



FILM + DIGITAL ARTS

Frequently Asked Questions

Whether your career interests will put you in front of the camera or behind it, Berkmar High School's Film+Digital Arts Program is a great place to focus on a future in film and the creative arts...

Tell Your Story!

What is the Berkmar Film+Digital Arts Program?

Berkmar's new Film+Digital Arts Program, opening in 2021-22, will be the flagship program for the school's Media, Arts, and Communications Academy.

The program will combine a college-preparatory curriculum with film and production experiences. Students will have opportunities to work with industry professionals, and teachers will have film production training, from pre- to post-production.

Areas of concentration will include Television Broadcasting, Film Production, Set Construction, and Animation and Digital Media. Unique industry partnerships will be available for students in each focus area.

Berkmar's Media, Arts, and Communications Academy is one of five academies at the school that allow students to make connections between what they're learning in the classroom and how they can apply their learning in the real world.

Why focus on film and digital arts?

During the past decade, Georgia's film industry has boomed, offering a wide range of career opportunities for young people in the state. With its temperate climate, great variety of locations, the world's busiest airport, large crew base, and business-friendly focus, Georgia is now a leading destination in the world for filming.

According to the Georgia Film Academy, "industry growth is projected to generate 40,000 jobs in Georgia over the next 18 months, with a \$2 billion investment. Television and film production jobs in Georgia pay an average salary of \$84,000."

Students will need both academic and authentic work experiences to prepare for careers in this growing industry, with demand for specialists in lighting, film, sound, writing, staging, animation, and other digital technologies as well as on-camera talent such as actors and broadcast journalists.

What will students learn in Berkmar's Film+Digital Arts Program?

Students will learn film, stage, digital, and technical skills, which will prepare them for diverse postsecondary education and career opportunities. Industry apprenticeships, options for dual enrollment, and other work-based learning opportunities will support students as they transition to college and career and will provide benefits to the larger community.

Film+Digital Arts Program will collaborate with allied programs at the school—including the Fine Arts and Architecture and Construction programs—particularly in the areas of acting, film scoring, set design, engineering, and construction of sets.

Berkmar will launch the state pilot for a Dramatic Writing course for students with an interest in screenwriting. Students in the program will earn embedded industry credentials with the opportunity to pursue advanced courses and studies, including Advanced Placement (AP) credit, dual enrollment with postsecondary partners, and industry certifications.

What opportunities will program participants have?

Program participants will have access to state-of-the-art, industry-recognized equipment and will work with industry professionals.

Additionally, they will participate in hands-on internships in their field of interest and may pursue dual enrollment opportunities through Georgia Film Academy and Georgia Gwinnett College, earning both high school and college credit.

What facilities will be available for the new program?

Renovation of existing facilities is underway. The renovation of Berkmar's theatre offers a unique opportunity to create enhanced and unique facility spaces that will expand the scope of this program for students. The renovation of the BHS theatre space will include:

- A full-scale sound stage for film productions;
- Unique spaces for events such as countywide film festivals;
- Two screening auditoriums;
- A state-of-the-art post-production studio;
- Designated areas for set construction, props, make-up, and other equipment;
- Access to industry equipment; and
- Classrooms for allied courses such as screenwriting.

How will partners support the program?

Strong partnerships between the school and Georgia Film Academy and Georgia Gwinnett College will serve as a bridge from a robust high school experience to postsecondary and professional opportunities.

The Georgia Film Academy (GFA) will be the primary partner for this program. A collaboration of the University System of Georgia and the Technical College System of Georgia, GFA was created by state leaders to meet educational and workforce needs for high-demand careers in the state's film and digital entertainment industries. GFA provides certification programs, courses in film production, and internship opportunities for high school and postsecondary students. The academy also provides training to help educators understand the industry and better prepare film and production students for postsecondary and career opportunities. GFA's direct-to-industry training is supported by industry trade unions and producers.

The program's postsecondary partner, Georgia Gwinnett College, offers a bachelor's degree in Cinema and Media Arts Production. GGC film students are uniquely situated within a "camera-ready community" that embraces Georgia's burgeoning film industry. The GGC program allows students to gain hands-on experience with current digital media equipment and media techniques, participate in rewarding internships that connect students with industry professionals, and attend courses tailored to their interests and skills in various areas of film and other media industries.

Program developers also will develop partnerships with film studios and other industry professionals in Georgia, and GCPS' Broadcast and AV Media department (GCPS TV). The City of Lilburn and community developers will work with the school to engage community members and students in meaningful experiences, internships, and showcases related to the film industry.

Who can attend Film+Digital Arts Program?

The Film+Digital Arts Program will serve Berkmar students in grades 9–12. (All 9th graders have the opportunity to explore all academies on campus.)

The program will serve approximately 300 to 450 Berkmar students. If more students express interest in the program than available capacity, Berkmar High School will prioritize juniors and seniors and consider implementing an application process.

Will the program offer instruction for English learners (EL), gifted classes, special education services, etc.?

Yes, the program will serve students who are eligible for EL, special education, and gifted services.

Will students who attend earn special certificates, credentials, or diplomas based on their coursework?

Students will have the opportunity to earn certification in industry-recognized software such as AVID and Premiere Pro.

Additional certification opportunities include Georgia Film Academy Safety Certificate and OSHA 10.

What will I be able to do after graduating from Berkmar's Film+Digital Arts Program?

Film+Digital Arts will prepare students for a wide range of opportunities—both in front of and behind the camera. Future career opportunities include film director, producer, broadcast journalist, camera operator, grip, gaffer, film editor, set designer, carpenter, electrician, screenwriter, sound engineer, graphic designer, animation artist, special effects animator, game design artist, art director, and actor.

Graduates will have a head start on training, credentials, and hands-on experience for many technical fields. Students completing the program also may be interested in pursuing a bachelor's degree in Design Production, Writing for Stage and Screen, Filmmaking, or another college major in the creative arts.

How can I learn more?

For more information, email **Principal Durrant Williams** at durrant.williams@gcpsk12.org, contact **Career Academy Coach John Tronolone** at john.tronolone@gcpsk12.org, or visit our website at gcpsk12.org/BerkmarHS.

