

BENTON MIDDLE SCHOOL ELECTIVE COURSE CATELOGUE

Welcome to Benton Middle School's Elective Course Catalogue. Benton Middle School is a Visual and Performing Arts Magnet program that emphasizes a comprehensive arts program. Students benefit from expert instructors who help students build a love of the arts, develop real-world skills, and exceed their own expectations. Our mission is to inspire and empower all students to achieve academic excellence in a creative visual and performing arts environment.

Students may request enrollment in an honors course but final placement is based on student performance, assessment data, and teacher recommendation. Benton offers the following honors courses:

6th Grade	ELA and Math
7th Grade	ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies
8th Grade	ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies

Benton Middle School utilizes a creative 4x4 block schedule to maximize instructional time while increasing the elective offerings over a typical middle school. All Wolverines are enrolled in the standard five core courses (English, Math, PE, Science, and Social Studies) while enjoying the benefit of three electives each year. Class periods are 84 minutes each and permit teachers to increase the depth of learning beyond the 52 minutes of a traditional bell schedule. Benton Middle School offers extensive elective offerings for students to hone their talents as they progress through challenging levels of artistic expression. Currently, Benton employs five full-time arts elective instructors as well as three teachers who share time between Benton Middle School and La Mirada High School. Our unique schedule, caring staff, newly renovated facility and elite arts program will quickly show you why we are the *World's Greatest Middle School*.

Benton has twenty-four different electives listed below. Students may find course descriptions in the following pages.

<u>Visual Arts</u>	<u>Musical Arts</u>	<u>Performance Arts</u>	<u>Career Electives</u>
Studio Art	Beginning Band	Beginning Drama	Leadership (ASB)
Cartooning	Advanced Band	Advanced Drama	AVID 7
Media Arts	Orchestra	Stagecraft	AVID 8
Beginning Photo	Brass & Woodwind Lab	Dance	Automation and Robotics
Advanced Photo	Percussion Lab		Green Architecture
Video Production	Beginning Choir		
	Intermediate Choir		
	Beginning Guitar		
	Intermediate Guitar		

Visual Arts

- Studio Art** Prepare to open your mind, dare to be original, challenge your creativity, take risks, and produce artwork beyond your own expectations! Draw, paint and use mixed media to create portraits, landscapes, illusions, collages and abstract art. Learn how to mix color while experimenting with composition. Get inspiration from famous artists and historically significant art pieces. Students will experience the art of ceramics and will participate in designing skateboard decks for the Benton Board Company.
- Cartooning** Explore the many styles of cartooning from Marvel comics to Manga as you develop and improve your own style. Create collections of characters and story lines and put them together to form comic strips and anime. Improve freehand drawing, rendering, and storyboarding skills. Explore careers in cartooning and the history of animation!
- Media Arts** Media Arts is a class which focuses on integrating the arts with technology. The goal of Media Arts course is to build the basic, fundamental concepts, technical, and artistic skills necessary to produce graphic designs, media artwork, video composition, podcasts, basic web sites, stop motion animation, and basic coding techniques. Students will focus on building their graphic design vocabulary and integrating learned concepts into their digital artwork. Students will leverage various resources such as Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, iMovie, Garage Band, FrameByFrame, and other Internet based resources and Apps.
- Beginning Photography** Beginning photography students learn the technology of photography to insure their image will “turn out” as planned. As they reading about, evaluation of that information, and engage in the vitally important practice, students explore the array of modes built into the modern “point and shoot” digital camera. Through these steps, students gain control of the physical methods of photographic image capturing such as shutter speed, aperture, and ISO. This learning is interwoven with artistic standards such as the value of light, contrast, color, texture, shape, composition, and perspective. Some of the topics explore in this first year class are portraiture, night photography, drawing with light, freeze action, point of view, black and white photography, and creating a magazine cover with PhotoShop.
- Intermediate Photography** Intermediate photography students that have demonstrated competence and self-control during their time in Beginning Photography will use the higher-level classroom digital cameras with manual control settings. These students will expand on their prior learning; develop a greater understanding of natural and artificial lighting, composition, and use of PhotoShop. Students are responsible for photographs that appear in our Benton Yearbook and learn to use the software to build yearbook pages.
- Video Productions** Video Productions is a course in which you will be able to tell stories visually by using cinematic techniques that are common in your favorite movies and television shows. You will work both individually and collaboratively to take projects from conception to finished product by writing scripts, shooting scenes, and editing videos. This course will draw upon all of the arts (photography, drama, music, etc.) to empower you to tell memorable stories using motion pictures.

