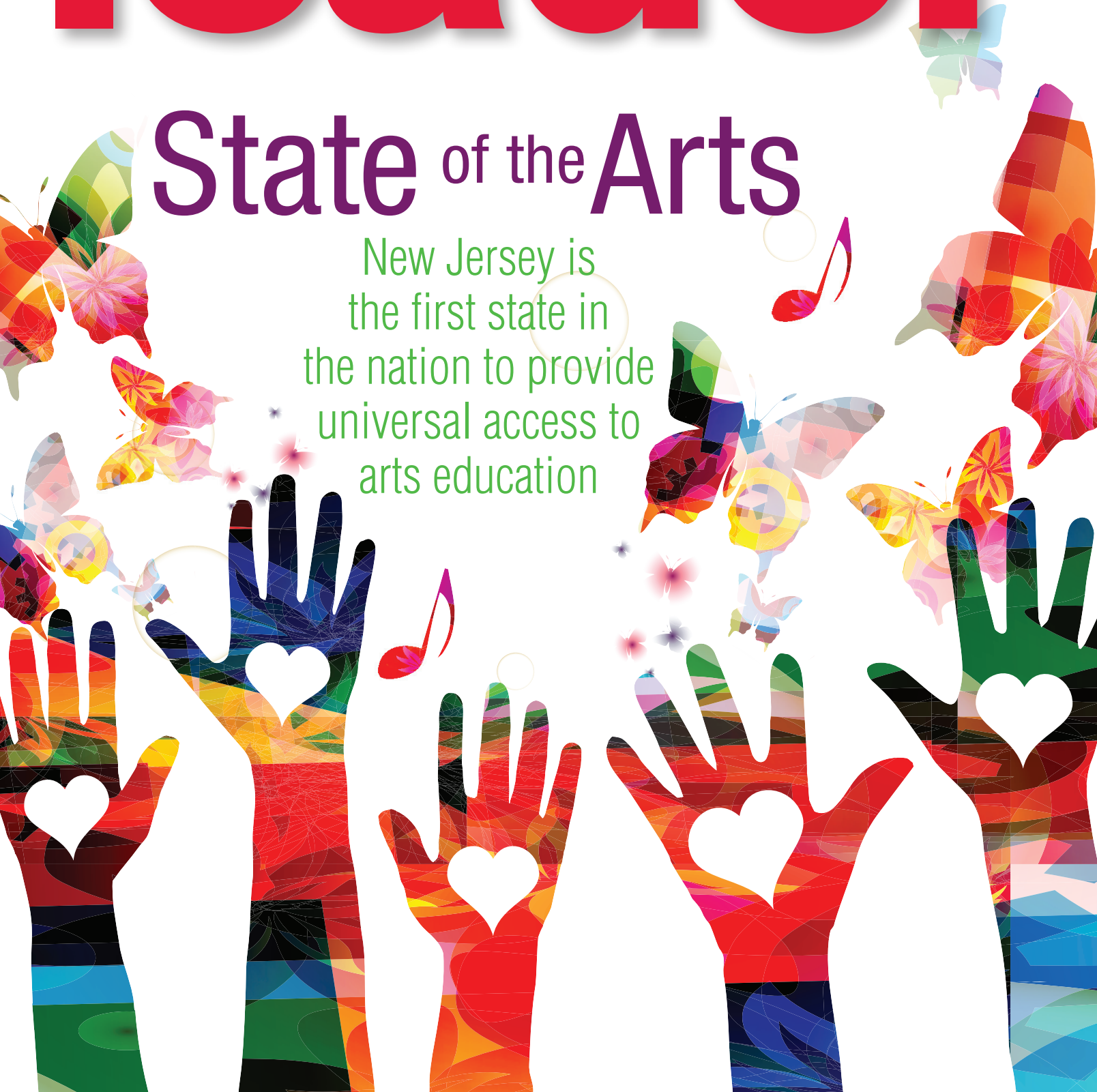
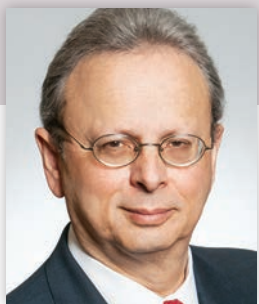


SCHOOL leader

State of the Arts

New Jersey is
the first state in
the nation to provide
universal access to
arts education





EXECUTIVE WORD

The Arts are Essential for Education

People have been moved to express themselves artistically since the earliest humans were inscribing paintings on the walls of caves. There is simply something about creating art that enriches one's soul.

