

**Letter from the Director**

Dear Readers,

The school year is just winding down as I write these notes, and it has been quite a year for our new office. With the successful launch of our first "Arts on the Agenda" symposium in late April, attended by over two-hundred principals and administrators, and the awarding to Ramsey Lewis of the 2008 "Arts Champion" award, Arts Education re-emerged on the CPS landscape from its long winter's hibernation. Panels, performances and more informal discussions – and a request-for-proposals surprise announcement – created a lively atmosphere and valuable focus on the real ways arts education can be enhanced at local school sites as curricular, discipline-based programs.

A panning shot across the arts disciplines and the programs directly touched by Arts Education reveals an astounding landscape of activity. The Chicago "Guide for Teaching and Learning in the Arts" [formerly "Blueprint for the Arts"] is concluding its first phase. This curriculum mapping project utilizes the deep knowledge of educators from within the schools as well as adjunct teaching artists encompassing various teaching approaches that will eventually serve as a guide for professional development and curriculum implementation around the systematic teaching in the arts to national, state, and local arts standards. Phase two, the writing and editing of the Guide, will take place over the next school year.

Currently, a dedicated Office of Arts Education website, communicating arts program information, is under construction. The necessity for a one-stop, linked Arts Education hub of communication is essential for building cohesion in the district.

The annual All-City art exhibition program, with culminating shows at the Museum of Contemporary Art, the Museum of Science and Industry, and Gallery 37 brought forward talented visual artists from schools throughout the city. Over \$600,000 in college scholarships was offered to student participants.

The 45th year of the All-City performing ensembles program also concluded successfully with its annual concert at Symphony Center and distribution of scholarships to worthy seniors. The 83rd year of the Citywide Music Contest (a solo and ensemble assessment and evaluation program) saw a rise in the number and quality of participants. The Contest is the oldest continuously produced and adjudicated music performance assessment event in a public school system in the country and a valuable tool for gauging the strength of music education programs. More than 6000 CPS students participated in the All-City performance programs.

GlobalWRITeS, featuring a poetry slam contest held on-line between three Chicago and three New York City schools and underwritten by a Department of Education grant, also allowed us to publish "Writing Book, Volume 1," an anthology of the work of all the Chicago poets, in partnership with Young Chicago Authors.

The third year of the "Having a Ball" [HAB] ballroom dance program became the first year of a major International-style ballroom dance curriculum project. Operated from our central office and supported by a Department of Education grant, HAB involved 25 schools over 1300 fifth graders and culminated with a dance competition with a truly grand finale at Navy Pier. Unlike any other ballroom dance project in the country, the intensity of the Arts Education program allowed us to evaluate not only the physical exercise aspects of dance but also the command of technique aspects. A pilot dance scholarship program reaching young students identified through the revised "Having a Ball" program is in the works for the next school year.

Other projects in the works involve visual arts "salons" for CPS arts teachers, professional development and curriculum building around the CPS collection of murals in the schools, an exploration of music education delivery in after-school settings, a storytelling initiative, and a wide range of cooperative ventures with our many arts partner institutions in the city.

With the latest news indicating that more than 25,000 Illinois college undergraduates are majoring in the visual and performing arts in the state's colleges, making the arts the second most popular major in aggregate of all majors, is simply a reflection of the hunger for more arts education that exists in our society today, and for very good reasons. Perhaps more than any other academic discipline learned in a sequential manner, learning through the arts proves that there are multiple interpretations possible, that there is more than one way to solve a problem or that there are multiple answers to a single posed question.

Innovation, high-performance and creative problem-solving are also the watchwords of business and professional careers, but those skills are learned best by doing, hands on. As in mathematics, the "elegance" and clarity of the solution is where the true beauty lies. A graceful drawing hand, a clear and expressive vocal line, a beautifully executed turn – this is arts elegance. High quality studio learning leads to aesthetic, cultural, and personal understanding and accomplishment.

Thank you for joining with the Office of Arts Education in setting the bar high by helping to bring access to robust arts education programs for every Chicago public school child this school year.

*David Roche*  
Director

**Save the Date!**

Please save Wednesday, August 27, 2008 for a special Office of Arts Education teachers event! More details will be available soon.

**Visual Arts Highlights****Re-Discovering Chicago School Murals Project**

The Office of Arts Education is pleased to offer two professional development workshops for 5<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies, Language Arts and Fine Arts teachers to revisit the CPS Mural Curriculum Guide developed in 2002 and its soon to be released Educator Supplement. The Re-Discovering Chicago School Murals Project is funded by the Terra Foundation for American Art and provides opportunities for teachers to learn engaging arts integration strategies and art-making skills. This program, in conjunction with the Lane Tech Mural Exhibition at the Chicago Cultural Center, will involve up to 60 CPS teachers in two-day summer and fall workshops. Registration for the summer workshop scheduled for July 9 and 10 (9:00 am – 3:00 pm) at Bateman Elementary is required by Thursday, June 19, 2008. The fall workshop will occur on October 10 and 11 at Gallery 37 with a registration deadline of September 19. Teachers interested in participating should call the Chicago Teachers' Center at 312-563-7118 to register or for more information.

**Summer Printmaking Workshops for Art Teachers**

Art Teachers are also encouraged to register for printmaking workshops offered through a special partnership with Anchor Graphics at Columbia College. Non-Press Processes for elementary school teachers will take place on July 15 from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Participating teachers will learn basic processes that can be done in the classroom without a press and will cover methods using stencils and linoleum blocks (all materials will be provided). High School art teachers are offered both press and non-press workshop days on July 16 and July 17 from 10:00 am – 5:00 pm and can register for one or both days. Processes covered on the press day will include drypoint and collagraph using textured materials and chipboard (all materials will be provided). Registration is required for all workshops by Wednesday, June 25 to 773-553-1952.

**Have a Great Summer!**

We hope that you all have a safe and restful break! Our office is available during the summer months and happy to serve you as you prepare for your 2008-2009 arts education programs.

Our newsletter will take a brief time out but will return in the fall.

Thank you for your continued support and interest in arts education!

For more information about the Office of Arts Education or items featured in this newsletter please contact [cjgerner@cps.k12.il.us](mailto:cjgerner@cps.k12.il.us) or call 773-553-2170.

*Website coming soon!*

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