

**PROFESSIONAL
CHILDREN'S
SCHOOL**

CURRICULUM GUIDE
2025-2026

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SCHOOL MISSION

The Mission of Professional Children's School is to provide a challenging academic education for young people working in or studying for careers in the performing and visual arts, competitive sports and other endeavors; to meet the diverse needs of our students; provide mastery of fundamental skills and prepare them for college or other post-secondary education; to teach young people to balance the demands of their professional, personal and academic lives; to provide support for young people who must often contend with the pressures of the adult world in addition to the normal pressures of adolescence; to encourage young people to respect others of diverse ethnic, racial, economic, geographic and artistic backgrounds; to balance their individual needs with the needs of others and to accept responsibility for their decisions; to foster a community in which both academic and artistic pursuits are valued.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

BELIEFS

We believe that education is a lifelong process of primary importance, irrespective of one's professional pursuits. Education is not only an intellectual endeavor, but one that encompasses artistic, emotional, spiritual and physical growth as well. A good school encourages critical thinking, aesthetic appreciation, formation of values, and sound health and fitness, while also fostering intellectual curiosity, initiative and creativity in all areas of life.

We believe that, although students have different abilities, aptitudes and talents, all children want to learn and are capable of learning. Each student should be encouraged to achieve his or her full potential. An effective school must provide a challenging and supportive learning environment, in which students learn from and provide an educational stimulus for one another. In order to nurture their growth as thinkers, as artists and as citizens, students should be provided with a wide range of courses that meet their educational needs and interests.

We believe that our school functions as part of a larger society. Students should see themselves not only as members of academic and artistic communities, but as members of New York City, the nation and the world. A meaningful education should prepare students to meet the challenges of these ever-changing communities, in an atmosphere that encourages awareness and appreciation of diversity. As a school, we have the responsibility to enable students to make informed choices and to adapt themselves to personal and social changes throughout their lives.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

Professional Children's School is committed to developing a community where all of its members feel safe, supported and celebrated, and share a common responsibility to cultivate the same in others. We aim to be a place that embraces diversity in its multiple forms, actively confronts prejudice and bias, and does not shy away from difficult conversations. Given that the journey towards equity and justice is ongoing and evolving, so too must our academic offerings and social interactions remain open to revision, as we strive to become responsible world citizens.

INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE AND HATE SPEECH STATEMENT

Professional Children's School is committed to fostering and maintaining a climate of inclusion and belonging within our community. Acknowledging that language is one of the most penetrating means for invoking a feeling of welcome or exclusion for both individuals and groups, it is of paramount importance that words and expressions created with the intention of delivering harm to or diminishing the spirit or worthiness of another person or group are not condoned or permitted in our space. This includes, but is not limited to, terms that have been historically used to target individuals based on race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. While some of these words may appear in historical documents or source material for use in classes, they will not be permitted to be used verbally or in writing in our academic, common, or public spaces, by students, faculty, staff, administrators, or visitors to our school. Whenever possible, when these words appear in class materials, teachers and other adults will inform students in advance. Instances of the use of such language will be addressed as deemed appropriate by school leadership in consultation with the Faculty and Staff Diversity and Equity Committee.

LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT

The Professional Children's School library program aims to assist students in developing a thoughtful and critical approach to books, media, and digital resources that can serve them in many aspects of their lives. We strive to provide students, staff, and faculty with a broad selection of educational materials on all levels in a variety of different formats, with diverse appeal allowing for the representation of many points of view. The library's mission is to teach library, research, and

media literacy skills so that students can successfully analyze, organize and interpret information while also developing a lifelong love and appreciation for learning and literature.

TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

PCS aspires to be a school whose program enables students to learn in part through the online exchange of ideas, content and instructions. This opportunity offers an enhanced classroom-centered experience as well as an element of student control over time, place path, and/or pace of learning. This ensures our students' ability to pursue professional and pre-professional endeavors that remove them from the physical classroom and to continue to learn while they are away without losing connection to the teacher, the students, or the coursework.

PHILOSOPHY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

At Professional Children's School, we believe that academic integrity is a critical element of a healthy and well-functioning community. We strive to instill these values in our students in all areas of school life. Academic integrity holds that all work must be one's own or attributed to the source from which it came. This belief is central to the academic philosophy at PCS. Specific standards of academic integrity are defined by the school and facilitated by each department, and will be explained to the students at the beginning of the year as well as throughout the year.

One aspect of academic integrity is academic honesty, which students both in and out of the classroom must uphold.

Students demonstrate academic honesty by:

- Completing one's own work
- Performing one's responsibilities during collaborative activities
- Citing words, ideas, images, and artistic expressions of others and AI applications
- Seeking appropriate levels of help from others, both in school and at home
- Respecting the learning environment by not sharing one's work with others for copying purposes.

Students may use AI tools, if approved by a teacher, in the following ways:

- To aid in jump-starting the research process
- To critically think about content
- To generate ideas or brainstorm for the beginning stages of a project or lab

- For additional practice of concepts covered in class
- To explore models for the understanding of content

Acting with academic integrity means avoiding cheating and plagiarism. Cheating is the obtaining of content and ideas by dishonest or deceptive means. Plagiarism is the undocumented or unacknowledged use of material that is not one's own. Plagiarism can occur through the general or specific use of quotations, ideas, or concepts when taken from, but not attributed to, another source.

Signs that may indicate a violation of our Academic Integrity policy:

- A student is incapable of reconstructing a main argument/thesis or supporting ideas used in a written assignment or steps in a mathematical process
- A student is unable to recreate fundamental syntax, vocabulary, and sentence structure used in a paper
- A student is unable to reconstruct the research process (i.e. not able to explain how they did the work or where they got the ideas)
- A tremendous contrast between in-class work and take-home assignments
- Informal collaboration resulting in identical or near identical assignments among students
- Highlighted examples of plagiarism or missing citations from plagiarism and AI detectors

Students may not use AI tools in the following ways:

- To cut and paste a summary of work
- As a cited source
- As a replacement for individual work
- As a translator or thesaurus, unless explicitly permitted
- To fulfill skill sets that students are expected to master

These standards apply whether students are learning in-person, on Guided Study, or taking a course through the PCS Summer Academy.

UPPER SCHOOL

Violations of academic integrity in the Upper School will initiate a restorative process that is grounded in learning and includes the tiered approach outlined below. Incidents accumulate over time and do not reset at the beginning of each school year.

Incident 1: The student will first meet with the teacher and then the Head of Upper School to review the issue and ensure that there is clarity about the learning expectations. The student's parents will be informed. The student will redo the assignment with no penalty. A note will be made in the student's file.

Incident 2: The student will first meet with the teacher and then the Head of Upper School to review the issue. The student's parents will be informed and may be called in for a meeting. The student will redo the assignment to demonstrate understanding of the misstep, and there will be a grade penalty determined by the teacher and the Division Head. Consequences will be reviewed, including that a third incident will result in a suspension that will be reported to colleges. A note will be made in the student's file.

Incident 3: The student will first meet with the teacher and then the Head of Upper School to review the issue. An additional meeting will be held with the student, their parents/guardians, the Head of Upper School and the Head of School. The student will be suspended - a consequence that will be reported by both PCS and the student in the college process - and will be informed that another infraction will result in expulsion. During the suspension, the student will be required to redo the assignment with a penalty decided upon by the teacher, which could include no credit at all. A note will be made in the student's file.

Incident 4: The student will first meet with the teacher and then the Head of Upper School to review the issue. An additional meeting will be held with the student, their parents/guardians, the Head of Upper School and the Head of School. The student will be expelled.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

We believe that all Middle School students can learn and be successful with the proper guidance and the opportunity to practice a growth mindset. We encourage students to find their own voice in their learning across the grades. Our Policy on Academic Integrity provides a framework for students to follow with respect to their academic work, whether that be when collaborating with others or when completing work on their own.

Class time and Advisory is used to review our Policy and to discuss what academic integrity looks like both in and out of the classroom with respect to cheating and plagiarism. Educators will provide guidance and support in helping students meet these expectations.

Taking responsibility for one's actions is also an important life skill that we value in our Middle School. If a student does not adhere to our Policy, a teacher will make it a point to speak with the student using the meeting as a teaching moment.

If the issue continues, consequences may include:

- A meeting with the teacher, student and Division Head
- A meeting with the Division Head and the Parent
- A lowering of the grade or receiving a zero for the assignment/assessment
- An alternative assignment or recompletion of the original assignment

Repeated and deliberate cheating or plagiarism is taken very seriously and will be noted in a student's report card comment.

MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS (Grades 4-8)

The following list of courses describes our Middle School offerings for the 2025-2026 school year. Our program is geared specifically toward Middle School-age students with a developmentally appropriate sequence of classes that aid in progressing from concrete thinking to abstract learning. World Language learning begins in 7th grade. Middle School students may enroll in either Spanish or French and earn HS credit.

The curriculum described below, along with classwork, independent projects, and homework, provides students with a variety of opportunities to grow and develop as thinkers. This includes the expectation of up to one and a half hours of homework each evening in order to reinforce the learning that takes place in the classroom.

The development of skills is primary in Middle School. Higher-order learning skills such as goal setting, decision making, organization, problem-solving, and self-monitoring are areas addressed in all classes and reinforced in Study Skills, Library Skills, Health, Research Skills, and in our Advisory Program. Middle School students are assigned an advisor who will meet with them on a weekly basis during our Advisory period and as needed.

HUMANITIES

ENGLISH 4/5

The English curriculum is dedicated to fostering passion for reading and writing by increasing reading fluency and comprehension skills. Through a carefully curated selection of texts used in literature circles, read-alouds, as well as the promotion of independent reading, students will be exposed to authors and characters from all manner of cultures, genders, developmental variations, and time periods. All lessons are structured to take advantage of the diverse interests and learning styles of our students, providing both support and enrichment as needed.

Students will focus on key writing goals as we work on writing skills, including understanding different text types, producing clear writing, and conducting research. They learn to tailor their writing for various audiences and purposes, planning, revising, and editing their work with support. Students will also engage in different writing tasks, such as opinion, explanatory, and narrative pieces, incorporating introductions, supporting details, and conclusions. Grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling are taught through Language Lab and classroom activities, with expectations varying by grade and mastery.. As students grow as writers, they will advance their understanding of grammar, improve summarizing and paraphrasing abilities, and work on longer writing assignments.

Throughout the course, students will encounter examples of dilemmas within our texts related to bullying, social injustice, and ethics, and will relate such problems to their experiences and the world at large. By observing acts of kindness, integrity, and activism demonstrated by characters, as well as related nonfiction examples, the class will find inspiration for their own writing and projects that advocate for causes important to them. Additionally, elements of the RULER curriculum for social-emotional learning will be integrated into the course's literary analysis. Students will use the mood meter and other tools to spark empathy and understanding of character motivation, as well as to inform their creative writing and enhance their personal lives.

Possible texts:

Wonder by R.J. Palacio

Fish in a Tree by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Shakespeare Stealer by Gary Blackwood

Murdle/Murdle Jr. by G.T. Karber

Chris Grabenstein Presents: Super Puzzletastic Mysteries

The Thieves of Ostia by Caroline Lawrence

Keepers of the School by Andrew Clements

A variety of poetry, including sonnets, limericks, and free verse.

LANGUAGE LAB 4/5

Language Lab meets for three periods a week, but can also be taken on Resident Guided Study if approved by the Division Head. Students are instructed in the grammar, vocabulary, and spelling content necessary to meet and surpass the academic standards for their respective grade. With the assistance of the online program No Red Ink, course content includes the identification and fixing of both run-ons and sentence fragments, the ability to write component and compound sentences, and subject-verb agreement in the present, future, past, and perfect tenses.

The goal of Language Lab is to provide the class with consistent and targeted instruction while also exposing them to the belief that the learning of new words and grammatical principles can be fun. Going together with English's Spring into Shakespeare unit, the course explores the many different words attributed to William Shakespeare while giving students the opportunity to create his or her own. We will also see how learning the rules of grammar and syntax can lead to knowing when to "break" them for the purposes of both poetry, realistic dialogue, and humorous prose.

Language Lab has weekly quizzes, alternating between grammar and spelling. These provide insight as to where each student's strengths and challenges currently lie. Each child receives his or her own unique word list for spelling assessments, combining words from their own writing, jargon from other courses, and essential words from our *Wordly Wise* textbook. Cursive handwriting is also taught in Language Lab throughout the year. Not only is acquisition of such a skill beneficial in and of itself, but improved physical writing benefits students in other subjects by increasing the speed and proficiency of their journaling, freehand, and notetaking skills.

WRITING WORKSHOP 4/5

This course meets two times per week and is designed to nurture and develop each student's imagination and creative drive while focusing on the development of strong writing habits. Work will include short journaling prompts and lessons on using a writer's notebook as students begin to "look at life as a writer." Once students generate several pieces of self-selected content, the class introduces the concepts of revision and publishing. Having a clear delineation between writing made for fun and that to share with an outside audience gives students a level of buy-in to the editorial process that is often not possible in assigned topics or essays.

While freewriting remains the core of Writer's Workshop throughout the year, the class will pause several times a year to investigate different media and genres of interest to students. Of particular importance is the memoir project, where our community's bonds can grow through sharing

more about each other. Other units may include, but are not limited to, instructional essays, poetry, newspaper-style reporting, comics, and realistic fiction.

Students further develop their identities and increase their self-esteem by being allowed to think about what is most important to them and how they can eloquently share it with their friends, community, and beyond. All the while, the quality of their work rises to meet grade-level expectations through a combination of high production quantity and numerous craft and grammar lessons from proven programs.

SOCIAL STUDIES 4/5

Understanding our nations' origins, geography and development of our democracy is the focus of the 4/5 curriculum. European exploration and colonization laid the groundwork for the United States, shaping its initial geographic boundaries, political structures, and cultural foundations. The curriculum highlights the motivations and challenges faced by early explorers and settlers, revealing the forces that drove them to embark on dangerous journeys and establish new communities as well as demonstrates the power of curiosity, teamwork, innovation, and resilience in pushing boundaries and pursuing knowledge. At the same time it recognizes the profound impact on indigenous populations as Europeans explored and colonized this nation. Students will study both the Haudenosaunee and Algonquin people as examples, at the same time focus on the geography of New York and how it has shaped the history and cultures that have lived there. As the year progresses, students will explore the contributions of diverse cultures, groups and key figures to the development of our country from immigration, to slavery to the suffrage movement. Looking at our past through the lens of activism teaches students that they themselves can become the agents of change they want to see in their community and beyond.

