



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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A Nationwide Call to Start the Art Week

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Because kids have a right to arts education, the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA), in conjunction with Americans for the Arts, will launch *Start the Art Week* during the week of October 9, as part of National Arts and Humanities Month.

Start the Art Week is a national initiative to inspire students to participate in the arts and keep arts in schools. Parents, teachers, and arts advocates across the country are encouraged to embrace, sponsor, and support the arts during the weeklong celebration.

"All children deserve a quality arts education," said Anna Weselak, president of the PTA. "*Start the Art Week* is not only an opportunity to engage and celebrate the arts, but also to recognize the importance and benefits of the arts in our schools and communities."

The PTA offers information on how to become an advocate for the arts, how to launch the Reflections Program, and also provides a list of suggested arts activities for every day of *Start the Art Week*. Suggestions for the week include showcasing international music, dance, and art to promote diversity; inviting local musicians, theater groups, and dance troupes to perform at a special assembly; and encouraging students to stand up for their arts by creating art letters to President Bush asking him to save the arts. More ideas are available online.

"We are delighted that schools will be joining the coast-to-coast celebration of arts and culture in America this month," said Robert L. Lynch, president of Americans for the Arts. "*Start the Art Week* will help stress that arts education is an integral and fundamental part of a child's development."

Studies show that there is a direct link between the arts and student achievement. Students who study the arts develop critical thinking skills, problem-solving techniques, and a drive for excellence. According to a 2005 Harris Poll commissioned by Americans for the Arts, "93

percent of Americans agree that the arts are vital to providing a well-rounded education for children."

PTA's *Start the Art Week* is supported by U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, Americans for the Arts, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association for Music Education, and The National Art Education Association.

About PTA

PTA comprises nearly six million parents and other concerned adults devoted to the educational success of children and the promotion of parent involvement in schools. PTA is a registered 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization that prides itself on being a powerful voice for children, a relevant resource for parents, and a strong advocate for public education. Membership in PTA is open to anyone who is concerned with the education, health, and welfare of children and youth.

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, it has a record of more than 50 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

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