



MCPS VISUAL ART CENTER APPLICATION PROCESS

The Visual Art Center (VAC) offers students a broad perspective of the visual arts and deepens their understanding of the opportunities for art-related careers through exposure to art history, contemporary artists and artwork. This rigorous and comprehensive program, directed towards portfolio development, enables students to realize and achieve their full potential in visual art. Lessons consist of lectures, demonstrations, slide presentations, studio activities, assigned research, and group critiques. Most graduating students advance to study fine arts or commercial art at a higher level.

STUDENTS ACCEPTED WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO:

- Study commercial design techniques using digital media and computer graphics software
- Receive a strong classical foundation in drawing, painting and Art History
- Complete one or more College Board Advanced Placement (AP) Studio Art Portfolio Exams: Drawing, 2-D or 3-D,
- Exhibit work and compete at local, state, and national art competitions including: NFAA Young Arts, National Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, NAACP- ACT-SO, and Congressional High School Art Competition.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY:

Any student currently enrolled in 8th-11th grade, who is interested in a rigorous advanced level portfolio development program, is encourage to apply for acceptance into this magnet program. The VAC program is open to applicants from all high school clusters in the county. Students may opt to take a combination of courses at their home high school and the VAC, or they may opt to transfer to Albert Einstein High School. Down county Consortium (DCC) resident students who have been assigned to Einstein through the choice process and have been accepted into the Visual Arts Center will be provided transportation from Consortia neighborhood stops. Students not assigned to Einstein HS are responsible for providing their own transportation.

APPLICATION PROCESS & DEADLINES:

- Potential applicants should plan to visit the VAC with a parent or guardian by attending one of the Options Fairs or Open Houses:

The DCC High School Information Night for Grade 8 students and families:

- Thursday, September 26, 2019 at John F. Kennedy High School

NEC High School Options Fair Information Meeting

- Wednesday October 2, 2019 at James Hubert Blake High School:

DCC Albert Einstein High School Open House

Thursday, October 24, 2019 -

During this event students and families will have the opportunity to meet with VAC faculty, students, and parents. The presentation will begin after the AEHS Welcome in the Auditorium at 7 pm. Come to the AEHS Gallery on Main Street and groups will be guided down to the VAC Classroom by current VAC Students.

- Contact current school counselor to review graduation requirements and determine if the VAC course offerings will fit into student's schedule options. Discuss, if accepted, whether the student would transfer to Albert Einstein High School full time or commute daily to attend the VAC for two periods before returning to another MCPS High School.
- **Students need to prepare a portfolio that reflects their best work.** This should include **2-3 observational drawings** and **5-7 completed artworks in any media.**
- Complete online application form during the **October 4 – November 1, 2019** window. The online application can be accessed in the document library of the MyMCPS Parent Portal or MyMCPS Student Portal.
- By submitting an online application, the student is required to attend a portfolio review and drawing session on **Saturday, December 14, 2019** at Albert Einstein High School. There will be a morning and afternoon sessions available. Each session will be two hours. Please plan to arrive fifteen minutes before the scheduled time for registration. The snow date for this session is December 17 and 18, 2019.
- Students who are unable to test on Saturday because of religious reasons will be able to schedule an alternative date. These sessions will be held on **Tuesday, December 10, 2019** at the same location. The snow date for this session is December 11, 2018.
- [A third Application Day has now been scheduled for Saturday, January 4, 2020, \(*\) See Home VAC Home Page.](#)
- If the student requires accommodations, a copy of the Individualized Education Program (IEP), Section 504 Plan, or English Language Learner (ELL) Plan that specifies the accommodations **MUST** be submitted to the VAC faculty by **December 1, 2018**. The faculty will contact the parent/guardian to discuss accommodations.

SELECTION & NOTIFICATION:

Admission to Visual Art Center is very competitive. There are only 25-30 seats available each year, but there will be a waiting list. Multiple criteria are used to evaluate the applicants including: portfolio content, teacher recommendation, artist statement, previous grades and course work. Notifications about selection will be sent to the applicant's parent/guardian in early **February 2020**.

PORTFOLIO CONSIDERATIONS:

- Students are encouraged to show their unique talents and to bring a portfolio that may include: sketchbooks, drawings, paintings, sculptures, mixed media work, photographs and digital artwork.
- Students must provide evidence of observational value drawing by including representations of at least one self portrait drawn from a mirror and one still life. Students may choose to include an additional observational drawing that represents a subject of choice.
- Cartoon or Manga style artwork must be original and not copied from other artists.
- When evaluating portfolios, the Selection Committee is looking for:
 - Creativity & Content – does the artist express a personal statement and/or communicate ideas in an innovative way?
 - Composition & Design – does the artist demonstrate an understanding of fundamental art elements and design principles?
 - Craftsmanship & Media Manipulation – does the artist demonstrate skill and technique when utilizing various art media?

For More Information: Contact VAC Faculty:
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 240-740-2700 extension #1080.
<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/vac/> Contact
 MCPS Fine Arts Office:
[Sarah D Neubold@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Sarah_D_Neubold@mcpsmd.org)

APPLICATION CHECKLIST:

- Complete Online Application
- Prepare Student Portfolio
- Attend Onsite Drawing Session