Students examine unique shopping habits in Francophone regions, discovering local markets and comparing these experiences to their own, while expanding vocabulary related to food, clothing, and daily needs. They also explore health and wellness practices, learning how Francophone communities approach physical health, sustainable living, and environmental care. To deepen their language skills, students develop a solid understanding of French grammar, focusing on various tenses—especially the past tense—through reading a short novel set in Québec, Canada. Mid-year, students will be taking a placement test to guide them through their next journey at the high-school level. Through this immersive approach, students gain practical language skills, enabling them to discuss shopping, health, and environmental responsibility meaningfully. By year's end, they are well-prepared for nuanced conversations in French, setting a strong foundation for high school studies.

## **Spanish World Language Pathway**

### **Overview of the Spanish World Language program**

The Spanish program is designed to foster comprehensive proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, providing students with the skills needed to communicate confidently in diverse contexts. Language skills are enriched through a blend of engaging resources, including interactive online activities, computer-based exercises, culturally authentic songs, diverse cultural artifacts, and curated readings that bring the richness of the Spanish-speaking world to life. The program incorporates a variety of instructional methods tailored to different learning styles, such as collaborative group work, paired conversations, and targeted direct instruction. Each approach emphasizes active participation and real-world communication, empowering students to develop their linguistic abilities, while gaining an understanding and appreciation of Spanish-speaking

cultures. Through these methods, students not only build foundational skills, but also cultivate a deeper cultural insight that enhances their communicative proficiency.

### **Spanish Grade 5**

In 5th grade, students embark on their engaging Spanish language journey, diving into the vibrant cultures and traditions of the Spanish-speaking world. They acquire foundational structures and work towards crafting simple, meaningful sentences suited to everyday situations. Topics covered include warm greetings, sharing likes and dislikes, describing themselves and others, and talking about clothing and family. Essential grammar is introduced, highlighting core verbs like *ser* and *tener*, along with definite and indefinite articles, and adjective agreement. Students also draw connections between Spanish and English, while discovering the significant presence of Spanish within the United States.

### **Spanish Grade 6**

In sixth grade, students deepen their introduction to Spanish, broadening their understanding of the diverse Spanish-speaking world, while uncovering the captivating history of Mexico City. Building on previous skills, students focus on the four key language abilities—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are practiced through a dynamic array of activities, including paired and small-group exercises, aimed at crafting simple sentences with personal significance. Topics covered include discussing classes and after-school activities, telling time, talking about upcoming events, expressing obligations, and ordering food. Students also learn present-tense verb conjugations for regular verbs and selected irregular verbs, further enriching their language proficiency.

### **Spanish Grade 7**

In seventh grade, students further enrich their grasp of the Spanish language and immerse themselves in the vibrant cultures of the Spanish-speaking world, with a special emphasis on the dynamic island of Puerto Rico. They learn to express emotions, describe the weather, discuss popular sports, and make detailed comparisons. As their skills advance, students begin to use more sophisticated grammar, including direct object pronouns, stem-changing verbs, and the present progressive tense, allowing for more expressive and fluid communication.

### **Spanish Grade 8**

Eighth grade Spanish centers on advancing students' communicative competence in the language. Students achieve greater proficiency in interpretive, presentational, and interpersonal communication by participating in dynamic performance tasks designed to showcase their knowledge and practical skills in Spanish. Through interactive role-play activities, students grow in confidence, learning to



express fundamental ideas clearly and be understood by others. Key topics and vocabulary include giving detailed directions, bargaining in a lively Mexican market, ordering food in a restaurant, and describing one's home. Grammar instruction covers essential areas like commands, affirmative and negative expressions, indirect object pronouns, irregular verbs, and the past tense. Typically in January, students take a mid-year exam, an important step in determining their high school placement.

# Physical Education (PE) & Health Curriculum

## Physical Education Curriculum

The philosophy of the Carlisle Public School physical education program is to positively impact student knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors relative to physical education and themselves. The main emphasis of the course is to provide students with successful encounters in physical activities that lead to improved physical fitness and overall wellness, which encompasses students' mental, social and emotional well-being. Students are provided various opportunities to develop these social and emotional skills by working in small groups and in larger team situations. A major focus of the program is to give students opportunities to be part of a team and find themselves in leadership roles, and therefore they can build their self-confidence and understand the value of lifetime fitness. The program is taught with the National Standards and the Massachusetts State Standards in mind, so students can understand what the physically literate individual is capable of knowing and doing. These national standards can be found [here](#), while the Massachusetts Frameworks can be accessed online [here](#).

