

Apply For



Acting / Vocal Music



Dance



Instrumental Music



Visual Arts

DENZEL WASHINGTON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

121 South 6th Avenue
Mount Vernon, NY 10550
Phone: 914-358-2740
Andrea M. Thomas, *Principal*



Mount Vernon City School District

Denzel Washington School of the Arts

Application



Objective:

The Mount Vernon City School District offers a creative opportunity for students entering grades 6 – 9 to excel academically and artistically. The Denzel Washington School of the Arts is designed for creative students interested in the arts. Students can apply from any Mount Vernon school and are admitted based on an audition in theatre, vocal music, dance, a visual arts portfolio, or playing a musical instrument in addition to a comprehensive application and an interview with the student and parent. The school will assist each student with discovering and nurturing their unique talent while also utilizing an arts framework to support success in academic classes. Students will transfer their creative skills to the classroom and build their cognitive framework and affective mindset to become strong readers, mathematicians, thinkers and learners.

****Application Must Be Complete Prior to Audition**

Application Process

Auditions are a part of the admissions process. To gain admission, students must exhibit artistic skills at the audition. Auditions are also a great opportunity for students to meet school staff and learn about the program. Students are expected to prepare and perform at an audition. Students should review the audition criteria for their preferred discipline below. Students should note that they may not get to present everything that they have prepared for the audition.

1. Incomplete applications will not be considered for placement.

2. Choose one or more of the disciplines from the list below in which you would like to major and audition.

3. Read the audition procedures and expectations listed below for your chosen audition area. Please come to the audition prepared to do exactly what is expected.

4. Complete entire application. Double check application for completion prior to submitting. Incomplete applications will not be processed and students will not be allowed to audition.

5. Two recommendations are required.

- a. One recommendation must be from your current public or private school **teacher**.
- b. The second recommendation must be from your **School Counselor**.
- c. Third recommendation is optional. The third recommendation can be from an Arts Teacher/instructor, coach, clergy, or community member.
- d. Completed recommendation should be emailed to M. Alexander [at Malexander@mtvernoncsd.org](mailto:Malexander@mtvernoncsd.org) or mail in a sealed envelope to 121 S. 6th Avenue, Mount Vernon NY 10550.

6. Provide a current school report card with no failing grades.

7. Attach a photo of yourself (headshots preferred)

8. Mail completed application and corresponding documents to the provided address.

Confirmation of application receipt will be provided by email. Due to the volume of applications, it is not possible to provide confirmation via phone. The application will be complete when we've received:

- a. Application
- b. Student essay (form included in this packet)

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- c. Current report card
 - d. Photo of yourself
 - e. Recommendation forms

9. Audition Day:

- a. Sign in/Registration and Application Review - *application reviewed for completion*
- b. General information session - *overview of the Denzel Washington School of the Arts*
- c. Parent Interviews - *parent/guardians are interviewed on audition day*
- d. Student Academic Assessment - *brief ELA and Math assessment*
- e. Arts Audition - *student auditions in preferred Arts discipline/major*



Arts Discipline and Audition Process

DANCE

- The dance audition consists of a class. The class covers some ballet; modern, and jazz dance techniques. Dancers are assessed on the basis of these techniques as well as natural flexibility, strength, endurance, coordination, ability to pick up and remember steps, and musicality.
- After the brief class, each student will perform a *one-minute* dance, which is choreographed by the student or someone else *prior* to the audition. Dance pieces may be in any dance form including (but not limited to) ballet, modern, jazz, ethnic, or hip-hop. The dance should showcase the dancer to share what they believe are their strongest dance attributes. Students must bring their own solo music.

□ Auditioning students should be in appropriate dance attire.

Ladies:	Leotard and footless tights
Gentlemen:	White T-shirt, jazz pants or sweatpants, athletic support
Hair:	Pulled back off the face and secured neatly. Wear a bun if possible.
Jewelry:	Post earrings only.
Shoes:	Should correspond with dance style (i.e. ballet shoes, tap shoes, jazz shoes, or

slippers)

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

All music applicants are expected to demonstrate sight reading ability. The audition assessment is based on the student's musical ability during the performance. You may audition on more than one instrument (Woodwind, Brass, Percussion, or Piano). You will be asked to perform a prepared solo selection. Bring your own instrument(s) except piano, tuba, double bass, harp, percussion and guitar amplifiers, which are provided by the school. The audition also includes on-site music tasks (tapping back rhythmic patterns, play selected scales, or completing a sight reading, music theory or improvisation task).

- 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 might not be asked to play a second selection.
- Be prepared to sight read a short musical passage (four to eight measures).
- Be prepared to play at least one scale

STRING ORCHESTRA

Students entering 6th grade: Beginning Strings students should be able to:

- Express a strong interest in learning to play the stringed instrument
- Show correct playing position
- Show correct rest position
- Pizzicato (plucking the strings)
- Bow grip - some understanding of how to hold the bow
 - Students should know the names of the open strings
 - Students may know how to place 3 fingers on the D and A strings

- Students may know how to play Twinkle or French Folk Song.

Students entering higher grades: Beginning Strings with 1-2 years' experience:

- Students should know all criteria listed for 6th grade.
- Play a major scale
- Perform a solo: Suzuki Book or Solo Time for Strings
- Sight Read a short excerpt

ACTING (9th – 12th Grade)

Prepare and memorize two contrasting monologues, a maximum of two minutes in length for each monologue. One must be classical and the other should be contemporary. The monologues should showcase your strengths and skills as a performer. Please bring a written copy of your selected materials with you when you audition

- There will be an interview with each student. Be prepared to discuss your selected monologue.

