

Creative Brief

Client: New York City Department of Education
Project: 2017 Cover Design Competition
Date: November 2016

What should you be trying to do?

The *2018 New York City High School Directory* is an important tool for seventh and eighth grade students researching and applying to over 400 high schools in New York City for the 2018-2019 school year. As a participant, you are responsible for creating a cover design that speaks to all of the students and families in New York that will be using this important resource.

What's the opportunity?

This competition challenges you to reflect on your life as public school students in New York City and express your ideas artistically in the form of a cover design. Every student has a story to tell about his or her high school experience and this competition gives you the opportunity to share it with all of New York City!

You will be competing for an opportunity to work with award-winning comic book artist and illustrator [Phil Jimenez](#) as well as other design professionals. The winning cover design will be featured on a yearlong campaign that includes the **large-scale distribution** of the Directory and other outreach materials including presentations, signs, postcards, and more. If your design isn't used for High School Admissions, it could be used to represent another admissions process such as Middle School.

Who are we trying to connect with?

This Directory is for students in grades 5-8 and their families. When students receive a Directory, many of them are just beginning their journey through High School Admissions. The cover should reflect your unique vision of what high 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 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 Directory covers? Create a design in which **image**, **color**, **typography**, and **layout** are all considered and support the main **message** for your intended audience (students in grades 5-8 and their 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 changing from middle school to high school?
- What were your friends' experiences like?
- How are you preparing for life after high 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 in 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 competition work?

- Read the [Cover Design Competition Guidelines](#) for competition rules and regulations,
- You can submit your design to the competition beginning Monday, November 28, 2016.
- The deadline to submit your design is Friday, December 16, 2016.
- Finalists are notified between Monday, January 9 and Friday, January 13, 2017.
- Mandatory workshops for finalists are on the following Wednesdays at the Cooper Hewitt Design Center (2 East 91st Street): January 18; January 25; February 1, February 8, 2017.
- An online public vote, which determines one of the top four winners, will be in mid-February.
- Winners will be announced during the Awards Ceremony at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum (2 East 91st Street) on March 8, 2017.

How do I submit my design?

Please visit www.nyc.gov/schools/coverdesign to understand all contest rules and see last year's winners.

- Submit a *fully completed* Cooper Hewitt consent form.
- Submit a *fully completed* NYC Department of Education consent form.
- Check your schedule! Will you be able to attend all of the required workshops?
- Set the front cover dimensions to 8.5"x11".
- Include the following title—"2018 New York City High School Directory."
- Use a typeface in the Franklin Gothic typeface family for all cover text.
- Include the NYC Department of Education logo (download it [here](#)).
- Save a copy of your files as a PDF that is 2MB or under.
- Send your PDF entry to coverdesign@schools.nyc.gov by Friday, December 15.
- Keep your final design files for future edits (accepted design programs: Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator).