

Alabama School of Fine Arts creative writing

Alabama School of Fine Arts

ASFA has a unique mission unlike any other public school in Alabama or most other states. ASFA exists exclusively for students who wish to pursue an extraordinary passion in one of six **specialty** areas of study. The quality of our **advanced specialty curricula** is superior and taught at college-level, and the requirements and expectations of our **specialty areas are intensive and demanding**. In order for us to exist and thrive, we also provide the 4 x 4 academic courses of study as required by the Alabama State Board of Education for an advanced high school diploma. While we are proud of our core academic offerings and their quality*, **prospective students and parents must understand** that core academics serve a role of supporting our students in making them college-ready while ***they focus on their intensive specialty area***.

*Our core academics are of high quality and thoroughly prepare students for college while exceeding the minimum requirements of a national *common core* or *standards based curriculum*, although we do not adhere to a prescribed curricular program. Many of our core courses are taught at advanced, honors levels without carrying standardized labels such as “advanced placement” or “international baccalaureate.” Annually, ASFA students gain acceptance to top tier colleges, universities, arts institutes and professional performance companies and earn more scholarship money than most other students in the state.

The Creative Writing Department at ASFA

The ASFA Creative Writing department offers a disciplined study of poetry and prose for grades 7 – 12. Students do more than simply produce poems, stories, and creative nonfiction of high literary merit. Because we believe good writing requires good thinking, the department’s primary goal is to develop students’ critical thinking skills. Our rigorous program of writing workshops, literature surveys, and professional development opportunities is designed to help each young writer cultivate a writing process that is demanding, rewarding, and sustainable.

Alabama School of Fine Arts Mission Statement

The mission of the Alabama School of Fine Arts, a diverse community of explorers, is to nurture impassioned students by guiding and inspiring them to discover and fulfill their individual creative abilities in an atmosphere distinguished by the fusion of fact and feeling, risk and reward, art and science, school and society.

Accommodation Statement

ASFA was created by the State to provide a more challenging education for impassioned, talented students in Creative Writing, Dance, Math & Science, Music, Theatre Arts and Visual Arts. Consistent with its mission, only those students will be admitted to ASFA and allowed to remain who are able to meet the demands of a rigorous curriculum. Applicants with existing Individualized Education Plans (IEP) are obliged to inform ASFA administration during the application period and to provide a copy or authorization for release of the applicant’s most recent IEP and any related records deemed necessary by ASFA. If a qualifying disabling condition is substantiated before or after enrollment, a committee appointed by Dr. Tim Mitchell, President of the Alabama School of Fine Arts will determine if the school can reasonably accommodate the student’s needs or if these needs will be better accommodated in a different educational environment.

creative writing

About the Alabama School of Fine Arts

The Alabama School of Fine Arts (ASFA) operates as a public secondary school with the entire state as its district. Situated in Birmingham, the population center of Alabama, ASFA offers residential facilities for students who are beyond commuting distance. The ASFA campus is in downtown Birmingham and is a major part of the Cultural District.

- Partially residential, publicly funded secondary school grades 7-12
- Semester system, modified block schedule (90 minute block periods only in specialty areas)
- Extended school day from 7:55 am until 4:40 pm with 6 periods running 45 minutes each and two specialty periods running 90 minutes each
- Extended school day and departmental activities in the evenings and on weekends preclude sports and other extracurricular activities
- College preparatory curriculum in core academics
- Specialty courses (those listed in departmental profiles) are open only to students within those departments
- Member of the National Association for College Admission Counseling; The College Board; The International Network of Performing and Visual Arts Schools; The Alabama Association of School Boards; The National Consortium for Specialized Secondary Schools of Mathematics Science and Technology, and the Coalition of Essential Schools
- Enrollment for 2021-2022 school year is 329
- **ACT COMPOSITE**

		ASFA	State	Natl.
Middle 50%.....	22—32	Mean: 27	18.9	20.7
- **SAT I REASONING**

	Middle 50%	Mean:	ASFA	State	Natl.
Reading & Writing	620-640		665	591	533
Math	570-730		655	568	528
Composite	1190-1410		1320	1159	1060
- 2021 ASFA Seniors (65) awarded over \$11.1 million in college scholarships and grants
- 12 National YoungArts Foundation Finalists in Creative Writing, Music, Visual Arts
- Two Gold Medals in the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards in Visual Arts and Creative Writing
- 4 National Merit Scholars
- 6 National Achievement Scholars
- 5 Scholastic Art & Writing Gold Medal Winners
- 2 Intel International Science & Engineering Finalists
- 4 representing Alabama in the National Science Bowl
- Faculty: full time 73; part-time and adjunct 26
- Four teachers certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

creative writing

information

Frequently Asked Questions

When is the best time to apply to ASFA?

- Our applications are available in early November and the deadline is **January 28, 2022**.

Can I apply to more than one department?

- No. ASFA is looking for students who are passionate and serious about a particular specialty program.

What grades do you have to have to get into ASFA?

- You must have a 70 average in core classes of the current semester in which you are applying. Also, your scores on national testing and teacher recommendations are of importance in the application process.

What is the cost?

- We are a public school. There is **no tuition** for Alabama residents. There is a \$135 Creative Writing fee that is due once a year.

How do classes work each day?

- Students have eight class periods and one lunch period each day. Six class periods are academic periods of about 45 minutes. Students meet the last three hours of the day in their Creative Writing classes.

What time are Creative Writing students dismissed each day?

- Students in 7th and 8th grade are dismissed at 3:10 pm and students in grades 9 – 12 are dismissed at 4:40 pm except Friday when they are dismissed at 3:12 pm.

What type of student is successful in the Creative Writing Department?

- Creative Writing students should be passionate and serious about reading and writing and should possess the mental discipline required to hone their craft.

How many students are accepted each year?

- The number varies each year according to space available in the department and the overall school enrollment.

Does the Alabama School of Fine Arts offer bus service?

- Unfortunately, no. Our students are from so many different locales that it would be impossible to run a bus service. We do have carpool lists available.

If invited to the on-site audition, what will be the process?

- Auditioning Creative Writing students must complete a 90 minute writing assignment and a 15 minute interview with the Creative Writing Audition Committee.

When are auditions held?

- Auditions will be held March 5, 2022 by invitation only.

How soon after the audition will I know if I have been accepted?

- Letters will be mailed on March 18, 2022.

What is the Student Shadow Program at ASFA?

- It offers a prospective student an opportunity to experience a typical day at ASFA. **Go to www.asfa.k12.al.us**, click on *Apply to ASFA*, click on *Visit ASFA*, click on *ASFA Shadow Form*.

creative writing

application procedure

To apply to the Creative Writing Department at ASFA, you must be a rising 7th – 11th grader.

Application Deadline: ASFA must receive all of the following documents by **January 28, 2022**. Student Application; Application Fee; **three** Teacher Recommendation Forms; Counselor/Registrar Form, including transcript and testing information and writing portfolio.

Student Application: Complete and submit to ASFA **as soon as possible**.

Application Fee: A \$50.00 non-refundable application fee must be paid when application is submitted **on or before the deadline**.

Teacher Recommendation Forms (3): Forms are located under schoolrecs on the application. Forms must be electronically signed by the parent and student before forms are submitted to the teachers to complete. Forms must be completed by your **current English, academic teacher of choice and dance teacher**. Recommendations must be received **on or before the deadline**.

Counselor/Registrar Request for Grades Form: Form is located under schoolrecs on the application. Form must be signed by the parent and student before the form is submitted to the Registrar or Guidance Counselor at your school to complete. This form and all of the requested information must be completed and returned to ASFA **on or before the deadline**.

Writing Portfolio: **DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME** on any writing samples. When Creative Writing faculty assess the portfolios they do not know the student's name, sex or other identifying information.

- Include a cover page on your writing portfolio labeled with applicant's name, grade and birthdate.
- Label each page with appropriate headings (poetry, short fiction, and personal essay) and individual titles. Also, each page of the writing portfolio must be labeled with the applicant's birthdate in the right hand corner (ex: June 14, 2001 should read 61401).
- The portfolio must be submitted electronically on 8 ½ by 11, 12-point Times New Roman font.
- Single-space poetry and double-space short fiction and personal essay.
- Do not include illustrations, clip art, or submit more work than requested in the writing guidelines.

Portfolios that do not follow these guidelines will not be read. The portfolio must be sent to ASFA **on or before the deadline** to Melanie Lee (address below). The following requirements apply to **all grades, 7 – 11**.

mlee@asfa.k12.al.us

POETRY – five to seven (5 – 7) poems. **Note:** this refers to individual poems, not pages.

SHORT FICTION – five to ten (5 – 10) pages of short fiction

PERSONAL ESSAY – One to two (1 – 2) pages. Pick **ONE** of the following essay prompts:

- Write about the most transformative moment you experienced last year.
- How does writing change the way you see the world?
- What objects tell the story of your life?

The writing portfolio should be organized in the order listed above. **Only completed applications received by the deadline** will be reviewed. When the audition committee reaches a decision, we will notify you.

Good luck as you complete your application!

creative writing

Email Creative Writing Portfolio to

Melanie Lee
Registrar
mlee@asfa.k12.al.us

For questions about completing applications contact

Melanie Lee
205.252-9241
205.458-0342 (fax number)
Email: mlee@asfa.k12.al.us

For questions about specific audition requirements contact

T. J. Beitelman
Chair, Creative Writing Department
Email: tjbeitelman@asfa.k12.al.us

Equal Opportunity Statement

It is the policy of the Alabama School of Fine Arts not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion, color, creed, national origin or any other proscribed category, in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by local, state, and federal policies and laws. Inquiries or complaints regarding compliance with applicable laws or this policy may be directed to Dr. Tim Mitchell, President, Alabama School of Fine Arts, 1800 Rev Abraham Woods, Jr Blvd., Birmingham, AL 35203, or by calling her at (205) 252-9241.