



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Duke Ellington School of the Arts

SY23-24 Audition Procedures – Literary Media & Communications

GUIDELINES

All auditions are closed to parents/guardians, family members, or peers. If you leave **for non-emergencies** during your audition, you may be disqualified.

All students must complete an audition in person. However, virtual accommodations can be made for exceptional circumstances and should be requested for consideration to the Admissions Office.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please contact the Admissions Office at admissions@ellingtonarts.org or call 202-631-3129.

What We Are Looking For

LMC is the storytelling department, across a range of platforms, but with a focus on writing as the core. We are looking for students who are intelligent, respectful, humble, and intellectually curious about the world and how it works. The prospective student should be confident about their voice and aware of the need for effective communication. The student must read constantly and have an awareness of current events. Prospective students must engage with technology and have an awareness of the possibilities of emerging platforms as means of storytelling.

What to Upload/How to Prepare

FOR THE AUDITION ITSELF:

There are 3 requirements for the LMC audition – submission of written materials, video recording, and photo essay. If selected to proceed, you may be asked to participate in an interview or workshop.

WRITTEN PIECES

Portfolios will be submitted electronically as a pdf and need to be submitted as ONE document. Please share your document with the following email addresses: penny.hollis@k12.dc.gov and eric.easter@k12.dc.gov who will confirm the receipt.

Your portfolio must contain the following:

- Title page with candidate name, address, telephone number, grade, and a recent headshot, if available, of the applicant.
- Titles for each piece
- Samples of your best writing, which MUST include two (2) pieces from the following four categories:
 1. At least one original poem
 2. An original short story of no more than 300 words
 3. An original work of cultural critique/review (movies, books, art, music, culture)
 4. A one-page personal essay on why you write and what motivates you creatively

Note: *We strongly encourage submissions that accurately reflect your creative spirit, even if independent of schoolwork.*

Choose one of the pieces from your portfolio and write a reflection on your writing process of taking the piece from a rough draft to a more polished draft. Be sure to include the following:

- Where you revised and why. In other words, identify what what could be improved in the current draft and how you made those improvements. These areas might include pacing, word choice, character depth, dialogue, descriptive details, organization, mechanics, narrative voice, etc.
- Anything you learned about your strengths and areas of growth as a writer through the revision process

MAKE A (VERY) SHORT FILM

Create a short video or compilation of videos of 30 seconds or less. (A single film or individual videos). Video may be creative, narrative, or experimental. Whatever tools you have are sufficient. Avoid spending money.

Beyond creativity, we want your work also to have these elements:

1. *Unique camera movement.* Must employ a method of camera movement; track, tilt, pan, etc. You can run with the camera, spin the camera, etc., any movement is fine if the subject is in the frame and the camera is moving.
2. *Unique lighting.* Whether it be a face half in shadow, light passing through leaves, Rembrandt lighting, silhouette, or whatever piques your interest. We must see you utilize lighting in your video - outside of standard natural or three-point lighting.

-
3. *Unique composition.* Take advantage of an unusual angle, interesting framing, or something interesting in the foreground or background of a subject - everything in the frame matters to a filmmaker.

PHOTO ESSAY

With your own photographic tools – no need to purchase no resources to complete this task, tell a compelling visual story using photos only. Provide no less than (5) pictures that work together to capture a moment, explore a narrative, or represent a creative concept as a body of work. Let the images speak. Do not provide captions.

OPTIONAL:

A printed or electronic sampling of any creative media work you may have completed or are working on, such as (but not limited to):

- A blog
- A podcast
- A website
- Any film, documentary, or short footage you have worked on
- Digital or traditional photography
- Physical piece? Take a picture and have that item with you, if feasible, during your audition interview

NOTES

Two notes on a key part of the Literary Media & Communications application:

- For your My School DC application online essay, please be sure to include your personal goals as an artist and any experiences you may have had that could impact your decision to pursue this course of study in the essay.
- If possible, please include an “Art/Other” recommendation as one of your three in the MSDC Application. This could be a letter from someone who has read/viewed and critiqued your work in any of the above genre or forms. (Note: Your application will not be penalized if you cannot provide this additional letter.)

The Audition Process Itself

The Literary Media & Communications audition has three phases, please see the following:

1. For the first phase, you must submit your audition portfolio/writing samples electronically by the deadline (see Part 1 of “What to Upload/How to Prepare”).
2. Participate in an in-person interview via our email. The interview consists of a conversation with faculty about the work you submitted and the reading assignment. The audition interview will also include a writing component.

3. For the final phase, if selected to continue you will take part in a special LMC workshop held in-person, where you will have writing and group review exercises. For those selected, participation in the audition classwork is mandatory for continued consideration as a LMC candidate.

Have a Successful Audition

- Review/edit the portfolio items you will submit so we see your best work.
- READ. Great writers are constantly reading.
- Be prepared to discuss where you want to go in life, what you hope to accomplish.
- Engage – be an active participant in the audition class exercises.
- Dress appropriately – dress your best! Auditioners typically wear business casual clothing.
 - You are able to wear everyday/multifunctional options such as plain blue jeans and a white/black polo-style shirt (business casual).

Please note 504 and IEP accommodations are available, please contact us at admissions@ellingtonarts.org with any questions or concerns.