Musical Performance

Beginning Band	Beginning band is a fun and exciting class for students who no prior experience or have less than a year of experience playing a band instrument. Students can choose from an assortment of classical instruments and have a wonderful opportunity to gain an understanding for reading, writing and performing music. Students can achieve success on a personal level and make several new friends in the team environment that is created in the band community.
Advanced Band (Audition Required)	Advanced Band is a fun and exciting class for students who have one year or more of experience in the Benton Band program or take private lessons. Students in this group have a strong understanding of music theory, rhythm, advanced technique. Students will be able to enjoy an assortment of music and be challenged and continue to grow as musicians. Students can achieve success on a personal level and make several new friends in the team environment that is created in the Band community. We welcome students who want to continue to grow as musicians and take their skills to the next level.
Orchestra	Orchestra is a fun and exciting class for students who no prior experience or have experience playing an Orchestra string instrument, such as Violin, Viola, Cello or String Bass. Students can choose from an assortment of classical instruments and have a wonderful opportunity to gain an understanding for reading, writing and performing music. Students can achieve success on a personal level and make several new friends in the team environment that is created in the Orchestra community.
Brass and Woodwind Lab	Brass and Woodwind lab works specifically on the techniques and skills of the brass and woodwind musical instrument family. Students receive specialized instruction to enhance their skills. Students are able to meet most of their practice-time requirements by taking the Brass and Woodwind Lab. This course is not for students in Orchestra. Students are required to also be enrolled in Beginning or Advanced Band.
Percussion Lab	Students in Percussion Lab focus on the techniques and skills of a percussion instrumentalist. Students focus on building motor skill and rhythm proficiency among all of the percussion family of instruments. Students are able to meet most of their practice-time requirements by taking Percussion Lab. Students are required to also be enrolled in Beginning or Advanced Band.
Beginning Guitar	This one-year course is designed for students with no previous guitar experience. Students will receive guidance and direction in solving problems related to playing the guitar at a beginning level and will learn many of the different styles, skills and techniques required to become a successful guitarist. Areas of concentration include: correct posture, note reading, aural skills, flat-picking, singing songs, rhythmic patterns, chord study, finger-picking styles, musical forms, improvisation and performing experiences.

Intermediate Guitar
(Audition Required)

This one-year course is designed for students who have successfully completed the skills outlined in the Beginning Guitar syllabus. This course includes further development of the skills necessary to become independent as a guitarist. This course emphasizes the development of style, articulation, dynamics, rhythmic ability and skills inherent to performance. Students will receive guidance and direction in solving problems related to playing the guitar on an intermediate level and will learn many of the different styles, skills and techniques required to become a successful guitarist. Areas of concentration include: correct posture, note reading, aural skills, flat picking, singing songs, rhythmic patterns, chord study, finger picking styles, musical forms, improvisation and performing experiences. A progression of technical proficiency is expected.

Beginning Chorus

This course provides a variety of singing opportunities for students with limited formal choral experience. The semester long course is an introduction to vocal music at the Middle school level and a preparatory experience for Concert Chorus here at Benton. Vocal techniques and music reading are emphasized, and students are given the opportunity to explore various musical sources and styles. Much emphasis is placed on providing a positive musical experience to students through class activities.

Intermediate Chorus
(Audition Required)

This course is designed for the large performing group, whose members have a strong grasp of middle level choral music, a broadened base of performance experience, and a desire to explore more advanced literature. Previous experience at the intermediate level or evidence of competency at the intermediate level is required. Students sing three-part and/or four-part music in this year-long performing choral music group. Students have the opportunity to sing solos and participate in small ensembles. Some afterschool rehearsals and evening performances may be required and students will be expected to participate in ALL afterschool rehearsals and evening performances.

Performance Arts

Beginning Drama (Acting)

This is a performance class. It is a basic course intended as a general introductory to drama with emphasis on acting exercises, movement, voice and speech, scene work, monologue work, and play structure. Videotaping of classroom performances will take place and they may be used as in-class demonstration tools. The fundamental principles and techniques of drama will be explored with a variety of materials.

Intermediate Drama (Audition Required)

This is a performance class. It is intended for students who would like to continue developing their theatrical abilities. Closer attention is given to developing the student's ability in character interpretations and in creating characterization through acting. Videotaping of classroom performances will take place and they may be used as in-class demonstration tools. Play analysis and film analysis is also included.

Stagecraft

This is NOT a performance class. This course is designed for the student who is interested in the technical elements of theatre. Areas of study include: scene design and construction, lighting skills, costume, makeup, sound and properties. Videotaping or pictures of work may take place and they may be used as in-class demonstration tools. This class demands a high level of concentration, safety, and labor.

Dance

Student work with a professional dance instructor to develop their skills in a variety of dance genres, including, ballet, hip hop, and modern dance.

Career Electives

AVID 7 and 8

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) is an academic elective course that prepares students for college readiness and success; it is scheduled during the regular school day as a year-long course. Each week, students receive instruction utilizing a rigorous college preparatory curriculum provided by AVID Center, tutor-facilitated study groups, motivational activities and academic success skills. In AVID, students participate in activities that incorporate strategies focused on writing, inquiry, collaboration, organization and reading to support their academic growth.

Leadership

Leadership students will be responsible for planning and running school dances, lunchtime activities, student council meetings, monthly spirit days, and publicizing activities and fundraisers. Application and interview are required. Leadership is open to all grade levels.

Automation and Robotics/Magic of Electrons (Project Lead The Way)

In the first semester, students examine the behavior and parts of atoms as well as the impact of electricity on the world around them. They learn skills in basic circuitry design and use what they know to propose designs such as a burglar alarm for an art museum. In the second semester, students learn about the history and impact of automation and robotics as they explore mechanical systems, energy transfer, machine automation, and computer control systems. Using the VEX Robotics® platform, students apply what they know to design and program traffic lights, robotic arms, and more.

Green Architecture (Project Lead The Way)

Students learn how to apply green concepts to the fields of architecture and construction. They explore dimensioning, measuring, and architectural sustainability and apply what they have learned to design affordable housing units using Autodesk's® 3D architectural design software.