

the NYSATA news

An Official Digital Publication of the New York State Art Teachers Association

Volume 54 • No. 4 • Spring/Summer Edition 2025



2025 Artist Participants
 Olympics of the Visual Arts

About the News

The Association shall focus on the following purposes in support of its mission:

- Secure wider recognition of the importance of art education for all.
- Develop and implement strategies for statewide advocacy.
- Research, analyze, and inform the membership about current policy and practice, as well as social, legal, educational, health-related, and economic issues that affect art education.
- Provide high quality professional growth opportunities for the membership.
- Recognize the achievements of students and art educators in New York State.
- Foster leadership among members of the Association and within the profession of art education.
- Monitor and influence policies and legislation that affect art education at state and local levels.
- Eliminate discrimination; cultivate values of equity, diversity and inclusion; promote equal access, opportunity, and voice across groups of people of diverse backgrounds and with diverse needs.

NYSATA News Mission Statement

The *NYSATA News* desires to bring informative content in an easy to read and understand form to the art teaching professionals of our New York State Art Teachers Association membership.

Written by art teachers from pre-K to college level, this newsletter seeks to present meaningful and helpful narratives about the challenges, failures, and successes in art classrooms. The editors feel that there are valuable resources for educational theory and practice available elsewhere – and that this publication showcases authentic classroom experiences, where art teachers reveal their insights, frustrations, discoveries, mistakes, and triumphs – personal and instructional.

Our mission is to be a platform for teachers' voices. We believe that our pages are a valuable place to share experiences, and that the honest, informal quality of the writing provides realistic inspiration and a genuine sense of community in our profession.

The mission of NYSATA is to promote and advocate for excellence in art education throughout New York State.

The *NYSATA News* publishes official announcements for NYSATA as well as commentary and research on topics that are important to art educators. The opinions expressed in editorials and articles are those of the authors and do not represent NYSATA policies. The *NYSATA News* encourages an exchange of ideas, and invites submission of news or articles for publication. To submit news or articles, please contact Editor, [Valerie Savage](mailto:Valerie.Savage). Advertising inquiries should be sent to sponsorship@nysata.org.

Inquiries about receiving the *NYSATA News* should be directed to the Membership Chair Terri Konu, 9200 Sixty Road, Phoenix, New York 13135, (315) 695-2500, e-mail: tkonu@nysata.org. To change your address, please log into the NYSATA website and update your own address and contact info in your profile.

Photo Submissions: Graphics should be in jpeg, tiff, or pdf format, 150ppi. Photographs and print-ready art are always welcome in jpeg or pdf format. For purposes of accurate identification and acknowledgement, photos sent to the *NYSATA News* must be accompanied by the following information: your name, phone number, and e-mail; name and address of photographer; and first and last names of persons in the photo (in order from left to right, front to back). If art work is presented, the artist's name, school name, teacher name, and NYSATA Region must be included. Additionally, any photos that depict students under 18 must have parental permission to be printed.

An award winning publication, the *NYSATA News* has been named winner of the National Art Education Association State Newsletter Award Category 3 in 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, and 2025. Chosen by a panel of visual arts educators from across the nation, this award honors art education publications that demonstrate outstanding achievement and exemplary contributions to the field of art education.

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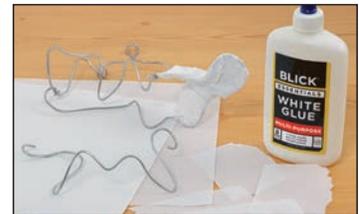
NYSATA members interested in serving on this board or contributing articles are encouraged to contact Valerie Savage at valhsav@gmail.com

Wire and Watercolor Forms

Lesson Plan for Grades 5–12



Bend: Make expressive *lines* by bending, curving, or looping sculpture wire.



Join: Arrange wire lines into *shapes* and join using bending or pliers. Cover with rice paper brushed with diluted glue to make a three-dimensional *form*.



Paint: After paper has dried and hardened, paint the sculpture using liquid watercolor.

Learn how a *line* becomes a *shape* that transitions to a *form* in this simple abstract sculpture-making process.

Students will grasp concepts of 3D art as they use wire and paper to create open, expressive forms.

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Executive Editor.....Valerie Savage
Layout & Design Editor.....Alyssa Marchand
Proofreader.....Jo Merchant
Guest Contributors: Sandy Looker, Thom Knab, Elizabeth Tripp, and Dr. Tracie Glazer
Photos: Marty Merchant and article authors.

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President's Message



Dear NYSATA Members,
As the school year approaches an end, I hope this Spring/Summer edition of the *NYSATA News* finds you all basking in the afterglow of student art shows. Truly, my favorite time of the school year, watching students proudly pointing out their artwork to peers, family, and friends;

opening receptions showcasing students' beautiful and intriguing artistic endeavors; and how student art shows are celebratory occasions that bring communities together. Oh, but getting to that point of culmination begins in the art room, with an art educator who is working with curriculum, assigning art projects, and engaging in assessments.

With this issue of *NYSATA News*, the editor asks some key questions about assessments:

"When art teachers think about assessment and rubrics, do they think beyond rigid, established rules for measuring good/bad, success/failure or other binary methods of determining whether a student has responded to our learning goals, telling them where they fall on a scale of achievement? Can effective rubrics and clear assessment values be flexible tools that help us clarify what we want our students to learn? Can they present a clear measure of what we want them to know, and still give students the freedom to create their own visual solutions to challenges we pose? Are there assessments out there that guide growing minds to engage with new thinking and problem-solving? Have you developed an assessment process that provides structure while opening doors?"

As educators, we are also researchers. Researching can provide much information and a plethora of options to assist teachers with making informed decisions for utilizing the best form of assessment. I am actually going to start with where I ended my research for this article. After pouring through NYSED and NAEA documents, I asked AI to provide an overview of Visual Arts Assessments and was impressed. AI provided a simplistic outline of the many options that Art Educators have when choosing assessments.

AI Overview

Visual Arts Assessments can take many forms, encompassing both creative production and the understanding of art history and theory. They can be diagnostic, formative, or summative, and can include a variety of methods such as observation, portfolios, rubrics, and performance-based tasks. Below is a more detailed look at different types of visual arts assessments:

1. Formative Assessments:

Observation: Observing students' work in progress to provide feedback and guidance.

Reflective Writing: Students document their artistic process, ideas, and learning through writing.

Peer and Self-Assessments: Students critique each other's work or their own, providing feedback and identifying areas for improvement.

Quick Checks and Exit Tickets: Short, informal assessments to gauge understanding of key concepts or techniques.

Process Videos: Students create short videos documenting their artistic process.

2. Summative Assessments:

Portfolios: Collections of student work, often including a range of artworks, reflective writing, and other evidence of learning.

Checklists and Rubrics: Structured tools for evaluating student work based on specific criteria.

Final Projects: Major artwork or exhibition showcasing a culmination of learning and skills.

Exams: Evaluations of knowledge and understanding of art history, theory, and terminology.

Performance-Based Assessments: Assessments that require students to demonstrate their skills and knowledge through artistic creation and presentation.

3. Other Types:

Dynamic Assessments: Assessments that allow students to demonstrate their understanding through various means, such as presentations, creative projects, or multimedia assignments.

Content Knowledge Assessments: Evaluating students' understanding of art history, art theory, and the Elements & Principles of Art.

Observation of Student Engagement: Observing students' participation in class discussions, activities, and feedback sessions.

4. Specific Art Forms:

Drawing, Painting, Sculpture, Photography, and Printmaking: These are all areas where students' skills and understanding can be assessed through the creation of artwork.

Art History and Art Appreciation: Assessments in these areas might include essays, quizzes, or presentations.

Certainly, the assessments listed above are more like a checklist for most of us and remind us of how assessments can be a valuable tool for both the student and the teacher. My favorite assessment is Portfolio, using this as a review of what grade 7/8 students learned and created during a ten-week Visual Arts/ Media Arts class. Watching my students organize their projects, discussing with this teacher and tablemates their artistic journey and what was achieved, is a lovely way to end a quarterly art class.

I would like to note some valuable assessment information

that I found on the NAEA website. The first link is a nicely composed position statement: <https://www.arteducators.org/advocacy-policy/articles/536-naea-position-statement-on-assessment-in-the-visual-arts-classroom>

NAEA Position Statement on Assessment in the Visual Arts Classroom

NAEA recognizes the importance of developmentally appropriate assessments to teaching and learning in the visual arts. Effective assessment is a continuous process that is standards-based and directly linked to instructional goals, objectives, and performance expectations. Performance assessment is the primary means of measuring learner knowledge, skills, and critical thinking in the visual arts. Visual arts assessment provides ongoing and instructive feedback for supporting learner growth. Assessment strategies often include methods that involve learner reflection and evaluation on the creative process and the final product. When shared with learners assessment criteria enable visual arts educators to communicate goals for growth and creative development. Educators who make informed judgments based upon formative and summative assessments are better able to plan and improve instructional practice to meet the needs of all learners.

And next, a stellar collection of assessment papers, that are especially relevant for guidance with developing and/or reimaging assessments. <https://www.arteducators.org/learn-tools/assessment-papers-for-art-education>

NAEA Assessment Papers for Art Education

The Assessment Papers for Art Education are a collection of more than a dozen essays written in response to a call from NAEA's leadership and Professional Materials Committee. These essays teach about current and established assessment practices and theories, and how these practices are relevant to all NAEA members. Assessment refers to how we measure and appraise anticipated and unanticipated student performances, learning outcomes, dispositions, and teaching and program effectiveness. This series offers a starting point for NAEA members—across all levels—as well as parents, administrators, and the general public to understand assessments' applications to art education. For those who are already proficient in assessment, the series can inspire new ideas and bolster current practices.

