

**Portland Christian
Middle School
Electives Catalog
2026-27**



At Portland Christian Schools, we recognize the unique character and characteristics of the middle school- aged child and strive to offer an education that meets the needs of the child during this transitional period. In general, students in this age bracket exhibit a tremendous number of changes in their physical, intellectual, social, and educational growth. Nowhere in their educational experience will so many transformations occur at different rates than in this age. Because our students exhibit a variety of academic and social levels and abilities, we provide a program that enables us to meet them where they are and challenge them to grow. Just as important in our educational setting, we take extreme care amongst our faculty and administration to uphold and model Biblical, Christ-like standards of attitudes, conduct, and speech.

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MIDDLE SCHOOL ELECTIVE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

At Portland Christian Schools, we believe that the middle school years are unique ones. Through our elective course offerings, we help prepare our middle school students for high school and beyond. Electives do not provide in-depth coverage of a single subject matter. Instead, most are designed as exploratory classes to provide opportunities for our students to gain “hands-on” experience. Band, Spanish 1, and Yearbook are the only full-year electives offered, while all the others are semester courses. At this time we offer the following electives (subject to change):

Art A and Art B

It is a unique privilege to be made in the image of our Creator God. The process of creating reveals the very nature of God and offers a means for glorifying Him. In middle school Art, students will have the opportunity for creative expression in two and three-dimensional art, learn the basic elements of design, and become familiar with the works of some major artists. Studio projects are designed to expose students to art history, new art techniques, and creative problem-solving. Art A and Art B will provide a varied experience, and one does not need to take one before the other - they may be taken sequentially or in isolation

Band 6th, 7th or 8th grade

This class is designed to give the band instrument musician a traditional band performance experience. Its purpose is to teach comprehensive musicianship and musical excellence through playing musical exercises and the performance of band literature and transcriptions. The student will also demonstrate an understanding in music-related ideas.

Board Game Design

In this class, we will explore different genres of board games: physical, numerical, linguistic, card/pattern, engine-builder, deck-builder, European, resource management, and more. For each genre, we will reflect on which strategies work best and how the game's overall design advances its purpose. After we try out numerous games, we will apply our knowledge of those games to designing our own. This will include detailed rules, construction of the game board, creation of the materials needed to play, and general game box design. This will be done individually or in small groups if approved by the teacher. The final for the class will be each student/team presenting their game, and allowing the class to play-test it.

Choir

Middle School Choir is an elective designed to do four things: introduce students to choral music and choral singing; give students confidence in singing, whether they are new to singing or have been performing all their lives; teach and develop basic music concepts, particularly as they apply to singing; and through all these steps, serve as a "feeder" for high school choir. As singing is one of the many ways God has given us to worship Him, Middle School Choir is for anyone! There will be performances held during the evening a couple of times during the semester, in which participation is expected.

Creative Writing

The Creative Writing elective course offers students the opportunity to explore language as an art form. Students will hone their craft through writing in a variety of genres, including short stories, journals, memoirs, poetry, dramatic monologue, and dramatic dialogue. Additionally, students will collaborate with peers by participating in writing workshops, peer-revision, and performance. At the end of the year, students will create a writing portfolio that celebrates their journey as a writer.

Digital Media Arts

This course is designed to give students a strong introduction to Media in the Arts. Students will learn about advertising fundamentals and recognize its influence throughout our daily lives. They will become Canva-certified through hands-on training and be provided with certificates of completion. Students will also explore the basics of block code through the free Hour of Code courses. This introduction is meant to inspire students to explore more in-depth coding that can be explored later in our Intro to Coding class. Students also learn basic principles of stop-motion animation through photography, LEGO building, and project-editing through Canva. *Students who have completed a semester of Media Arts and who want to take it again will need to get written permission from Mrs. Martin.*

Drama

The purpose of this course is to give middle school students the opportunity to honor God through a genuine theater production experience. This will include learning about the process of theatrical production from auditions to final performance. Special emphasis will be placed on stagecraft vocabulary, acting vocabulary, and theater etiquette. Students will learn the basis of successful public speaking as well. There will be a performance held during the evening near the end of the semester, with rehearsals held after school in preparation. Participation in this event is expected.

Gardening

This course will be an introduction to the basics of gardening and include the creation of vegetable and flower gardens on campus. Students will learn by gardening hands-on. We will frequently be working outdoors (weather permitting) to create garden spaces, insect habitats, and bird habitats.

Introduction to Coding

Technology Education and Literacy in Schools (TEALS), a Microsoft Philanthropies program, brings technology professionals from the community into the school to partner with PC teachers, providing expertise and sharing in the instruction. Students learn computational thinking, problem-solving, programming, and computer science concepts that are applicable in a multitude of fields beyond high school.

Introduction to Spanish

Middle School Introduction to Spanish is a basic, introductory foreign language course that introduces students to the foundations of foreign language learning. Classroom emphasis includes focus on topics regarding personal introductions, numbers, colors, weather, and time. Students are introduced to the concept of thinking in another language and viewing that language through the lens of a native speaker, as opposed to thinking in their own language. Basic vocabulary and grammar concepts are introduced through a variety of creative activities, games, memorization, and assignments. Cultural elements are incorporated throughout the course to promote interest and relevance in the language.

Newspaper

The middle school newspaper elective provides a creative outlet for writers and artists. Past issues of "Roy's Radical News" include comic strips, fiction just for fun, and news articles about upcoming events or awards received by your PC classmates. You will learn the basics of journalism and how to skillfully revise and edit your work. Publications appear via Google Classroom roughly every three weeks. Take this opportunity to help guide this publication into a new school year. Bring a friend along with you. You won't regret it!

Yearbook

The primary objective is to create and produce a yearbook reflective of PC Middle School's year and students in a manner that glorifies God. Students work independently as well as in groups to document the school year through use of photography, story, captions, layout, design, interview, and other journalism techniques. Students will use school equipment (digital cameras and computer programs) provided.

ELECTIVES FOR HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT:

Concert Band 7th or 8th grade

Prerequisite: Beginning Band; instructor approval

Credit 1.0

This class is designed to give the band instrument musician a traditional band performance experience. Its purpose is to teach comprehensive musicianship and musical excellence through playing musical exercises and the performance of band literature and transcriptions. The student will also demonstrate an understanding in music-related ideas. The Concert band represents the school in local State competitions and festivals. The participation in these festivals is expected.

Spanish, Level I; French, Level I; Japanese, Level 1: 8th grade

Credit: 1.0

These are beginning foreign language courses that emphasize the skills of listening and speaking so that students are able to communicate on a basic level. Vocabulary and grammar are acquired through memorization, conversation, role play, and other interactive activities. Grammar content includes, but is not limited to, regular and irregular verbs in the present tense, interrogatives, negatives, adjectives, possessives, and articles. Vocabulary acquisition is a major part of the course and includes basic words and phrases necessary for use in a variety of contexts. The skills of reading and writing are developed through cultural references, short stories, creative writing, and written exercises. The culture of many Spanish-speaking / French-speaking countries will be explored.

LEARNING SUPPORT

It is the policy (5.10.12) of Portland Christian to offer a class as an elective for students who are struggling academically. In **After-school tutoring**, the student will receive individualized support for homework and organizational skills.

They may also have individualized academic accommodations throughout their classes if needed.

1. Parents, Principal, or teachers may refer a student to the Dean and/or Student Support Specialist to be considered for assistance through the after-school tutoring regarding study skills or tutoring. A student may be accepted as a student at PC on the condition that the student attends this support time. The parents may be required to seek outside testing, counseling, or other interventions if needed.
2. The Dean, Student Support Specialist, and teacher may create a Student Support Plan for the student to guide the support provided, or accommodations, when needed.
3. Some students who receive assistance from the after-school tutoring do not need classroom accommodations. These students will utilize the class time to do homework and learn organizational strategies.
4. A student may require minor accommodations in one or more of their courses. These accommodations will allow the student to access the same information as the rest of the class. Such students will generally be required to learn the same content and be responsible for showing that knowledge.
 - A typical minor accommodation might include: shortened assignments, more time to complete assignments, testing location, seating assignment, break during class period, additional time to complete tests, etc.
5. A student who is not able to keep up with their coursework (with reasonable accommodations) may be eligible for extensive accommodations, which would require them to receive a modified diploma. This level of change to the student's academic plan would require a decision by the Principal and the student's parents. Working toward a modified diploma would mean that the student's grades would be modified and they would not be held accountable for the same level of content as the rest of the students. This arrangement is reserved for rare situations that require such a plan.
6. All factors will be taken into consideration before placing a student with an accommodation plan on academic probation. This decision will be made by the teachers, Student Support Specialist, Dean, and Principal.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The Arts

Middle School students may choose to audition for the school-wide fall and spring drama/musical productions. They may also submit artwork for the spring art show. The band, drama, and choir will perform at various times throughout the year.

Athletics

Because Portland Christian Middle School resides on the same campus as PC High School, our students can take advantage of all the facilities our high school program has to offer. This includes a state-of-the-art track and field. Students can participate in cross country, volleyball, basketball, baseball, track and field, and soccer.

Clubs/Activities

Students may participate in Student Council, Art Club, and the Ski Club. The Student Council exists to promote Christian example and develop leadership potential in our Middle School students.

Annual Serve Day

Every spring, PCS middle and high school students take a full day and serve the community with a missional focus. Small groups of students, teachers, and parents participate in serve day. The groups go out for the day to food banks, public elementary schools, parks, shelters, churches, senior centers, etc. A reflection and sharing of experiences occurs back on campus.

Outdoor School

The sixth-grade students and teachers experience a week (4 days/3nights) of Outdoor School each fall. This is a time for learning in the beauty of God's creation. Educational activities include science, math, history, art, and language. There are opportunities for numerous recreational activities as well as each afternoon. Campfires, skits, music, and special guest speakers are enjoyed in the evenings. PCS provides cabin accommodations and meals for this experience.

Weekly Chapels

Students enjoy a weekly chapel experience where they worship with music and learn about God's love for them. Students are invited to participate in the worship group, singing or playing an instrument, under the direction of a teacher. There are occasional guest speakers (missionaries, youth pastors, community members) who bring a message for chapel. Often a teacher, school leader, or high school student will speak.

After School Tutoring

Students are encouraged to seek additional academic assistance from their teachers each day, 3:30 - 4:00 pm. This time should be planned with the teacher, student, and parent. It is intended for homework, to make up a test, to have a paper reviewed and edited, work on a large project, review vocabulary, get organized, read a book, or to address any other academic needs a student may have. This time can be required by a teacher if a student is falling behind in class.