



Organized in 2007, The Arts in Special Education Consortium provides means by which professionals and key stakeholders involved in arts education for students on the special education spectrum in New York can share perspectives, determine needs, develop ways to meet them, and deepen practice and understanding. Our purpose is to bring together constituencies, and engage them in meaningful conversation and exploration in order to ascertain barriers to and opportunities for providing quality arts education to special education students.

www.ArtsSpecialEd.org

The Steering Committee meets on a monthly basis, collaborates on events, makes decisions on focus, goals and mission, and carries out the necessary tasks to succeed in reaching our goals.

Steering Committee

Stephen Yaffe, Chair
Lisa Dennett
Adam Goldberg
Elise May
Maryann Polesinelli
Ronnie Shuster

The Support Committee consists of individuals with a high interest in the goals of the Arts in Special Education Consortium but without the time needed for participation on the Steering Committee. Support Committee members may take on individual tasks as needed for specific functions of the Arts in Special Education Consortium.

Support Committee

Patricia Freer
Dena Malarek
Linsey Miller
Maria Mitchell
Romy Nordlinger
Erica Rooney
Constance Stienon
Meryl Wittenberg

If you are interested in joining the Steering or Support Committee please send an email to info@ArtsSpecialEd.org



We wish to extend our thanks and appreciation to the following organizations and individuals for their support and help

CO/LAB (Creative Opportunities without Limits And Boundaries) Theater Group

Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana

Museum of Jewish Heritage

New York City Department of Education, District 75, Citywide Special Education

New York City Department of Education, District 75, Transition Services

Maryann Polesinelli

Jordana Mendelson, Anthony Ptak and Aedan Ptak

The New York City Ballet and The New York City Ballet Education Department

Shelly Segev, Occupational Therapy Supervisor NYCDOE

Amy Shrank, Supervising Occupational Therapist D4 & D6 - D75: P94 & P169 NYCDOE

Barbara Vaccaro

Emily Davis, Tessa Derfner, Wema Harris, Dena Malarek, Linsey Miller

P94M, The Spectrum School

The Students at P168X@194

The P177Q Technology Band

New York State Council on the Arts

I.D.E.A.S.

The Arts in Special Education Consortium is made possible by The New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. Sponsored by I.D.E.A.S.



**Council on
the Arts**



Those of you on Twitter are encouraged to tweet about the conference using #artsped



Connecting to Tomorrow

How the Arts Enable

DAY AT A GLANCE

- 9:15 **Coffee and Registration** – Lobby, 1st floor
- 10:00 **Welcome/Overview** – Edmond J. Safra Hall/Auditorium, 1st floor
- 10:20 **Keynote: Opening Doors at All Ages – The Arts and People with Disabilities**
 Dr D. (Dr. Joseph Dutkowsky, M.D.)
 Edmond J. Safra Hall/Auditorium, 1st floor
- 11:00 **Entry Points to Common Ground**
 Edmond J. Safra Hall/Auditorium, 1st floor
- 12:00 **Lunch** – Events Hall, 2nd floor (12:00-12:45)
- 12:55 **Afternoon Sessions** – *Art Making and the Journey Ahead*** (12:55-2:10)
 - Dance – Safra Hall/Auditorium (1st floor)
 - Drama – Events Hall (2nd floor)
 - Music – Classroom A/B (1st floor)
 - Visual Arts – Classroom C/D (1st floor)

** Please attend the sessions that you registered for.
This will ensure adequate attendance and ample space.
- 2:20 **Afternoon Sessions** – *Art Making and the Journey Ahead*** (2:20-3:35)
 - Dance – Safra Hall/Auditorium (1st floor)
 - Drama – Events Hall (2nd floor)
 - Music – Classroom A/B (1st floor)
 - Visual Arts – Classroom C/D (1st floor)
- 3:45 **Final Convening – *Connecting to Tomorrow***
 Edmond J. Safra Hall/Auditorium, 1st floor
 - Looking Ahead
 - Door Prize

PLEASE NOTE that photographs & video will be taken throughout this conference. Your likeness may be used for documentation purposes, reporting, or appear on our website. Only presenters or panelists will be identified. No compensation will be received, given or expected by any party. If you have objections to having your photo/video taken, please make that known to the conference chair or a Steering Cmt'ee member.

