

Creative Brief

Client: New York City Department of Education
Project: 2015 Cover Design Competition
Date: January 2015

BUSINESS BACKGROUND

What should you be trying to do?

The *Directory of New York City Public High Schools* is a critical tool for 7th and 8th grade students researching schools and ultimately applying to one of over 400 high schools in New York City. As a participant, you are responsible for creating a cover design that speaks to all of the the 7th and 8th grade students in New York that will be using this important resource.

What's the opportunity?

Participants will be competing for an opportunity to work closely with award-winning comic book artist and illustrator [Phil Jimenez](#) as well as other veterans of the design profession. The winning design will be featured on a yearlong advertising campaign that includes the large-scale distribution of the *Directory of New York City Public High Schools*, all related publications, and outreach materials including signs, postcards, and t-shirts.

What are the key challenges we want you to tackle?

- Your design should feature your unique vision and experience, and must also be compelling for younger audiences.
- Your design should be appropriate for a [government-issued publication](#).
- Your design must be adaptable to different media (e.g. print, t-shirts, electronic, etc.).

What does a successful design look like?

- Unique qualities (separate your design from previous submissions), engaging color scheme, easily adaptable into other media

AUDIENCE INSIGHTS

Who are we trying to connect with?

The target audience for this Directory is students in grades 5-8 and their families. The cover design should be appropriate for all ethnicities, ages, genders, and boroughs.

The insight:

Many students are just beginning their journey through High School Admissions. The cover should be reflective of this exciting and sometimes daunting experience, but also convey a sense of ease to applicants unfamiliar with the nuances, many of whom are non-native English speakers.

MANDATORIES

Creative assets:

- Draw inspiration from your perspective as a New York City Student:
 - Why are you proud to be a New York City student?
 - What was your experience like when transitioning from middle school to high school?
 - How are you preparing for life after high school?
 - What makes your experience as a New York City student unique?
- Do not use previously copyrighted images, including identifiable buildings in Manhattan, in your entry. Designs that incorporate real human faces should include more than a single individual.

Timing:

- The competition is open for submissions on Monday, January 12.
- All submissions are due on Monday, February 2.
- Finalists are notified Thursday, February 12 – Friday, February 20.
- Mandatory workshops for finalists are on the following Thursdays: February 26; March 5; March 12; March 19.
- A public vote, which will determine one of the top four winners, will be held online Wednesday, April 1 – Monday, April 6.
- Winners will be announced during the Awards Ceremony at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum (2 East 91st Street) on Tuesday, April 14.