

*Preston*  
*Pumas*



6th Grade  
COURSE DESCRIPTION  
HANDBOOK

# PRESTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

4901 Corbett Drive  
Fort Collins, Colorado 80528  
(970) 488-7300  
Fax: (970) 488-7307  
Attendance: (970) 490-3059

## Principal

Amy Schmer

## Dean of Students

Kyle Healy

## Counselor

Stephanie Pitner

## Assistant Principals

Lindsey Matkin

Bill Saint

## PRESTON VISION

The Preston School Community prepares students to become successful, contributing members of a changing society.

## PRESTON MISSION

The Preston School Community teaches necessary skills and content knowledge within a positive, productive learning environment.

- All students have the right to learn
- All teachers have the right to teach
- All students learn at their own developmental pace
- All learning is a life-long process
- All learning will include the essential skills of:
  - Organization
  - Communication
  - Problem Solving
  - Information Accessing

## SCHOOL DISTRICT AND COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

Fort Collins, Colorado, located 65 miles north of Denver, has an urban population of over 110,000. Colorado State University, Front Range Community College and Poudre School District are some of the major employers of the community. Poudre School District includes 31 elementary schools, 11 middle schools, 7 high schools, and growing numbers of charter and alternative schools. The total enrollment for Poudre School District is approximately 24,000 with an instructional staff of approximately 4,000.

## PRESTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

- A 3-year middle school (6 - 8)
- Accelerated Courses -- Mathematics; Foreign Language; English 8/GT.
- Standards Based Grading.
- Extra curricular activities -- 6<sup>th</sup> cross country, golf, and track & field. Math Counts, Science Olympiad, Lego Robotics, Jazz Band, Science Bowl, Rocketry, Forensics & Debate and Outdoor Club.
- School Mascot -- Puma.
- School colors -- purple, black and teal.
- Enrollment – 1,150 (grades 6 - 8).
- Primary feeder elementary schools – Bacon, Bethke, Kruse, Timnath, Werner, Zach.
- High School attendance area -- Fossil Ridge High School.
- Class Size -- Typical class size is 27-33.

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT CLASS FEES AND MATERIAL COSTS**

Please note that some classes require fees or associated costs for labs, materials, etc. These funds help us in providing enhanced opportunities for our students. **Free and reduced lunch students may have these fees waived.** Please contact your child's counselor if you would like assistance with these costs.

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## **HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

For information regarding Graduation Requirements and PSD Policy please review the district policy at:

<https://www.psdschools.org/sites/psd.psdschools.org/files/PSD/policies//IKF-3.pdf> the Sp

## *REQUIRED CORE CLASSES*

***All core classes are taught with Pre AP strategies.***

Preston Middle School utilizes Pre-Advanced Placement strategies school-wide, to support and challenge students. The use of these strategies allows for our students to practice higher level thinking when they enter high school, reading and writing that can prepare them to enroll in Advanced Placement or Honors courses. Preston continues to have high expectations for academics and encourages students to push themselves. College Board strategies help us to attain this goal.

### **LA610 English 6**

*Grade 6 Year Long*

The sixth –grade language arts course is devoted to developing communication and thinking skills through the integrated study of reading, speaking, and writing strategies as well as further refining active listening and critical viewing practices. In addition to adapting usage, conventions, form and/or genre to a variety of audiences and purposes, students continue their practice with the writing process as they gain experience mastering single and multi-paragraph texts in all four major modes- narrative, descriptive, persuasive, and expository. Students actively apply these aforementioned techniques in order to summarize, compare, contrast, activate and synthesize literary and informational texts across content areas.

### **SC620 Science 6**

*Grade 6 Year Long*

This course is designed for all students and is the first of three courses that meets the Colorado State and Poudre School District Content Standards for Science grades 6 – 8. The major topics covered in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade are: Forms and Transfer of Energy – Renewable vs. Non-renewable Energy; Properties of Matter – Phases and Changes; Living Systems – The Human Body and Diseases; Earth Systems – The Solar System and the Universe.

### **SS630 Social Studies 6**

*Grade 6 Year Long*

Sixth Grade Social Studies is a study of the patterns and interactions of countries in the Western Hemisphere. Students will determine information about people, place, and environment through the use and construction of geography tools. From an understanding of the physical and human characteristics of places, students will study the effects of the interaction between human and physical systems. With an emphasis on resource distribution and use, they will determine how economic, political, cultural, and social processes interact to shape patterns of human populations, interdependence, cooperation, and conflict. This course builds a secondary-level foundation of global awareness, economic literacy, and civic literacy in order to address complex global issues. The 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, and cross-cultural understanding will be emphasized throughout the course.