Writing is an integral component within the curriculum and will focus on the wealth of content knowledge offered by the class. Students will write and revise a multitude of essays, persuasive pieces, and creative project writing entries while also having several written assessments throughout the year.

Using primary and secondary sources, students will be prepared to tackle the increasingly challenging conceptual and societal dilemmas introduced as the curriculum progresses. In addition to online resources, interactive simulations and other digital tools to enhance their learning.

ENL HUMANITIES I & II (GRADES 6-12)

ENL I and ENL II are a two-course continuum that build the skills, concepts, vocabulary, and cultural literacies that enable students to develop and strengthen their English proficiency through the four domains of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students explicitly

practice the receptive and productive language skills they need to succeed in academic settings, their professions, and in their daily lives. Vocabulary and grammar are embedded into every learning experience and explicitly practiced through a variety of face to face and online resources.

ENL I is designed for students to gain basic proficiency and confidence in each of the four language domains, building vocabulary and academic language skills that will enable them to engage in other PCS classes. The Humanities component of the course, students will strengthen their skills in historical reading, writing and analysis through World Geography, US History and current events reading. Assessments include goal-setting activities to develop metacognitive and metalinguistic skills, performing learning tasks in the classroom, group presentations, student review of their own work in groups and personal reflections, public learning projects that make learning artifacts public to the school community, quizzes, and unit tests.

ENL II is designed to build upon the skills introduced in ENL I, with continued engagement with challenging texts and provide opportunities for advanced language skill development. ENL II will prepare students for the ENL Exit Exam which will assess their readiness for mainstream Humanities classes. Formative assessments are embedded within each learning activity. Summative assessments such as Socratic discussion, research papers, interviews and presentations, and reflective thinking demonstrate learning, as do quizzes and tests.

Along with their peers, all ENL students engage in rich, deep explorations of global literature throughout the year, deepening their connection to reading and storytelling. There are multiple opportunities to write in a variety of genres, and each student receives writing support for their other classes. Units of study are inquiry-based through the lenses of language, identity, and community. Recent learning experiences have included research projects on composers and world religions, interviews and oral histories of PCS community members, co-leading the entire PCS community in a Lunar New Year assembly and school celebration, and crafting expository essays. Each learning experience embraces the cultures and traditions of our diverse students and their goal is to be culturally responsive, seeing each student holds a vast repository of assets that enrich the class and the PCS community.

Possible Texts:

The Giver, Lois Lowry

When Stars Are Scattered, Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed

Animal Farm, George Orwell

When Marian Sang, Brian Selznick and Pam Muñoz Ryan

Global short stories, poetry, essays

HUMANITIES 6/7

This two-year interdisciplinary Humanities course weaves together English and Social Studies, focusing on the core themes of empathy, citizenship, and social change. Through literature, historical readings, and engaging activities, students explore World Geography and World Civilizations, developing a deeper understanding of human experiences across time and place.

In the first year, students examine the regions of the world through the lens of geography. They build their "geographer's toolbox" with essential geographic thinking and map skills. As they investigate Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, South America, Southwest Asia, and North Africa, students analyze how geography influences history, urbanization, politics, religion, and economics, laying the foundation for global awareness and civic engagement.

In the second year, students dive into the ancient civilizations and mythologies of Europe, Japan, China, Africa, and the Americas. They explore how stories, archetypes, and belief systems reflect cultural values and legacies. Through myths, legends, historical texts, and artifacts, students analyze gods and goddesses, cultural traditions, and the enduring impact of ancient narratives. Literature connected to mythology and history deepens their literary analysis and reinforces historical understanding.

Writing is integrated into the curriculum, focusing on crafting introductory paragraphs with clear topic sentences, developing strong thesis statements, and writing detailed body paragraphs with varied vocabulary and proper grammar. By the end of 7th grade, students will have learned to write strong multi-paragraph essays.

The curriculum remains story-centered and inquiry-driven, engaging students with diverse voices and perspectives from the past and present. By examining themes of justice, power, and legacy, students are encouraged to think critically about the world and recognize the roles individuals and cultures play in shaping it. This Humanities course ultimately empowers students to become empathetic, informed citizens capable of contributing to meaningful social change.

Possible Texts:

The Odyssey Graphic Novel

Percy Jackson: The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan- Greek mythology

Akata Witch by Nnedi Okorafor-- West African mythology

The Dark is Rising by Susan Cooper-- Norse and Celtic mythology

Race to the Sun by Rebecca Roanhorse- Diné [Navajo] Mythology
A Midsummer Night's Dream, William Shakespeare
19th and 20th-century world poetry

Textbooks:

National Geographic: *World Cultures and Geography*
National Geographic: *Work History Great Civilizations*

HUMANITIES 8

The 8th-grade Humanities curriculum integrates English Language Arts and United States History to help students become thoughtful readers, critical thinkers, skilled writers, and engaged citizens. Students explore their role in shaping the world through diverse texts and pivotal historical events with a thematic focus on identity, belonging, and American democracy.

In Social Studies, students examine U.S. history from the era of sectionalism through the end of the 20th century, including the Civil War, Reconstruction, westward expansion, Indigenous Peoples' Removal, industrialization, the World Wars, the Great Depression, and the Civil Rights Movement. They grapple with the complex issues that shaped the nation and continue to impact it today. Students develop a nuanced understanding of how the past informs the present by centering marginalized voices and analyzing primary and secondary sources.

In English, students read novels, poetry, short stories, plays, and nonfiction that complement historical themes such as justice, identity, resistance, and resilience. Literature selections deepen their understanding of history while building key literacy skills, including literary analysis, argument writing, and figurative language. Grammar and vocabulary are integrated into each unit, supported by NoRedInk.

Possible Texts:

Red Badge of Courage, Stephen Crane
To Kill a Mockingbird, Harper Lee
Countdown, Deborah Wiles
1984, George Orwell
Julius Caesar, William Shakespeare
Nothing But the Truth, Avi

Textbook:

National Geographic: *American Stories*
Vocabulary from Classical Roots Series

WRITING WORKSHOP 6/7 (2 times a week)

This course is centered on the improvement of voice, craft, and mechanics. Students will create a writing portfolio highlighting their individual and unique expression of background, self, and multiplicity of identities. Each portfolio will be a collection of various writing genres, including short stories, memoirs, argumentative essays, responses to literature, and quick-writes. One day per week will be dedicated to teaching, and another to the students taking concentrated time to write, while the teacher circulates to workshop and offer feedback. Group instruction will be centered on examining mentor texts for inspiration and to serve as exemplars, reading texts that we will cite from and texts that we will respond to. Instruction will also be dedicated to developing writerly skills, such as varying our vocabulary, avoiding generalities, employing sensory details, crafting solid introductions and conclusions, correcting sentence fragments, and reducing run-on sentences. Students will learn to peer- and self-edit.

Lessons will be supported through *Grammar for Writing*, *Writing Revolution* (the Hochman method), and *Worldly Wise*, all of which will target spelling, punctuation, syntax, and vocabulary building. The skills targeted throughout the year will allow students to move on to high school with a body of knowledge pertaining to written self-expression and the ability to convey ideas in a thoughtful, expansive, and polished way. Grades will be focused on production rather than skill, with the expectation that students work both in and out of the classroom to write, edit, and implement teacher feedback.

MATHEMATICS

Our Middle School Math teachers believe in a can-do attitude. They encourage students to approach challenges with confidence and resilience. This mindset fosters a positive learning environment where mistakes are viewed as opportunities for growth and not moments of failure. By believing in their abilities and embracing challenges, students can develop a strong mathematical foundation and the skills necessary for future success.

The Math Department maintains its practice of conducting math placement exams for all incoming Middle School students. The aim is to appropriately place students in classes that challenge our students while also supporting their academic needs. In some instances, students may enroll in Upper School Math courses and receive high school credit that will be noted on their transcript if requirements are met.

MATH 4

Our 4th-grade math curriculum focuses on developing an understanding of whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and geometry. Key topics include operations with multi-digit numbers, adding and subtracting fractions with unlike denominators, multiplying and dividing fractions, working with decimals, the power of 10 and understanding volume, the coordinate plane, triangles and quadrilaterals.

The curriculum emphasizes real-world problem solving, data investigation, and graphing. It also highlights key mathematical practices such as reasoning, modeling, and developing what we call "math talk," which is the ability to explain mathematical thinking clearly.

For each lesson, a variety of manipulatives, activities, games, and investigations are introduced to make learning math fun and meaningful.

MATH 5/CONCEPTS OF MATH

This is a foundational course that uses both traditional and applied mathematics to strengthening students' skills in multiplication, division, fractions, decimals, recognizing patterns and understanding basic geometry while at the same time introducing several new concepts to prepare students to tackle math from an algebraic perspective. One of the primary goals for this course is for students to become mathematical thinkers and not just rote-learners. The curriculum emphasizes real-world problem solving, data investigation, and graphing. It also highlights key mathematical practices such as reasoning, modeling, and developing what we call "math talk," which is the ability to explain mathematical thinking clearly.

For each lesson, a variety of manipulatives, activities, games, and investigations are introduced to make learning math fun and meaningful.

PRE-ALGEBRA

This course bridges elementary mathematics and Algebra I by strengthening foundational skills while fostering critical thinking, mathematical reasoning, and a growth mindset. Rooted in the core principles of numerical fluency, algebraic thinking, proportional reasoning, and problem-solving, the course explores key concepts such as integers, fractions, decimals, ratios, rates, expressions, equations, and introductory geometry and statistics. Centered on big picture questions like "How can we use math to solve real-world problems?", the course promotes critical thinking, problem-solving, and algebraic reasoning. Aligned with a social-emotional learning framework, students build confidence, practice collaboration, and develop resilience through group work, mathematical discourse, and supportive classroom routines that celebrate diverse strategies and encourage risk-taking. The

Pre-Algebra course integrates hands-on learning, cooperative group activities, and technology to create an engaging and interactive environment.

Assessment in Pre-Algebra goes beyond traditional quizzes and tests to include interactive projects and hands-on activities that enhance engagement and understanding. Projects include a Halloween-themed one-step equations coloring activity, a two-step equation story poster project, a Tic-Tac-Toe challenge offering creative options to show mastery, and a Lemonade Stand project to explore ratios and unit rates. These experiences help students apply learning in meaningful, collaborative ways, while frequent reflection and discussion build both mathematical skills and self-confidence. The course prepares students for Algebra I and fosters a genuine appreciation for math as a relevant, creative, and powerful problem-solving tool.

Text: Pre-Algebra and Pre-Algebra Workbook (McDougal Littell)

ALGEBRA I

HS credited course: 1 credit

Algebra I is a foundational course designed to deepen students' understanding of mathematical relationships and prepare them for more advanced math and science coursework. Grounded in key principles such as patterns and functions, algebraic reasoning, and real-world problem solving, students explore linear equations and inequalities, systems of equations, polynomials, factoring, quadratics, and data analysis. Big-picture questions like "How can algebra model real-life situations?" and "What do mathematical patterns tell us about the world?" guide exploration and discussion. The course integrates social-emotional learning by fostering collaboration, perseverance, and reflective thinking, technology integration while encouraging students to take risks, learn from mistakes, and support one another in a respectful, inclusive learning environment through inquiry-based tasks.

Assessment extends beyond traditional quizzes and tests to include hands-on projects and interactive activities that increase engagement and real-world application. These include a Scavenger Hunt Project where students classify real numbers using clippings from magazines and newspapers, a Probability Lab involving experiments like coin flips and dice rolls to contrast theoretical and experimental outcomes, a Calendar Project in which students generate equations tied to calendar dates, and a Food Truck Project that applies linear systems to practical business scenarios. These experiences support creative thinking, collaboration, and diverse demonstrations of mastery. Ultimately, this course equips students not only with essential mathematical skills but also with the strategies and mindset needed to face complex challenges with curiosity and perseverance.

Students who receive a grade of C- or higher will receive Upper School credit and be eligible to take Geometry.

A TI-84 graphing calculator is required for this course.

Text: Algebra I and Algebra I Workbook (Bellman, Bragg, Charles, et al.)

GEOMETRY

HS credited course: 1 credit

Prerequisite: Algebra I

The Geometry course builds on Algebra I and develops students' understanding of shapes, space, and logical reasoning. Through the study of congruence, similarity, transformations, coordinate geometry, proofs, and basic trigonometry, students strengthen problem-solving and critical thinking skills. The course emphasizes clear mathematical communication, respect for diverse problem-solving approaches, and perseverance in tackling challenging tasks. Students collaborate in groups, use technology such as calculators and computer programs, and make real-world and cross-disciplinary connections to art, science, and engineering. Cultural contributions to geometry are also explored, promoting equity and global awareness in STEM. Preparation for the SAT is integrated throughout.

Text: *Geometry and Geometry: Practice Workbook with Examples* by McDougal Littell.

PERFORMING & VISUAL ARTS

ART 4/5/6

This course meets students where they are and supports them in their development by offering hands-on art projects that center observation, imagination, and invention. These elements are inherent in both the making of artworks and in the collecting and generating of ideas.

Experimentation and play facilitate invention of solutions to design problems. At the beginning of each art project, students are encouraged to experiment with art materials and then learn to control them. Subject matters of art projects include neighborhood scenes, cityscapes, landscapes, portraits, animals, and still-life objects. Following these topics, students record and interpret imagery via drawing, painting, and collage. The construction of realistic and inventive objects is taught with materials such as clay and papier-mâché.

With each art project, artists and art practices of different backgrounds are shared with students to initiate opportunities for them to interpret and analyze art. This component teaches them to apply their vocabulary of

art, share ideas, and build on each other's observations, resulting in inspirations for students to create art in new and unique ways.

Through the course of the three-year sequence, our students will be able to draw from observation, understand how to work with paint, and create complete images and forms, which train their motor skills and stimulate their imaginative capacity.

ART 7/8

Art 7/8 meets students where they are and supports them in their development by offering hands-on art projects that center observation, personal expression, innovation, and meaningful making of art.

With each art project, students use their observations as a point of reference and point of departure in helping them shape their artwork ideas. Each art project provides space for students to express their inner world and construct meanings through purposeful design and use of media. Experimentation with art materials further stimulates students' unique expressions. Mediums include drawing, painting, collage, printmaking, sculpture, and digital media. Opportunities for collaborative projects are considered as seen fit. Students develop habits of planning and revising work based on real-time experience and relevant criteria.

Artists and art practices of different backgrounds are regularly shared with students to initiate opportunities for them to interpret and analyze art. This component also teaches them to apply their vocabulary of art, share ideas, and build on each other's observations, resulting in inspirations for students to create art in new and unique ways.

