



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Summer Residential Governor's Schools

Student Handbook
2026-2027



Information for students and families exploring advanced academic, mentorship, and visual and performing arts residential experiences.

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STATE TIMELINE

Important Dates & Deadlines

Your school, division, or regional coordinator will set local application deadlines. Follow the dates given to you locally.

DATE - WINDOW	STAGE	STUDENT ACTION
October 14, 2026	Apply	Applications released; obtain local instructions & deadlines.
December 2, 2026 - January 13, 2027	Apply - VPA	Complete the required statewide virtual adjudication.
April 14, 2027	Selection & Notification	Check your personal email for VDOE status update.
April 21, 2027	Accept & Prepare	Invited students accept or decline the offer.
Late April – May 28, 2027	Accept & Prepare	Registration information sent by host university.
June – July, 2027	Residential Experience	Program sessions; exact dates vary by program.

Local application deadlines and procedures will vary. Host colleges and universities provide program-specific registration, arrival, housing, and residential information to accepted students.



Explore the Programs

Review the seven program options, session dates, and learning experiences before deciding where to apply. Each program is hosted on a Virginia college or university campus and centers on intensive study in a specific field.

Important: Program dates differ. Before applying, compare the exact session dates with family, work, travel, camp, athletics, and other commitments. Invited students are expected to attend the full program.

Programs at a Glance

PROGRAM	FOCUS	HOST & 2027 DATES
Agriculture	Agricultural issues, environmental implications, resource management, biotechnology, and agribusiness.	Virginia Tech June 19 – July 10, 2027
Humanities	Human culture through history, literature, philosophy, and the social sciences.	Radford University June 20-July 10, 2027
Medicine & Health Sciences	Connections between health-sciences research and the practice of medicine.	Radford University - Roanoke June 20 – July 9, 2027
Visual & Performing Arts	Intensive study in Dance, Instrumental Music, Theatre, Visual Arts, or Vocal Music.	Radford University June 20-July 10, 2027
Engineering (JLAB)	Hands-on engineering mentorship and research connected to Jefferson Lab.	William & Mary July 11-July 30, 2027
Marine Science (VIMS)	Marine science mentorship and field & laboratory study with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science.	William & Mary July 11-July 30, 2027
Mathematics, Science, & Technology	Interdisciplinary exploration of advanced topics across STEM fields.	University of Lynchburg July 4-July 24, 2027

Mentorship readiness: JLAB and VIMS are small mentorship programs. Experience with research design is beneficial, although participation in research competitions is not required. JLAB applicants must be at least 16 years old by June 17, 2027, and U.S. citizens.

01 EXPLORE

Agriculture

Virginia Tech - Capacity: 90

- **Areas to Explore:** Animals, plants, food, natural resources, technology, business, leadership, and the people and communities connected to agriculture.
- **What to Expect:** Hands-on courses, field experiences, industry visits, group research project, and opportunities to learn with Virginia Tech faculty and agricultural professionals.
- **Consider this program if:** You want to explore how agriculture connects science, technology, business, people, and the environment to solve real-world challenges.

Engineering (JLAB)

William & Mary - Capacity: 11

- **Areas to Explore:** Engineering and research through team-oriented projects connected to the Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility.
- **What to Expect:** Work with Jefferson Lab mentors in laboratories and other facilities, participate in tours and lectures, and present your research to the JLAB community.
- **Consider this program if:** You are interested in engineering research and are prepared for a small mentorship setting. Applicants must be at least 16 years old by June 17, 2027, and U.S. citizens; prior experience with research design is beneficial.

Humanities

Radford University - Capacity: 100

- **Areas to Explore:** Human culture and society through fields such as history, literature, philosophy, anthropology, political science, economics, sociology, psychology, and media.
- **What to Expect:** Reading, discussion, seminars, and lectures that ask you to examine ideas from multiple disciplines and perspectives.
- **Consider this program if:** You enjoy philosophical discussions, debates, interpretation, and discovering how ideas shape people and society.

Marine Science (VIMS)

William & Mary - Capacity: 6

- **Areas to Explore:** Biological, chemical, geological, and physical oceanography; wetlands ecology; fisheries science; coastal law; and marine resource management.
- **What to Expect:** Join existing VIMS research teams for field and vessel work, laboratory study, data collection and analysis, and research presentation.
- **Consider this program if:** You want an intensive, very small research mentorship and are comfortable learning through field, laboratory, and data-based work. Prior experience with research design is beneficial.

01 EXPLORE

Medicine & Health Sciences

Radford University - Capacity: 20

- **Areas to Explore:** Connections between health-sciences research & the practice of medicine.
- **What to Expect:** Hands-on classroom activities, laboratory exercises, & field experiences built around analysis & problem solving in medical & health-sciences contexts.
- **Consider this program if:** You have a serious interest in science and medicine and want a rigorous, accelerated learning environment.

Mathematics, Science, & Technology

University of Lynchburg - Capacity: 160

- **Areas to Explore:** Advanced topics across mathematics, science, technology, scientific inquiry, and STEM-related public policy.
- **What to Expect:** Hands-on laboratory work, multimedia instruction, classroom study, and independent research, including attention to scientific experiment design.
- **Consider this program if:** You enjoy exploration across STEM fields and want to combine investigation, laboratory work, research, and interdisciplinary problem solving.

Visual & Performing Arts

Radford University - Capacity: 250 across five disciplines

- **Areas to Explore:** Dance, Instrumental Music, Theatre, Visual Arts, or Vocal Music, with opportunities for intensive artistic development.
- **What to Expect:** Classes, workshops, group activities, and interdisciplinary study. The program emphasizes artistic creation and growth; instruction is primarily ensemble or small-group.
- **Consider this program if:** You want to develop your art through sustained practice, feedback, collaboration, and work with other students in your discipline.



Before You Apply

Before starting an application, confirm that you meet the applicable eligibility requirements and can attend the full program if invited.

Eligible applicants may attend a Virginia public school, an Academic-Year Governor's School, a DoDEA school, or an accredited private school in Virginia, Maryland, or the District of Columbia.

Eligibility for all applicants

Eligible students must be a current sophomore or junior (10th-11th grade), as well as:

- Identified gifted by the division/school or be an advanced student who may be competitive, as determined by the division/school.
- Not previously attended nor currently applying to another Summer Residential Governor's School or Governor's Foreign Language Academy program.

Eligibility for Visual & Performing Arts applicants

If you are not identified as gifted in an arts discipline, you may meet the VPA eligibility requirement through at least one of the following:

- 80th percentile or higher on a recent standardized assessment;
- C-average or higher in the prior school year; or
- a letter of commendation from a teacher.

Eligibility for Mentorship applicants

Additional mentorship requirements include:

- JLAB-only: You must be at least 16 years old by June 17, 2027, and a U.S. citizen;
- JLAB and VIMS: Experience with research design is beneficial, although participation in research competitions is not required.

Private School applicants

Private-school applicants should follow the applicable school or regional process.

- Virginia students attending an out-of-state private school should use the guide at the end of this handbook. Students and parents/guardians should not submit completed applications directly to VDOE.

Home-schooled students must be nominated by the division superintendent of the school division in which the student resides. Home-schooled students submit a completed application for scoring to the principal of the public high school they are eligible to attend. Each division determines its own policies and procedures regarding tuition payment for home-schooled students.

Commitment Expectations

Review the exact session dates in [Section 01 Explore](#) with family, work, travel, camp, athletics, and other commitments before you apply. Invited students are expected to attend the full duration of the program.

What if I cannot attend all the scheduled dates?

If you already know you cannot attend the full session, you should not submit an application.

What if my schedule changes after I apply?

If a new conflict develops after you submit your application, contact your school or coordinator as soon as possible. If the conflict means you cannot attend the full session, ask to have your application withdrawn. Do not wait for the selection process to end.

What if I am waiting to hear results from other summer programs?

If you are invited to a Summer Residential Governor's School, you must accept or decline your offer by Wednesday, April 21, 2027. After the deadline, VDOE will finalize program rosters based on responses received. See [Section 05 Accept & Prepare](#).



