Magnet Evaluation Instructions

For students applying to the 2027 - 2028 School Year Cohort

Use the document tabs to access the instructions for each magnet program.

Log back into the Avela application any time to view or change your assigned audition time.

Middle School Programs

- AGT - Gifted
- STEM Academy
- AAA - Arts

High School Programs

- College Academy
- New Century
- Lee - Dance
- Lee - Theater
- Lee - Music
- Lee - Visual Arts
- Lee - Media

Middle School Magnet Programs

Middle School - Gifted Magnet Program
Academy for Gifted and Talented (AGT)

Evaluation Location:

- Log back into the Avela application to view your assigned audition date and location

Eligibility Requirements:

- To be eligible for The Academy for Gifted and Talented (AGT) magnet program, students must be identified as gifted during the elementary years. Applications are open to rising 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students zoned for Huntsville City Schools.

What to Expect:

- The additional requirements consist of a writing task and an interview with the AGT team.

    - **Writing Task:** Students will be asked to answer 3 essay questions that will assess the student's creativity and problem-solving skills along with their personality. Students are expected to write a minimum of 5 sentences per question. For the writing task, students should write in complete sentences. Students should also formulate complete thoughts, support their ideas with specific details and evidence, and develop clear, well-structured sentences that effectively convey their thinking.

    - **Interview:** Students will meet with a panel of interviewers from the AGT Interview Team. The purpose of the interview is to allow students to showcase their strengths, leadership skills, and character. The interview consists of 7-8 questions asked by the interviewers. Students will then get a chance to ask the interviewers questions about the program. The total interview typically lasts no more than 10 minutes. Students do not need to do anything to prepare except to take a deep breath and not let nerves get the best of them. Students are encouraged to dress appropriately for the interview.

Middle School - Magnet STEM Academy
(formerly Academy for Science and Foreign Language Middle School)

Evaluation Location:

- Log back into the Avela application to view your assigned audition date and location

What to Expect

The evaluation for students applying to the Magnet STEM Academy includes a writing sample and an in-person interview.

- **Writing Task:** Students will be asked to answer open-ended questions that will assess the student's creativity and problem-solving skills. For the writing task, students should write in complete sentences. Students should also formulate complete thoughts, support their ideas with specific details and evidence, and develop clear, well-structured sentences that effectively convey their thinking.

- **Interview:**
  - Each applicant will participate in a 10-minute interview. The interview is panel-style, and students will be asked a series of questions about their interests and reasons for wanting to attend the HCS Magnet Middle School STEM Academy.
  - Students do not need to bring anything to the interview.
  - Guardians are welcome to come and wait in the front office during the interview.

Middle School - Arts Magnet
Academy for Academics & Arts (AAA)

Audition Location:

- Log back into the Avela application to view your assigned audition date and location

What to Expect

The evaluation for students applying to the Academy for Academics and Arts (AAA) middle school includes an in-person audition. Each applicant should be prepared to answer the following:

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself and why you would like to attend AAA.
2. Which pathways (listed below) are you interested in exploring while you are here?
3. What experiences have you had in the arts inside and outside of school?
4. Do you have any questions for us?

What to Bring

Pathway	Programs included	Audition Examples
Creative Arts	Creative writing, visual arts, media arts, journalism, photography	-Bring work samples to show the committee and speak about your art process (examples: a sketchbook, paintings, original photography, 3D art, etc) -Recite an original poem or other piece of creative writing
Vocal/ Instrumental	String orchestra, concert band, mixed choir	-Bring your own instrument and play one to two minutes of a song -Sing one to two minutes of a song -A piano can be provided upon request
Dance	Dance	-Perform a one to two minute piece of choreography -Applicants must bring their own school appropriate music.
Theatre	Theatre, Technical Theatre, Stars and Clowns	-Perform a one-minute monologue, poem, or musical theater piece -Bring work samples to show the committee and speak about your tech theatre process

High School Magnet Programs

High School - Dual Enrollment Magnet
College Academy (partnership with UAH)

What to Expect

The preliminary evaluation for students applying to the College Academy includes standardized assessment data and grades. Students who advance to a panel interview and writing sample will receive additional instructions at a later date.

