



A NEIGHBORHOOD VANGUARD & FINE ARTS
MAGNET SCHOOL

3838 BLUE BONNET BLVD . HOUSTON, TEXAS 77025



At Pershing, our focus is on the success of every student who walks through our doors. We feel that success is not only measured in academics, but also in the social and emotional well being of our students. Our goal is to prepare students for the challenges of high school and beyond. Today, Pershing is home to approximately 1,750 6th, 7th and, 8th graders from feeder schools including Condit, Horn, Longfellow, Mark Twain, Roberts, Shearn, and West University. Our students are exposed to a large, diverse population, and are offered many choices and opportunities during their time at Pershing.

Pershing is a Fine Arts Magnet School, dedicated to offering all students opportunities in art, drama, orchestra, band, dance, gymnastics, guitar and vocal performance. Magnet students comprise 30% of the student population with the remainder coming from feeder schools. However, we are more than an arts school. We also offer Vanguard and Pre-AP academics based on the HISD curriculum and guidelines. We are confident our curriculum and faculty are providing students the academic tools they need for future success.

Our school has been recognized locally and nationally. Pershing was named a **“School to Watch”** as a part of a program developed by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform, and we are a State of Texas Recognized Middle School.

We also benefit from strong community partnerships. Our partnership with the local YMCA provides before and after school learning opportunities for our students. We are a No Place for Hate school, a partner with West University Tri-Sports Association, and a partner in the Positive Works initiative. Additionally, we have a very active and involved Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) that helps provide resources and volunteers to improve the experience at Pershing.



PRINCIPAL

Principal **Kim Heckman** started her career as an English as Second Language (ESL) and Spanish as Second Language (SSL) teacher. After 10 years of teaching, Kim became the Assistant Principal at Park Place Elementary in 2003 and was subsequently promoted to Principal in 2005. During her tenure, Park Place Elementary has moved from Acceptable to Exemplary status on the Texas Education Agency accountability measure. Park Place Elementary was awarded 2010 NCEA Higher Performing School Award and 2011 Outstanding Academic Performance Award. In 2009, Kim was honored with the Region IV Principal of the Year and the Asian Pacific American Educator of the Year awards.

TEACHERS

Pershing's faculty is made up of a diverse group of highly educated and dedicated teachers each striving to help our children succeed. Over 40% of our teachers have greater than 11 years teaching experience, with many having more than 20 years experience. A third of our teachers have at least a Master's degree and all of our teachers are certified to teach all three levels of curriculum offered at the school. In addition to their teachers, each grade level has an Assistant Principal and Counselor who stay with the grade throughout their academic career at Pershing.

“We have fond memories of our time at Pershing from the annual Spaghetti Supper to the 8th grade dance. We found the faculty and staff very professional and supportive. Our sons were fully engaged from academics to athletics including other extracurricular activities. Their time at Pershing provided the foundation for being academically successful and fully involved in student government, community service and athletics at the high school level. They are both successful college students today!”

Valorie Steinhart : Prior President Episcopal HS PTO (Ryan UT Junior and Kevin SMU Freshman)

We feel very fortunate to have been zoned to Pershing Middle School. The academics, teachers, staff, diverse student body, extracurricular activities and the opportunity to invest our time into our zoned school and community were all factors in our decision to choose Pershing for our children. Pershing prepared our children academically, socially and environmentally for high school and beyond. We encourage you to choose Pershing and become a part of this thriving learning community!

Jenny Sommer : Prior Feeder Middle School Liason (Alex, Audrey and Mary)

All 5 of our children went to Pershing; 2 are now in college and 3 have graduated from college and are successfully employed. While we considered the school associated with our church, we decided public education had many benefits that could not be matched by any private school. Pershing was the most perfect place for them and an exceptional experience all around. The academics were excellent and the teachers very well-trained and dedicated. Beyond the classroom, the athletic opportunities, the fine arts programs, and especially the social development in those very formative adolescent years fostered by such a diverse and inclusive community provided an education on top of their education. Our children went on to high school extremely well prepared, academically and socially. As they entered high school, not only were they competent and confident in the various academic subjects, often placing out of freshman level classes by placement tests, but they were also quite comfortable socially, as well as humbled since Pershing has such a diverse population from all segments of Houston.”

Irene Lahart : Prior Mothers Club President St. Agnes and PTO Secretary Strake Jesuit (Matt, Andrew, Natalye, Eric, and Kenny)

Pershing is a culturally rich campus with a small school feeling that utilizes a cluster system that is architecturally supported in the design of the campus. Each grade level has designated hallways, morning meeting areas, and cafeteria space. Each student is assigned to a cluster where they remain with the same group of students throughout the day.

While the school has approximately 600 students in each grade, the cluster system allows the students to interact with a much smaller subset in their clusters. The following chart represents cluster and academic groupings for inbound 6th graders.

