



PERFORMING ARTS  
IN NEW MEXICO:  
ENGAGING OUR  
STUDENTS

# PRESENTERS



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Musical Theatre Awards

# THE ARTS IN NEW MEXICO SCHOOLS

The members of this presentation have been asked to discuss the Performing Arts in New Mexico, especially how they can be a tool to increase student engagement.

Although the Performing Arts, and all the Arts in general, can help engage students in school, it must be stressed that the Arts are valuable for inclusion in schools for their own sake. At their very foundation, they are important mainly because they are a part of the whole human experience.

Although the Arts are intrinsically important, there are extrinsic benefits for having them in the schools. Student engagement is one such extrinsic benefit.

# THE ARTS IN NEW MEXICO SCHOOLS

The LESC is absolutely correct in addressing student engagement.

- A poll from this year showed that 80% of teachers of grades 4 through 12 are concerned with students' engagement in school.
- The same poll indicated that 75% of teachers thought students lack intrinsic motivation for learning in school, and
- 59% of teachers thought that students do not see the relevance of what they are learning in school (Gradient Learning, 2023).

# THE ARTS IN NEW MEXICO SCHOOLS



What Fine Arts are represented in New Mexico schools?

- Dance (ballet, hip - hop, jazz)
- Drama (including acting, stagecraft, etc.)
- Music (band, choir, orchestra, guitar, piano, mariachi, general music)
- Visual Arts (drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, graphic art)
- Media Arts (audio, film, music production)



# THE ARTS IN NEW MEXICO SCHOOLS



How the Arts can help with student engagement

- The Fine Arts Education Act (FAEA) provides substantial funding for elementary (K –6) Fine Arts education, especially in the areas of Visual Arts and Music. This funding helps students identify potential areas of interest and passion for further study in higher grades.



# THE ARTS IN NEW MEXICO SCHOOLS

## In Clovis:

- FAEA funds cover the salaries and benefits of 11 certified elementary music teachers, 1 certified elementary art teacher and two elementary Art EAs. In addition to the FAEA funding we also use district Operational Funds to support these arts programs with supplies, curricular resources, travel funds, and professional development opportunities.

# THE ARTS IN NEW MEXICO SCHOOLS

## In Clovis:

- One significant program that we use is our partnership with the Clovis Community College's Cultural Arts Series events. 3rd - 6th graders are treated to a special performance by professional groups including musicians, plays, ventriloquists, and ballets. By the time a student exits elementary school, they will have seen at least four professional performances for free as part of their arts education.



# THE ARTS IN NEW MEXICO SCHOOLS



## In Rio Rancho:

- In Rio Rancho, FAEA funds cover the salaries and benefits of 24 elementary Art and Music teachers. The FAEA also supplies funding for instructional supplies, equipment, and professional development.



# THE ARTS IN NEW MEXICO SCHOOLS



## In Rio Rancho:

- One significant program that we use is our partnership with the Santa Fe Opera to provide a student - produced opera program to elementary and middle school students. These students work with teaching artists to write the words and music for short operas, which are then performed for the public.



# THE ARTS IN NEW MEXICO SCHOOLS

How the Arts can help with student engagement

- The Arts are an opportunity during the school day for students to experience a different type of learning. The Arts' uniqueness is a roadway toward engagement.
- Many Performing Arts activities (e.g., marching band) require extensive parental engagement. This “whole family” engagement allows parents and guardians to experience firsthand what their children are doing in class and partner with their student in the educational experience.

# THE ARTS IN NEW MEXICO SCHOOLS

As of today in Clovis, we have:

- 533 students in middle school band
- 259 students in middle school choir
- 206 in middle school theater
- 258 in high school band
- 173 in high school choir
- 108 in high school theater
  
- These enrollments represent 43% of the student body at middle school and high school.

# THE ARTS IN NEW MEXICO SCHOOLS

As of today in Rio Rancho, we have:

- 606 students in middle school band
- 269 students in middle school choir
- 341 students in middle school orchestra
- 309 in middle school theater
- 312 in high school band
- 200 in high school choir
- 138 in high school orchestra
- 258 in high school guitar
- 134 in high school dance
- 426 in high school theater
  
- These enrollments represent 32% of the student body at middle school and high school.

# THE ARTS IN NEW MEXICO SCHOOLS

Importance of Partner Organizations:

New Mexico Music Educators Association (NMMEA):

- Hosts the annual NMMEA All-State Conference that provides workshops for educators as well as opportunities for students to perform in audition-only All-State ensembles led by world-class conductors.
- Through district organizations, offers opportunities for students to perform in both large ensemble, small ensemble, and solo performance assessments.

# THE ARTS IN NEW MEXICO SCHOOLS

Importance of Partner Organizations:

New Mexico Theatre Association/Educational Theatre Association (EDTA):

- Hosts the annual New Mexico Thespian Festival
- Partners with the New Mexico Activities Association to run the NMAA One-Act Play festival, which brings young actors from across the State to perform for one another

# RECOMMENDATION

## # 1 TO THE LES C

Add a 1-credit Fine Arts high school graduation requirement.

- This credit could be fulfilled by taking any of the Fine Arts classes mentioned above.
- This credit requirement would expose students to at least one art form, potentially developing interest, and could lead students to greater engagement in school.
- The Fine Arts graduation requirement would still leave students with many credits of electives for exploration in other disciplines.



# RECOMMENDATION # 2 TO THE LESC

Increase the FAEA multiplier to 0.065

- As presented to the LESC Working Group in August, the current FAEA formula falls short in fully funding elementary Fine Arts programs.
- More support for Fine Arts at the elementary level could help encourage students to be involved in programs at the secondary level.

# RECOMMENDATION # 3 TO THE LES C

Extend FAEA funding to cover secondary Fine Arts programs

- If the Arts are indeed a way to engage students in school, then funding and potentially expanding secondary Fine Arts programs could promote student engagement and reduce dropout rates.



THANK YOU



THE  
SANTA FE  
OPERA










Santa Fe Opera

Performing Arts

NMArt PD Series



Founded in 1957 by John Crosby.

During the past 66 seasons, the company has presented more than 2,000 performances of 175 works by 83 composers spanning five centuries of opera, creating a legacy of 45 American premieres and 15 world premieres.



Each season, an audience of up to 85,000 comes to Santa Fe from every state in the nation and more than 35 foreign countries to experience “the Rolls-Royce of American summer opera festivals”





The Santa Fe Opera generates \$250 million in economic activity for the economy of northern New Mexico.

**The  
Pueblo  
Opera  
Program**





Dragon from SFO *The Magic Flute*  
Backstage Tour by Picuris Pueblo (1974)

(k)



# 3...2..1 Opera!



# Opera Makes Sense

Ages 3 - 5









# Opera Storytellers

3rd - 8th  
grades



# Scene 1

TRACK 1

♪ My home is well-nurtured + peaceful  
And it is always safe  
♪ doo/ahh

• instruments  
• coral  
[prop: scarves for coral] • swimming creatures

RECIT

§ What is happening to our home?  
The coral is dying  
☀ The factory is making the coral die  
We need to do something  
§ No I don't want to. Why us?  
We could get hurt.

☞ We have to do something  
or we'll lose our home.