Through the course of the two-year sequence, our students will be able to grow in their ability to draw and paint from observation, and apply their understanding of colors, forms, and space with conceptual intention. With their growth in technical skills and sustained practice of imagination and personal expression, students will be able to create visually clear and compelling artistic works.

MS DRAMA

The drama classes at the Middle School level are designed to give students experience with and knowledge of working as an ensemble, engaging their instincts and making believable acting choices. This is achieved through the use of "theater games" that focus on movement, dialogue, rhythm, concentration, and many other elements of the theater. Later in the year, students present a project either in the form of scene work or in the presentation of a play or musical production.

MS MUSIC

The MS Music program will focus on a variety of topics including music history/listening, singing in an ensemble, and performance techniques. Opportunities for instrumentalists to collaborate within the ensemble will also be incorporated based on student needs. Students will learn skills on how to listen to various music and styles from around the world (both traditional and contemporary) as well as beginning music history, ear training, and musicianship. They will also learn how to give presentations and speak in a public setting. Students will perform in a choral ensemble at the school music assemblies and will have opportunities to perform in the MS Musical in late spring. My passion is in singing and chorus techniques, and we believe that all students will learn and benefit from singing with others, making music and sharing in community.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SCIENCE 4-6

This course introduces students to the principles of engineering, robotics, and physics beyond rote memorization of facts and empowers them to become active learners, problem-solvers, and innovators, fostering their curiosity and sense of wonder. Students use their mathematical abilities, their logical thinking, and their creative problem-solving skills to build their conceptual and analytical abilities through the study of key physics principles of motion, forces, energy, electricity, and magnetism. They also learn to manage projects and work in a team. Students find innovative solutions to problems posed and collaborate with their science peers to brainstorm solutions, evaluate the effectiveness of their designs, and present their findings. LEGO EDUCATION serves as the catalyst for the project-based learning curriculum, as well as teacher-created projects that involve design and construction. The curriculum is designed to promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration in students. We want to inspire the next generation of STEM learners and creators.

SCIENCE 7

This course focuses on several different approaches to learning, which include integrating and connecting different areas in science but the main idea of common ancestry is highlighted throughout the curriculum and serves as the underlying theme. Students begin with an introduction to the world of science where students are taught to approach science as more than a subject, but as a way of thinking. The course begins with a review of the scientific method and exercises demonstrating the importance of observational skills in science. Students will then explore the world of monerans, protists, invertebrates and vertebrates. The second part of the year is devoted to primate and human evolution. Each lesson, activity, lab and project is designed for students to observe, classify, communicate, measure, infer and predict. During lab time,

students learn to conduct experiments, write lab reports and evaluate results.

SCIENCE 8

The eighth grade science course introduces students to the fields of chemistry and human biology. Concepts related to the properties of matter, atomic structure, chemical interactions, and the understanding of how solutions form will be covered in the first semester. Human anatomy and physiology will be covered in the second semester. Through daily instruction, demonstrations, and lab work, students will learn to integrate key concepts with current scientific discoveries, to use evidence to describe, predict, explain and model, and to manipulate materials while conducting labs. At the end of the year, students will conduct a research project showing their ability to use everything they have learned to plan, execute, analyze, and explain a scientific experiment of their own.

WORLD LANGUAGES (GRADES 7-8)

In the World Languages program, we enjoy our role as purveyor of other cultures and languages. Our goals are to teach students to communicate in another language, learn about and appreciate other cultures, acquire information and connect with other disciplines, and thus develop insight into their own language and culture.

Middle School students, depending on their previous language learning, can enroll in levels I or II of either French or Spanish. Our language courses are Upper School credited courses. Therefore, students will receive High School credit upon satisfactory completion of each course. Typically, a World Language course will be composed of Middle and Upper school students. Two consecutive years/levels of the same language are required for Upper School Graduation; three years establishes a sequence. Middle School students new to Professional Children's School who have already taken Spanish or French will be required to take a placement examination to determine their course level. Returning students who receive a grade of 73 or better may proceed to the next level of the language they are studying.

FRENCH I

Full year, 1 credit

Language learning beginners are welcome in this introductory course. Students will begin to explore the French-speaking world and to master reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in French.

We use the textbook "D'accord!" Level, which includes an online edition in which students can complete homework, listen to audio exercises, read articles, and view videos. Our themes include the vocabulary and grammar around school life, family and friends, dining out, leisure time

and celebrations, weather and seasons, and hobbies and pastimes.

To support these themes, we will read real-world articles, view videos of native speakers giving interviews/guiding viewers in francophone locations, listen to pop music, read children's books, and follow news in the French-speaking world. Speaking is reinforced with simple games and more involved projects, which allow students to demonstrate their inquiry and communication skills. Historically, these projects have included a slideshow presentation about friends and family, dessert making, memorizing, and performing short texts. Past field trips have brought students to view French films, theater, and art exhibitions. Assessments test vocabulary, grammar, reading, and listening skills.

The primary goal in the French department is real-life communication. We believe that speaking a new language provides a path to being a global citizen. Moreover, we believe that language learning promotes empathy for English language learners, and humility and courage within students of French, as they overcome the challenges of speaking their non-native language. Above all, we strive to find a path for student success, whether via their reading, writing, listening, or speaking skills.

Text: D'accord 1! (5th ed.), Vista Higher Learning Workbook

FRENCH II

Full year, 1 credit

In French II, communication and comprehension skills continue to be the major goals through vocabulary building activities and the acquisition of new grammar structures and tenses. In addition to strengthening their listening, reading, speaking and writing skills, students also broaden their cultural knowledge through stories, music, Internet activities and films.

As in French I, we use the textbook "D'accord!" Level 1 which includes an online edition in which students can complete homework, listen to audio exercises, read articles, and view videos. Themes include the home, clothing and shopping, vacations and travel, and food and dining.

To support these themes, we will read real-world articles, view videos of native speakers giving interviews/guiding viewers in francophone locations, listen to pop music, read children's books, and follow news in the French-speaking world. Speaking is reinforced with simple games and more-involved projects, which allow students to demonstrate their inquiry and communication skills. Historically, these projects have included interviews, dessert making, slideshow presentations about travel, and storytelling to practice tenses. Past field trips have brought students to view French films, theater, and art exhibitions. Assessments test vocabulary, grammar, reading, and listening skills.

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Text: D'accord 1! (5th ed.), Vista Higher Learning Workbook
D'accord 2! (5th ed.) Vista Higher Learning Workbook

SPANISH I

Full year, 1 credit

Spanish I introduces students to the basics of Spanish through listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Learners explore everyday topics—such as greetings, personal introductions, family, hobbies, numbers, and school life—while developing grammar skills to form simple sentences and questions using present-tense verbs. A blend of traditional assessment and project-based learning allows students to demonstrate knowledge in varied and meaningful ways. By the end of Spanish I, students will be able to communicate at an introductory level with their teacher and peers in Spanish, as well as write short compositions about themselves and familiar topics using learned vocabulary and grammatical structures. The course emphasizes playful identity exploration, empathy, and intercultural understanding. Students engage with diverse Spanish-speaking cultures through reading cultural articles and carrying out creative culturally based projects based on their own interests. Along the way, they develop deep listening skills, and an appreciation for the challenges of learning a new language.

Instructional Materials: *Vistas* (6th Edition) Textbook and Supersite.

SPANISH II

Full year, 1 credit

Spanish II builds on foundational skills as students grow into more confident communicators. Learners engage with intermediate-level Spanish through listening, speaking, reading, and writing, exploring everyday themes like travel, shopping, daily routines, dining out, and celebrations. Grammar instruction includes the present and preterite tenses (regular and irregular), the comparative and superlative, as well as direct object pronouns. Students write short compositions on personal and cultural topics and participate in conversations that reflect real-life scenarios in the target language. A blend of traditional assessment and project-based learning allows students to demonstrate knowledge in varied and meaningful ways. This course continues to foster deep listening, identity exploration, and intercultural understanding. Students explore the richness of Spanish-speaking cultures through project-based

learning focused on a variety of cultural traditions. Emphasis is placed on empathy and connection, helping students navigate the challenges of learning a new language while developing a greater appreciation for global voices.

Instructional Materials: *Vistas* (6th Edition) Textbook and Supersite

NON-DEPARTMENT SPECIFIC COURSES

LIBRARY SKILLS 6-8

Your Adventure Starts Here: Library Skills Unleashed!!!! This course is available to students in Grades 6-8 and meets twice a week. The curriculum offers students an opportunity to be creative and foster a love for reading in a fun and interactive way. Students will engage in activities such as scavenger hunts, safaris, escape rooms, author interviews, and digital storytelling. They will also learn about the process of conducting good research and participate in multimedia projects to highlight great books and research finds, utilizing our green screen room whenever possible. Collaboration with classroom teachers will support students as they delve into the world of research and writing. Additionally, we will integrate Drop Everything and Read (D.E.A.R.) into the program whenever possible. During D.E.A.R., everyone—including Division Heads, teachers, and students—will pick up their books and read for a designated amount of time. The guiding principle of our library skills class is centered around the idea that I have yet to discover a book that doesn't open up so many possibilities for learning and getting to know others!!!

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Middle School Physical Education introduces students to proper lifetime fitness skills. Sports fitness and game activities are used to help increase self-esteem as well as social skills. Sportsmanship, solving differences, and building healthy daily relationships are important aspects of the class. Cooperative games help to build peer relationships. These skills are important to develop early on as students become introduced to competitive team situations. The program results in students being well-rounded both physically and emotionally. All students must wear comfortable clothing and appropriate athletic shoes. All Middle School students are required to take Physical Education no matter what their outside activities may be. Students may be exempt from this course upon the approval of the Head of Middle School.

STUDY SKILLS 6-8

In this year long class for Grades 6-8, students will learn essential techniques to enhance their academic performance and manage their time effectively. The course will cover a variety of topics, including organization strategies, note-taking methods, reading and understanding

textbooks and test preparation skills. Students will engage in hands-on activities that promote active learning, such as creating study schedules, using graphic organizers, and practicing mindfulness techniques to reduce stress. Additionally, the class will emphasize the importance of setting goals and developing self-discipline, helping students build a strong foundation for future academic success. By the end of the year, students will feel more confident in their ability to tackle homework, projects, and exams, equipping them with skills that will benefit them throughout their educational journey.

TECHNOLOGY 6/7

In Technology, students explore how technology has evolved with human needs to shape our present reality. Projects and lessons are interdisciplinary, project-based, and hands-on, focusing on design thinking and practical application. Students learn basic computing and networking skills and tools of productivity, communication, collaboration, and creation. The class will discuss topics that include digital copyright, being a good digital citizen, electronics, digital design, and computer programming. While hands-on learning is emphasized throughout, students will exercise critical thinking skills to assess and explain how they interact with technology in their everyday lives.

LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

PCS has a Learning Specialist who is available to work individually with students who need additional support in organization and study skills, reading comprehension, writing skills, or mathematics. Work with this Learning Specialist may be short-term or ongoing, and is available to students regardless of whether or not they have a diagnosed learning disability. If a student has a diagnosed learning disability, the Learning Specialist writes an educational plan which includes the student's strengths and challenges, formal accommodations, and suggestions for teachers working with the student in the classroom. The educational plan is shared with the student's teachers each year. The Learning Specialist is available to parents and teachers who have questions regarding students' academic work and progress. They also consult with the division head and parents/guardians when a psycho-educational evaluation by an outside professional may help a student who is not progressing as expected.

UPPER SCHOOL PROGRAM

OUTLINE OF GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A minimum of eighteen credits are required for graduation. Professional Children's School's curriculum is based on a four-year program, and it is recommended that college-bound students graduate with credits beyond the minimum, especially in sequential courses.

Students generally carry five credits per year. Courses that meet four or five times per week receive one credit per year or one-half credit for semester offerings. Courses that meet less frequently receive less credit.

Credit Requirements

Each student is required to take the following courses:

English	4 credits including Senior English for all. ENL courses can be taken for equivalent credits
History	3½ credits, including U.S. History and U.S. Government. ENL students: 3 credits
World Languages	2 credits; must be taken for two consecutive years/levels; ENL students exempt
Mathematics	2 credits
Science	2 credits
The Arts	1 credit
Health (Grades 9/10)	½ credit
Research & Information Literacy	½ credit online course; recommended to be taken before Senior year
Physical Education	Must be taken each year unless an exemption is granted

Sequence

In addition to the above, students must fulfill a three-year sequence in at least one of the following: World Languages, Mathematics, or Science.

Electives

Once students have completed course requirements, the additional credits required for graduation may be taken from the sequences or in History, English, Math, Science, or the Arts.

Physical Education

All students are required by New York State law to take Physical Education. Physical Education is a PCS graduation requirement and must be taken each year. A student who is regularly enrolled in an instructed physical activity for at least two full hours a week may receive an exemption. Physical education exemption forms are available in the Upper School office. Medical exemptions may only be given with a letter from a physician, and students must attend P.E. classes until an exemption is granted.

Transfer Credit

Transfer credit will be given for courses that are similar to courses offered at Professional Children's School. Credit will only be given for summer school courses if that credit was earned when repeating a failed course or to improve a low passing grade. Credit-bearing PCS Summer Academy courses also earn credit.

For courses transferred to Professional Children's School transcripts, credits and grades are recorded, but these courses are not factored into the Professional Children's School G.P.A. The G.P.A. listed on Professional Children's School transcripts includes only academic courses taken at Professional Children's School.

Summer Academy

The PCS Summer Academy offers online courses designed to provide students with an opportunity to earn credits and/or bolster their skills during the summer months. Students may have weekly scheduled sessions with instructors, along with assigned Q&A appointments by arrangement with the teacher. Some courses also have final exams, which students have to take at school and are scheduled at the end of the summer. Courses vary from year to year; recent offerings include Health, U.S. Government, Conceptual Physics, Creative Writing, and Environmental Science. The summer school courses are intensives: a semester or full year's worth of work is condensed into 9 weeks, so students opting for these courses must have time in their schedules to make this commitment. Summer course offerings are announced in the spring prior to pre-registration.

ADDING AND DROPPING COURSES

Students may add a course up until the first interim reporting date of a marking period.

A student is permitted to drop a class during the first marking period of a semester. This policy applies to one-semester courses (i.e. U.S. Government) and full-year courses (i.e. Calculus and Advanced Physics). If a course is dropped during the first marking period, it will not appear on the student's transcript.

Occasionally there are extenuating circumstances for a student to drop a course, commonly professional or medical. The decision to drop a course after the above-mentioned deadline is at the discretion of the Associate Head of School. If a student drops a course after the end of a marking period, a notation of Withdrawn/Passing or Withdrawn/Failing will be recorded on the transcript.

