

Northwest

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Edgewood Academy set to hit high note

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With high hopes and a nervous stomach, Dan Trevino attended auditions last week for the city's only fine arts school.

Staff members of the Edgewood Academy for Communications and the Fine Arts still are deciding what students will make up the first class for the school, which is scheduled to open this fall.

The \$1.6 million campus represents the city's only school solely devoted to the study of fine arts. It's one of only four in the state. Location is the site of the old Edgewood High School, 607 S.W. 34th St.

The academy will offer advance instruction in all types of dance, instrumental and vocal music, theater and visual arts, and radio and television broadcasting.

The thought of attending such a school excites Trevino, whose creative skills were put to the test during his audition June 17.

During the tryout, he had to draw still-life objects and an extra-terrestrial.

"This audition kind of makes me nervous," the Memorial High School sophomore said. "I like to draw with pencils best, listening to Beethoven."

Trevino was one of 25 students who turned out for tryouts last week. About 150 high schoolers already have been selected for the academy from previous auditions. There are 50 slots left. Future enrollment, however, is expected to reach 1,000.

"The audition numbers justify the vision that kids are hungry for communications and the arts," said Jesus Cardona, a communications teacher.

■ See FAME/8H

Dual-language academy/6H



JOE MITCHELL / Special to the Express-News

Veronica Valenzuela (left) fills out her application to the Edgewood Academy for Communications and the Fine Arts with the help of Deborah Keller, a teacher in the program.

Fame the game at fine arts school

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The audition is just one requirement for admission to the campus. Students also must have a passing grade point average in all academic classes and maintain a 95 percent attendance rate while at the school. Students also must live within the Edgewood School District, although long-range plans call for opening the school to all San Antonio students.

"A lot of students don't give themselves credit during the audition," academy dance teacher Yvonne Sandoval said. "Many have raw talent waiting to be unleashed."

Those who are chosen for the school will get intensive training in the field they choose to study on a part-time basis. They will continue taking some classes at their regular campus.

Teachers believe it's important to continue nurturing artistic talent beyond elementary school.

"Somewhere between elementary school and high school, emphasis on the arts dies," Cardona said. "Kids are happy in kindergarten, producing so much art and smiles, but the fun is taken out in high school. Our classes will take care of that."

Communications students will take audio and visual classes, get practice using a camera and microphone, and use the school's studios for broadcast journalism projects.

Theater arts participants will take acting, technical theater and production classes.

For music students, instrumental and vocal music courses will be offered, along with music theory classes and individual lessons.

The visual arts curriculum includes art history, design, drawing, painting and photography courses.

Although several local school districts offer similar magnet programs, Edgewood is the first to have dedicated a separate campus to the study the fine arts.