Choice Enrollment Open House

Centennial, A School for Expeditionary Learning
2020-21 School Year
Who are we?

Centennial, A School for Expeditionary Learning is an inclusive school that fosters each child’s sense of wonder and adventure through exemplary standards of character, academic achievement, and social responsibility.

Centennial is proud to be the first neighborhood school in DPS to partner with EL Education. Centennial has been an EL school for the past 8 years.

We are proud to call Northwest Denver home!
Who do we serve?

There are currently 425 students, ECE-5, enrolled at Centennial.

- We are projected to have approximately the same amount of students enrolled for the 2021-22 school year.

Here’s how our student body breaks down:

- Hispanic/Latino: 36%
- Asian: >1%
- Black/African America: >1%
- Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander: >1%
- White: 56%
- Two or More Races: 5%

We currently serve approximately 16 English language learners and approximately 30% of our student body is eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch.
Grade Level Configurations
Unique Characteristics

- Centennial thinks of grade levels in ‘bands’ because we employ a looping model.
- K-5 teachers and students stay together for two years to support strong relationships between teachers, students and families. We refer to our classrooms as crews.
  - Kindergarten loops to 1st grade; 2nd grade loops to 3rd grade; 4th grade loops to 5th grade.
- Centennial supports both straight grade level and multi-age crews. Multi-age crews are most common at Kindergarten/1st grade, but we have had multi-age crews across all grade level bands throughout the years.
- We work with incoming families to determine if a multi-age or straight grade level crew is best for their child.
- We work with families should there be a need to change crews during a looping cycle.
ECE 3 and 4 Specifics

Centennial has a total of 5 ECE classrooms. Over the years we have significantly increased the size of our ECE program from two rooms to five.

- One ECE 3 classroom that serves two half-day sections
- Four ECE 4 classrooms that are all full-day

Classroom enrollment does not exceed 16 across all ECE classrooms.

The ECE 3 classroom is supported by two paraprofessionals and a teacher with ECE Special Education licensure.

The ECE 4 classrooms are supported by one paraprofessional.

All ECE classrooms implement inclusive programming where students with special education needs are educated alongside ‘typical peers.’
Grade Level Sections, Crew Size for Kinder-5th Grade

- Typically we have six sections at Kindergarten/1st grade and six sections at 2nd/3rd grade.
- Most recently we have had five sections at 4th/5th grade. We anticipate that the section number at 4th/5th grade will increase to six as our students matriculate up.
- We aim to keep class size as low as possible in our primary crews. It’s our goal to keep Kindergarten-3rd grade at/below 24 students. Recently our crews have been bigger at 4th/5th- where we’ve had as many as 27 students per room. This is not ideal and we strive to keep numbers lower, even in our intermediate grades.
- Centennial believes in prioritizing budget funds to keep class size low, and this means we do not raise crew size to have fewer teachers but more paraprofessionals.
Enrichments
What enrichments do we offer?

All students ECE 4 through 5th grade participate in enrichment class each day. Students engage with four enrichment classes:

- Art
- P.E.
- Science*
- Library/Digital Literacy

*Because Centennial used to be a K-8 we have a middle school-grade science lab for our students to access. This is a rather unique enrichment class for elementary schools.

Enrichment teachers at Centennial provide standards based instruction to students AND they pan collaborative instruction to support and enhance the expedition content of each grade level as well.
Specialized Support
Special Education

- Centennial currently has 1.5 mild/moderate special education teachers on staff to support K-5.
- M/M special education teachers work collaboratively with general education teachers and provide both inclusive instruction in the general education room and pull-out instruction in smaller spaces. The type of instruction is planned based on student needs and goals.
- There is at least one general education crew identified at each grade level to support with inclusive practices. Special education teachers work more intensely in these identified rooms to provide inclusive instruction.
- In order to support effective inclusive practices, our Special Education teachers participate in weekly grade level team meetings to collaboratively plan specialized and differentiated instruction.
Special Education

- Centennial is home to a Multi Intensive-Severe (MI-S) special education program that serves students in Kindergarten through 5th grade.
- This program serves up to 10 students and is supported by a special education teacher, and three paraprofessionals.
- Students from the MI-S program are full members of grade level appropriate homeroom crews and spend an identified portion of their instructional day included with general education peers for various instructional experiences.
- Students from the MIS program also participate in enrichments, and attend lunch and recess with general education peers.
Gifted and Talented & English Language Development

- Centennial is supported by an itinerant GT teacher who works at our school 10 hr/week and a .5 English Language Development (ELD) teacher.
- Both the GT and ELD teachers collaborate with teachers, and work directly with identified students- mostly in small groups.
- The GT teacher develops Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs) and collaborates with general education teachers so they can implement differentiated instruction for students identified as GT in their crews.
- Both GT and ELD teachers administer assessments to identify students for programming and monitor students’ progress throughout the school year.
Engagement and Support Team- EaST

Members of EaST include: school leadership, mental health providers, Dean of Culture, Restorative Justice/Educational Counselor

- Promotes social emotional wellness, equity and a positive school culture based on goal-oriented communication for students and staff.
- Empowers staff to utilize skills and have the capacity to identify and implement interventions and restorative practices based on data and self-reflection.
- Supports students to gain the tools to empower themselves and become more self-efficacious.
EL Education

Mission and Vision

When students and teachers are engaged in work that is challenging, adventurous and meaningful, learning and achievement flourish. EL Education’s mission is to create classrooms where teachers can fulfill their highest aspiration, and students achieve more than they think possible, becoming active contributors to building a better world.

When students enter adult life, they will be celebrated not for their performance on basic skills tests, but rather for the quality of their work and their character. That’s why EL Education builds students’ capacity for three dimensions of student achievement:

- Mastery of Knowledge and Skills; Character and High-Quality Student Work
EL Curriculum

- EL Education’s approach to curriculum makes standards come alive for students by connecting learning to real-world issues and needs.

