

May 22, 2020

Dear Dr. [REDACTED],

Thank you for your tireless efforts over the past few months to look out for your students, faculty, and staff as the state transitioned from in-person learning to distance learning nearly overnight. We recognize the herculean effort this has taken and applaud you and your team on behalf of students.

We also recognize the efforts to open your district for the new school year will be challenging as the pathway forward remains unclear. Understanding the health, safety, and security of our students, faculty, and staff must be the top priority - there remain many more questions than answers right now.

Knowing the challenges ahead, Arts Ed NJ has convened the September Ready Taskforce for Arts Education. More than 100 arts administrators, practitioners, and association leaders have joined together to develop the strategies, plans, and solutions needed for arts instruction to be delivered to our students in a way that addresses health and safety considerations. We intend to make available to you, your curriculum administrators, and arts faculty the findings and solutions developed by this taskforce.

The September Ready Taskforce, which has been meeting since early May, includes representatives from the following organizations: New Jersey Department of Education, New Jersey State Council on the Arts, New Jersey Education Association, New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, New Jersey PTA, New Jersey School Boards Association, New Jersey Art Administrators Association, New Jersey Music Administrators Association, Arts Ed NJ, Art Educators of New Jersey, Dance New Jersey, New Jersey Music Educators Association, New Jersey Thespians, Speech and Theatre Association of New Jersey, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Grunin Foundation, Montclair State University, and Rowan University.

We expect to have detailed materials and recommendations based on the latest research and best practices being developed both in the United States and from around the world in June. These resources will be available at <https://artsednj.org/covid19>.

We all know the critical role arts education plays in the development of our students, including addressing important social and emotional learning needs. The connections our students make in and through the arts will be a critical component of their successful transition back into whatever configuration our schools take this fall.

Last September, Governor Murphy joined with us to celebrate New Jersey's remarkable achievement of providing universal access to arts education in our schools. Please know that all of us at Arts Ed NJ are committed to working with you to ensure the high-quality well-rounded education - which includes the arts - remains available for all of our students no matter how our instruction will be delivered in September.

Please let me know if you have any questions or if we may be of further assistance to you and your students. I may be reached directly at bob@artsednj.org or 908-542-9396.

Sincerely,



Robert B. Morrison
Director