



Milwaukee Public Schools High School Early Admission Process Essay
MPS Student Directions

A. As part of your high school application you will write an essay. This essay will introduce you to the principal and staff at the high schools you choose. The essay will help determine if you are a good match for the school. Counselors may use the essay to help guide you in the months to come. **The first step is to choose one topic to write about from the list below:**

1. Tell your story and how you see your future during high school
2. Write about a time you overcame a challenge and how this will help you in high school
3. Explain what you want to do in the future and how high school will help you reach your dreams
4. Describe a time when you solved a problem and how this will help you succeed in high school
5. Tell about a meaningful accomplishment or event that impacts what you want to do in high school

Your essay tells a story about who you are, what is important to you, and how you make decisions. Your audience is the principal of your new high school. Make sure you write about how your subject will impact your future in high school.

B. Prepare for writing your essay by jotting down ideas, talking to friends, family and teachers.

C. Write a draft and have several people read it. **Your essay should be no more than 650 words.** Here are some tips for writing a good essay:

1. Be exact, not wordy or repetitive
2. Avoid clichés (e.g., “in a million years”, “make a long story short”)
3. Avoid overuse of “I” in first-person narratives
4. Stay on topic
5. Avoid flowery language (e.g., This fabulous program will be utterly delightful and awesome)
6. Use strong action verbs and avoid passive voice
7. Avoid starting sentences with “It is”, “It was”, “There is”, “There was”, etc.
8. Make your “voice” and style of writing shine through the essay

D. Bring your draft essay to school to write the final copy. **Ask your teachers for help.** (During the week of October 18 through October 28th, you will be provided a time at school to transcribe your essay on the computer.)

E. Know which schools you have applied to or will apply to attend. This is required information for the essay cover page that you will complete at school. Download the cover page and essay template by visiting:

mpsmke.com/highschools.

F. Every essay will have a cover page that will include the following:

1. Your full legal name (no nicknames)
2. Your MPS student ID number
3. Date the essay was completed
4. The names of the schools to which you have applied or will apply

G. When you have completed your essay, save your essay with your last name followed by your ID. For example: stewart 801137

High School Admission Essay Student Rubric

Note: A rubric is the guidelines that you, teachers and others can use to help you write your essay.

	Needs Work	Developing	Ready to Go
Staying on Topic	The student did not write about the topic selected.	The student wrote about multiple topics, including the one selected. The student may or may not have related the essay to high school.	The student wrote only on topic selected and relates the topic to their future high school experience.
Content	The student used very simple sentences, primarily passive voice and the reader often was not clear about the subject.	The student used simple words, used some passive voice or weak verbs, and was vague about their subject.	The student used good word choice, strong action verbs, and was concise in their writing.
Purpose	The student wrote an essay, but the reader could not follow the subject or purpose.	The student wrote an essay that was clean, but did not engage the reader. The audience of the essay is not clear.	The student communicated the topic clearly and engaged the reader. The audience for the essay is their future high school principal.
Depth	The student wrote about the topic, but clearly does not have knowledge of experience with the topic.	The student wrote about the topic, but demonstrated an academic knowledge of the topic and little experience.	The student explored the topic deeply and demonstrated a clear understanding or experience with the topic.
Grammar	Multiple errors that made reading and understanding the essay difficult.	Multiple errors, but they did not distract from the reader understanding the subject.	No more than two errors.
Overall Impression	The student demonstrates they are not serious about school and will require strong support.	The student demonstrates potential and will succeed at any school with some support.	The student will highly impress readers and this student would excel at any school.
Using the Essay for High School Selection	The essay does not provide insight to the school or others about the students' high school vision.	The essay provides some information about the student that will help in the high school selection process.	The essay will help staff know more about the student and help them assist the student select the best match high school.