

# **Frequently Asked Questions about VSAA**

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- **What important dates do I need to know in order to apply?**
  - Applications available.....January 22, 2008 @ 7:00pm
  - Parent Information Night.....January 22, 2008 @ 7:00pm  
 VSAA's Durst Theatre  
 3101 Main Street, Vancouver, WA 98663
  - Application Available Online.....January 23, 2008 at <http://arts.vansd.org/>
  - Applications Due.....February 11, 2008 by 4:30pm  
 Late applications will not be processed
  - Interview & Workshop.....February 21 or 25 (by assignment)  
 All applicants **are required** to attend their assigned workshop/interview
  
- **What parts of the application packet need to be filled out and returned to the school?**
  - Student Application page
  - Arts Block Teachers recommendations (Grade 5 only)
  - Art Teacher recommendation (Grade 6-11 only)
  - Current School Principal page
  - Community Member Letter of Recommendation (optional)

**ALL items must be received by VSAA no later than 4:30pm on Feb. 11, 2008.**

- **What is the application process?**

The application process is designed to assist the VSAA staff, through various sources of input, information that would in turn create a successful placement for each admitted student. The application process consists of:

- A written student application page (name, address, phone, etc.)
- Art/Arts Block Teacher recommendations
- Community Member Recommendation (optional)
- Current School Principal form
- Attendance history printed by your current school office.
- High school applicants must also submit a copy of your academic history.
- Participate in the Cooperative Activity – Workshop
- Complete the Application Question (Written response) during the workshop.
- Complete the interview in the application workshop.

- **Do I have to come to the information meeting?**

The January 22<sup>nd</sup> Informational meeting is designed as a resource for students and their families to compile as much information as possible to make an informed decision. If families cannot attend they can download the application from the VSAA web page.

- **What are the interview and workshop activities?**

Students will have the opportunity to sit down with two VSAA staff members in an interview setting. They will also be involved in artistic activities and will be asked to complete a writing sample on this day that will be submitted with their application packet.

- **We live out of district. Can our student apply?**

Students that live outside of the Vancouver School District boundary are invited to apply. However preference will be given to students residing within our school district's geographic boundary. If the entire list of in-district applicants has been exhausted, students from out of

district would be considered for placement. Students residing outside of Washington State are ineligible to apply.

- **How many people apply? What are my child's odds of getting in?**

We always have a large number of applicants at each grade level, the most from incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders. In the 6<sup>th</sup> grade last year we accepted 90 students out of the 241 that showed interest at that grade level. In grades 7-12 there are fewer applicants but less availability as a majority of VSAA students stay for all seven years.

- **What if my student just wants to come for middle school?**

Our goal is to offer a diverse and comprehensive arts and academics curriculum to each student. We encourage students to make VSAA a seven year commitment.

- **Do you have to reapply each year once you're in?**

Once applicants have applied and been accepted they do not have to reapply in following years. If a student does not get accepted on the first try they are encouraged to reapply the following school year.

- **How long is the waiting list?**

There is a waiting list at each grade level based upon the number of applicants and the availability VSAA can offer. Applicants will stay on the waiting list for one year at which time they would need to submit a new application for the next school year.

- **Do you take students at the semester?**

VSAA makes every effort to maintain the student population of the school. If space becomes available, at any grade level, during the course of the school year the waiting list will be reviewed. Invitations to attend VSAA will be filled on a space available basis.

- **We are moving into the area in the spring. When should we apply?**

Students may apply at any time. An application may only be processed once the student has moved into the Vancouver School District's geographic boundaries.

- **How should my child prepare in order to be accepted?**

Applicants need to be diligent in getting all components of the application packet in by the deadline of February 11, 2008 by 4:30 pm. All received items are time and date stamped. Applicants must attend their assigned interview and workshop activities.

- **What can I do so that my child will get accepted to your school?**

There are no guarantees for acceptance. Throughout the process every effort is made to discover students that would be successful in the VSAA culture.