That's why the news we received this fall from Arts Ed NJ, that New Jersey has become the first state in the nation to provide access to arts education in all schools, was so welcome.

I believe that an arts education is key to engaging students. During the years I spent as a teacher, principal and superintendent, I noticed that for a significant number of students, their involvement with the arts is the highlight of their day, and for some, the reason to come to school.

Students involved in the fine and performing arts always seemed to perform better academically when they were involved in a robust program — a relationship that has been borne out by research.

There is also a clear link between the arts and social-emotional learning. No other discipline creates the opportunity for self-expression and collaboration more than the arts. The ability to empathize with others, interact with people in a positive way, and express yourself clearly and honestly are life skills that are critical for the personal growth of students, and ones that make full self-actualization possible. It's no wonder that children thrive emotionally when they have access to the arts.

This issue of *School Leader* magazine has a special section on arts education, and details the impressive gains New Jersey schools have made in providing this essential discipline for children, how one district boosted participation among its students, and some ideas for community partnerships in arts education. The section begins on page 16; I urge you to read it.

Learning about and participating in one or more of the four disciplines of the arts — music, visual arts, theater and dance — can start someone on a lifelong journey. Not long ago, I spoke with a gentleman who played the trumpet in a community orchestra — something he began doing when he was a young student. This man was 91 years old and was still experiencing happiness and fulfillment from his involvement with music. Music had been his faithful companion throughout the ups and downs of life, and, after nine decades, continued to enrich his days.

My hope is that our state's students will find a passion like that to inform and enhance their lives. I believe that the only thing better than art... is more art.

Lauren S. Grinnell

State of the Arts

New Jersey has reached a historic milestone: It is the first state to provide universal access to arts education.

BY ROBERT MORRISON

New Jersey has become the first state in the nation to provide universal access to arts education for all public school students according to the 2019 New Jersey Arts Education Annual Summary Report released in fall 2019 by Arts Ed NJ. The review is based on data from the New Jersey State Department of Education (NJDOE) for the 2017-2018 school year. This is indeed a historic milestone for arts education, not only in New Jersey, but for our nation.

Universal access means all New Jersey public schools provide some form of arts education and every student who attends a public school in New Jersey has the opportunity to participate in arts education programs as part of the regular school day. Achieving universal access to arts education has been the number one goal of Arts Ed NJ, a public awareness campaign to raise the visibility of arts education for all students.

"I'm proud of New Jersey's success in providing arts education to our students," said New Jersey Commissioner of Education Dr. Lamont 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."

The announcement took place in September at Paramus High School, which was recognized in 2013 as a Model School in the Arts for the state of New Jersey, with



In September 2019, Gov. Phil Murphy announced the art education milestone at Paramus High School.

education leaders and dignitaries from across the state, led by New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy.

"I am grateful that my own education included exposure to the arts, and I know that I would not be where I am today without the skills theatre taught me," said Gov. Murphy. "I am proud to announce that all New Jersey public schools are now offering arts education. The future of New Jersey is bright, and today's announcement is a critical part of ensuring that our children reach their full potential."

The report also highlights significant gains in arts education participation. More than 81% of all students in New Jersey now participate in art programs every year; that's a 25% increase in student participation over the past decade. This means an additional 250,000 students annually participate in arts education compared to a decade ago.

Despite the gains in participation over the past decade, there are still more than 26,000 elementary students and another 45,000 middle school students who, based on state policies, should be participating in the arts who are not. There are another 31,000 or so high school students who could also be participating who are not.

In addition, the diversity and equity of course offerings vary widely across the state, impacting the quality of arts experiences for students.

The Importance of Arts Education The public agrees on the importance of an arts education. According to a 2017 Rutgers-Eagleton Poll, nine out of 10 residents say that receiving an education in the arts — which includes lessons in dance, music, theater, visual arts, media arts, and other forms of creativity — is "very" or "some-what" important in the classroom (90%),

through before or after school programs (93%), and through cultural organizations in their community (89%).