Completing Your Application

Applications are submitted through your school, school division, or applicable regional process. Follow the instructions and deadline provided by your local coordinator; local deadlines may be earlier than statewide milestones.

Do not send a completed application directly to VDOE. Home-schooled students and private-school applicants should follow the application process described in [Section 02 Before You Apply](#). DoDEA applicants should follow the application instructions provided by their DoDEA school.

Application steps

1. Review the current application materials and the instructions provided by your school, division, or regional coordinator.
2. Complete the student application and all required components for your program.
3. Request required recommendations early enough for recommenders to return them.
4. Submit completed materials to the designated local contact before the local deadline.

What is included with the student application?

Academic & Mentorship application components include *applicant information, resume, two recommendations, two essays, and academic records*.

Visual & Performing Arts application components include *applicant information, resume, two recommendations, and completing a required virtual adjudication video*.

Recommendations

You must request two recommendations to be completed and submitted on your behalf.

- One recommendation must be from a teacher in your area of interest who can assess your current abilities.
- The second may be from any teacher or adult outside your family who is familiar with your work.
- You are responsible for giving each recommender the instructions and deadline required by your school or division.
- Updated forms can be found on the [VDOE Summer Residential Governor's School website](#)

Completing Your Application

Resume

Follow the application directions and limit entries to what is requested. Be specific when describing activities, research or study experiences, and honors or recognitions; reviewers may not be familiar with local or regional programs. The current scoring guidelines limit the number of items scored in these resume categories, so additional entries do not increase the scored total.

Essays - Academic & Mentorship only

Review the essay prompts and scoring rubric included with the current application. The rubric is used to evaluate both essays. Use it to check whether your response has a clear central idea, relevant evidence and details, logical organization, specific word choice, and accurate mechanics. You may ask someone familiar with the scoring criteria to read your essay and provide feedback before you submit it.

Virtual Adjudication - VPA only

Radford University conducts the required statewide virtual adjudication for VPA applicants using Opus Events. Your coordinator must submit the required information so you can be registered for adjudication.

2026–2027 adjudication window: December 2, 2026, through January 13, 2027.

VPA applicants will record and submit the required video materials during the adjudication window. Use only the current instructions distributed for the 2026–2027 cycle; Radford University will provide the current platform and submission details through coordinators. Radford faculty will score all adjudications and send results to division coordinators for final application calculations. Requirements for adjudication can be found at the end of the handbook.

After you submit

Your school, division, or regional process determines which completed applications move forward as state-level nominees. Submitting a complete application does not guarantee nomination or state-level selection. See [Section 04 Selection & Notification](#) for what happens next.

Important: VDOE does not accept applications submitted directly by students or parents/guardians. School divisions or private/DoDEA schools must submit the completed application through the required process.

Selection & Notification

Local selection

For most applicants, applications first move through the local or regional nomination process. Your school division or private-school region evaluates completed applications using its established local process and determines which applicants will be forwarded as state-level nominees. Virginia students attending an out-of-state private school follow the separate selection process described at the end of this handbook. DoDEA applicants follow the separate selection process administered by VDOE in coordination with the DoDEA school.

If you are not nominated locally, your school division or private school will notify you. Local selection decisions are final; VDOE does not make or overturn local nomination decisions.

State-level selection

For students nominated to the state level, final selection is made by VDOE and university program faculty. The process considers application strength and local ranking, regional representation, graduation year, and program needs.

Important: Only students selected as nominees through the applicable process move forward for state-level consideration. A nomination does not guarantee an invitation to attend.

When will I hear?

Wednesday, April 14, 2027 - Status notifications from VDOE (govschool@doe.virginia.gov) will be sent to the personal email address submitted with your nomination information.

If you do not see the email, check your junk or spam folders. Confirm with your school or coordinator that the personal email address on file is correct. If the address is correct and the message is still missing, email govschool@doe.virginia.gov with your full name, school division or school name, and program area.

What does my status mean?

Invited: You have been selected to attend the program. Follow the response instructions in your VDOE letter. The response deadline is Wednesday, April 21, 2027. See [Section 05 Accept & Prepare](#) before submitting your response.

