

## Terms to know

**ACT** – Standardized college admission test featuring 4 main sections: English, math reading and science. Students take the ACT at PCS during the spring of junior year.

**Advanced Placement (AP) Classes** – Rigorous, college preparatory classes. Students take a national exam in May and may earn college credit for these classes. These classes offer a weighted GPA on a 5.0 scale.

**Course Selection/Course Requests** – the process by which the student picks the classes he/she wants to take for the next school year. This is done in 2 ways: a paper copy (the 4 year plan) and online through Powerschool.

**Course Selection Plan (4 year plan)** – paper copy that is filled out by the student every year to help map out the classes he/she will take during his/her entire high school career.

**Credit Recovery** – the process by which a student makes up a class (that is required for graduation) that was not passed at the first attempt. May be online or retaken at school.

**Distinguished Scholar Diploma (DSD)** – A diploma that goes above and beyond a traditional diploma by requiring students with a 3.7 GPA or higher to complete a specific rigorous academic course load, complete additional service, and participate in leadership training classes. Students are invited to participate in the spring of their sophomore year if they meet the specific requirements of the program.

**Dual Credit** – specific classes that can earn college credit as well as credit at PCS. Most are offered online through ICC. Students must be juniors or seniors in order to take dual credit classes. These classes offer a weighted GPA on a 4.5 scale.

**Graduation credit hours** – numerical value (typically either .5 or 1) that represents successful completion of a class. A minimum number of credit hours specific to subject area are required for graduation from high school.

**Graduation Service Hours** – Hours that students volunteer in their local community. 10 hours per year are required for a total of 80 hours by graduation.

**GPA (Grade Point Average)** - shows overall academic performance. Computed by assigning a point value to each grade earned.

- **Cumulative GPA** - the GPA computed for all classes over the entire high school career. Cumulative GPA is updated only after each semester.
- **Semester (or current) GPA** - the GPA for the current semester of classes only. Does not include classes previously taken.
- **Weighted GPA** – a GPA that is calculated using a system that assigned a higher point value to grades in more difficult classes. Honors, Dual Credit and AP classes are all weighted classes at PCS.

**Honors Classes** - certain upper-level courses that challenge students academically and prepare them for more difficult, college preparatory classes. These classes offer a weighted GPA on a 4.5 scale.

**Mini-term** – the week before spring break when non-traditional classes are offered (for example, Money Management, Construction, Mission Trips, Candy Making, etc) to give students hands on learning that is not available during the school year. Required for graduation.

**PE Opt Out** – Students taking PE have the option to take a study hall in lieu of PE if they are in a sport and do not have a study in their schedules. Determined on a first come, first served basis and when the sport season is over, the student must return to his/her PE class.

**Permanent Academic Record** – record of all classes and grades taken while in high school. Also known as a transcript.

**Powerschool** – online student information system (SIS) used by PCS for all student information. Parents and students access it to check grades, attendance and schedule information.

**SAT** – College Board’s standardized college admissions test similar to the ACT.

**Schoology** – learning management system (LMS) used by all PCS high school students and teacher to communicate, turn in assignments and keep track of course work.

**Semester Exams (Finals)** - Comprehensive exam taken at the end of each semester covering content specific to that semester for specified academic classes. Worth 20% of the final semester grade.

**Transcript** – Official record of course work at school. Only high school classes are recorded on a PCS transcript. Most colleges (and some employers) require an official copy of a student’s transcript as an admissions requirement and after graduation as proof of completion of high school.

**X2vol.com** - website that we use to track service hours. Students will create an account and log their volunteer activities, each time they serve.