“Research links involvement in the arts with improved school attendance, increased academic performance, and higher levels of college attendance,” said Dr. Lawrence S. Feinsod, executive director of the New Jersey School Boards Association. “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 acknowledges the powerful and positive role that the fine, visual and performing arts have on a student’s academic career and life and is a significant accomplishment for New Jersey’s public schools.”

Laying the Foundation for Universal Access

The effort to reach this arts education milestone began more than a decade ago on Sept. 18, 2007, when the collaborative partnership of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, the New Jersey State Department of Education, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Playwrights Theatre of New Jersey, and Music for All released the definitive report on the state of arts education in New Jersey schools, “Within Our Power: The Progress, Plight, and Promise of Arts Education for Every Child.”

The project represented two years of work gathering information from more than 98% of New Jersey’s schools and marked the first time that the NJDOE collected information about the implementation of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for visual and performing arts. The report looked at how

continued on page 7



School Board Members and Arts Education

The 2019 School Board Candidate Survey* administered by Arts Ed NJ, shows that:

- 82%** of school board candidates have been or continue to be involved with the arts
- 84%** of school board candidates reported having children who were involved with the arts
- 97%** of school board candidates know that arts education is required for all students in New Jersey
- 98%** of school board candidates are aware of the research highlighting the benefits of arts education for students
- 99%** of school board candidates indicated they have or will play a leadership role in supporting arts education in their own district.

* 500 school board candidates participated in the survey.

About Arts Ed Now

Arts Ed Now is a statewide campaign to increase active participation in arts education in all schools in New Jersey. Studies show that students who participate in arts education do better in school and in life. Unfortunately, not all NJ students have the access or information to increase their participation in arts education.

The Arts Ed Now campaign identifies ways to increase participation in arts education and garner public support to put a spotlight on the issue - and is designed to be customized at a local grassroots level for more impact. The “Campaign Central” website <https://artsednow.org> features stories, tools and ways for citizens to become better ambassadors — together. This project is supported in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, and the Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation and by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The 2019 New Jersey Arts Education Annual Summary Report may be downloaded at:

<https://www.artsednj.org/2019-nj-arts-ed-annual-summary-report>





What's Next for Arts Education in New Jersey?

The achievement of universal access to arts instruction represents the current mile marker on a long journey for building strong arts-rich schools and districts across the state. Universal access means all students have programs in their schools. The focus now turns to the quality of programs and equity of instructional opportunities for all students.

Three significant initiatives to advance arts education in New Jersey will take flight during 2020.

1. New Jersey Student Learning Standards in the Visual and Performing Arts A team of arts education administrators and leaders from across the state have been working over the past five years on an overhaul

of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in the Visual and Performing Arts. These new standards will come into effect for the 2020-2021 school year as the New Jersey State Board of Education is on schedule to formally adopt the revised standards in June. If precedents are any guide, districts will have until September 2022 to have local curriculum aligned to the new standards. What is significant about the new visual and performing arts standards is that they are grounded in the artistic processes of Create, Perform (Perform, Produce, Present), Respond, and Connect. Aligning local curriculum around the artistic processes provides clarity regarding the learning expectation for what all students should know and be able to do in the

arts. With eleven anchor standards and a complete set of essential questions and enduring understanding for each anchor standard, teachers will have a more powerful way of engaging students across the arts disciplines. Also new for 2020 is the implementation of a new arts discipline. Joining Dance, Music, Theatre, and Visual Art is the additional discipline of Media Arts, which recognizes the emerging role of technology in artistic pursuits.

2. Connecting Arts Education and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) has made addressing social and emotional learning a priority for local schools and districts. The NJDOE has even adopted a set of competencies in SEL as a guide for all districts. Furthermore, there are power-

Key Facts About Arts Education in New Jersey

Below is a sample of the findings from the 2019 New Jersey Arts Education Annual Report (data from 2017-2018)

All students (100%) in the state have access to arts instruction, yet only 11% of students have access to all four arts disciplines required by state code.

There are 7,133 certified arts educators employed in the state. There are 3,169 visual art, 3,634 music, 149 theatre and 87 dance educators statewide, as well as 101 arts administrators.

Participation has increased from 65% in 2006 to 81% in 2018, a 25% increase. There are now 250,000 more students participating in the arts annually than there were a decade ago.

