

Welcome to Benton Middle School’s Elective Course Catalogue. Benton Middle School is an award winning Visual and Performing Arts Magnet School 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 Accelerated Math
7th Grade	ELA, Accelerated Math, Science, and Social Studies
8th Grade	ELA, Algebra I, 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 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 seven full-time arts elective instructors. Our unique schedule, caring staff, newly renovated facility and elite, arts program will quickly show you why Benton is a ***Destination for the Arts.***

Benton has over 30 different electives listed below. Students will find course descriptions in the following pages. Use the hyperlinks below for quick access to elective descriptions.

<u>Visual Arts</u>	<u>Musical Arts</u>	<u>Performance Arts</u>	<u>Career Electives</u>
<u>Art</u>	<u>Beginning Band</u>	<u>Beginning Drama</u>	<u>Leadership (ASB)</u>
<u>Advanced Art</u>	<u>Advanced Band</u>	<u>Advanced Drama</u>	<u>Automation and Robotics</u>
<u>Cartooning</u>	<u>Jazz Band</u>	<u>Stagecraft</u>	<u>Medical Detectives</u>
<u>Media Arts</u>	<u>Orchestra</u>	<u>Dance</u>	<u>Green Architecture</u>
<u>Advanced Media Arts</u>	<u>Advanced Orchestra</u>	<u>Intermediate Dance</u>	<u>Environmental Science</u>
<u>Beginning Photo</u>	<u>Brass & Woodwind Lab</u>		<u>Ethnic Studies</u>
<u>Advanced Photo</u>	<u>Percussion Lab</u>		<u>Creative Writing</u>
<u>Video Productions</u>	<u>Beginning Chorus</u>		<u>Spanish</u>
	<u>Advanced Chorus</u>		<u>Korean</u>
	<u>Beginning Guitar</u>		<u>Sports Elective</u>
	<u>Intermediate Guitar</u>		
	<u>Advanced Guitar</u>		

Visual Arts

Art	A beginning visual arts studio course that introduces the student to the processes involved in creating two and three-dimensional art forms. Students will learn fundamental art making techniques by experimenting with a range of media that will include drawing, painting, collage and ceramics.
Advanced Art	Students will continue working with the concepts of design while developing skills with a variety of art media. Students explore creative problem solving using visual materials. Students begin to develop independent work in areas of special interest. Student will deepen their exploration of art history and practice art criticism as they learn about art movements and multicultural perspectives.
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 the Media Arts course is to build the basic, fundamental concepts, technical, and artistic skills necessary to produce graphic designs and digital media. Students will focus on building their graphic design vocabulary and integrating learned concepts into their digital artwork. Students will design and create digital designs using a variety of design, video, and audio software, in order to increase their design and visual communication skills. This software includes, but not limited to, Adobe Illustrator and other applications from the Adobe Creative Suite.
Advanced Media Arts	Advanced Media Arts is a class which focuses on integrating the arts with technology. The goal of the Media Arts course is to build upon the basic skills learned in Media Arts. Students will expand their skills and create advanced digital artwork, video composition, and motion graphics. Students will design and create digital designs using a variety of design, video, and audio software in order to advance their design and visual communication skills. This software includes, but not limited to, Adobe Illustrator and other applications from the Adobe Creative Suite.
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.

Advanced Photography

Advanced 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

Prerequisites:

- *None*

In Beginning Band, students will learn the fundamentals of reading, interpreting, and performing music as they prepare for Advanced Band. Members of Beginning Band will perform in several after-school concerts throughout the year. Instrumentation includes woodwinds (flute, oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon, saxophone), brass (French horn, trumpet, trombone, baritone, euphonium, tuba), and percussion.

Technology (iPads, chromatic tuners, metronomes, etc.) will be employed to enhance student learning, reflection, and self-reliance.

Summary: Learn to play a brass, woodwind, or percussion instrument! No experience required. Instrument will be provided.

