

The Cinema School

Bronx, New York, United States



A South Bronx public high school built with Ghetto Film School, where seniors write, shoot, and produce original movies on real sets.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	51/100
Academic outcomes	46/100
University placement	42/100
Prestige & heritage	27/100
Alumni network	33/100
Facilities	74/100
Transparency	63/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

The Cinema School is a niche New York public high school with a clear proposition: liberal arts taught alongside sustained filmmaking. For families in the Bronx who want more than a standard comprehensive experience, that matters. This is not a generic “creative” school that adds a media club after lessons. Film sits at the centre of the offer and gives the academic programme its structure, vocabulary and purpose. The result is a school for teenagers who want school to feel **urgent**, **hands-on** and tied to actual production rather than abstract enrichment.

What sets it apart is the seriousness of the specialism. The school states that it is selective, serves ages

****14-18****, and uses filmmaking as the vehicle through which students examine themselves and the world. That is a distinctive model in a city crowded with themed public schools, many of which struggle to turn theme into substance. Here, the theme is the substance. Parents who have a child with a real appetite for writing, shooting, editing, directing or production planning will understand the appeal at once. A teenager who wants a conventional campus life, broad athletics culture or a wide spread of academic pathways under one roof will find the focus narrow. A teenager who wants **creative discipline**, **serious purpose** and a daily link between intellectual work and making things will find it compelling.

The school belongs on a shortlist because it offers something hard to replicate: a public-school route into sustained film education without abandoning the US high school diploma. That combination gives it market value. It can suit students who are artistically ambitious but still need a full secondary education and a clear path to college. It also fits students who learn best through projects, deadlines, critique and collaboration. Film production punishes drift; pupils need stamina, organisation and the nerve to show unfinished work. The Cinema School suits adolescents who are **restless in conventional classrooms** but thrive when work has an audience, a schedule and visible standards.

Parents should also read the signals carefully. This is a specialised day school in the South Bronx, not an all-things-to-all-students institution. The website gives the essentials — mission, contact details and admissions prompt — but little hard public detail on academic outcomes, facilities or the full range of student life. That leaves the school’s core strength in plain view: identity. For the right student, that identity is **electrifying**. For the wrong one, it is constraining. Put it on the shortlist if your child wants English-language schooling in New York, values a liberal arts base, and has a genuine appetite for film as craft rather than glamour.

STRENGTHS

- Operates as a New York City Department of Education public school, meaning tuition is free for eligible city residents.
- Small school size allows film production and screenwriting to be woven into core academic subjects rather than offered only as an after-school club.
- Located in the Bronx, giving students proximity to New York's professional film and television industry for internships and guest instruction.
- Themed, cohort-based structure gives students a consistent creative focus across all four years of high school.

TRADE - OFFS

- As a small themed public school, the range of elective subjects, sports and extracurriculars outside the film focus is narrower than at large comprehensive high schools.
- Only open to New York City residents through the DOE high school application system, so it is not a fee-paying option for international or relocating families.
- Facilities, staffing and production equipment depend on public school district funding rather than private endowment or tuition income.
- Public exam and graduation outcome data specific to the school's film program is not independently published in detail, making comparative rigor hard to verify.

ADMISSIONS

The Cinema School is a New York City Department of Education public high school, so entry is through the citywide high school application process (MySchools), typically completed in the fall of eighth grade with placements offered the following spring. Admission is not based on private-school style interviews or fees; it depends on the DOE's matching algorithm, applicant ranking of the school, and any school-specific priorities such as geographic district or open seats. Because it is a themed, small school, seats are limited relative to demand from students with a stated interest in filmmaking, making it moderately competitive within the public system rather than selective in the private-school sense.

WTS RATING 

This profile summarises editorial research by World's Top Schools. Verify all admissions dates directly with the school before submitting. Sources are cited in the full online profile at WorldsTopSchools.com/schools/sch_16cf3450af.