

Introduction

This application aims to identify strategic initiatives at the school level, including both requests for flexibility in adhering to district policy and local programming requests.

This form allows schools to:

Request flexibility: identify an opportunity where requesting flexibility from a specific district policy or state law could enhance your school's ability to meet student needs more effectively. This option allows schools to propose innovative, student-centered approaches that align with their unique context.

Report on an approved flexibility: Provide an update on the implementation of a Value-Added Flexibility and its impact on academics and school operations.

Propose a new program: Request a program your school would like to implement from the district program inventory or that is not currently offered in FCS.

Report on an active program: Provide an update on a program that is currently being implemented at your school to ensure Board approval for the program offering.

Discontinue an existing program: Share rationale for sunsetting a program that has traditionally been active at the school.

Note, all programs offered at Fulton County Schools must be board approved and require board certification every three years.

Whether requesting flexibility or proposing a new program, schools will be asked to clearly articulate:

- The specific challenge or opportunity they are addressing.
- Your proposed solution, including details of the requested flexibility or the new program.
- The expected outcomes and positive impacts of their proposal.

Please complete this form thoroughly and in consultation with your principal and fellow council members.

Value Added Flexibility Form

Select one of the following: *

Propose a new program

Grade Level: *

High

School *

Milton High

Submit a Programming Request or Update

New Programs

What new program are you requesting to implement at your school. The following programs are not eligible for individual school requests (AVID, College and Career Academy, Dual Language Immersion, In-School Academies, Safe Centers, School-Based Health Center, Pre-K, JROTC, Middle College):

New Program Requested *

Visual & Performing Arts Magnet

Identified Need

1) What specific challenge or need would this magnet program address at your school? Describe the issue and how it was identified. *

Milton High School has a long history of excellence in the visual and performing arts, but our technology course offerings are underdeveloped and do not currently provide students with the range of hard skills necessary to thrive in today's workforce. As identified through the lack of Technology and Engineering based courses offered at Milton, the offerings are limited and often lack direct real-world applications that make learning meaningful and engaging.

The proposed Visual and Performing Arts Magnet, with a focus on integrating arts and technology, directly addresses this need by expanding and strengthening technology-based course offerings while leveraging the school's flourishing arts programs. Milton will implement new course offerings and pathways where students will gain hands-on experience with Building design software, audio engineering, digital music production, lighting technology, coding for performance, video production, and interactive media, seeing their technical training come alive through live productions, exhibitions, and performances. This integration ensures that technology learning is not purely theoretical but applied in authentic, collaborative, and creative settings.

By embedding technology into the arts, the program will also fill a critical workforce readiness gap. Students will leave Milton with industry-relevant skills, certifications, and practical experiences that prepare them for both college and career opportunities in creative and technology fields. Additionally, the magnet designation will increase student engagement in technology courses by showing their immediate relevance and application, attracting a broader range of students who may not have pursued technology coursework otherwise.

Program Rationale and Fit

2) Why do you believe this program would be successful at your school? Include supporting evidence such as research, data, or models from other schools. *

Milton High School has long been recognized as a leader in the arts, with programs that consistently achieve at the highest levels. The band program has earned prestigious honors such as Superior Ratings at all Large Group Performance Evaluations, Winner of the Percussion Arts Society Competition - High School Division, WGI World Championships Semi-Finalists: Indoor Drumline and Winterguard, WGI World Championships Finalist - Indoor Drumline, Grand Champion Marching Band at GMEA Competitions 29 out of the past 30 performances. Milton's band program has a large number of musicians chosen for All State Band. The Band has also earned the GMEA Exemplary Performance Award and the National Band Association's Blue-Ribbon Program of Excellence.

The choral program is the largest in Fulton County and consistently earns Superior ratings at GMEA Large Group Performance Evaluation. The program has performed at Carnegie Hall and tours domestically and abroad including invitations to perform at State Music Educators Conventions. Milton's choral program consistently sends a large number of students to participate in All State Chorus each year and has the

largest representation of all Public Schools at the Governor's Honors Program over the last 15 years.