☞ Take this lightbulb. When  
you need it most, work together

☀ Hope you don't die  
It's been a good time

§ I want to curl into a ball  
But! I need to be brave  
for my friends

☞ ♪ What is happening to our home?  
♪ The coral is dying ☀ (instruments)  
♪ We're in this together

Scene 2

RECIT

World of the Unknown

TRACK 2

☀-in  
☞-f  
♪ Th  
☀  
• Haven  
a mud  
• The f  
me k  
• You



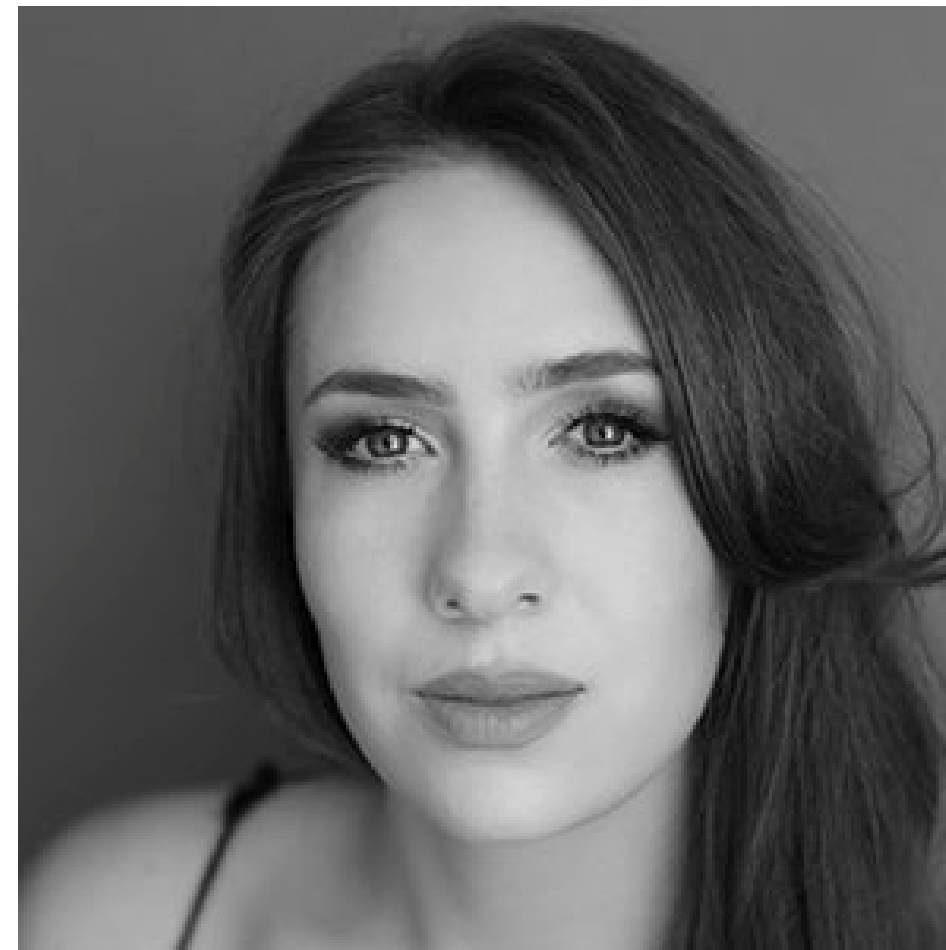




# Young Voices

Grades 9 - 12

*Members of the Young Voices with New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham at The Governor's Mansion where they performed for families with young children as part of the Opera Makes Sense program held on June 29, 2019.*



Lydia  
Grindatto

Tijeras,  
NM



# Young Technicians

Grades 9 - 12





*Students from the Early College Opportunities High School in Santa Fe built a portion of the raked deck for our 2019 Season production of Janáček's Jenůfa*



# ALTO - Active Learning through Opera

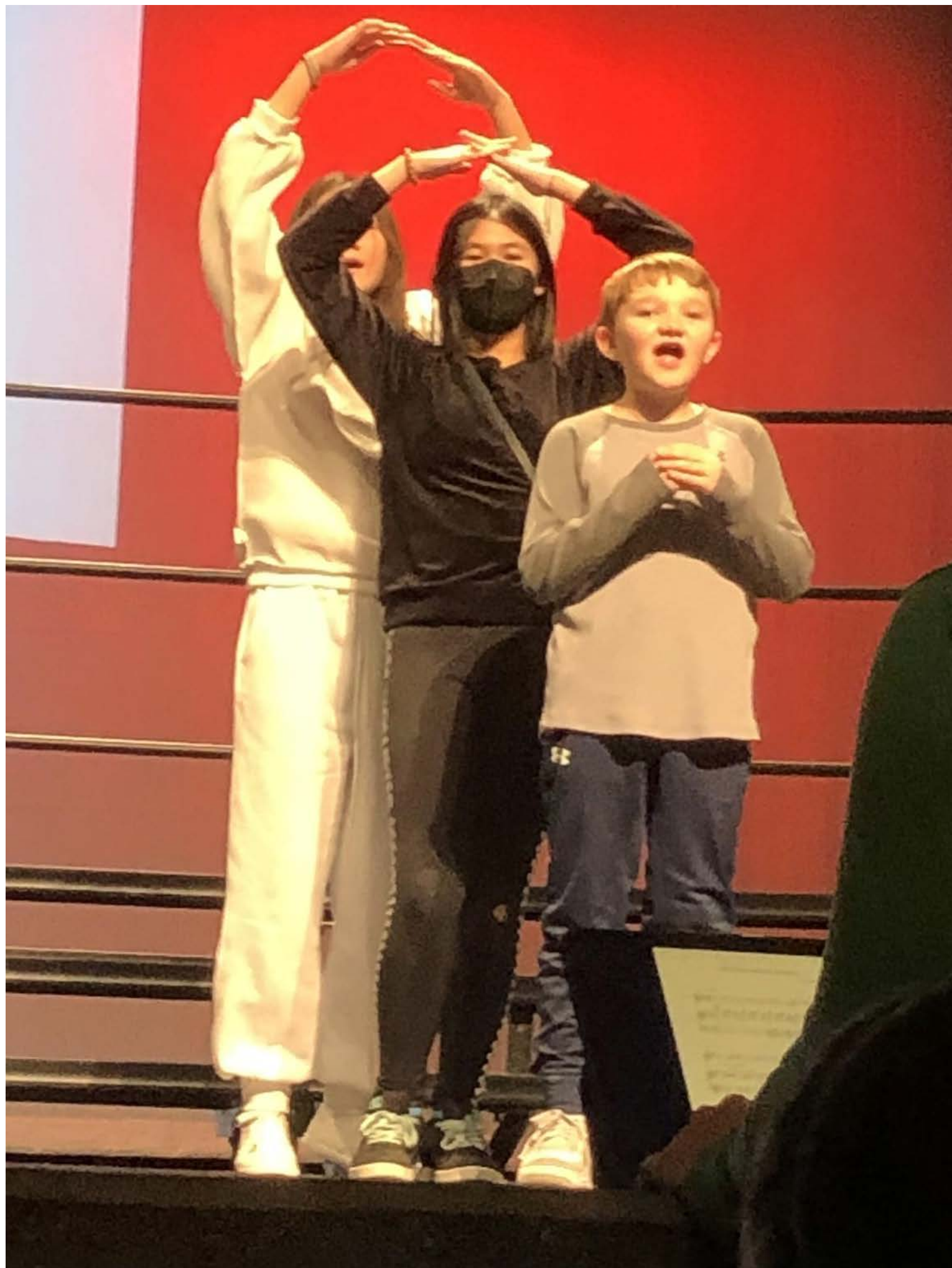
From "The Girl in the Mirror" original opera from Eagle Ridge  
Middle School, RRPS - January, 2020



