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**Arts Ed NJ Issues ‘September Ready
Fall 2020 Guidance for Arts Education’**

WARREN, N.J. – As school districts nationwide scramble to finalize plans later this month to safely reopen this fall during the COVID-19 pandemic, New Jersey is once again earning high marks when it comes to arts education best practices.

Following the June 29 release of the New Jersey Department of Education’s *The Road Back, Restart and Recover Plan for Education* guidance to reopen schools, Arts Ed NJ has just unveiled *September Ready Fall 2020 Guidance for Arts Education*, a comprehensive, 126-page document offering practical guidance for K-12 school administrators and arts educators seeking to provide meaningful arts instruction for their students.

More than 130 arts administrators, educators, practitioners, and associations leaders have joined together to develop the strategies, plans, and solutions needed for arts instruction to be delivered to students in a way that addresses, first and foremost, the necessary health, safety, and well-being considerations for students, faculty and staff.

The *September Ready Fall 2020 Guidance for Arts Education* addresses the various learning environments New Jersey schools are considering include in-person, hybrid, and remote learning for each of the arts disciplines (dance, music, theatre, visual arts) as well as complementary arts and culture resources. The guidance is broken down by major categories, including: Scheduling, Facilities and Social Distancing Requirements; Instructional Strategies; Equipment, Materials and Supplies; Technology Considerations and Resources; and Professional Development.

The *September Ready Fall 2020 Guidance for Arts Education* reinforces the 2020 New Jersey Student Learning Standard for Visual and Performing Arts (NJSL-S-VPA), adopted by The New Jersey State Board of Education on June 3. The NJSL-S-VPA outlines what students must be taught in the arts and sets the foundation upon which school districts craft instruction. The report also keeps New Jersey at the forefront of arts education in the United States, ensuring that all students will have equitable access to a quality arts education that leads to artistic literacy and fluency.

Arts education will play a particularly prominent role in education this fall in combating the trauma and loss brought on by the pandemic, largely due to foundational Social-Emotional Learning attributes.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process that provides students with the knowledge, attitude and skills needed to understand and manage emotions and to confront challenges while serving as preventative mental healthcare for students.

The arts are inherently social and emotional, and are best suited for SEL to flourish, as they help students worldwide in managing the additional stresses they currently face. New Jersey's new *Arts Education & Social and Emotional Learning Framework*, the first in the nation, is prominently featured in the new September Ready guidelines, helping teachers develop new strategies for teaching and learning. The state's program is so strong that other states across the country are looking to adopt this exact framework.

This opportunity has led New Jersey educators to become more resourceful and innovative in planning for this fall, not only to ensure safety in the classroom, but also to ensure that arts programs continue to have the same level of academic rigor and educational validity as any other core subject such as language arts literacy or math.

The *September Ready Fall 2020 Guidance for Arts Education* clearly define how New Jersey arts educators may modify their practices not only in teaching, but in classroom orientation, cleaning, spacing and management. Regardless of whether teachers and students are physically together, adopting a hybrid model, or teaching and learning remotely, the Arts Ed NJ guidance provides the tools to create a successful, sequential arts program in any environment.

"The '*September Ready Fall 2020 Guidance for Arts Education*' illustrates that regardless of how arts education is taught, arts curricula can be delivered effectively and successfully," said Robert Morrison, director of Arts Ed NJ and chair of the September Ready Taskforce for Arts Education. "Arts education is important now more than ever, to address the social and emotional needs of our students."

September Ready Taskforce for Arts Education was comprised of representatives from the 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.

For more information about Arts Ed NJ, visit <http://www.artednj.org>

For more information about Arts Ed NJ's COVID-19 Resources, visit <https://www.artsednj.org/covid19/>

For more information about Arts Education and Social and Emotional Learning Framework, visit <https://selarts.org>

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About Arts Ed NJ

Arts Ed NJ is the unified voice for arts education in New Jersey. The mission of Arts Ed NJ is to create the proper conditions for arts learning to take place in New Jersey. Formerly the New Jersey Arts Education Partnership, Arts Ed NJ was founded in 2007 by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, New Jersey Department of Education and Music for All Foundation. Additional support has been provided by the Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation, ArtPride New Jersey Foundation and an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional information is available at www.artsednj.org.