Milton's orchestra sends students to the Georgia All-State Orchestra annually, was invited to perform at the GMEA Annual In-Service Conference and consistently earns Superior Ratings at Large Group Performance Evaluation. The orchestra program also has students chosen for the Governor's Honors Program annually.

Milton Theatre program's most recent accolade was won on a national Broadway stage when Milton Junior, Jake James was awarded the 2026 Jimmy Award for Best Actor which included a \$25,000 scholarship. Milton Theatre also won the 2026 Shuler Award for Best Overall Musical, Micki Ankiel won for Best Direction and Jake James Best Actor for their production of Water for Elephants. Milton Theatre has also received multiple other Shuler Award recognitions and state-level accolades in GHSA One-Act and Georgia Theatre Conference Competitions. The Theatre program is also regularly chosen to perform at the Georgia Thespian Conference to an audience of over 4,000 people. Also, through Georgia Thespians Milton theatre students earn Superior rating on Thespy submissions, are Scholarship recipients, and have been chosen as State Thespian Officers.

Milton's Visual artists are showcased in state exhibitions such as GAEA High Museum High School and earn NAHS conference awards. Milton's visual artists have participated in the prestigious Capitol Art Exhibit, exhibited work at the Alpharetta Arts Center, exhibited with From the Artist's Studio, participated in the Fulton County Schools Student Art Show at the High Museum, exhibited work in the Juried North Fulton High School Art Show, participated in the highly acclaimed Atlanta High School Art Exhibit/Dogwood Arts Festival, and have been accepted into the Ceramics Symposium. This track record demonstrates not only the breadth and depth of Milton's artistic talent, but also the strong instructional foundation and community support already in place.

A Platform for Innovation

While Milton's legacy provides a strong foundation, Milton has also proven to be innovative in the Arts realm through the creation of the Cirque Program which offers circus arts and movement training as part of the Milton Theatre Program as well as the Gone Boarding class which combines sculpture, engineering and digital media to create functionable art pieces (skate boards, long boards, snow boards, stand up paddle boards, wake boards, surf boards). To add to this innovation, the school is also uniquely positioned to lead the next evolution of arts education—where technology and creativity converge. As a magnet, Milton could expand already offered programs and pioneer new programs that few high schools currently offer, such as:

- Digital Performance Lab – Students use motion capture, projection mapping, and virtual/augmented reality to create immersive theatre, dance, and musical performances.
- Music Technology & Sound Design – blending traditional music performance with audio engineering, electronic composition, and industry-standard recording techniques. Courses in digital music production, scoring for film/video games, and live electronic performance.
- Film & Multimedia Storytelling – A fusion of cinematic arts, animation, and interactive digital media where students collaborate across disciplines to create original productions.
- Immersive Stagecraft & Design – Training in 3D modeling, digital set design, lighting automation, and costume design that integrates wearable technology.
- Interactive Arts & AI – Exploring artificial intelligence as a creative partner in composing music, generating visual art, and building responsive installations.
- Interactive Visual Arts: combining fine arts training with digital animation, motion graphics, and 3D design.
- Film & Multimedia Storytelling: equipping students to merge theatre, writing, and digital media into new forms of performance.
- Creative Entrepreneurship Studio – A capstone program where students develop portfolios, learn branding/marketing through digital platforms, and launch creative projects for real-world audiences.

This fusion of arts and technology aligns with the realities of the 21st-century creative economy, where artists must be both innovators and collaborators across multiple platforms. Establishing Milton as a VPA magnet focused on this cutting edge prepares students not just for college and conservatory pathways, but also for careers in entertainment, media, design, and emerging digital industries.

