

ARTS ED NEWARK partners call for **EQUITY** in **HIGH-QUALITY ARTS EDUCATION** for **ALL YOUTH** in Newark. We believe the **ARTS CAN TRANSFORM** young people and help them **THRIVE!**



WHY ARTS EDUCATION?

55%

More likely to attend college

71%

For high-risk youth: college attendance

29%

More likely to earn 4-year degree

20%

Lower dropout rates

Arts education plays a critical role in the future of Newark:

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Arts education increases non-academic, interpersonal skills — focus, empathy, and collaboration.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Students with access to arts education show higher language development and literacy outcomes.

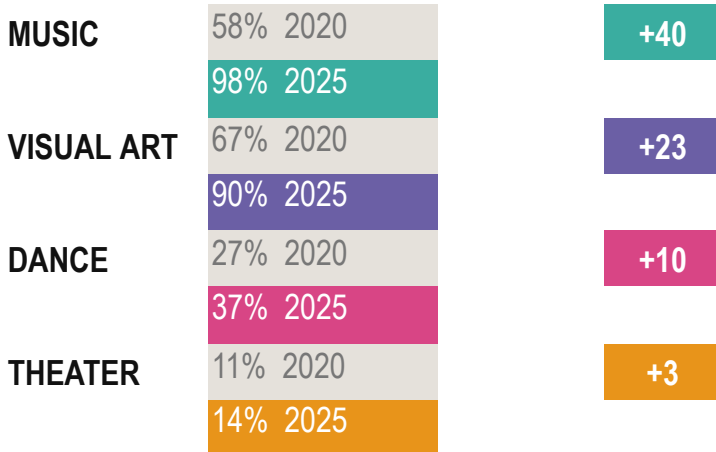
BETTER SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

Experiencing and creating art stimulates critical thinking, expression, and problem-solving.

ARTS ACCESS IN NEWARK SCHOOLS

Between 2020 and 2025, Newark Board of Education schools dramatically expanded arts access across all four disciplines.

% of NBOE students with access (2020 vs. 2025):



KEY TAKEAWAY

Music and visual arts access have surged. Advocates must demand more access to dance and theater.

NEWARK YOUTH PROGRESS 2020 → 2025

Graduation Rate	↗ Positive
Attendance Rate	↗ Positive
Post-Secondary Enrollment	↗ Positive
Youth Population	↗ Positive

GAPS THAT REMAIN

Only 23% of NPS 3rd graders meet ELA standards vs. 44% statewide. Multilingual learners grew 17→24% with a 45:1 bilingual teacher shortage. Arts education is essential to closing these gaps.

“ Art is the window that reveals our imagination. And our imagination determines our future. — Willie Cole, Native Newark & Renowned Artist

SUMMER ARTS INSTRUCTION

Arts Ed Newark has partnered with NBOE since 2013 — as Summer Plus, now SummerQUEST — with annual student surveys since 2017.

Summer arts instruction works.

8 years · thousands of students · zero exceptions

8 yrs	~21K	30%+
Survey evaluation	Students served	First-ever arts experience

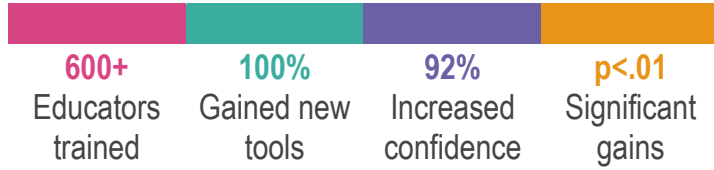
8 CONSISTENT FINDINGS (2017–2025)

- ▶ **Confidence grows every year**
Students report thinking more positively about themselves post-program.
- ▶ **Making friends is the #1 outcome**
“I made new friends” earns the top survey rating every single year.
- ▶ **Arts support wellbeing in crisis**
Even online in 2020, students reported joy, expression, and coping.
- ▶ **Artist identity strengthens**
Matched surveys show gains in “I think of myself as an artist.”
- ▶ **Parent engagement amplifies**
Students with arts-engaged parents score higher on every SEL indicator.
- ▶ **Satisfaction consistently high**
All sites range from Satisfied to Very Satisfied every year measured.
- ▶ **Students always want to return**
“I want to participate next year” — positive at every site, every year.
- ▶ **Music is the #1 coping strategy**
“Listen to music” tops the stress-response list every year since 2021.

“ I made new friends. It made me think in new ways. — SummerQUEST Student

HEALING CENTERED ENGAGEMENT (HCE)

Since 2020, AEN has led a multi-year HCE training series for educators, teaching artists, and community practitioners across NJ and beyond.



WHAT THE DATA SHOW

► Knowledge gains are measurable

“Know a lot” about trauma jumped 11%→60% post-training (p=0.001).

► Confidence with youth rises

Pre-training: 42% confident. Post-training: 68–80%. None “not at all confident.”

► Arts use in trauma work doubles

Intentional arts use rose from 30% to 57% of participants post-training.

► 100% gained tools — every cohort

Every year. Every format. Every cohort. Zero exceptions across four years.

PARTICIPANTS AGREE

Arts provide a vital outlet for expression · Help regulate the nervous system · Build resilience · Are a self-care tool for educators · Create psychological safety

“ I now understand what it means to create a safe and healing-centered space through my art form.
— NJ Educator Participant

OUR PLATFORM FOR CHANGE

Arts Ed Newark works at the intersection of advocacy, data, and community to ensure every Newark young person has access to high-quality arts education.

AS PARTNERS, WE SEEK TO:

► Build Collaboration

Connect arts programs citywide so no student falls through the gaps.

► Map Arts Access

Identify which youth have access to arts education in and out of school.

► Ensure Quality

Promote standards-aligned, culturally responsive arts instruction.

► Advocate for Resources

Push for increased funding, staffing, and equitable access in all schools.

► Build Advocate Capacity

Train community partners to speak powerfully for arts education.

“ Giving a child the tools to bring their most creative thoughts and ideas to life through arts education is the ultimate gift.

— Porché Hardy, Advocate & Arts High Alum

THIS WORK MATTERS FOR:

EDUCATORS

Healing tools & trauma-informed practice

PARENTS

Your child’s growth, identity & confidence

FUNDERS

8 years of proven, measurable outcomes

POLICYMAKERS

Data to drive equitable arts investment

Achieving the goal of **ARTS ED EQUITY** for all Newark youth is a **COMMUNITY-WIDE EFFORT.**

HOW YOU CAN BE AN ARTS ED CHAMPION!

Spread the Word! Arts advocacy starts with each individual - speak up! **Get the Tools** to be an Arts Ed Champion. **Share on Social Media.** Tell your story and engage others! **Become a Partner!** Join a shared community vision.



WHAT WE DO

- SummerQUEST**
~2,700 students daily · 15 sites · 8 years of rigorous annual outcome data.
- HCE Training**
600+ educators trained across NJ. Statistically significant gains confirmed every year.
- Arts Advocacy**
Citywide data, mapping, and policy advocacy for every Newark student.

OUR IMPACT

- ~21,000** students served in summer since 2012
- 600+** educators & practitioners trained
- 100%** of all cohorts gained new tools
- +40 pts** music access increase 2020–2025
- 8 years** of rigorous evaluation data

GET INVOLVED

- ▶ Spread the Word!
- ▶ Sponsor arts programming.
- ▶ Fund HCE training.
- ▶ Partner with AEN.
- ▶ Advocate for arts access.
- ▶ Share on Social Media.
- ▶ Become a Partner!

*“The arts can **TRANSFORM** young people and help them **THRIVE!**”*