

SPECIALIZED HIGH SCHOOLS Workshop Packet

**Interpretation services are available.
Please see a representative for assistance.**

This Workshop Packet is available in:

العربية | বাংলা | 中文 | Français | Kreyòl Ayisyen | 한국어 | Русский |
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**You can also get interpretation services by calling 718-935-2399
or visiting a Family Welcome Center.**

Students with disabilities participate in high school admissions in the same way as their non-disabled peers. Students in 8th grade whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) Teams develop IEPs with a recommendation for special education services within a district school submit applications during the annual high school admissions process in December. Students with disabilities may apply to all programs listed in the [New York City High School Directory](#). The Directory outlines each school's admissions requirements, which are applicable to all students. Additional information on the high school admissions process may be found at www.nyc.gov/schools/ChoicesEnrollment/High and information on special education programs and services may be found at www.nyc.gov/schools/Academics/SpecialEducation/programs.

Applying to High School

Students with disabilities may apply to any high school program, and all schools are expected to deliver special education supports and services to meet students' needs. The high school application shows information about students' current recommended special education instructional program and support services, prior year attendance data, reading and math standardized test scores, and subject area grades. Students and families can learn more about the programs and services available at each high school by meeting with guidance counselors, reviewing the [New York City High School Directory](#) or other resources provided by the NYCDOE, and attending high school admissions [events and workshops](#) and school [information sessions](#).

Test- or Audition-Based Admissions Schools (Including Specialized High Schools)

Students with disabilities who are interested in applying to schools with admissions criteria that include tests and/or auditions may receive certain testing accommodations, as specified on their IEPs, as long as the accommodation does not impact what the test or audition is trying to measure. Review the [New York City High School Directory](#) for information about admissions criteria and test and audition dates, and, for information on testing accommodations, visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/Classroom/instruction/accommodations.htm>.

Students who are interested in applying to one of the Specialized High Schools must take the Specialized High Schools Admissions Test (SHSAT) and, if specified in their IEPs, may receive testing accommodations on the exam. To apply for Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts, a specialized high school for performing/visual arts, students must participate in the school's audition process but are not required to take the SHSAT. The only accommodations that are not permitted for tests or auditions are ones that change what is being measured. Students and their families should review the [Specialized High Schools Student Handbook](#) to learn more about the Specialized High Schools admissions process and related testing accommodations.

Special Education Specialized Programs in District Schools

Special education specialized programs provide targeted services and supports for students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), students with intellectual disabilities, and students recommended for bilingual special education. Specialized programs are not available in all schools, and students must meet specific eligibility requirements. Therefore, students who are continuing in a specialized program or entering one for high school should work with their guidance counselors to also complete the regular high school application to ensure they apply to district schools that have the program the IEP Team has determined best meets the student's needs. Students may receive both a specialized program offer and a district high school offer. In these cases, students and families should carefully consider which program option best meets the student's academic and personal goals. See below for additional information about specialized programs. You may also visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/enrolling/specializedprograms/default.htm> or contact specializedprograms@schools.nyc.gov for information about the application process.

- **ASD Nest and ASD Horizon** programs are offered within some district schools and include a therapeutic component, coordinated and provided by a multi-disciplinary team.
- **Academics, Career, Essential Skills Program for Students with Intellectual Disabilities** (ACES-ID) are offered within some district schools for eligible students who are classified by the IEP Team as having an "Intellectual Disability" and participate in New York State Alternate Assessments (NYSAA).

- **Bilingual special education** programs are provided for students whose IEPs recommend special education supports and services in a language other than English to meet the needs of students with emergent English language skills. Currently, bilingual special education programs are offered in Spanish, Chinese, and Yiddish.

Functionally Accessible Schools or Programs for Students with Mobility Impairments

Fully or partially accessible buildings are available for students with mobility impairment(s) to ensure they can enter and access the necessary areas of their school. A list of accessible schools can be found on the Office of Space Planning website at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/OSP/Accessibility.htm>. Site accessibility is also described in the [Directory of NYC Public High Schools](#). Students and families are encouraged visit the school to determine whether the level of accessibility is appropriate to meet specific mobility needs.

Students in Specialized Schools (District 75)

In New York City, specialized schools for students with disabilities are managed by District 75. The transition to high school is a time when many IEP Teams, including the family, consider a transition to a more inclusive program in a district school, if appropriate. For additional information about District 75 schools, please visit www.nyc.gov/schools/Offices/District75 or email d75info@schools.nyc.gov.

