



Arlington  
Public  
Schools

Arts Education

# BRIEFING REPORT

MARCH 2019





# ARTS EDUCATION

The Arts Education Office operates within the Department of Teaching and Learning to meet APS Strategic Plan goals and DTL core services. Arts Education is an essential part of the core curriculum from pre-kindergarten to grade 12 that provides opportunities to develop artistic literacy and supports the academic growth of all students. The mission of the arts education office is to recruit, hire, and retain highly effective teachers while leading a culture of continual learning toward the implementation of best practices and curriculum design, aligned to APS and state standards. This provides the opportunities for students to receive high levels of arts education as well as to develop the necessary problem-solving and critical thinking skills that will transfer to all aspects of their lives.

During the 2017-18 school year, there were 7632 enrollments among students in grades 6 through 12 in Instrumental Music, Choral Music, Visual Arts and Theater. The arts offer powerful tools for expression – tools for making connections, critical thinking, personal realization, communicating, problem-solving, and civic engagement. They are an essential part of human history and provide a foundation for students to succeed. All students will be equipped to problem-solve and use the tools they learn in the arts to build and innovate our future worlds.

## **MAJOR SERVICES PROVIDED**

- Development and implementation of high quality Arts programs.
- Providing outside opportunities for students to be involved in the Arts.
- Hiring and retaining highly effective teachers.
- Collaboratively designing curriculum and aligning instructional resources for implementation.
- Providing instructional support for schools.
- Designing sustained and continuous professional learning for teachers.

## **BRIGHT SPOTS**

Each year, the Arts Education office supports numerous opportunities for students to be challenged in the Arts, which is a testament to our highly effective teachers, professional learning, rigorous curriculum and instructional resources.

### **2017-18 DISTRICT XII, ALL-VIRGINIA JAZZ, SENIOR HONOR CHOIR & ALL-REGIONAL ORCHESTRA**

More than 30 APS students were accepted into the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors' Association (VBODA) District XII All-District Bands. These students performed in the All-District Band Event Feb. 1-3, 2018, at Kenmore Middle School.

Three APS high school students were accepted into the All-Virginia Jazz Ensemble. This prestigious ensemble is available to approximately 40 students around the state. The performance was held at the Virginia Music Educators Association Conference in Hot Springs, Virginia on Nov. 16, 2017, with two nationally acclaimed guest conductors.

Four APS high school seniors were selected as members into the 2017 Virginia Music Educators Association (VMEA) Senior Honor Choir. The choir is open only to the top 125 singers from around Virginia, and is the highest honor a choir student can attain during his or her high school career. Auditions were open to seniors enrolled in choral programs at their respective schools. Students performed at the Virginia Music Educators Association's convention in Hot Springs, VA, on Nov. 18, 2017.

Six APS high school students were accepted into the Northern Virginia All-Regional Orchestra that performed on Nov. 11, 2017, at Marshall High School in Fairfax. The orchestra is one of four regional orchestras in the state where approximately 110 strings, wind and percussion players are accepted via a rigorous audition that took place in September. The top players of each instrumental section are then eligible to audition for the All-Virginia Band and Orchestra later in the school year.

### 2017-18 ALL-STATE MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL MUSICIANS

On Apr. 7, 2018, 25 APS middle and high school instrumental and choral students performed in Richmond, VA for the All-Virginia Music Band, Chorus and Orchestra festival. Selected through a highly competitive audition process, there were a total of five ensembles that performed: Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Orchestra, Treble Choir and Mixed Choir.

### 2017-18 DISTRICT XII HONORS CHORUS AND HONORS ORCHESTRA

APS had more than 100 middle school and high school students accepted into District XII Honors Chorus. This is an increase of 15% of accepted choral students from the previous year. Additionally, eight middle school and high school students were accepted into District XII Honors Orchestra. The District XII High School and Middle School Chorus auditions took place on Nov. 4, 2017. The Honors Treble Choirs and Honors Mixed Choirs performed on Feb. 10, 2018, at Oakton High School. District XII Junior and Senior Orchestra ensembles performed Jan. 6, 2018, at Wakefield High School.

### APS HONORS MUSIC PROGRAM

The Arts Education Department held auditions for four weeks starting the last week of October for six different music ensembles open to 4th-8th graders. Over 600 students came out to audition representing every elementary and middle school. The program saw an increase of 20% of auditioning students! The Honors Band, Honors Orchestra and Middle School Honors Chorus met for a 4-day period in January with a culminating concert on Saturday, Jan. 20, 2018, and the elementary honors chorus, junior band and junior orchestra held its final group concert on Mar. 22, 2018.