Morning Sessions

10:20 am

Keynote Address

Opening Doors at All Ages – The Arts and People with Disabilities

Speaker

Joseph P. Dutkowsky, MD, Associate Medical Director of the Weinberg Family Cerebral Palsy Center at Columbia University, is a leading specialist in the fields of physical and intellectual disabilities and Pediatric Orthopaedic Surgeon. Dr. Dutkowsky earned his undergraduate degree in Biomedical Engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and his M.D. from the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University in 1983. He completed residencies at both Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center and The University of Tennessee/Campbell Foundation, followed by a fellowship at Harvard University and Boston Children's Hospital. He has since dedicated his career to serving individuals with special needs, traveling to small hospitals and community clinics throughout the state of New York to care for rural children and adults with disabilities. In the last four years, in addition to his work above, he began teaching and seeing patients at Columbia University Medical Center in New York City. He has given lectures internationally and assisted in the care of children with disabilities in the barrio of Lima, Peru.

An activist in his field, Dr. Dutkowsky is a committed member of organizations including the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, the Pediatric Orthopaedic Society of North America, and the American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine, for which he served as president in 2011. Additionally, he is an Attending Orthopaedic Surgeon at Bassett Medical Center in upstate New York and an Associate Clinical Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery at the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. A pioneer in the care of adults with childhood-onset physical and intellectual disabilities, Dr. Dutkowsky's work was featured in an article in The New York Times and a television segment on PBS. A video posted last year on July 1st on Upworthy of a program he developed for children with special needs with the New York City Ballet went viral with over four and a half million views.

Entry Points to Common Ground

Can the Arts help students with disabilities live meaningful and purposeful lives? Do the Arts develop skills that deepen and enrich the lives of students beyond school? From their variety of viewpoints, panelists will address these questions. They will explore how, through partnerships, collaboration and thinking outside of the silo, they can find common ground in Arts programming and Artmaking.

Panelists

Gloria Corsino is the President of the Citywide Education Council for District 75. Her first step into parent leadership was as a member of her children's Parents Association. She went on to become a member of the School Leadership Team followed by her current position, which has helped to bring her vision of becoming an involved parent beyond that of her own family's needs. Gloria is the mother of three sons, two of whom are diagnosed on the autism spectrum. After their diagnosis, Gloria realized that in order to be an effective parent advocate she would have to be knowledgeable about their disability and the services that they need to be successful. Today, as President of the Citywide Council, she collaborates with community-based organizations and government agencies to aide families and their children with disabilities on their educational journey as well as a successful transition into adulthood.

A lifelong resident of Brooklyn, *Gary Hecht* has maintained a distinguished 37-year career within District 75, the New York City Department of Education, as the Superintendent from 2010 – January, 2016, and Deputy Superintendent from 2005-2010. Prior to serving at the district level he held administrative positions as assistant principal and principal for students with special needs. He has distinguished himself as a progressive leader, student and parent advocate who worked tirelessly to cultivate programs that provided opportunities and promise for his students, and is a strong and vocal supporter for building collaborative school environments. Throughout his career he has built strong relationships with community groups and agencies that provided services and supports to students with disabilities.

Mr. Hecht earned a Bachelor's degree in Elementary and Special Education, and a Master's degree in Special Education with an advanced certificate in Administration and Supervision from Brooklyn College.

Since 2008, *Sacha Inglis* has served as the Executive Assistant to the District 75 Superintendent. The district is part of the Division of Specialized Instruction and Student Support within the NYC Department of Education. In that role Ms. Inglis provides supports to administration, staff and parents in 60 school programs in over 320 sites across the five boroughs. Ms. Inglis provides direct support to 58 parent coordinators who assist over 23,000 families.

Before her present position, Sacha was District 75 Director of Family Engagement for four years, providing support to schools and families, and working collaboratively with various organizations.



Prior to joining the DOE, Sacha served as the Director for Public Affairs at Learning Leaders, supporting NYC public schools participating in Learning Leaders programs.

Sacha holds a Bachelor's Degree in Applied Science from the New York Institute of Technology, a Master's Degree in Public Affairs from Hunter College and a Master's Degree in Social Work from Touro College.

Natalie Mc Queen serves as the Director of Transition Services in the NYC Department of Education's District 75. In that capacity, she facilitates and supports district-wide activities that are focused on improving students' academic and functional achievement from school to post-school activities in the areas of education, employment and independent living. Her work includes collaborations with students, families, community organizations and other stakeholders to support the achievement of positive postsecondary results. With a focus on the needs of students, Ms. Mc Queen also advocates for the development of new programs and the restructuring of existing ones.

Throughout her career, Ms. McQueen has served in various capacities providing services to individuals with special needs in school and adult rehabilitative settings. Her work has included but is not limited to participation in the NYSED Model Transition Program (MTP) and various Work Readiness, Work Adjustment Training (WAT), Supported Employment and Psychosocial Clubhouse programs.

Erica Rooney is a Teaching Artist and licensed Art Therapist. For many years she was a scientific illustrator and writing teacher. As a Teaching Artist, her work is multi-modal since her background includes music, poetry and the visual arts. She is a Co-Curriculum Writer and Lead Teaching Artist in the EASE program, Everyday Arts for Special Education, combining professional development with in-class co-teaching across all special ed populations. With Marquis Studios, she is a Master Teaching Artist and mentor in TATI, Teaching Artist Training Institute, training teachers to work with students on the autism spectrum. Her belief in the power of the Arts to awaken students to the rich pleasures of artistic exploration has infused her teaching in varied settings – Montessori, HeadStart, public and private schools, college, private practice and family work. Erica has an MFA in Poetry from Cornell University and an MPS in Creative Arts Therapy from Pratt Institute.

Ronnie Shuster is the principal of P94M, a K-12 public school in Manhattan serving students with autism as well as other disabilities. Ms. Shuster is dedicated to developing a school that nurtures children individually and encourages them to reach their academic and social potential. Her school's curriculum taps into the fascination that drives children's interests, and helps them to learn to be productive members of their community. She believes that the visual and performing arts are critical to youth development, and has incorporated Arts education in every classroom in her school. Ronnie is a member of the Arts in Special Education Consortium's Steering Committee.

Afternoon Sessions

12:55pm and 2:20pm

Art Making and the Journey Ahead

Explore connections between Art making in a specific discipline and skills essential to living and participating more meaningfully in the world outside and beyond school. These hands-on workshops include discussion facilitated by a multi-stakeholder team.

DANCE

Presenters

Frank DeGennaro has worked for the past 26 years in the NYC DOE as a teacher, IEP Coordinator, Job Developer, Assistant Principal and Principal. He has been the principal for the Stephen D. McSweeney School for the past 4 years, working with his administrator and teacher colleagues to create an atmosphere where the whole student is considered. The school features a highly successful inclusion program at Lehman High School where 90+% of the students pass their Regents exams and most of them go to college. Stephen D. McSweeney also has a well-developed transition program that produces competitive employees. Frank is committed to the Arts as a means of getting students to express themselves, communicate, socialize and display their incredible talents. His school features teachers of fine arts, music and performance art. Frank's schools have been associated with Flamenco Vivo for the past seven years.

Hanaah Frechette is the Managing Director of Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana, one of the premier flamenco dance and music companies in New York City. In her role she primarily oversees the robust programming calendar of Arts education activities, performances and classes. After graduating from Florida State University with a BFA in Dance and Spanish, Hanaah moved to Brooklyn and has called the borough home for the past 5 years. She was selected to take part in the 2016 Executive Program in Arts & Culture Strategies class through National Arts Strategies and Penn University. In 2014, she completed a 14-month fellowship with the Emerging Leaders of New York Arts and has recently joined their Board of Directors on the fundraising and strategic partnership committees. Hanaah is also a freelance choreographer and dancer, most recently working with Empty Nave Projects, Artists by Any Other Name and Kaley Pruitt Dance. She is a member of the Arts in Special Education Consortium Arts Values Working Group.

Basilio Georges (Guitarist/Singer) has studied guitar in Madrid, Seville, and New York and has accompanied such artists as Rafael Fajardo and Concha Vargas in the U.S; La Tati, Faico, Ciro, and Manolete in dance studios; and many cantaores such as Juanele de Jerez, Marcelino Sanchez and Antonio Benamargo in various Flamenco peñas in Madrid. His recordings include "Apertivos Pa' El Oido" with Flamenco Latino, "Guerra, Amor y Campanas" which was the music for a Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana project, "La Reina del Nilo" with singer/dancer La Conja and "Cante Flamenco" with singer Luis Vargas. His guitar work was featured in the soundtrack of Almodovar's "High Heels" and he participated in the 1992 Broadway revival of "Man of La



Mancha." Basilio is on the staff at the American Institute of Guitar and teaches privately through Flamenco Latino.