Why It Will Work at Milton

Milton High School is an ideal site for this transformation:

- **Proven Talent Base:** The school already attracts and develops top-tier performers and artists who thrive in competitive environments.
- **Community & District Support:** Large Community support for the Arts overall and specifically supportive of innovative programming such as the Cirque and Gone Boarding Program.
- **Culture of Innovation:** Milton's combination of artistic tradition, innovative arts programming and academic excellence creates fertile ground for a forward-looking program that can serve as a model for the district and beyond.
- **Research-Based Benefits:** Expanding arts opportunities is proven to increase student attendance, engagement, and achievement while lowering discipline referrals—meaning a magnet program would not only strengthen the arts but improve overall school outcomes.

Milton High School has already demonstrated that it can nurture award-winning artists across every discipline. As a magnet, it can leverage this success to take a bold next step: becoming a cutting-edge hub where the arts and technology intersect. This dual focus grounded in tradition yet future-oriented positions Milton to be a model for 21st-century arts education and a destination school for students across the district who want to push the boundaries of creativity.

3) How does this proposed magnet program align with your School Action Plan and overall school improvement goals? *

1. Enhance Performance through Instructor Training and Professional Development

Transforming Milton into a VPA magnet with a focus on arts and technology fusion will require robust professional learning. Teachers will gain access to specialized training in digital music production, animation, film editing, coding for stage design, virtual/augmented reality in performance, and multimedia storytelling. These opportunities ensure that instructors remain on the forefront of innovative arts education, which strengthens both student performance and teacher expertise. Cross-disciplinary collaboration between core content teachers and arts faculty will also expand instructional practices schoolwide

2. Prioritize Safety and Operational Efficiency through Restorative Practices

A school culture rooted in the performing arts provides students with meaningful opportunities for creative self-expression, teamwork, and positive identity development. When students are engaged in state-of-the-art arts and technology programs such as collaborative film projects, ensemble performances, and design labs they are less likely to engage in behaviors that lead to ISS/OSS. The program's focus on collaboration mirrors restorative practices, giving students constructive avenues to resolve conflict and build relationships.

3. Ensure Impactful Programming

As a VPA magnet, Milton will offer signature, innovative programming not found in other schools, such as:

- **Digital Performance Lab** – Students use motion capture, projection mapping, and virtual/augmented reality to create immersive theatre, dance, and musical performances.
- **Music Technology & Sound Design** – blending traditional music performance with audio engineering, electronic composition, and industry-standard recording techniques. Courses in digital music production, scoring for film/video games, and live electronic performance.
- **Film & Multimedia Storytelling** – A fusion of cinematic arts, animation, and interactive digital media where students collaborate across disciplines to create original productions.
- **Immersive Stagecraft & Design** – Training in 3D modeling, digital set design, lighting automation, and costume design that integrates wearable technology.
- **Interactive Arts & AI** – Exploring artificial intelligence as a creative partner in composing music, generating visual art, and building responsive installations.
- **Interactive Visual Arts:** combining fine arts training with digital animation, motion graphics, and 3D design.
- **Film & Multimedia Storytelling:** equipping students to merge theatre, writing, and digital media into new forms of performance.
- **Creative Entrepreneurship Studio** – A capstone program where students develop portfolios, learn branding/marketing through digital platforms, and launch creative projects for real-world audiences. These cutting-edge courses prepare students for 21st-century creative industries while offering impactful, real-world learning experiences. This forward-thinking approach ensures that Milton's programming remains relevant, engaging, and nationally competitive.

4. Strengthen Workforce Engagement through Employee Satisfaction

By creating a collaborative and future-focused arts-and-technology culture, staff will have opportunities to co-create curriculum, build cross-disciplinary projects, and design innovative showcases. Teachers will feel energized by being part of a program that places Milton on the leading edge of arts education in Georgia. Shared successes such as film festivals, tech-infused performances, and student exhibitions will boost employee pride and foster positive staff interactions across departments.