To build self-confidence and promote a healthy lifestyle, students learn about healthy habits in Health and PE. Within Health students are given the opportunity to learn about real world scenarios to reduce stigma around mental and emotional health and to create self-advocates for themselves and long-term learners.

The Carlisle Middle School Physical Education Curriculum was developed with the idea of promoting a healthy lifestyle that can lead to a life-long love of movement and fitness, and it is centered around students having “fun” as they learn various skills. The program is taught with the National Standards and the Massachusetts State Standards in mind, so students can understand what the physically literate individual is capable of knowing and doing.

## PE Grade 5

Grade five students meet one time per week, and they are involved in activities that promote team building and enhance their physical, social, and emotional health. This approach is used to help build a life-long love of overall fitness. Each period students take part in a fitness portion of class that works on their flexibility, muscular strength, muscular endurance, and cardiovascular fitness. These fitness elements are assessed during the year with the personal best fitness test, so that students can track their progress throughout their time at CPS.

Major units for 5th-grade physical education are broken down by term, and the first term includes team building activities/initiatives that start by working with a partner and then moving on to whole class activities. Students gain a better understanding of playing a role in a group, adding to team success, as well as contributing their voices to the group's planning process.

The major focus of the second term is on striking activities and building hand-eye coordination. This is done through the teaching of new skills and during modified game play. During this unit, which introduces pickleball, badminton, nitroball, and floor hockey, students are exposed to using long and short handled implements to strike moving objects.

The final term starts with a circuit training unit that helps students not only understand how to work within their target heart rate, but also how to strengthen their entire body through workout. Students also complete the year by taking part in invasion games and other skill-related games of their choosing.

## **PE Grade 6**

Grade six students meet one time per week, using the foundation that they have built in fifth grade to further their basic understanding of their bodies and to enhance their skill sets. Much of what sixth grade students do is similar to fifth grade, but with the expectation that they will improve past learned experiences. Each day students focus on their overall fitness as they continue to work on their endurance, strength and flexibility. Students take part in the personal best fitness assessment, as a means to see their growth from the previous year.

Term one continues the quest to understand what makes a successful teammate and how each student can play a role in adding to their group's success. From two-person teams to whole-class teams, students are challenged to be part of a group, create a plan and work to succeed in the daily initiative / challenge. A major focus is on a willingness to play one's role well and to respectfully address group members with any issues or ideas that may arise as the daily activity takes place. Moreover, students are tasked with holding one another accountable, so that the group stays on task. This unit involves activities, such as trust, fitness, and rope swing.

Term two focuses on games that involve striking and working on these skills from the ground up. Floor hockey, nitroball (a volleyball-like game), pickleball and badminton are included and students are expected to build upon what they have learned, so that they can successfully use the various implements in a more advanced way than they previously could. These skills are taught in more game-like situations so that students can use their recall of past experiences and alter their approach to better succeed.

Term three is built around the continual quest to build and maintain fitness and to do so in a way that students can begin to piece together what activities help them to get stronger and more fit. Fitness stations are used to share a variety of activities that students can take part in to maintain their own physical well-being. Students learn how to exercise by going through fitness circuits in order to get a full body workout in a limited amount of time that is effective and beneficial to them. The year ends with students taking part in skill-related games that are chosen by the class and often deal with invasion tactics (capture the cones) or team games like soccer. Grade seven students meet one time per week and a focus of their physical education is based around leadership and personal responsibility in both their own experience and that of their peers. A fitness component remains in 7th grade, as students continue to work on their personal physical fitness at the beginning of each class with a daily jog, a dynamic warm-up, push-ups and planks. A student is chosen during each class to be the leader of the dynamic warm-up portion of class to give them the responsibility of having a leadership role for that day. Towards the end of each term, students take part in portions of the personal best fitness assessment, and they can use the results to measure their own improvement over time.

## **PE Grade 7**

Term one in grade 7 PE primarily consists of team building games, mostly in larger group and team settings. This allows students to work together, share ideas, and figure out the best solution to the challenge for that day. It is during this term where students begin to take on leadership roles and share what they think will work, how the group should be set up to approach the challenge, and they make adjustments based upon their group's success. Games include aerobic tag (team vs team keep away) and pipeline, along with mental challenges like traffic jam and the maze, which require teams to work together to solve a problem.