- Project based learning expeditions, case studies, projects, field work and service learning inspire students to think and work as professionals, contributing high-quality work to authentic audiences beyond the classroom.
Instruction

- Classrooms at Centennial are busy with discovery, inquiry, critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration.
- We want teachers talking less and students talking (and thinking) more!
- Lessons have explicit purpose, guided by learning targets for which students take ownership and responsibility.
- Student engagement strategies and activities serve to differentiate instruction and maintain high expectations.
- Through this, it’s our goal to bring out the best in all students!
What is an Expedition?

- Expeditions allow students to go deep on one topic— a standard-based topic selected to engage student curiosity and passion.

- Expeditions provide opportunities to connect historic, scientific, and other disciplinary concepts to specific case studies that make learning concrete and relevant.

- Literacy is integrated in every learning expedition to build skills in context and as a means for engaging deeply with content.
Expeditions Continued

Fieldwork, experts and service learning are used through an expedition.

- **Field Work** allows students to use the natural and social environments of their communities as sites for purposeful learning. Students are active investigators during fieldwork, applying research tools, and inquiry techniques.

- Teachers invite **experts** and people with firsthand knowledge of events and issues related to the expedition into the classroom. These experts collaborate with students on projects, teach them skills, and critique their work using professional standards.

- **Service** in EL schools goes beyond charitable acts and extends to complex academic tasks that provide service for the community, such as conducting energy audits of city buildings to help save money and reduce carbon footprint.
## Expedition Topics

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<th>Grade</th>
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<td>Kinder</td>
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| Toys and Play  
| Weather Wonders  
| Trees are Alive  
| Enjoying and Appreciating Trees |
| 3rd Grade |  
| Overcoming Learning Challenges Near and Far  
| Adaptations and the Wide World of Frogs  
| Exploring Literary Classics  
| Water Around the World |
| 1st Grade |  
| Tools and Work  
| What’s up in the Sky: A Study of the Sun, Moon and Stars  
| Birds’ Amazing Bodies  
| Caring for Birds |
| 4th Grade |  
| Poetry, Poets and Becoming Writers  
| Animal Defense Mechanisms  
| The American Revolution  
| Responding to Inequality: Ratifying the 19th Amendment |
| 2nd Grade |  
| Schools and Community  
| Fossils Tell of Earth’s Changes  
| The Secret World of Pollination  
| Providing for Pollinators |
| 5th Grade |  
| Stories of Human Rights  
| Biodiversity in the Rainforest  
| Athlete Leaders of Social Change  
| The Impact of Natural Disasters |
Respectful Culture

- As an EL Education school, Centennial strives to build a school culture of respect, responsibility, courage and kindness.
- Our whole school is committed to quality work and citizenship.
- School structures and traditions—such as crew, community circle, Celebration of Learning, and service projects ensure that every student is known and cared for, student leadership is nurtured, and contributions to the school and world are celebrated.
- Our goal for students and staff at Centennial is to be supported to do better work and be better people than they thought possible.
Equity

- We are an inclusive school that actively seeks out and celebrates diverse perspectives
- We engage our community in equity book studies
  - 19-20 book: *So, You Want to Talk About Race?*
  - 20-21 book: *How to be an Antiracist*
- We have a Diversity and Inclusivity Committee
- We engage our staff in diversity and inclusivity work
  - Book studies
  - District-wide training on bias, identity and culturally-responsive teaching
  - District-sponsored Black Excellence Plan
  - Black Lives Matter at School Week
- Student leadership-sponsored events
  - Pride day
Other Items of Note
The Power of Play

Authentic, purposeful play is embedded in instruction in all of the ECE and primary classrooms at Centennial.

**Young children learn through play.**

*Play is the highest form of research.* (Albert Einstein)

Play is the context within which primary students can develop vital skills that are harder to practice in more structured formats – complex decision-making, leadership, and executive functioning.
Play Beyond the Classroom

- All crews at Centennial are encouraged to take brain breaks during the instructional day - this could be either in the classroom or outside.
- All crews have outdoor recess before/after lunch every day.
- ECE classrooms have multiple outdoor breaks each day in addition to lunch recess.
- K-3 classrooms take at least one outdoor recess break each day in addition to lunch recess.

We are not shy about being outside at Centennial! We encourage our students to have plenty of warm weather/wet weather gear so crews can enjoy nature even when the sun isn’t shining.
Centennial Structures and Traditions

Crew

Habits of Scholarship: WoRLD CARE

Wonder, Responsibility, Leadership, Determination, Care, Advocacy, Respect, Empathy

Community Circle

Celebration of Learning

Student Led Conferences

Student Leadership

Overnights
Before/After School Care

Centennial hosts the Discovery Link program

Students age 5+ can enroll for before/after school care

- 6:30 am to 6:30 pm

Discovery Link offers clubs/activities for ALL Centennial students to enroll in throughout the year
Parent Engagement & Leadership
Opportunities to Get Involved

PTA- Parent Teacher Association
CSC- Collaborative School Committee
Diversity and Inclusivity Committee
Health and Wellness Committee
Room Parents
Be a Centennial volunteer!
Q & A
Important Information

First Round Choice is open January 15 through February 16

Choice Enrollment Priorities for Centennial are:
- Boundary
- Sibling preference
- Non-Boundary

Necessary Documents for Choice Application:
- Birth Certificate,
- Proof of Address
- Proof of income for 30 consecutive days (ECE applications only)

Apply on School Mint
- dps.schoolmint.net
Choice Enrollment Resources

Virtual School Tour Video
Please reach out with any questions....

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