Since the second grade *Cheryl Green* wanted to be a teacher and make a difference in the lives of young people. In college she hoped to combine her desire to be a teacher with her passion for the Arts by becoming a visual arts teacher. Upon graduation there were not many jobs for Art teachers and she pursued her masters' degree in special education. That began an over-thirty-year career in the field of special education, twenty-five as an educational leader. Cheryl is currently an Assistant Principal at P721X (Stephen D. McSweeney). As the school's Art Liaison, she is deeply committed to the Arts, their value in school and throughout life. She wrote the \$15,000 Arts grant the past two years that brought Flamenco Vivo to the school. Her greatest strength as an educational leader is that she believes all children can achieve, and that it is her job to provide staff with the necessary resources and supports to ensure every student reaches his or her full potential.

Lisette Melendez attended Lehman College in the Bronx for both her undergraduate and graduate degrees. She is a special education teacher at P721X Stephen McSweeney School. This is her second year there, but she has been a New York City teacher for 13 years. She enjoys working with young adults and helping them reach their potential through academic and vocational education. Lisette believes every student should be valued, respected, and empowered to make a positive contribution to society.

DRAMA

Presenters

Laura Borgwardt is an actor and teaching artist who lives in Brooklyn, but has a valid passport just in case! She currently works with Arts Connection – teaching acting, creative movement, and musical theater to PreK-High School students and working with P94 The Spectrum School's STAARS program. There she helps middle schoolers on the autism spectrum put on a production and explores theater careers with high schoolers as they prepare for college and career readiness through the Arts.

She is also a teaching artist at The Stuttering Association for the Young – an organization that uses the Arts to improve the confidence and communication skills of kids and teens who stutter. She is a co-founder, administrator, and teaching artist for CO/LAB Theater Group – a non-profit that offers teens and adults with developmental disabilities a creative and social outlet through theater arts. Learn more at www.colabtheatergroup.com.

Eugene Coco is a clinical school social worker, currently working with elementary and high school aged special needs students at P53K, a District 75 School, servicing developmentally delayed, autistic and emotionally disturbed students. In the course of my 35 years of teaching, providing crisis intervention support, and, presently, clinical support services, I have had the good fortune of being able to use my physical education, special education, and literary backgrounds to comprehensively serve students in the most compassionate and supportive way possible. I have also had the good fortune of having 20 children's books published and am currently implementing a behavioral curriculum I developed called: "Teaching Little Hearts to be Big," which focuses on



teaching students how to recognize when their peers are mad, sad, or frustrated, and “opening their hearts” wide enough in order to help them.

Lisa Dennett is the founder/director of Interactive Drama for Education and Awareness in the Schools (I.D.E.A.S.), which specializes in devising theater through improvisation with students with disabilities and other disadvantages. Lisa is an actress, singer and teaching artist who provides professional development workshops to teaching artists, teachers and special workshops for parents. She instituted drama classes with blind youth and adults at the Lighthouse where she taught for 16 years. Lisa is a nationally certified Sign Language Interpreter and holds an MA degree from New York University. She is founding co-chair of the Arts in Special Education Consortium, has worked as a consultant with VSArts and is a past Chair of the NY State Theater Education Association, NYC chapter.

MUSIC

Presenters

Emily Davis is a Music and Literacy Teacher at P168X, a District 75 school in the Bronx. She teaches students with autism in grades Pre-Kindergarten through 5th grade to joyfully participate in music making, movement and listening. She also works closely with her administration as the Arts Liaison to support other Arts teachers and enhance Arts Education at P168X by partnering with various Arts organizations. Emily holds a B.S. in Music Therapy from Utah State University (magna cum laude) and a M.S. in Urban Education from Mercy College (with distinction). She lives in New York City with her husband Bryan and their two children Sarah and Austin. Emily is a member of the ASEC Arts Values Working Group.

Adam Goldberg implements the latest technologies, specifically the iPad and Logic Pro, to empower his students as music makers in an all-inclusive music making environment. This empowerment has led to wonderful opportunities for his students to represent the true capabilities of special populations, including filmings for District 75 and Fox News, and features on NPR's *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered*. As invitees of VSA at The Kennedy Center, Mr. Goldberg's student band, the P.S. 177 Technology Band, performed in Washington D.C. to open the U.S. Department of Education's International Education Week. They have also performed at the Upper West Side Apple Store, pedagogical conferences and various special occasions.

Mr. Goldberg has presented for NYSSMA, TI:ME, WNET's Celebration for Teaching and Learning, The UFT, The Soho and Upper West Side Apple Stores and The Arts in Special Education Consortium's annual conference. He has written articles for macProVideo.com, and is an Apple Distinguished Educator. He serves on the ASEC Steering Committee and is a founding member of the ASEC Arts Values Working Group.