Students who undergo an educational evaluation midyear and receive the recommendation that they not take a world language may drop the language course once the school receives the evaluation. The course will then be deleted from the transcript.

ACCELERATION

Occasionally there are students who are completing the 10th grade who request permission to combine their Junior/Senior years and graduate one year early. This request may be considered if the 10th grader has at least 12 credits, has a grade point average of at least 3.0, and there is a compelling reason or professional need that would make early graduation advisable. Since competitive colleges and universities generally frown upon early graduation, the following process is in place at PCS.

The parents must write a letter to the Head of Upper School and Head of School requesting permission to combine Junior/Senior years. The specific reason for the request must be clear and compelling.

The parent and student must meet with or speak with the College Counselor in order to understand potential consequences, especially if the student plans on applying to competitive colleges.

The Head of School, Head of Upper School, and College Counselor will review the request and make a decision. They will consider both the academic performance and the maturity of the student in coming to their decision, and the decision is left to their discretion.

If permission is granted for acceleration and the student needs to take a course in summer school after the 10th grade, the course and the curriculum must be approved by the Head of Upper School.

The student must successfully complete the 10th grade before a revised contract is issued to parents, and if a student doubles up on English in

order to graduate early and then elects to remain at PCS for a fourth year, they must take English again the following year. English is required to be taken every year a student is enrolled.

TESTS AND OTHER FORMS OF ASSESSMENTS

While conflicting professional commitments remain the ongoing exception, we expect students to take tests and quizzes as scheduled.

Along with an adult contacting the attendance office to excuse an absence, students must be in contact with each of their teachers, either in person or by email, in order to reschedule an assessment.

Missing a test as scheduled and/or neglecting to contact the teacher after an absence may result in a grade sanction. Specifics of such sanctions are at the discretion of the teacher.

If the Division Head is informed of or notes a pattern of absences or late arrivals on assessment days, a discussion will take place with the student and/or parents.

Midyear and Final Exams

In the Upper School, exams may be given at the end of each semester. Each exam period is preceded by a period of review, and exam schedules are published in advance.

Rather than exams, teachers may choose to create ESLEs (End of the Semester Learning Experiences) in the classroom. Teachers use class time to work on projects, which students share with each other. Deadlines for these projects vary but teachers have been instructed to assign due dates prior to the exam period so that those students who are taking exams have time to study.

Some teachers will continue to teach during review and exam periods but little or no homework will be assigned as students are studying for exams and/or completing ELSE projects.

While we remain supportive and flexible regarding professional commitments, during each exam period, we do our best to have students take their tests according to the exam schedule. It is in the student's best interest to take the exams according to schedule. It is not our practice to reschedule exams except for extraordinary or unavoidable professional commitments, and it is our policy that any student missing an exam due to illness must supply a doctor's note to verify their illness.

Exams must be taken at PCS or under conditions approved by PCS.

Exam Exemptions for 2nd Semester Seniors: All Second Semester Seniors are expected to attend classes through the review period unless otherwise instructed by the subject area teacher. Subject area teachers will make final decisions regarding exemptions from final exams and will inform exempted students during review week.

- A Senior who maintains an average of at least an A for a second-semester course may be exempted by the teacher from taking the final exam. All coursework for the 4th quarter must be completed and submitted before the first day of the review period. Exemptions are not guaranteed and are at the discretion of each teacher.
- Juniors who are taking Senior-level courses may not be exempted from exams.

The privilege is reserved for second-semester Seniors only.

DEPARTMENTAL CREDITS AND POLICIES

Dept. / Course	Credits	Prerequisite(s)	Co-requisite(s)
English	4 credits to graduate		
Where I Come From (9)	½		
Where I'm Going (9)	½		
Power, Responsibility, and Coming of Age (10/11)	½		
The Danger of a Single Story (10/11)	½		
Power, Memory, and Identity in	1		

Modern Literature (12)			
Power and the American Psyche (GS)	1	Advisor recommendation	Grades 10-12 only
ENL Humanities I	2	Faculty recommendation	Possible placement for Seniors new to PCS
ENL Humanities II	2	Faculty recommendation	Possible placement for Seniors new to PCS
Introduction to Literature	1	Faculty recommendation	Possible placement for Seniors new to PCS
History	3½ credits to graduate (ENL: 3 credits)		
World History I	1		
World History II	1		
U.S. Government	½		
U.S. History	1		
Contemporary Global Issues	½		Grade 12 only
Civil Rights and Social Justice in Film	½		Grade 12 only
American Nation	1	Faculty recommendation	Grades 10-12 only

Mathematics	2 credits to graduate, 3 to establish a sequence.	Placement test for all new International students and new students with prior math average of C or below	
Algebra I	1	Pre-Algebra	
Geometry	1	Algebra I (C-)	
Computer Science I	$\frac{1}{2}$	Simultaneous with or after Algebra I/Geometry	
Computer Science II	$\frac{1}{2}$	Computer Science I, minimum grade B- or Algebra I & faculty teacher rec.	
Applications of Math	1	Algebra and Geometry	
Algebra II	1	Algebra I and Geometry (C)	
Pre-Calculus	1	Algebra II (B-)	
Calculus	1	Pre-calculus (B)	
Advanced Calculus	1	Calculus (B+)	
Science	2 credits including one lab science to graduate, 3 to establish a sequence.		
Biology	1		Algebra I

Conceptual Physics	1	Algebra I	
Chemistry	1	Biology and Algebra I	Algebra II
Advanced Physics	1	Physical Science or Conceptual Physics	Pre-Calculus
Environmental Science	1	Algebra I and Geometry	
Advanced Biology	1	Biology	
World Languages	2 credits to graduate, 3 to establish a sequence	Placement test for all students new to PCS	
French I	1		
French II	1	French I (C)	
French III	1	French II (C)	
French IV	1	French III (C)	
French V	1	French IV (C)	
Advanced French	1	French V, faculty recommendation	
Spanish I	1		
Spanish II	1	Spanish I (C)	
Spanish III	1	Spanish II (C)	
Spanish IV	1	Spanish III (C)	
Spanish V	1	Spanish IV (C)	

Advanced Spanish	1	Spanish V, faculty recommendation	
Performing and Visual Arts	1 credit to graduate		
Drama I	½ per semester		Non-guided study; 50% attendance required
Drama II	½ per semester	Drama I or equivalent	Non-guided study; 50% attendance required
Advanced Musical Theater	¼ per semester		Audition required, Non-guided study; 50% attendance required
Music Literacy	½ credit per semester		Non-guided study; 50% attendance required; Spring-only students need placement exam
Poetics of Music	½ credit per semester		Guided Study option available
Visual Art Foundation	¼ per semester		Fall only; Non-guided study; 50% attendance required
Visual Art Structure	¼ per semester		Spring only; Non-guided study; 50%

			attendance required
Studio Art	½ per semester	Visual Art Foundation or Visual Art Structure or equivalent	Non-guided study; 50% attendance required
Art Portfolio Intensive	½ per semester	Grades 10 and up; 2 semesters of Studio Art or equivalent; instructor permission	Non-guided study; 50% attendance required
Introduction to Modernism (Guided Study course)	½ credit per semester	Seniors needing Arts credit	Fall only; Full Guided Study only
Physical Education	Each semester to graduate	All non-exempt students	Non-guided study; 50% attendance required
Health	½ credit to graduate		
Research & Information Literacy	½ credit to graduate		

COURSES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Students identified as possibly needing English language support are assessed upon matriculation through placement testing. The Division Head and English as a New Language teacher then make individualized course recommendations based on the intensive English and academic language development that they need in order to master their academic and artistic disciplines. Students who are in the beginning stages of English language learning will be enrolled in ENL and American Nation, courses which serve as our foundation courses in Humanities.

Whether or not they are in ENL classes, international students enroll in Math, Science, and Physical Education as part of their core curriculum.

They also have the option of studying Music, Drama, or Studio Art and are required to take a Health course before graduation. Students will be administered an assessment in order to place out of our ENL support level classes and be fully mainstreamed. Any student exiting the ENL Program at PCS is required to take only 3 years of history. Former ENL students are encouraged to take U.S. Government but are not required to take it to graduate. Any English Language Learner taking mainstream English by senior year must take Research and Media Literacy to graduate. Students who have been in the ENL Program are welcome to take another world language class but are exempt from this graduation requirement as well.

UPPER SCHOOL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

The following list of courses describes the curriculum for the 2025-2026 school year. Read all course descriptions carefully to learn about the focus and content of each course. Not all courses will be available to all students nor will all courses be offered every year. Please note if the course you wish to take has a prerequisite and/or may be taken only by audition or on the recommendation of the instructor, department, or advisor. Course choices may be limited by your professional schedule and/or by the master schedule.

ENGLISH

The English Department focuses on developing responsive readers and self-directed writers. During four years, students study a wide variety of styles and voices within the Western and non-Western literary traditions, from preliterate narrative through Shakespeare, up to contemporary literature, reflecting the diversity of experiences in American life. Writing assignments range from expository essays and short fiction to research projects in the senior year. Throughout the four years, teachers stress the revision process as well as both the analytic and aesthetic exploration of literature.

Placement of students in English is determined by some or all of the following: a student's academic record, admissions tests, departmental placement test (if required), faculty recommendations, and professional schedule. Four years of English are required for graduation.

WHERE I COME FROM: FAMILY HOME, AND COMMUNITY IN LITERATURE- GRADE 9

Fall, 1/2 credit

"In every conceivable manner, the family is the link to our past, a bridge to our future." – Alex Haley

This one-semester English course invites students to explore the dynamics of family, culture, identity, and home through diverse literary voices and coming-of-age narratives. The curriculum is representational and inclusive, offering stories that reflect a wide range of family structures, traditions, and lived experiences. Rooted in inquiry and self-exploration, the course encourages students to ask meaningful questions about belonging, independence, and personal responsibility, while connecting literature to both timeless human themes and contemporary social issues. Through close reading and textual analysis, students examine how characters navigate societal norms and begin to define their own values—sometimes in alignment with, and sometimes in resistance to, their cultures and families. Writing is central to the course: students engage in all stages of the writing process—outlining, drafting, revising, and editing—to build essential skills in reading, writing, language, and reflection. Assignments include analytical and persuasive essays as well as creative projects in poetry and short fiction. Throughout the course, students are invited to think critically about who they are, where they come from, and how literature can illuminate the journey toward independence and self-discovery.

Possible Texts:

All American Boys, Bradon Kiely and Jason Reynolds

Romeo and Juliet, William Shakespeare

American Born Chinese, Gene Luen Yang

Fangirl, Rainbow Rowell

Various poetry and short stories

Textbooks:

Vocabulary from Classical Roots Series

Online Resources: No RedInk, CommonLit

WHERE I'M GOING: FITTING IN AND FREEDOM - GRADE 9

Spring, 1/2 credit

This one-semester English course explores the dynamics of family, culture, and home through literature, with a particular focus on coming-of-age narratives. Students engage in close reading, textual analysis, and personal reflection to examine how individuals begin to define their own values and identities—sometimes rooted in tradition, and sometimes in resistance to it.

The curriculum is intentionally representational and diverse, offering texts that reflect a wide range of voices, family structures, cultural backgrounds, and lived experiences. Through literature, students will consider how traditions shape identity, how individuals navigate societal expectations, and how personal responsibility evolves during adolescence.

In addition to its thematic focus, the course is designed to spiral and strengthen essential reading, writing, and language skills. Students will participate in all stages of the writing process—outlining, drafting, revising, editing, and reflecting—with consistent opportunities to grow as writers. Assignments include analytical and persuasive essays, as well as creative projects in poetry and short fiction.

Throughout the semester, students will grapple with timeless and contemporary questions: Who am I? Where do I come from? How do I grow into independence? How does literature help us understand ourselves and others? Lessons are inquiry-driven, inviting students to ask meaningful questions about identity, culture, belonging, and resistance

Possible Texts:

The Poet X, Elizabeth Acevedo

Frankly in Love, David Yoon

Counting by 7's, Holly G Sloan

Fan Girl, Rainbow Rowell

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, Mark Haddon

Textbooks:

Vocabulary from Classical Roots Series

Online Resources: No RedInk, CommonLit

POWER, RESPONSIBILITY AND COMING OF AGE - GRADES 10/11

Fall, ½ credit

What does it mean to come of age? What obligations do your parents owe you and what do you owe them? What if parents disappear, disown, or are absent? Through the genre of Science Fiction, English 10/11 students explore short stories, poetry, news articles, and novels that evoke these questions that have animated world literature for millennia. As they engage in critical text analysis, students discover how authors and stories can guide them to formulate and express their own ethical beliefs and social critiques, using Science Fiction to offer insight, inspiration and warning. Bioengineering and Artificial Intelligence are explored as case studies in dialogue with questions that emerge through literary texts.

Possible Texts:

Science Fiction Literature Circles: Choice of *Warcross*, Marie Lu
Jurassic Park, Michael Crichton
Scythe, Neal Schusterman
The Ministry of Time, Kailiane Bradley
Selections from Genesis (Oxford Annotated Bible)
Frankenstein, Mary Shelley
“The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” by Ursula K. Le Guin
“The Ones Who Stay and Fight” by N.K. Jemisin

The Danger of a Single Story - GRADES 10/11

Spring, ½ credit

Children are always told about “the way things are.” That is not the only story. What other stories might be silenced, ignored, or unimagined? In whose interest is one person’s story privileged over someone else’s? How does this shape the way we understand ourselves, each other, and the social frames that inform both? Using Chimamanda Adichie’s TED talk as a cornerstone, this course interrogates and complicates monolithic and siloed views of identity and power. Maya Angelou’s coming-of-age memoir is, in part, an account of how a child reacts to, then resists, the story she is told of her own inferiority. *The Crucible*’s narrative of tragic hero versus temptress is challenged through a post #MeToo lens through *John Proctor Is The Villain*, shaped by current events, activism, and a callback to Genesis 1-3. The year culminates with *Macbeth*’s exploration of leadership, tragic heroes and antiheroes by re-examining two of literature’s most infamous individuals: Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

Possible Texts:

“The Danger of a Single Story,” Chimamanda Adichie
I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings, Maya Angelou
Poetry by Maya Angelou, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Audre Lorde, Claudia Rankine, Amanda Gorman
The Crucible, Arthur Miller
John Proctor is the Villain, Kimberley Belflower
Macbeth, William Shakespeare

Throughout the year, English 10/11 students grow as independent writers through journaling, online discussions, research projects, formal essays, timed assessments and creative pieces. The curriculum emphasizes sentence structure, word usage, style and thesis development. Public speaking and presentation skills are also developed regularly.