Prepare for the Panel Interview

Think about why you want to attend College Academy and how its university partnership connects to your interests and goals. Be ready to describe your study habits, how you manage deadlines, and when you ask for help. Choose examples from school, home, activities, or community experiences that show responsibility, persistence, and cooperation. Practice with a trusted adult, using your own words and specific examples.

Use these questions for practice. They are examples, not the actual evaluation questions:

- Why are you interested in College Academy and taking college courses while in high school?
- Describe an academic challenge. What did you do, and what did you learn?
- How do you organize your work when several assignments are due?
- What would you do if you were struggling in a class?
- How would you contribute to the College Academy and Jemison communities?

Prepare for the Writing Sample

Practice responding independently to a short prompt. Read it carefully, identify what it asks, and plan your main idea before writing. Organize your response into clear paragraphs, support your ideas with specific examples, and leave time to check complete sentences, spelling, and punctuation. Follow the length and time directions provided during the evaluation.

Practice prompt: Describe a goal that required effort. Explain the steps you took, a challenge you faced, and how that experience could help you succeed in College Academy. This is a practice example, not the actual writing prompt.

Get Ready for Evaluation Day

Plan to arrive or sign in early. Get adequate rest, listen carefully, and ask for clarification when needed. Share honest responses about your strengths and areas for growth. Families can help students practice while allowing them to develop and express their own answers. Contact the program in advance with scheduling questions or to discuss accessibility needs.

High School - STEM Magnet
New Century Technology HS

Evaluation Location:

- Log back into the Avela application to view your assigned audition date and location

What to Expect

The evaluation for students applying to New Century Technology HS entails a writing sample.

- Laptops will be provided for applicants.
- Cellphones, iPads, smart watches, and AirPods cannot be used while completing the writing portion of the application.
- Students should arrive 10 minutes prior to the start of the session to check in and get settled.
- Students may leave after the writing sample is submitted.

Writing Checklist

- **Take a deep breath!**
  - Don't be nervous! You've got this! We are excited you joined us today!
- **Take your time**
  - Read each question carefully. If you finish early, reread your responses before submitting.
- **Be yourself**
  - The committee wants to get to know you. Share your interests.
- Share lots of details
  - Elaborate where possible, and provide specific examples. Make it personal to share your unique experiences.
- **Does it make sense?**
  - Re-read your sentences to make sure they are logical and that you stayed on topic.

Lee High School - Arts Magnet
Dance

Evaluation Location:

- Log back into the Avela application to view your assigned audition date and location

Auditionees must wear dance attire: black leotard and black leggings or shorts. Please have hair in a ponytail or a bun. The dance director and student directors will teach a center or across the floor combo.

Everyone must perform a solo, no longer than 45 seconds.

Dancers need to include in their solo:

1. A double pirouette either turned out or in parallel (en dedans or en dehors-meaning inside turn or outside turn)
2. Any type of jump or leap, you can even include both
3. Floor work showing control and flexibility
4. Arabesque turn or attitude turn or show this position in a balance
5. Please have a definite ending, do not just walk off or say "that's the end"
6. If solos are longer than 45 seconds, the music will be cut off at the 45 second mark.

All solo music needs to have appropriate lyrics or no lyrics at all.

Solos can be in any dance style as long as the above is showcased in some form and in any order.

Please come dressed to dance and be warmed up before your audition time. We do have bathrooms available for students to change in and there is space in the Theatre Lobby for students to spread out and warm up.

Lee High School - Arts Magnet
Performance Theater & Tech Theater

Evaluation Location:

- Log back into the Avela application to view your assigned audition date and location

Performing Theater:

- Please dress business casual for your audition.
- Please bring a resume and/or a portfolio of your work.