# “Dr. Diago Dragon vs. The Tooth Fairies”

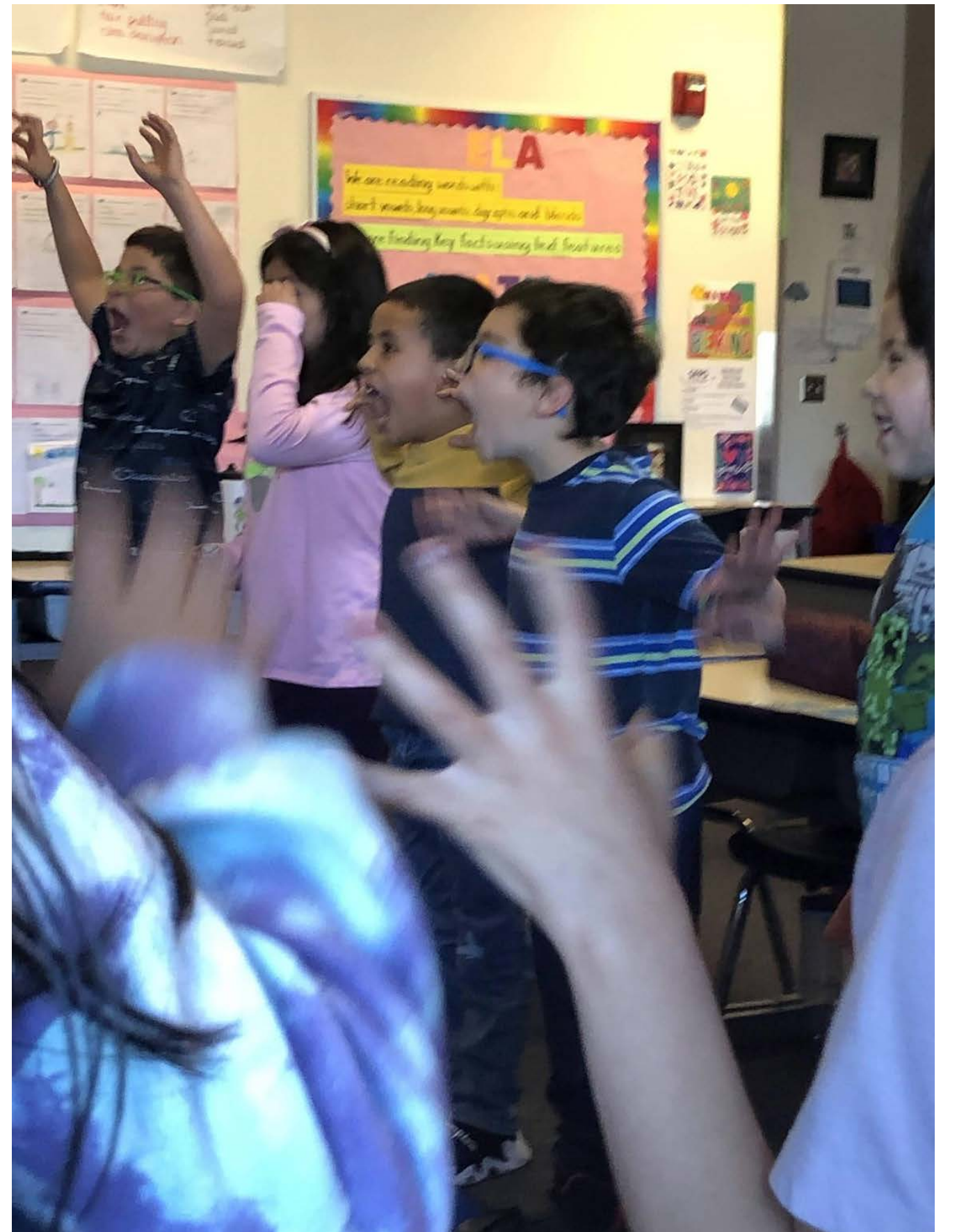


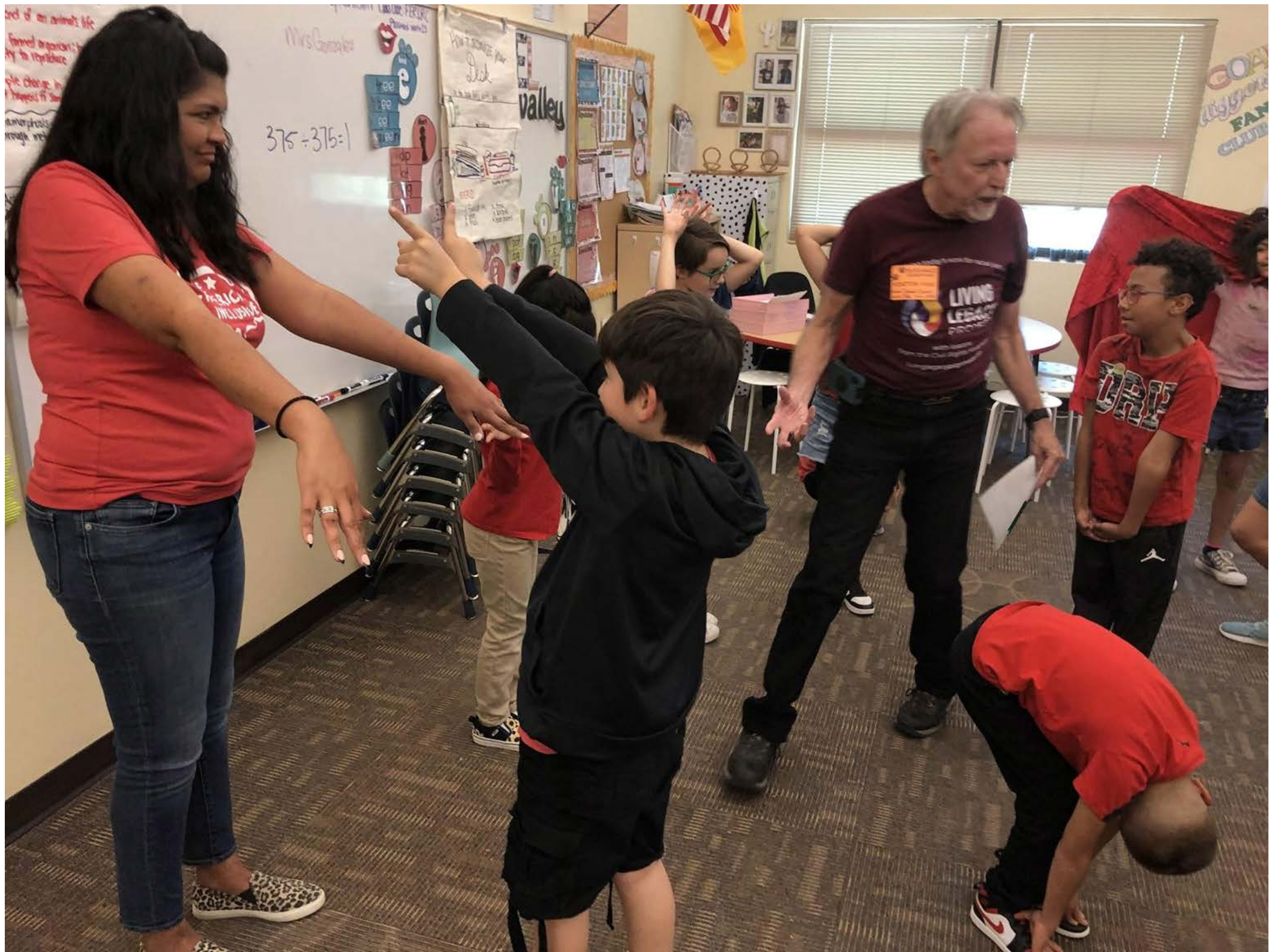
original opera from TEQ Elementary, Espanola Public Schools - December, 2018

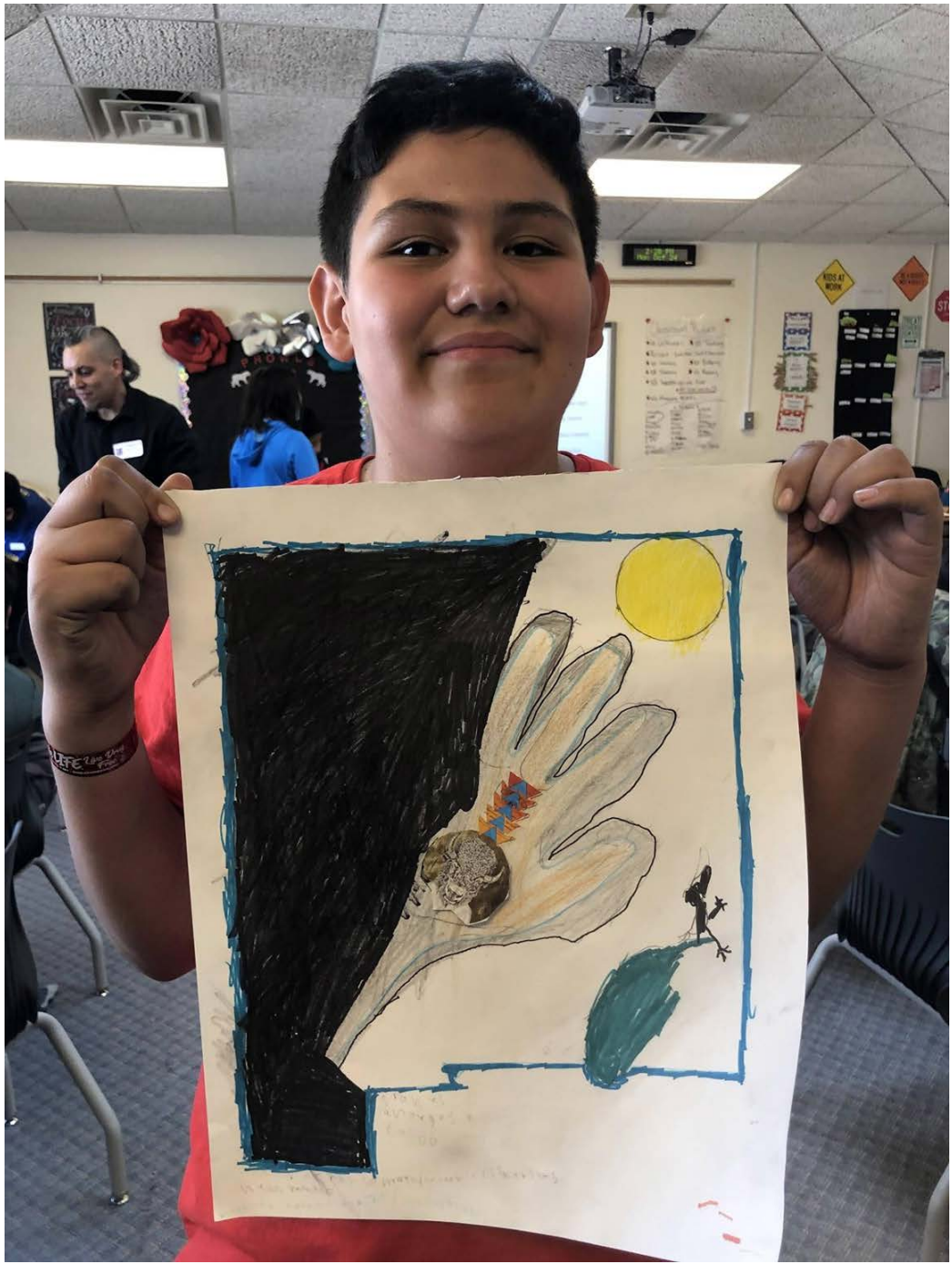


# ALTO - Arts Integration Grades pre K - 