Excerpt from **Assessment Papers for Art Education**
Section III:

Some Guiding Principles of Assessment

- Principle 1. Assessments must measure what was taught and be linked to the educational objectives or outcomes. (Validity)
- Principle 2. Assessments must be repeatable within and among various groups of learners. (Reliability)
- Principle 3. Assessments must be fair. (Fairness)
- Principle 4. Assessments must be ongoing. (Sustainability)
- Principle 5. Students must have time to learn what is

- being assessed. (Opportunity to Learn)
- Principle 6. Assessments must allow students to demonstrate what they have learned in numbers of ways. (Comprehensiveness)
- Principle 7. Assessments must be easy for students to understand and for teachers to administer. (Understandability)
- Principle 8. Assessment data and results should be used to inform students and to guide curriculum development, teaching performances, and assessment evaluation. (Diagnostic Capability)
- Principle 9. Assessment methods and tools should vary. (Variability)
- Principle 10. Students have rights and responsibilities as participants in assessments. (Accountability)

Research nerd that I am, I learned much through the editor's quest for input on the topic of assessments. As Art Educators, we are fortunate to have multiple options for assessing student success. Lifelong learners that educators are, it is important that we continue to stay abreast and evolve our programs to meet the needs of everchanging student body. Hopefully, this *NYSATA News* edition will provide you with information, strategies and examples that can be useful in your classroom and/or for curriculum development.

Before ending my last President's Message, I would like to thank all of you. NYSATA is an association of excellence because of NYSATA Members. The Board of Trustees is a stellar group of volunteers who are extremely dedicated to ensuring that NYSATA continues to provide the highest level of resources and support for members. The association has an incredible number of outstanding art teachers from across the state, who provide amazing CTLE/PD classes and opportunities to gather as artists and friends. The last two years, the NYSATA Conference attendance numbers have been between 500-600 members, which speaks volumes as to how members value the information and workshops that the conference offers. Nationally, NYSATA's membership numbers compare to PA, CA and OH, which is pretty awesome. Consistently, NYSATA receives annual NAEA Awards for excellence in the areas of Website, Newsletter, and Youth Art Month (YAM). So, thank you for being a part of NYSATA and please continue the great work that you do, providing quality visual art programs for students across NYS.

And a supercalifragilisticexpialidocious thank you to the *NYSATA News* editor, Marty Merchant, who is retiring after 25 years of unwavering service. Marty, your guidance, knowledge, dedication, and wonderful sense of humor has been appreciated, and you will be greatly missed.

Wishing you all a relaxing and restful summer vacation and looking forward to what a new school year brings this Fall.

Sincerely,
Carol Pinkans
NYSATA President 2023-2025

President-Elect's Message



Art Room Lessons

It could be a conscious or subconscious thing, but I am sure we all have our favorite sayings, “artisms” or life lessons we say in our classes. As I contemplated on what to write for my article, I thought back about my high school art teacher and mentor Mrs. Topazio. She was this spitfire ball of art energy with an impressive collection of pencils stuck in her hair. She would start her class each day calling us to come talk or look, by assigning us as a group of vegetables or animals. “Alright my little chickadees, let’s gather around.” “Hello my little zucchinis’ it’s time to get started.” She was able to command a room filled with high school students like no other. A few small words, could quiet down, demand attention, and get a room filled with artists focused. I started to self-reflect on the things I say or have said in my classroom but nothing really stuck out like Mrs. Topazio’s verbiage. I thought about the students I have had the privilege of educating over the past 20 years and wondered what might have stuck with them.

Recently I asked my students to share with me some of their takeaways from being in my class, and see what words of wisdom stuck with them. They spoke to me about impactful conversations, and memories they had in my classroom and what my role as their educator looked like to them. They assured me that once I took a breath and trusted in the process (something I must say 100 times a week) it would come to me, and it did. I thought about the lessons I have taught students, and how I have been inspired along the way. I decided to take their words of advice and apply it to my experience with NYSATA. I wanted to share with you their top five life lessons they learned in my art room.

1. Great things are done by a series of small things brought together – Vincent Van Gogh.

This quote is posted on the front wall of my classroom. It has traveled to each classroom, school district, and space I have taught in. It has become the class anthem of sorts. The shift of focus on students is not the end but rather the journey to get there. We make small decisions every day and work on our craft in the classroom. I try to shift the mindset of the

students to focus on today and get the most out of today that you can. I encourage you to do this as well.

I think what makes NYSATA great is that it is made up of tons of opportunities, programs, scholarships, grants, and shows. We try to find something for everyone to participate in, regardless of where they teach or how long they have been teaching. If you have not participated in one of our many programs, I encourage you to train to be an adjudicator first. Seeing how OVA or Portfolio Project operates as a judge is the perfect transition into bringing your students to these statewide programs, in the future years.

2. It is Important to Feel Seen and Heard.

My students reiterated how important it was to their art making, that I created a space that allowed them to be themselves. They could not wait to come to class and talk about their day, listen to others, and share their life experiences. They learned to talk to others and to listen. Often students would bring their friends to my classroom, knowing I would accept anyone in the art room with arms wide open. The art room was always a safe space for me growing up, and I want that to be the case for my students.

It is important that you feel seen and heard in our organization. I invite you to reach out and say hello, introduce yourself or see what it is all about and come to a board meeting. We would love to get to know you. If there is something you want to see NYSATA help you with, offer, or have any suggestions we want to hear from you. It is important that in this membership that we all have a voice. We want our membership to feel like our students do . . . seen and heard. If we happen to meet, or get a chance to take a class together, please come chat. Share and be seen. It can sometimes seem daunting or overwhelming to be part of such a large organization, but we are all creative humans. Let us grab a coffee and let me know how your school years are going, what art you are making or maybe there is some advice we can share with each other. We will never grow and thrive as a community if we do not rely on others in our fold. I do not pretend to know the answers to everything, I am a flawed human and I often get things wrong, but I will try to

help in any way I can. If I cannot, I will help you connect with someone who can. What I can offer you is someone who will listen, someone to laugh with, and someone who will always share a cup of coffee.

3. Find Your Tribe.

There is something electric that happens when a group of art teachers get together. It is almost unexplainable, but it is this charged electric pulse that happens you cannot contain. Art teachers have an innate way of bringing out the creative energy of those around them. When we take a class together or meet at the annual conference the level of artmaking escalates to superpower status. If you have not had the chance to attend one of the NYSATA conferences, I encourage you to come and see what they are all about. We offer a pre-conference workshop as well as three days of workshops, keynote speakers, and amazing hands-on experiences with your creative hive mind. I know that even after 15 years of attending workshops, I come home charged and revived to teach and create more than ever.

One of the most common sayings I will hear from teachers regardless of how long they have been teaching is "I have nothing to teach a workshop on; nobody would be interested in what I do." I cannot stress how far from the truth this is. You all have things you are doing in your classroom, or ideas you are working on that we need to see! Propose to teach a workshop at our conference and share. We only grow by sharing with each other. I started my career before technology was at our fingertips. We did not have the ease and availability that teachers have now to share their lessons. You are all doing great things and need to share it with other teachers. It is so great to see the natural connection and collaboration that happens within a workshop as people share what they do and things that they have tried with other teachers.

4. Get Comfortable in the Uncomfortable.

I always tell my kids that you will not learn who you are as an artist if you do not try new things, new techniques, or take a chance with your work. The same can be said of my teaching. I purposely try to change up my lessons, projects, artists and use the inspiration from my workshops, conferences, and conventions to help fuel my inner student. But beyond the classroom, I have really tried to live by these words of wisdom with my journey in NYSATA.

About four years ago I decided it was time to give back to my profession and start working with pre-service teachers. I began taking on student observers, and student teachers from a few different programs and working with them to become art educators. I felt comfortable talking in front of 200+ teachers at conferences, but the idea of being responsible for helping to train a new art teacher was nerve racking. I have enjoyed the experience and with each student teacher I learn more about who I am as an educator and artist. I challenge you to become a mentor for the pre-service teachers. Having that experience and working with the "new

teachers" allows me to look at teaching in a new perspective and see things differently than I have ever before. But I had to try something completely out of my comfort zone to get here.

5. When All Else Fails, Make Art.

Art is a vessel and vehicle to heal the soul. Students use art to help work through topics, roadblocks and situations they might not be able to verbalize. Year after year I see the healing power of artmaking at all levels of students. So when did it stop being a part of my practice as an art educator? We wear so many hats in life. As a mother of three, teacher, sister, partner, and daughter, I made time for everyone in my life but put the artist in me last. When I first began teaching in 2005, I made time for my own craft, but soon the focus of my art making gravitated to that of demos for art projects. I constantly struggled with who I identified with, an artist or art teacher? I am happy to say that for the first time in my career I will be making my own art again. I will be attending the 2025 Summer in Sagamore, something I have wanted to do since the start of my career. In the past I have made every excuse under the sun to not attend. "My kids need me", "I can't be away from the family that long", "I need to write a curriculum... prepare my classroom... take a class for lane change". You name it, I found a way to convince myself I could not go. Granted none of these things that stopped me from going, allowed me to reconnect with the artist in me. A full week of artmaking is in my near future. I am so beyond excited to take this time to make art and I know I will come back with a full tank to be the best version of myself I can be. I encourage you to make sure that you find time for the artist as you, not just the teacher. Find opportunities to make, to create, and to share in that passion with others around you.