POWER, MEMORY, AND IDENTITY IN MODERN LITERATURE GRADE 12

Fall/Spring, 1 credit

English 12 is a skill-driven literature course designed to hone students' abilities in critical reading, analytical writing, and discussion as they prepare for collegiate academic work. Through a diverse selection of texts, students will examine how literature shapes the understanding of identity, morality, and society. Students will practice how to respond to texts with depth, clarity, and precision through class discussions and various writing assignments. Over the course of the year, emphasis will be placed on competencies that will best lead to the students being college-ready including close reading, synthesis, analysis, and argumentation. Assessments and learning experiences will include literary analysis essays, argumentative writing, citation, Socratic discussion, and reflective thinking.

Possible Texts:

A Clockwork Orange by Anthony Burgess

Bartleby, The Scrivener by Herman Melville

The Way to Rainy Mountain by N. Scott Momaday

Watchmen by Alan Moore

The Tiger's Wife by Tea Obreht

Wise Blood by Flannery O'Connor

ENL HUMANITIES I & II - GRADES 6-12

Full year, 2 credits

ENL I and ENL II are a two-course continuum that build the skills, concepts, vocabulary, and cultural literacies that enable students to develop and strengthen their English proficiency through the four domains of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students explicitly practice the receptive and productive language skills they need to succeed in academic settings, their professions, and in their daily lives. Vocabulary and grammar are embedded into every learning experience and explicitly practiced through a variety of face to face and online resources.

ENL I is designed for students to gain basic proficiency and confidence in each of the four language domains, building vocabulary and academic language skills that will enable them to engage in other PCS classes. Through the Humanities component of the course, students will strengthen their skills in historical reading, writing, and analysis through World Geography, US History and current events reading. Assessments include goal-setting activities to develop metacognitive and metalinguistic skills, performing learning tasks in the classroom, group presentations, student review of their own work in groups and personal reflections, public learning projects that make learning artifacts public to the school community, quizzes, and unit tests.

ENL II is designed to build upon the skills introduced in ENL I, with continued engagement with challenging texts and provide opportunities for advanced language skill development. ENL II will prepare students for the ENL Exit Exam which will assess their readiness for mainstream Humanities classes. Formative assessments are embedded within each learning activity. Summative assessments such as Socratic discussion, research papers, interviews and presentations, and reflective thinking demonstrate learning, as do quizzes and tests.

Along with their peers, all ENL students engage in rich, deep explorations of global literature throughout the year, deepening their connection to reading and storytelling. There are multiple opportunities to write in a variety of genres, and each student receives writing support for their other classes. Units of study are inquiry-based through the lenses of language, identity, and community. Recent learning experiences have included research projects on composers and world religions, interviews and oral histories of PCS community members, co-leading the entire PCS community in a Lunar New Year assembly and school celebration, and crafting expository essays. Each learning experience embraces the cultures and traditions of our diverse students, and their goal is to be culturally responsive, seeing each student holds a vast repository of assets that enrich the class and the PCS community.

Possible Texts:

The Giver, Lois Lowry

When Stars Are Scattered, Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed

Animal Farm, George Orwell

When Marian Sang, Brian Selznick and Pam Muñoz Ryan

Global short stories, poetry, essays

ESL Writing: Intermediate & Advanced, Mary Ellen Muñoz Page

Vocabulary from Classical Roots, Norma Fifer and Nancy Flowers

INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE (Grades 9-12)

Full year, 1 credit

This skill-intensive course is designed for high-intermediate English language learners. Over the course of the year, they will develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills for both real-world scenarios and academics. Pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar structures will all be practiced and mastered through interactive speaking tasks; close reading of nonfiction, fictional novels, and other texts; paragraph and essay writing; and context-based grammar and vocabulary instruction. The goal of the course is to help the students participate actively in all classes, comprehend complex texts, and write content that fulfills requirements they will encounter in academic and professional settings.

Possible Texts:

We Have Always Lived in the Castle by Shirley Jackson
Girl, Interrupted by Susanna Kaysen
Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi
Maus by Art Spiegelman
Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck
Slaughterhouse-Five by Kurt Vonnegut
The Color Purple by Alice Walker

GUIDED STUDY COURSES IN ENGLISH

Guided study English courses are only available to students in grades 10-12 who, because of scheduling conflicts, cannot be in English class on a daily basis. Enrollment is decided by the Division Head in consultation with the instructor and the Advisor.

GUIDED STUDY ENGLISH: Power and the American Psyche

This course presents the world of literature in a way that fosters creativity of thought along with discipline and shares time and energy with the students' professional engagements. Students are offered a unique opportunity to develop critical reading, writing, and analytical skills. Designed specifically for PCS's busiest of pre-professionals and professionals, this class fosters a deeper understanding of literary works while encouraging connections between the themes of the texts and their own lives and career aspirations. Students will engage with a variety of texts, while learning how literature intersects with creativity, expression, and personal growth. The skills focused on will be critical reading and textual analysis; writing with purpose and precision; the synthesis of ideas; discussion and collaborative analysis; and the comparative analysis of texts.

Possible Texts:

Deliverance by James Dickey
James by Percival Everett
One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest by Ken Kesey
Beloved by Toni Morrison
Ceremony by Leslie Marmon Silko
A Thousand Acres by Jane Smiley

HISTORY

The primary mission of the History Department is to develop students' thinking skills through the teaching of history and to endow our students with a critical understanding and appreciation of the multiple voices of the past. The department emphasizes the use of primary source materials to learn how to analyze both primary and secondary sources and how to distinguish between statements of fact and opinion. Students are thus

introduced to basic concepts and methodologies of the social sciences. Our history courses seek to hone students' writing skills, and students are required to prepare individual research projects over the course of their high school curriculum. Extensive use is made of library and archival resources in physical and digital formats.

Three and a half years of history, including World History and United States History, are required for graduation. For highly competitive colleges, the school recommends four or more credits in history. Any student who has been in the ENL Program at PCS is only required to take 3 years of history.

WORLD HISTORY I - GRADES 9-10

Full year, 1 credit

World History I is the first part of a two-year survey of the development of human societies and their interactions from 5,000 BCE through the late 21st century. This course is inquiry-driven and balances content and context with thematic questions that arise from the explorations of our human family. Students develop their thinking skills through the teaching of history and to endow our students with a critical understanding and appreciation of the multiple voices of the past. By the end of this course, students will have increased their understanding of themselves and of contemporary society by encouraging reflection on the past by considering the diversity and richness of the entire human experience. In so doing, they will have begun to hone the essential habits of mind of a historian such as: curiosity, critical thinking, open-mindedness, reflection, tenacity/growth mindset, historical empathy, the foundation of historical exploration at PCS and beyond.

Topics include early societies of Asia, Africa and the Americas; the classical phase in Greece, Rome, Persia, China, India, and Japan; the growth of major world religions; the rise of Russian civilization; the global Middle Ages; and cultural and technological transmissions along the Silk Routes; and the dawn of the first global age.

Assessments include: notes checks, primary source analysis, role plays and simulations, Socratic seminars, essays and cumulative tests and exams. Short research assignments build to an extensive interdisciplinary research paper in the second semester. Geography and current events are embedded into the course and components and students have multiple opportunities to build media literacy, presentation, collaboration and writing skills throughout the year.

Possible Texts:

Ways of the World: A Brief Global History with Sources, Volume 1, 5th edition, Robert W. Strayer, Eric W. Nelson

Science and Technology in World History: An Introduction, 5th ed.,
James E. McClellan III and Harold Dorn

WORLD HISTORY II - GRADES 9-10

Full year, 1 credit

In World History II, inquiry shifts to the modern period and the increasingly global character of its interactions. We investigate the revolutions that took place in the arts, religion, science and philosophy, politics, industry, and commerce from the 15th to the 19th centuries, before turning our attention to the growth and clash of political ideologies from the 19th through the 21st centuries.

A major goal of this two year progression is to help students gradually develop their critical thinking and writing skills. Accordingly, students will spend a large portion of their time learning to gather, evaluate, and use evidence as historians; to build critical media literacy; and to present and defend arguments. The assessments emphasize writing but also include discussions, quizzes and presentations. It is preferred that students take World History I and II in sequence.

Possible Texts:

Ways of the World (Volume 1), MacMillian

The Webs of Humankind (Volume 2), Norton

Assorted primary and secondary source materials

U.S. HISTORY- GRADE 11

Full year, 1 credit

U.S. History is a year-long survey course in the study of the historical forces that shape the American nation, exploring concepts of identity, leadership, power and struggle. The course takes a thematic approach to the study of history using essential questions to guide student inquiry. Themes to be explored include the American presidency, perseverance through strife, modern parallels of the Gilded Age, and the American Dream. In these themes, students will explore aspects of the political, social, economic, diplomatic, intellectual, and cultural history of the United States and the interconnections between these disciplines. Current events are integrated into the curriculum and students are encouraged to read, listen and watch news coverage. Students will read and analyze primary and secondary sources, develop skills in visual literacy and interpretation, and evaluate historical data. Assignments will include regular reading, short- and long-form writing, papers, quizzes, and tests. Critical analytical thinking is emphasized in all assignments and class activities.

Possible Texts:

American History: Connecting with the Past, Alan Brinkley

American Pageant, David Kennedy and Lizbeth Cohen

CONTEMPORARY GLOBAL ISSUES - GRADE 12

Fall, ½ credit

This course, primarily reserved for 12th-grade students, will delve into a series of contemporary issues through processes of inquiry, discussion, presentation, and writing. Questions of concern to students regarding economics, the environment, social justice, criminal justice, peace and war, and conflict resolution will drive the curriculum. In the first half of the course, the class will identify issues of concern to its members and dive into them for 1-2 weeks each. Students will do research both individually and in small groups. They will share their findings with peers and argue the relevance of different perspectives on each issue. Students will be evaluated for their participation as well as through a few short quizzes and writing assignments. In the second half of the course, students will undertake individual research projects into an issue of deep personal interest and share their findings with classmates regularly. The class will culminate with a longer paper/presentation.

Students who enjoy high levels of collaboration in their learning and are adept at self-evaluation and planning for improvement will thrive in this course. Students who want to grow as critical thinkers and engaged learners will be challenged to do so in this course.

CIVIL RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN FILM - GRADE 12

Spring, ½ credit

In this course, students will critically examine films that have portrayed significant issues in American law, civil rights, and social justice. Students will delve into various social realities that inspired filmmakers and attempt to put the study of film into conversation with how we study and understand historical change. Along the way, students will look at the ways in which filmmakers treated issues of social (in)justice and, in many cases, became a part of the struggle for greater equality and justice in American life. Students will not only evaluate films for their historical accuracy, but also consider how popular culture and media have influenced our interpretations of history, culture, and identity. Stanley Kramer, Spike Lee, Ava Duvernay, and Ryan Coogler are just a few of the directors whose films we might study. Assessments will include structured discussions/debates, informal journaling, research notes, short papers, and one in-class test.

AMERICAN NATION

Full year, 1 credit

Designed primarily for students new to American history, this yearlong course is designed for them to engage with key themes, dilemmas, movements and moments in US History through a global lens. Analytical, critical thinking, media and information literacy, and research skills are

developed throughout the year, culminating in a seminar-style research essay based on a work of art, music or literature of each student's choice. By the end of the year, students will have gained and deepened the concepts, content knowledge, and habits of mind that enable them to think like a historian while building the key vocabulary, reading, writing and research competencies that will prepare them for higher level classes and postsecondary education. Through a variety of simulations, Socratic seminars, primary source DBQs, debates and presentations, students build the critical thinking skills and habits of mind that empower them to exercise their critical thinking skills as they examine primary, secondary and tertiary sources, from texts to music, images, artifacts, architecture, and more. In the process, they build a learning community that is both responsive and courageous in confronting the "hard history" that all Americans have inherited. Assessments are both formative and summative, including opinion writing, tech design projects, Socratic seminars, online discussions, research papers and presentations, quizzes, and cumulative tests and exams. Frequent discussions of current events connect past to present.

Textbooks:

America's History: Land of Liberty, Steck-Vaughn

A People's History of the United States by Howard Zinn

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT- GRADES 10-12

Fall/Spring, 1/2 credit

The U.S. Government course covers the major ideas and institutions that shaped the United States 250 years ago and that continue to evolve today. We cover the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and then continue with a study of the variety of political ideologies, the right to vote, the function of the Electoral College, the federal budget and taxes, and a survey of the three branches of our government (Congress, President, and Supreme Court). There is time to consider the participation of women, African-Americans, and young people in this country's political life. We also practice skills such as calculating tax payments on income, filling out a practice voter registration form, identifying political positions on current events, evaluating opinion poll results, weighing the pros and cons of proposed legislation, writing opinionated letters to our public servants, and making determinations about lawsuits. All of the resources for the course are pulled from the U.S. Archives, numerous federal government websites, and the news media. The U.S. Government course is a one-semester course, and it meets twice a week.

MATHEMATICS

These courses provide students with experiences that encourage and enable them to value mathematics, become skilled problem solvers, and learn to reason and think critically. The curriculum recognizes that students will spend their adult lives in a society increasingly dominated by quantitative reasoning and technology.

All students are required to study mathematics for a minimum of two years. Course offerings include the traditional college preparatory sequence of Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Pre-Calculus and Calculus. Topics in Math and Applications of Math are offered in alternating years, and may be taken to strengthen skills before studying Algebra II. Topics in Math and Applications of Math may also be taken as a year-long course after Algebra II, Pre-Calculus or Calculus or as an alternative to the Pre-Calculus and Calculus track. Highly competitive colleges expect a minimum of at least four years of college preparatory math.

The Math Department conducts math placement exams for all new Upper School students who have earned a C or below in their most recent math class, and all new International students in both Divisions. The aim is to appropriately place students in classes that challenge them while also supporting their academic needs.

ALGEBRA I

Full year, 1 credit

Algebra I is a foundational course designed to deepen students' understanding of mathematical relationships and prepare them for more advanced math and science coursework. Grounded in key principles such as patterns and functions, algebraic reasoning, and real-world problem solving, students explore linear equations and inequalities, systems of equations, polynomials, factoring, quadratics, and data analysis. Big-picture questions like "How can algebra model real-life situations?" and "What do mathematical patterns tell us about the world?" guide exploration and discussion. The course integrates social-emotional learning by fostering collaboration, perseverance, and reflective thinking, technology integration while encouraging students to take risks, learn from mistakes, and support one another in a respectful, inclusive learning environment through inquiry-based tasks.