Alternate: You have not received an immediate invitation, but VDOE may contact you individually if space becomes available before program rosters are finalized. Alternate status does not guarantee a later invitation.

Not selected: Your application was not selected. No further response is required.

Accept & Prepare

If you receive an invitation, first decide whether you can make the full commitment. Then use the response link in your VDOE notification to accept or decline the offer.

Respond to your invitation

1. Open the response link in your VDOE notification.
2. Choose Accept or Decline. Submit the form even if you are declining.
3. Submit your response by Wednesday, April 21, 2027.
4. Keep the confirmation shown on the final screen for your records.

Important: The submitted form is the official record of your response. The “submission complete” screen is the only confirmation; no automatic confirmation email is generated.

If you need to decline

If a new scheduling conflict or other commitment means you cannot attend the full session, decline the invitation as soon as possible. Do not wait until the April 21 deadline. Prompt responses help VDOE finalize program rosters and allow alternates to be contacted if space becomes available.

After you accept

Your host university will contact you with registration information beginning in late April and no later than May 28, 2027. Watch the personal email account used in your application and check junk or spam folders. Complete the university registration steps by the deadlines provided by the host program. Review the host program's information about arrival, housing, meals, required forms, and what to bring.



Plan for Costs and Logistics

Tuition and Activity Fees

Tuition and the university activity fee are separate costs. VDOE invoices the student's school division, private school, or DoDEA school for the applicable tuition amount.

Families do not pay tuition directly to VDOE. **The activity fee is separate from tuition and is collected by the university during registration.** Unless the school or division has notified the family that it will cover the activity fee, the student is responsible for paying the fee to the university during registration. Families should not send tuition or activity-fee payments directly to VDOE.

Fee waiver and financial support

If your family needs financial support with the activity fee, a waiver form will be included in the university registration materials. A waiver may be based on free or reduced-price meal eligibility or economic hardship. Other circumstances considered may include public assistance, foster care, or homelessness.

Transportation and personal expenses

Students are responsible for transportation to and from the program and for personal spending money. The host program will provide an estimate of recommended spending money during registration.

Before the program begins

Complete all university registration forms and other required registration steps.

- Review the host program's arrival and departure instructions.
- Plan transportation for the program's full session.
- Use the host program's packing list to prepare and pack.

Before arrival

Read the host program's registration and arrival materials completely.

- Know the check-in and departure times and your transportation plan.
- Review the program's conduct, residence-hall, visitor, and technology rules.
- Contact the host program promptly if you have a question about accommodations, required items, or an instruction that affects your participation.

Your Residential Experience

Each Summer Residential Governor's School has its own schedule, campus, staff, and program-specific activities. Your host program will send the detailed information you need before arrival. The statewide expectations below apply across programs.

What a typical day may include

Schedules vary by program and by day. Students should expect a structured residential experience that may include classes, laboratory or studio work, research, workshops, lectures, performances, field experiences, group activities, evening programs, and limited personal time.

Housing, meals, and supervision

Students live in college or university residence halls or other housing arranged by the host program.

- Meals are provided through the host campus or program.
- Resident Advisors and program staff provide supervision and student support.
- Room assignments, residence-hall expectations, arrival procedures, and what-to-bring information are provided by the host program.

Attendance and participation

Students should arrive on the date and at the time provided by the host program and remain through the scheduled final day. Students who accept an invitation are expected to attend the full program and participate in required classes, activities, events, and program responsibilities. Leaves of absence are considered only for serious family or medical emergencies under the host program's procedures.

Student support and accommodations

Programs arrange student-support services through the host institution and local providers. These may include counseling, medical support, campus security, and disability accommodation. Students who accept should follow the registration instructions from the host program for requesting accommodation or support.

Grades, credit, and completion

Summer Residential Governor's School participation does not award traditional course grades or academic credit. Students who complete the program receive recognition of participation; some programs may also provide participation reports or course descriptions to students or schools.

Living on Campus

Standards of conduct

Students are expected to follow the host program's rules, respect other students and staff, and contribute to a safe residential and learning community.