12th

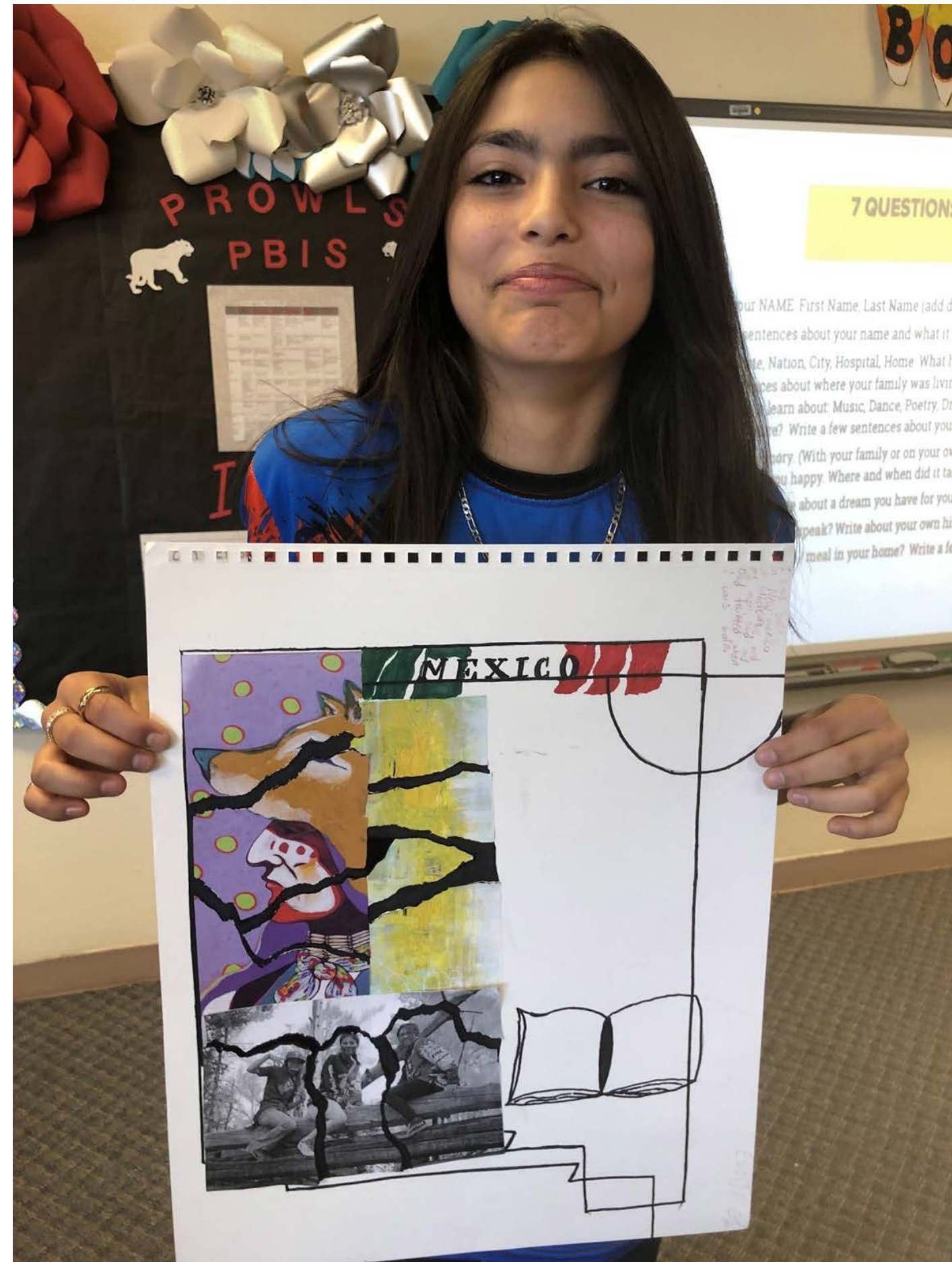
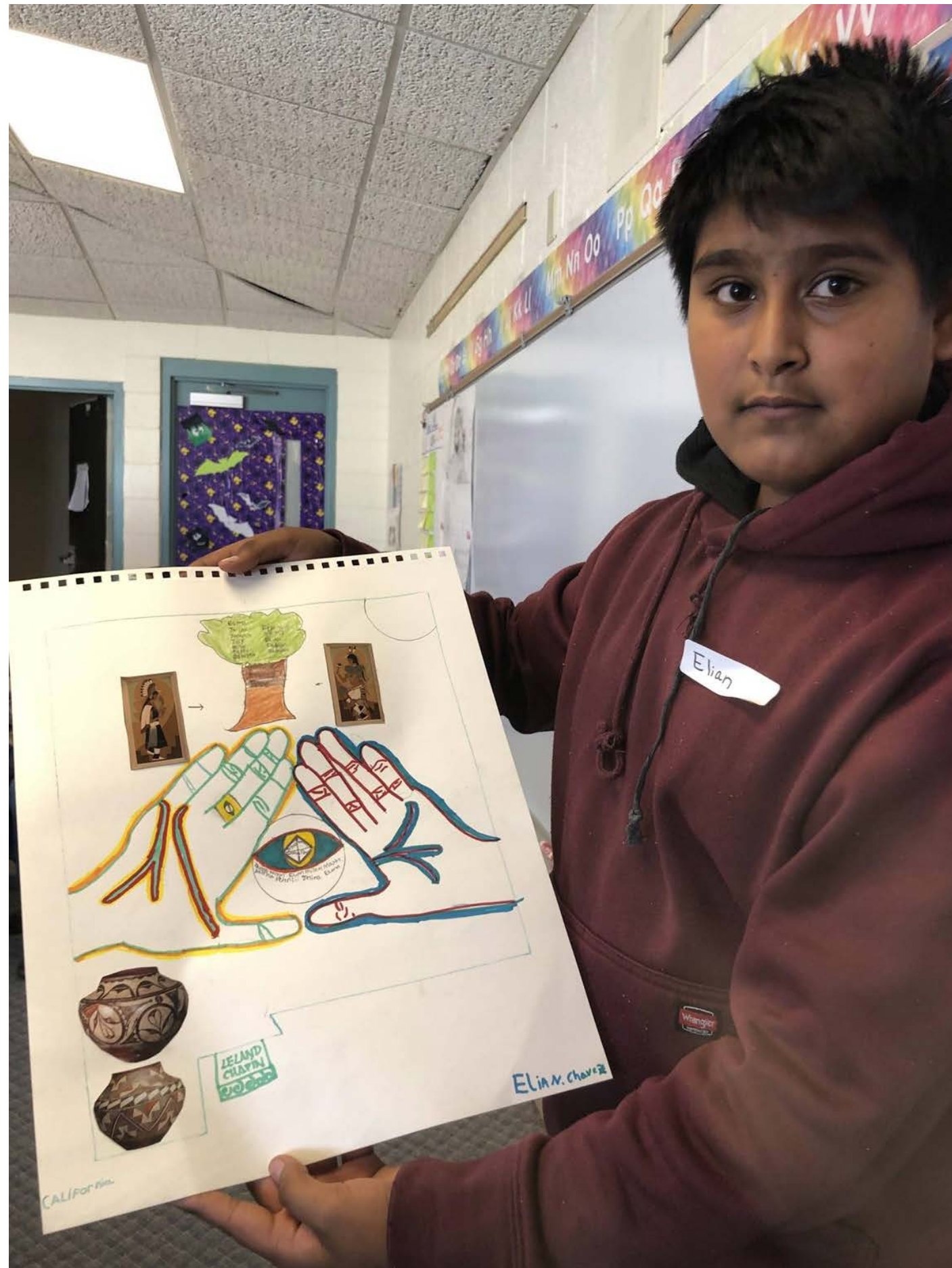