Assessment extends beyond traditional quizzes and tests to include hands-on projects and interactive activities that increase engagement and real-world application. These include a Scavenger Hunt Project where students classify real numbers using clippings from magazines and newspapers, a Probability Lab involving experiments like coin flips and dice rolls to contrast theoretical and experimental outcomes, a Calendar Project in which students generate equations tied to calendar

dates, and a Food Truck Project that applies linear systems to practical business scenarios. These experiences support creative thinking, collaboration, and diverse demonstrations of mastery. Ultimately, this course equips students not only with essential mathematical skills but also with the strategies and mindset needed to face complex challenges with curiosity and perseverance.

Students who receive a grade of C- or higher will receive Upper School credit and be eligible to take Geometry.

A TI-84 graphing calculator is required for this course.

Text: Algebra I and Algebra I Workbook (Bellman, Bragg, Charles, et al.)

GEOMETRY

Full year, 1 credit

Prerequisite: Algebra I

The Geometry course builds on Algebra I and develops students' understanding of shapes, space, and logical reasoning. Through the study of congruence, similarity, transformations, coordinate geometry, proofs, and basic trigonometry, students strengthen problem-solving and critical thinking skills. The course emphasizes clear mathematical communication, respect for diverse problem-solving approaches, and perseverance in tackling challenging tasks. Students collaborate in groups, use technology such as calculators and computer programs, and make real-world and cross-disciplinary connections to art, science, and engineering. Cultural contributions to geometry are also explored, promoting equity and global awareness in STEM. Preparation for standardized testing is integrated throughout.

A TI-84 graphing calculator is required for this course.

Text: *Geometry and Geometry: Practice Workbook with Examples* by McDougal Littell.

ALGEBRA II

Full year, 1 credit

Prerequisite: A grade of C or better in Algebra I or Geometry is required for the course.

Algebra II builds on foundational algebraic skills while expanding students' understanding of mathematical relationships, functions, and models. The course emphasizes abstract reasoning, algebraic manipulation, function analysis, and real-world problem solving. Students investigate quadratic, exponential, radical, polynomial, and rational functions, along with systems of equations, sequences, and introductory

statistics. Big-picture questions such as “How can we use functions to model change and solve problems?” and “What patterns help us make predictions in complex systems?” guide inquiry. A strong social-emotional learning framework is integrated throughout, promoting collaboration, perseverance, creative expression, and confidence through meaningful discourse and peer engagement.

Beyond traditional assessments like quizzes and tests, learning is enriched with hands-on activities and interactive projects. Highlights include the Halloween House Project, where students design haunted houses using linear equations and concepts of slope, parallel, and perpendicular lines; the Shark Tank Challenge, in which students pitch business ideas while modeling cost and revenue through systems of equations; and the Quadratic Formula Project, where students demonstrate understanding through poems, songs, or raps. These experiences foster creativity, communication, and critical thinking while reinforcing real-world applications. Designed to spark curiosity and build confidence, the course equips students with the skills and mindset needed for advanced math courses like Precalculus and Calculus, and for applying math across disciplines such as science, technology, finance, and the humanities.

A TI-84 graphing calculator is required for this course.

Text: Algebra 2, Bellman, Bragg, Charles, et al.

APPLICATIONS IN MATHEMATICS

Full year or 1/2 year credit

This course and the Topics in Mathematics course are offered in alternating years. This course may be taken as a full-year course for 1 credit or in either semester for 1/2 credit.

The real-world-focused curriculum is designed to build mathematical literacy and problem-solving skills through practical, engaging, and interdisciplinary contexts. Rooted in principles such as modeling, data analysis, and proportional reasoning, students explore how mathematics informs everyday decisions, civic life, and various career fields.

Big-picture questions like “How does math help us make informed decisions?” and “Where do we see math in our communities and daily lives?” guide inquiry and application. The course integrates social-emotional learning by fostering collaboration, resilience, and confidence through student-centered discourse, reflective practice, and creative expression.

Assessment extends beyond traditional quizzes and tests, incorporating a variety of hands-on projects that promote deeper understanding and student engagement. Highlights include the *Halloween Data Project*,

where students survey peers and represent data using frequency tables, bar graphs, and circle graphs; the *Financial Advice Project*, which analyzes investment models through linear, quadratic, and exponential functions; and the *Mathtopia City Project*, where students design a scaled city using linear equations to describe street layouts. The *Puppy House Project* encourages application of linear modeling in a design context. These experiences help students recognize the relevance of math in real life, strengthen critical thinking, and build communication and analytical skills. Through technology integration and engaging in authentic, meaningful tasks, students develop the ability to make informed decisions, interpret data, and apply mathematical reasoning to complex, real-world challenges.

Text: Using and Understanding Mathematics, Bennett & Briggs'

PRE-CALCULUS

Full year, 1 credit

Prerequisites: Geometry and a B- average in Algebra II

Precalculus builds a bridge between Algebra, Geometry, and Calculus by exploring how mathematical models describe patterns, change, and relationships in the world. Central concepts include function behavior, transformations, trigonometry, and analytic geometry. The course encourages students to connect abstract thinking with real-world applications while asking big questions such as: “How do different types of functions behave and relate?” and “How can complex phenomena be represented using mathematical tools?” Precalculus classrooms foster a growth mindset, resilience in problem-solving, and collaborative learning. Students are encouraged to appreciate diverse problem-solving approaches.

The graphing calculator, TI-84+, is required.

Text: *Advanced Mathematical Concepts*, Glencoe 2006; and Mathspace

CALCULUS

Full year, 1 credit

Prerequisite: A grade of B or higher in Pre-Calculus is required to enroll in this course.

Calculus is a conceptually and computationally challenging course that explores fundamental questions about change, motion, and accumulation—such as how things change instantaneously and how we measure the area under a curve. Building on concepts from Algebra II and Precalculus, students develop powerful tools like derivatives and integrals to analyze dynamic systems. Key topics include limits, continuity, rates of change, and the accumulation of quantities, forming

the foundation for further study in mathematics, science, and engineering. In the first semester, students investigate rates of change and are introduced to derivatives; the second semester focuses on measuring accumulated change, leading to antiderivatives and integrals. Applications, particularly in physics, provide meaningful context (though physics is not a prerequisite). The course is taught at the level of a first-year college class and emphasizes collaborative problem-solving, reflection, and peer feedback to foster deep understanding, communication, and empathy in a supportive learning environment.

A TI-84 calculator is required.

Text: *Calculus Early Transcendentals 9th Edition*, Stewart

ADVANCED CALCULUS

Full year, 1 credit

Prerequisite: A grade of B+ or higher in Calculus is required to enroll in this course.

Advanced Calculus is a second-year calculus course designed for highly motivated students seeking a deeper, more rigorous exploration of the subject. The course begins by reinforcing foundational concepts, then advances to techniques of integration, extended applications of differentiation and integration, and topics such as infinite sequences and series, parametric equations, polar coordinates, vector functions, partial derivatives, and multiple integrals. Emphasizing both abstraction and theoretical understanding, the course asks big questions like: What does it mean for a function to be continuous or differentiable? How do multivariable systems behave? How can the Fundamental Theorem of Calculus be generalized? Students are challenged to approach problems from multiple perspectives, collaborate thoughtfully, and develop persistence and intellectual curiosity in confronting complex ideas. With a focus on both conceptual depth and problem-solving skill, Advanced Calculus prepares students for higher-level mathematics and STEM fields.

A TI-84 calculator is required for this course.

Text: *Calculus: Early Transcendentals 9th Edition*, Stewart

COMPUTER SCIENCE I

Fall/Spring, ½ credit

Computer Science I teaches the foundations of computer science and basic programming tooling and vocabulary, with an emphasis on helping students analyze processes with computational thinking principles. The course is designed to be accessible for complete beginners with no previous background in computer science, but can also engage the more

advanced, self-taught programmer who wants to learn the theory and structure underlying computer programming. Throughout the course, students focus on real-world use and practical applications of knowledge, learning to self-teach, troubleshoot, and collaborate with peers.

Computer Science I is, in large part, a project-based course. Students are evaluated on what they produce, as well as their explanations of their process, planning, and computational concepts.

COMPUTER SCIENCE II

Spring, ½ credit

Prerequisite: Computer Science I or an equivalent from another school

Computer Science II builds on the fundamentals gained in Computer Science I to continue exploring coding tools and best practices. Areas of focus include databases and APIs, and the basics of cross-platform app development. While foundational concepts are explored throughout, the emphasis is on applying what students have learned to create functional projects at a greater scale and faster pace. In addition to provided materials, students are expected to seek out additional definitions, explanations, and code examples independently to support their learning of an evolving field.

Computer Science II is, in large part, project-based, with an emphasis on understanding the conceptual basis of a project's code and operation, not just a project's product. Students will learn to independently seek answers and assess their own efforts.

PERFORMING & VISUAL ARTS

The Arts Program provides students with opportunities to participate in multiple forms of artistic expression. The goal is to supplement, enhance and expand on the rich experiences our students engage in outside of school. It is our hope that the students will come to discover and appreciate how exposure to diverse art forms serves to enrich their understanding of the human condition in general and deepen their approach to their chosen professions in particular. The overarching goal is to help students find their voices and develop the confidence and skill to express their unique perspectives.

The following Arts courses are open to all students except where a prerequisite, audition, or faculty recommendation is indicated. Students are required to have one credit in the Arts for graduation, but all students are urged to expand their aesthetic appreciation and knowledge by electing additional Arts courses.

Studio and Performing Arts classes are not open to students on full Guided Study. Highly professional students who anticipate missing more than 50% of the class should not register for these courses. A student who becomes unable to fulfill the attendance requirement during the course of the semester for professional or medical reasons may have to withdraw from the class without penalty, but is welcome to re-enroll in subsequent classes.

DRAMA

DRAMA I - GRADES 9-12

Fall/Spring, ½ credit

Drama I is a semester course which offers the perfect theater class for both beginners and experienced performers. Students will hone performance skills, explore different careers in theater, and collaboratively devise new theatrical works. Throughout the year, students will study improv, scene study (both theatrical and on-camera), and other theatrical skill sets such as fight choreography, playwriting, and directing. Students will hone their personal autonomy, empathy, and humility through scene work, as well as build leadership skills and logistical flexibility in the directing unit. Assessment of student work will be based on individual progress, such as critical analysis of text as an actor, playwright, and director, exhibiting consistent diction and volume, engaging fully with physicality on stage, and exploring emotional expression (matching what is in the script with their physical, vocal, and emotional choices). No matter their level of experience, students will be invited to grow in their personal and collective integrity and creativity. Successful students are expected to be open, focused, and engaged in all units.

DRAMA II- GRADES 10-12

Full year, 1 credit

A pre-college theater class, this course demands that actors engage with maturity, curiosity, and tenacity. Enrollment is a full year, which will be split up into one semester of skill honing and one semester of rehearsing and executing a full-scale production of a play. Actors must have taken Drama I or have shown, via their talent and conduct, that they are ready for a more rigorously paced class with professional expectations.

In the first semester, students will study improv, perform heightened language scripts (Chekov, Shakespeare), and engage with other theater modalities such as playwriting and dramaturgy. The second semester will be devoted to a play, which will be performed at the end of the school year for family, friends, and the school community. Students will hone their emotional intelligence, personal authenticity, and resilience through both scene study and by preparing for the full production. Additionally, their literacy skills will expand through the playwriting and heightened

language units, and their cultural appreciation will deepen in the dramaturgy unit. Assessments of student work will be based on individual progress, such as critical analysis of text as an actor, playwright, and director; exhibiting consistent diction and volume, engaging fully with physicality on stage, and exploring emotional expression (matching what is in the script with their physical, vocal, and emotional choices). Students are expected to have integrity when engaging with their peers and the material, showcasing creative collaboration skills and focused determination to achieve a common goal.

The course meets three days per week and is not open to students who may be on Guided Study for more than 50% of the year.

MUSIC

ADVANCED MUSICAL THEATER

Fall ¼ credit

During the Fall semester, this course will focus on learning singing techniques, choreography, and scenes from various musicals in the American musical theater canon. Students will hone their performance technique by engaging in ensemble-building exercises with classmates, reflecting on how personal experiences inform character interpretations, and concentrating on the specifics of vocal and performance techniques for the musical theater stage. Students will also discuss the historic, cultural, and political contexts of the musicals they are studying, as well as engage in research on the pieces they are performing. Students will work in groups to regularly present and perform for one another and for the entire school community.

This is an advanced performance-based class and is by audition-only. The selected repertoire will reflect the interests and input of enrolled students. There is a 50% attendance requirement, so students who expect to miss more than 50% of the class cannot receive credit and will be asked to withdraw from the course.

MUSIC LITERACY

Fall/Spring ½ credit

Music Literacy is a beginning music theory and sight-reading course geared towards students who are beginners or would like to improve and gain music literacy skills. The curriculum includes basic music theory, notation, solfege, rhythm, dictation, and ear training. Students will learn how to read music, hear intervals, use music theory and analysis, and practice basic keyboard skills. They will also analyze musical structures to promote critical thinking, explore music from diverse cultures and traditions in order to broaden perspective and appreciation for cultural differences, and engage in collaborative activities and feedback sessions

with peers that will promote active listening, empathy, and effective communication.

Students do not need to take a placement exam for this course. It is open to anyone who wants to learn to read music efficiently and with confidence. Students must, however, be able to attend class for at least 50% of the semester.

This course meets three times per week and will include sight reading quizzes, listening and theory tests, as well as group classwork. This course is cumulative, but students may join in the spring upon completion of a placement test. Students must consult with Dr. Inman before enrolling in the spring.

POETICS OF MUSIC

Fall/Spring ½ credit

The “poetics of music” is a phrase Igor Stravinsky coined to describe the inner workings of music both in terms of composition and observation. This course integrates both activities. Students will learn to foster a deeper understanding of music through the development of informed listening skills. By placing music into its social and historical context, we will discover the importance and relevance of music in our culture and in the world at large. We will explore a vast collection of familiar and unfamiliar musical pieces to broaden our listening skills, and make meaningful discoveries through thoughtful discussions. Students will learn various music technology tools and learn how to score short film compositions. Students will also experience a live performance at one of the Lincoln Center Venues (NY Philharmonic, Metropolitan Opera, NYC Ballet) and will utilize the incredible NYC Performing Arts Library for various topics.

Fall: Film Music compositions, History of Jazz and Blues, Folk and Contemporary music

Spring: Brief History of Western Classical Music (Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic) and World music including the Eurovision Song contest.

This course meets three times a week. This course is also available online as a full Guided Study course. Approval will be necessary to take it on Guided Study.