The second term is made up of striking games that are no longer modified, so that students begin to take part by using the instructions and rules that are specific to each sport. This begins with floor hockey, and moves through nitroball, pickleball and badminton. In all of these games students are expected to be able to better navigate the equipment (i.e., being able to use both sides of the hockey stick, hitting forehands and backhands in racket sports, etc.), and begin to create strategies for how best to score against their opponents. Moreover, students begin the process of sharing how they can better perform with regard to their body positioning, the pace of the object they are looking to strike, the implement they are using to strike, and they begin to better develop their anticipatory skills.

The third, and final term of grade 7 PE has a featured unit on fitness that is built around fitness stations. Students learn about how to return their heart rate to resting, and the importance of using short bursts of rest to prepare for the next exercise, along with focusing on proper form to gain the maximum benefit from each exercise. At the conclusion of this unit, students take part in more advanced skill related games like team handball and speedball. These games begin to incorporate more team strategy along with a combination of advanced skills such as kicking, throwing, defending, creating space, etc.

## **PE Grade 8**

Grade 8 students meet for PE one time per week, and the year is a continuation of what students learned in grade 7, but with the deeper understanding and application of previously learned skills and strategies. Student expectations for their personal fitness continue to develop as students spend time every day working to improve their muscular fitness (push-ups), muscular endurance (plank), flexibility (dynamic stretching), and their cardiovascular fitness (students run on the “track” for a certain amount of time) all with an eye toward being at their peak fitness level.

First term activities are once again built around the idea of leadership and they require students to speak out and offer ideas and opinions so that everyone in their group shares in the responsibility of finding team success. The majority of the activities during this time are done in larger groups that require more coordination to get group members to stay on task and to ensure that each does their respective job. Included in this term are rope swing and scooter activities that allow for very little equipment and that present major challenges.

The second term focuses around striking activities/games and students are expected to know the rules, to voice their strategy, and to use the equipment in a way that shows mastery. In racket sports students should be able to hit forehands, backhands, serves, and drop shots, along with other shots specific to that sport. In hockey they should be able to stickhandle to advance the puck/ball, pass, and shoot an object that is on the move. In nitroball, students should be able to serve underhand, use the forearm pass, set, and spike the ball, so that their team can attack when on offense.

The third term allows for students to focus on their fitness and to work through a fitness circuit. The time they are expected to perform each exercise is higher than it was in 7th grade, as they look to build their stamina. Students are also expected to be able to share which body parts are the focus of each part of the circuit. Finally, students continue on with the skill-related games and show that they can apply knowledge of the concepts and strategies that they have learned throughout their time at CPS to succeed.

## Health Curriculum

At Carlisle Middle School, our health education program for grades 5-8 aligns with the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework, focusing on helping students develop the knowledge and skills needed to make healthy decisions. We prioritize physical, mental, and emotional well-being through topics such as nutrition, personal safety, human growth and development, and substance use prevention. In addition to classroom instruction, our program includes state-mandated health screenings such as SOS (Signs of Suicide), SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment), YRBS (Youth Risk Behavior Survey), and participation in Challenge Day to build community and resilience. Each grade builds on these concepts, encouraging students to take responsibility for their health, understand their emotions, and practice self-care strategies that align with state standards.

### Health Grade 5

The fifth-grade health curriculum at Carlisle Public Middle School follows the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework and focuses on helping students develop a foundation for lifelong wellness. Students explore the "Health Triangle" by learning about physical, mental, and social health. As part of this unit, students will also begin to understand the physical and emotional changes during puberty through age-appropriate lessons, culminating in a creative board game project that reinforces key concepts.

Students will learn about the importance of safety and prevention through handwashing and the immune system to stay healthy. Lessons on prevention will focus on bullying prevention, teaching empathy and conflict resolution, while online safety is introduced through engaging activities designed to help students navigate the digital world responsibly.

Finally, students will learn about mental and emotional health, covering topics like peer pressure and decision-making. Students will participate in role-playing scenarios that help them understand how to make positive, informed choices when faced with challenges. By the end of the year, students will be better prepared to manage their health and make decisions that promote safety and wellness.