Advanced Band (Symphonic Band) (Audition Required)

Advanced Band (Symphonic Band)

Prerequisites:

- *One (1) complete year in Beginning Band with an 86% grade average or above, or*
- *One (1) complete year in Beginning Band with a 70% grade average or above and concurrent enrollment in the appropriate Lab, or*
- *One (1) year of continuous private lessons on a woodwind, brass, or percussion instrument (audition required)*

Symphonic Band is a traveling performance ensemble, performing at various festivals and other venues throughout Southern California (transportation is provided by Norwalk-La Mirada USD for most or all off-campus events). Instrumentation includes woodwinds (flute, oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon, saxophone), brass (French horn, trumpet, trombone, baritone, euphonium, tuba), and percussion.

Technology (iPads, chromatic tuners, metronomes, etc.) will be employed to enhance student learning, reflection, and self-reliance.

Through student leadership positions, students will have an opportunity to develop leadership skills.

Summary: Elite musical performance ensemble for brass, woodwind, and percussionists. Prerequisite: Beginning Band.

Jazz Band

(Saxophone, trumpet, trombone, vibraphone)

Prerequisites:

- *One (1) complete year in Beginning or Advanced Band with an 86% grade average or above, or*
- *One (1) year of continuous private lessons on saxophone, trumpet, or trombone (audition required), and*
- *Concurrent enrollment in Advanced (Symphonic) Band*

(Piano, guitar, bass guitar, drums, percussion)

Prerequisites:

- *Audition required for all rhythm section positions*

Jazz Band is a traveling performance ensemble, performing at various festivals and other venues throughout Southern California (transportation is provided by Norwalk-La Mirada USD for most or all off-campus events). Instrumentation includes saxophone, trumpet, trombone, piano, electric guitar, electric bass guitar, drums, vibraphone, and percussion. Various 20th-century American musical styles (jazz, blues, rock, latin, funk, etc.) will be explored. Technology (iPads, chromatic tuners, metronomes, etc.) will be employed to enhance student learning, reflection, and self-reliance.

Summary: Elite musical performance ensemble focusing on jazz, blues, rock, latin, and funk styles.

Orchestra

Prerequisites:

- *None*

Orchestra is a traveling performance ensemble, performing at various festivals and other venues throughout Southern California (transportation is provided by Norwalk-La Mirada USD for most or all off-campus events). In Orchestra, students will learn how to read, interpret, and perform music in a variety of styles. Instrumentation includes orchestral strings (violin, viola, cello, double bass).

Technology (iPads, chromatic tuners, metronomes, etc.) will be employed to enhance student learning, reflection, and self-reliance.

Through student leadership positions, students will have an opportunity to develop leadership skills.

Summary: Learn to play violin, viola, cello, or double bass! No experience required. Instrument will be provided.

Advanced Orchestra

Prerequisites:

- *One (1) complete year in Beginning Strings with an 80% grade average or above, or*

- One (1) year of continuous private lessons on an orchestral string instrument (violin, viola, cello, double bass) or percussion (audition required)

Advanced Orchestra is a traveling performance ensemble, performing at various festivals and other venues throughout Southern California (transportation is provided by Norwalk-La Mirada USD for most or all off-campus events). Instrumentation includes the orchestral string instruments (violin, viola, cello, double bass) as well as percussion. Technology (iPads, chromatic tuners, metronomes, etc.) will be employed to enhance student learning, reflection, and self-reliance. Through student leadership positions, students will have an opportunity to develop leadership skills.

Summary: Elite musical performance ensemble for string musicians and percussionists. **Prerequisite:** Beginning Strings.

Brass and Woodwind Lab

Prerequisites:

- *Concurrent enrollment in Advanced Band or Beginning Band*

Wind Lab will focus on individual development of brass and woodwind technique and musicianship. Proper breath control and support, embouchure formation, tone quality, and mastering the idiosyncrasies of each musician's particular instrument will be emphasized. Instrumentation includes woodwinds (flute, oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon, saxophone) and brass (French horn, trumpet, trombone, baritone, euphonium, tuba).