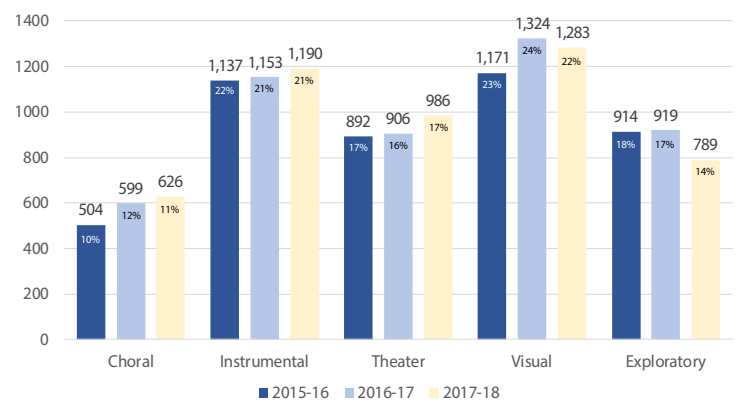
### SCHOLASTIC ART AWARDS

The Regional Scholastic Art Award Exhibit was on display at all of the middle and comprehensive high schools showcasing approximately 500 pieces of art from APS middle and high school students. Approximately 900

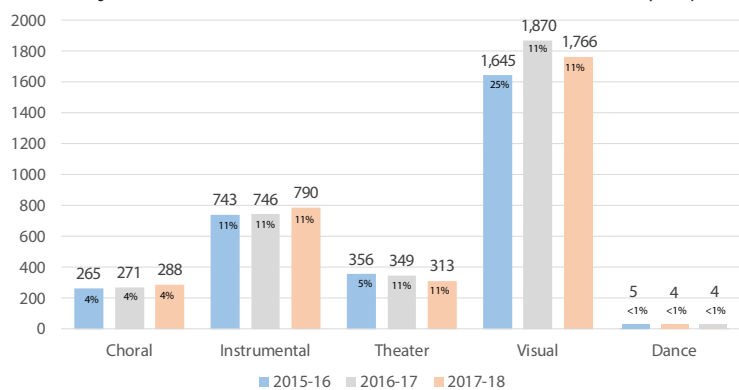
## DATA THAT PROVIDES INSIGHT

The Arts Education office uses a variety of data sources including enrollment, staff surveys, student surveys, and district, regional, and state assessments in order to monitor the fidelity and impact of arts education.

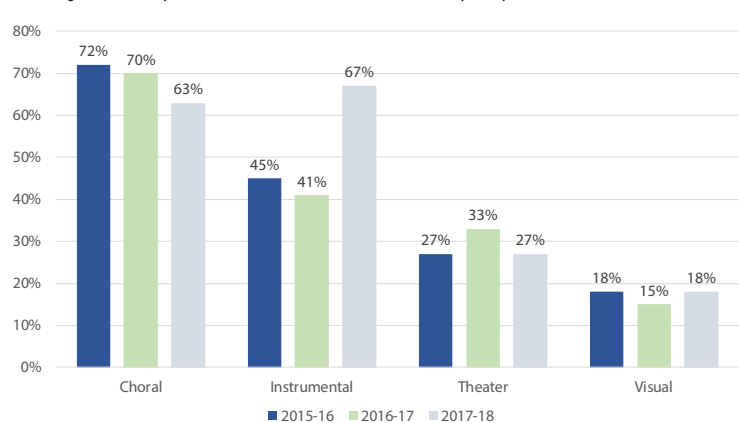
Number of Middle School Students (and % of total MS Students) Enrolled in at Least One Art Course by Discipline



Number of High School Students (and % of total HS Students) Enrolled in at Least One Art Course by Discipline



Percentage of Secondary Art Students Enrolled in Advanced Courses by Discipline



pieces were awarded at the regional level from over 2,100 submissions. The program, currently in its 95th year, is a national program recognizing outstanding creativity in teens grades 7-12. Eighteen APS students were honored by the national non-profit organization, which presented the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards on Thursday, June 7, 2018 at a gala celebration at Carnegie Hall in New York City. Their work was displayed at Parsons New School of Design and the National Department of Education.

### **NAMM AWARD**

In 2017-18, Arlington Public Schools was honored with the Best Communities for Music Education designation from The NAMM Foundation for its outstanding commitment to music education. This was also awarded in 2016-17. The Best Communities for Music Education designation is awarded to districts that demonstrate outstanding achievement in efforts to provide music access and education to all students. To qualify for the Best Communities designation, APS answered detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, support for the music program, and community music-making programs.

### **KENNEDY CENTER PARTNERSHIP: CETA AND COHORT**

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and Arlington Public Schools are members of the Kennedy Center's Partners in Education program. Selected because of their demonstrated commitment to the improvement of education in and through the arts, partnership teams participate in collaborative efforts to make the arts integral to education. Beginning in the 2016-17 school year, Arlington Public Schools and the Kennedy Center formed a cohort to achieve the Kennedy Center CETA (Changing Education Through the Arts) Certificate of Study. In April of 2018, 21 teachers received the Certificate of Study at the Kennedy Center. The certificate is an ongoing recognition program for teachers who participate in the Kennedy Center's professional learning. In order to receive a Certificate of Study, teachers participate in a minimum of 21 hours of professional learning through the CETA program in order to explore ways to bring the arts into their classroom. In addition, they develop and submit documentation that shows evidence of the impact of the arts on student learning.