### Health Grade 6

The sixth-grade health curriculum at Carlisle Public Middle School is aligned with the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework, promoting holistic wellness and empowering students to make informed health decisions. Through a combination of hands-on activities,

discussions, and personal reflections, students will gain a deeper understanding of the essential components of a healthy lifestyle.

The ‘Wellness Wheel’ introduces students to the six dimensions of health: physical, emotional, social, intellectual, spiritual, and environmental, building on the knowledge they learned as fifth graders (Health Triangle). By creating their own Wellness Wheel, students assess their current health practices and identify areas for improvement. This foundational unit encourages students to think about wellness as a dynamic, multifaceted concept, reinforcing the importance of balance in daily life.

Students dive into the basics of nutrition and the role of nutrients in maintaining health. They will learn how to read nutrition labels, plan balanced meals using MyPlate, and discuss the impact of healthy eating on their bodies. The unit emphasizes making informed food choices and understanding the importance of vitamins and minerals, helping students develop lifelong healthy eating habits. The unit concludes with our “Fast Food Project” where students will make a healthy meal from a fast food project, looking at all parts of the meal.

The next unit focuses on Self-Esteem and the development of positive self-image and confidence. Through activities like creating self-esteem collages and analyzing media portrayals of body image, students learn to challenge unrealistic beauty standards and embrace their strengths. This unit also includes media literacy education, encouraging students to critically examine how the media influences their perception of themselves and others.

The curriculum continues with Unit 4: Vaping and Tobacco, where students explore the dangers of vaping, tobacco, and nicotine products. Interactive lessons, including role-playing refusal skills and peer pressure scenarios, empower students to resist harmful substances. This unit encourages students to make informed decisions about their health while reinforcing the importance of advocacy and peer support.

Finally, in Unit 5: Goal Setting, students learn how to set and achieve SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound). They will create personal goal-setting plans, track their progress, and learn strategies to stay motivated when facing obstacles. This unit provides students with valuable tools to achieve success both academically and personally, fostering a sense of responsibility and self-efficacy.

## **Health Grade 7**

The seventh-grade health curriculum at Carlisle Public Middle School, aligned with the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework, focuses on helping students develop

a well-rounded understanding of personal health and wellness. Through interactive lessons, students explore how to maintain physical, mental, and emotional well-being, while learning to navigate real-world challenges related to alcohol use, peer pressure, and digital wellness.

In unit 1, the Dimensions of Health introduces students to the six key dimensions of health: physical, emotional, social, intellectual, spiritual, and environmental. Students create a personal health wheel and engage in activities that explore each dimension, such as creating personal health plans and learning mindfulness techniques for emotional health. By understanding how each dimension affects overall wellness, students are better equipped to maintain balance in their lives.

Within Unit 2, Mental Health, students dive into topics like recognizing the signs of depression and understanding the risk factors for suicide. Using the SOS (Signs of Suicide) program, this unit emphasizes the importance of seeking help and support. Students participate in awareness activities, discussions, and role-playing scenarios to practice seeking help and supporting others when mental health issues arise.

As students move through the school year, they will start Unit 3, Alcohol Use and Abuse, which educates students on the risks and consequences of alcohol use, focusing on how alcohol impacts both the body and mind. Lessons include discussions on the short-term and long-term effects of alcohol, identifying signs of addiction, and strategies to resist peer pressure.

Finally, in Unit 4, Digital Wellness and Screen Time will address the growing impact of technology on students' health. Through activities like creating digital wellness plans and analyzing their screen time use, students learn how to develop healthier relationships with technology, promoting overall well-being in a digital world.

## **Health Grade 8**

The eighth-grade health curriculum at Carlisle Public Middle School focuses on equipping students with the knowledge and skills to make informed health decisions, with an emphasis on accessing reliable health information, understanding the risks of substance use, and navigating topics like digital wellness, cannabis, and sexual health. Aligned with Massachusetts health standards, the curriculum promotes critical thinking, advocacy, and decision-making, preparing students for real-life health challenges.

Unit 1 will teach students about Accessing Information teaches students how to identify and evaluate reliable sources of health information. Students explore characteristics of trustworthy health websites and practice evaluating various sources for credibility. They will analyze health articles and videos for accuracy, bias, and relevance, creating checklists to aid in their assessments.