MUSICAL THEATER (6th – 8th Grade)

- Prepare and memorize one classical or contemporary monologue. Monologue should be 1-2 minutes long. The monologues should showcase your strengths and skills as a performer.
- Prepare to sing one song, preferable from a Broadway show.

VOCAL MUSIC (9th – 12th Grade)

- Vocal music is performed with or without instrumental accompaniment, in which singing provides the main focus of the piece. Vocal music students commonly study sight reading, music theory, music history and repertoire, and vocal technique, and gain an understanding of music's social and cultural impact.
- Students will perform a song of their choice and an additional song chosen for them. Vocal singers will also be asked to repeat vocal phrases to test rhythm, tonal memory, and basic vocal technique. Ability to incorporate directions from teachers will be considered.

VISUAL ARTS

Each applicant is expected to complete the **5 assignments listed below as well as 5 independent assignments for a total of 10**. Students should not submit cartoon and superhero drawings as part of their independent assignments. Applicants are required to bring all 10 assignments. Additionally, sketchbooks showcasing your artistic style and strengths are welcomed but not required. The program is looking for students with artistic potential to learn, grow and become artists.

Applicants will present their artwork and do an onsite drawing assignment as part of the audition. Instructions and supplies will be provided. Applicants must bring their work with them on audition day.

VISUAL ARTS APPLICANTS' PORTFOLIOS MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ASSIGNMENTS:

- A self-portrait from a mirror observation.
- A color design.
- A drawing of a bicycle, a motorcycle or car using pencil or pen & ink from observation.
- A still life drawing of objects from observation (examples—a bowl of fruit, or sneakers) interior view of the corner of a room in your home or school, any medium or material.

Applicant Information

***Parent or Guardian should complete application form*

Applicant Information

(Please print neatly)

Student ID

Last Name		First Name		MI	Date
Date of Birth		Gender	Expected Grade Level Next September		
Home Address		Street Name		Apt #	
City	State	Zip	Home Phone Parent/Guardian Cell Phone		
Parent/Guardian Name			Work Phone		
Parent/Guardian Email Address			Student Email Address		
Name of Current School					
Where did you learn about this program? (Check or circle one)					
School /Teacher	a friend	open house	district's website	performances	other

Artistic Area of Interest

Please select check or circle **one** area of interest for which you wish to audition.

	Dance			Visual Arts
Musical Theater	Acting	Vocal Music	Instrumental Music	String Orchestra

Participation Policy:

Audition results, application, recommendation letters, personal essay, and report cards will be considered to determine which students are offered admission to the Denzel Washington School of the Arts.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent / Guardian Signature _____ Date _____



Recommendation # 1

***Must be completed by a teacher*

Thank you for taking the time to complete this recommendation. We welcome information that will help us to differentiate this student from others. Please email the completed recommendation to Mrs. M. Alexander at Malexander@mtvernoncsd.org or mail in a sealed envelope to 121 S. 6th Avenue, Mount Vernon NY 10550.

Contact Information:

Name: _____ Date: _____

School Name: _____ Position: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone #: _____

Student Name:

Student ID#:

Requested Information:

1. How long have you known this student and in what context?
2. What are the first words that come to mind when describing this student?
3. The Denzel Washington School of the Arts requires its students to elect advanced placement classes in high school and prepare academically for success in college or a conservatory. Additionally, students are expected to be disciplined and capable of performing and studying the arts commencing in 6th to 12th grade. Please give us your opinion of this student's aptitude for success under these conditions.

How do you rate this student in terms of:	Weak or Non-existing	Basic	Proficient	Superior	Exemplary
Creativity					
Self-Motivation					
Discipline and Work Habits					
Academic Achievement					
Interpersonal Skills					
Interest in the Arts					
Written expression of ideas					
Potential for growth					
Ability to follow directions					
Respect for others					

Additional Comments:



Recommendation # 2

***Must be completed by a School Counselor*

Thank you for taking the time to complete this recommendation. We welcome information that will help us to differentiate this student from others. Please email the completed recommendation to Mrs. M. Alexander at Malexander@mtvernoncsd.org or mail in a sealed envelope to 121 S. 6th Avenue, Mount Vernon NY 10550.

Contact Information:

Name: _____ Date: _____

School Name: _____ Position: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone #: _____

Student Name:

Student ID#:

Requested Information:

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Interpersonal Skills					
Interest in the Arts					
Written expression of ideas					
Potential for growth					
Ability to follow directions					
Respect for others					

Additional Comments:



Recommendation # 3 (Optional)

***May be completed by an Arts teacher, coach, clergy, or community member*

Thank you for taking the time to complete this recommendation. We welcome information that will help us to differentiate this student from others. Please email the completed recommendation to Mrs. M. Alexander at Malexander@mtvernoncsd.org or mail in a sealed envelope to 121 S. 6th Avenue, Mount Vernon NY 10550.

Contact Information:

Name: _____ Date: _____

School Name: _____ Position: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone #: _____

Student Name:

Student ID#:

Requested Information:

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Written expression of ideas					
Potential for growth					
Ability to follow directions					
Respect for others					

Additional Comments:



Application Checklist



Stop and Check:

Before submitting your application packet, do you have the following items?

- Completed application

- Student Essay (form included in this packet)
- Current Report Card

- Photo of yourself (headshot preferred)
- Completed recommendation forms (2)
- Prepared for your audition

Application Submission:

Mail	In Person	Email
Denzel Washington School of the Arts 121 South 6 th Avenue Mount Vernon, NY 10550 <i>Attn: DWSA Audition Department</i>	Denzel Washington School of the Arts 121 South 6 th Avenue Mount Vernon, NY 10550 <i>Attn: DWSA Audition Department</i>	Michelle Alexander Malexander@mtvernoncsd.org Example Subject line: DWSA Application (Student Name)