### **REFLECTIONS AND MARTIN LUTHER KING ART CONTESTS**

The Arts Education Department receives numerous requests for participation in arts contests throughout the year. These opportunities are shared with teachers and students. Arts teachers are instrumental in supporting students who participate in many contests, however we are extremely proud of our student interest in the CCPTA Reflections contest and the Martin Luther King art contest. Over 1,000 art entries were received in these contests. This is another example of our excellent teachers working collaboratively to provide outside opportunities and successes for students in the arts.



### **WHAT WE LEARNED**

We have learned that with sustained focus, alignment of goals, resources, and a systemic action plan, we can increase opportunities and impact student learning. Staff has also learned the effectiveness of the pyramid model when done consistently and with alignment to desired outcomes. Effective use of the pyramid model across the performing arts has increased enrollment and had an impact on student retention in the arts, which has increased student enrollment in advanced arts courses.

We continue to grow all of our secondary programs and have seen a significant increase in enrollment in choral music since 2013-14 and a substantial increase in instrumental music since 2016-17. Hiring highly qualified teachers and continuing to provide outreach opportunities through the effective pyramid model has contributed to this success. We have seen a slight decrease in Theater enrollment and have added the pyramid model to theater in 2018-19. This year we held a Theater Festival that included all secondary schools. Additional outreach includes bringing small productions from middle schools to the elementary schools and bringing high school productions to the middle schools. Additionally, to showcase more of the arts we have increased our use of social media through twitter and Instagram.

At all levels, we continue to focus on professional learning for teachers through the Arts Academies listed in the Professional Learning Framework, which include but are not limited to areas of differentiation, technology, conversational solfege, special needs students, gifted identification and effective Collaborative Learning Teams.





## MOVING FORWARD

The Arts Education Office Evaluation was presented in the Spring of 2018. Data collected over the course of the evaluation process was analyzed and used to develop recommendations for additional course offerings in the arts, professional learning opportunities, needed resources, areas of improvement, and sustaining areas in which we have done well.

### ARTS PROGRAM EVALUATION RECOMMENDATION PROGRESS

**Recommendation 1:** Explore opportunities for APS to increase awareness of and participation in arts courses. Work with schools and departments to encourage arts opportunities for all students and find creative solutions to scheduling conflicts.

#### Action Steps Completed in Response

- Met with the Supervisor and Directors of Counseling and counselors to discuss scheduling conflicts and other issues preventing students from participating in the arts. Looked at different models used across the county to increase these opportunities.
- Met with Supervisor and Directors of Counseling and counselors to enhance their understanding of arts careers in alignment with students' interests in their individualized personal academic plan.

**Recommendation 2:** Develop and implement a countywide theater equipment replacement schedule. Continue to work with the external theater inspection company and APS safety inspector to assess and maintain APS theater facilities. Develop a countywide replacement schedule for theater equipment using a graded A–F system and include a maintenance cycle in the APS budget.

#### Action Steps Completed in Response

- Provided professional learning on proper use and maintenance of theater equipment for staff.
- Arts Education Supervisor continues to work with outside vendor to update the theater equipment grading system.

**Recommendation 3:** Expand outreach opportunities for parents and students to find out more about arts courses in planning their A2E pathway.

#### Action Steps Completed in Response:

- Participated in Harvesting Dreams event, providing information on opportunities for students in the arts.
- Work with Supervisor of Equity and Excellence to showcase the arts at the Black History Month Celebration.

**Recommendation 4:** Explore effective ways to consistently identify students as gifted in the arts across all schools.

#### Action Steps Completed in Response:

- Worked with Supervisor of Gifted Services to update and streamline the Gifted Referral form and process.
- Met with the resource Teachers for the Gifted to discuss ways to collaborate with arts teachers in order to increase arts referrals and identifications.
- Provided professional learning for teachers on the referral process and what gifted looks like in the arts.

## GRADUATE PROFILE



### ARIANA L. CHAIVARANON

H-B Woodlawn, 2014  
Harvard University, 2018

Ariana L. Chaivaranon, graduate of H-B Woodlawn, is a painter and VES concentrator in Adams House whose works of art have included cover art for the books *Hello Able Five* and *Metropolis* and paintings in *Renegade*, a Harvard magazine focusing on art and advocacy. After graduating from college, she plans to begin a career in the art world.

“Ever since I can remember, I’ve wanted to be an artist.... But it was really when I got a little bit older, between the ages of 10 and 15, [when] my grandmother wanted to take me to all the art galleries in the D.C. area.... I can still remember the way specific [pieces] looked and the emotions they gave me. That was when I realized, ‘Wow, art can make people feel intense things.’

There’s a series that I made senior year of portraits of people around me... [It’s] ultimately getting at how I think people pay less and less attention to the things around them. As you become more absorbed in your phone and whatever you’re doing on there, you’re missing more of the things that go on around you. So...[I was] trying to evoke a bit of that sense of the here and now...

I think one of the things conducive to change is a state of discomfort. When people are comfortable, they tend to want to stay the way they are.”