More than 45,000 middle school students who should be participating in arts education, based on state requirements, do not.

Visual art and music are the most widely available of the arts disciplines at 94% and 96%, respectively. Only 6% of schools offer all four arts disciplines as required by state policy.

Art (68%) and music (61%) had the highest participation among the four arts disciplines, followed by 3% participation for theatre and 2% participation for dance.

81% percent of all students participated in one, or more, arts education course(s) during the year. This represents nearly 1.1 million students.

The vast majority of arts educators are full-time employees (93%) and work in a single school (85%).



ful connections between arts education and social and emotional learning. For SEL to be meaningful, it must be embedded in the curriculum with intentionality. To assist arts educators in this effort, an Arts Education/Social Emotional Learning Task Force convened by Arts Ed NJ and SEL4NJ has been working for the past year, identifying the intentional connections between the SEL Competencies and the visual and performing arts anchor standards. A website allowing educators to explore these connections will be released to coincide with the adoption of the new visual and performing arts standards. It will include lesson examples highlighting the intersections between the five SEL Competencies of Self-Awareness, Self-Management,

Social Awareness, Responsible Decision Making, and Relationship Skills with the four Artistic Processes of Create, Perform, Respond, and Connect.

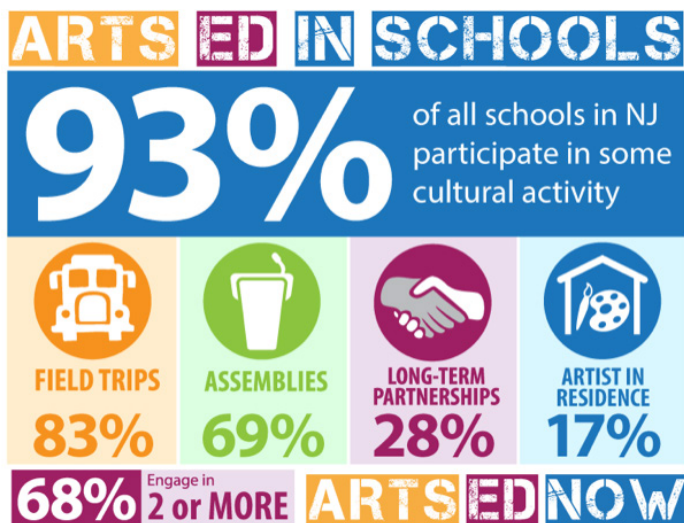
ACTION: Share this information with your administration regarding the new standards as well as the connection to social-emotional learning. Look for professional development opportunities provided by Arts Ed NJ for your administrators and faculty beginning summer 2020. These learning opportunities will allow districts to jump-start the curricular revision process and the intentional embedment of SEL into the arts curriculum.

3. ARTS ED NOW Campaign Expands The statewide ARTS ED NOW campaign will be announcing a new set of goals for

art education to be reached by 2025. With universal access achieved, ARTS ED NOW will begin to focus on assisting districts to address quality and inclusion, diversity, equity, and access (IDEA). New tools will allow schools and districts to identify “conditions of quality,” which are common attributes shared by arts-rich schools and districts. Strategies to address equitable access to a variety of course offerings for all students will be made available as well.

ACTION: To learn more about how to bring ARTS ED NOW information and materials into your schools, visit artsednow.org. ARTS ED NOW is a statewide resource for every district in all communities.

—R.M.



State of the Arts continued from page 4

arts education has changed in the prior 20 years in New Jersey and concluded that while the state had come very far, there was still much work to do to bring arts education to every student.

The study was a monumental opportunity for New Jersey to take a leadership role in data collection efforts and paved the road for future reports including Keeping the Promise (2012) and Arts Ed Now: Every Child, Every School (2017).

Since 2013 the NJDOE has included arts education measures in the annual School Performance Reports, becoming the first state in the nation to publicly report such measures.

Arts Ed NJ, previously the New Jersey Arts Education Partnership, was established in 2007 to create the proper conditions for arts learning to take place. Arts Ed NJ is the backbone of ARTS ED NOW (www.artsednow.org), a statewide campaign to increase active participation in arts education at all schools in New Jersey.

The primary goal of the ARTS ED NOW campaign was to reach universal access. Since that objective has been achieved, the state's arts advocates can turn their attention to improving the quality of the arts education experience and to assure inclusive offerings for the state's students. (See box, "What's Next for Arts Education in New Jersey," page 18.)

