



March 20, 2018

Arts Education in Maryland Schools (AEMS) Alliance
190 W. Ostend St, Suite 210
Baltimore, MD 21230

Dear Ms. Snyder,

I am writing in support of Anne Arundel County Public Schools participation in the Maryland Arts Education Data Dissemination Tool development and implementation. The Arts Education Data Map Project excites us in Anne Arundel County! The idea of constructing an electronic portfolio collection tool with associated rubrics to drive and recognize excellence in the arts is something that is long overdue in preK-12 education.

It will be amazing when we have the searching capability in our public schools to see what is happening in the arts statewide, who is leading in the various arts areas, what resources are being used, where can we go to learn more in a given area, who are the community-based arts partners in our various regions, and where do we have arts education deserts where capacity to grow through the arts must be nurtured.

As you know, Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) is a school district that values the arts—in fact, we have tens of schools specifically working to increase arts-integration in their classrooms across the disciplines. We seek to give all AACPS schools more tools to improve their capacity for integrating the arts into schooling, and we strive to increase access to arts-integrated learning opportunities for all of our students. We know that when the curriculum incorporates the arts, students are further motivated to learn and engage with the instructional materials and tasks at hand. We also know that students who are engaged and have positive experiences at school are more likely to form positive relationships with peers and teachers. Learning through the arts and arts-integration are excellent, research-based vehicles for improving student achievement, social-emotional learning, and school culture.

I support this arts initiative and see it supporting our students on their overall preK-12 learning journey. Our students need a learning environment where exposure to the arts is valued, inquiry is supported, and exploratory learning is part of daily instruction. I see the Arts Education Data Map Project as a step to help Maryland educators build the capacity to reach and engage more young people across our state using the arts, arts integration, and artful thinking as the vehicles.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maureen McMahon".

Maureen McMahon, Ph.D.
Deputy Superintendent for
Academics and Strategic Initiatives