It was really interesting to hear from my students and reflect on what they took away from me over the years. It was even more interesting that most of the things they learned had little to do with artmaking itself but more about self-discovery and growing as a person. It is my hope that you will find a place for yourself in NYSATA, and that you will continue to grow and learn from our membership. I look forward to sharing a cup of coffee with you down the road and learning from you at our next conference. Keep making art and making our kids better people. Regardless of what you think, they really are listening to what you say . . . Just ask them.

Kelly Verdi, NYSATA President-Elect

(New) Editor's Message

Valerie Savage



I am excited to assume the role of co-editor of the *NYSATA News*. Current co-editor, Marty Merchant, has successfully developed relevant and timely themes for each issue of the *NYSATA News* and has supported and encouraged both veteran and new authors. Striving for a smooth and seamless transition, Marty is now graciously offering guidance and support to prepare me for the co-editor role.

As co-editor, I will be drawing upon a variety of art education experiences. Last spring, I retired from 39 years of teaching art at Wheatland-Chili Central School. Over the course of my career at Wheatland, I gained experience in teaching 6 – 12 grade art classes, served as arts curriculum leader, mentor teacher, and advised a variety of clubs. At the college level, I have taught as an adjunct of art education at Roberts Wesleyan University and am presently teaching and observing student teachers as an adjunct at Nazareth University. Recently, in the AED Nazareth Capstone Class, I have been assisting, proofing, and evaluating student writing. I find joy in working with writers as they explore ideas and work to share their thoughts clearly with others.

As NYSATA president (2019-2021) and while holding positions at regional and state levels, I gained valuable insight into NYSATA programs/goals and art education issues. As I worked with New York State Education Department's Arts Content Advisory Panel, I became informed on the direction of state education initiatives. At the national level, I have been active with National Art Education Association (NAEA) and have served in a variety of roles. I am fortunate to be a graduate of the 2019 NAEA School for Art Leaders and to have been recognized with awards from both NYSATA and NAEA. I am committed to remain informed and knowledgeable to the current state of art education and in turn will use this information when working on each issue of the *NYSATA News*.

I look forward to working with you, the NYSATA membership, on the *NYSATA News*. With your continued insightful article submissions, the News will continue to be meaningful, informative, and noteworthy.





the NYSATA news

Winner of the 2012,
2013, 2015, 2016, 2017,
2018, 2019, 2021, 2022,
2025
NAEA State Newsletter
Award!

Call for Contributions

Calling for Contributors to the Fall 2025 NYSATA News

The Power of Art

This issue of the NYSATA News will go online in October 2025

Deadline for content submission is September 14.

Art has the power to offer hope, heal, move, inform, and transform both the viewer and the creator. As artists and art educators we have viewed and studied numerous genres and styles of art. Many of us have paused in front of artwork to observe and seek further information or to purely experience a sense of calmness and peace. We have seen artwork that challenges our thinking, and we have found inspiration for our own art. While creating, we have been able to escape the outside world, felt empowered to voice ideas, and experienced enjoyment. We have observed and experienced the power of art.

In the art classroom, we have witnessed negative moods turn positive as students immerse in the creative process. We have seen students who feel unheard, experience feelings of freedom by exploring thoughts and ideas with art materials. Through learning activities such as the analysis and critiquing of relevant artists and the artwork of their peers, we provide opportunities for students to gain an understanding of others. We strive to create positive, inclusive classroom environments and design lessons to help our students, and the school community become aware of the many powerful attributes of Art.

The editors of the NYSATA News are seeking thematic articles on the power of art for the upcoming fall issue. Please consider sharing how you have explored or observed the power of art in your art classroom, or in your personal art practices. This theme is also aligned with the 2025 NYSATA Conference, Navigating the Waves.

In this call for articles, we ask that you consider the following:

- Resilience and Healing through Art: How have you used art to overcome challenges, inspire others, or facilitate emotional recovery and mental well-being with your students?
- Creativity in the Face of Adversity: How have you personally or in the classroom implemented the role of art in fostering hope, resilience, and optimism in times of social, cultural, or environmental turmoil?
- Innovative Methods: What approaches to teaching art have you used to implement adaptability, inclusion, and empowerment?
- Art as a Tool for Social Change: How have you incorporated the role of art in raising awareness, fostering empathy, and building solidarity into your art practice or in the classroom?
- Fostering Inclusivity and Representation: Do you have experiences in art education that celebrate diverse voices and reflect the experiences of marginalized groups?
- The Role of Technology in Advancing Art Education: How have you used digital tools to explore the power of art and/or to expand the reach of art education and foster new forms of creative expression?

Articles (around 500 words) and features (around 2000 words) should address the theme in some manner. There is no specific length required or recommended – say what you need to say. Early submission is encouraged to allow us to assist and help you.

You can use our latest issue for reference, <https://www.nysata.org/nysata-news>. The newsletter welcomes and encourages images. Signed permission slips for student artwork / classroom activities showing students' faces are required, (we have a form). Images should be .jpg format / a minimum of 5 x7" at 150 ppi.

We appreciate the time and effort you will put into your work for the newsletter – your article will enrich and inform readers.
[Valerie Savage](#) NYSATA News Co-Editor and [Alyssa Marchand](#) Design & Layout Editor

NYSATA Annual Conference 2025

Please join us for the 2025 NYSATA Conference, *Navigating the Waves*, where we will explore the transformative potential of art in navigating challenges, celebrating resilience, and finding hope in uncertain times. This year, workshops will focus on the ways in which art education can foster personal growth, community connection, and innovation—even in the face of adversity.

- Resilience and healing through art—how have you used art to overcome challenges, inspire others, or facilitate emotional recovery and mental well-being?
- Creativity in the face of adversity—what can we learn about the role of art in fostering hope, resilience, and optimism in times of social, cultural, or environmental turmoil?
- Innovative methods—what approaches to teaching art emphasize adaptability, inclusion, and empowerment, particularly during uncertain times?
- Art as a tool for social change—what is the role of art in raising awareness, fostering empathy, and building solidarity?
- Fostering inclusivity and representation—how can art education celebrate diverse voices and reflect the experiences of marginalized groups?
- The role of technology in advancing art education—how might we leverage digital tools to expand the reach of art education and foster new forms of creative expression?

Immerse yourself in a conference that celebrates the resilience, creativity, and optimism that art education can foster. Learn from diverse perspectives and inclusive approaches. All levels of experience and backgrounds are welcome—whether you're a seasoned educator or a newcomer with a fresh perspective. Let's inspire each other to create, collaborate, and find hope through the transformative power of art.



navigating the waves

NYSATA 77th Annual Conference
November 21-23, 2025
DoubleTree Hotel, Binghamton

**Inspiring Keynote Speakers ▪
100 Workshops ▪ Commercial
& College Exhibitors ▪ Student
Scholarship Winners ▪ Student
Art Exhibit ▪ Hands-On Studio
Workshops ▪ Awards Banquets
President's Dinner ▪ Member's
Art Exhibit and Silent Auction ▪
Artisans Market ▪ Whova App**

Registration opens in September.
Watch your email and www.nysata.org/2025-conference for updates.

Registration

- \$169 Member Early Bird
- \$199 Member After November 1
- \$130 Student/Retired/Unemployed Member Early Bird
- \$160 Student/Retired/Unemployed Member After Nov. 1
- \$255 Non-Member (No Early Bird Rate)

Meals

- \$230 Meal Package
- \$35 Friday or Saturday Lunch
- \$55 Friday Dinner (Buffet)
- \$65 Saturday President's Reception & Plated Dinner
- \$40 Sunday Brunch
- \$134 Room Rate at the DoubleTree Hilton, Binghamton, NY

2025 National Art Education Association (NAEA) Convention, Louisville, KY

New York State Art Educator Receives *NAEA Art Educator of the Year*

NYSATA and NAEA Past President Thom Knab was an Elementary Art Educator at Dodge Elementary, East Amherst, NY from 1990 until his retirement in 2024. He earned his Bachelor (1987) and Master (1992) degrees in Art Education from Buffalo State College. Thom served as the NAEA Elementary Division Director from 2015-2017. He received the Eastern Region Art Educator Award in 2024 and both the National and Eastern Region Elementary Art Educator honors in 2018. He has been a keynote speaker at state, regional, and international conferences. Thom has been published several times in *SchoolArts* magazine, the *NYSATA News*, and the *NAEA News*; he has exhibited artwork in four solo shows. Thom has served as NYSATA President and Vice President. He was honored as NYS Art Educator of the Year in 2018. He is a 2020 inductee into the National Teachers Hall of Fame and is a 2023 NAEA Distinguished Fellow inductee.

During the convention, Thom was honored on the convention stage and at a separate Team East meeting. NYSATA extends sincere congratulations to Thom for his art education accomplishments and recognition as the *NAEA Art Educator of the Year*.



NYSATA Art Educator of the Year

Each year NAEA acknowledges art educator awardees from each state. During the Team East meeting at the convention, NYSATA's 2024 Art Educator of the Year, Cheryl Schweider, was honored.

NAEA Recognizes NYSATA with Program Awards

NAEA encourages states to apply for program awards. NYSATA received awards for the *NYSATA News* newsletter, NYSATA website, and for Youth Art Month.

Newsletter Award Category III



Martin Merchant, Editor and Alyssa Marchand, Design and Layout Editor



NYSATA President, Carol Pinkins accepts award from NAEA Eastern Region Vice-President, Kristi Oliver and NAEA Executive Director, Mario Rossero

Website Award Category III



Website Cindy Henry Wood



NYSATA President, Carol Pinkins accepts award from NAEA Eastern Region Vice-President, Kristi Oliver and NAEA Executive Director, Mario Rossero

2024 Youth Art Month Award of Excellence



Chairs: Patti Krakoff, Tracy Berges



Third and fourth from the left are NYSATA President, Carol Pinkins and President-Elect, Kelly Verdi accept the award

Embracing Assessment as Advocacy

Samantha Nolte-Yupari and Valerie Savage

While as educators we know that assessment is required, for many of us, because it is tied to grading, assessment is often the least fun and is one of the most put off tasks that we complete.