In certain circles there exists a myth that arts education is for gifted and talented students. This is false. The arts are for everyone, and are just as fundamental to a basic education as math, science, social studies, language arts, physical education and world languages.

After all, we do not teach the arts to create great artists. We teach the arts to create great people.



Robert Morrison is director of Arts Ed NJ; he is also a member of the Watchung Hills Regional High School Board of Education.

A Commitment to Arts Education

How the Paramus school district built a first-class arts program for its students

BY LISA VARTANIAN

Why do all children need education in the arts?

Over the past 15 years serving as supervisor of Visual and Performing Arts and 21st Century Life and Careers for the Paramus Public Schools, I have had the opportunity to work with many incredible students and have witnessed firsthand how the arts impacted their lives and future careers in a profound way. The “why” of arts education is embodied by Dr. Victoria Herrmann, a Paramus High School alumna. Herrmann, 29, is currently the president and managing director of The Arctic Institute, a nonprofit that promotes research into the complex issues facing the Arctic. She is also a National Geographic Explorer, where one of her functions is to use stories to bring attention to climate change impacts and inspire people to act together to find solutions.

Dr. Herrmann’s job — telling America’s climate change story and crafting sustainable, equitable policies for a livable future — requires the foundational skills she acquired in arts classes as a student at Paramus Public Schools.

At Paramus High School, she sang her way through four years of choir classes and studied AP Art History books long after she finished her homework. Her art classes, and in particular art history, were an immersive learning experience that taught her far more than definitions of chiaroscuro and the process of creating an encaustic painting. These courses instilled in Herrmann a lifelong

“The true purpose of arts education is not necessarily to create more professional dancers or artists. It’s to create more complete human beings who are critical thinkers, who have curious minds, who can lead productive lives.”

Kelly Pollock, executive director, Center of Creative Arts, St Louis

commitment to analyze the social, economic, and political contours of art, and question the consequences of what was visible and invisible to audiences’ eyes. She still remembers the excitement and satisfaction she felt handing in her art history final on Francisco Goya’s *The Third of May 1808* [completed in 1814]. Not only was she able to visually explore the painting’s symbolism and iconography, but she was also able to explore the socioeconomic and political conditions which led to the revolt in May 1808 and how art can inspire empathy, conviction,

and collective action.

Victoria Herrman’s arts education at Paramus High School helped her develop the skills needed to research, analyze, and write — skills she used as an art history major at Lehigh University, later as she completed a Ph.D. in geography as a Gates Scholar at Cambridge University, and today as she works with cultural heritage leaders to keep public art, architecture, and history above water as sea levels rise.

But when she thinks back to her time in art classes as a Paramus student, she says that “the most important and lasting impact it has had on me is the courage, compassion, and creativity my arts teachers infused in me. Lessons of storytelling and critical discourse analysis my teachers taught to me over a decade ago still inspire and elevate my research regardless of where I’m working — whether testifying in front of the U.S. House of Representatives or presenting at the United Nations climate change negotiations.”

The lessons that Victoria Herrmann learned from the arts classes she took in high school are ones that all students should be taught. The Paramus school district has put that principle into practice over the past several years.

Using Data to Create Change To share the journey of how we used data to create change in the Paramus Public Schools, I have to go back 15 years to when I began my work as the new supervisor of visual



Paramus school district arts programs include classes in visual arts.

and performing arts. During my first few years, while getting acclimated and learning the nuances of the position, the New Jersey Department of Education created a plan to survey all core curriculum content areas not included in the statewide assessment program. The New Jersey Visual and Performing Arts Education

Survey was distributed to all school districts statewide. As a new administrator, filling out the survey helped me pinpoint our strengths and weaknesses in arts education. The survey enabled me to dig deeper, to sit with principals and central office administration within the district, have meaningful and honest discussions

about our programs, and brainstorm ways we can improve. After I submitted the survey, Arts Ed NJ provided Paramus and all school districts in New Jersey with a thorough report compiled from the extensive amount of data collected. For the first time, arts administrators had accurate, relevant data to use as leverage to help make a change in our programs. This was monumental. For a new supervisor, the information was beyond helpful: It was invaluable data I would not otherwise have had in my hands.