5. Utilize Fiscal Resources Effectively with Faculty/Staff Governance Input

An innovative arts-and-technology magnet requires targeted investments in digital equipment, sound and film studios, editing labs, VR/AR hardware, and stage technology. By involving faculty and staff in governance decisions, Milton ensures resources are directed toward tools and programs that have the greatest impact on student learning. This collaborative fiscal model allows teachers to advocate for the equipment and professional development that directly support transformative student experiences.

6. Deepen Community Connections through Communication

The VPA magnet model provides continuous opportunities to strengthen relationships with the community. Partnerships with local theaters, film companies, technology firms, and universities will support student learning and provide internship opportunities. Public performances, film screenings, digital showcases, and community exhibitions will position Milton as a regional hub for innovative arts education. Communication with families and stakeholders will highlight Milton's unique role in preparing students for the creative economy, increasing pride and support across the community.

By becoming a Visual and Performing Arts Magnet focused on state-of-the-art arts and technology integration, Milton High School will directly advance its strategic plan. The magnet model enhances teacher expertise, fosters a restorative and inclusive school culture, ensures distinctive and impactful programming, strengthens staff satisfaction, promotes collaborative use of resources, and deepens community engagement. This vision will not only elevate Milton's profile but also prepare students to thrive as creative leaders in the 21st-century global workforce.

Program Design and Uniqueness

4) What is the proposed theme or focus of the magnet program, and how does it offer a unique learning opportunity for students? *

The Milton Edge: Visual & Performing Arts Magnet
On the leading edge of artistry and technology.

Concept:

This program positions itself as a cutting-edge hub for innovation in the arts, redefining what it means to be a 21st-century artist. By fusing traditional disciplines in music, theatre, dance, and visual arts with state-of-the-art technology, students will have access to learning experiences that few—if any—high schools in the region are offering.

Innovative Program Examples:

- Digital Performance Lab – Students use motion capture, projection mapping, and virtual/augmented reality to create immersive theatre, dance, and musical performances.
- Music Technology & Sound Design – blending traditional music performance with audio engineering, electronic composition, and industry-standard recording techniques. Courses in digital music production, scoring for film/video games, and live electronic performance.
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- Film & Multimedia Storytelling: equipping students to merge theatre, writing, and digital media into new forms of performance.
- Creative Entrepreneurship Studio – A capstone program where students develop portfolios, learn branding/marketing through digital platforms, and launch creative projects for real-world audiences.

Why It Stands Out:

- Unlike traditional magnet programs, this one doesn't just train students in the arts it trains them to push the boundaries of what art can be.
- Students graduate not only as performers and creators, but also as innovators, storytellers, and problem-solvers prepared for careers in both the arts and emerging creative industries.

5) What is your vision for the program's short- and long-term goals, and how will success be measured? *

Short Term Goals:

Strengthen Feeder Program Relationships

- Host annual VPA feeder showcase nights where middle school students perform or display artwork at the high school.
- Develop joint workshops, clinics, or masterclasses with feeder school students and high school VPA faculty.
- Establish a VPA feeder liaison team of teachers and administrators who regularly collaborate with feeder schools.

Improve Recruitment from Feeder Schools

- Create targeted recruitment materials (brochures, videos, social media) highlighting student success, performance opportunities, and magnet benefits.
- Launch a "VPA Ambassador Program" where current high school students visit feeder schools to share experiences and perform.
- Host open houses and shadow days specifically for students from feeder programs.

Expand Course Offerings with Technology Integration

- Introduce entry-level courses like Digital Music Production, Graphic Design & Animation, and Film & Media Technology.
- Pilot interdisciplinary classes (e.g., Coding for Theatre Lighting and Sound, Interactive Digital Art, Motion Capture for Dance).
- Ensure student access to industry-standard software and equipment (Adobe Suite, Pro Tools, VR tools, 3D printers).

Increase Student Enrollment in VPA Tech Programs

- Add introductory sampler courses combining multiple disciplines (e.g., Arts + Tech Lab: Music, Media & Design).
- Promote VPA courses during course registration with student showcases and "try-it" days.
- Promote recognition pathways (certificates, diploma seals) for students completing multiple technology-focused VPA classes.