- **Transitioning to a District High School:** current 8th graders in District 75 who are preparing to transition to a district high school participate in high school admissions. This transition should be discussed and planned for at the 8th grade annual review meeting. Students and families are encouraged to work with their guidance counselors and attend a high school fair to learn more about their district high school choices and options.
- **Continuing in District 75 for High School:** current 8th graders who will be transitioning to high school in a specialized District 75 school will get placement into high school through the District 75 Placement Office. Students will be notified of the high school placement in April or May. Current 8th grade students who have a recommendation of SETSS provided by a District 75 provider will be transitioning to high school in a specialized District 75 school and participate in an application and placement process managed directly by District 75. Applications are provided directly to students and are due in December. Students will be notified of their high school placement by the District 75 Placement Office in May or June.

Special Education Services and Supports in High School

When students transition to high school, the special education services, supports, and instructional strategies listed on their IEPs are provided in a variety of ways depending on their needs in each subject and/or functional area, and schools' instructional approach and academic program. For more information, please see our [Family Guide to Special Education](#).

Academic Planning and Post-Secondary Goals

Students and families are encouraged to think about post-secondary goals and engage with support staff at school to strategically plan for life after high school. Ideally, these discussions are held throughout middle school as students' 8th grade IEPs must specify post-secondary goals. Students, families, and school staff should work together to consider which academic program, assessment (standard vs. alternate), and graduation pathway best supports the student toward achieving those goals. Students' IEPs should reflect the specially designed instruction, supports, services, goals, and post-secondary objectives needed to meet specific graduation requirements.

Graduation Requirements

Students in New York City must complete a minimum of 44 credits of coursework in specific subject areas and pass New York State Regents exams to graduate from high school. Students with disabilities are encouraged to pursue the most rigorous diploma option appropriate, based on their interests and goals. Eligible students with disabilities may also earn a commencement credential in addition to a diploma or as a standalone credential. These credentials are not equivalent to a diploma, but provide students the opportunity to demonstrate their preparation for entry-level work. For additional information on graduation requirements, visit <http://www.nyc.gov/schools/RulesPolicies/GraduationRequirements> and talk to your child's guidance counselor. The [Graduation Requirements Cards](#) are a quick reference for families to understand all the requirements.

For more information, call (718) 935-2399 or visit our website: www.nyc.gov/schools/ChoicesEnrollment/High

Last Updated: May, 2016

Visual and Performing Arts High Schools: Preparing Your Audition/Arts Portfolio

New York City students with an interest in the arts have an array of high school choices dedicated to cultivating artistic talent. To gain admission to these schools, in addition to demonstrating your academic aptitude, you must also exhibit strong artistic skills in the form of an audition and/or portfolio.

How to Prepare for a Visual Arts Audition

When applying to a Visual Arts program, you may be asked to demonstrate your skill and commitment in up to four ways: through a portfolio of your work, a writing component such as an essay, completion of a new artwork upon request, and/or an interview.

1 The Portfolio

The visual arts portfolio is a critical part of the visual arts audition. A well thought-out portfolio shows your strengths and your potential for high school-level work. It is an opportunity to display your best efforts. Individual schools may vary slightly in their requirements. Check the school's website for complete information. The following guidelines will help you assemble a competitive portfolio.

Presentation: You can protect your work and make a good impression by using a sturdy, high-quality portfolio case. A neat and attractive presentation is extremely important. It tells the reviewing committee that you have taken care of your work and that you are proud of it.

Your pieces should be:

Clean, undamaged, and in good shape

Unframed

Labeled on the reverse side with:

- ✓ Your name
- ✓ School name
- ✓ Title
- ✓ Date of work
- ✓ Either "Under Supervision" or "Without Supervision"

Number and Type of Artwork This varies from school to school, with some programs requesting six works and others requesting anywhere from 10-20. Some schools request *only* 2-dimensional work and some allow you to include photographs of 3-dimensional work. When submitting digitals/photographs of 3-dimensional work, label each one and put them in presentation sleeves, or other neat packets.

