



Ms. Lori Snyder
Executive Director
Arts Education in Maryland Schools Alliance
190 W. Ostend St, Suite 210
Baltimore, MD 21230

November 12, 2018

Dear Ms. Snyder,

We are writing on behalf of the Chesapeake Shakespeare Company (CSC) in support of the development and implementation of *artlook*[®] *Maryland*. We believe that this data-mapping platform with associated rubrics to drive and recognize excellence in the arts is long overdue in preK-12 education in Maryland.

In just 17 years, CSC has become a leader in the Maryland cultural community. Last season, more than 9,000 Maryland middle school and high school students enjoyed matinees, setting an attendance record for our education programming. CSC is excited about the potential to further expand its reach through *artlook*'s publicly-accessible database of arts partners and schools. Our Chesapeake Shakespeare Company Teaching Artists have seen firsthand the positive impacts of providing students with a non-competitive environment in which they can grow, learn, prepare, and laugh together. The *artlook* map will provide a crucial tool for connecting schools and arts partners throughout the state to help target resources to fill gaps in arts access for our students, particularly those from low-income schools and communities. Furthermore, we believe that *artlook* will drive increased efficiency for our education department by making it easier to locate and contact schools with students who would most benefit from our in-school residencies, afterschool and weekend programs, summer camps, and other classes and community education events.

We know that arts education is essential as part of a well-rounded, world-class education that we want to provide for each student in our city and state. Numerous studies indicate the arts' positive impact on student achievement and test scores, overall motivation, and critical-thinking skills. We also know that students involved in the arts and who have constructive experiences through school are more likely to form positive relationships with peers and teachers. When learning is interesting and exciting, both student engagement and achievement will rise. From there we can engage them more deeply in the learning of all disciplines.

We are pleased to endorse the implementation of *artlook Maryland* and see this important project supporting our mission to break down the barriers between Shakespeare and audience members. Our students need a learning environment that helps them develop empathy and critical thinking skills by integrating literature and the arts. We see *artlook* as a step to help Maryland educators and cultural institutions build the capacity to reach and engage more young people across our state through the arts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lesley Malin".

Lesley Malin
Managing Director
Chesapeake Shakespeare Company

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Heneghan".

Ron Heneghan
Director of Education
Chesapeake Shakespeare Company

7 South Calvert Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
410.244.8571 office
410.244.8570 box office
chesapeakeshakespeare.com