

Arts in Education Remarks

Governor Phil Murphy

Paramus High School, Paramus, New Jersey
September 9, 2019

Good morning everyone and thank you Megan Akdemir for welcoming us to Paramus High School and for that wonderful introduction. What a fantastic choir! Thank you so much for that performance, you guys really sound great!

I'd like to recognize Paramus Mayor Richard LaBarbiera, Director of Arts Ed NJ Bob Morrison, Commissioner Repollet, Senator Joe Lagana and Assemblywoman Valerie Vaineri Huttel. Thank you all for being here this morning and for supporting art in education.

And, before I go any further, I'd like to thank all the students here today for your participation in the arts and for continuing to develop your own artistic abilities at the high school level—that takes commitment.

I'd like to begin by celebrating the fact that New Jersey has reached a milestone of 100% of our public schools offering arts programs. That's an incredible achievement that I know the state, and our schools, have worked hard to accomplish.

And, when I saw last week that New Jersey public schools are ranked #1 in the nation there was no doubt in my mind that our arts programs are a major contributor to our student's success.

What a week for New Jersey educators! I hope you are all starting the school year off on the right foot because New Jersey's educators are one of our best resources and we can't thank them enough for all they do.

But this morning isn't about math, or science, or English, or history—this morning is about the arts and all the ways an education that includes the arts enriches our lives.

Being knowledgeable about the arts or even exploring our own artistic talents can certainly bring us personal pleasure and enjoyment, but what does it do beyond that?

Here is what the experts say: Arts instruction helps children with the development of motor skills, language skills, social skills, decision-making, risk-taking, and inventiveness. It teaches you to collaborate, persevere, and focus.

In 2005, Steve Jobs gave a commencement address at Stanford University where he stated in no uncertain terms that the empire he created at Apple would never have happened if it weren't for one calligraphy class he took in college.

More often than not we think of arts education as a secondary piece of the education puzzle. We don't assume that it is centrally important to your education, that it will increase productivity in the economic sense or lead to visionary leadership within any given industry—but it does.