DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HeSY27-28 and SY28-29 Duke Ellington School of the Arts: Admissions Process Rubric

For Grades: 9-12*

Note: This rubric is in effect for SY27-28 and SY28-29 admissions cycles.

About Duke Ellington School of the Arts (Ellington) Admissions Criteria: At Ellington, we are looking for scholars who have a passion for the arts, a commitment to community and promotion of artist citizenship, and who can work through challenges – balancing a rigorous college-preparatory schedule while committing to pre-professional arts training. We find the most successful applicants put effort into all their classes, even if their grades or scores are not perfect.

About Ellington's Admissions Process: At Ellington, we request that all applicants submit an essay, report card, and three (3) recommendations as part of their initial application. GPA is calculated per the DCPS grading policy. All lottery applicants who successfully submit their My School DC application are eligible to audition. There is no minimum GPA for entry. All recommendation content and scores are confidential and will not be shared with anyone including applicants, families, or staff at the student's current school, etc. Accommodations may be requested for any portion of the admissions process, and families may contact the Admissions Director/POC to discuss accommodation options.

Each component of the application process is scored and weighed according to the chart below. Applicants are evaluated as individuals and weighed against the needs of the school's various arts programs. All eligible applicants (within a department) will receive equal rankings. **Specific details related to an applicant's admissions process and eligibility results will remain confidential.**

Admissions Component	Weight	Notes
Report Card Review	10/100 points	Duke Ellington School of the Arts (Ellington) reviews grades only as part of the report card review. Applicants should submit their final SY25-26 and SY26-27 first quarter report cards. There is no minimum GPA required, but both report cards must be submitted for the application to be considered for admission. GPA is calculated per the DCPS grading policy. Please note that the Ellington team may reach out to school counselors, deans, school leaders, etc., to receive conversion scales or context to aid in reviewing the report cards in accordance with the DCPS grading policy. The school reviews all applicants using the same process, including international applicants.

*Please note, Ellington will review applicants entering the 11th and 12th grade so long as they are transferring from an arts school and have sufficient arts credits in a similar program as their intended course of study.

Essay(s): In My School DC application	10/100 points	The essay is used to assess applicant interest in our program, commitment to community, and experiences demonstrating personal perseverance. This essay is completed through the My School DC application. **Note:** Depending on the department to which the applicant is applying, they may be required to submit additional essays, writing prompts, or materials through the My School DC application or directly to the departments that the applicant is applying for via email. These additional materials are evaluated as part of the audition/portfolio review portion. Essays will be reviewed by each Art Department and the Ellington Admissions Team. Though applicants will be expected to write regularly throughout high school, the evaluation of essays does not solely focus on technical writing skills such as grammar and vocabulary. The essays focus on the applicant's reasons for wanting to attend our school for the department they are applying to. These essays are intended to offer more detailed insight into their reasons for hoping to attend our school.
Recommendation Letter Review	10/100 points	Duke Ellington School of the Arts (Ellington) uses teacher recommendations to better understand an applicant's experience at school and to provide context to their academic outcomes. Ellington requests three (3) recommendations, worth 10 points (3.3 points per recommendation). All recommendation content and scores are confidential and will not be shared with anyone including applicants, families, and staff at the student's current school. Applicants can log into their My School DC lottery application to check the status of their recommendation submissions at any time and send reminders to recommenders. Regular notifications are sent to recommenders and families when a recommendation is missing or incomplete. Applicants and families are strongly encouraged to follow up with the individuals submitting recommendations on their behalf and to check the accuracy of recommender emails. **Missing recommendations ultimately will receive zero points.** Since the auditions begin immediately following the application deadline, we encourage applicants to submit their applications well before the deadline to ensure their recommenders have enough time to

		complete their recommendations. If necessary, Ellington staff may call the applicant's school directly to receive information on behalf of the applicant.
All applicants are invited to participate in the admissions audition or portfolio.		
Audition/Portfolio Review	50/100 points	All applicants who successfully submit a My School DC application in the Lottery round are eligible to participate in an in-person audition or portfolio review. Depending on their selected department, applicants will be asked to submit supplemental materials, including a headshot (if not submitted through the My School DC application), portfolio/work samples, etc. These materials (such as writing samples, portfolios, etc.) must be submitted directly to the department that the applicant is applying for via email and are evaluated as part of the audition/portfolio review. See our Audition Procedures which provide additional insight on each department's process. Detailed instructions will be sent to all applicants, including information and next steps for any applicants who may need support or accommodations to complete the audition/portfolio review. Support and accommodations are also available on the school's website year-round.
Only applicants who pass the audition and application review stage will be invited to continue to the next steps of the process.		
Department Presentation Night	Participation is not required, but highly recommended	The purpose of the Arts Department presentation night is an opportunity for families and applicants who passed their audition to meet with the department to review department-specific expectations and ask questions about that area of study. Attendance shows strong interest and is indicative of an applicant's commitment to our departments.
Family Interview	10/100 points	Duke Ellington School of the Arts (Ellington) believes strongly in identifying applicants with a passion for our program, commitment to community, and who can demonstrate perseverance. We request that applicants participate in the in-person interview along with at least one family member (parent, legal guardian, or other close family member) or other important figure (such as a coach, counselor, or mentor) who regularly supports them. All applicants, along with their parent/guardian, are invited for a 30-minute panel interview. The interview panel consists of faculty, staff, and current students. Applicants and parents are encouraged to do their best by being themselves. The accompanying adult's participation is not factored into scoring in any way. Applicants for whom an accompanying adult is unable to participate will not be penalized.

Admissions Review	10/100 points	After the family interview is completed the Admissions Committee (Principal, Admissions Team, Assistant Principals, Dean of Students, Teachers and/or Department Chairs) will review the total application and provide final feedback to make a final eligibility determination.
After the Admissions Review, top scoring applicants from each art department will be marked eligible. All eligible applicants will receive equal ranking (within a department) for determination in the My School DC Lottery.		