The “State of the Arts” in Paramus? The overall data from the report indicated that there were a few areas that needed immediate attention. The state calls for access to all four arts disciplines (music, theater, dance and visual arts). While Paramus High School offered music and art, it did not offer dance. We had a theater program, but it was embedded in the language arts department. We had a thriving performance-based music program. Still, we did not have educational technology to aid in instruction nor alternative electives for students who were interested in music but not interested in enrolling in the traditional ensemble program—band, orchestra, and choir. We had a visual arts program, but needed to streamline the offerings to allow students the ability to enter higher-level art classes such as the AP Studio Art programs in their junior/senior year of high school. We also needed to improve the media arts component of the program to include new curricula and industry-standard technology.

Once the data was analyzed and deficiencies noted, an action plan was created. Being a districtwide initiative, the plan required that all stakeholders, especially the board of education, commit to the project. By laying out the vision and plan to the board and keeping them engaged throughout the journey, I was able to



Paramus school district arts programs include classes in visual arts, dance, theater and music

enhance the level of support from what was an already-committed board.

Reflecting on the board's level of commitment, board of education trustee William Holzmann shared his views, stating that the Paramus Board of Education "understands the value that arts education has on the development of the student as a whole, and recognizes that this is not a 'nice to have'; instead, it is a 'must-have.' Arts education may set some students on the path of a career in the performing or culinary arts. More likely, their arts education will supplement their overall education and personal development by providing the student with critical thinking and problem-solving skills that transcend any career path. Quite simply, the board recognizes that arts education is a core component of public education."

In the past decade, Paramus has taken action to enhance its arts education for students. Some changes made include:

- A new dance program at Paramus High School and expanded dance offerings at the middle school level

- A new music technology program with new classes such as Music Technology and Piano
- New technology and black and white photography labs with new art classes such as filmmaking, documentary, AP Photography, and Graphic Design
- A revised theater arts program and expanded offerings at the middle school level
- Partnerships established with local universities to provide dual enrollment opportunities in the arts.

Paramus has also undertaken several community-school partnerships to strengthen the arts program. More details about these are available in the article beginning on page 25.

I was determined that the next time the arts survey came out, Paramus would be ready. In 2008, the arts survey was administered again. Paramus met all the criteria. Because of this, we qualified to apply for the Model School of the Arts program. This was an intensive application process. In addition to the application, representatives from the New Jersey Arts Education Partnership spent a day at our school, reviewing the program, curriculum, and interviewing teachers, students, and administrators. In 2012, Paramus High School was one of four schools in New Jersey to receive the Model School of the Arts designation.

The 2019 New Jersey Arts Education Annual Summary Report On Sept. 9, 2019, Paramus High School had the opportunity to celebrate National Arts in Education Week with Gov. Phil Murphy.

In addition to the governor visiting

arts classrooms, we had the opportunity to attend a press conference where Bob Morrison, director of Arts Ed NJ, unveiled the results of the new state report, which was released this fall. Once again, I found myself looking through the results of the latest report and seeing pockets of improvements that we can make as a department, such as adding additional dance and theater classes for K-5 and including more performance opportunities for students who might not otherwise be interested in the traditional BOC (band, orchestra, choir) programs.

Lessons Learned Below are some of the takeaways and suggestions from our experience in making our arts education program broader and deeper. Our recommendations:

Create "belief statements." Anne Fennel, the K-12 music program manager in the San Diego Unified School District, shared with attendees at the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) National Conference the need for powerful belief statements. She encourages arts administrators to create belief statements as the statements become the "light that guides them on their path." Fennel's belief statements are as follows: "1. I believe in lifelong learning and access to arts education for all children. 2. I believe in casting the educational net wide to all students providing them with rich and diverse offerings in all art forms. 3. I believe and know that the arts are creative, rigorous, academic subjects that are part of a well-rounded education and that all children should be allowed to experience them. 4. I believe the arts improve the human condition through creative expression that defines our humanity and culture."

Be self-reflective. Understand and accept that this work will take a few years, and that's ok because taking the time needed



At top, a musical theater performance at the high school, above, a Paramus High School Modern Band student.

to do the research will result in a reliable, tangible plan. Visit other school districts and share best practice ideas with your colleagues.

