The Middle School Arts Magnet for students in grade 6-8 provides enrichment and instruction in literary, theatre, and dance arts. Learning experiences encourage students to work independently and collaboratively to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and enhance self-esteem. Excellence in the arts is a natural extension of the middle school academic program.

Students take three 55-minute classes (Literary Arts, Theatre Arts, and Dance Arts) at the York County School of the Arts (SOA) facility at Bruton High School. These students also take four classes (history, math, science, and an elective/Exploratory Wheel or foreign language) at Queens Lake Middle School. Students participating in the Middle School Arts Magnet begin their day at Queens Lake Middle School with two classes and then travel to SOA at BHS for Literary Arts (every day), Theatre Arts and Dance Arts (alternating days). Following the Magnet classes, students are transported back to Queens Lake Middle for lunch and the final classes of the day.

Who’s Eligible?
- Students must have received or earned a “C” or above in the first or most recent semester of their English course.
- Students must have earned a passing score (400 or above) on the English: Reading Standard of Learning (SOL) assessment in the previous school year (or an equivalent achievement test from another state).
- Applicants in grades 6 & 7 who do not currently meet these criteria may choose to reapply for admission the following year.

Additional Information
- Students admitted to the Middle School Arts Magnet must enroll at Queens Lake Middle School as their home school.
- Parents of students zoned for TMS, GMS, and YMS are responsible for transportation to and from Queens Lake Middle School.
- Enrollment in the Middle School Arts Magnet does not guarantee acceptance into the School of the Arts in grade 9.
Welcome to the newest year of SOA and mSAM! The new year is already off to a great start with a fully planned main-stage season, lots of events on the schedule, and most importantly, two new teachers joining our staff.

Mrs. Lee Knight is a SOA alum who joins us from the Virginia Beach Public Schools Visual & Performing Arts Academy as our Dance Arts Instructor. She has her license and certification in Dance Education and Theatre from Old Dominion University. She is thrilled to be joining SOA and excited to work and train with its dancers. She has a strong ballet background and enjoys teaching and performing everything from contemporary, jazz, hip-hop, and musical theatre.

Ms. Vanessa Jones is excited to be getting back to her performing arts roots at SOA. She has her license and certification in Theatre and English from Old Dominion University and a Masters in English from the University of Iowa. Ms. Jones taught high school English in Raleigh, NC and can be seen acting in local Panglossian Theater productions. She enjoys singing, ballroom dancing, and writing poetry, nonfiction essays, and children's books.

Their introduction videos will be coming to the SOA YouTube channel soon!

You'll also notice some changes in the SOA Office. The Coordinator position this year will be divided between two staff members. Mrs. Swanson will lead as our Administrative Coordinator, and Mrs. Maney will be our Production Coordinator. Of course, they and the rest of the staff will be working together closely as always to make this a fantastic year. Frankly, we're all pretty excited to get going!

For more information, contact:

Keith Wright
ACC/mSAM Administrator
Queens Lake Middle School
757-220-4076
kwright@ycsd.york.va.us

Applying for mSAM
- Applications are available in each elementary and middle school main office and at the School Board Office.
- The applications of eligible students will be grouped by grade level for random, lottery-style selection.

Programs of Study

**Literary Arts** An advanced exploration of literature, writing, and language skills; creative and challenging interdisciplinary environment; composition; communication; critical thinking skills; extension of expressive talents beyond the ordinary; literature-based study to enhance skills needed for successful performance in subsequent English courses. (These courses replace middle school English courses.)

**Theatre Arts** Study of theatre through history, culture, genres, and performance; consideration of the role of theatre arts in contemporary society; participation in theatrical productions and design efforts; distinguishing between the meaningful and the mediocre in the arts. (These courses serve as middle school electives.)

**Dance Arts** Participation in dance as a healthy lifestyle as well as an art form; exploration of creative dance, improvisation, the basics of choreography, and a variety of dance forms; consideration of the diversity of style, historical, and cultural aspects of dance arts. (These courses replace middle school physical education courses.)

**What Students Say About mSAM**

“To me, mSAM is a second family where I can showcase my emotions and feelings. It is a place where I can broadcast what I am thinking; which I would call home.” 

- Logan Richardson

“To me, mSAM means a lot, and I’ve learned each year is different. It teaches you, taught me, to be bold and not to be shy. The memories of each year are what I cherish and will remember when I’m old and wrinkly.”

- Avia Aztor

“mSAM is my home away from home. It’s my safe and happy place where I feel free to express my true self and not be judged. And to also be surrounded by crazy amazing people.”

- Robyn Emery

“mSAM has been such a great opportunity. Everyone says it’s like a family, and no matter how cheesy it is, they are so right. I love mSAM and it’s one of the best decisions I’ve made.”

- Julia Laarhoven

In the York County School Division, students will be admitted, retained, dismissed, assigned, and/or transferred and be allowed to participate in all programs and activities in the York County School Division without regard to race, color, creed, sex, national origin, political affiliation, age, disability, or belief, except as permitted by state or federal law.