Unit 2 adds to student learning by teaching about Prescription Medicine Misuse, focusing on the risks and prevention of misuse. Students learn the differences between prescription and over-the-counter medicines, analyze medication labels, and understand dosage instructions. Students practice refusal skills and create prevention campaigns to promote safe and responsible medication use, reinforcing the importance of accessing reliable health resources.

Through Unit 3, students will learn about Cannabis and provide an in-depth look at the effects of cannabis on the body and mind. Understanding Cannabis, students learn about various forms of cannabis, including its legal status, and discuss the short-term and long-term effects on brain development. Risks and Consequences of Use emphasizes the risks of cannabis use by analyzing case studies and creating educational brochures on its dangers.

Finally in Unit 4, students will learn about Sexual Health to help students understand human development, reproductive health, and the importance of healthy relationships. Students will revisit puberty and the reproductive system.

Students will also learn about STI Prevention and Contraception, which teaches students about sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and contraception methods. Revisiting our first unit, students will show their abilities to access credible Sexual Health Resources and encourage students to identify and access local sexual health resources.

## **Visual Arts Curriculum**

At Carlisle Middle School, the Visual Arts program allows students to express themselves authentically and without judgment. The art room provides a safe space for students to explore their thoughts, emotions, and experiences, and to gain a deeper understanding of themselves.

Primary goals of the Middle School Visual Arts curriculum are to nurture creativity, skill development, and a lifelong appreciation for the arts. Students' social emotional development and sense of well-being are key components to the creative process, with the curriculum being accessible and inclusive. Working from observation and imagination, students create both abstract and representational art that is self reflective. They are encouraged to make thoughtful choices about the balance, variety, and unity of their compositions, as well as representing diverse cultures, perspectives, and artistic traditions.

## **Art Grade 5**

The fifth grade art curriculum begins with an introduction to the element of value and the importance of how to add dimensionality to a drawing by the use of different types of pencil shading. Building upon this skill, fifth grade students learn to blend analogous color combinations in order to achieve value and dimension using both oil pastels and colored pencils. Using their previous learned skills of design thinking and creative problem solving, students will create three dimensional artworks using the mediums of ceramics, fiber arts, and origami. A wide range of art historical references will be highlighted, including, but not limited to, Tibetan mandalas, contemporary landscape and fiber artists, Japanese origami, and artists who promote civil rights.

## **Art Grade 6**

For the sixth grade art curriculum, students continue to explore a variety of media, building on their previous skills using the elements and principles of design and creative problem solving. Advanced color theory in painting is emphasized, with students creating tertiary, tints, shades, and neutral color combinations in various artworks. Students will learn how to create depth by using overlapping, atmospheric perspective, diminishing size and detail, and object placement in the picture plane. An increased understanding of coil and slab building techniques is introduced for both construction and embellishment in ceramics. Students will also be able to perform the steps involved in the printmaking process in order to create a series of successful prints by means of transferring an original drawing based in nature. Some art historical references highlighted include, but are not limited to, Aztec and Mayan sculpture, Japanese printmaking, and the art and artifacts of Mesopotamia.

## **Art Grade 7**

The seventh grade art curriculum introduces students to creating a personalized work of art using advanced value shading and color theory techniques. They will also use creative digital platforms, such as Sketchbook and Canva in order to enhance a previously created original drawing and/or painting inspired by science and astronomy. Seventh grade students will also be introduced to advanced printmaking techniques by carving an image into a linoleum block. Finally, students will be introduced to art historical references, including, but not limited to, contemporary street artists, Japanese pop artists, and Latin American linocut artists.

## **Art Grade 8**

The 8th grade art curriculum is an exploration of student choice and voice. A personal aesthetic is emphasized, with a focus on a studio class environment to foster a community of respect for students' individualized work processes and creations. Students will be encouraged to research art historical references that they share an affinity with. Major units include, but will not be limited to, Joseph Cornell inspired metaphorical boxes, functional ceramics, symbolic self portraits, and sewing. A major component of the grade 8 art curriculum is understanding the basic mechanics of a sewing machine and sewing a basic garment pattern from start to finish.

## **Art Enrichment (Grades 7 & 8 only)**

Students who participate in Art Enrichment will have the opportunity to be introduced to new skills and techniques that are an extension of their weekly scheduled art classes. Assignments will encourage students to expand their artistic skills, broaden their visual perception, and problem solve using a wide range of two and three dimensional mediums. Projects include, but are not limited to, ceramic vessels inspired by nature, paintings inspired by Carlisle wildlife, enlargement drawings, and creating a personal brand identity using digital platforms such as Sketchbook and Canva.