Take time to reflect on what story the data is telling. What are your areas of strength? Where are opportunities for improvement? Make sure everyone owns the data — the superintendent, building principals, board members, community members, parents, and students. This is a school/districtwide effort, and you need everyone on the same page.

The data is only meaningful if used to drive transformation. To that end, use the data to create a plan for improvement. Include in the plan both short-term goals (diversification of course offerings, improved scheduling to allow more students to participate) and longer-term goals (add a new discipline or add new classrooms or technology).

Measure again, and be extremely reflective. Use the new, updated data from the 2019 New Jersey Arts Education Annual Summary Report to help drive account-

ability. If one of the goals was to increase student participation, what did you do? Did your strategies work? If not, why not? And then, based on the results, revise the plan — don't lose sight of why you are doing this work- it's for the kids, and they deserve it.

During National Arts in Education Week that took place in September, Bob Morrison announced during his keynote address that New Jersey is the first state to document universal access to arts education for all students. As the report indicates, our work remains unfinished. In spite of our gains in participation over the past decade, we still have more than 26,000 elementary students and another 45,000 middle school students who should be participating in the arts who are not. As Bob Morrison put it so eloquently, "In a world where imagination, creativity and innovation are sculpting our future, ensuring we provide the inspiration for these skills for all students must be our goal."

To read the full report, go to www.artsednj.org/2019-nj-arts-ed-annual-summary-report/.

Lisa Vartanian is supervisor of visual and performing arts and 21st century life and careers for the Paramus school district.

The Importance of Community Partnerships in Teaching the Arts

Involving local residents and businesses in your district's arts program is good for both the students and the community. Here are some project ideas.

BY LISA VARTANIAN

Part of the success of any program revolves around solid community support. Below are some ideas and activities that we've tried in the Paramus Public Schools and found to be impactful. What's more, they gave the Tri-M Music Honor Society (a music honor society that is a program of the National Association for Music Education) students ways to join together with the Paramus community to form meaningful partnerships.

Volunteer If you can, volunteer to serve on a local community board or a townwide foundation. Get to know your community in a more personal way by giving up a small portion of your time to help your neighbors. Besides the fantastic opportunity to give back to the community and make a difference to the people around you, you will help make those positive, lasting connections with your community.

Host an Arts Festival Pictured at top: Student-created poster that was distributed to local businesses to help advertise the art festival.

Host an arts festival in your school and invite your community to come out for a refreshing evening of arts and culture. The Paramus District Arts Festivals are free and open to the public, and feature students in the music and arts programs from kindergarten to grade 12. Suggestions on how to put on a festival are at right.



HOST AN ARTS FESTIVAL

<i>What we did...</i>	<i>Its impact...</i>	<i>Your turn...</i>
We proposed the idea to the administrative team. Early in the school year, we chose a date, time and location for the event and filled out the facility paperwork to secure the venue (school).	This enabled teachers to plan ahead, collect art projects throughout the year, and decide on interactive activities and events for the festival.	Discuss with your arts colleagues the possibility of having an art festival at your school. Brainstorm ideas for the event. Speak to your administrative team and share your ideas and plans. Tell them why it is important to you and your students.
Students spent the year planning for the arts festival. Arts students created posters for the event. Students sent home personal invitations to their families and to the school community. We advertised online and in the local papers.	This caused a great deal of buzz and excitement within the school community about the arts. It empowered students to learn the value and importance of advertising for an event. Students stepped up their commitment to practice and prepare for the event, and art students created beautiful artwork to showcase to their families.	Speak at the next PTA meeting about your music program and the upcoming arts festival to gain support for your students. Invite students to the PTA meeting in order to provide a 'sneak peek' of what the festival will feature
The entire school celebrated an evening of arts and culture at the District Arts Festival (no cost to attendees).	It raised awareness of the importance of arts education for all children and enabled students to share their talents with the community.	Figure out a performance or service-based event through which your students can bring music and art to life.
We included an Arts Ed Now Campaign as part of an arts advocacy activity.	Everyone attending the arts festival had a chance to sign up to be an arts advocate.	Go online and gather arts advocacy tools from Arts Ed Now (ArtsEdNow.org) Have your art students take pictures of community members in front of the Arts Ed Now sign.

ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF PARAMUS HIGH SCHOOL

GETTY IMAGES



Instrumental Test Drive Two years ago, we hosted an ‘instrumental test drive’ activity during the Arts Festival where Tri-M music students and our local music store, Music and Arts, partnered together to welcome all community members to try an instrument of interest to them. Not only was it a fun activity, but students, parents, school administrators, and teachers had a chance to try out musical instruments (some for the first time). That school year, we saw an increase in the number of students who enrolled in the instrumental program.

INSTRUMENTAL TEST DRIVE

<i>What we did...</i>	<i>Its impact...</i>	<i>Your turn...</i>
We partnered with the local music store.	This enabled us to have all instruments represented at no cost to the school district.	Call your local music store(s) to see how they can partner with your school district. Local music stores are more than happy to participate in school events. They may also be willing to provide free workshops for teachers (i.e. instrument repair clinics).
Tri-M music students volunteered to work at the event in order to demonstrate and model for younger students the correct way to play the instruments.	This broadens our students' ability to demonstrate correct technique on their instrument and be a role model for younger musicians.	Borrow as many instruments as you can from feeder schools or ask the local music stores for help.
We sent out follow-up letters about the event, and shared ways parents can get their child started on a musical instrument.	It forged new relationships and conversations with parents, the Tri-M students, and the music teachers.	Send home letters to parents at least three times a year and talk about music-related opportunities for your students.

GETTY IMAGES



One interactive service-learning activity in which we participate in the “Senior Prom.” The “Senior Prom” takes place each spring. Jazz band members interview the senior citizens (before the event) to find out what music was popular during the

“SENIOR PROM”

<i>What we did...</i>	<i>Its impact...</i>	<i>Your turn...</i>
Our students interviewed local senior citizens about the music from their youth.	This opens up a music-based conversation with an important and valued segment of the community. It also teaches our students about musical genres.	Name a segment of your community to whom you can reach out through music conversations.
Students studied the type of music that was prevalent in the youth of these seniors.	This broadens our students' music repertoire.	Help your students find examples of music that may have been impactful in your own community. This may be based on era, on culture, or genre of music.
Students played music at the “Senior Prom.”	It forged a new relationship between our students, our program, and the senior citizens.	Figure out a performance- or service-based event through which your students can bring new music to life.

time of their prom. Students then learn and perform the music for the senior citizens at their annual “Senior Prom.”



Pianos in the Parks Project March is “Music in Our Schools Month” and “Youth Art Month,” and the Paramus school district partnered with the mayor and the Paramus Municipal Council on a project called “Pianos in the Park.” The project is similar to the “Play Me, I’m Yours” public art project that debuted in New York City. During the summer of 2019, three donated pianos were placed in parks and public spaces of Paramus for all to view, play and enjoy. (The pianos were in places where they were protected from the weather.)

Young artists from the Paramus schools had an opportunity to study artists such as Christo and Jeanne-Claude, Judy Chicago, and Jeff Koons, who are known for their public art installations. Students then decided on a theme for an art installation, submitted the sketch to

PIANOS IN THE PARKS

<i>What we did...</i>	<i>Its impact...</i>	<i>Your turn...</i>
We solicited the donation of gently used pianos.	This puts the importance of music into the air of the community.	Start with your students and their extended families. They might have old pianos they no longer use.
We found homes for the instruments in local parks.	This further broadens the visibility of the arts within the community.	Find a public space within your community that can be a safe, free, and engaging home for music and musical instruments, like parks, a library, or community center.
We had an event to launch the use of the pianos.	It brought a celebratory nature to this service learning project for our students, while even further broadening the audience within the community.	Invite students to play at “opening night,” and invite their family and friends.

Mayor Richard LaBarbiera for approval, and then painted the pianos with assistance from the art teachers before placing them in the parks. Students were thrilled to participate in a project where their artwork will remain on display in Paramus for the next three years.

The vision for the program is to build community engagement in local parks, to provide students an opportunity to learn about and create public art installations, and to encourage everyone to play a musical instrument. Having “Music in the Air” in the Paramus Public Parks is a welcomed addition to the already pristine spaces.

These are a few examples of activities we’ve tried and found to be impactful to share our love of music and the arts with the Paramus community. Feel free to reach out (lvartanian@paramusschools.org) if you would like further information on any of the projects mentioned above.

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