Dance

Students will participate in three portions of a dance audition:

- Upon arrival, students will be assigned an audition number and have their photo taken to be associated with that number.
- Group Technique Class: Students will participate in a dance class consisting of short portions of ballet, modern dance, and jazz dance techniques. Following the group technique portion, everyone will have a short break before beginning their solo.
- Individual Solos: Students will perform a pre-choreographed one-minute solo in a chosen style. Choreography should show artistic potential and **not include** movement from dance apps or social media platforms. This movement must be planned and prepared by the student before the audition takes place. Students should be prepared with their own device to play music from.
- Interview: Students will have a short interview immediately after their solo presentation.

Audition Attire:
Female identifying dancers should wear a leotard and convertible tight, ballet shoes with elastic sewn and tie strings tucked in, barefoot for modern and jazz shoes or bare feet for jazz. Long hair must be pulled back (bun preferred), no jewelry should be worn. Male identifying dancers should wear a solid white or black t-shirt with black tights or form fitting shorts or joggers, ballet shoes with elastic sewn and tie strings tucked in, barefoot for modern and jazz shoes or bare feet for jazz. Hair must be neatly secured from the face. Non-binary and gender non-conforming dancers should follow the general guidelines above, aligned with their personal gender identity and expression.

Scoring:
Please review the Audition Scoring Guide, available on the Dance department page of pghschools.org/caparegistration.

Length of Audition:
Though we are efficient in our audition process, the complete audition can take up to 3 hours total and sometimes extend beyond.

Instrumental Music

On your audition day, you can expect a panel of at least three CAPA faculty members to listen to your instrumental audition. They all look forward to meeting you and hearing you play, so relax and do your very best. We look forward to hearing your two song choices that demonstrate your level of playing skills and overall musicality. Our instructors/ judges are professionals and will be able to identify both your current strengths and areas of potential future growth.

The following are the requirements for all Instrumental Auditions:

- Students may audition on ONE instrument only (brass, woodwind, percussion or string).
- Students should bring their own string, wind or brass instrument along with their audition music with them to the audition.
- Percussionists must bring their own mallets (if choosing to also play a mallet instrument in their audition) and their drumsticks, however, the percussion instruments on which they will audition will be provided by CAPA. Percussionists may also demonstrate that they have current playing experience on drumset.

INSTRUMENTAL AUDITION PART 1 - SCALES

- Students entering grade 6 will first be asked to play ONE scale of their choice.
- Students entering grades 7 or 8 will first be asked to play TWO scales of their choice.
- Students entering grades 9-12 will be asked to play THREE scales of their choice.
- Any students entering grades 6-12 who can play their scales more than one octave (or even more than the required number of scales) should do so during this part of their audition.

INSTRUMENTAL AUDITION PART 2 – SONG OF CHOICE #1

- Students will then move on to the first piece they have chosen to play for the judges. This piece should not only demonstrate their performance strengths and developed skills as a musician but also represent a style of music they enjoy both listening to and playing. Students should share with the judges why they chose the song they did.

INSTRUMENTAL AUDITION PART 3 – SONG OF CHOICE #2

- Students will then move on to their second chosen piece. This piece should differ in style and tempo from their first chosen piece. Song choice #1 and #2 should be contrasting pieces, for example, if song choice #1 is a melodic ballad (a slower song that requires the player to play notes smoothly and focusing on a beautiful tone and changing dynamics), song choice #2 may be a march (a faster up-beat song that requires the player to use a variety of appropriate articulations like staccato, accents, etc.). Another example of contrasting pieces would be playing a smooth section of a classical piece of music for song choice #1 and an upbeat swinging section of a jazz tune for song choice #2.

INSTRUMENTAL AUDITION PART 4 – SIGHTREADING

- Students will then be asked to sight-read a line or two of music to showcase their sight-reading abilities. This will demonstrate that they can take what they have already learned and can easily play and apply that knowledge to music they have not yet played. Students should take a moment to look through the piece put in front of them before they begin to play.

Instrumental Music (continued)

HOW AUDITIONS ARE JUDGED
The instrumental faculty will be listening for strengths and scoring students accordingly in the following areas during the student's playing audition:

For Winds, Strings and Brass:

- **Tone -** A musician's quality of sound - the timbre or tone color that makes it distinct.
- **Pitch/Intonation -** The pitch accuracy when playing from note to note. Is the musician staying "in tune?"
- **Rhythm -** Patterns of sound verses silence. Is each note or rest being held out to its proper length/value?
- **Technique -** The ability of a musician to exert control of their instrument to produce the precise musical effect they desire.
- **Interpretation -** How a musician translates a piece of music's meaning, imagery and emotions into sound.