Have you ever had a parent dismissively ask “Why did my child get a “C”? It’s *just* art...” The “Just” in this sentence is a key indication of the continued advocacy work we need to do day-to-day as art teachers and also why rich, data driven assessment and transparency in assessment is a key component to your ongoing advocacy efforts. In this article we offer answers as to how assessment can be used as a strong advocacy tool and pair assessments you are already doing with advocacy audiences. We also provide charts of assessment strategies paired to the standards that can be found here and on the NYSATA website.

While as educators we know that assessment is required, for many of us, because it is tied to grading, assessment is often the least fun, and is one of the most put off tasks that we complete. Something always seems more important—preparing a new demonstration, unloading the kiln, organizing the crayons, perhaps? Yet assessment is imperative and might as well be leveraged on as many fronts as possible. But **why** is assessment part of advocacy and **how** can you embrace assessment methods to support art advocacy?

Why is Assessment a Part of Advocacy?

To answer this question, let’s clarify some terms. Assessment—both formative and summative—is about the ongoing and recursive process of evaluating whether students are making progress towards learning objectives. Assessment can be immensely valuable to you as the teacher in determining whether or not you need to reteach a skill or can move on while also providing students with the means to evaluate their own progress and learning. Grading on the other hand is a static value judgement issued on report cards and transcripts. Grades come from assessment, but good assessment does not always require a grade. Take for example an in-progress critique which allows the teacher to hear from the student about process, content, and technique. Vocabulary use is authentically assessed as the student recalls and applies their knowledge in context. A grade is irrelevant to the conversation, consequent reflection, and movement forward with the work. The grade may be necessary inside our educational system but is a secondary

step to the assessment. It is not the grade that is part of advocacy but the “making learning visible” (Krachevsky, et al., 2013) comes out of assessment. When we can show young artists’ thinking and learning, when we manifest what seems opaque to many, art becomes not this magical, “talent” based thing, but a set of powerful cognitive, physical, and socio-emotional skills.

One of the key limiting art learning beliefs of stakeholders and administrators that prevents them from supporting art education is the idea that success in visual arts is about inborn “genius” or “talent” some simply have and others do not (Erikson, 2002). From this belief, administrators decide that those who have talent will discover on their own how to be successful or seek specialized extracurricular educational opportunities. Everyone else does not need an arts education because the arts are readily available in our visual and material culture (Erickson, 2002); and they (the administrators) turned out just fine without an arts education didn’t they, so what’s the big deal? Assessment, good documentation, and “making learning visible” can slam through this faulty belief by explicitly showing what we teach in the arts in a language stakeholders understand.

Embracing Assessment to Advocate

Assessment is language that all educators speak, including administrators – so even if they do not understand the joy and learning in the pile of cardboard at your sculpture station, or the hours you spent teaching color mixing, they do understand learning objectives paired with assessment that are aligned to standards, SEL, and CRSE anchors. Advocacy through assessment means code-switching between artistic jargon and educational jargon. And who better to do that than us? The art educators who bridge these worlds all day, every day? Here are some specific strategies to leverage your assessment:

• For Administrators:

- Make sure you have a curriculum map, and/or lesson plans that are standards aligned.
- Make a briefing document/global statement with examples about how SEL and CRSE elements show

up in the art studio.

▪ **For Parents:**

- In elementary classes, create a reference sheet about how you determine students' grades (We recommend checking out the assessment resources in *Studio Thinking from the Start* (Hogan, et al. 2018).
- In secondary classes, make sure your syllabus includes a summary of assignments and holistic rubrics. Be clear in how grades will be determined.
- Consider inclusive transparency in learning and teaching assignment sheets for students (that parents can see) for big assignments and portfolios. Include the following:
 - The purpose of this assignment is...
 - This assignment helps you practice the following skills...
 - The assignment will also help learn the following content knowledge in art...
 - Specifically, your task for this assignment is to...
 - The criteria for success for this assignment are...
 - Checklist, rubric, or other tool to document degree of success.
- Prepare clear qualitative rubrics so that you can confidently explain, based upon the learning objectives, how you determined a grade. If you are using Studio Habits of Mind (SHoM) readiness rubric – be able to explain the student's understanding, ability, and inclination to engage with a particular SHoM, with examples from their work and classroom behavior.

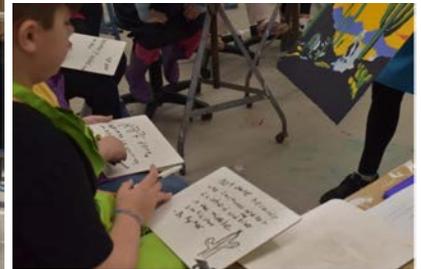
- **For Yourself and Students:** Do not forget to take pictures of guided practices, thumbnails, envision handouts, and sketchbooks pages. Revise and build strong routines for reflective writing and artist statements to accompany work. We know that final artwork can be so outstanding that viewers cannot perceive how the magic happened...take the opportunity to show them.

- **For Art Show Visitors:** Include process pictures in the art show, or even SHoM posters, standards, "I Can" statements, or classroom visuals to help narrate the art show. If you have an outside juror or specific awards categories, consider sharing the juror's process. For example, *Best in Show* is often a piece that exemplifies the most successful overall in composition, technique, expression, and viewer engagement. While a *Principal's Choice* award may simply be a selection of a piece that the principal finds visually appealing.

process (Create, Produce, Respond, Connect) we provide suggestions as assessment strategies for you to use or adapt in your own way. A quick study of the charts reveals multiple ways assessment is used in each artistic process throughout the lesson cycle. Keep in mind the overall goal in using assessment as an advocacy tool is to make the learning of the student visible and clear to all stakeholders. Assessment completed in this manner will strengthen your art instruction, student learning, and elevate respect and value for your art program.



CREATE: mixing of colors as low stakes discovery play



RESPOND: determining criteria for the completion of personal artwork



CONNECT: applying findings from artwork of exemplar artists to sketches



PRESENT: using artist statements with displays of artwork

Embracing assessment as advocacy is not an additional task but instead an easy opportunity to adjust current assessment practices to be more meaningful and rewarding. The following charts are aligned with the New York State Art Standards and have been created as tools to assist you with this shift in assessment. Which do you already do? Where might you easily build in an additional documentation point for something that you are already doing? For each artistic

References

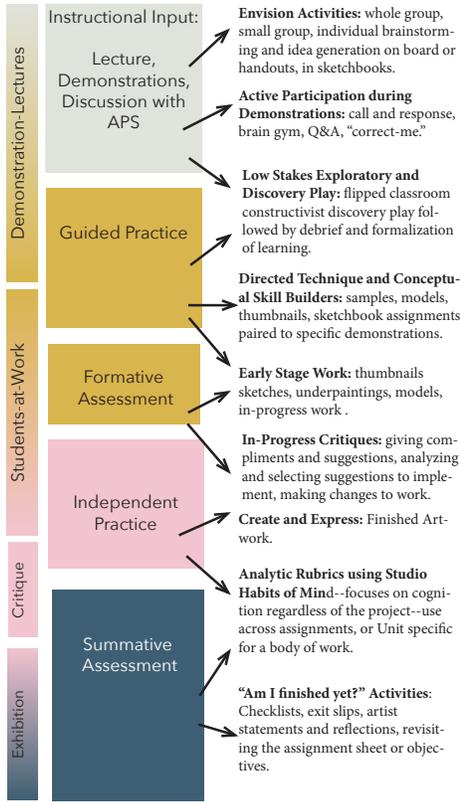
Erikson, M. (2002). "A Developmental Dilemma: Education Stakeholders' Commitment to Art Learning." *Art Education*, 55(1), 11-15.

Hogan, J., Heltand, L., Jaquith, D. B., Winner, E., (2018). *Studio Thinking from the Start: The K-8 Art Educator's Handbook*. Teachers College Press.

Krachevsky, M., Mardell, B., Rivard, M., & Wilson, D. (2013). *Visible Learners: Promoting Reggio-Inspired Approaches in All Schools*. Jossey-Bass.

