

EdMatters

Celebrating Arts in Education Week - Iredell-Statesville Schools Fine Arts: Hope in Action

Walk into any school within the Iredell-Statesville Schools District and you will hear the beautiful sound of music. As you continue through the hallways, the student art work impresses at every turn. Each and every student within the district

can participate in outstanding performing and visual art instruction from kindergarten through 12th Grade. All elementary students take music and art—and that fine arts education is just the start. In our middle and high schools, our fine arts programming expands to include Band, Chorus, Dance, Orchestra, Theatre, and Visual Arts. The Fine Arts classrooms in Iredell-Statesville Schools are thriving environments where students learn and grow.

Our fine arts programs are especially important to Iredell-Statesville Schools because of the many ways the arts support every aspect of our strategic plan. From lowering the dropout rate to increasing test scores, the arts are a critical partner in educating the whole child. The arts are a proven antidote to poverty and support mental health. Take for example N.B. Mills Elementary's theatre program under the direction of Chad Schuermeyer. The only elementary school that offers theatre, N.B. Mills knows that participating in theater productions, like Annie, fosters self-awareness, teaches social awareness, and builds relationship skills.



N.B. Mills Elementary cast of Annie on stage. The cast went on to participate in the Charlotte Junior Theater Celebration.

The arts in middle school expand upon the elementary experience and provide our early teens with much needed structured spaces for creativity, self-expression, and exploration. These environments are especially important as our middle school students learn self-management. Because the arts have been shown to reduce disciplinary infractions by upwards of 3.6%, the arts are critical to school success. One dynamic arts program



Third Creek Middle School Dance Program.

is Dance at Third Creek Middle School run by Sonya Briggs. From her classroom studio, students are encouraged to continue with Dance at the county's unique and rigorous Dance Magnet Program at Statesville



Lake Norman High School AP Art Students at Four Corners Framing and Gallery.

High School under the direction of Cheryl Klaft.

Our high school students have Fine Arts opportunities not found in other local schools. Our specialty programming sets us apart. From the Statesville High School Dance Magnet to Technical Theatre at West, North, and Lake Norman High Schools; from Jazz Ensembles to Orchestra; the arts offered in Iredell-Statesville Schools are unmatched by charter or private schools. The arts also offer Honors and Advanced Placement classes for those looking for the most challenging curriculum experience. And every arts class prepares the student for a future endeavor or career.



Night of 1,000 Strings.



West Iredell High School Chorus Students.

According to Forbes, the jobs of today integrate applications of artistic and technological talent and there is a profound need for art skills in growing career sectors.



Percussion student practices at Statesville High School.

Business, science and engineering, and tech companies are clamoring for the skills that the arts promote—collaboration, problem solving, and creativity. Fine arts prepares our students and gives them a career advantage in a rapidly changing future.

Reaching over 25,000 family and community members every year through performances and exhibits, our fine arts programs are excellent because of partnerships



A+ Day at Scotts Elementary School.



Middle School Art Teachers at Superintendent's Art Show.

with community, families, educators, and students. Partners such as the NC Museum of Art, Blumenthal Theater, A+ Schools, The Songbird Foundation, and Iredell Arts Council connect our schools with our community. Out of 80 fine arts educators, 48% have earned a master's degree, are certified in National Boards, or are working towards one or the other. Our educators are creative industry experts who perform and visual artists who produce, bringing talent and educational expertise to the classroom every day.



Statesville High School Marching Band students.

We invite you to see for yourself. Bring your family and come see a musical this spring. Attend one of the seven All District events from I-SS Elementary Honors Chorus to Night of 1,000 Strings to the Superintendent Art Shows. Keep an ear to WAME (92.9 FM/550 AM) in December for holiday music courtesy of our students. With excellent K-12 programming, an array of offerings, partners in our community, involved families, and stellar educators, it is no wonder that the Fine Arts classrooms in Iredell-Statesville Schools are thriving environments where students learn and grow.



Elementary Honors Chorus rehearsing with their clinician.

We Proudly Support the Iredell-Statesville Schools!



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