Centerville Elementary School takes pride in being a direct descendant of the original Centerville School erected in the late 1930s. At that time, the school was located in the Centerville community on Highway 124, five miles south of Snellville. It consisted of three teachers, three rooms, eight grades, 120 students (71 of whom attended), and operated within a budget of $1,205 per annum.

The original Centerville School closed in June of 1969, and the Centerville students were moved to Snellville Elementary, which was replaced by W. C. Britt Elementary.

The current Centerville Elementary School was constructed and completed for the 1973-74 school term. The school experienced double-session status with Britt Elementary in Snellville for the beginning of the term, since the new building was not complete when school was scheduled to begin. The building was completed for occupancy on February 11, 1974, and students and faculty reported to the new school on the present site.

Initially, the building had 23 classrooms. However, with continuing growth in the area, it was necessary to construct 10 additional classrooms for the school term 1978–79. The following year, the school’s growing enrollment reached 1,235 students. Prior to this peak in enrollment, the Centerville area and the population had been rezoned two different times because of the increase in the number of students. A 1976 rezoning moved students to Gwin Oaks Elementary and a 1977 rezoning sent Centerville students to R.D. Head Elementary. In 1980, more than 500 students were moved to another new school named Annistown Elementary. The Centerville area continued to grow and R. L. Norton Elementary opened in the fall of 1986 to relieve Centerville of 300 of its 1,150 students. And in 1988, the school received a 23-classroom addition to help serve its growing student population.

The Cougar was selected as Centerville’s mascot in 1978, by representatives from PTA, faculty and staff, parents and students; school colors of green and gold also were chosen at that time.

Jimmie J. Powell opened Centerville Elementary and served as principal for 10 years. He retired June 30, 1983, after 35 years with the Gwinnett County Board of Education.

Dr. Wanda Warner was principal at Centerville from August of 1983 until Norton Elementary was constructed, at which time she left to become the first principal at that school. Marian Hicks came to Centerville in 1986, serving as principal through the spring of 1990. She left that fall to become principal of Shiloh Elementary. Becky Hopcraft became principal of Centerville Elementary in the fall of 1990, leading the school for 14 years. During those years...
the student body decreased due to the opening of Shiloh and Partee elementary schools. Centerville’s enrollment was 750 students when Becky Hopcraft retired in 2003. Barbara Schmich became the school’s fifth principal in July of 2003. Centerville’s population began rising and reached 890 students by the spring of 2006.

Following Ms. Schmich as principal was Allan Gee, who served the school from January 2009 to 2009. Kimberly McDermon became the principal in 2009 and served until November 2012. During Ms. McDermon’s tenure as principal, the school aligned its mascot and school colors with the other schools in the Shiloh Cluster, becoming the generals. When Ms. McDermon left to work at the district level, Dr. Brenda Johnson became the principal. Dr. Johnson led the school from November of 2012 until May of 2016 when she transferred to become the principal of a new elementary school in Norcross called Baldwin Elementary. The Board of Education named Bonita Banks as Johnson’s successor.

Parental involvement has been and continues to be a hallmark of Centerville. In addition to an active PTA, the school has had a Centerville Watch DOGS (Dads of Great Students) program that engages dads in the work of the school. Centerville also has offered a number of parent workshops that align to the school’s Local School Plan for Improvement.

In 2014, the school celebrated 40 years of excellence, proudly serving 729 elementary students in the Shiloh Cluster. Today, the school’s enrollment stands at just over 700 students. Centerville Elementary School continues to build upon its rich history, providing an educational experience that empowers students to excel, encourages them to discover their strengths, and motivates them to realize their full potential.