Content: As you assemble your portfolio, carefully select the works that you feel represent your best efforts. ("Less is more" is an excellent guideline!) Consider the following:

Select current artwork (work completed in 7th or 8th grade)

Schools enjoy looking at sketchbooks

Do not include work done in the style of a famous artist, copies of famous works, or work copied from photographs

Most of the work should be done from observation but you may include some work done from imagination or memory

Cartooning should be limited to a minimum (**Portfolio: Content Considerations continued on next page**)

Performing Arts High Schools: Preparing Your Audition/Arts Portfolio

The selections should demonstrate your understanding of composition and the principles of design:

- ✓ Unity
- ✓ Balance
- ✓ Repetition
- ✓ Variety
- ✓ Emphasis
- ✓ Proportion
- ✓ Rhythm
- ✓ Figure-Ground Relationship
- ✓ Scale

You may select works that are thematic to show an in-depth investigation of an idea **OR** you may include a variety of subjects to show a breadth of interests

You may wish to prepare pieces using a variety of media (such as drawing, painting, printmaking, media technology, etc.) to demonstrate your skill with different tools, materials, and techniques

Review the specific portfolio requirements for the schools to which you wish to apply in the High School Directory and on the school's website

2 The Writing Component

Some schools require students to write an essay or answer a series of questions about why they want to attend that particular school. You also may be asked to compare two works of art. Schools will be looking at the content of your writing as well as the level of literacy. As in any piece of writing you would submit for examination, the writing component of your audition should be:

- Well organized
- Demonstrate correct sentence structure, spelling, punctuation and paragraphing
- Address the questions

The writing component is intended as a way for you to convey your commitment to the study of visual arts and your interest in attending the school.

3 Completion of New Artwork upon Request

Many schools will ask you to complete one or two pieces of art "on the spot." The most common art activities are drawing a figure or inanimate object from observation, though you also may be asked to draw an object from memory. Work is usually done on 8.5" x 11" paper. Bring a drawing pencil and eraser with you. Examiners will be looking for imaginative and creative approaches to the assignment within the parameters given at the audition.

4 The Interview

Schools may include interviews in their admissions process. While questions and procedures vary from school to school, remember:

- Poise and appearance count
- Attitude is important; show respect to teachers and other students
- Convey your commitment to the visual arts
- Listen closely and try to provide answers that directly address the questions you were asked. Possible questions:
 - Why did you choose to audition for this school?
 - How did you decide what to include in your portfolio?
 - Which art museums or galleries have you visited lately?
 - In the future, how do you plan to use the art education you receive here?

The interview will most likely be in the form of a conversation. You may be asked about your background, experience, knowledge and interest in the visual arts. This will be a friendly conversation; interviewers want you to feel at ease.

Performing Arts High Schools: Preparing Your Audition/Arts Portfolio

How to Prepare for a Drama/Theater Audition

Requirements Different schools have different audition requirements – check your High School Directory for specific requirements. In general, students may be required to do any of the following:

Recite two prepared monologues. The two monologues should differ in style (for example, one comic and one dramatic) and meet the following requirements:

- All monologues should be published. Original student writing or internet monologue material is not appropriate.
- All monologues should be 1-2 minutes in length.
- Monologue characters should be age-appropriate.
- Generally, classical theater or verse such as Shakespeare is discouraged unless the student can reveal real facility with complex language.

Participate in theater games or improvisations in order for auditioners to judge students' ability to collaborate in a group and to be spontaneously creative.

Verbally answer questions about reasons for wanting to be in a theater program in general and at that school in particular. Auditioners will want to know that students are committed to this particular school and the demands of a theater program.

Sing a musical selection from a Broadway show (for students applying to musical theater programs only). Check with individual schools about their musical theater audition requirements.

Note: Schools may call students back to present their monologues a second time. Typically, no additional preparation would be required for a “call back” audition.

Monologue Criteria: The specific criteria by which students are evaluated vary among schools. However, auditioners may look for the following features:

- ✓ Dramatic Understanding
- ✓ Characterization
- ✓ Diction
- ✓ Clarity of Communication
- ✓ No Costume or Prop Pieces

Preparing a Monologue: Audition monologues are available from a variety of print and published sources. Please consider the following recommendations:

You may select either an independent monologue or a monologue taken directly from a play and edited for your purposes. If you select a monologue from a play, please be aware of the entire play from which the monologue is taken. You should read the play and be familiar with the character you are portraying.