  Portfolio:

  - any experiences performing on stage or working back stage or tech on shows
  - any leadership or team roles, club or team memberships
  - any academic accomplishments.

  Be prepared to perform:

  - a 60 second monologue and 16 bars of a musical theater style song OR
  - two contrasting 60 second monologues

  You will be asked to share about your performance experiences.

Tech Theater:

- Please dress business casual for your audition.
- Please bring a resume and/or a portfolio of your work.

  This resume should reflect any experience you have in:

  - Design
  - Construction
  - Visual arts that may relate to prop building or scenic painting
  - Leadership or team roles, club or team memberships
  - Academic accomplishments

  Please bring representations of any technical work you have done:

  - costume design
  - set design
  - light design
  - sound design
  - construction
  - painting

  You will be asked to share about your experiences listed on your resume and talk about your processes for any work samples you bring to share.

Lee High School - Arts Magnet
Musical Arts

Evaluation Location:

- Log back into the Avela application to view your assigned audition date and location

Audition Requirements:

To complete the application process, your student must attend an audition.

- Dress business casual for your audition.
- Bring a prepared piece with sheet music to perform.
- Be prepared to discuss relevant musical experiences, including participation in musical competitions and various ensemble performances.

Vocal Audition: Be prepared to sing any classical song.

Song Suggestions:

- America the Beautiful
- Bound Away
- Homeward Bound
- My Country Tis of Thee
- Red River Valley

Instrumental Audition:

- Be prepared to play scales
- Perform technical skills
- Perform a solo

Solo music can reflect a wide range of genres but should showcase the musicians' talents to the best of their ability.

Lee High School - Arts Magnet
Visual Arts

Evaluation Location:

- Log back into the Avela application to view your assigned audition date and location

Audition Requirements:

- Dress business casual for your audition
- Bring a portfolio of your work with an artist statement (at least 2 paragraphs about your art and yourself as an artist)
- Be prepared to discuss your portfolio

Portfolio should include:

- a sketch book with sketches
- self-portrait
- observational drawing of a real object
- contour line drawing
- a drawing with value

The portfolio should also include use of at least three mediums:

- Pencil
- Charcoal
- Paint
- 3-D
- Collage
- chalk pastel
- oil pastel
- pen and ink (ink pen)
- colored pencil or markers

At the audition, you will present your artist's statement.

Artist Statement should include:

- how art inspires you
- why you make art
- how you feel art will impact your life in the future

Lee High School - Arts Magnet
Creative Media

Evaluation Location:

- Log back into the Avela application to view your assigned audition date and location

Students are welcome to bring a resume to the audition if they have one. Please dress business casual for your audition. Prior to the audition, please prepare a few examples of your creativity.

What to Bring:

Film & Video Production Audition

- Any videos you have created on your own for YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, or a video you have made specifically for this audition
- Original Work: Submit examples of your creative work, such as videos, music, photography, podcasts, writing, artwork, drawings, animations, or comics.
- Digital Media: Include original content created for YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, or specifically for this audition.

Please also prepare an example of your interests:

- An example of the kind of video/entertainment content you enjoy or would like to make.
- A YouTube link with an example video you enjoy.

Photography Audition

- Showcase a variety of photographs that demonstrate composition, creativity, perspective, and/or technical skill. Include work from at least three different photography approaches, such as portrait, landscape, documentary, still life, action, or creative/experimental photography.
- Photography Statement: At the audition, present a brief statement explaining how photography inspires you, why you take photographs, and how photography will impact your life in the future.
- Portfolio Presentation: Be prepared to discuss your photographs, including your creative choices, inspiration, and the story or idea behind selected images.

Creative Writing Audition

- Bring at least five pieces of varied samples of your writing in a portfolio (preferably pieces you wrote outside of school)
- Portfolio suggestions include poetry, fiction, nonfiction, screenplays, scripts
- Different genres that could be included- mystery, thriller, science fiction, fantasy, biography, etc.