



Nurturing Confidence. Realizing Potential.

MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Center School's curriculum is language-based, recognizing the role that language plays in academic success. Using the Pennsylvania Core Standards as a guideline, full curriculum instruction is offered through a structured, multi-sensory approach based on students' needs and designed to address each child's learning needs through small group instruction. Curriculum can be adjusted to be taught at an appropriate pace for a student's individual level of learning. In Middle School, an advisory system teaches students how to set goals and celebrate their strengths and interests.

Reading

Reading is the cornerstone of the curriculum at Center School, and much of the day is dedicated to building literacy skills. The reading curriculum is language-based, multisensory, sequential, and structured to be cumulative. Direct instruction and explicit modeling are used to provide students with the tools necessary to develop sound comprehension skills. Material is chosen at the child's instructional reading level.

In Middle School, a greater emphasis is placed on independent reading and development of the reading process. Novels, short stories, poetry, and nonfiction stories are incorporated to provide a transfer and application of learned comprehension skills. Vocabulary is studied and interpreted in order to deepen language skills and comprehension. Foundational skills are well developed, and interpreting and analyzing literary genres, elements, and devices become the core of the student's learning. Determining and analyzing the author's purpose is studied more deeply as it relates to points of view of characters and/or narrators.

6th Grade

Students continue to develop and build reading skills and strategies in order to determine central ideas, build vocabulary, and interpret figurative language. Citing textual evidence is emphasized to support analysis of the text. Wilson® techniques are utilized through vocabulary acquisition as a means to clarify the meaning of unknown words.

7th Grade

While utilizing reading comprehension strategies, students track two or more central ideas over the course of a text. When seeking textual evidence, students provide several references from the text to support analysis of explicit plot points. Students closely analyze the interactions of characters as they represent the events and varied points of view.

8th Grade

Throughout reading, students determine their own central ideas of a text by citing several key pieces of explicit and implicit evidence to support their claim. An emphasis is placed on analysis of the author's purpose for writing a specific text and how the author introduces conflicting viewpoints. Rigor increases in preparation for high school.

Wilson Reading System® and Wilson Foundations®

Wilson Reading System® is a research-based reading and spelling program for all ages. Its multisensory, structured curricula is based upon phonological-coding research and Orton-Gillingham principles. Wilson Reading System is used for groups of approximately five students.

Students receive instruction in:

- Phonemic awareness
- Decoding and word study
- Sight word recognition
- Spelling
- Fluency
- Vocabulary
- Oral expressive language development

Wilson Foundations® provides research-based materials and strategies essential to comprehensive reading, spelling, and handwriting. This program is geared towards students in grades K-3. Students receive instruction in critical foundational skills which emphasize:

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonics/ word study
- High frequency word study
- Reading fluency
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension strategies
- Handwriting
- Spelling

All new students are assessed to determine their need for placement Wilson Reading System® or Wilson Foundations®.

Writing

In Middle School, writing is further developed, and organization in writing is stressed. Students add voice to all genres of writing. Writing informally shifts to writing formally. All steps of the writing process are utilized with support from adults being gradually released as students enter eighth grade. Sentence patterns become more complex, and precise words and details are used to convey clarity in writing.

6th Grade

Students continue to write in multi-paragraph form and work towards writing a five paragraph essay. Adult and peer support is given in the writing process to develop and strengthen writing.

7th Grade

Students develop writing skills through consistent use of the steps within the writing process. As students learn more about the structure of essays, the idea of a thesis statement is introduced.

8th Grade

Students enter eighth grade with a clear understanding of the writing process and the structure of a five paragraph essay. While writing continues to focus on specific genres, writing in response to literature to show comprehension is incorporated in preparation for high school.

Math

The math curriculum in Center School is developed using a variety of methods to address students with or without a specific learning disability in math. Supplemental material pulled from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's *Big Ideas Math* is incorporated with numerous teacher-created materials and interactive media to develop a curriculum that focuses on computation skills, problem solving, and real life, practical applications. A full learning experience is reinforced through the use of manipulative materials to engage students in active learning. Numbers and operations, algebraic concepts, geometry, and measurement, data, and probability are incorporated to provide a well-rounded and sequential curriculum.

6th Grade

- Interpretation of Fractions including Ratios
- Application of Equations and Expressions
- Application of Geometric Concepts in the Real World including Circles
- Introduction to Statistics

7th Grade

- Ratio and Proportional Relationships
- Utilization of Algebraic Concepts with Graphs
- Visualization and Representation of Geometric Concepts
- Identification and Calculation of Probability and Permutations

8th Grade

- Application of Rational and Irrational Numbers
- Analysis of Expressions, Equations, and Functions
- Application of Formulas to Shapes; Pythagorean Theorem
- Interpretation of Bivariate Data

Science

In Middle School, students continue to explore science concepts through the use of *Delta Science Modules*. Each year, students focus in on one concentration of science in which they learn a wide range of topics within that area to make sense of science concepts on a larger scale. Students continue to expand their scientific inquiry skills through the use of the scientific method during labs and experiments. Teacher-created materials and interactive media help to further complete the curriculum.