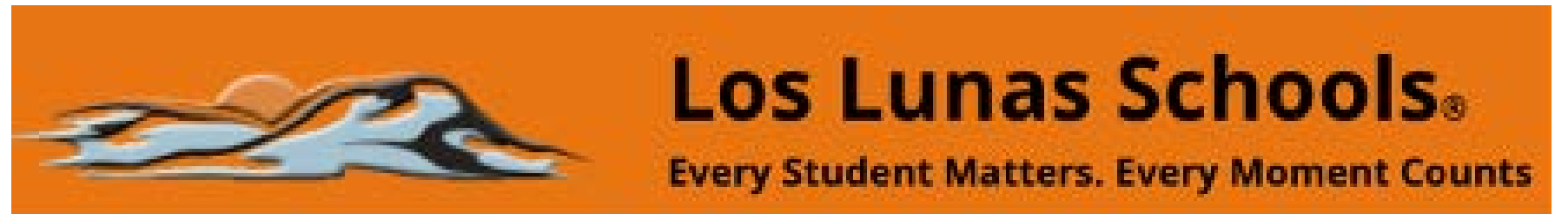






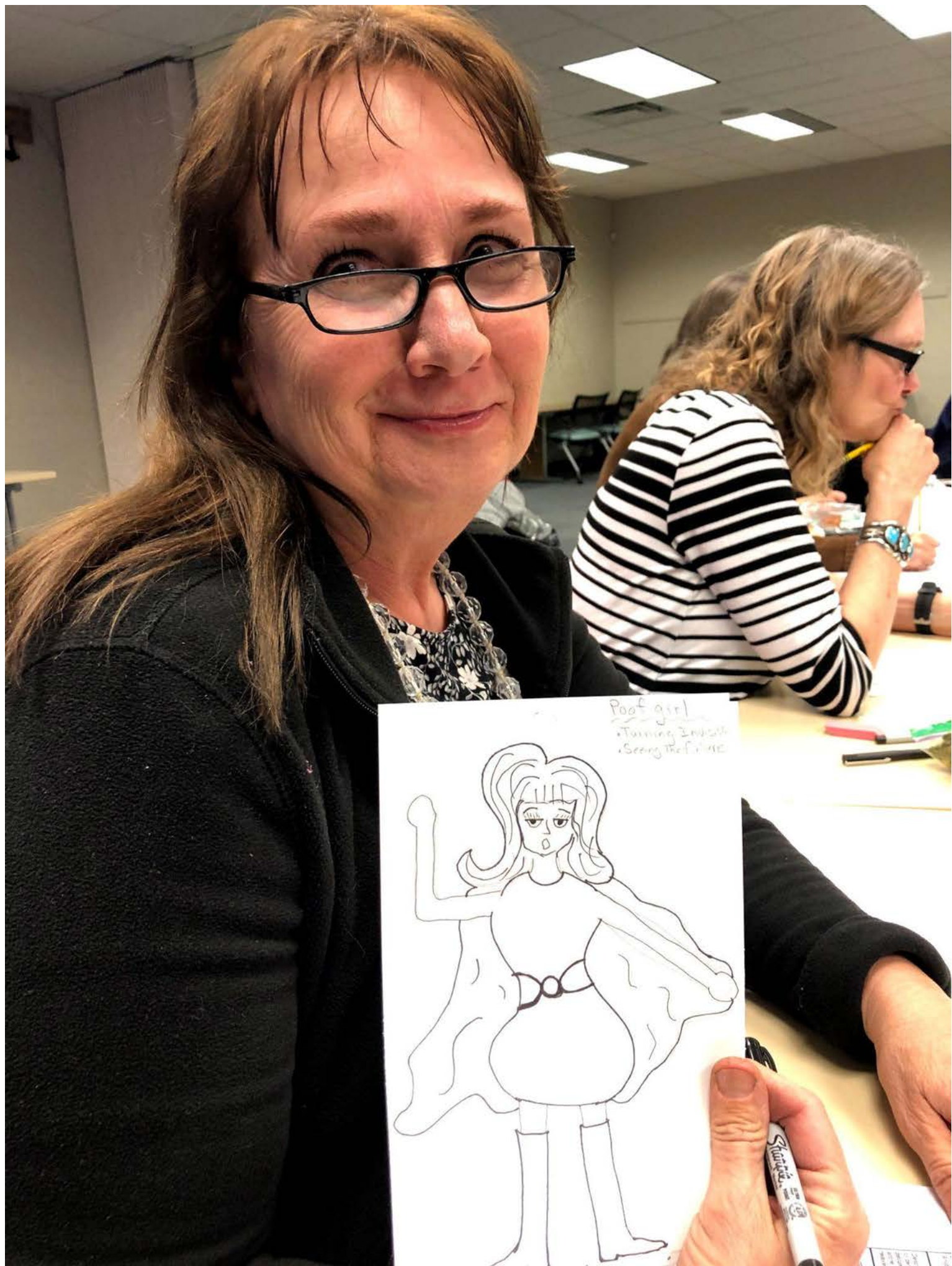






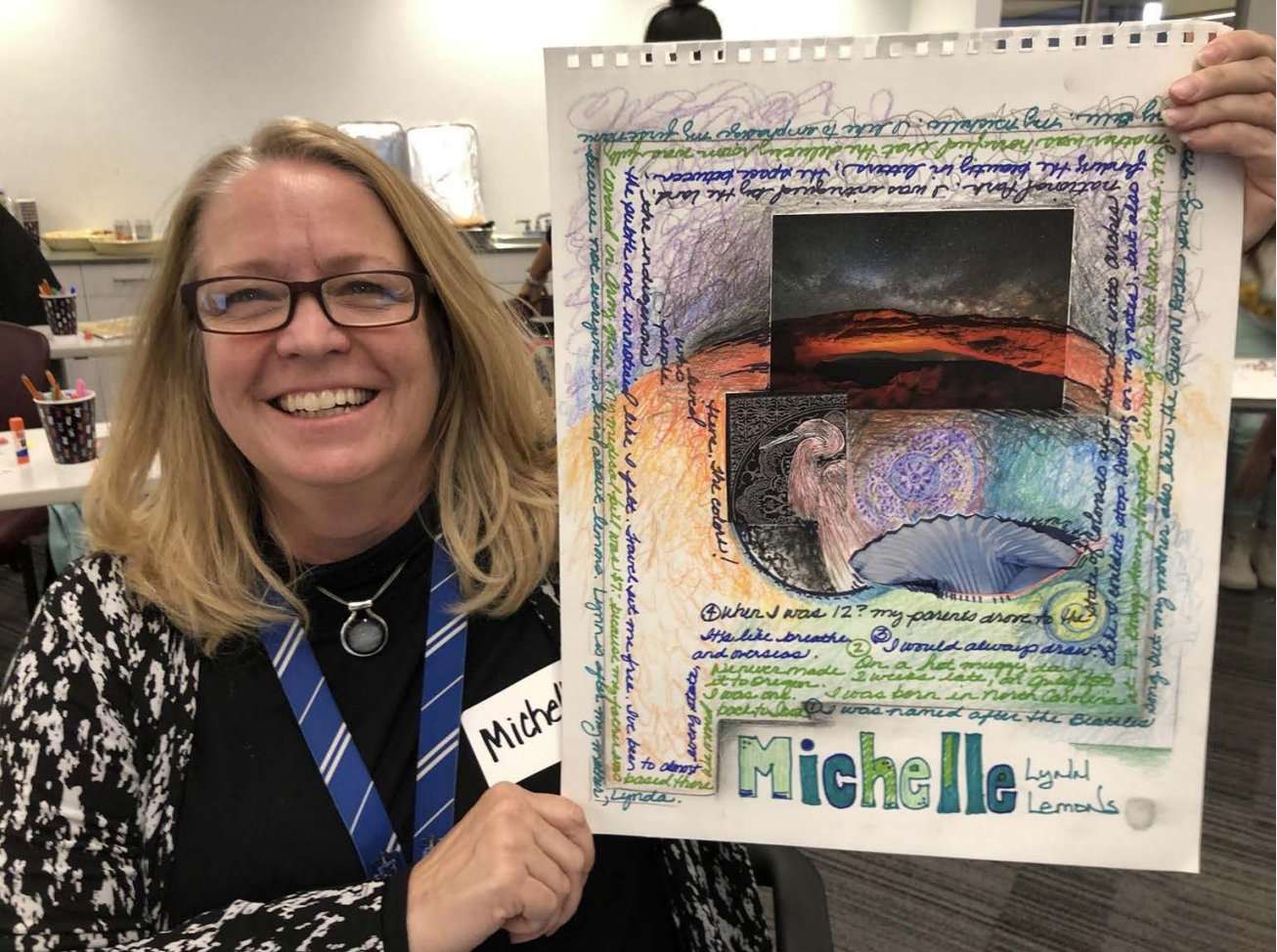
# NMArt

## The New Mexico Alliance for Responsive Teaching











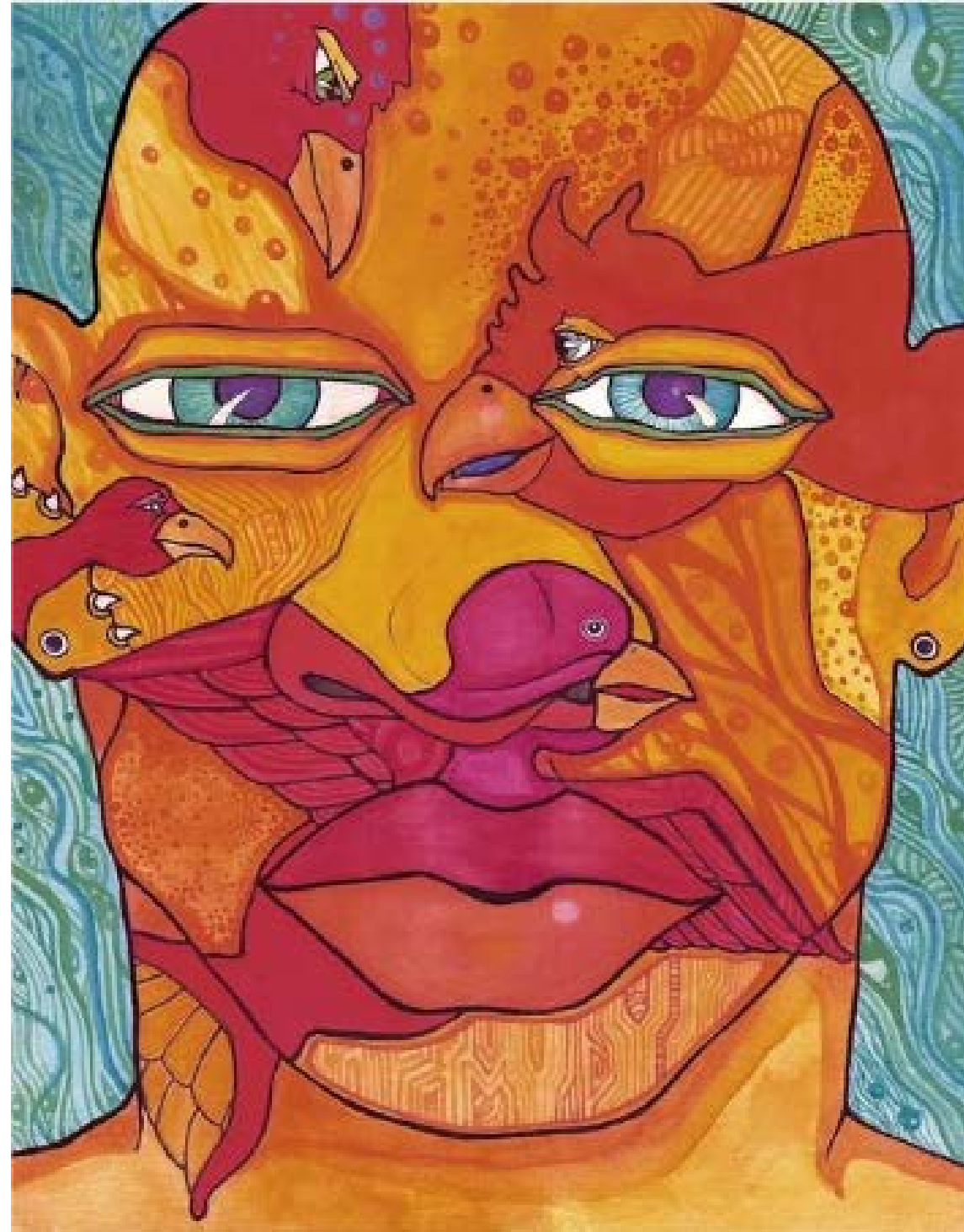
**SEPTEMBER**

**Engaging the Whole Child the  
Whole Way Through  
*with Randy Barron*  
All Grade Levels.**



**OCTOBER**

**Creating Your Personal  
Identity Map  
*with Leland Chapin*  
Grades 3-12.**







**NOVEMBER**

**Creative Drama PD:  
Connections to Language,  
Literacy and Creativity**

*with Michelle Holdt*

Grades K-8.





# What's Love Got to Do With It: Compassion Practices to Enhance Joy & Resilience in the School

*with Erin Sibley Doerwald*  
Grades K-12.



# Bringing Literature and SEL to Life Through Shadow Puppetry



*with Daniel Barash*  
PreK-12.





- Current NMArt Budget: \$100K  
25 PD workshops / year  
4 school districts

Our recommendation and request:

- Additional \$400K from the PED  
100 PD workshops / year  
20 school districts



# Thank you!

Charles  
Gamble

[cgamble@santafeopera.org](mailto:cgamble@santafeopera.org)

SFO Director of School Programs



NEW MEXICO HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL THEATRE

# ENCHANTMENT AWARDS!



**An awards show once a year. An education program every day.**

Terry S. Davis, Co-Executive Director

# We celebrate high school theatre and all it does for students — live in Popejoy Hall



**The 2023 Enchantment Awards**

The 2023 Enchantment Awards, photo by Hank Henley

- We put 150 students on stage in our state's home for Broadway musicals.
- The top performers and productions earn awards and scholarships.
- We coach students to improve their skills with an eye on national performance levels.
- Our program raises awareness of all the lifelong positive lessons and skills high school theatre offers students.



# We send two students every year to the National High School Musical Theatre Awards



**RRHS's Breton Sego (#8) rehearses for the Jimmy Awards**

- **The program, also known as the Jimmy Awards, is staged by the Broadway League.**
- **Our Best Actor and Best Actress perform on a Broadway stage with 100 winners from similar programs across the country.**