- Do not possess or use alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco, vaping products, or weapons.
- Do not leave campus or other designated program areas without permission.
- Respect residence-hall boundaries, roommate and community expectations, and the property of others.
- Follow staff directions and behave respectfully toward students, faculty, staff, presenters, and others on campus.

Important: Serious violations of program rules may result in dismissal from the program. The host program will provide the complete rules and consequences that apply at its site.

Cell phones and personal technology

Host programs establish their own rules for cellphone and personal-technology use.

Normal school rules may not be the same. Students who accept an invitation are expected to follow those restrictions. Review the host program's instructions before arrival.

Visitors and time away from the program

The residential program is designed to function as a cohesive learning community.

Students should not plan to leave the program for outside activities or routine personal commitments.

What should I bring?

Use the packing list sent by your host program. Campus housing, activities, laundry arrangements, required clothing, equipment, and technology needs differ by site.

Do not bring alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco or vaping products, weapons, candles, or other items prohibited by the host program.



Visual & Performing Arts Adjudication Criteria

Visual Art Adjudication Criteria:

Applicants should read and be familiar with the program description for the Governor's School for Visual and Performing Arts.

1. Applicants will submit a portfolio containing 12 pieces of original artwork. Work may represent the following media: Drawing, Painting, Mixed Media, Printmaking, Photography, Ceramics, Sculpture, Installation, Collage, Assemblage, Video, and New Media.
2. Core Portfolio: Eight works should represent the applicant's primary medium or area of artistic focus.
3. Supplementary Work: Four works should demonstrate variety beyond the applicant's primary area and may show experimentation, exploration, and artistic growth.
4. The portfolio must be submitted as a PDF.
5. One artwork in the applicant's primary medium, created specifically for the adjudication process described below, must be included as one of the 12 portfolio pieces.

Adjudication Artwork and Process Video

As part of the portfolio, applicants must create one original artwork specifically for the Governor's School adjudication process. The artwork must:

- Be created in the applicant's chosen primary medium.
- Respond to the provided theme.
- Reflect the applicant's individual interpretation. Themes will be intentionally broad and may be approached conceptually, technically, or in any direction the applicant chooses.

Applicants must submit a 10-minute continuous, unedited process video showing themselves actively creating the artwork. The applicant's head, torso, arms, and hands must remain clearly visible while working. The video is intended to give adjudicators insight into the applicant's creative process, thinking, and decision-making.

Because artistic processes vary by medium, what is shown during the 10 minutes will vary; however, cuts, edits, and combined clips are not permitted.

An image of the completed adjudication artwork must also be included in the applicant's portfolio.

Adjudication Criteria

Applicants will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. **Design** – Cohesiveness and effectiveness of the composition.
2. **Expression** – Communicative or expressive quality of the work.
3. **Originality** – Evidence of novel, inventive, or unique artistic solutions.
4. **Fluency** – Development and exploration of multiple ideas or concepts.
5. **Flexibility** – Variety in approaches, ideas, techniques, or artistic solutions.
6. **Elaboration** – Ability to develop, extend, or expand upon imagery and ideas.

Preparations:

- Camera: Most digital cameras, including cell phones, are perfectly fine for both the photos and videos for the adjudication. Professional photography or videography is neither required nor expected. Please ensure picture clarity. You may mount your camera on a tripod or have someone operate it.

- Space: Use a space free from distractions, specifically background noise.
- Lighting: Make sure the lighting is adequate for the adjudicator to view.

Finalize:

- Upload videos to YouTube (unlisted link), Google Drive (must be a personal Google account, not a school account), or Dropbox. Please ensure that our adjudicators can access the link.
- Create a Word document with your name, discipline, and links you created above.
- Save the Word doc as a PDF.

Submission:

- Register for adjudication through Opus Events
 - Upload the PDF document you created above
 - Follow the instructions to record an answer to your question
-

Dance Adjudication Criteria:

Applicants should read & be familiar with the program description for the Governor's School for Visual & Performing Arts. Applicants from diverse backgrounds with abilities in diverse dance genres are encouraged to audition. Applicants are asked to prepare & perform one solo dance 1-1 1/2 minutes maximum in length. The dance may be any form or genre. The applicant must design the choreography, but coaching by a teacher or instructor is permissible during preparation. The student determines the accompaniment for the dance.