Assessing CREATE Standards in the Lesson Cycle

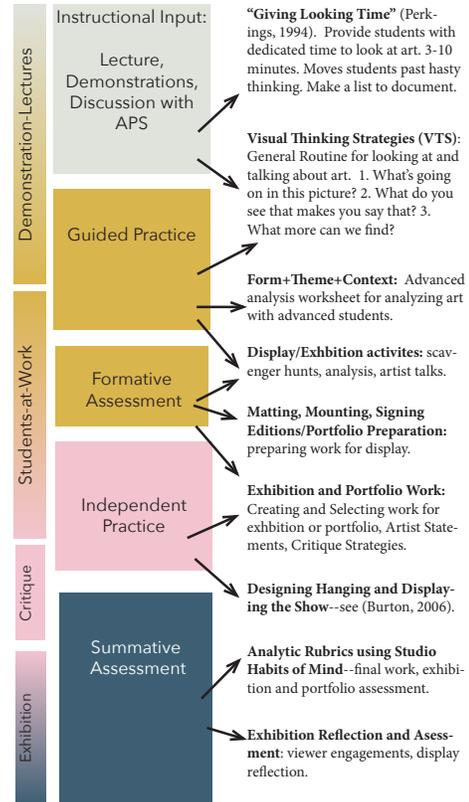
Studio Structures and the Lesson Cycle



(C) Dr. Samantha Nolte-Yupari

Assessing PRESENT Standards in the Lesson Cycle

Studio Structures and the Lesson Cycle



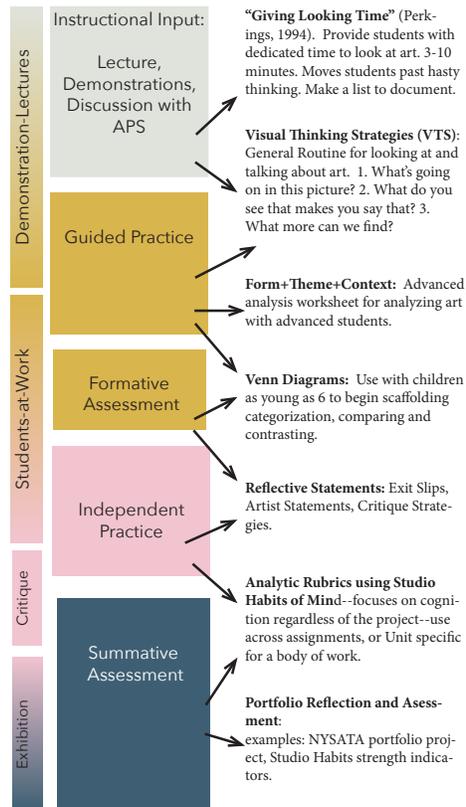
(C) Dr. Samantha Nolte-Yupari

OBSERVE, REFLECT, DEVELOP CRAFT, ENVISION, EXPRESS
STRETCH & EXPLORE, ENGAGE & PERSIST

OBSERVE, REFLECT, EXPRESS, UNDERSTANDING ART WORLDS

Assessing RESPOND Standards in the Lesson Cycle

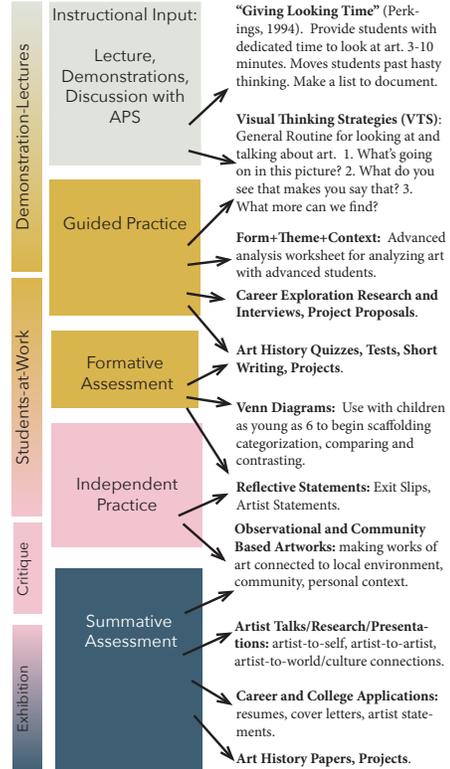
Studio Structures and the Lesson Cycle



(C) Dr. Samantha Nolte-Yupari

Assessing CONNECT Standards in the Lesson Cycle

Studio Structures and the Lesson Cycle



(C) Dr. Samantha Nolte-Yupari

OBSERVE, REFLECT, UNDERSTANDING ART WORLDS

OBSERVE, REFLECT, DEVELOP CRAFT, ENVISION, EXPRESS
UNDERSTANDING ART WORLDS

Portfolio Project

It's FINALLY Here!

The new and improved portfolio assessment program

n y s a t a
PORTFOLIO PROJECT 2.0



Launching this summer, and in full effect for the 2025-2026 school year.

Portfolio Highlights

Aligned to the NYS Standards
Based on student choice
Open ended components
In-depth process artifacts
Emphasis in presenting
Genuine conversation
Creativity through differentiation
and
BEST OF ALL- Student Driven!

Levels being offered
Elementary, Intermediate, HSI, HSII, HSIII,
and eventually an IAAP Review



With even better results

Instant in-person feedback, as well as a score sheet with additional comments.

A portfolio rating both numerical and leveled; Emerging, Competent, Proficient, or Distinguished.

A chance at earning admittance into the New York State Summer School of the Arts program (8th grade and above only).

Gaining eligibility for the 'Jessica Bayer' Senior Art Scholarship (11th and 12th grade only).

Regional Art shows specifically for student portfolio project participants.

A wide variety of connections and valuable experience in the field of art assessment.



Here's a sneak peak at components

HSI PROFICIENT

**Grade 9-10
Introductory Level**

Component 1
Personal Identity with
process artifact(s)
+

Component 2
Social/Political/Cultural/
Historical Connection with
process artifact(s)
+

Component 3
Artistic Response
+

Component 4
Student Choice with process
artifact(s)
+

Portfolio Presentation



Don't worry we are here for you!

Professional Development is on the way!

This summer an entire CTLE web series going through all things portfolio project 2.0 will be made available to all members. This will not only include everything you need to know to get started, but also certify you as an adjudicator for the program.

Resources to help

- Our webpage complete with overview of the program, information about each level and its components, and access to each region site coordinator. www.nysata.org/portfolio-project
- Crosswalks showing the difference between the classic portfolio to the 2.0 for those currently participating
- Handouts and supporting documents for each level including what process artifacts look like for each standard, how to make an artistic response, and organization tools like checklists, labels, and more
- Frequently asked questions with answers



Youth Art Month

Youth Art Month 2025 Was Full of Color

Tracy Berges and Patti Krakoff

Youth Art Month 2025 was yet again a wonderful celebration of the importance of art education in our schools, and as always New York State Art Teachers did not disappoint. Thank you for celebrating with art shows both big and small, partnering with community members, posting on social media for Make Art Mondays, creating bold and colorful art displays and bulletin boards, plus many other events! As a collective, our NYSATA members shared the incredible effect art has on our students while embracing this year's theme *Healing through Color*.

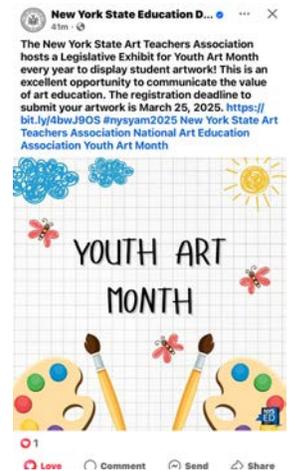
As your Youth Art Month co-chairs, we are now compiling our early report for the Council for Art Education. We are excited to share the new proclamations and endorsements that were received, the third annual lighting of the Mario M. Cuomo Bridge on March 15th, and the new addition of the lighting of the Mid-Hudson Bridge on March 22nd, all in celebration of Youth Art Month. This year we also plan to highlight how National Art Honor Society chapters across NYS contribute to Youth Art Month. Plus, the many unique ways in which our NYS Art Teachers honor Youth Art Month.

We need your help to accurately report all Youth Art Month celebrations and events. Every teacher who fills out the reporting form will be entered for a chance to win Youth Art Month swag, including our popular t-shirt! Don't delay, please fill out the form today!

We are already preparing for next year by securing sponsors for our annual NYS YAM Flag Design Contest! We are excited to welcome both NASCO and Colart as new sponsors for the 2025-2026 contest. And we are in communication with our previous sponsors, Blick and Golden Artist Colors. Once the theme for 2026 is available, we will prepare and share the materials for the contest.

As always, we are grateful for our NYS Art Teachers and all they do for their students during Youth Art Month and all year long. We wish you a restful summer. You've earned it! But while you are rejuvenating, don't forget to look for the flag design contest information in mid-August!

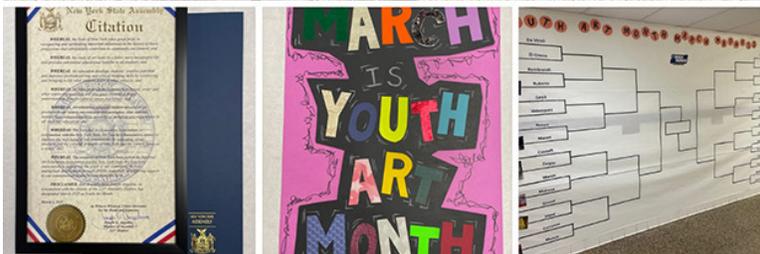




YOUTH ART MONTH IS HERE!!!! Big Thank you for the Official Citation from Assemblyman Joseph Angelino with a declaration naming March 2025 Youth Art Month!

In addition to this we have exhibits up around school and we are once again hosting our YAM March Madness! Great month to be an Artist!

Youth Art Month New York State



Teaching and Assessing Art Through IDEAS: Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access, and Safety



**Jennifer Grasso Moise, Visual Arts Educator, Community Arts Advocate,
NYSATA ED&I Committee Chair, NYSATA Region 10 Vice Chair**

As classrooms continue to reflect the complex identities and experiences of students, NYSATA ED&I remains committed to supporting educators with resources, community, and inspiration. This spring, art educators across New York State continued to advance inclusive, equity-driven practices in classrooms, schools, and community spaces. From culturally responsive curriculum development to implementing assessment strategies centered on access and student voice, members of the NYSATA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I) Committee have helped support art teachers in fostering and assessing learning environments grounded in inclusion diversity, equity access, and safety for our students.