For Percussion:

- **Pulse –** The underlying, steady heartbeat of a performance.
- **Rolls -** The playing skill that allows a percussionist to produce a sustained, continuous sound as opposed to a single attack/strike.
- **Rhythm -** Patterns of sound verses silence. Is each note or rest being held out to its proper length/value?
- **Technique -** The ability of a musician to exert control of their instrument to produce the precise musical effect they desire.
- **Interpretation -** How a musician translates a piece of music's meaning, imagery and emotions into sound.

AUDITION SCORING

- Scales will be worth 10 points *per scale* with extra points given for playing multiple octaves. (10+ points for students entering grades 6 playing one scale; 20+ points for students entering grades 6-8 playing two scales; and 30+ points for students entering grades 9-12 playing 3 scales).
- Sightreading will be worth 10 points.
- The student song of choice #1 will be worth 75 total points with a possible 15 points per category listed above.
- The student song of choice #2 will be worth 75 total points with a possible 15 points per category listed above. (Should be a contrasting style to choice #1.)

Following the student's playing audition will be a short interview by the instrumental panel. Two questions all students will be asked is "What brings you the most joy when playing your instrument? and "If you make it into CAPA, what do you believe will be the greatest asset you will be bringing into the department?"

Students will also be asked if they have any prior experience playing other instruments and if they would be interested in playing those instruments in their various music ensembles if needed.

Length of Audition:
The average audition will last 15–20 minutes.

Literary Arts

Part One: Application & Written Materials

Arts Essay

Submitted within online magnet application, respond to the two prompts below by crafting one short essay that answers all of the questions:

Pittsburgh CAPA 6–12 is a community of artists in dance, literary arts, piano, production technology, theater, visual arts, vocal and instrumental music. Why do YOU want to be an artist?

Specifically for Literary Arts Applicants: Describe a book, poem, play or other piece of writing that has influenced you or made you think differently about writing. How does the piece you chose connect to the type of writer you hope to become? What do you think it will take to get there?

Writing Portfolio

Submitted within the online magnet application, as a single file upload – contact the magnet office at magnetoffice@pghschools.org if you need assistance submitting the writing portfolio:

Students applying for the Literary Arts department at Pittsburgh CAPA 6−12 should submit a writing portfolio in any genre that you feel represents you and your best work as a creative writer. This should be in one of the following genres of writing: 3−5 poems (25 lines minimum for each poem) or 7−15 pages in length of prose in either fiction or creative nonfiction, or dramatic writing that you wrote on your own, not for a school assignment, 3-5 pieces of flash fiction. NO FAN FICTION is acceptable.

Include a cover sheet with the portfolio that includes the student's name, date, and the titles of the creative work(s). The student's name should only be on the cover sheet—do not include a name on the actual pieces of writing. Writing will not be returned and writing portfolios must be submitted via the online application by the deadline for Pittsburgh CAPA applications.

Part Two: In-House Audition

1. All auditioning students should bring with them a journal of their writing to share with the panel. These will not be read in detail, but the Literary Arts staff wants to see a student's writing process even when doodling ideas. These should be shared during the interview point of the audition

2. Students should be prepared to engage in the following activities during the audition for literary arts.

    - Be prepared to talk about yourself and your work. Think about why you want to join the CAPA Literary Arts program.
    - Be ready to engage in a writing workshop where you will interact with teachers and other auditioners regarding a piece of literature.
    - Practice reading a piece of writing from your portfolio to share with the audition panel. Be familiar and comfortable reading your writing.
    - Be prepared to write a creative response to a prompt after reading a prose piece and discussing it.
    - Ask questions. Find joy in the process.

Scoring:
Please review the Audition Scoring Guide, available on the Literary Arts department page of www.pghschools.org/caparegistration.

Length of Audition:
2 - 3 hours

Piano

Students auditioning for grades 6 – 8:

Students will perform two pieces of contrasting style from solo piano literature that represents current level of ability. Students will also be asked to play some major scales, hands together, one octave, in addition to sightreading.

Please bring additional copies of your pieces regardless whether playing from memory.

Students auditioning for grades 9 – 12:

Students will perform two pieces of contrasting style from solo piano literature that represents current level of ability. Students will also be asked to play major and minor scales, hands together, two octaves, in addition to sight-reading.

Please bring additional copies of your pieces regardless whether playing from memory.

Please dress semi-formally while making certain that you are comfortable.

Scoring:
Please review the Audition Scoring Guide, available on the Piano department page of www.pghschools.org/caparegistration.

Length of Audition:

The average audition will last 10–15 minutes.

Production Technology

Students auditioning for grades 6–8 should prepare the following:

- A portfolio of creative work containing three to four different items.
- A new creative project of the student's choice.
  - Design sketches of the project.
  - Photos demonstrating the construction process.
- Students will present their portfolio items and project, all of which must be brought to the audition.
- Students will also complete a design exercise that will be provided at the audition.