## **Music Curriculum**

Music is an integral part of every society and community, and is also a vital component in developing the whole child. Music Education offers a unique learning opportunity to explore individual creativity and artistic expression. A comprehensive music education will enable students to develop their musical abilities through self discipline and focus, leading to increased confidence.

Each Carlisle Middle School student participates in a music class. All students in grades 5-7 are enrolled in Band and/or Choir. Eighth graders may select Band and/or Choir, or they may choose to enroll in Music Appreciation.

## **Middle School Band Overview**

Middle School Band offers students who play wind and percussion instruments the opportunity to develop lifelong instrumental and musical skills, both individually and in a large ensemble. Students develop teamwork and leadership skills through group collaboration. Performing a band instrument

builds self-confidence, self-discipline, and empathy as students develop an emotional connection to music-making. The skills they build will prepare them for performing in a variety of settings outside of school and support them in becoming contributing citizens.

Students prepare music in a variety of styles, which they perform throughout the year, including two concerts in the winter and spring: a Memorial Day Parade and the 8th Grade Graduation Ceremony. Additional events may include festival performances and field trips. Students in 6th through 8th grade can also audition for Advanced Band and Jazz Band. Each Middle School Band rehearses two times per week.

### **Band Grade 5**

Fifth Grade Band builds on the foundational skills learned in fourth grade by introducing more advanced music, including an extended range of notes, more rhythmic complexity, and some independence of parts. Students meet twice per week for full band rehearsals in which they practice effective collaboration in a large group setting and begin to form connections between music and emotion. We practice proper posture, breath support, and technique to build healthy playing habits.

### **Band Grade 6**

Sixth Grade Band builds on the skills in fifth grade by introducing more advanced music, including greater melodic, rhythmic, and stylistic variety. Students will begin to perform with more independent parts on each piece. Students meet twice per week for full band rehearsals in which they practice effective collaboration in a large group setting and form connections between music and emotion. Students in 6th grade may audition for Advanced Band and/or Jazz Band.

### **Combined Grades 7 & 8 Band**

Seventh and Eighth Grade Band builds on the skills in 6th grade by introducing more advanced music, including greater melodic, rhythmic, and stylistic variety. Students will perform in a greater variety of time signatures, key signatures, tempos, and forms. Students practice effective collaboration in a large group setting and form connections between music and emotion. Pieces will be longer and require more independence. Students in 7th and 8th grade may audition for Advanced Band and/or Jazz Band.

## **Middle School Choir Overview**

Middle School Choir offers students the opportunity to develop their vocal skills individually and in an ensemble. Students develop teamwork and leadership skills through group collaboration, while also building confidence and discipline. Students prepare music in a variety of styles to present multiple performances throughout the year, including two concerts in the winter and spring, and the 8th Grade Graduation Ceremony. Additional events may include festival performances and field trips. Students in 6th through 8th grade can also audition for Advanced Choir. Each Middle School Choir rehearses two times per week.

### **Choir Grade 5**

Fifth Grade Choir builds on the foundational skills learned in fourth grade. Students develop their ability to sing with healthy vocal technique and musical phrasing. Specifically, students will learn proper breath support, vowel shape and articulation. Students are also introduced to varied rhythms and dynamic markings. Fifth Grade Choir will begin to explore 2-part harmony.

### **Choir Grade 6**

Sixth Grade Choir builds on the foundational skills learned in fifth grade. Students work on expanding their vocal range. Students will develop their ability to sing with healthy vocal technique and musical phrasing. Additionally, students will learn proper breath support, vowel shape and articulation. Students are also introduced to varied rhythms and recognizing dynamic markings. Sixth Grade Choir will sing repertoire in 2-part harmony with more complex rhythms.

### **Combined Grades 7 & 8 Choir**

Seventh and Eighth Grade Choir will sing choral repertoire in varied styles, level of difficulty and number of parts. Students in choir will work to achieve unified blend within the ensemble. Students will sing in SA & SAB music with more complex rhythms. In addition, students will work on proper diction, initial and final consonants and vowel unification.