Building on this momentum, the NYSATA ED&I Committee is proud to announce the upcoming Summer Arts Education IDEAS Workshop weekend, taking place August 15–17, 2025 (See details using the QR code below). The Patchogue Arts Council Museum of Contemporary Art (PAC MOCA LI) and the Victor D'Amico Art Institute's Art Barge and Archive are two iconic Long Island NY arts and cultural locations that reflect and represent art education's past, present, and future aspirations of inclusion, diversity, equity, access, and safety.

The IDEAS workshop is a shared coordination by NYSATA ED&I Committee Chair, Jennifer Grasso-Moise and NYSATA ED&I Committee member and NAEA Liaison, Dr. Ann Holt of The Pennsylvania State University. Holt is facilitating the weekend workshops along with D'Amico Institute of Art President, Christopher Kohan, and invited guest artists including Dudley Music and Diego Garcia. The IDEAS program will highlight contemporary artists whose work exemplifies IDEAS principles, offer opportunities for collaborative experimentation, and provide practical tools for educators to integrate inclusive practices into their own teaching and institutions. Over the course of the weekend, participants will engage in hands-on multimedia studio sessions, critical discussions, and archival explorations that trace the past, present, and future of IDEAS in U.S. art education.

The IDEAS Workshop will be open for up to 20 participants and include an immersive, interdisciplinary experience for artists and educators dedicated to transforming art education through an IDEAS lens. This workshop is not only about skill-building—it's about reimagining what art education can be when we assess teaching and learning through IDEAS with humanity and care. Participants will walk away with a deeper understanding of how IDEAS are embedded in both the history and future of our field.

Click [here](#) for more information about the Summer Workshop and to register. We hope to see you there!



**ART EDUCATION
ART HISTORY
CERAMIC ART
DRAWING, PAINTING
& PHOTOGRAPHY
EXPANDED MEDIA**

*Animation, Design, Print,
Sound, Video, VR*

**FOUNDATIONS
GALLERIES**

Exhibitions, Internships

PERFORMING ARTS

Dance, Music, Performance

Design & Technology,

Theatre

**SCULPTURE /
DIMENSIONAL
STUDIES**

*Glass, Fibers, Foundry,
Installation, Metal, Mixed
Media, Neon, Paper, Stone,
Wood*

50+ Minors



Alfred University

ARTS
ALFRED UNIVERSITY



GO.ALFRED.EDU/ARTS

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Olympics of the Visual Arts

Anne Manzella

They came and they conquered the OVA Creativity Challenges! Congratulations to all of the student elementary, middle and high school teams who participated at the 2025 Olympics of the Visual Arts student design competition, in our 43rd year. Your New York State Art Teachers Association was pleased to welcome teams from many of our NYSATA regions to the City Center in Saratoga Springs on April 1st. Our Volunteer Judges were so impressed with the creative design solutions to this year's category prompts:

Drawing: *Moving Vision*

Painting: *Color's Power*

Illustration: *Magic of the Sea*

Sculpture: *Found Life*

Fashion: *Gilded Grandeur*

Architecture: *Hidden Haven*

Photography: *Smoke & Mirrors*

Graphic Design: *Surge Promotional Package*

This year we saw an increase in the overall number of registered teams. We welcomed back some long participating districts and were so pleased to include a few newer schools at the event. In summary, we had 34 elementary level teams, 79 from the middle school level, and an amazing 106 high school level teams. The categories were well represented across all design challenges with 32 Drawing entries, 32 in Painting, 27 Sculpture submissions, 29 Architecture designs, 34 Illustration solutions, 34 Fashion designs, 18 Photography entries, and 22 Graphic Design concepts. It was an ambitious day for our 44 volunteers who were challenged with limited time to review the thoughtful portfolios and category solutions and provide both quantitative and qualitative feedback to the student teams. We hope we can add to the list of volunteers for next year's event.

NYSATA thanks our generous partner, BLICK Art Materials, for their sponsorship contribution for OVA. As always, this wonderful event is only as great as the participants who come to compete, supported by their art teacher advisors, along with our volunteers who celebrate the arts and creativity, while adjudicating the students' long term design solutions installed at the event, along with the on-demand design challenge completed at the event. We always need volunteers for the event, and will begin planning for OVA 44 this summer. Please SAVE the DATE of April 30th, 2026 for our next Olympics of the Visual Arts Competition. All districts are urged to discuss this date with your school leadership and make arrangements in advance for field trip approval and travel, in that the date does fall within the long NYSED grades 3-8 testing window.



CNA Awards 2025

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|----------------------------------|
| Architecture: Hidden Haven | Elementary Brewster CSD - 1st Scotia Glenville - 2nd Clinton - 3rd | Middle School Plainview Old Bethpage - 1st Niskayuna - 2nd Saratoga Springs - 3rd | High School Valley Stream - 1st North Colonie - 2nd Broadalbin-Perth CSD - 3rd | Drawing: Moving Vision |
| | Tuckahoe HS - Hyndman Creativity | | | |
| Elementary Plainview Old Bethpage - 1st Clinton - 2nd Brown - 3rd | Middle School Clinton - 1st Brewster - 2nd Goshen - 3rd | High School Niskayuna - 1st Margaretville - 2nd Pleasantville - 3rd | Illustration: Magic of the Sea | |
| | North Colonie HS - Hyndman Creativity | | | |
| Fashion: Gilded Grandeur | Elementary Clinton - 1st Brentwood UFSD - 2nd Brewster - 3rd | Middle School Brewster - 1st Margaretville - 2nd Valley Stream 24 - 3rd | High School Broadalbin-Perth CSD - 1st Margaretville - 2nd Syosset - 3rd | |
| | Margaretville HS - Hyndman Creativity | | | |
| Elementary Gloversville - 1st Schenectady - 2nd Frankfort Schuyler - 3rd | Middle School Brentwood - 1st Goshen - 2nd Valley Stream #24 - 3rd | High School Pleasantville UFSD - 1st Broadalbin-Perth CSD - 2nd | Graphic Design: Surge Packaging | |
| | Clinton - Hyndman Creativity | | | |
| Elementary Niskayuna - 1st Mechanicville - 2nd Plainview Old Bethpage - 3rd | Middle School Saratoga Springs - 1st Brentwood UFSD - 2nd Goshen - 3rd | High School Goshen - 1st Hicksville - 2nd Plainview Old Bethpage - 3rd | Painting: Color's Power | |
| | Gloversville MS- Hyndman Creativity | | | |
| Elementary Gloversville - 1st Mechanicville - 2nd Frankfort-Schuyler - 3rd | Middle School Valley Stream #24 - 1st Niskayuna - 2nd Brewster - 3rd | High School Gloversville - 1st Hicksville - 2nd Mechanicville - 3rd | Photography: Smoke & Mirrors | |
| | Clinton MS - Hyndman Creativity | | | |
| Elementary Brentwood- 1st Frankfort-Schuyler- 2nd | Middle School Brentwood- 1st Valley Stream #24- 2nd Pleasantville- 3rd | High School Wappingers - 1st Niskayuna - 2nd Hicksville - 3rd | Sculpture: Found Life | |
| | Niskayuna HS- Hyndman Creativity | | | |
| Elementary Deposit - 1st Mechanicvills - 2nd Saratoga Springs - 3rd | Middle School Brewster - 1st Tuckahoe - 2nd Niskayuna - 3rd | High School Plainview Old Bethpage - 1st Clinton - 2nd Margaretville - 3rd | On Demand | |
| | Clinton MS - Hyndman Creativity | | | |
| Elementary Saratoga Springs: Architecture Team | Middle School Clinton: Painting Team | High School Goshen: Graphic Design Team | On Demand | |
| | Plainview Old Bethpage HS Sculpture - Hyndman Creativity | | | |

There Is No Room in Report Cards for Heart, Soul, or Passion

Sandy Looker

Editor's Note: Following an alternative pathway, Sandy Looker rediscovers the pure sensory joy of making art through her students – and her shared insights remind us of the limitations of assessment and how traditional evaluative requirements might muffle and constrain the inherent physical pleasures of artmaking.

As an art educator, if someone were to ask you *why you teach art* what would you say? What made you want to teach art?

Many of us would say we wanted to share the joy of art. We wanted to show students all of the amazing ways art can enhance their lives. We wanted to create opportunities for students to explore their creativity and discover their talents. We grew up loving art, and we want the same for our students. Assessment and critique were never the goal.

I began my career teaching Art in a K-8 school with neurotypical students in an urban school setting. My students came from difficult backgrounds where subjects higher on the Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs* took a backseat to life's necessities.

try new things or take risks that made them vulnerable. After I did have success getting them to take those risks and believe in themselves, I then had to turn around and judge them with rubrics and grades. It was incredibly defeating and heartbreaking. Even with art, there is often no room on report cards for heart, soul, and passion.

Four years ago, I found myself in a completely different teaching situation. I took a job teaching art at a school that solely serves students with developmental disabilities. My students now range in age from 3 to 22, and almost all of my students are on the Autism spectrum. To put it lightly, I had to change my entire pedagogy. Everything I once knew about teaching art became irrelevant . . . and I'm loving it.

My students are on unique academic tracks and are not bound by statewide graduation requirements. The main source of guidance is the IEP. Unfortunately, art is not a standard mandate on IEPs and for many of our students it is just not an appropriate use of their learning time for a number of understandable reasons. Those students focus on necessary life and communication skills. Once a safe level of skill is achieved, they will be able to incorporate art into their day (if they choose). As much as I would love for every student to participate, the safety of the staff and students is more important. The majority of our students *are* able to participate in art classes, and they have completely changed my perspective on art education in the best way.