Long-Term Goals (3–5 Years)

Sustain & Deepen Feeder Program Partnerships

- Develop articulation agreements with feeder middle schools that guarantee student placement in advanced high school VPA tech courses.
- Create an annual district-wide Arts + Tech Festival where elementary, middle, and high school students present collaborative, technology-based art projects.

- Offer professional development for feeder teachers in arts technology integration to build a strong pipeline.

Grow Recruitment and Broaden Access

- Establish mentorship and internship programs with local universities, film studios, design firms, and tech companies.
- Offer summer bridge programs for rising freshmen to explore arts + technology before high school entry.

Expand Innovative Course Offerings

- Build specialized academies/pathways within the magnet:
 - ☐ Digital Media & Film Academy
 - ☐ Music Technology & Sound Engineering
 - ☐ Digital Scenic Design for stage and film
 - ☐ Dance & Motion Capture Lab
 - ☐ Visual Arts + AR/VR Design
- Invest in cutting-edge facilities (recording studio, green screen studio, VR performance lab, 3D projection theater).

Increase Enrollment & Establish VPA Pathways

- Set measurable enrollment goals (e.g., 30% increase in VPA course enrollment over 3 years).
- Create graduation endorsements/seals in Arts + Technology, signaling students' advanced preparation for college/careers.
- Establish capstone projects and senior showcases where students produce original technology-driven performances or exhibits.

Strengthen Community & Industry Partnerships

- Secure grant funding and sponsorships from arts councils, tech companies, and creative industry leaders.
- Partner with local theaters, film companies, design firms, and music studios for student internships.
- Position the school as a national model for arts + technology education by pursuing Magnet Schools of America certification and presenting at conferences.

The success of the innovative Visual and Performing Arts Magnet School will be measured through a combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators. Key metrics will include increased enrollment in VPA courses, improved recruitment rates from feeder schools, and the development of clear feeder-to-magnet pipelines. Course expansion will be measured by the number of new offerings introduced and the percentage of students completing multi-course VPA pathways. Student achievement will be assessed through performance assessments, capstone projects, and participation in showcases, festivals, and competitions. Additionally, feedback from students, parents, feeder schools, and community partners will provide valuable insight into program effectiveness. Long-term success will be measured by student outcomes such as college acceptance in arts and technology fields, industry certifications earned, and postsecondary career readiness in creative and technological industries.

Implementation and Resources

6) What steps will you take to implement this program, including staffing, training, resources, and timeline? *

Partner with Magnet Schools of America as it provides a clear blueprint (Five Pillars + Standards of Excellence), coaching via NIMSL, a structured 9-month process, and nationally recognized branding that supports recruitment and funding.

Once Approved as a Visual and Performing Arts Magnet:

- Join Magnet Schools of America; design program to the Five Pillars; secure budget/facility needs; launch feeder-school recruitment and family advisory.
- Enter the MSA certification cohort; complete platform training; upload evidence; address any gaps

with SMART goals.

- Year 1 (Aug–May): Launch VPA pathways; collect evidence; run equity checks; host showcases; document PD and partnerships.
- Year 2 and beyond: Receive rating (Certified or Demonstration); celebrate/market; submit for MSA Merit Awards.

Join MSA + name a Magnet Lead Team. (Spring 2027)

a. Secure district approval, join MSA as a member school, and appoint a VPA Magnet Coordinator with a cross-functional team including administration, arts teachers, core teachers and a counseling representative.

Phase 1: Apply to the MSA Certification Cohort (Spring 2027)

1. Budget for application + support.

a. Application fee is currently \$1,395 per school; optional coaching is extra. Plan a small line for a one-year extension buffer if ever needed.