### **Music Appreciation Option (Grade 8 only)**

As an alternative to the performance-based ensembles in grade 8, students can instead select the Music Appreciation class. This course gives students the opportunity to explore and create music that is current and relevant to their everyday lives. The curriculum focuses on contemporary music styles, such as pop music, film scores and video game soundtracks. Students learn the unique

vocabulary of music technology, and they explore how traditional musical elements are incorporated into contemporary music. Throughout the course, students will engage with various music apps to create original audio and multimedia projects.

## Advisory: Anti-Bullying, Anti-Bias & Social-Emotional Curriculum

The Carlisle Middle School advisory program is a structured time designed to support the social, emotional, and growth of adolescent students. The advisory group meets regularly on a weekly or bi-weekly basis to build relationships, foster a sense of community, and help students develop essential life skills.

The primary goals of the middle school advisory program include:

1. **Social-Emotional Development:** The program provides a safe space for students to discuss personal issues, build self-awareness, and develop prosocial coping skills.
2. **Community Building:** Students build trust and connections with their peers and advisor, creating a supportive environment.
3. **Character Education:** Advisors help reinforce positive behaviors, empathy, responsibility, and other core values, specifically anti-bias and anti-bullying related.

Advisory programs often incorporate activities like team-building exercises, discussions on relevant topics (e.g., bullying, peer pressure, self-esteem), and goal-setting exercises. The middle school advisory program fosters a ‘whole-child’ approach to student development, ensuring that students not only excel academically, but also grow as unique individuals. Below are descriptions of our middle school advisory programs and curriculum at each grade level.

**Grade 5 Advisory:** The grade 5 advisory curriculum focuses on supporting student transition from elementary to middle school and includes lessons on executive functioning skills, digital literacy, and time to practice newly learned skills of independence and responsibility. Since the grade 5 team of educators believe that every student can be successful, the advisory lessons aim to strengthen the class community and develop intrapersonal communication skills. Students engage with the [‘Think-Give’ curriculum program](#) in grade 5 advisory to reinforce the character education trait of empathy.

**Grade 6 Advisory:** The grade 6 advisory curriculum primary goals are to help students become successful middle school students. The grade 6 advisory program incorporates aspects of the 4 C’s

learning curriculum from Outdoor Classroom (Cooperation, Communication, Commitment and Care). We also include lessons on executive functioning skills, study habits, growth mindset and building healthy and positive peer relationships.

**Grade 7 Advisory:** The grade 7 advisory curriculum primary goals are to build, nurture, and sustain non-academic relationships with and between middle school students to foster a more inclusive learning community. The grade 7 advisory program includes lessons and topics structured to promote prosocial engagement and community building activities, such as a classroom door decorating contest, fractured fairy tales, a lip sync contest, community connections (cards for veterans), and thankful turkeys. Additionally, the grade 7 advisory program incorporates aspects of the social-emotional learning [curriculum from Challenge Day](#). Finally, the grade 7 advisory program emphasizes the importance of academic integrity in order to reinforce positive behaviors, encourage student responsibility, and promote authentic learning.

**Grade 8 Advisory:** The grade 8 advisory program aims to build community by deliberately providing students with opportunities for discussion and reflection. Lessons and small group activities include, the Heart-to-Heart workshop, civil discourse protocols, and CBT/DBT skills in order to focus on how thoughts, feelings, and behaviors influence each other. Emphasis is placed on developing anti-bullying and anti-bias lessons, and the grade 8 advisory program integrates lessons from the [Celtics Playbook Initiative](#) in which students are confronted by real life scenarios and discuss possible solutions and interventions. Additionally, prosocial activities during grade 8 advisory include team building, collaborative games, greetings, and community/school service opportunities.

## Student Support Classes

As a special education department, we want to make a difference in the lives of special education students and their families. Students with disabilities are integrated within the general education classrooms in a full inclusion model to help students achieve their full potential. This model equips students with the skills and strategies they need to advocate for themselves, fostering their development into independent learners.

### Study Skills

Study Skills is designed for middle school students grades 5-8 with Individual Education Programs (IEPs). In this class, students receive small group instruction from a Special Education Teacher and paraprofessionals, focusing on enhancing their executive functioning abilities and developing

essential skills for academic success. Students learn effective strategies for planning, organizing, prioritizing, and managing assignments. For instance, students use math reference sheets to support problem-solving and calculations, boosting their confidence in tackling mathematical challenges. Students also use graphic organizers to help them visually represent information, improving their organizational skills and clarity of writing.