Every day I am reminded of that original reason we all got into art education. I get to see my students experiencing art for the reason art exists – its sensory connection to our



They struggled with skill, and they struggled with confidence. The last thing they needed was another low grade or judgmental comment. I had a difficult time getting them to



physical bodies and spirit. I watch them experience the joy of movement when they make a brushstroke or release their anger with the stab of a marker. They squish clay or run their hands through a bucket of beads and their faces light up from the sensory bliss. Who remembers the pure fun of stringing beads just to watch them slide back off, or mixing paints just to watch the magic of colors transforming? To see those memories come to life through these students has reminded me that the concept of assessment in art is creatively limiting in so many ways. My classes are not mandated and because of that we do not perform assessments. There is no judgement of skill, no restriction of material usage, no limitations on "how" or "why". We offer new materials, or demonstrate new skills to try, but we never seek to conform their art into a defined box. We want to encourage the continued exploration of art for these students and build within them a love for art that brings them fulfillment for years and years. These students are faced with challenges every day in a world built for other capabilities. Art should not be just another thing they are told they "Can't do". Art is meant to be experienced, not produced, and I get to see that every day with these students.

There are two paths in art education. Students with technical skills and creative talent may one day pursue art as a livelihood or career. For that purpose, we need assessments in order to compare ourselves to our competition and challenge ourselves to grow and improve. Most of society will follow the other path though: art for personal fulfillment. My students are on that path, as most of them may never meet the societal measure of a "good artist". It warms my heart to see their confidence and their carefree pursuit of doing what makes them truly happy. How often do we hear adults say, "I'm terrible at art"? Assessments in art make terrible artists, not the ability of an artist.

If you have the opportunity to work with a special-needs population, take it. It will restore your faith in art. The smallest of accomplishments become huge celebrations. The

pressure for perfection doesn't exist. Freedom from expectation creates art that is pure and real. Assessment is a necessary evil for most of our classrooms, it's true, but perhaps we can find inspiration in the neurodiverse and expand the limits of those necessary boxes. See beyond the definitions and make room for your artists that exist outside the lines.



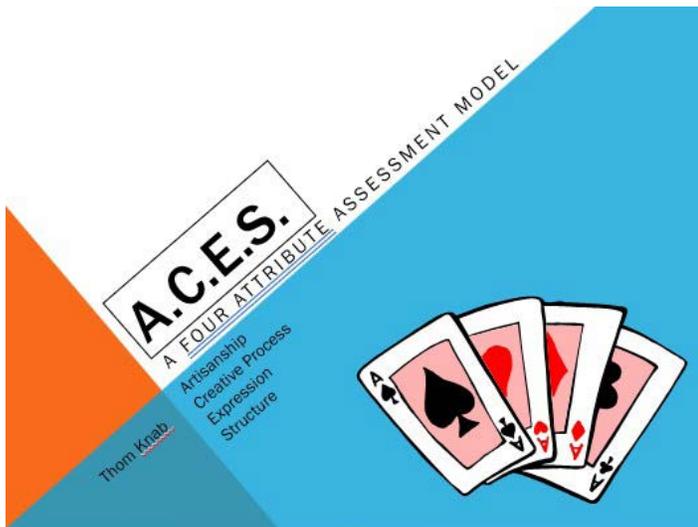
Sandy Looker is an art educator living in Buffalo. Her lifelong interest in the arts started with a Mom who dabbled in everything and a house full of craft supplies. She earned her BS in graphic design from RIT where a mentor professor encouraged her to pursue teaching. A special initiative between the Rochester City School District and Roberts Wesleyan University then allowed her to earn her MEd and invaluable experience in inclusive classrooms. She currently spends her time redefining art with her students in Buffalo. When not teaching, Sandy enjoys traveling, community involvement, and crushing the opposition at pub trivia.

The ACES Model

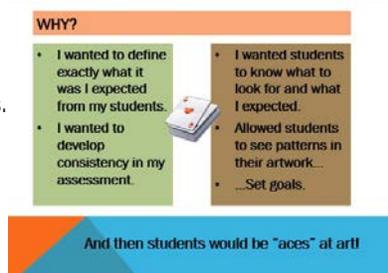
Thom Knab

Editor's Note: here past NYSATA- and NAEA-President Thom Knab gives us a veteran teacher's method of evaluating his elementary students — with components that clearly establish his expectations and allows students to monitor and assess themselves.

Around 2005, I had been teaching K-4 Art for about fifteen years and became dissatisfied with how I was assessing student work. So, that year I focused my professional development on gaining as much knowledge as I could around the topic of student assessment. I had a desire to create an assessment model that would function for myself by providing useful information, and helped my elementary students succeed.



After a great deal of research and participation in sessions at state and national conferences, I ultimately created a four-attribute model I called ACES. ACES represents each of the four attributes: **A**rtisanship, **C**reative process, **E**xpression, and **S**tructure. This model was developed with the intention of clearly defining exactly what I expected from students and making certain that students knew exactly what was expected of them. The model was also intended to create consistency within my assessment structure and to make the process second nature for students. This allowed students to see patterns in how they worked and assisted them in setting goals for future work.



Attributes

In my art room, I posted the general traits that were included in each attribute to be assessed. Each attribute was defined further into rubrics specific for each artwork, using a four-point scale for each rubric. Below is a list of the general traits that might be observed for each attribute. Each was expressed in the form of a question that students could ask themselves.

Artisanship: Is my work neat and complete? Did I show the skill the way the teacher showed? Did I show an attention to detail? Did I persist?

Creative Process: Did I use my sketch paper? Did I plan my artwork? Did I develop a good/final sketch? Did I refine, practice, create, present, solve, reflect, develop, gather, and/or sketch? For example, in one project I may have asked students to practice something/a new technique, while in another they may have been asked to come up with multiple ideas before choosing their best and moving forward or asked to complete some research before beginning the visual work.

Expression: Can I demonstrate how I created emotion, message, meaning, or idea in my artwork? Did I create the correct genre (landscape, portrait, abstract, still life, etc.)? Did I create using the correct style, subject matter, and/or media?

Structure: Did I use all my space appropriately? Did I use the elements of art and principles of design to create a unified and organized artwork?

Grading Slips

To accompany the ACES model, I created grading slips for students to attach to their completed work. I simply circled the number on the rubric that reflected their achievement level. Sometimes I even had students grade themselves; they would circle the achievement level they felt they earned in pencil, then I circled my assessment in ink so they could compare the two. If the student's perception was very different than mine, we could discuss it during a short conference.

Posting the rubrics allowed them to become an instructional resource as well. I would refer to them as I introduced each

aspect, and I directed students to the rubrics when a component(s) of a project was missing.

An Evolving Model

The ACES model was not carved in stone either. I tweaked it as needed by refining my questions or adding traits to the four attributes. And not only did the ACES model assist me as I planned new units and reflected on previous instruction, but my students appreciated and benefited from the process as well.



Thom Knab is a past NYSATA & NAEA President, as well as a past NAEA Elementary Division Director. Thom is a 2020 National Teacher Hall of Fame inductee and the 2025 NAEA National Art Educator. He retired in June 2024 after a thirty-six-year career as an elementary art educator.

4 POINT RUBRIC

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| Project Rubric Gr. 3 Artanship: 4 3 2 1 NA Creative Process: 4 3 2 1 NA Expression: 4 3 2 1 NA Structure: 4 3 2 1 NA | Project Rubric Gr. 4 Artanship: 4 3 2 1 NA Creative Process: 4 3 2 1 NA Expression: 4 3 2 1 NA Structure: 4 3 2 1 NA |
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Assessing and Not Stressing!

Elizabeth Tripp

Editor's Note: As a beginning art teacher, Elizabeth has tackled the challenge of assessment and found an efficient method that solves many issues associated with evaluating student work, which allows for artist comments, sharing artwork, and more.

Gathering over 400 pieces of physical artwork across the elementary school grade levels for assessment and data collection is a daunting task. As a first-year teacher, I am excited to have an opportunity to assess how my students are doing, not to mention how I am doing, but the idea of collecting all of the grade level student artwork at the completion of a project is very intimidating. Fortunately, an alternative to being buried in large piles of artwork exists. I have been using Artsonia as a platform to house all of my student work, teach important skills, and reflect upon my effectiveness as an educator.

I was introduced to Artsonia in my student teaching with my mentor teacher, and now my current school uses this program district wide. Artsonia is a program where artwork can be "published" to a school gallery. To set up students with an Artsonia account, parents/guardians must give permission for the artwork to be live on the website. To protect student identity, published artwork is viewed by school name, student first name or a pseudo name and an Artsonia assigned number. Student work is shared with families and there is a fundraising aspect as well where families can buy prints of artwork on a variety of products. Families have access to the website through a secure code sent by the school to ensure everything is confidential with students' identities. If families desire to see artwork and have not received the confidential code, they must be approved by the teacher to view their student's portfolio. I have embedded Artsonia use into my curriculum and classroom routines. After each project, I make sure that every student has work published to Artsonia. Currently my older students are guided through the upload process, however, my future plans include scaffolding the publishing process from my 3rd graders all the way through 5th grade where they will be able to complete the publishing process independently.

I have found it beneficial for students to learn how to take a good quality picture of their artwork as it is a really important step in their development as artists. Students photographing and adjusting images of their own work also helps my curriculum include *Presenting*, one of the artistic processes of the New York State Learning Standards of the Arts. In class, we talk about shadows, lighting, and cropping as students are using my photography station to capture their art. Intuitively, they are learning to steady their hands and focus the camera. All of this happens on a school issued iPad that belongs to my school.

