



WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Visual & Performing Arts Department

Casey
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VPA Supervisor

Frequently Asked Questions about Course Selection In Visual & Performing Arts

GENERAL INTEREST

- 1. Are high school students required to take both a Visual Art class and a Performing Art class for graduation?**
No. One course in either Visual Arts OR Performing Arts will satisfy the graduation requirement.
(All students must take a Practical Art as well.)
- 2. When should the Visual & Performing Arts required course be taken?**
Any of the four high school years.
- 3. What courses should a student consider if they have had no previous experience in art, music, or dance, and don't want to perform in a music ensemble?**
All of our introductory courses are worth considering depending on the level of interest:
Experiencing Visual Art, Visual & Performing Arts Appreciation, Multi-Cultural Art & Design, Digital Arts Foundations, Guitar 1, Keyboard 1, Dance 1, Music Technology 1 or Exploring the Theatre.
- 4. What is the best course to take if the student prefers a more “book-oriented” arts class (rather than actually creating art or performing)?**
Experiencing Visual Arts or Visual & Performing Arts Appreciation

FOR STUDENTS WITH A STRONG INTEREST IN ART

- 1. What course is best for a student that is very interested in Art?**
Studio Art 1. This is the prerequisite for all of the higher-level art courses.
- 2. My student is interested in computer Animation. What course do they need to take first?**
There are no prerequisites for Animation or Digital Illustration, however students should understand that there will be a lot of drawing and computer work in these classes.
- 3. My child took Talented Art in eighth grade. What art class should they sign up for as a 9th grader?**
If they have a grade of 90 or better, they are eligible for Studio Art 2. If they are interested in continuing in art, and have a lower grade, they should take Studio Art 1.
- 4. Can a student take more than one art course per year?**
Yes, the PRIDE schedule allows for students to take more than one elective.



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FOR STUDENTS WITH A STRONG INTEREST IN MUSIC

1. How will students be placed into band, chorus and orchestra classes?

Through an individual audition. The high school music teachers will meet with all 8th grade music students at each middle school and all high school music students to explain the audition process. Each student (high school and 8th grade) will perform an audition for the high school teacher. After all auditions have been completed, teachers will place the students in the appropriate ensemble and communicate that information to the counseling department over the summer.

2. What if my child is not in a music group at the middle school or attends another school?

You must make an appointment with the appropriate director for an audition.

3. Do students get cut from music groups?

We do not cut students from music groups, however returning students are expected to improve their skills each year, and may not be recommended for continuation if they are not meeting expectations.

4. How many performances do the students have each year?

Each of the performing groups (except for Marching Band) present 2 to 4 concerts per year. Some of the ensembles may be asked to perform at additional special events during the school year. Students are given sufficient advance notice so that they can arrange their schedules to accommodate.

5. Are there any required after school rehearsals?

The majority of our rehearsals take place during the class. However, an occasional after-school dress rehearsal prior to the concert may be required and is scheduled well in advance.

6. Is there a separate audition for marching band?

No. The overall band audition satisfies the audition for marching band.

7. When does marching band meet? Is it year-round?

Marching band meets in the summer and fall. Typically, they rehearse two or three nights a week, perform at all football games and participate in several competitions. Other than the occasional performance in the spring, the traditional marching season ends around mid-November.

8. Do you need previous experience to take Guitar 1 or Keyboard 1?

No previous experience is necessary.

9. Do you need your own guitar for guitar classes?

Guitars are provided for all classes. Students enrolled in Guitar 2 and Guitar 3 are expected to practice at home and should have their own guitar.

10. I have played guitar before. Can I skip Guitar 1?

Guitar 1 focuses on notation and history in addition to basic performance. However, higher level placement can be considered on a case-by-case basis. You will be expected to read music.



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11. My child is interested in majoring in music. What course(s) should he/she take while still in high school?

Music Theory 1 and AP Music Theory. A vocal ensemble (for non-chorus students) would be very helpful as well.

12. What courses should a student take if they are interested in musical theater?

Exploring the Theatre. It is also recommended that students with an interest in theatre participate in Chorus and/or Dance 1.

13. Is previous experience in music required for Music Theory I.

Students are expected to have a working knowledge of music including basic music reading skills. Music Theory 1 is **not** a music appreciation course.

14. Are any music classes held afterschool?

Yes: Jazz Band, A Cappella Choir & Marching Band

- **Jazz Band** is a 2.5 credit course that meets two days per week during the 2nd and 3rd marking periods. Auditions are held in October.
- **A Cappella Choir** is a 1 credit course that meets one day per week for most of the school year. Auditions for those ensembles are held as soon as school begins in September. Performances are scheduled at various times during the year but typically culminate with the annual Choral Pops concert in February.
- **Marching Band** is a 2.5 credit course that typically meets from July through November. Students must be enrolled in the concert band or orchestra program in order to be enrolled in this course.

FOR STUDENTS WITH A STRONG INTEREST IN DANCE

1. My child has danced in a studio for years. Can he/she skip Dance 1?

Our dance classes include units on dance history and choreography. Most studios do not provide instruction in these areas, so we start all students at the Dance 1 level.

2. Will all students get into Dance?

Dance is one of our most popular electives. It is possible that the classes will fill up and that some students will have to wait until the next year.

3. Do the Dance classes give a public performance?

Yes. All dance students participate in a performance in the Spring. The Dance Production classes have an additional performance in June.