WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
Public Instruction

Jill K. Underly, PhD, State Superintendent

DATE: August 2026

TO: District Administrators, Curriculum and Instruction Directors, Principals

FROM: Chris Gleason
DPI Arts and Creativity Education Consultant
Phone – 608-264-9554
Email - christopher.gleason@dpi.wi.gov; Website - http://dpi.wi.gov/fine-arts

SUBJECT: Wisconsin Arts Celebration Project, DPI Arts & Creativity Newsletter, & Fall Conference Attendance

Thank you for your continued support of the arts and creativity in Wisconsin. I have three important items for you as you prepare for the upcoming school year:

Item 1 - The Wisconsin Arts Celebration Project is a project developed by the Department of Public Instruction with the goal of highlighting a human capacity while showing the interconnectedness of all of the arts. The project offers **FREE** music, lesson plans, and materials created by local artists for Wisconsin schools, communities, and libraries. This year's project theme is **Collaboration**. The project launches on November 1, 2026 on the DPI Website. Learn more about the WACP Project here as well as the opportunity for your school to receive one of six $1,000 funding opportunities.

Item 2 - I would love to have you and your arts staff consider subscribing to my monthly Arts and Creativity Newsletter. It contains updates, announcements, arts news, grant opportunities, teaching strategies, research, advocacy, and professional development information. Follow this link to see previous issues and to subscribe: https://dpi.wi.gov/fine-arts/newsletter.

Item 3 - We are fortunate in Wisconsin to have a number of outstanding arts organizations that are dedicated to supporting the work of your arts educators. Each year these organizations go above and beyond to offer timely professional development, mentoring, collaboration, and inspiration. Below is a list of the statewide arts conferences to consider for your fine arts staff. The time and money invested in supporting your arts teachers' attendance will surely benefit your students..

- Alliance for Wisconsin Theatre Education Conference – UW-Parkside, September 18, 2026
- Wisconsin Dance Council Conference – MYArts, Madison, October 10, 2026
- Wisconsin Art Education Association Conference – Waunakee Intermediate School, October 30-31, 2026
- Wisconsin State Music Conference – Monona Terrace, Madison, October 28-31, 2026

These annual gatherings are the largest professional development opportunities scheduled statewide for educators engaged with the arts in learning. Conference opportunities often include the sharing of effective arts instructional strategies and assessment methods, in-depth standards reviews, the latest research, integration of technology, and inclusive arts practices.

I am asking for your encouragement and support of your art educators in building their knowledge and professional skills by providing release time for their participation in a statewide conference within their content area. Thank you for your partnership in fostering a comprehensive education for our children and for supporting the continual building of professional capacity in our educators.