The documentation of artwork is incredibly important. In my

district the student's digital portfolio follows them throughout their academic career. Many students in middle school and high school look back on their artwork from elementary school with nostalgia, fondness, and recognize their growth as artists. Parents, guardians, friends and relatives are also able to go back and look at their student's artwork to see the whole body of work. I also find it so necessary to preserve their artwork though an online gallery, since the physical piece of elementary artwork may not exist once a student reaches high school. However, they can still view and remember their work though the Artsonia digital portfolio.

Another feature of Artsonia that is included within the New York State Learning Standards of the Arts is the written reflection available for each artwork published. Students are able to assess their work, and they have the option to enter an artist statement explaining each piece. Teachers can go in and enter feedback for student responses and the artwork itself. This is one aspect of the program that I have not been able to explore yet, however, I know that this will be a great tool to use as I establish my classroom in the future.

As this year is my first-year teaching, I find myself constantly reflecting on how I am doing and what I would like to change for future success. Through Artsonia, I have been able to remotely look through the artwork from this year in one place. This has especially helped me when it comes to grading at home and doing common assessments with my department. As a team, my department and I were able to sit and assess and grade our students with the Artsonia gallery of student work in front of us. Getting the opportunity to see everyone's artwork was a joy and it did not even require lugging boxes or portfolios around.

I feel that both my students and I have benefited by using Artsonia. I know my students are experiencing a high level of learning by presenting their artwork, reflecting on what they have made in the past, and evaluating on what they want to do differently in the future. I certainly will be able to better assess myself as an educator and my students' work using this program. I also hope that I have created an impact on my students in creating memories that they will be able to revisit through their portfolios of digital work.



Elizabeth Tripp is a first-year elementary art teacher in Gates Chili school district. She is a recent Masters graduate of Nazareth University. As an artist Elizabeth is an avid sculptor, and book maker.

Exploring New Horizons in Visual Arts Assessment: The Role of IAAP and NYSATA's Portfolio Project

Dr. Tracie Glazer - Director of Visual and Performing Arts for the Brighton Central School District

Introduction

As the new NYSATA Committee Chair for Arts Supervision and Administration, I am thrilled to share insights on the transformative potential of the intersection of two existing initiatives that both promise to revolutionize the way that art is taught and experienced in our NYS schools. Through a purposeful synergy of the New York State Education Department's (NYSED) Individualized Arts Assessment Pathway (IAAP) and the New York State Art Teacher's Association (NYSATA) Portfolio Project, we are offered a unique opportunity to enhance art education and opportunities for students across our state. These initiatives, in concert, not only offer innovative possibilities for art teachers but also hold the potential to enrich entire districts.

By embracing IAAP and NYSATA's Portfolio Project together, art educators can inspire creativity, foster critical thinking, and cultivate a deeper appreciation for the arts among students. Imagine classrooms where technology seamlessly integrates with traditional art forms, where collaborative projects bridge diverse disciplines, where teachers can collaborate with professional portfolio adjudicators from across the state, and where every student feels empowered to express themselves artistically through a longitudinal process that leads them to graduation, post-graduation, and beyond. This article explores the potential synergy between these two initiatives, highlighting the promise, change, and opportunities they offer for art teachers and their students. By aligning the rubrics and processes currently being developed by NYSATA with the goals of the IAAP, our field can utilize the existing and emerging programs offered to create a more cohesive and supportive framework for art, music, and theater/dance education in New York State.

The Individualized Arts Assessment Pathway (IAAP)

The IAAP is a groundbreaking 4+1 graduation pathway option in NYS that allows students to complete a locally determined three-unit sequence in the arts (Visual and media arts, music, dance, and theater). Through a collection of creative works, students demonstrate growth over time, meeting the High School II Accomplished Performance Indicators in the New York State Learning Standards for the Arts. This pathway is designed to cater to students' artistic and research interests, providing a flexible and personalized approach to arts education (NYSED, 2025).

The IAAP pilot, which began in September 2022, has allowed a diverse sample of schools and districts across New York State to experiment and pave the way for the future of all our programs. With the pilot coming to a close in June of 2025, NYSED has opened up the application to officially offer the Individual Arts Assessment Pathway (IAAP) as a road to graduation to all districts and schools in the SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance System located within the Application Business Portal for the 2025-2026 school year. Applications are open until August 1, 2025 (NYSED, 2025).

NYSATA's Portfolio Project

Complementing the IAAP, NYSATA's Portfolio Project offers a structured yet flexible framework for assessing student artwork. This initiative, developed in cooperation with NYSED, encourages students to compile a portfolio of their best works, reflecting their artistic journey and growth. The portfolio serves as a comprehensive assessment tool, showcasing students' skills, creativity, and personal expression (NYSATA, 2025).

Opportunities for Utilizing NYSATA's Portfolio Project for Students Considering an IAAP Graduation Option

1. **Guided Portfolio Development:** Teachers can guide students in selecting and curating their best works throughout their high school years. For example, during a student's first year of engagement with the IAAP process, students can choose some of their creative art works that meet the IAAP portfolio criteria with guidance from their teacher, which can also be utilized in their NYSATA Portfolio Project adjudication process. The feedback that students can receive can help them understand the importance of self-assessment, professional feedback, and continued reflection that can drive their future creation processes and thinking. Collaboratively, these opportunities can also serve to assist students interested in pursuing AP coursework and portfolio development with artwork creation and sustained for AP's 2-D Art and Design, 3-D Art and Design, and AP drawing pathways (College Board, 2025).
2. **Peer and Self-Assessment:** Teachers can develop tools for peer and self-assessment, based off the NYS Visual and Media Arts Standards aligned IAAP and Portfolio Project frameworks and rubrics, allowing students to

provide and receive constructive and valuable feedback on their creative works in their classrooms (NYSED, 2017). This practice can not only enhance students' critical thinking skills but also foster a collaborative learning environment built on students' goals and graduation aspirations.

3. **Regional Adjudication Events:** Teachers can assist students in preparing for regional NYSATA Portfolio Project adjudication events where they can present their portfolios to adjudicators who will also soon be trained in the nuance of the IAAP process and rubrics. These events can provide students with valuable feedback from professionals in the field and offer an opportunity to showcase their work to a broader audience. These adjudication sessions can be tailored to provide feedback for the IAAP process, saving art teachers time in completing the IAAP processes with their students. With challenges that art teachers face, such as budget constraints and lack of time and resources, this synergy between IAAP and the Portfolio Project can provide practical solutions and strategies to overcome these obstacles while advancing opportunities and access for our students.

Impact on NYS's Visual and Media Arts Students

The integration of IAAP and NYSATA's Portfolio Project into visual arts education has significant implications for students:

1. **Personalized Learning:** The IAAP allows students to pursue their artistic interests and develop their unique creative voice. By working on projects that align with their passions, students are more engaged and motivated to excel.
2. **Skill Development:** Through the process of creating and refining their portfolios, students develop essential skills such as critical thinking, self-assessment, and artistic expression. These skills are not only valuable in the arts but also transferable to other areas of their academic and personal lives.
3. **Preparation for Future Opportunities:** The IAAP and Portfolio Project prepare students for future professional and educational experiences in the arts. By building a comprehensive portfolio, students have a tangible representation of their growth and achievements that can be used for college applications, scholarships, and job opportunities.

Conclusion

Recent research supports the effectiveness of portfolio-based assessments in fostering student engagement and achievement. According to a study by the National Art Education Association, portfolio assessments encourage students to take ownership of their learning, leading to increased motivation and higher-quality work (NAEA, 2024). Additionally, the flexibility of the IAAP allows for a more individualized approach to assessment, course selection, and graduation pathways, aligning with best practices in arts education. One of the key goals of IAAP is to provide

equitable access to art education for all students. By implementing a standardized assessment pathway, IAAP ensures that students from diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to participate in high-quality art programs across NYS, which can lead to greater inclusivity and diversity in art education. Furthermore, the NYSATA Portfolio Project has been recognized for its success in providing authentic assessment opportunities for students and showcasing student understanding and learning in the visual arts.

As we embrace these innovative assessment practices, we have the opportunity to collectively redefine the landscape of visual arts education in New York State. The IAAP and NYSATA's Portfolio Project not only provide valuable tools for assessing student growth but also inspire us to think creatively about the possibilities that exist within our classrooms. By fostering collaboration and sharing best practices, we can create a vibrant and dynamic arts education community that empowers both art teachers and our students to achieve their full potential.

In conclusion, the synergy between IAAP and NYSATA's Portfolio Project represents a significant step forward in visual arts assessment in New York State. Together, they offer a cooperative pathway for students to showcase their artistic growth and provide teachers with the tools to support and evaluate their students' progress effectively. Let us embrace these opportunities and work together with our NYSATA peers and colleagues to create a brighter future for visual arts education in New York State.



Dr. Tracie Glazer, the current Director of Visual and Performing Arts & Instructional Technology for Brighton Central Schools, brings over 20 years of school and district leadership in education. A former art teacher, program director of art education at Nazareth University, and NYSED policy fellow, her research centers on arts achievement, family engagement, and building collaborative school communities through the visual arts.

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| 2 | Finger Lakes | Allegany, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Wayne, Seneca, Steuben, Yates |
| 3 | Central | Cayuga, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, St. Lawrence |
| 4 | Southern | Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Otsego, Schuyler, Tioga, Tompkins |
| 5 | Adirondack | Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton |
| 6 | Capital Eastern | Schoharie, Albany, Columbia, Fulton, Greene, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren, Washington |
| 7 | Southeastern | Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester |
| 8 | New York City | New York, Bronx, Kings, Queens, Richmond |
| 9 | LI Nassau | Nassau |
| 10 | LI Suffolk | Suffolk |