Students enrolled in Wind Lab are able to get most, if not all, of their practicing done at school and in many cases may not need to practice at home very much or at all in order to be successful in Band.

Technology (iPads, chromatic tuners, metronomes, etc.) will be employed to enhance student learning, reflection, and self-reliance.

Summary: Supplemental instruction and practice time for brass and woodwind students; recommended for all brass and woodwind students enrolled in Beginning or Advanced Band.

Percussion Lab

Prerequisites:

- *Concurrent enrollment in Advanced Band or Beginning Band*
- *All Percussionists in Beginning or Advanced Band are required to enroll in Percussion Lab*

Percussion Lab will focus on individual development of percussion technique and musicianship. All percussionists will learn and develop their technique on core percussion instruments (snare drum & keyboard percussion) as well as learning appropriate technique for a range of common percussion instruments including, but not limited to: xylophone, vibraphone, orchestra bells, bass drum, tom toms, timpani,

suspended cymbals, crash cymbals, triangle, tambourine, miscellaneous auxiliary percussion instruments, drumset, hand drums, etc.).

Students enrolled in Percussion Lab are able to get most, if not all, of their practicing done at school and in many cases may not need to practice at home very much or at all in order to be successful in Band.

Technology (iPads, chromatic tuners, metronomes, etc.) will be employed to enhance student learning, reflection, and self-reliance.

Summary: Supplemental instruction and practice time for percussion students; required for all percussion students enrolled in Beginning or Advanced Band.

Beginning Guitar

Prerequisites:

- *None*

This course is designed for students with little to no classical guitar or musical experience. The goal of this course is for students to learn classical guitar technique, music notation, chords, and finger-picking. A classical nylon string guitar is not needed for this class, one will be provided, but students with their own guitar are encouraged to bring them.

Students will be expected to participate in ALL after school rehearsals and evening performances.

Technology (iPads, chromatic tuners, metronomes, etc.) will be employed to enhance student learning, reflection, and self-reliance.

Summary: Learn the fundamentals of music and classical guitar technique! No Experience required.

Intermediate Guitar (Audition Required)

Prerequisites:

- *One (1) complete year in Beginning Guitar with a 70% grade average or above (or permission of the director)*
- *Previous experience at the intermediate level or evidence of competency at the intermediate level is required.*

This course is a classical guitar ensemble that focuses on the development of comprehensive musicianship through the performance experience. Members will be exposed to a breadth of music literature with an emphasis on high quality performance and thorough understanding. This course is designed for a mid-sized performing group, whose members have a strong grasp of classical guitar technique, a broadened base of performance experience, and a desire to explore more advanced literature. Students will perform three-part and/or four-part ensemble pieces. Areas of concentration include: correct posture, note reading, aural skills, rhythmic patterns, chord study, finger picking, and performing experiences.

Students will be expected to participate in ALL after school rehearsals and evening performances. This is a traveling ensemble that performs at various festivals and venues.

Technology (iPads, chromatic tuners, metronomes, etc.) will be employed to enhance student learning, reflection, and self-reliance.

Summary: Elite musical performance ensemble for classical guitar.

Advanced Guitar

Prerequisites:

- One (1) complete year in Beginning Guitar with a 70% grade average or above (or permission of the director)
- One (1) complete year in Intermediate Guitar
- Previous experience at the intermediate level or evidence of competency at the intermediate level is required.

This course is a classical guitar ensemble that focuses on the development of comprehensive musicianship through the performance experience. Members will be exposed to a breadth of music literature with an emphasis on high quality performance and thorough understanding. This course is designed for a midsized performing group, whose members have a strong grasp of classical guitar technique, a broadened base of performance experience, and a desire to explore more advanced literature. Students will perform three-part and/or four-part ensemble pieces. Areas of concentration include: correct posture, note reading, aural skills, rhythmic patterns, finger picking, and performing experiences. Students will be expected to participate in ALL after school rehearsals and evening performances. This is a traveling ensemble that performs at various festivals and venues.

