

Marketing Art

Art Teacher Checklist for promoting the Visual Arts

ART ADVOCACY & PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Advocacy requires that we continually teach the public in deliberate, sustained ways what students have learned in the process of creating original artwork.

- Plan and implement a quality art program based on state and national standards.
- Have high expectations for student work and behavior.
- Cooperate and plan with other art teachers/fine arts teachers in your building.
- Display high-quality student artwork everywhere and often – school, superintendent’s office, school board meeting room, branch libraries, business partners’ offices, etc. In the exhibit, wall text should state the goals of the lesson, including standard criteria charts/procedures which remind others that the works provide evidence of understanding.
- Neatly mount work and label appropriately.
- Create an art space/lab that is visually stimulating, organized, and LOOKS like an art room – not messy and chaotic, but colorful with student work, study prints of the masters, vocabulary, etc. Does your room visually say, “Art is important and what we do matters here?”
- Post quotes regarding the importance of art at school, in the art room, in exhibits.
- Teach every minute of every period. Love art and show it!
- Know students’ names and get to know them as individuals.
- Return phone calls, respond to notes/emails from administrators/parents/colleagues the same day.
- Let school staff, custodians and secretaries know you appreciate them.
- When elementary classroom teachers pick up children, verbally close the lesson with key questions to students or summary statements about what students learned that day so that you are educating your colleagues, too.
- Invite your principal to the art room for a special project... or for no reason at all!
- Treat visitors like VIPs in your classroom. Be welcoming and receptive no matter how busy you are. One unconcerned or angry art teacher can do permanent damage to art programs everywhere!
- Send “good” notes home with students who deserve special recognition, one each day from each class.
- Write your own fall/spring art newsletters to parents and/or write art articles for PTA/PTO newsletters that regularly go home. Highlight different levels and include what you are teaching (curriculum and standards), any needed materials, student honors, exhibits, local museum exhibits for families to enjoy, etc. Include photos.
- Make a brief presentation on the importance of art to your PTA/PTO.
- High school students can write regular “art happenings” for school publications, interview local artists, cover exhibitions and gallery openings.

- Use an empty classroom to create a student gallery.
- Be pro-active in promoting good things about art.
- Get a current media list from your Chamber of Commerce for newspaper, TV & Radio contacts, etc. and personally call them for special events/recognitions/exhibits, fine arts festivals, etc. Also send a written press release listing you as the contact person.
- Plan special events with your fine arts team – Fine Arts Night with student demonstrations and performances – art, music, dance, & drama. Ask your public access channel to cover the event.
- Design a visual arts or fine arts brochure to share with parents/others; include goals, rationale for why the arts are important, state/national standards, quotes, etc.
- Brainstorm pro-art slogans and involve students in designing original bumper stickers, laminate and distribute to parents and business partners (ARTsmART, Art: Ask for More, Art Matters, heart & Soul, Art Adds Color to Life, etc.)
- Involve students in designing billboards for Youth Art Month and/or art t-shirts (art teachers sell t-shirts/bags/aprons as fundraisers)
- Make a strong case in writing for an adequate art budget to meet student needs – be specific, refer to standards, number of students served, and the fact that many art materials are consumable, etc. – less emotion and more specifics with rationale build budgets!
- Focus on solutions to cutbacks, finding ways to make your principal, school and district look good!
- Check the internet for specific research (brain research, multiple intelligences, etc.) which support art – NAEA, Getty Institute, Elliot Eisner, etc. “Students who studied the visual arts in high school scored an average of 76 points higher on the SAT than students who did not take art courses.” (College Board Report, 2002). We must make educationally-sound arguments, not emotional pleas. **Develop political skills among art educators who give systematic, continuous dialogue with decision makers is crucial for reform.**
- Personally ask 2 or 3 of your most supportive parents if they would be willing to speak at school board meetings should art become a target for cuts. Parents and community leaders are the KEY to getting and keeping quality art programs. School board members listen to taxpayers and superintendents listen to the board members who hire them.
- Be willing to speak up yourself and justify the visual arts to administrators, school board members, community leaders, etc. Know the names/addresses of your city council members, local board members, House Reps and Senators and State Board of Education Reps. Send student artwork to them with a letter from the student during Youth Art Month or at any time during the year.

You are the future of your program!