Additionally, students preview and review academic vocabulary, concepts, and skills, ensuring they understand key information from their core classes. They apply targeted comprehension strategies to enhance their reading and critical thinking skills using texts suited to their grade and/or instructional levels. Throughout Study Skills, students explore various study techniques tailored to their unique learning styles, promoting better retention and understanding. Ultimately, Study Skills equips students with a toolkit of strategies that empowers them to navigate their academic journey with greater independence and success.

## **Strategic Learning Skills (SLS)**

The goal of the Strategic Learning Skills class is to help students become self-directed lifelong learners who can effectively acquire skills and access curriculum in any learning environment. Middle School students in grades 5-8 will receive the support and structure they require through in class support and small group instruction to improve their time management and executive functioning skills. The mission of the class is based upon helping students to access strategies that allow them to develop their unique abilities. It seeks to stimulate student awareness of individual challenges, while promoting cooperative skills, creativity, independence, and self-esteem. Additionally, students focus on organization, time management, and self-advocacy.

## **Speech and Language**

Speech-language pathologists in the Middle School focus on identifying and remediating disorders that interfere with a student's ability to independently and successfully communicate with peers and teachers. Speech-language services may be provided in the classroom setting or in the speech-language therapy room. In addition, services may be provided through consultation.

Programming is highly individualized based on student needs and may include focusing on vocabulary and word-retrieval, strategies for following directions, language comprehension, expressive grammar and syntax, articulation, stuttering, motor speech disorders, social pragmatic skills, and assistive technology consultation.



## **Physical/Occupational Therapy**

Physical and occupational therapy helps students adapt to and participate in school by using activities and adapted environments. Occupational Therapy (OT) can help with fine motor skills (handwriting, typing, tool use, etc.), self-regulation, visual-motor coordination, and sensory processing. Physical Therapy (PT) can help restore function, improve mobility, promote fitness, range of motion, balance, posture, and coordination as it relates to activities within the school environment. OT and PT are delivered through direct service and/or collaboration with teachers to support students' independence and participation in school activities. To qualify for PT/OT services in Carlisle Middle School, a student must be eligible due to a disability documented by a licensed clinician.

## **English Language Learners (ELL)**

The Carlisle Public Schools provides services to ELL students. The school registration process includes a home language survey that staff conduct in-person with parents. Additionally, classroom teachers identify any new students who may use a language other than English at home. To determine eligibility for English Language Learner services, our ELL teacher will review teacher and parent information and administer an assessment developed by World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA), an organization responsible for promulgating new standards and assessments for schools educating English Language Learners. If faculty determine that a child meets eligibility guidelines, English Language Learning services will begin for that child. State and federal laws require that ELL students receive instruction designed to assist them with both learning English and with learning subject matter content.

Carlisle's ELL teacher provides instruction and support for students for whom English is a nonnative language and who for that reason are not able to perform grade level classwork in English. Once the students are assessed and identified as English language learners, they will receive ELL services on a weekly basis, depending on individual need. Instruction includes English language development in all four domains: understanding, speaking, reading, and writing as well as support in the content areas of math, science and social studies. The ELL teacher also provides English language learners with an introduction to the school and its cultural practices. ELL instruction may take place either in a pull-out setting or in the student's classroom. When a student no longer needs services, parents are informed, and the student is monitored for two years per state regulation. Formerly Limited English Proficient (FLEP) is the term used to designate students who at one time were classified and reported as ELL/LEP, but who subsequently met the district's English language proficiency criteria.

# Middle School FLEX Program

FLEX blocks are dedicated time in the weekly middle school schedule for all adolescent learners to receive supplemental academic support and enrichment opportunities. The vision of FLEX is to provide all middle school students the opportunity to develop academic and social skills and introduce new topics in a manner that is tailored to meet their individual needs.

The instructional methodology during FLEX is designed to promote project-based and student-centered learning with students grouped according to areas that faculty identify to be beneficial. There are three FLEX blocks per week in the schedule at Carlisle Middle School, and students will be placed into FLEX classes based upon a variety of criteria, which includes, but is not limited to, teacher recommendation, STAR Renaissance reading assessment data, ALEKs math assessment data, and MCAS data.