- **They are coached and rehearsed by Broadway professionals.**
- **They audition for a panel of casting directors, directors, and producers.**
- **Students can gain professional audition opportunities and earn scholarships.**

The 2023 Jimmy Awards, photo by Picture DLC Photography

# What we have learned from participating in a national program



RRHS's Breton Segó performs in the 2023 Jimmy Awards


The 2023 Jimmy Awards, photo by Tricia Baron

- **Students trained in drama have many options for careers either backstage or onstage, and those options are expanding.**
- **Students from drama programs can work in film or in theatre, or both.**
- **Budgets for New Mexico drama programs are a fraction of budgets for schools in other states, putting our students at a disadvantage.**
  - **Schools in other states spend more than double the average annual NM drama budget on just one production.**

## Some basics

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- 
- **You can't light a stage or amplify sound without physics or math.**

# Some basics



- **You can't design or build sets or costumes without history or geometry.**



Costume design by Montana Levi Blanco for the Lincoln Center Theatre production of *The Skin of Our Teeth*  
Set design by William and Jean Eckart for the original Broadway production of *Once Upon a Mattress*

# Some basics

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- **Nearly every theatre project involves research for cast and crew.**

INTO  
THE  
WOODS

Disney  
BEAUTY  
AND THE  
BEAST



SHREK  
THE  
MUSICAL

Disney  
THE LITTLE  
MERMAID

## Some basics



- **Theatre is an art form — and a business.**



# Some basics

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Trey Caperton, the 2016 Popejoy Awards. Photo by Frank Frost.

- **The spotlight shines just as bright on others as it does on you.**



## Some basics

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- **Drama is the original form of social emotional learning.**

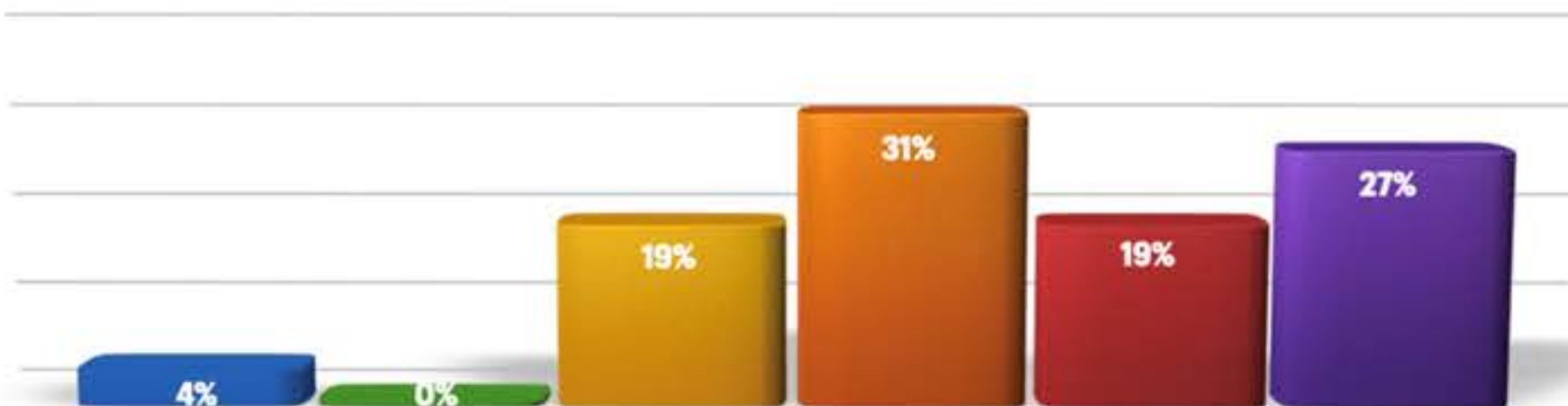




# Drama teachers spend a significant amount of extra time on their programs



How many hours each school year do you spend working on your program **beyond regular school hours**?



