

What People Are Saying

“Increasing access to quality arts education has been a longstanding goal of the State Arts Council,” **said New Jersey Secretary of State Tahesha Way**. “Creativity is key as we look to the future and consider the skills needed to thrive at work, home and in our communities. This is an exciting milestone, and we at the Department of State look forward to continuing our work through the Council with the visionary partners at Arts Ed NJ, to ensure that all New Jersey students get the complete education they deserve.”

“I’m proud of New Jersey’s success in providing arts education to our students,” **said Education Commissioner Dr. Lamont O. Repollet**. “Research tells us that participation in the arts has a positive effect on academic outcomes, improves school engagement, and is linked with an increased likelihood of attaining a postsecondary degree.”

“My life as a professional Rock and Roll musician and a Broadway composer is the result of my musical education in Edison schools. Being a part of this project from the beginning, it is amazing to see the impact Arts Ed NJ has had expanding arts participation to millions of students,” **said David Bryan, Founding member of Bon Jovi, Multiple Tony Award winner and inductee at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame**. “Due to Arts Ed NJ, students have rightful access to arts education as part of their basic education. Traveling to schools across New Jersey and across the nation, I’ve seen first-hand the power of the arts to inspire students regardless of their career choice. There are many facets of music education, including applying math to music, providing a place to go after school and an introduction to team building skills. This project has brought together all sides of the aisle for a greater common cause. Today I join with Governor Murphy and all the project partners in celebrating this historic milestone for our state... and the nation.”

“The arts can actively engage students in their own education process, ignite their passion for learning and be used to deliver core subjects and themes in a vastly different way,” **stated State Board of Education President Kathy Goldenberg**. “Providing access to performing, visual, or culinary arts in every school throughout New Jersey will help students become tomorrow’s well-rounded, critically thinking leaders.”

“Arts education equips students with many of the critical skills needed for success today – not the least of which are authentic self-expression, creative thinking, and innovative problem solving,” **said Allison Tratner, Executive Director of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts**. “Collecting this data helps keep us accountable, charts the course for future efforts, and makes it possible to recognize this tremendous step forward in our efforts to ensure access to a complete education for every student in New Jersey.”

“We join in celebrating with Governor Murphy, Arts Ed NJ, and the many stakeholders who advocated for and contributed to these outstanding access outcomes,” **said Wendy Liscow, Education Program Director for the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.** “We will continue to work together to break down barriers to ensure that every NJ student has the opportunity to take sequential visual arts, music, theatre and dance coursework throughout their school career. We hope residents from across the state will join us in strongly supporting arts education which will transform young people’s lives.”

“The Grunin Foundation is so excited to be able to support Arts Ed NJ in the organization’s mission to provide access to high quality arts education for all New Jersey students,” **said Jeremy Grunin, President of The Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation.** “To that end, the announcement that we have helped Arts Ed NJ clear their first hurdle of universal access for all students further validates our belief in both the organization and New Jersey schools.”

“On behalf of the Board of Arts Ed NJ, I express our excitement about our State’s accomplishment in reaching universal access to arts education for the students of New Jersey,” **said Dr. Mary Reece, Chair Arts Ed NJ.** “It’s an honor to attain this unique distinction. We are particularly grateful that Governor Murphy recognizes this significant achievement by his presence and his proclamation.”

“This milestone of universal access to arts education in New Jersey is a significant one. Once again, New Jersey leads the nation in educational opportunity for its students,” **said Dr. Richard Bozza, Executive Director, New Jersey Association of School Administrators.** “We must work now to set our sights on expanding the breadth of offerings available to every New Jersey student.”

“It is well recognized that arts education is essential in preparing well-rounded students for a successful future. Arts education plays a key role in advancing the 21st century skills of creativity, collaboration, problem-solving and critical thinking. The New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association has been a strong advocate of arts integration as a way to ensure that the arts become an integral part of every child’s learning experience,” **said Patricia Wright, Executive Director, NJPSA/FEA.** “Today marks an exciting milestone in New Jersey’s efforts to provide an equitable and quality education to all NJ students. NJPSA is proud to affirm our commitment to universal access to arts education, and we congratulate Arts Ed NJ for their role in this outstanding accomplishment.”

“Universal access to arts education acknowledges the powerful and positive role that the fine, visual and performing arts have on a student’s academic career and life,” **stated Dr. Lawrence S. Feinsod, Executive Director New Jersey School Boards Association.** “Research links involvement in the arts with improved school attendance, increased academic performance, and higher levels of college attendance. For every student who pursues a career in the arts, there are countless others in the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) areas and other fields, whose lives are enriched through an appreciation of music, painting and

other artistic expression. Universal access to arts education is a significant accomplishment for New Jersey's public schools, one that will benefit our students' future."

"Universal access to arts instruction in New Jersey is a huge milestone within our overall education system and should be applauded alongside the tireless work of our advocates." **said Patrick O'Keefe, President of the New Jersey Music Educators Association.** "Inspiring things are happening in music classrooms throughout the state, and our educators will continue to strive to create a depth of inclusive offerings for our students."

"Education is incomplete without the arts as our 'dramatic imagination' is the basis for all learning," **said Chuck Miller, President, STANJ (Speech and Theatre Association of New Jersey).** "I applaud our State officials for not only recognizing that but taking the brave and necessary actions on behalf of the students of New Jersey. May this be only the beginning!"

"What a tremendous accomplishment for arts education and a well-deserved celebration," **stated Lisa Conklin, President of the Art Educators of New Jersey.** "We look forward to even more students exploring their passion and creativity through arts education as districts around the state work to provide even more diverse offerings. This is a very exciting week!"

"The integration of an arts education during the school day in every New Jersey school is a monumental achievement for each individual student and school community because the arts makes education more equitable for all," **said Cristina Marte, Executive Director of Dance New Jersey.** "As programs expand and student participation increases, Dance New Jersey is dedicated to supporting districts in broadening arts offerings to include a high quality dance education from K-12 so that every student has access to dance throughout the state."

"The arts have the power to change lives. We are incredibly lucky to live in a state that makes arts education a priority," **stated Carolyn Little, Chapter Director of NJ Thespians.**