CLUSTER 6 - 1
Approximately
150 students

ADVISORY/ELECTIVES

CORE CURRICULUM CLASS
100% GT

CORE CURRICULUM CLASS
100% Pre AP

CORE CURRICULUM CLASS
100% On Grade Level

Classes are taught at 3 levels at Pershing and students are encouraged to take classes that will personally challenge them. Our class size averages 25 students in core curriculum classes. Students are segmented into academic levels based upon standardized test results. We use the HISD Vanguard Matrix to identify GT students but will also include students who are high performing on Stanford and STAAR at the agreement of parents and counselors.

GT : The GT program is a rigorous program with dedicated students that are asked to research and write using both primary and secondary resources that require independent thinking, analysis and interpretation. Approximately 30% of the student body.

Tier 1 : Curriculum for students that are capable of performing at more than 1 grade level ahead. This program allows for students to complete Algebra and Geometry before leaving Pershing and offers advanced science classes including IPC, Biology and Environmental science classes for high school credit. Stanford test scores of 95% or above in both math and reading are required for acceptance into this program.

Tier 2 : Curriculum for students that are capable of performing 1 grade level ahead. This program allows for students to complete Algebra before leaving Pershing and offers advanced science classes including IPC, Biology and Environmental science classes for high school credit.

Pre AP : This level of academics are taught using HISD CLEAR curriculum utilizing Pre AP methodologies that include higher level questioning and problem solving skills. Approximately 50% of the student body.

On Grade Level : Students are taught using the HISD CLEAR curriculum and are performing grade level work. Approximately 20% of the student body.

At Pershing we follow alternating block schedules which cuts down on transition time between classes increasing our instructional time. The chart below contains sample schedules for 6th, 7th and 8th graders.

SAMPLE SCHEDULES	A DAY	B DAY
6TH GRADE EXAMPLE		
8:30 - 9:00	Advisory	Advisory
9:00 - 10:30	Elective	Physical Education
10:35 - 12:00	Social Studies	English / Language Arts
12:05 - 2:20*	English / Language Arts	Math
2:25 - 3:50	Math	Science
7TH GRADE EXAMPLE		
8:30 - 9:00	Advisory	Advisory
9:00 - 10:30	Elective	Physical Education
10:35 - 12:00	Social Studies	English/Language Arts
12:05 - 2:20*	Elective - Fine Arts	Elective - Foreign Language
2:25 - 3:50	Math	Science
8TH GRADE EXAMPLE		
8:30 - 9:00	Advisory	Advisory
9:00 - 10:30	Elective	Elective - Speech
10:35 - 12:00	Social Studies	English / Language Arts
12:05 - 2:20*	Elective - Fine Arts	Elective - Foreign Language
2:25 - 3:50	Math	Science

* Includes a 30 minute break for lunch.



Pershing offers more than 50 clubs, electives and enrichment programs for students to participate in, many are unique and not available at other area schools. Some of our programs include:



GARDEN INITIATIVE Teacher Charles Coursey leads the Garden program in which students grow over 14 varieties of vegetables each year. The students are taught the proper care and harvest of the plants and sample the cooked product in class. Each Saturday the vegetables from the Garden are for sale at our own farmers' market. Money earned from the sales pays for garden supplies and other tools used to sustain the program. This class is taught as an elective and as a club.

LANGUAGE LAB For the 2012 - 2013 school year, we are implementing a pilot program of Tell Me More an online learning solution for 150 students that will improve the listening and oral production skills in their foreign language classes. The program assists students in Chinese, French and Spanish.

ACTION LAB Our Computer Power/ Action Lab classroom integrates math, science, and technology. Students work on modules that include rocketry, forensic science, computer aided design, and aerodynamics. Students in this class also explore MIT Scratch computer programming and NXT Robotics.

ROPES COURSE This elective class is the combination of low and high ropes courses that challenge the participants to grow at both the team and individual levels through games, activities and elements. The Low ropes course (which is only a few feet above ground) focuses on collaboration, trust, communication and problem solving. The challenges of the High Ropes Course, which is constructed in the trees off of Blue Bonnet Blvd., teach participants to expand their comfort zones and personal development.

MUSIC PRODUCTION An elective offered to all grades, allowing students to use the same computers and software used by professional music producers and DJs to create their own music. It's the only course of its kind in a middle school in Texas, and possibly, the country.

SPRING BREAK ITALY / FRANCE / SPAIN EXPERIENCE Offered to Pershing Students through Explorica, this is a truly unique spring break experience. Traveling to different destinations gives students the opportunity to explore the culture and interactive learning experiences. Recent trips have included France, Italy and Spain which are led by teachers in the foreign language department.

At Pershing, the Arts program is our HISD designated magnet, however opportunities in the Arts are available to the entire student body regardless of registration status. The students have learning experiences in music, visual arts, dance, gymnastics and theater. The department provides a wide variety of programs that offer opportunities from beginner to advanced that meet the needs and interests of the students, while promoting understanding and appreciation of the arts.

