

ARTS ED FOR ALL

Practical Strategies for Engaging Every Student in the Arts

Assess Your Current Program

Evaluate Accessibility: Are there barriers preventing students from accessing arts classes (e.g., financial, physical, or academic)?

Identify Gaps: Are there specific groups of students (e.g., students with disabilities, ELL, or low-income students) who are underrepresented in your arts program?

Analyze Resources: Do you have the necessary resources (materials, equipment, space) to support a diverse range of students and their needs?

Foster a Supportive Culture

Varied Curriculum: Ensure your program reflects a wide range of artistic traditions, including music, dance, theatre, and visual arts from different cultures and time periods.

Differentiated Instruction: Use a range of teaching strategies (e.g., visual aids, hands-on activities, technology) to cater to different learning styles (visual, auditory, kinesthetic).

Modifications: Make necessary adjustments to activities for students with physical, sensory, or cognitive disabilities (e.g., accessible materials, adaptive instruments, alternative performance methods).

Engage and Empower All Learners

Student Voice and Choice: Provide opportunities for students to express their ideas and interests through projects or performances that allow creative freedom.

Collaborative Projects: Foster teamwork and cooperation by involving students in group performances, collaborative artworks, or joint musical compositions that require participation from diverse learners.

Supportive Language and Representation: Use language that is welcoming and encouraging for all students. Incorporate a variety of perspectives in course materials and class discussions.

Professional Development

Ongoing Training: Offer teachers professional development in inclusive practices and universal design for learning (UDL) to ensure they're equipped to meet the needs of all students.

Collaborate with Experts: Engage with experts in special education, arts education, and diversity to ensure your practices are current and effective.

Expand Understanding: Encourage staff to engage in training that enhances their awareness of the experiences and needs of students from various backgrounds.

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Secure Funding and Scholarships

Research Grants and Scholarships: Look for local and national grants, as well as scholarships, that can help cover the cost of arts supplies, tuition, and special programs.

Partner with Local Organizations: Connect with local arts organizations, businesses, and philanthropists who may be willing to provide funding, materials, or scholarships for students.

Fundraising Initiatives: Create community fundraising events, like benefit performances or art auctions, to support scholarships or provide art supplies for students in need.

Promote Community Engagement

Involve Families and Caregivers: Encourage family involvement in arts activities by offering family art nights, performances, or showcases.

Community Partnerships: Build relationships with community centers, museums, and local artists to expand learning opportunities and bring professional artists into the classroom.

Public Performances and Exhibits: Give students opportunities to showcase their work through performances, gallery shows, or community events, ensuring that all students are celebrated.

Continuous Reflection and Improvement

Collect Feedback: Regularly solicit feedback from students, families, and staff to evaluate the inclusivity of your program and identify areas for growth.

Celebrate Successes: Highlight and celebrate achievements, both large and small, in creating an environment that is supportive to all.

Adapt and Evolve: Be open to making adjustments based on student needs, new research, and evolving arts practices.

DON'T FORGET!

Check local arts organizations, foundations, and online platforms for grants, scholarships, and funding opportunities to support your program:

- **Local Arts Councils:** Many offer grants for school-based arts projects.
- **National Arts Foundations:** Look into the NEA or NAEA for funding.
- **Crowdfunding:** Platforms like DonorsChoose.org help raise money for supplies or projects.
- **Corporate Sponsorships:** Reach out to businesses with arts-related initiatives.
- **University Partnerships:** Local universities may offer collaboration or grants.
- **Online Platforms:** Try GoFundMe or Kickstarter for immediate funding.



Our [funding guide](#) is also a great place to start!