A member of the Arts in Special Education Consortium's Steering Committee, *Maryann Polesinelli* has had a variety of career experiences that have shaped her ideas and mindset regarding the power of the Arts and languages in educating both special needs and typically developing students, and in the concept of exposing them to a world to which they may not have



been privy. Ms. Polesinelli is currently the District 75 Director of English Language Learner (ELL) Citywide Programs covering English as a New Language (ENL), Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) and Dual Language Bilingual Education (Programs) across the District's 58 schools spanning 370 sites across the five boroughs of New York and one site in Syosset. In this capacity her office provides instructional and compliance support for ENL and bilingual teachers and administrators, as well as classroom teachers with whom Integrated ENL is provided. Formerly, Ms. Polesinelli sang leading roles in opera, oratorio, operetta and concerts in the U.S., Canada, Puerto Rico, Italy, France and Germany.

Special thanks to

All the *students at P168X@194* for giving us a video peek at how they are exploring their voice and self-expression in music classes.

The P177Q Technology Band for representing exemplary free improvisation.

VISUAL ARTS

Presenters

Jordana Mendelson is an Associate Professor of Art history in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at NYU. I have served on the Board of GiGi's Playhouse NYC: Down Syndrome Achievement Center, where I co-chair the Programs Advisory Committee. I served on the School Leadership Team at PS 3 in Manhattan for 3 years and am currently serving on the School Leadership Team for P94. With Anthony Jay Ptak, we are the parents of an 8-year-old son with Down syndrome who attends P94, and have experienced first hand the power that collaborative Art making holds for our son, especially in his work with Anthony. That power was recently featured on Upworthy: <http://www.upworthy.com/meet-the-father-son-duo-sharing-their-disability-experiences-through-art>

Erica Rooney is a Teaching Artist and licensed Art Therapist. For many years she was a scientific illustrator and writing teacher. As a Teaching Artist, her work is multi-modal since her background includes music, poetry and the visual arts. She is a Co-Curriculum Writer and Lead Teaching Artist in the EASE program, Everyday Arts for Special Education, combining professional development with in-class co-teaching across all special ed populations. With Marquis Studios, she is a Master Teaching Artist and mentor in TATI, Teaching Artist Training Institute, training teachers to work with students on the autism spectrum. Her belief in the power of the Arts to awaken students to the rich pleasures of artistic exploration has infused her teaching in varied settings – Montessori, HeadStart, public and private schools, college, private practice and family work. Erica has an MFA in Poetry from Cornell University and an MPS in Creative Arts Therapy from Pratt Institute.

Anthony Jay Ptak bridges distances between disparate communities. I speak the language of technologists, create change, and advocate access and openness by seeing what others will not see, and saying what others will not say. I am an artist, composer, interaction designer, educator, critical thinker, musical scientist, public speaker, disabilities advocate, and cancer survivor.



Final Convening

3:45pm

Connecting To Tomorrow

Facilitators

Dena Malarek is the Director of NYC Residencies and Special Populations with Arts Horizons and a certified recreation therapist. As a former Director of Day Habilitation for adults with disabilities, she managed educational, recreational and Arts programs to facilitate goal development. A key focus was curriculum development for transition age adults. Her current major projects with Arts Horizons include VSA Music Education programs under contract with the Kennedy Center; partnership with Fordham University in NYC Community Schools; partnership with nine area Hospital School's to serve students undergoing extended stays in medical rehabilitation or psychiatric care; and programs with NYC DOE's Office of Arts and Special Projects for Arts for ELL and SWD. Dena's skill set as a manager, trainer, recreation therapist, dancer and educator carefully guide the collaborative development of successful Arts-in-education programs. She is also a modern dancer and teaches dance and yoga to students with, and without, disabilities.

Stephen Yaffe is an Arts and Education consultant and former professor. His professional development work has been praised by the Director of Education Programs for the Corporation of Public Broadcasting as being "brave, visionary, smart." He has mentored classroom teachers, teaching artists and arts administrators nationally, served as the VSA Teaching Artist Fellows coach, and has led professional learning communities in inclusive practices and Universal Design for Learning across the country. Additionally, he has provided PD to those working in the field of disability in Croatia, Egypt, Ghana, Haiti, Hong Kong, Jamaica, India, Paraguay, Russia and Saudi Arabia.

Stephen has evaluated numerous Arts-in-education initiatives and conducted many needs assessments, including one of students with disabilities and the Arts in NYC Public Schools, K-12 (VSA).

Stephen is a founding member and Chair of The Arts in Special Education Consortium.