In addition to the solo, please provide the following for the video:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| ▪ Contemporary/Modern combo with: | ▪ Ballet Center with: |
| ○ Floorwork | ○ Adagio |
| ○ Inversions | ○ Pirouettes |
| ○ Balances | ○ Petite Allegro |
| ○ Turns | ○ Grand Allegro |
| ○ Leaps | |

Applicants will be judged on the following criteria:

- | | |
|--|--|
| A. Technique: Alignment, Musicality/Rhythm, Finished Movement, Strength, Flexibility, Varied Movement Vocabulary | C. Performance of Movement: Interpretation of Movement, Connecting/Flow of Movement, Use of Technique, Execution, Musicality |
| B. Stage Presence: Presentation, Carriage, Display of Confidence, Body Language, Facial Expression, Dynamic | D. Interview responses to questions related to the applicant's role in group learning |

Preparations:

- Camera: Most digital cameras, including cell phones, are perfectly fine for both photos & videos for your audition. Professional photography or videography is neither required nor expected. Please ensure picture & sound clarity. You may mount your camera on a tripod or have someone operate. Auditions must be recorded from the front, framing the whole body.
- Space: Use a space free from distractions, specifically background noise.
- Lighting: Ensure the lighting is adequate for the adjudicator to view, that you are not backlit, & that a lamp or sunlight is not coming through a window behind you.

Recording:

- Each part should be one continuous recording with no edits or splicing.
- Compile the parts together into one video file OR
- You may do all parts as one continuous shot, pausing between each part to transition to the next part.
- You may record your parts multiple times & choose the best one to submit.

Finalize:

- Upload videos to YouTube (unlisted link), Google Drive (must be a personal Google account, not a school account), or Dropbox. Please ensure that our adjudicators can access the link.
- Create a Word document with your name, discipline, & link you created & save as a PDF

Submission:

- Register for adjudication through Opus Events
- Upload the PDF document you created above
- Follow the instructions to record an answer to your question

Music (Instrumental) Adjudication Criteria:

Applicants should read and be familiar with the program description for the Governor's School for Visual and Performing Arts. Applicants from diverse backgrounds with abilities in classical and/or commercial/jazz genres are encouraged to apply. All music applicants will perform two (2) contrasting prepared selections (2-3 minutes each) and a brief sight-reading exercise available on Opus Events when the applicant registers. Additionally, applicants will be asked to respond to a question prompt about their practice on Opus Events at the time of registration. Memorization of music is encouraged but optional. The repertoire should be set at a medium level of difficulty or higher.

A. Any form of accompaniment for instrumental music will not be allowed; specifics for vocalists are outlined below. The applicant will select compositions for auditions from the standard solo repertoire for his/her instrument or voice within the following guidelines:

- **Woodwinds and Brass** may select materials from the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors Association's (VBODA) Manual Solo Listings in grades IV, V, and VI; however, selections are not limited to those on these lists. Etudes and exercises from your instrument's method book are also acceptable (i.e. Klosé, Arban, Rochut, etc.) Any form of accompaniment for instrumental music will not be allowed. In addition, applicants will be required to perform a chromatic scale over the full range of their instruments (eighth notes, MM=60; slur up, tongue down). There will also be a sight-reading exercise.
- **Strings** may select materials from the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors Association's (VBODA) Manual Solo Listings in grades IV, V, and VI; however, selections are not limited to those on these lists. Solos from the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, or Contemporary periods are acceptable. Any form of accompaniment for instrumental music will not be allowed. Additionally, perform scales in A Major and c melodic minor with articulation as follows:
 - Ascending – Played in groups of two slurred and two martelé;
 - Descending – Groups of four slurred;
 - Quarter note MM = 120;
 - There will also be a sight-reading exercise.
- **Classical/Symphonic Percussionists** must present one prepared selection on a mallet instrument and one on the snare drum. Additionally, perform Eb major, A major, and Db major scales (eighth notes, MM = 60, 2 octaves). There will be sight reading exercises for snare drums and mallets. In addition to the classical/symphonic audition, percussionists who can perform the commercial/jazz audition requirements are encouraged.
- **Commercial/Jazz Percussionists** must perform all the following grooves on a drum set: rock, funk, swing, jazz waltz, and a one-minute improvised drum solo. Videos of the grooves should be at most five minutes long. In addition to the commercial/jazz audition, percussionists who can perform the classical/symphonic audition requirements are encouraged.
- **Classical Guitarists (acoustic) and Harpists** should select two (2) contrasting pieces from two different style periods (Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and 20th/21st Century, or original composition). There will also be a sight-reading exercise. Guitarists will also be asked to perform a three-octave E melodic minor scale in rest stroke (eighth-two-sixteenth pattern - ) In addition to the classical audition, guitarists who can perform the classical/symphonic audition requirements are encouraged.

