

2022 Cover Design Challenge

Creative Brief

Client: New York City Department of Education

Project: 2022 Cover Design Challenge

Date: January 2022

What should you be trying to do?

The *2022 New York City Department of Education Public School Admissions Guide* is an important tool for students and families researching and applying to all public schools in New York City for the 2023-2024 school year. As a participant, you have the opportunity to create a cover design that speaks to all of the students and families in New York who will be using this important resource.

What's the opportunity?

This challenge asks you to reflect on your life as a public school student in New York City and creatively capture your experience visually in the format of a cover design. All students have stories to tell about their public school experiences, and this challenge gives you the opportunity to share yours with all of New York City.

Challenge finalists will have the opportunity to work with design professionals to develop your creative skills. The winning cover design will be featured on a yearlong campaign that includes the **large-scale distribution** of the Admissions Guide.

Who are we trying to connect with?

This Admissions Guide is for all students and their families. When students and families receive a guide, many of them are just beginning their journey through the public school admissions process. The cover should reflect your unique vision of what public school is like, as well as what it is like for most students—an exciting and sometimes overwhelming experience that everyone experiences in different ways. The design should communicate openness and accessibility to students and families who are unfamiliar with the admissions process, many of whom are non-native English speakers. Lastly, the cover design should have appropriate images and language, as it is a government publication produced for students and their families.

What does a successful design look like?

Your design should be unique—can you submit something different than previous guide covers? Create a design in which **image**, **color**, **typography**, and **layout** are all considered and support the main **message** for your intended audience (New York City students and families).

Draw inspiration from your time as a New York City student:

- Why are you proud to be a New York City student?
- What was your experience like when going to a new school?
- What were your friends' experiences like?
- How are you preparing for life after school?

Represent your school journey with a unique image. Try to avoid common images (e.g. apples, pencils) and do not use previously copyrighted images, including identifiable buildings in Manhattan (e.g. the Statue of Liberty, Empire State Building). Designs with people should include more than a single person and show the diversity of New York City.

While we accept hand-drawn entries, submissions created using our templates for Photoshop, Illustrator, or InDesign are strongly preferred. If you submit a hand-drawn entry and become a finalist, you will have to recreate your design using one of the design programs listed above.

How does the challenge work?

- Read the Cover Design Challenge Guidelines for rules and regulations at schools.nyc.gov/CoverDesign.
- You can submit your design to the challenge beginning January 24, 2022.
- The deadline to submit your design is February 18, 2022.
- Finalists are notified on March 4, 2022.
- Mandatory workshops for finalists will take place after school once a week between March 9 – March 30, 2022.
- Winner will be announced on April 13, 2022.

How do I submit my design?

Please visit schools.nyc.gov/CoverDesign to understand all challenge rules.

- Submit a *fully completed* [NYC Department of Education consent form](#).
- Check your schedule! Will you be able to attend all of the four required virtual workshops after school?
- Download the official [Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, or Adobe Photoshop template](#) (optional), or set the front and back cover dimensions to 8.5"x11" on each side, plus spine.
- Include the following title—"2023 New York City Public School Admissions Guide."
- Use the included template text, and rework as needed, or a sans serif typeface for all cover text.
- Include the NYC Department of Education logo (provided in the design templates).
- Save a copy of your files as a PDF that is 2MB or under.
- Send your PDF entry to coverdesign@schools.nyc.gov by February 18, 2022.
- Keep your final design files for future edits (accepted design programs: Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator).