

Arts Education

BRIEFING REPORT



MARCH 2020



Arlington
Public
Schools



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 2018-19 school year, there were 7416 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, for 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.
- Designing the 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 the highly effective teachers, professional learning, rigorous curriculum and instructional resources.

2018-2019 DISTRICT XII, ALL-VIRGINIA JAZZ, SENIOR HONOR CHOIR & ALL-REGIONAL ORCHESTRA

Forty-four APS students were accepted into the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors' Association (VBODA) District XII All-District Bands. These students were selected by audition on January 12, 2019, and performed in the All-District Band Event January 31–February 2, 2019, at Chantilly High School. Two APS high school students were accepted into the All-Virginia Jazz Ensemble. The performance was given at the Virginia Music Educators Association Conference in Hot Springs, Virginia on Thursday, November 15, 2018, with two nationally acclaimed

guest conductors. This prestigious ensemble is available to approximately 40 students around the state who are accepted into one of the two ensembles. One of our APS high school seniors was selected as members into the 2018 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. The audition took place at Longwood College October 13, 2018. Students performed at the Virginia Music Educators Association's convention in Hot Springs, VA on November 17, 2018. Ten APS high school students were accepted into the Northern Virginia All-Regional Orchestra that performed on Nov. 10, 2018, at West Potomac 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.

2018-19 ALL-STATE MS & HS MUSICIANS

On April 6, 2019, fifteen Arlington Public Schools 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 are a total of five ensembles that performed: Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Orchestra, Treble Choir and Mixed Choir.

2018-19 DISTRICT XII HONORS CHORUS AND HONORS ORCHESTRA

APS had more than 100 middle and high school students accepted into District XII Honors Chorus. All APS secondary schools participated. Additionally, six middle and high school students were accepted into District XII Honors Orchestra. The District XII High School and Middle School Chorus auditions took place on November 13, 2018. The Honors Treble Choirs and Honors Mixed Choirs performed on February 9, 2019, at Marshall High School. District XII Junior and Senior Orchestra ensembles performed January 12, 2019, at Wakefield High School.

APS HONORS MUSIC PROGRAM

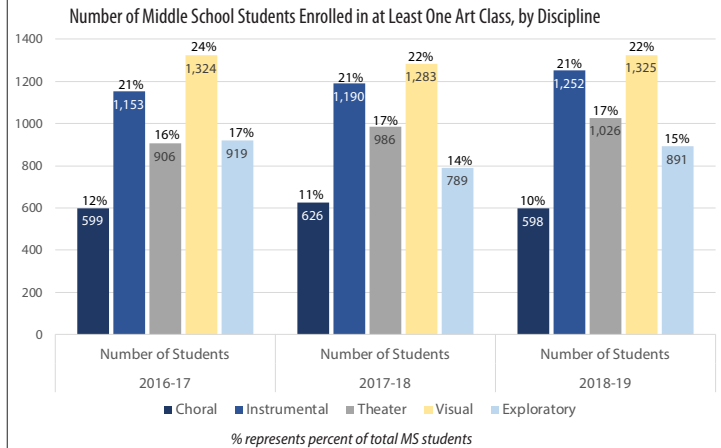
The Arts Education Department held auditions for four weeks starting the last week of October, running through mid-November, for six different music ensembles open to APS 4th-8th graders. Over 600 students came out to audition, representing every elementary and middle school. The Honors Band, Honors Orchestra and Middle School Honors Chorus met for a 4-day period in January with a culminating concert on Saturday, January 26, 2019, and the elementary honors chorus, junior band and junior orchestra held its final group concert on Tuesday, March 21, 2019.

SCHOLASTIC ART AWARDS

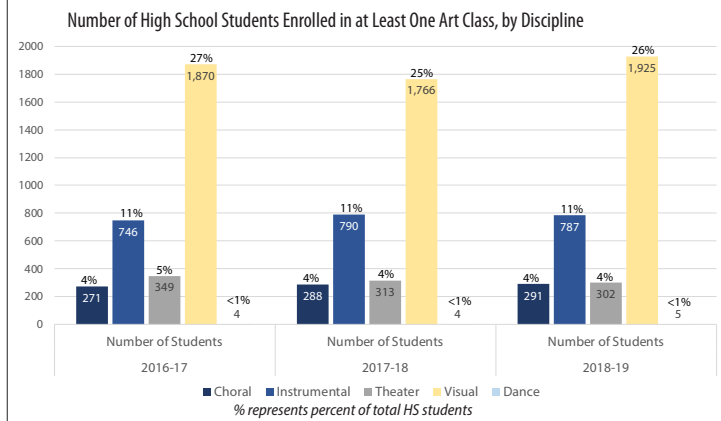
The 2018-19 Regional Scholastic Art Award Exhibit was on display at all of the middle and comprehensive high schools, showcasing approximately 650 pieces of art from APS middle

DATA THAT PROVIDES INSIGHT

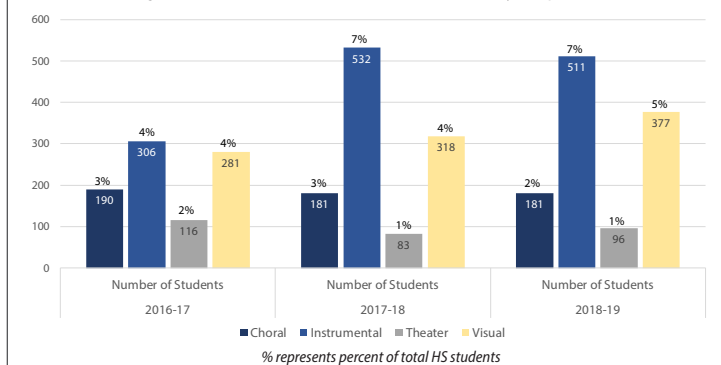
MIDDLE SCHOOL



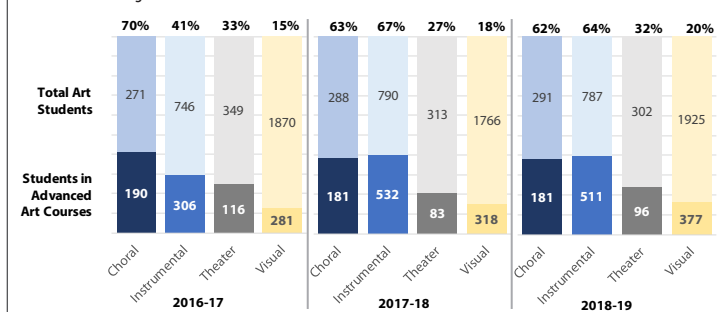
HIGH SCHOOL



Number of High School Students Enrolled in Advanced Arts Classes, by Discipline



Percent of High School Art Students Enrolled in an Advanced Art Course





and high school students. Approximately 940 pieces were awarded at the regional level from over 2,100 submissions. The program, currently in its 96th year, is a national program recognizing outstanding creativity in teens grades 7-12. Twenty-one APS students were awarded by the national non-profit organization, which presented the national Scholastic Art & Writing Awards on Thursday, June 6, 2019, 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.

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.

NAMM AWARD

In 2018-19, Arlington Public Schools was honored with the Best Communities for Music Education designation from the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Foundation for its outstanding commitment to music education. This was also awarded in 2016-17 and 2017-18.

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. Responses were verified with school officials and reviewed by The Music Research Institute at the University of Kansas. This award recognizes that APS is leading the way with learning opportunities as outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA recommends music and the arts as important elements of a well-rounded education for all children. Research into music education continues to demonstrate educational/cognitive and social skill benefits for children who make music. In a series of landmark studies by scientists and researchers at Northwestern University, a link was found between students in community music programs and life-long academic success, including higher high school graduation rates and college attendance. In another study from the University, it was discovered that early exposure to music education improves how the brain processes and assimilates sounds, a trait that lasts well into adulthood.

ABOUT THE NAMM FOUNDATION

The NAMM Foundation is a nonprofit supported in part by the National Association of Music Merchants and its approximately 10,300 members around the world. The foundation advances active participation in music-making across the lifespan, by supporting scientific research, philanthropic giving, and public service programs. For more information about the NAMM Foundation, please visit www.nammfoundation.org.

KC 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 their first cohort of thirty teachers to achieve the Kennedy Center CETA (Changing Education Through the Arts) Certificate of Study. In April 2018, 21 teachers received the Certificate of Study at the Kennedy Center, and an additional 9 teachers from Cohort I will receive their certificate in 2020. Cohort II currently has 24 teachers who are working towards their certificate of study. 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.

