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*Advocacy Information Provided by New York State Alliance for Arts Education.*

## **A CHECKLIST FOR ARTS TEACHERS FOR PROMOTING THE ARTS**

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***Don't wait for a crisis in your school district to begin advocating for arts education programs. Establish a solid foundation for your school's art, music, dance, drama, literary and media arts programs by beginning now. Use the following as a guide for building support in and for your school.***

- ✓ Consider yourself a vital part of the faculty and act accordingly. Participate on school committees, attend special events planned by fellow teachers, see that the arts are on the table for discussing of all school policies.
- ✓ Plan and collaborate with other arts and non-arts teachers in your school. Make your role essential in the minds of colleagues.
- ✓ Art teachers: Display high-quality student artwork everywhere and often. Your exhibits should include wall texts that state the goals of lessons that stimulated the work. Provide evidence of the students' understanding of the assignment and its relationship to other subjects.
- ✓ Make sure that student work is exhibited in museum style. Higgledy piggledy displays may look cute, but they don't send the message that the art is a result of serious thinking, planning, and executing original ideas.
- ✓ Regularly invite your principal to your studio to see works in progress.
- ✓ Write your own Fall/Spring newsletters to send home with students. Include photos, any needed materials, student honors, exhibits, local museum highlights, etc.
- ✓ Write articles for your PTA/PTO newsletters. Highlight the importance of your students' projects in relation to their regular classroom work and New York State Learning Standards.
- ✓ Ask to make a brief presentation at PTA/PTA, School Board, or staff meetings in order to highlight on what your students are doing in their arts classes and how their work addresses the NYS Learning Standards. curriculum
- ✓ When the arts look threatened, ask parents, students, and other teachers to write letters or send postcards to your school board, superintendent, and principal telling them why the arts are important for the district's children. Cite research referenced in the NYSAAE Toolkit.
- ✓ Make an appointment with your principal to discuss how to strengthen the arts education programs in your school.
- ✓ Help to establish an arts column in your student-run school newspaper.
- ✓ Obtain a list of media contact information from your Chamber of Commerce. Personally invite the key media players to special events, recognitions, exhibits, fine arts festivals, etc. Also send written press releases in cooperation with your principal and district PR policies.
- ✓ Have arts education advocacy materials on display and available for students, parents, teachers and administrators whenever there is a performance or exhibition featuring students' work. Encourage browsers to take away the materials and share with other citizens. Check the specific research findings that support arts education in the NYSAAE Toolkit. It will help you to make educationally sound arguments rather than emotional pleas.
- ✓ Brainstorm pro-arts slogans and involve students in designing original bumper stickers. Have them laminated and distributed to stakeholders in your school community.
- ✓ HELP YOUR DISTRICT AND SCHOOL SET UP ARTS ADVOCACY ADVISORY GROUPS. Help your Advisory Group to make the case to maintain and expand arts programs to serve all students in all district schools.
- ✓ Attend local hearings that concern school budgets. Let your voice be heard. Be specific about policies that you want the district to consider that favor a strong and excellent arts profile for the district.