

# Meet Ella Young, GHS Class of 2022



Ella graduated with a tough choice: practicality or passion. She was accepted into Berklee College of Music, the largest independent music college in the world. But Ella was torn between attending a college with a more traditional academic program, or pursuing her dreams of becoming a musician and music teacher. Ultimately, she feels like she made the right call.

Ella took on a lot during her GHS career - band, track and field, newspaper, and rigorous course loads - but was encouraged along the way to go after her true love: singing. Ella offers voice lessons in her free time, and is going into her sophomore year excited to improve as a musician and discover all that the world of music has to offer.

## What are you studying right now?

I'm studying vocal performance at Berklee. I take 14-16 credits per semester, I have to take private vocal lessons each semester as well as recital preparation, which prepares you to perform. I also take core music, which is stuff like ear training, harmony, arranging, things like that, and then I take a handful of liberal arts classes too.

## In high school, what were your main extracurricular activities?

My main extracurriculars were track and field, both indoor and outdoor, chorus, I was in the **band** playing guitar, National Honor Society, and I was in the **Gender Equity in STEM club**. I also did the Gillnetter, which was fun.

## What about these activities led you to choose music school, over a more traditional college?

Having experience in the **band** and chorus really showed me what a strong community that can be, we were all very different but we all got along and bonded over music. I also got to see what rehearsals look like in a college setting, because we got to go to Endicott College to observe. Mr. Lundquist, the music teacher, really nourished the passion I had and encouraged me a lot...I knew I wanted to do music no matter what, but I was considering going to a college where I'd have a better scholarship, because UMass Amherst was going to offer me that, but I felt like I didn't click there. I really wanted to go to Berklee, and my track coach told me to just do it...Ms. Cafasso, who was involved in **Gender Equity in STEM**, told me the same thing. I felt a lot of support even from the activities that weren't music-related.

## Was there a specific moment where you knew you were going to pursue music?

I knew before high school that I wanted to do this. I knew I wanted to study music and be a musician when I was in 7th grade and I did the middle school school talent show. I did it, and I just felt so complete and fulfilled. That was when I knew.

## How are you feeling about your future after college? What do you see yourself doing?

I sort of yo-yo between feeling apprehensive and doubtful and extremely hopeful. The thing about college is that after my first year, I improved so much more than I ever thought I could. I thought I would never be a good enough singer for a long time. I improved so much, and that gave me hope for my future...If everything goes well, I see myself recording my own music, performing, touring, teaching.



This interview was conducted by GHS student Aurelia Harrison in 2023, as part of a GEF Summer Internship. GEF funds a wide variety of dynamic programs in the arts, STEM, and more in the Gloucester Public Schools. GEF-funded programs are highlighted in yellow above. To learn more visit our website: [www.thinkthebest.org](http://www.thinkthebest.org).