VISUAL ART

The Visual Art Program at PCS nurtures and develops artistic expression. With new and existing skill sets promoted via each art project, project frameworks are medium-specific. Technicality of mediums and suitable project themes are carefully considered, not only in

accommodating students' different learning needs and visual art experiences, but also in inviting them to create and share meaningful works with confidence. Artworks and art-making processes by artists of different and/or relatable heritages and backgrounds are crucial resources in displaying project themes, inspiring students to create their own artworks and deliberately exchange their stories, ideas, and feelings. In furthering the learning and appreciation of diverse artistic expressions, the program takes advantage of local and cultural opportunities, with students meeting with working artists and visiting museums or galleries where possible.

ART PORTFOLIO INTENSIVE

Fall/Spring, ½ credit

Art Portfolio Intensive is designed for advanced students who want to develop their own voices as artistic creatives, or who want to pursue visual art in their post-secondary education. The first half of the course presents students with specific projects, encompassing a conceptual framework and traditional and experimental approaches to design, image, or object making. Mediums include drawing, painting, collage, ceramics, sculpture, and installation. During the second half of the semester, students design and pursue their own projects, in fulfilling the course's independent project guidelines.

Throughout this course, students are expected to focus on self-expression and create synthesis between image, technique, conceptual content, and supporting art and literary research. They must be self-starters and self-directors. Opportunities to research and implement new media are welcomed. Portfolio Intensive meets five periods a week and is open to students in Grade 10 and above.

Prerequisites include at least two semesters of Studio Art or its equivalent AND the permission of the instructor. The class may be repeated for credit. There is a 50% attendance requirement, so students who expect to miss more than 50% of the class cannot receive credit and will be asked to withdraw from the course. Students may re-enroll in subsequent years.

STUDIO ART

Fall/Spring, ½ credit

Studio Art is an intermediate and advanced semester course, open to all students in grades 10-12. The course focuses on growing visual awareness, technical skills, and material experimentation to support creative self-expression through hands-on studio work, class discussions, and critiques.

Students practice the techniques and vocabularies of media, such as drawing, painting, printmaking, ceramics, and digital. Every art project is

medium-specific. Fall semester projects highlight image rendering processes, and spring semester projects emphasize structure and object making. In the process of practicing and making, students will develop personal vision, informed via research and skill-building exercises to gain the ability to make autonomous decisions. On average, there are three projects per semester, with each project spanning 4-5 weeks.

The class meets three times a week. In order to enroll in this course, students should have prior experience in various 2D and 3D art mediums sufficient at beginner high school art levels, or have taken both the Visual Art Foundation and Visual Art Structure courses at PCS. There is a 50% attendance requirement; students who expect to miss more than 50% of the class cannot receive credit and will be asked to withdraw from the course. Students may re-enroll in subsequent semesters or years.

VISUAL ART FOUNDATION

Fall, ¼ credit

Visual Art Foundation is an introductory course, open to all students in grades 9-12. Students begin the semester by learning how to draw. Observation drawing is the primary focus during the first half of the semester, where students learn how to approach and practice drawing objects, perspective, figure, and portraiture. During the second half of the semester, students explore color theory and painterly applications through the use of acrylic, oil, and watercolor. Art projects are designed to equip students with a thorough understanding of these materials and techniques. On average, there are eight art projects in this course, each project spanning 2-3 weeks.

The class is offered only in the Fall semester, meets twice a week, and there is no prerequisite. However, there is a 50% attendance requirement. Students who expect to miss more than 50% of the class cannot receive credit and will be asked to withdraw from the course.

VISUAL ART STRUCTURE

Spring, ¼ credit

Visual Art Structure is an introductory course, open to all students in grades 9-12. The class explores structure as it can be applied to 2 & 3-dimensional applications. Course works engage various analog and digital processes via the use of printmaking, graphic design, ceramics, and/or digital fabrication. The overall objective is to equip each student with technical comprehension and critical and creative thinking skills to create unique and complete objects. On average, there are six art projects in this course, each project spanning 2-3 weeks.

The class is offered only in the Spring semester, meets twice a week, and there is no prerequisite. However, there is a 50% attendance

requirement. Students who expect to miss more than 50% of the class cannot receive credit and will be asked to withdraw from the course.

ART AND MUSIC: FROM MODERN TO CONTEMPORARY GUIDED STUDY

Fall, ½ credit

This online course introduces students to the history, theory, discourse, and making of Visual Art and Music, spanning the period between Modernism and Contemporary. Visual Art meets in the first quarter, and Music meets in the second. In the Visual Art section, students begin with analyzing artworks and readings to examine paradigm shifts that influence our understanding of art. Weekly responses to texts are required in conjunction with research, art-making, and exhibition visits. In the Music section, students begin with basic music terms and listening skills. Album reviews, watching documentaries, and listening assignments are required, as well as completing two live concert reviews.

This course is only open to seniors who need the 1/2 credit to graduate and cannot attend a regularly scheduled class. The course is only offered in the fall semester and students can only take this course once.

SCIENCE

BIOLOGY - GRADE 9

Full year, 1 credit

This course offers a comprehensive introduction to the study of life, exploring the fundamental principles that govern living systems. Students will examine key biological concepts such as cell structure and function, the inheritance of traits, and the dynamic relationships between organisms and their environments. Emphasis is placed on the interconnectedness of life and the relationship between structure and function in biological systems. Students will gain an appreciation for how biology connects to their everyday lives in a real-world context and recognize the contributions of scientists from diverse backgrounds who have shaped our understanding of the natural world.

Through hands-on laboratory activities, class demonstrations, group work, discussions, and regular assignments, students will develop scientific inquiry skills, including hypothesis formation, experimental design, data analysis, and drawing evidence-based conclusions. Projects throughout the course will introduce students to independent research, scientific writing, and presentation techniques.

Texts & Resources:

Miller & Levine Biology, handouts, and selected materials from credible educational websites such as sciencebuddies.org.

CONCEPTUAL PHYSICS - GRADE 10

Full year, 1 credit

This introductory Conceptual Physics course is designed to build a strong conceptual understanding of fundamental physical principles, from classical mechanics to modern physics, using an inquiry-based learning approach. Through engaging real-world situations, illustrative demonstrations, and both online and hands-on laboratory activities, students will grasp physics concepts in an accessible and relatable manner, demystifying a subject often perceived as challenging. By exploring the physics evident in transportation, technology, and the energy around us, students will develop a deep appreciation for the laws of motion, energy, and forces in familiar contexts, such as the mechanics of car crashes, the thrills of roller coasters, and household energy consumption. A significant emphasis is placed on cultivating problem-solving and critical thinking skills through these activities and data analysis, enabling students to apply learned principles to tackle real-world challenges effectively. Collaborative work and clear communication are also integral aspects of the course, fostering inclusivity and recognizing diverse perspectives in scientific contributions. Ultimately, the goal is to move beyond rote memorization and foster a genuine understanding of physics concepts, empowering students with lasting knowledge and analytical abilities, illuminating their everyday world. Throughout the year, students will engage in various projects related to physics concepts, and the course will utilize interactive simulations and multimedia resources to further enhance understanding and engagement. Recognizing that mathematics can sometimes be a barrier, applying math in problem-solving will be limited to Algebra I.

Texts, Media, and Technology:

Interactive simulations (e.g., PhET Interactive Simulations)

Multimedia resources (videos, animations, documentaries)

Online learning platforms and resources

Data analysis software (as appropriate for the level)

Materials for hands-on laboratory activities (both physical and virtual)

CHEMISTRY - GRADES 11-12

Full year, 1 credit

Prerequisites: Conceptual Physics and Algebra II, although Chemistry may be taken concurrently with Algebra II.

This course provides students with a foundational understanding of Chemistry, focusing on the principles, processes, and real-world applications of chemical science. Students will explore key topics such as atomic structure, chemical bonding, chemical reactions, stoichiometry, energy transformations, and the properties of acids and bases. Through these topics, students will learn how chemical principles are derived and how they explain both laboratory phenomena and everyday occurrences.

Emphasizing scientific inquiry, students will engage in formulating hypotheses, designing and conducting experiments, analyzing data, and drawing conclusions. The course also integrates mathematical reasoning, requiring students to apply both basic and advanced math skills—including metric system conversions and algebraic problem-solving—across various units of study.

In addition to academic content, the course highlights the contributions of scientists from diverse backgrounds, promoting an inclusive understanding of the development of modern chemistry. Students will learn how chemistry relates to their lives and communities while developing collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills.

Texts & Resources:

Prentice Hall Chemistry, selected handouts, and materials from reputable sources such as ScienceBuddies.org and *Scientific American*.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE - GRADES 11-12

Full year, 1 credit

This course directly engages students with current environmental issues and the significant impact on the ever-growing human population with the goal that students will actively participate to address environmental challenges and understand the importance of civic engagement. Students will gain knowledge of the intricate interactions between human activities, resource utilization, and the environment taking into consideration human interactions and diverse perspectives through a cultural lens.

Key components of the course involve researching current event articles related to contemporary environmental issues discussed in class and fostering an understanding of real-world applications and challenges. A critical analysis of information is essential, and students will be expected to develop the ability to analyze information from diverse sources, including reputable news outlets, scientific journals, and informative videos. Case studies on sustainability, climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and other pressing concerns, foster a sense of involvement and connection to global challenges.

This course may be taken asynchronously if professional circumstances or schedules necessitate it. Permission from the Division Head will also be required.

Texts, Media, and Technology:

Current news articles

Documentaries and educational videos on environmental topics

Digital platforms for accessing and analyzing information

Scientific journal articles or excerpts relevant to specific topics

ADVANCED BIOLOGY - GRADES 11-12

Full year, 1 credit

Prerequisite: A prior Biology course with a B or higher or approval by the science department.

Advanced Biology is a year-long course designed to deepen students' understanding of life sciences by building on foundational concepts introduced in general Biology. Students will explore advanced topics such as biochemistry, genetics, cellular respiration, photosynthesis, and human biology, with an emphasis on connecting these concepts to real-world applications, current scientific research, and ethical and social issues in the field.

This course fosters scientific inquiry and critical thinking through hands-on laboratory investigations, analysis of medical case studies, independent research, and evaluation of current scientific literature. Students will practice developing hypotheses, designing experiments, interpreting data, and drawing informed conclusions. Advanced problem-solving skills, including the use of math and data analysis, will be integrated throughout the curriculum.

Students will also examine the role of ethics in biological research and healthcare, learning to navigate complex topics such as genetic engineering, biotechnology, and medical consent. The course highlights the contributions of scientists from diverse backgrounds, encouraging an inclusive and socially aware approach to science education.

Texts & Resources:

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot

Survival of the Sickest by Dr. Sharon Moalem

Selected handouts, and materials from credible sources such as scientific journals and educational websites.

ADVANCED PHYSICS - GRADES 11-12

Full year, 1 credit

Prerequisites: Chemistry and Biology

Co-requisite: Pre-Calculus or Calculus (and a B or higher in Algebra II taken in the prior year)

This course introduces students to the demands of college-level science study and provides a systematic and rigorous introduction to the main principles of physics, with a strong emphasis on developing advanced problem-solving skills. A solid foundation in mathematics is crucial, and students are expected to be proficient in algebra, geometry, and trigonometry. The coursework itself is designed to deepen students'

understanding of advanced classical mechanics, electromagnetism, and thermodynamics, with the expectation that students will develop proficiency in analyzing complete simulated experimental data and enhance rigorous logical reasoning skills. A respectful discussion of the debate of scientific ideas is crucial to developing a strong conceptual understanding of the coursework covered throughout the year.

This course requires attention to detail, consistent effort through rigorous weekly homework assignments, and preparation for challenging weekly quizzes. Topics covered include, but are not limited to, Mechanics, Vectors, Wave Phenomena, and Electricity and Magnetism.

Texts, Media, and Technology:

CK12 Advanced Physics Online text

Simulation websites (e.g., PhET Interactive Simulations)

Mathematical modeling tools (e.g., Positive physics)

Online resources and databases for physics information

HEALTH - GRADES 9-10

Fall/Spring, 1/2 credit

The Health course is holistic in its approach. It explores the various dimensions of one's life and well-being by emphasizing personal responsibility, the importance of prevention, the development of skills for making choices, and the process of behavioral change. Students are provided with the information and inspiration they need to make healthy decisions and changes in their lives. Self-directed activities, along with regular group discussions, help students explore how their health can be influenced by their environment, their lifestyle, and their personal, well-informed choices. As a requirement for graduation, Seniors are not eligible for exemption from the final assessment whether that is an assigned project or final exam.

Text: Selected readings

WORLD LANGUAGES

In the World Languages program, we enjoy our role as purveyor of other cultures and languages. Our goals are to teach students to communicate in another language, learn about and appreciate other cultures, acquire information and connect with other disciplines, and thus develop insight into their own language and culture.

Two consecutive years/levels of the same language are required for graduation; three years establishes a sequence. Students new to Professional Children's School are required to take a placement examination to determine their course level. Returning students who receive a grade of 73 or better may proceed to the next level of the

language they are studying. For highly competitive colleges, we recommend a minimum of three years of one world language.

FRENCH I

Full year, 1 credit

Language learning beginners are welcome in this introductory course. Students will begin to explore the French-speaking world and to master reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in French.

We use the textbook “D’accord!” Level, which includes an online edition in which students can complete homework, listen to audio exercises, read articles, and view videos. Our themes include the vocabulary and grammar around school life, family and friends, dining out, leisure time and celebrations, weather and seasons, and hobbies and pastimes.

To support these themes, we will read real-world articles, view videos of native speakers giving interviews/guiding viewers in francophone locations, listen to pop music, read children’s books, and follow news in the French-speaking world. Speaking is reinforced with simple games and more involved projects, which allow students to demonstrate their inquiry and communication skills. Historically, these projects have included a slideshow presentation about friends and family and dessert making, and require memorizing and performing short texts. Past field trips have brought students to view French films, theater, and art exhibitions. Assessments test vocabulary, grammar, reading, and listening skills.

The primary goal in the French department is real-life communication. We believe that speaking a new language provides a path to being a global citizen. Moreover, we believe that language learning promotes empathy for English language learners, and humility and courage within students of French, as they overcome the challenges of speaking their non-native language. Above all, we strive to find a path for student success, whether via their reading, writing, listening, or speaking skills.

Text: *D’accord 1!* (5th ed.), Vista Higher Learning Workbook

FRENCH II

Full year, 1 credit

In French II, communication and comprehension skills continue to be the major goals through vocabulary building activities and the acquisition of new grammar structures and tenses. In addition to strengthening their listening, reading, speaking and writing skills, students also broaden their cultural knowledge through stories, music, Internet activities and films.

As in French I, we use the textbook “D’accord!” Level 1, which includes an online edition in which students can complete homework, listen to

audio exercises, read articles, and view videos. Themes include the home, clothing and shopping, vacations and travel, and food and dining.