Listed below are some published monologue books to consider. These books are readily available online or at the Drama Bookshop, 250 W 40th St., New York, NY 10018: (212) 944-0595. The Performing Arts Library at Lincoln Center is also a good resource for monologue books.

- *Audition Monologues for Student Actors: Selections from Contemporary Plays* by Roger Ellis
- *Red Licorice: Monologues for Young People* by Carole Tippit
- *Monologues for Young Actors* by Lorraine Cohen
- *100 Great Monologues: A Versatile Collection of Monologs, Duologs and Trilog for Student Actors* by Rebecca Young
- *Multiplicity: A Collection of Monologues for Student Performance* by R. James Scott & Bianca Cowan

Students should be coached on the presentation of the monologue for the above criteria. If you have an in-school theater teacher, ask for assistance with your preparation. An English teacher may also be able to help.

At the audition, students should be prepared to announce their name, monologue selection and the playwright. For example: “My name is _____. I will be performing one of Anne’s monologues from *The Diary of Anne Frank* by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett.”

Performing Arts High Schools: Preparing Your Audition/Arts Portfolio

How to Prepare for a Music Audition

Selecting and Practicing Your Audition Repertoire

- Choose your repertoire well in advance of the audition.
- Select music that is written specifically for solo instrument or voice (not music for which your instrument or vocal part provides the harmony for other instruments or voices).
- Select music that highlights your strengths. A difficult selection played or sung well can show off your skills. However, an easier selection played or sung with strong musicality and good intonation can be equally impressive.
- When practicing, prepare slow, expressive parts as carefully as you would up-tempo, technically challenging sections.
- Isolate and practice your weak areas. Spend time building your capacity so that all sections of your piece are performed with equal competency.
- Use a tuner and a metronome during the early stages of your practice to help with pitch and rhythm.
- Practice performing your audition repertoire in front of an audience. Ask them to critique your performance and overall presentation.
- Practice sight-reading every day.

Vocal Audition

- Prepare at least two pieces in contrasting styles from memory. However, you may not be asked to sing a second selection.
- Prepare one song in a foreign language, if possible.
- Choose songs from musical theater productions, American traditions, world-folk traditions, or art song collections. Note, most schools discourage performing R&B, Rock, and Rap selections for the audition. Check each school's preferences.
- Be prepared to match pitches, echo rhythms and melodies provided by the adjudicator.
- Be prepared to vocalize (arpeggios, leaps, runs, etc.) to demonstrate vocal range and placement.

Instrumental Audition

- Prepare one piece that can be played through to the end.
- Be prepared to play a second selection in a contrasting style or tempo. However, you may not be asked to play a second selection.
- Be prepared to sight read a short musical passage (4-8 measures).
- Be prepared to play at least one scale and know all required scales from memory. However, it is acceptable to use sheet music when playing your prepared audition selection(s).

Resources for Selecting your Repertoire

- Ask your music teacher for help when selecting repertoire.
- New York State School Music Association Manual, Edition 31. A professional resource for teachers and conductors, this book contains graded lists of repertoire for all voice types and instruments. It is available in some libraries or may be purchased from www.nyssma.org at a cost of \$55.
- You may be able to purchase sheet music for your repertoire at the following stores: Sam Ash Music, The Guitar Center Stores, Music Time (on line), J. W. Pepper (on line), Catalano Music (Long Island).

General Audition Advice

- ✓ Keep going even if you make a mistake. Do not get flustered. The adjudicator is most interested in determining your potential.
- ✓ If the adjudicator asks you to change the way you performed a passage, it doesn't necessarily mean you played or sang it incorrectly. He or she may wish to see how readily you are able to receive feedback and/or make a correction.

Performing Arts High Schools: Preparing Your Audition/Arts Portfolio

How to Prepare for a Dance Audition

Requirements: Different schools have different audition requirements – Check your High School Directory for specific requirements. In general, students may be required to do any of the following:

Participate in a dance class. Dance classes usually involve a combination of ballet and modern dance techniques, though some schools may require separate classes for each style. Some schools may also require students to participate in other forms of dance in the class, such as jazz or improvisation.

Perform a solo dance.

- The solo should show off the student’s best dance and performance abilities.
- Students should prepare a solo piece of original choreography, although some schools may allow pieces choreographed by someone other than the student.
- The solo may be in a style other than ballet or modern dance (such as Jazz, African, or Indian Classical dance) if that has been the student’s primary training.
- Schools may require the solo dance to be anywhere from 1 to 3 minutes in length.
- In some schools, all students have a chance to perform their solo pieces. In other schools, only students who are called back after the technique class will perform their solo pieces.

