



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

DATE: September 8, 2017
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **National Arts in Education Week, September 10-16, 2017**

National Arts in Education Week is a national celebration recognizing the transformative power of the arts in education. Passed by Congress in 2010 through House Resolution 275, the celebration is designated to bring attention to this cause for elected officials and educational decision makers across the country and to support equitable access to the arts for all students.

This national celebration also provides an opportunity to acknowledge the fine arts educators who assist students to reach high standards in the fine arts, while also serving their school communities as “fine arts educational leaders” who collaborate with classroom teachers to integrate the fine arts with other core academic disciplines.

The fine arts are an important part of a well-rounded education for all students. All of the fine arts: dance arts, music, theatre arts, and the visual arts are essential to preparing the Commonwealth’s K-12 students for the twenty-first century through innovation and creativity and for a social discourse that demands communication in images and sound as well as in text.

Research shows that when instruction provides opportunities for students to experience the fine arts in deep and meaningful ways and to make curricular connections with English, mathematics, science, and history and social science, students are more engaged in the learning process. As we strive to increase high school graduation rates and ensure that all students are college and career ready, we know that students who participate in the fine arts are more likely to stay in school and to graduate from college.

For additional information, please contact Cheryle C. Gardner, Principal Specialist of Fine Arts, Office of Humanities and Early Childhood, by email at Cherry.Gardner@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-2881.

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