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 achievement. 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 student retention in the arts which has increased student enrollment in advanced arts courses. In addition, we have found that professional learning when based on teacher interest and aligned with APS strategic goals moves us further in our work. This year we implemented small cohorts of elementary arts teachers establishing a personalized professional learning focus and increased collaboration. These cohorts are led by teachers which provides teacher leadership opportunities for staff and supports sustainable professional learning.

We continue to grow all our secondary programs and have seen a significant increase in enrollment in choral music since 2013-14, which has been consistent each year, 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 continue to have a slight decrease in Theater enrollment and added the pyramid model to Theater in 2018-19. Over the past two years we have held a Theater Festival that included all secondary schools. Additional outreach includes bringing small productions from middle schools to elementary schools, and bringing high school productions to middle schools. Additionally, to showcase more of the arts, we have increased our use of online media through Twitter and Instagram, the Arts Education Calendar, APS School Talk and APS FridayFive.

We continue to look at creative ways to provide more opportunities for students to take electives through online or blended learning options including taking Personal Finance during the summer online.

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, effective Collaborative Learning Teams and Equity in the Arts.



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 we have done well.

Arts Program Evaluation Recommendation Progress included:

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.

Update:

- 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 counselors to enhance their understanding of arts careers in alignment with students' interests in their individualized personal academic plans.
- Met with secondary arts teachers to provide training to create i-movie videos highlighting their programs and opportunities for students to participate in the arts, specifically to support feeder programs.
- Provided two 2-hour professional learning opportunities for arts staff around Equity in the Arts.
- Created vertical pyramid models in which elementary, middle and high school teachers meet to strengthen ongoing participation in the arts.

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.

Update:

- 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.
- Arts Education Supervisor continues to work collaboratively with Facilities to prioritize and replace outdated theater equipment and maintain the facilities.

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

Update:

- Participated in Harvesting Dreams for our Children event, providing information on opportunities for students in the arts.
- Continued collaboration with Supervisor of Equity and Excellence to showcase the arts at the Black History Month Celebration.
- Met with staff to increase outreach to all stakeholders.
- Added additional language to APS Arts website to include instrumental rental fees and fee scales for free and reduced lunch.
- Secondary teachers attended MS Information Night and shared information and resources with parents and students.

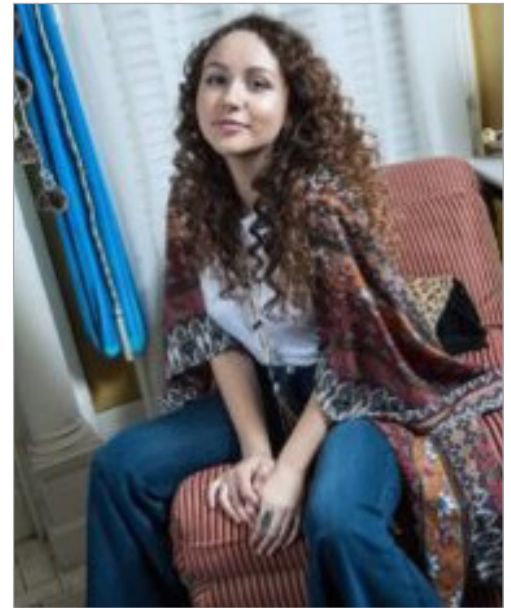
Recommendation 4: Explore effective ways to consistently identify students as gifted in the arts across all schools.

Update:

- 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 additional professional learning for teachers on the referral process and what gifted looks like in the arts.
- Sought feedback for staff and created a new gifted identification form for art and music that aligns with other content areas.



GRADUATE PROFILE



CALISTA GARCIA

H-B Woodlawn, 2019
Belmont University

Local singer/songwriter and H-B Woodlawn graduate Calista Garcia was recognized for her outstanding artistic achievements in vocal/songwriting, selected as a 2018 National YoungArts Winner, one of only 28 nationwide. Garcia also attend the YoungArts regional program in Miami in February 2019.

Garcia was also recognized as a National YoungArts Winner in 2018 and was a 2018 Strathmore Artist in Residence.