Technology (iPads, chromatic tuners, metronomes, etc.) will be employed to enhance student learning, reflection, and self-reliance.

Summary: Elite musical performance ensemble for classical guitar. Prerequisite: Beginning Guitar

Beginning Chorus

Prerequisites:

- *None*

This is a vocal music course for middle school students who have a desire to learn, sing and perform music. The goal of this course is to teach students the fundamentals of music, help create independence while learning and singing music to become confident vocalists. Students sing two and/or three part music in this year long course.

Students will be expected to participate in ALL after school rehearsals and evening performances. This is a traveling ensemble that performs in festival(s).

Technology (iPads, chromatic tuners, metronomes, etc.) will be employed to enhance student learning, reflection, and self-reliance.

Summary: Learn the fundamentals of music and vocal technique! No Experience required. Everyone can learn to sing!

Advanced Chorus
(Audition Required)

Prerequisites:

- *One (1) complete year in Beginning Choir with a 70% grade average or above (or permission of the director)*
- *Previous experience at the intermediate level or evidence of competency at the intermediate level is required.*

This course is a choral ensemble that focuses on the development of comprehensive choral musicianship through the performance experience. Members will be exposed to a breadth of music literature with an emphasis on high quality performance and thorough understanding. This course is designed for a large performing group, whose members have a strong grasp of choral music, a broadened base of performance experience, and a desire to explore more advanced literature. Students sing three-part and/or four-part music in this year-long course.

Students will be expected to participate in ALL after school rehearsals and evening performances. This is a traveling ensemble that performs at various festivals and venues.

Technology (iPads, chromatic tuners, metronomes, etc.) will be employed to enhance student learning, reflection, and self-reliance.

Summary: Elite musical performance ensemble for vocalists. Prerequisite: Beginning Choir.

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.

Advanced 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

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

Intermediate Dance

This course is designed for dancers who have mastered the basic technical aspects of dance. Students continue their exploration of dance techniques including ballet, jazz, modern, and hip hop, and are also challenged on the elements of body alignment, placement, and articulation. Dancers in Intermediate explore movement quality and accuracy.

Career Electives

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 <i>Project Lead the Way</i>	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.
Medical Detectives/Design and Modeling <i>Project Lead the Way</i> (Grades 7 & 8 only)	Students play the role of real-life medical detectives as they collect and analyze medical data to diagnose disease. They solve medical mysteries through hands-on projects and labs, measure and interpret vital signs, examine nervous system structure and function, investigate disease outbreaks, and explore how a breakdown within the human body can lead to dysfunction.
Green Architecture <i>Project Lead the Way</i>	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.
Korean 1A (1 st Year) Korean 1B (2 nd Year)	This is for beginning and emerging language students. Korean 1A is an introduction to the Korean alphabet, language and culture. Students will learn the basics of communication (speaking and writing) as well as the contributions Korean culture has made on our world. Students completing both Korean 1A and Korean 1B will be able to start high school in Korean 2.
Creative Writing	Students will develop their skills in creative writing with an emphasis on story-telling. If you love to write or would like to improve your writing skills, consider taking Creative Writing.
Environmental Science	Students will focus on how to utilize their resources to have a positive impact on the environment at their homes, at school, and in their communities. Students will develop their leadership skills and community-building skills to help mitigate negative impacts on the environment
Ethnic Studies (Grades 7 & 8 only)	Students will sharpen their critical thinking skills as they are introduced to and analyze different literature, media, and art pieces that connect to the core ethnic studies concepts such as race, class, identity, and gender, and to their own identity.

Spanish 1A (1st Year)
Spanish 1B (2nd Year)

This year-long Spanish language and culture course is designed to provide students with a comprehensive foundation in the Spanish language, focusing on communication, cultural awareness, and language skills development. Through a variety of engaging activities, authentic materials, and interactive learning experiences, students will explore the rich linguistic and cultural tapestry of the Spanish-speaking world. Students completing both Spanish 1A and Spanish 1B will be able to start high school in Spanish 2.

Sports Elective

Develop athletic skills while participating in team sports.