6th Grade

Earth

- The Scientific Method
- Earth Structures, Processes, and Cycles
- Evolution of the Universe

7th Grade

Life

- Organisms and Cells: Basic Cell Structures and Their Functions
- Theory of Evolution
- Genetics: From Genes to Proteins

8th Grade

Physical

- Chemistry: Physical and Chemical Changes of Atomic Structures
- Physics: Kinetic and Potential Energy; Electric Currents

Social Studies

In Middle School, a wide variety of resources are used to help students understand social studies concepts. Elements from Prentice Hall's *World Studies: The Ancient World* and McGraw Hill's *Discovering Our Past: The History of the United States* are incorporated with numerous teacher-created materials and interactive media to develop a comprehensive and coherent curriculum. There is a focus on the interaction between culture and geography on each other. Students will learn the development of laws and governments by analyzing and critiquing historical documents from each time period. As students move through middle school, more specific content is studied in order to utilize skills needed for high school.

6th Grade

Ancient Civilizations: Geography, History, and Culture and Their Effects on Modern Culture

- The Beginning of Human Society/The Fertile Crescent
- Egypt
- Greece
- Rome
- Indus River Valley
- China

7th Grade

Early American History: The Historical and Political Effect on America's Expansion

- The First Americans
- European Explorers
- Colonial America
- The American Revolution
- Uniting a Country
- US Expansion
- The Spirit of Reform and The Civil War

8th Grade

20th Century United States: The Voices and Agents That Brought About Lasting Change

- The Industrial Age
- Rise of Urban Cities and the Progressive Era
- Age of Imperialism
- WWI
- The Great Depression
- WWII
- The Cold War Era
- The Civil Rights Movement

STEM

STEM is based on the idea of educating students in four specific disciplines — science, technology, engineering and mathematics — in an interdisciplinary and applied approach. The students experience curricula that is engaging, multi-sensory and reflects the fundamentals of STEM instruction. The program prepares students for the integrated STEM demands and provides opportunities to research and experience STEM careers. Students who do not require Wilson® or have graduated from Wilson® participate in the STEM program. Topics covered include:

- Computer Coding
- Bridge Design
- Business
- Nutrition
- Money Management
- Stock Market Analysis
- Environmental Science
- Fashion Technology
- Statistics
- Sports and Exercise Science
- Financial Literacy
- Engineering Process
- Parachute Design

Health

The health curriculum is introduced in fourth grade and continues through eighth grade. Features from the Pennsylvania Core Standards are incorporated into the curriculum along with components from McGraw-Hill Teen Health and teacher-made activities and materials. Students are taught to identify, recognize, explain, and analyze concepts of safe and healthy living. Health class is instructed for one semester.

6th Grade

- First Aid and Safety
- Drugs and Alcohol

7th Grade

- Health Problems and Prevention

8th Grade

- Dating Guidelines
- Sexual Education

Physical Education

In Middle School, classes emphasize developing teamwork, understanding how to manage fitness needs, and learning the skills necessary to compete in lifetime sports effectively. The program includes:

- Fitness is fostered through exercise such as weight training and rope climbing. Students develop an understanding of how to manage their fitness needs on a daily basis, staying fit through a variety of activities.
- Teamwork is promoted through cooperative games and developed to create a positive environment.
- Strategies are taught for lifetime sports such as football, soccer, basketball, floor hockey, volleyball, and softball.

Art

The art curriculum at Center School provides opportunities for students to develop skills necessary to perceive and respond to visual arts, to gain an understanding of them as an essential aspect of human experience, and to cultivate an ability to make aesthetic judgements. At Center School, a Discipline-Based Arts Education (DBAE) model is used. DBAE is a framework that ensures all students receive a rigorous study of the visual arts. DBAE presents a sound art curriculum including the following components: Art Production, Art History, Art Criticism, and Aesthetics. Each grade level works in a variety of media to explore the principles and elements of design in both three-dimensional and two-dimensional art work. Every year lessons build upon the former year, forming a foundation for understanding artistic principles. Many units in art are approached in an interdisciplinary manner with teachers from different classrooms teaching the same subject matter to reinforce learning. These components of the art program create a well-rounded art curriculum. Attention is focused on the following elements:

- Color Theory
- Line Types and Directions
- Shapes
- Genres: Portrait, Still Life, Landscape, Abstract
- Composition and Balance
- Patterns
- 3-Dimensional Works

Leadership

Opportunities are provided to students in middle school to develop leadership skills which are an integral part of being a Center School student through participation in Student Council. The Student Council at Center School is an extracurricular activity led by the eighth grade student body with the purpose of positively impacting the school community. Through various fundraising activities, the Student Council raises money to benefit Center School and various organizations within the local communities. There are four main representatives in the Student Council: president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary. All other students serve as public relations support through involvement in marketing the various events which are hosted monthly.

The Student Council at Center School promotes collaboration, leadership, and community building experience.

After School Programs

Sports

Center School offers opportunities for students in grades four through eight to participate in competitive team sports including soccer, basketball, and softball. Center School's gym teacher and coach teaches the basics of each sport during practice which is held three times a week so students are prepared to meet the competition head-on during after school games.

Art

Fun and creative projects will allow each student to relax and refocus at the end of a busy school day. Classes are filled on a first-come, first-served basis with a maximum of eight students, giving your child a chance to interact with other children and on a one-to-one basis. Art projects include ceramics, painting techniques, 3D sculpture, and much more!