Cultivating curiosity, experimentation, and freedom of expression, founded in respect for all cultures and perspectives, is at the core of our mission in visual literacy. Many of our projects include a social justice perspective, based on individual concerns and research. Students learn to express and communicate with a critical lens within a supportive environment.

We know that high school students have a story to tell, and we give them the means to tell it in many ways, whether through painting and drawing, clay, video, photography or mixed media.

**Arts Requirements/Elective Courses**

We aim to foster a habit of creativity, so we require each student to take seven trimesters of arts (from a wide range of options) during the high school years: at least two visual arts courses, as well as two performing arts and three more in the student’s area of choice. Many students go beyond this requirement, choosing from the following visual arts courses:

- Advanced Ceramics
- Advanced Filmmaking
- Advanced Photography
- Advanced Visual Art
- Art Explorations
- Ceramics
- Digital Photography
- Figure Drawing
- Filmmaking
- Imagery Explorations
- Intermediate Drawing & Painting
- Intermediate Photography
- Mixed Media
- Painting & Drawing
- Photography
- Portfolio Development
- Sculpture
- Watercolor Painting
Field Trips and Special Exhibitions

Our urban location and schedule allow us to make use of all the aesthetic resources in DC. We keep our curriculum flexible to respond to, and take advantage of, the changing exhibitions and opportunities in Washington, DC’s myriad museums and galleries.

Each year, we partner with Via Umbria Gallery in Georgetown for an exhibition of our students’ artwork in a professional setting. Students donate their work for sale and proceeds benefit the Children’s National Medical Center’s Art Therapy program. The year culminates with an all-school art show, celebrating students’ impressive and thoughtful expressions; advanced students curate their own art installations within this show.

Preparation for Life Beyond Burke

While numerous students are accepted into highly competitive college art programs, even those who do not plan to pursue further study in art will conclude our program with:

- comfort with expressing themselves visually
- ability and confidence to make 2D and 3D art using a variety of techniques and materials
- appreciation for the creative process that requires patience, observation, flexibility and perseverance
- understanding that art is a powerful tool for expressing ideas
- knowledge of the history of art from many parts of the world and an understanding that all voices and histories carry equal significance
- ability to observe, reflect upon, and formulate specific feedback on their own work and that of others
- understanding that art is sometimes fun, sometimes difficult, and always important

Visit our Online Art Gallery:
bit.ly/BurkeVisual