- **Commercial/Jazz Guitarists (electric guitar and bass)** should prepare two jazz standards of contrasting styles and plan to improvise at least one chorus on each selection. Sight-reading of a standard lead sheet will also be included. Guitarists will also be asked to perform a three-octave E melodic minor scale in rest stroke (eighth-two-sixteenth pattern - ). In addition to the commercial/jazz audition, Pianists and Guitarists who can perform the classical/symphonic audition requirements are encouraged to do so.
- **Pianists** should prepare two (2) contrasting pieces from memory in different styles (Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Contemporary, Jazz, or original compositions are acceptable). Pianists will perform sight-reading once on campus if selected.
- **Vocalists** should select two (2) songs of contrasting style periods & moods from the Art Song (standard recital literature), Opera, or "Broadway Show" repertoire. Applicants should be sure that compositions are legally used under copyright law. Numerous Websites make available public domain art songs that can be printed freely. Three such sites are the [Choral Public Domain Library](#), the [International Music Score Library](#), & [Art Song Central](#). Vocalists must provide their accompanists/accompaniment & should not perform unaccompanied. The use of pre-recorded accompaniment is allowed. Applicants will be required to sight-sing an eight-bar example, VCDA level 5.

B. Adjudication specifics

- Instrumentalists will be judged on technique, interpretation, tone, intonation, sight-reading, and scales.
- Vocalists will be judged on technique, interpretation, tone, intonation, sight-reading, and diction.

Preparations:

- **Camera:** Most digital cameras, including cell phones, are perfectly fine for both the photos and videos for your audition. Professional photography or videography is neither required nor expected. Please ensure picture and sound clarity. You may mount your camera on a tripod or have someone operate it. Face the camera and ensure you are framed from your waist to slightly above your head.
- **Space:** Use a space free from distractions, specifically background noise.
- **Lighting:** Ensure the lighting is adequate for the adjudicator to view, that you are not backlit, and that a lamp or sunlight is not coming through a window behind you.

Recording:

- Each of the parts listed above should be one continuous recording with no edits or splicing.
- Compile the parts together into one video file OR
- You may do all parts as one continuous shot, pausing between each part to transition to the next part.
- All audition videos must be under ten minutes long
- You may record your parts multiple times and choose the best one to submit.

Finalize:

- Upload videos to YouTube (unlisted link), Google Drive (must be a personal Google account, not a school account), or Dropbox. Please ensure that our adjudicators can access the link.
- Create a Word document with your name, discipline, and link you created above.
- Save the Word doc as a PDF.

Submission:

- Register for adjudication through Opus Events
- Upload the PDF document you created above
- Follow the instructions to record an answer to your question
- Complete a sight-reading example provided on Opus Events

Theater Adjudication Criteria:

Applicants should read and be familiar with the Program Description for the Governor's School for Visual and Performing Arts. Applicants from diverse backgrounds with abilities in varied theatrical genres are encouraged to apply.

- A. Applicants for Governor's School will perform one memorized monologue 60-90 seconds long. For these auditions, a monologue is "a solo passage from a play." Applicants are encouraged to seek audition material that is close to their age and experience. Applicants must have read the entire play from which the monologue has been selected. Poetry not from a play, other nondramatic literature, and pieces from unpublished work (including original material) may not be used. Selections from monologue books or the internet are strongly discouraged.
- B. Audition videos must be under two (2) minutes.
- C. Applicants will be adjudicated on the following:
 - 1) **Vocal Ability:** Did the actor demonstrate effective vocal technique and show vocal variety in pitch, tempo, and inflection?
 - 2) **Physical Ability:** Did the actor effectively embody the character using gesture, movement, and non-verbal behavior? Was the actor's use of the body specific, connected, and purposeful?
 - 3) **Performance Decisions:** Did the actor pursue character goals? Did the actor choose and play dynamic tactics? Did the actor create believable & engaging characterization appropriate to the piece's context?
 - 4) **Preparation for the Audition:** Did the actor select appropriate audition material? Was the actor well-rehearsed? Did the actor demonstrate a thorough understanding of their character's super objective and function in the play?
 - 5) **Overall Impression:** Did the actor demonstrate professionalism, stage presence, confidence, and spontaneity? Was the actor a creative risk-taker?
- D. Applicants should perform in comfortable rehearsal clothes, not in costume. Props and/or sets (other than a chair) may not be used.
- E. Applicants should do a vocal and physical warm-up before auditioning.
- F. Applicants will be asked questions about their art form and role in group learning.

Preparations:

- Camera: Most digital cameras, including cell phones, are perfectly fine for both the photos and videos for your audition. Professional photography or videography is neither required nor expected. Please ensure picture and sound clarity. You may mount your camera on a tripod or have someone operate it. Face the camera and ensure you are framed from your waist to slightly above your head.
- Space: Use a space free from distractions, specifically background noise.
- Lighting: Ensure the lighting is adequate for the adjudicator to view, that you are not backlit, and that a lamp or sunlight is not coming through a window behind you.

Recording:

- Each of the parts should be one continuous recording with no edits or splicing.
- Compile the parts together into one video file OR
- You may do all parts as one continuous shot, pausing between each part to transition to the next part.
- You may record your parts multiple times and choose the best one to submit.

Finalize:

- Upload videos to YouTube (unlisted link), Google Drive (must be a personal Google account, not a school account), or Dropbox. Please ensure that our adjudicators can access the link.
- Create a Word document with your name, discipline, and link you created above.
- Save the Word doc as a PDF.

Submission:

- Register for adjudication through Opus Events
 - Upload the PDF document you created above
 - Follow the instructions to record an answer to your question
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Out-of-State Private School Instructions

Important requirements: The Office of Advanced Learning must be contacted before an application is submitted. Applicants must also follow the procedures and deadlines established by their private school. VDOE will not accept applications submitted directly by students or parents/guardians. All completed applications must be submitted by the private school. No exceptions can be made to the deadlines below.

Before Applying: Applicants must contact VDOE at govschool@doe.virginia.gov before November 11, 2026, for VPA applicants, or December 16, 2026, for all other programs, to notify VDOE. Confirmation will be sent to the applicant and school. Include the following in the email:

1. Applicant full name, email, program area of interest
2. Parent/guardian contact information, home mailing address
3. School name and school contact person (full name and email)

Application Process

1. Students submit completed applications to the private school. Applicants must meet the deadline established by their school.
2. The **private school scores** the application using the *Score Sheet* on the [VDOE Governor's School website](#).
3. The **Head of School** signs the Tuition Certification Form.
4. The **school submits** all required materials to VDOE (govschool@doe.virginia.gov) by February 26, 2027:
 - Completed student application
 - completed score sheet
 - *Tuition Certification Form*.

Selection Process - VDOE will review and rank all out-of-state private school applications. Top qualifying students will be nominated for the state selection process. Students will receive final status notifications in April via email.

Visual and Performing Arts Applicants - The VPA program has an early deadline to accommodate the required adjudication process. If the intent to apply is received before the November deadline, VDOE will submit the names of those students directly to Radford University.