### **0640 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Mathematics**

*Grade 6 Year Long*

Students will expand upon their knowledge of whole numbers and decimals formed in previous grades to include operations of multi-digit decimals and rational numbers. During the course of the year students will use their knowledge of rational numbers to write and solve equations and inequalities, analyze geometric shapes, and organize and evaluate data displays. Students will explore the concepts of area, surface area, and volume.

## *REQUIRED 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE CLASSES*

### **1010 Art Activities & Appreciation**

*Fee associated*

*Grade 6*

*Quarter*

Art appreciation and history are correlated with studio art, which emphasizes the elements of art (line, shape, color, value, texture, form, and space) and the principles of design (balance, movement, rhythm, contrast emphasis, and pattern unity).

### **1602 Web 2.0 Computer Technology**

*Grade 6*

*Quarter*

This class focuses on the safe and responsible use of Web 2.0 technology for productivity and communication. Tools covered in this class include 3D Design, Digital Photography & Video, Game Programming, Google Earth, Online Collaboration, and Internet Safety. In addition, this class teaches effective Internet and database research techniques.

### **2100/2000 Introduction to Technology**

*Grade 6*

*Quarter*

Introduction to Technology/Engineering is an exciting and fast paced hands-on/minds-on class. Students will explore areas of technology and engineering from electronics, rocketry, robots and other technology related areas. During each unit, Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) concepts will be integrated to provide the student with 21st century skills and help build technological literacy. This class will provide the foundation for additional Technology Education curriculum offered to seventh and eighth grade students. Student projects will align with The Design Cycle (Investigate, Plan, Create, Evaluate) for both student design and evaluation. Safe and proper use of equipment will be integrated in the course.

### **6530 Sci. Adv. – Problem Based Research & Presentation**

*Grade 6*

*Quarter*

The *Research and Presentation* class is designed to provide real-world relevance to the science and math the students are taking. Students will work with Web-based Inquiry activities to analyze existing data; they will create graphs and tables, and look at the value of representing data in different ways. They will examine animations and learn to read diagrams to obtain information. Finally, students will learn to write a scientific explanation that is supported by evidence.

## *MUSIC/ELECTIVE CLASSES*

### **2649 Choir 6**

*Grades 6*

*Year Long*

Choir 6 is an non-auditioned ensemble open to all 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. The choir performs music from all genres and time periods while learning the basics of singing, posture, music theory, and sight singing. Beginning choir is the entry pathway designed to give students with an interest in singing an opportunity to explore the changing voice at the middle level. This class will provide a strong choral foundation that will enable students to confidently transition to Select Choir at the seventh grade and eighth grade level.

### **2570 MS Beginning Band**

*Grades 6*

*Year Long*

The beginning band is designed for teaching basic skills to beginning wind, brass and percussion players. Tone, technical facility, music terminology, and music reading are stressed. Literature appropriate to beginner skill level is presented. Enrollment is based upon completion of the summer band program or by approval of the instructor. If a student is not able to attend the summer band program and wishes to play in the beginning band, he/she

should contact the instructor at the middle school they will attend. Performance opportunities begin in this class. Beginning Band is an extension of PSD summer band. Percussionists are strongly recommended to have two years of piano.

**2580MS Beginning Orchestra**

*Grades 6 Year Long*

This course is designed for the beginning string student. Basic techniques of bowing, fingering, and correct manipulation of the instrument are studied. Literature appropriate to beginner's skill level is presented. Enrollment is based upon completion of the summer instrumental program or by approval of the instructor. If a student is not able to attend the summer instrumental program and wishes to play in the beginning orchestra, he/she should contact the instructor at the middle school they will attend. Performance opportunities begin.

**2501 Music Exploratory 6**

*Grade 6 Semester*

Offers exploration of different musical styles and development of skills that are basic to musical understanding and appreciation and instruction in vocal techniques. Music exploration performance is limited to class.

**4510 World Language Explorations**

*Grade 6 Semester*

World Language Explorations is an elective class designed to introduce students to the alphabet, numbers, pronunciation, basic phrases, greetings, and culture of the individual language.