Art : Music Production : Band, Guitar and Orchestra : Dance and Gymnastics : Theater Arts



ELECTIVES

We offer a broad range of electives for students to choose from, some of the electives do require an interview or tryout. * Denotes potential for High School credit

Art
Band
Choir
Chess
Computing Power
Creative Writing
Dance

Drama
Gardening
Guitar
Gymnastics
Health
Journalism*

Languages* : Chinese,
French, Spanish
Musical Theater
Mythology
Orchestra
Ropes

Science Investigation
Science Electives*
Speech*
Swimming
Yearbook
US Wars

Interscholastic athletics offered to students in grades seven and eight are an important part of social development for the students at Pershing. Interscholastic athletics are voluntary at Pershing and are offered at minimal or no additional cost to the parents. We have access to great facilities through our field sharing arrangement with West University Tri-Sports Association and are one of the few middle schools that have a swimming facility.

Our coaches are devoted to teaching the student athletes the fundamentals of each sport, leadership skills that will be used long after they leave the field, and the importance of academic success. Pershing participates fall, winter and spring sports.

We encourage students to pursue athletics as they build confidence, camaraderie, and dedication in youth. Pershing's teams have won numerous zone championships and individual accolades including undefeated boys' 7th and 8th grade football teams for over 10 years running, 2010 and 2011 boys' baseball district champs, zone champions for both 7th and 8th grade girls' volleyball and basketball.



FALL SPORTS

Boys Football
Girls Volleyball
Boys Cross Country
Girls Cross Country
Cheerleading

WINTER SPORTS

Boys Basketball
Girls Basketball
Girls Lacrosse
Boys Lacrosse
Girls Swimming
Boys Swimming
Cheerleading

SPRING SPORTS

Baseball : 1 team grades 6,7,8
Softball : 1 team grades 6,7,8
Boys Soccer
Girls Soccer
Cheerleading

FACILITIES

In 2007 our facility built in 1948 was replaced with a 2 story 195,000 square foot state of the art facility. The new building accommodates approximate 150 staff members and 1,700 students using 85 classrooms. Every classroom has windows, giving students access to light during the day. Our library has over 17,000 titles available to the students, and the library is open to the students in the mornings before school and throughout the day for book checkouts or studying. The library has computers for student projects, and teachers have access to laptop computers for classroom projects. Some classrooms, such as creative writing, also have computers for every student. Each grade level has lab-style science classrooms that are built specifically to conduct lab experiments safely and enhance student learning.

Pershing has a lighted athletic facility so that games and practices can be held safely at night. Included at the facility are a football field, a baseball field, a softball field, two gyms, a gymnastics room—with full gymnastics equipment, and an indoor swimming pool.

Pershing has a 460 seat theater with a full stage, lighting and sound system to produce professional quality productions. There are also two black-box theaters, an orchestra room—with a practice room, a band room—with a practice room, a dance room, and an art room.

UNIFORMS

At Pershing, students have uniform choices, making it more flexible for parents and students. Students can choose to wear a collared polo shirt, an embroidered crew-neck shirt, or a "spirit" t-shirt. They can also wear an approved sweatshirt, also known, affectionately, as a "hoodie." Each grade wears a different color, making it easy for teachers and administrators to tell the 6th, 7th and 8th graders apart from one another.

6th grade : white **7th grade** : red **8th grade** : black

All of these shirts are made available before school begins, and will also be available at the PTO school store throughout the school year.

Uniform bottoms must be khaki in color, and can be shorts, skirts or pants. These can be purchased at any department or retail store at your convenience.



FAQ's

How do Pershing teachers and administration communicate with parents?

Students are encouraged to communicate directly with their teachers. However, when parent involvement is necessary teachers can be reached via their HISD email or are available to schedule one on one conferences as needed. Both the school and the PTO have websites where important information and upcoming events are posted. In addition, the PTO also distributes the Panda Post via email on a bi-weekly basis.

Are all HISD middle schools the same?

HISD utilizes the same curriculum across all middle schools in the district. At Pershing, we provide opportunities for students to choose from a wide range of clubs, electives, and extracurricular activities including athletics. We believe there is something for everyone at Pershing.

What is Pershing's magnet enrollment?

Approximately 30% of our student body participates in our Fine Arts magnet program. For more information on magnet admissions, please contact our magnet coordinator, Rachel Burgan.

How are children placed in class levels?

Counselors place students in class levels based upon standardized test scores. We encourage students to work at the highest academic level possible. Counselors are available to work with students and parents to customize schedules. For example, a student at Pershing can be enrolled in GT Math and Science and take Pre-AP English and Social Studies.

What do you offer dual language students who wish to continue their existing DL program?

We do not offer a dual language program, however, for students wanting to continue their language experience we offer advanced and native speaker programs.

Sounds amazing, how can I tour the school?

School tours are offered every Tuesday at 9:15 leaving from the front office.

KIM HECKMAN Principal

ANASTASIA B. LINDO-ANDERSON School Improvement Officer

MICHAEL CARDONA Chief Schools Officer

TERRY B. GRIER, ED.D Superintendent of Schools

MICHAEL L. LUNCEFORD District V Trustee

Phone : 713.295.5240

Fax : 713.295.5252

Hours of Operation : 7:45 a.m. - 4:45 p.m.

Website : www.pershingms.org

PTO Website : www.pershingpto.org

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