



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Duke Ellington School of the Arts**  
**SY23-24 Audition Procedures – Vocal Music**

**GUIDELINES**

All auditions are closed to parents/guardians, family members or peers. If you leave 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](mailto:admissions@ellingtonarts.org)

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**What We Are Looking For**

- **Passion** – A student must have a desire for singing and an eagerness to learn the technical aspects of the art form. Students must be willing to adapt to a scientific and holistic (healthy vocal technique) approach to singing.
  - **Students must have a willingness to learn to sing classical repertoire in multiple languages.**
  - **Our program is mainly focused on classical music with small opportunities for exploration in other genres.**
- **Vocal Potential** – Students must have a clear ability to match pitch (good intonation and tonal memory), a good sense of rhythm and a suitable vocal range.
- **Performance Potential** – Students must have a willingness to explore all possibilities of the art form through expression (taking chances) and vulnerability.
- **Academic/Artistic Success** – As Ellington is a college preparatory school, we are looking for students who can be successful in their academic and art classes. As we are a dual curriculum program, students must understand the importance of dedicated time to both art and academic classes.
- **A Cooperative Attitude** – Students must be able to work well with others in and outside of class. This includes students, faculty, and staff.
- **Endurance** – Students must have the stamina and capacity to successfully manage the longer school day, which is 9+ hours in addition to daily homework, daily practice, and performances. One must be a dedicated student who practices regularly and strives for excellence.

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## What to Upload/How to Prepare

1. To prepare for your video submission, memorize *one* piece from this list below and present your piece a cappella (without instrumental accompaniment) on-camera, with clear volume, and bright lighting. Students should dress their best. Typical attire consist of polo shirts, dress shirts, dress or khaki pants, skirts, dresses, cardigans, blazers, etc.
2. Categories-Below are the acceptable song choices for auditions. The number represents the level of difficulty.
  1. There is no benefit in choosing a more difficult piece. The overall goal should be **accuracy, musicality** and **expression** in the piece chosen.
  2. **Songs prepared that are NOT on the approved list will immediately disqualify the applicant.**
3. Upload a video file of you singing the memorized piece from above our email, [desa.vocal@ellingtonarts.org](mailto:desa.vocal@ellingtonarts.org) by **February 1, 2023**. We encourage you to submit a pre-recorded piece so you can take your time, do as many takes as possible and submit the BEST version of yourself!
  1. The subject link should reflect the following:
    1. Vocal Music Audition Video 2023
  2. The body should reflect the following:
    1. Full Name, Current Age, Current Grade, Current School
4. The earlier you submit the more time our faculty have to review! Students who submit their video recordings early may be notified of their audition callback status early.

Category #1 Beginner

Category #2 Intermediate

Category #3 Advanced

### **Amazing Grace**

(Entire 1st verse ending with "Blind but now I see")

### **Lift Every Voice and Sing**

(Entire 1st verse ending with "Til victory is won")

### **America the Beautiful**

(Entire 1st verse ending with "From sea to shining sea")

### **Climb Every Mountain**

### **Star Spangled Banner**

### **Art song in English, Italian or German**

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**NOTE: Students that do not upload their submissions by February 1st, 2023, are still granted an opportunity to audition LIVE on the first day of Vocal Music Virtual Auditions.**

### **The LIVE Audition Process**

Only if you **DID NOT UPLOAD A RECORDED VIDEO** - During your audition for the Vocal Music Department at DESA, you will:

- Present a musical selection chosen from the approved list (**sung a cappella**)
- Be tested in aural skills via vocal exercises and pitch matching

Upon completion of the initial auditions, the Vocal Music faculty will select a group of students to continue the audition process by participating in a three-day in-person afternoon vocal music callback class. ***Students are required to attend all days of the callback class to remain a candidate for the Vocal Music department. Students invited for callbacks will be notified by the Admissions Office.***

### **Have a Successful Audition**

To present yourself in the best light possible:

- 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).
- Say your name clearly and answer questions completely.
- Prepare your piece well (make sure the piece is memorized) and sing with confidence.
- Be ready to talk about yourself, your past musical experiences and your goals for the future. Give these ideas some thought.

Please note 504 and IEP accommodations are available, please contact us at [admissions@ellingtonarts.org](mailto:admissions@ellingtonarts.org) with any questions or concerns.