- **What is Advocacy?**

At VSAA, every teacher serves as an advocate for 18-20 students, offering professional attention to each student. The advocate, in cooperation with the student and family, monitors academic progress and planning. Advocacy groups meet twice a week before or after lunch. Advocacy is considered part of the VSAA curriculum and daily attendance is required.

- **What is Core?**

Teams of teachers who work together to help students learn mathematics, science, health, language arts, and social studies with a focus on the arts. Course work is directed to individual student needs and progress and related to a yearly, chosen “Theme.”. Individual and group projects are a primary source of learning within Core.

- **Are students in mixed-grade classes or with students in their own grades?**

Students are separated in their academic subjects into groups of 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade (blue, green, purple team), 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade (red team), and 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade (yellow team). Grade levels are integrated in our arts classes and through Advocacy.

- **Is there a good solid academic curriculum? How do academics match up with those in other public schools?**

Please visit the additional links on our home page.

- **What about PE in the middle school? PE in the high school?**

A Middle School student participates in a Fitness and Health program for their first three years at VSAA. A High School student receives physical education through our Dance curriculum.

- **What foreign languages are taught? Can you take a foreign language in middle school?**

VSAA currently offers Spanish, French, and American Sign Language for high school students.

- **What about high school credits when coming in as a Junior or Senior? Will my student be able to graduate?**

If a student wanted to enter VSAA as a Junior or Senior they would need to complete all components of the application process. The applicant would also need to meet with our school counselor to be sure that the applicant’s credits would move them forward towards an on time graduation.

- **Do you have special education?**

VSAA does have students in need of Special Education services. Through an inclusive model students are given the necessary support to have a positive educational experience.

- **Can outside activities count for dance or PE?**

Dance is a required component of the VSAA curriculum and must be taken.

- **Do students already have to be good at art to be accepted to VSAA?**

VSAA is a Vancouver Public School that focuses its efforts on a pluralistic interpretation of the arts. Students will have the opportunity to experience each art form (visual art, dance, literary arts, theatre, moving image arts, and music) at an introductory level and advance in subsequent years to higher levels of their preferred art forms.

- **What music offerings are available at VSAA?**

We offer vocal music, strings, and instrumental music. We do not offer piano or guitar as part of our general curriculum.

- **Do they have to take all art forms? What if they just want to take drama? Or dance? Or visual art? Etc.?**

As a pluralistic arts school we are tasked with introducing and developing students both academically and in the arts. Students will experience all six (6) art forms in their first three years at VSAA. After exploring each of them they may choose to focus in one or more of these art forms.

- **Do they have to take dance?**

Yes

- **Can I do sports while attending VSAA?**

Students who wish to participate in sports may do so for a maximum of one sport season per school year. They will need to arrange for an early release for the athletic season, and may either make up the missed coursework to gain credit in the class, or receive a "No Credit" (NC) for the class. Students with early release still need to meet the overall VSAA graduation requirements.

- **Is transportation provided to VSAA?**

The Vancouver School District provides bus transportation for in-district students. Each of the six district middle schools will serve as a "hub" site, transporting 6-12<sup>th</sup> graders from their neighborhood middle school to VSAA. Routes will return students to their neighborhoods much like the current intramural bus lines. A student who misses the bus is expected to proceed to school as quickly as possible by other previously agreed upon means of transportation.

- **Is VSAA a public school?**

The Vancouver School of Arts and Academics is a **public school**. It is a Full-day Arts Magnet of the Vancouver School District.

- **Is there any tuition? How much does it cost to attend?**

There is no tuition if accepted to VSAA as we are a Vancouver Public School. There are still the general fees associated with all schools paid at the beginning of a school year.

- **What if they don't have any art classes now?**

The foundation for acceptance is not based on talent but on the willingness to explore all art forms that VSAA offers each of their students. Previous arts experiences are just as valued as current arts experiences.

- **Can you mail information about VSAA and an application to me?**

We have tried to post as much information about the Vancouver School of Arts and Academics here on our web page so that students and their families can make an informed decision regarding the application process. This also includes access to a downloadable copy of the application.