To support these themes, we will read real-world articles, view videos of native speakers giving interviews/guiding viewers in francophone locations, listen to pop music, read children's books, and follow news in the French-speaking world. Speaking is reinforced with simple games and more-involved projects, which allow students to demonstrate their inquiry and communication skills. Historically, these projects have included interviews, dessert making, slideshow presentations about travel, and storytelling to practice tenses. Past field trips have brought students to view French films, theater, and art exhibitions. Assessments test vocabulary, grammar, reading, and listening skills.

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Texts: *D'accord 1!* (5th ed.) Vista Higher Learning Workbook
D'accord 2! (5th ed.) Vista Higher Learning Workbook

FRENCH III

Full year, 1 credit

In French III, students use the extensive audio/visual resources and activities of the D'accord! Level 2 online learning environment in order to become highly competent communicators. The class covers several major grammar points, including reflexive verbs, *imparfait*, *conditionnel*, et *futur*. Writing and speaking skills are emphasized in preparation for the independent reading and writing that will follow in French IV.

Topics in D'accord! 2 include grocery shopping, restaurant dining, health and daily routines, technology, and professional life. To support these themes, we read real-world articles, view videos of native speakers giving interviews/guiding viewers in francophone locations, listen to pop music, and follow news in the French-speaking world. Speaking is reinforced with projects, which allow students to demonstrate their inquiry and communication skills. Historically, these projects have included interviews, dessert making, and storytelling, as well as student-created audio tours to practice tenses. Student-led games have included an adaptation of Task Master to practice the future tense. Past field trips have brought students to view French films, theater, and art exhibitions. Assessments test vocabulary, grammar, reading, and listening skills.

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Text: *D'Accord!* Level 2 (5th ed.), Vista Higher Learning Workbook

FRENCH IV

Full year, 1 credit

French IV is a course aimed at fostering fluency in French, orally and in writing. In the first semester, students view a series of short films and read a variety of short texts in order to strengthen their listening, speaking and writing skills. Topics covered include community & social interactions, city living, media, and the environment. In the second semester, we read and discuss Saint-Exupéry's "Le Petit Prince." Grammar and vocabulary are reinforced in a thematic context and through the study of Saint-Exupéry's novella. French IV utilizes "Imaginez!," the final textbook in the D'accord! Series. Each chapter's theme is centered on a real French-language short film. Themes include relationships, media, politics, and modern francophone society.

Students begin reading "Le Petit Prince" with guidance from the teacher and an accompanying workbook, "A la découverte du Petit Prince." The workbook provides relevant vocabulary and reading comp/enrichment questions in which students practice writing short paragraphs. As the course progresses, students will read with less help from the teacher. Other projects include writing an additional chapter to the book and exploring/critiquing the many adaptations of the book. Throughout the year, we will review French III grammar points, and add *conditionnel passé*, *futur antérieur*, and *subjonctif*.

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Text: *Imaginez* (4th ed.) Vista Higher Learning Workbook
Le Petit Prince, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

ADVANCED FRENCH V / ADVANCED FRENCH VI

Full year, 1 credit

This course meets once a week for a double period, and focuses on various literary movements, periods, and genres. Students examine a selection of themes such as French identity and Francophone cultures. They also watch French news and other media in order to stay informed about contemporary life in France and the French speaking world.

In 2024-2025, we held a "Ciné-club" of significant films in francophone culture. These included: "Amélie," "Entre les murs," "Le Dîner de cons," "Les 400 coups," "Visages Villages", "Deux jours, une nuit," "Les Ordres" and "Dahomey." Whenever possible, French subtitles were provided with the films, but if not, English subtitles plus strategies on how to improve listening comp without subtitles were provided. Students studied cinema vocabulary, critical responses to films, and built towards a full-length analytical essay. Supplementary readings included accounts of the public's adoration and the critical rejection of "Amélie"; the process of creating a semi-documentary for "Entre les murs"; the study of the fool archetype in "Le Dîner de cons"; and the origins of New Wave Cinema.

Students also chose a film on which to present over two weeks and took the role of discussion leader, providing discussion questions and relevant vocabulary.

In 2025-2026, we will cover two works of francophone literature: the novel "Kiffe kiffe demain" by Faïza Guène and the graphic novel "Persepolis" by Marjane Satrapi. Both these works are notable for their exploration of the immigrant experience and text that captures real-world conversational speech. Historical context around French colonialism in the Middle East and North Africa, modern immigration to France, and the Iranian Revolution is included in our studies.

SPANISH I

Full year, 1 credit

Spanish I introduces students to the basics of Spanish through listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Learners explore everyday topics—such as greetings, personal introductions, family, hobbies, numbers, and school life—while developing grammar skills to form simple sentences and questions using present-tense verbs. A blend of traditional assessment and project-based learning allows students to demonstrate knowledge in varied and meaningful ways. By the end of Spanish I, students will be able to communicate at an introductory level with their teacher and peers in Spanish, as well as write short compositions about themselves and familiar topics using learned vocabulary and grammatical structures. The course emphasizes playful identity exploration, empathy, and intercultural understanding. Students engage with diverse Spanish-speaking cultures through reading cultural articles

and carrying out creative culturally based projects based on their own interests. Along the way, they develop deep listening skills, and an appreciation for the challenges of learning a new language.

Instructional Materials: *Vistas* (6th Edition) Textbook and Supersite

SPANISH II

Full year, 1 credit

In Spanish II, students will continue developing communication, and Spanish II builds on foundational skills as students grow into more confident communicators. Learners engage with intermediate-level Spanish through listening, speaking, reading, and writing, exploring everyday themes like travel, shopping, daily routines, dining out, and celebrations. Grammar instruction includes the present and preterite tenses (regular and irregular), the comparative and superlative, as well as direct object pronouns. Students write short compositions on personal and cultural topics and participate in conversations that reflect real-life scenarios in the target language. A blend of traditional assessment and project-based learning allows students to demonstrate knowledge in varied and meaningful ways. This course continues to foster deep listening, identity exploration, and intercultural understanding. Students explore the richness of Spanish-speaking cultures through project-based learning focused on a variety of cultural traditions. Emphasis is placed on empathy and connection, helping students navigate the challenges of learning a new language while developing a greater appreciation for global voices.

Instructional Materials: *Vistas* (6th Edition) Textbook and Supersite

SPANISH III

Full year, 1 credit

Spanish III challenges students to expand their communicative skills through more complex listening, speaking, reading, and writing tasks in Spanish. At this level, students engage in mid-length compositions and discussions on real-world topics such as environmental sustainability, health and well-being, technology, and urban life. They navigate authentic materials like websites, advertisements, and cultural articles, while refining their grammar with structures including the imperfect, preterite and, the subjunctive tenses. This course continues to center identity exploration, empathy, and intercultural competency. Through songs, interviews, social media, and current events, students are immersed in diverse perspectives from across the Spanish-speaking world, with a focus on non-Eurocentric voices. Assessments include both traditional methods and creative, project-based tasks, giving students meaningful opportunities to engage with culture while strengthening core language skills.

Instructional Materials: *Vistas* (6th Edition) Textbook and Supersite

SPANISH IV

Full year, 1 credit

Spanish IV is a course designed for students to confidently engage in complex conversations and express nuanced opinions in Spanish. Through interactive speaking, listening, reading, and research activities, learners discuss and analyze authentic materials such as websites, advertisements, songs, interviews, and short films. Vocabulary themes include personal relationships, media, city life, generational identity, and social justice. Grammar topics deepen students' command of the language, with a focus on the conditional, future, past subjunctive, and continued review of key tenses. Students refine their communication skills through presentations, debates, and projects that challenge them to think critically and empathetically about the Spanish-speaking world. Emphasizing intercultural competency and identity exploration, the course fosters humility, curiosity, and global awareness—equipping students to become thoughtful, multilingual citizens.

Instructional Materials: *Imagina* (4th edition) Text and Supersite

ADVANCED SPANISH V/ADVANCED SPANISH IV

Full year, 1 credit

This advanced course immerses students in the analysis of Spanish-language literature and film, helping them refine their language skills while exploring complex cultural and historical themes. Students engage with full-length feature films, news reports, and historical documentaries in Spanish, gaining the ability to understand and critically assess these materials. Key works include films such as *Roma*, *Pan's Labyrinth*, *Yuli*, and *También la Lluvia*, alongside texts like *La Travesía de Enrique* by Sonia Nazario and *Antes de Ser Libres* by Julia Alvarez. Through these works, students will deepen their understanding of Spanish-speaking cultures and histories, particularly the social, political, and historical contexts of Spain and Latin America. The course emphasizes academic and formal Spanish usage, providing students with opportunities to discuss, present, and analyze topics such as symbolism in film and literature, protest songs, and the portrayal of historical events. Students will enhance their speaking skills in academic settings, deliver interactive presentations, and engage in debates, all while refining their grammatical precision. By the end of the course, students will be able to navigate a range of Spanish-language media, analyze complex cultural content, and express sophisticated opinions in Spanish with confidence.

Instructional Materials: *La Travesía de Enrique* by Sonia Nazario
Antes de Ser Libres by Julia Alvarez

NON-DEPARTMENT SPECIFIC COURSES

RESEARCH AND INFORMATION LITERACY

Fall/Spring, ½ credit

This course is taught entirely online and requires students to submit weekly assignments. The following information literacy skills are emphasized: determine the extent of information needed; access the needed information effectively and efficiently; evaluate information and its sources critically; incorporate selected information into one's knowledge base; use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose; understand the ethical issues involved in accessing and using information; present information in a new way for others to use; understand the impact of AI on research and writing. In this online course, students will be encouraged to learn through project-based activities, collaborative experiences, and exploring web-based tools that will facilitate their research process.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Full year, ¼ credit

All students are required by New York State law to take Physical Education each year. There is a minimum requirement of two hours a week. Students must wear athletic footwear and appropriate clothing for physical activity. Physical Education exemptions may be granted to students who are regularly engaged in supervised physical training outside of school for at least two full hours weekly. Exemptions are commonly granted for students taking dance classes and training in competitive sports. All students who feel they qualify for an exemption must submit the PCS Physical Education Exemption Form. This form should be completed and signed by both the student's instructor and a parent/guardian within the first two weeks of classes. It should be returned to the Division Head who will confirm the arrangement with the instructor. Students who have submitted an exemption form must continue to attend their Physical Education classes as scheduled until they hear that the exemption has been approved. PE Exemption forms are available in Division Offices. Medical exemptions will only be granted with a letter from a physician.

Attendance in Physical Education is mandatory. In cases where students become very busy professionally, there must be documentation for these absences. Students who miss an extensive number of classes will not receive credit and will be required to attend extra classes in the following quarter in order to meet the course requirements.

LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES IN THE UPPER SCHOOL

PCS has a Learning Specialist who is available to work individually with students who need additional support in organization and study skills,

reading comprehension, writing skills, or mathematics. Work with this Learning Specialist may be short-term or ongoing, and is available to students regardless of whether they have a diagnosed learning disability. If a student has a diagnosed learning disability, the Learning Specialist writes an educational plan, which includes the student's strengths and challenges, formal accommodations, and suggestions for teachers working with the student in the classroom. The educational plan is shared with the student's teachers each year. As their schedule allows, the Learning Specialist is available to parents and teachers who have questions regarding students' academic work and progress. They will also consult with the Division Heads when a psycho-educational evaluation by an outside professional may help a student who is not progressing as expected. Requests for accommodations on standardized tests such as the SAT or ACT should be directed to the School's Learning Specialist.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

LETTER/NUMBER GRADE EQUIVALENTS

A: 93 – 100 (4.0)	B: 83 – 86 (3.0)	C: 73 – 76 (2.0)	D: 63 – 66 (1.0)
A-: 90 – 92 (3.7)	B-: 80 – 82 (2.7)	C-: 70 – 72 (1.7)	D-: 60 – 62 (0.7)
B+: 87 – 89 (3.3)	C+: 77 – 79 (2.3)	D+: 67 – 69 (1.3)	F: Below 60

G.P.A. calculations include all academic courses taken at PCS, except for Physical Education.

ELIGIBILITY FOR HONOR ROLL

- High School students are eligible for the Honor Roll at the end of the semester if they are taking a minimum of three academic courses* and they have a 3.7 G.P.A. or better.
- Grades for courses earned at other institutions while enrolled at PCS are not factored into the PCS G.P.A., and thus not computed for the PCS Honor Roll. These courses must be passed and are counted simply as a course taken.

- Students who withdraw from courses after the end of the first quarter are not eligible for Honor Roll, unless they withdrew at the recommendation of the school.
- Students who earned a Pass as a semester grade in any course are not eligible.

*All courses are factored into the G.P.A. and counted for honor roll, except Physical Education.

TRANSCRIPTS AND RECORDS

Student grades are recorded on a formal transcript at the end of each semester. Credit received for courses is calculated at the end of each school year.

Students receive credit for courses in which they earn a D- through A. They do not receive credit if they receive a grade below D-, or for a grade that is considered a failing grade from their previous school. If a failed course is a requirement for graduation, students must retake the course either at PCS or at an approved summer school, and a passing grade will be recorded once it has been earned. The grade for the first course is not taken off the transcript, if this first grade is earned at PCS, it continues to be factored into the PCS G.P.A.

PCS is not in the practice of changing grades of record or semester grades after they have been assigned.

Transfer credit will be given for courses that are similar to courses offered at Professional Children's School. Credit will only be given for summer school courses if that credit was earned when repeating a failed course or to improve a low passing grade. Credit-bearing PCS Summer Academy courses also earn credit.

For courses transferred to Professional Children's School transcripts, credits and grades are recorded, but these courses are not factored into the Professional Children's School G.P.A. The G.P.A. listed on Professional Children's School transcripts includes only academic courses taken at Professional Children's School.

If a student takes an AP class at a previous institution, in addition to the course being listed on the PCS transcript, the AP score is also recorded under "Additional Notes" on the transcript. Official documentation of the AP score must be provided for this score to be listed on a PCS transcript. If a student takes an AP test independently, the student can elect to self-report this score and provide documentation.

COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

PCS values the opportunity to honor Seniors at our graduation ceremony once they have completed their graduation requirements. If a student fails a course that is required for graduation or has committed an egregious violation of our school's code of behavior, that student's participation in our annual ceremony may be in jeopardy and is decided by the Head of Upper School and the Head of School.

DIPLOMA AGE LIMIT

When students do not complete the graduation requirements or meet the departmental standards as outlined above due to professional reasons, they may extend their course of study beyond the end of Senior year. In order to receive a diploma from PCS, and in accordance with the policies of the NYS Education Department, the limit for such study is age 21.

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