Students auditioning for grades 9–12 should prepare the following:

- A portfolio of creative work containing three to five different items.
- A model showing a scene from a play, movie, etc. and a prop from that scene.
  - Sketches of the set model.
  - Photos of the model making process.
  - Photos of the finished model.
- A full-scale prop from the same scene.
  - Sketches of the prop.
  - Photos of the prop building process.
  - Finished prop photos.
- Students will present the portfolio items, set model, and prop, all of which must be brought to the audition.
- Students will also complete a design exercise and measuring test that will be provided at the audition.

Scoring:
Please review the Audition Scoring Guide, available on the Production Technology department page of www.pghschools.org/caparegistration.

Length of Audition:
1–1.5 hours

Theatre: Drama or Musical Theatre

Materials referenced below are posted online on the CAPA Theatre Department website:

https://www.pghschools.org/about/enrollment/capa-registration/capa-theatre-arts

Students auditioning for **grades 6-8** should memorize a monologue (at least one minute in length) and be prepared to perform it. They can either choose a monologue from the "Monologue Choices Middle School" shared on the Theatre website or pick any monologue from a published play or novel.

In addition to preparing a monologue, students should prepare and respond to questions about the monologue and the play that it comes from. Questions are found on the Theatre website "Middle School Audition Written Work". This is to be filled out and brought to the audition.

For all students, the day will begin with a group warm up. Afterwards, individuals are called in for a brief interview and to present their monologues for the faculty. They may be asked to work on the monologue with the faculty and try different approaches to the way it's performed. Students will also be asked to do a cold reading from a provided script (middle school only).

Upon entering the audition room, the student will have a short interview with the panel where the student will discuss topics such as "Why you want to come to CAPA?", favorite subjects, prior experiences in theatre, outside classes, etc.

They will perform their monologue and may be asked to try something different with the monologue as well.

Students auditioning for **grades 9-12** should memorize a monologue (at least one minute in length) from a published play or novel and be prepared to perform it, as outlined above. They should also answer the questions about their chosen monologue on the worksheet posted on the Theatre website: "High School Audition Written Work" and bring this to their audition.

IN ADDITION TO THE MONOLOGUE, students in grades 9-12 auditioning for musical theatre are to prepare a song from musical theatre repertoire. They will also be taken through a dance warm up.

IN ADDITION TO THE MONOLOGUE, students in grades 9-12 auditioning for acting/drama are to prepare a 1 minute version of a fairytale in storytelling style. They are encouraged to have fun and make the story their own, using character voices, physical movement and their best storytelling efforts.

Scoring for students auditioning for grades 6-12:
Please review the Audition Scoring Guide on the Theater department page at www.pghschools.org/caparegistration.

Length of Audition:
1 hour

Visual Arts

Part One: Online Artwork Submission (completed via the online magnet application)
Students applying for the Visual Arts Department at Pittsburgh CAPA 6-12 should submit the following three pieces from their art portfolio:

- A self-portrait in pencil done from observation (looking into a mirror) not from looking at a photograph.
- A drawing done from observation. Choose an object and draw it with pencil.
- A two- or three-dimensional piece that demonstrates the student's artistic interests and skills.

Artwork is uploaded within the online application. Any student that is not able to complete the online submission may contact the magnet office for assistance.

Part Two: In-person Audition

Applicants will be invited to participate in an in person audition and will need to bring to their audition a portfolio of artwork consisting of 10-15 pieces, which should include:

INCOMING 6-8

1. A self-portrait in pencil done from observation (looking into a mirror, not from a photograph).
2. A drawing done from observation – choose an object and draw if with pencil.
3. A painting in watercolor, acrylics, or oil paints. It may be done on paper, canvas, or Masonite board.
4. A three-dimensional work – a sculpture, ceramic work, or multi-media construction.
5. An artwork completed in school under teacher direction.
6. An artwork completed at home without adult input.

The remaining 4-9 pieces should be chosen to demonstrate the student's artistic interests and skills.

Sketchbooks (completed or in progress) are highly encouraged.

INCOMING 9 - 12

1. A detailed self-portrait drawn with pencil from observation, not a photograph.
2. Four additional observational drawings – TWO in black and white with shading/value and TWO in color (colored pencil, marker, or pastel). Include each subject below:
   - Your hand
   - A view of your room
   - A still life with various objects, including plants
   - An outdoor environment

4-10 additional artworks in other media, such as painting, photography, fiber arts, printmaking, ceramics, digital media, video, mixed media.

Sketchbooks (completed or in progress) are highly encouraged. Select current, original work that represents your best efforts; include preliminary drawings when available.

Note: The three online submissions are listed separately from the 10–15-piece portfolio brought to the audition; artwork may overlap between the two.