2. Onboard to the certification platform and timeline.

a. Upon acceptance, MSA/NIMSL provides platform training and help desk support; the process allows ~9 months to address all standards and upload evidence.

3. Adopt the Five Pillars as the design frame.

a. Use MSA's Five Pillars (Diversity; Innovative Curriculum & Professional Development; Academic Excellence; Leadership; Family & Community Partnerships) to write Milton's magnet theory of action and success metrics.

Phase 2: Design for the Standards of Excellence (Spring/Summer 2027)

4. Program design mapped to the Standards.

a. Build a VPA theme map (dance, music, theatre, visual arts, media arts) showing integration in core classes; create sample unit arcs, capstones, juries, exhibitions, and performance cycles.

b. Hire additional staff.

c. Draft admissions/recruitment and diversity plans. (COSA process, feeder middle schools, audition supports).

d. Define supports that drive Academic Excellence (placement rubrics, Rtl for arts and academics, SEL in rehearsal studios, mastery-based assessments).

5. Professional learning plan via NIMSL.

a. Schedule coaching/workshops with MSA's National Institute for Magnet School Leadership (NIMSL) on theme integration, equity-centered recruitment, marketing, and evidence collection.

6. Governance, schedules, facilities.

a. Create a magnet budget, master schedule with VPA pathways, facility/equipment plan (black box, studios, lab theatre, practice rooms), safety/operations plans for performances—all aligned to Pillar 4 (Leadership) and Pillar 2 (Innovative Curriculum & PD).

Phase 3: Pilot, document, and build the evidence base (Fall 2027)

7. Run pilot courses and arts events (showcase night, feeder tours, adjudicated festivals) and start collecting evidence (syllabi, unit plans, performance programs, videos, assessment rubrics, PD agendas, family engagement logs, recruitment artifacts).

a. Certification is evidence-driven—avoid the “wheelbarrow” dump; collect aligned, concise proofs for each indicator.

8. Equity & access checks (Pillar 1).

a. Monitor enrollment/participation by subgroup; provide transportation/fee waivers; add audition bootcamps and “portfolio pathways” to broaden access. (Diversity is explicit in MSA's pillars and certification).

9. Family & community partnerships (Pillar 5).

a. Formalize MOUs with local arts orgs, universities, and industry; build a VPA Advisory Council; schedule artist-in-residence cycles and internships.

Phase 4: Verification and recognition (Spring 2028)

10. Evaluation & rating.

a. Trained evaluators score the application against the Standards of Excellence; schools that meet criteria earn Nationally Certified Magnet School; schools that exceed criteria earn Nationally Certified Demonstration Magnet School. Certification is valid 4 years.

11. Leverage recognition + pursue Merit Awards.

- a. Use certification for marketing and grants; consider applying for MSA Merit Awards to showcase excellence annually.

Community Engagement and Sustainability

7) How will you involve parents, community partners, and district leadership in supporting and sustaining the program? *

Milton High School is committed to establishing a technology-driven Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) program that integrates innovation with artistic expression. To ensure sustainability, a VPA Advisory Council composed of district leaders, parents, feeder school teachers, students, and community technology and arts partners will provide oversight and guidance. The program will be supported by a dedicated coordinator and parent booster organizations, which will help secure funding, manage resources, and maintain strong communication with stakeholders.

Community partnerships will be central to the program’s success. Collaborations with local universities, digital media companies, theaters, and technology firms will provide students with access to emerging tools, mentorship, and authentic learning experiences. Through masterclasses, internships, and project-based collaborations, students will explore areas such as digital animation, sound engineering, virtual production, and interactive media.

District leadership will play an integral role by aligning budgets with program needs, supporting specialized staffing, and ensuring equitable access to advanced technology for all students. By combining community investment, family engagement, and district leadership, Milton High School will create a sustainable and cutting-edge VPA program that prepares students to thrive as innovative artists and leaders in a rapidly evolving creative economy.

Governance & Flexibility Review

Governance & Flexibility Decision:

Comments