Complete a written audition. Some schools require students either to write an essay about why they want to attend the school or to take an exam to determine the extent of their dance knowledge.

Dance Criteria: The specific way students are evaluated varies among schools. However, keep in mind the following criteria:

Poise and appearance, as shown through neatness and attentiveness

Attitude: Appropriate classroom behavior, showing respect to teachers and peers, a sense of commitment to dance, and a desire to learn

Technical Ability: Demonstrated achievement in dance technique and the ability to pick up new movement information, take verbal and demonstrated corrections, and revise one’s work on the spot

Body Alignment: Knowledge of basic anatomical relationships

Musicality and Rhythm

Creativity, as shown in improvisation and the student’s solo choreography

Performance Skills: The ability to communicate with an audience

General Understanding of Dance, as demonstrated in movement and/or in verbal or written form

Attire: Students should come dressed in appropriate dance clothes for ballet and modern dance work: Footless tights, leotard, soft ballet slippers (no pointe shoes unless specifically requested). Other recommendations:

Wear solid colors – no fancy appliqués or patterns.

Do not wear midriff-baring outfits.

Do not wear baggy shirts or baggy pants.

Hair should be neatly pulled off the face in a bun or pony tail if long or neatly combed if short. This applies to girls and boys alike.

Remember to Bring to Your Audition

- ✓ Your Audition Ticket
- ✓ Your dance clothes and shoes
- ✓ A pen/pencil
- ✓ The tape or CD for your solo
- ✓ A light snack and water

Please complete and drop off in the box labeled "Surveys" on your way out.
Specialized High Schools Summer Workshop Survey

I am a:

- Student attending with my parent/guardian
- Student attending by myself
- Parent/guardian attending without my child
- Other _____

I/my child currently attend(s):

School Name: _____

Borough: _____

This fall, I/my child will be entering:

- 7th grade
- 8th grade
- 9th grade
- Other _____

If you would like to receive email updates about High School Admissions, please sign up with your email address:

1) Did you attend an Introduction to High School Admissions Summer Workshop this summer?

- Yes No

2) Before coming to this event, I/my child...

(check all that apply)

- Received a *Specialized High Schools Student Handbook* in English
- Received a *Specialized High Schools Student Handbook* translated in my home language
- Viewed the *Specialized High Schools Student Handbook* online
- Spoke to my guidance counselor about High School Admissions
- Participated in classroom or after-school activities around High School Admissions
- Researched test preparation programs for the SHSAT

3) The most useful part of today's workshop was...
(choose one)

- Learning about LaGuardia High School auditions
- Learning about the Specialized High Schools Admissions Test (SHSAT)
- Learning about testing accommodations
- The Q&A with the panel of Specialized High School representatives
- Learning how offers are made for the testing schools
- Other _____

4) Which (if any) of the following do you plan to do before applying to Specialized High Schools?

(check all that apply)

- Talk to my guidance counselor
 - Read school descriptions in the *Specialized High Schools Student Handbook*
 - Take sample SHSAT questions in the *Specialized High Schools Student Handbook*
 - Prepare for the SHSAT in another way (please describe below)
- _____
- _____

5) What is most important to you when thinking about specialized high school programs that you will apply to?

(check up to 5 boxes)

- Activities offered (ex: school clubs, internships)
- Advanced Placement (AP) courses offered
- Attendance rate
- Chances of getting in
- Graduation rate
- Safety of the school and neighborhood
- School culture
- School reputation
- School size
- Sports offered
- The program's area of focus (ex: Architecture)
- Travel time
- Other _____

6) How did you find out about this workshop?

- Department of Education postcard
- Department of Education email list
- My school/my child's school
- Social media (ex: Facebook, Twitter)
- At an Intro to High School Admissions Workshop
- Other _____

7) Were you satisfied with the translated materials you received today?

- Yes No Does not apply

8) Were you satisfied with interpretation services you received today?

- Yes No Does not apply

Please write in any other thoughts/suggestions:

**PLEASE COMPLETE
SURVEY ON OTHER
SIDE AND DROP OFF
IN THE BOX
LABELED 'SURVEYS'
ON YOUR WAY OUT.**

THANK YOU!