Continued on next page.

Visual Arts (continued)

Part Three: In-person Portfolio Discussion & Interview

Be prepared to talk with Visual Arts faculty about your artwork, creative process, interests, and reasons for applying to CAPA.

RESOURCES

The following resources offer helpful guidance:

- **How to Create an Excellent Observational Drawing: 11 Tips for High School Art Students**
- **How to Make an Observational Drawing — Tutorial**
- **CAPA Audition Overview Information for Visual Arts**

If you are unable to access the links via this document, please visit the Visual Arts page of the CAPA website at https://www.pghschools.org/about/enrollment/capa-registration/capa-visual-arts to access the links directly.

Scoring:
Please review the Audition Scoring Guide, available on the Visual Arts department page of www.pghschools.org/caparegistration.

Length of Audition:
3 hours

Visual Arts – Cinema & Media Arts (9th grade only)

Students entering grade 9 interested in the new Cinema and Media Arts program, focusing on filmmaking, storytelling, photography, editing, sound, and animation, will complete four portions of the audition. No prior filmmaking classes or professional equipment are required.

Part One: Artwork Submission

Submit a short 1-3 minute film – email your film, or a link to the film, to capaapplication@pghschools.org with your full name and the subject "Film Submission". You will receive confirmation via email when your film has been received.

Part Two: In-person Audition

Before the Audition — Prepare and Bring

• **Original Short Film (1–3 minutes):** Create a new film for this audition. You must be the primary filmmaker responsible for the story, filming, and editing. Other people may act in your film. Any camera (including a phone or tablet) and any editing software may be used. Content must be school-appropriate.

• **Film Statement (3–5 sentences):** Briefly explain what your film is about, what inspired it, and one creative choice you are proud of.

• **Creative Portfolio (3–5 pieces):** Bring examples of your creative work, such as photographs, drawings, digital art, animation, writing, scripts, comics, music, sculpture, props, or additional videos. Existing work is welcome.

During the Audition — What to Expect

• Storyboard Challenge: Respond to a provided story prompt by creating a six-panel storyboard in approximately 20 minutes. Materials will be provided. Simple drawings or stick figures are acceptable; drawing skill is not evaluated.
• Interview and Film Discussion: Talk with faculty about your short film, your creative work, your interests, and what you hope to learn.

RESOURCES

The following resources offer helpful guidance:

- Free editing programs: Capcut, Davinci Resolve, iMovie, OpenShot, Shotcut
- How to Make Your First Short Film: A Crash Course

If you are unable to access the links via this document, please visit the Visual Arts page of the CAPA website at https://www.pghschools.org/about/enrollment/capa-registration/capa-visual-arts to access the links directly.

Scoring:
Please review the Audition Scoring Guide, available on the Visual Arts department page of www.pghschools.org/caparegistration.

Length of Audition:
3 hours

Vocal Music

What to Expect:
On your audition day, you can expect a panel of at least three CAPA faculty members to listen to you sing. They look forward to hearing you, so relax and do your very best. In addition to requirements outlined below, the areas that we will be listening for are as follows:

- Presentation
- Tone Quality
- Intonation
- Breath Management
- Diction
- Preparedness

Middle School Audition Requirements (Incoming 6th−8th grade):
Students will sing one of the four songs: Maybe from Annie, Edelweiss from The Sound of Music, My Favorite Things from The Sound of Music or Where Is Love from Oliver. No other song is required, so the student should be well-prepared, and choose the song that best fits their voice. Students can find the YouTube videos for each of these songs for rehearsal purposes as well as karaoke versions to perfect their performances here: https://www.pghschools.org/about/enrollment/capa-registration/capa-vocal

In addition to the song selection, students will vocalize, match pitches played on the piano, echo various rhythm patterns, and be interviewed by the Vocal Department Faculty.

High School Audition Requirements (Incoming 9th −12th grade):
Students will be required to sing one of two songs: Since I First Saw Your Face, or Ward the Pirate. Students should choose the song that best fits their voice, and sing the song exactly as it is written. Materials are posted online at https://www.pghschools.org/about/enrollment/capa-registration/capa-vocal.

The student will also be required to sing an additional piece of their choosing. The additional song can be in any style. Students will also perform pitch recognition exercises, complete a music theory assessment exam, and be interviewed by the Vocal Department Faculty.

The music theory assessment does not count towards deciding whether the student will be recommended but helps the staff with determining the student's background in the subject.

Students will also be asked to sight sing a small excerpt of music. This portion of the audition will not have bearing on the student's acceptance. It is to help us with placement in appropriate music theory and solfege courses.

Scoring:
Please review the Audition Scoring Guide, available on the Vocal department page of www.pghschools.org/caparegistration.