- 120 Hours or less (0-3 hours a week)
- 121-240 hours (3-6 hours a week)
- 241-360 hours (6-9 hours a week)
- 361-480 hours (9-12 hours a week)
- 480-600 hours (12-15 hours a week)
- >600 hours (>15 hours a week)

2019 NMHSMTA Survey

- **Most teachers spend at least 360 hours extra every school year working on their programs, partly because most have no assistants.**
  - 77% spend more than 9 hours a week every week
  - 46% spend more than 12 hours a week
  - 27% spend > 15 hours a week
- **Drama stipends, across school districts, are among the lowest offered any teacher.**

# Proposal #1

**Mandate that all teachers in all school districts who are paid stipends be given similar differentials with none being lower than 60% of the highest stipend paid.**

**Goal: Acknowledge that all programs for students have similar value, make sure that all who contribute to student success through after-school programs are reasonably compensated, and stipends are paid more equitably.**



# Nearly half of all high school students participate in non-athletic programs



- **Nationally, 55% of all high school students participate in athletics; 45% participate in other activities (with some overlap)**
- **When a larger share of activity money is spent on athletics, nearly half of a school's population is minimized.**
- **Unintended consequence: Students know when we adults play favorites. They see the disparity in how different programs are regarded and are well aware when their preferred activity is neglected or their talents and passions are ignored.**

The 2023 Enchantment Awards, photo by Hank Henley

# Proposal #2

Grant any high school drama program \$10,000 a year to lift the burdens from teachers and provide opportunities for those programs to produce more kinds of shows.

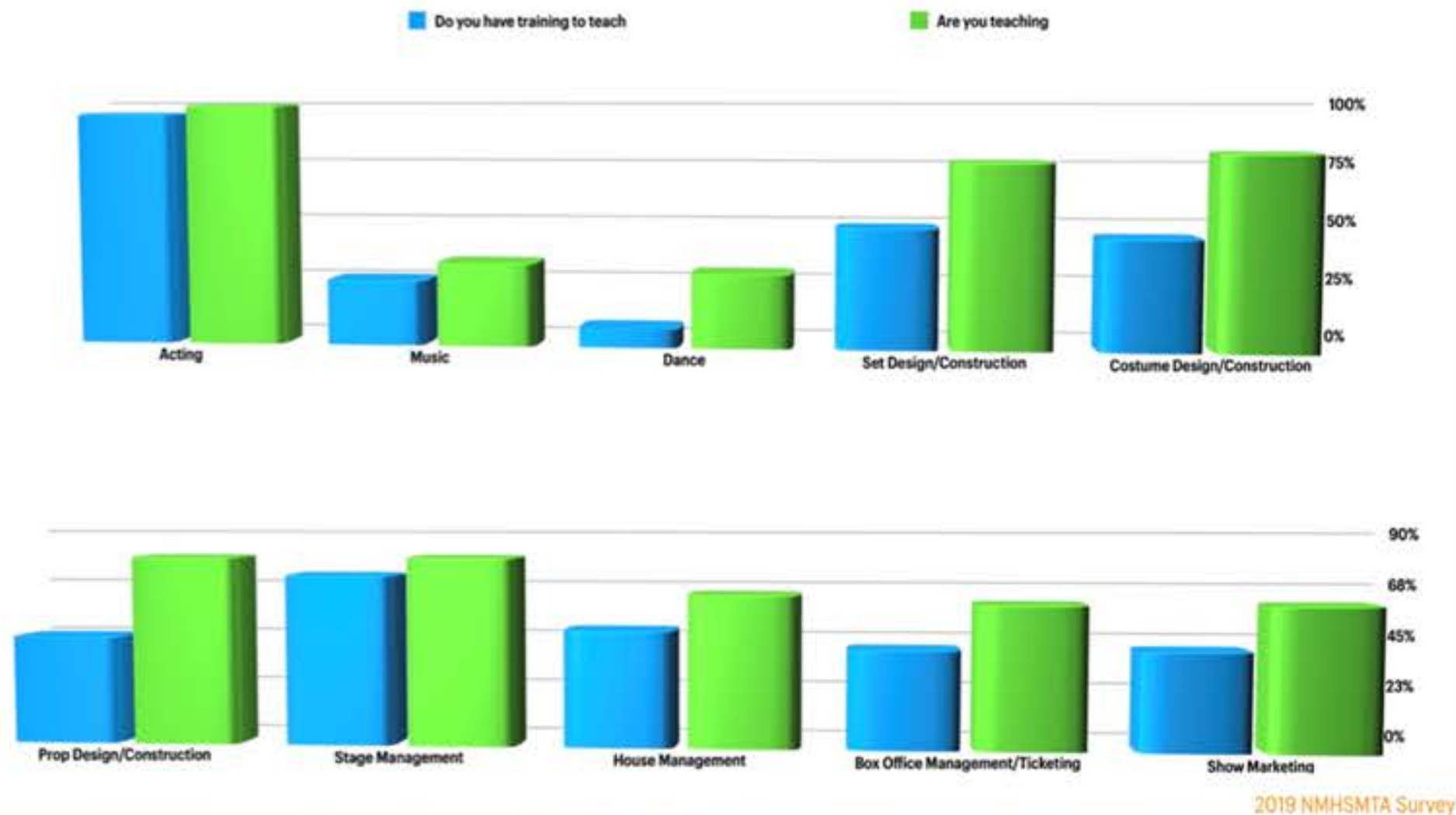
Goal: Allow teachers to: 1) hire personnel who can assist them, 2) rent costumes, sets, lights, or sound equipment, and/or 3) produce shows they might not otherwise be able to do, all of which will improve the student experience.



# Drama teachers are teaching disciplines they are not trained to teach



Disciplines teachers are trained in vs. those they teach



2019 NMHSMTA Survey

- All these disciplines are important to the production of theatre; none are complete in isolation.
- In all theatrical disciplines, more teachers are teaching specific subjects than are trained in them.
- From canvassing drama teachers, we did not find any in-state professional development opportunities for theatre disciplines

# Proposal #3

Create two statewide professional development days each year where teachers across New Mexico can discuss the latest methods in teaching specific subjects with one another. Allocate funding for experts in specific subjects.

**Goal:** Help those who often are the sole teachers of a subject in their schools connect with others teaching the same subject and learn from and with each other. This applies to any subject taught in our schools.



# We host workshops and professional development sessions with leading theatrical artists



**Montana Levi Blanco** -  
Tony-winning costume  
designer from NM



**Adrianna Hicks** -  
Broadway star of *SIX*,  
*Some Like it Hot*



**Anika Larsen** - Tony-  
nominated actress for  
*Beautiful*



**Michael James Scott** -  
*Aladdin*, *Something  
Rotten!* on Broadway



**Japhy Weideman** - Tony-  
nominated lighting  
designer, UNM graduate



**Donyale Werle** - Tony-  
winning set designer,  
UNM graduate

- **Workshops every year for students and teachers led by New Mexico-connected theater professionals**
- **Many workshop leaders are Tony Award winners or nominees**
- **Held online so all in New Mexico can attend**
- **Hosted a first-ever, drama-specific, statewide professional development workshop in July**

# Theatre facilities in high schools across the state are often woefully inadequate



LED lighting vs. halogen lighting



- LED fixtures last 5 times as long as halogen.
- LED lights can be programmed to project any color; halogen lights produce one.
- LED lights use much less electricity.
- LED lights are safer because they generate much less heat, emit no UV rays, and contain no hazardous materials.
- LED lights can be programmed to generate different patterns and effects.

**BUT — LED lights must be programmed, which requires a board designed for that task.**

- **When students have inadequate/non-standard facilities/equipment, they can't properly compete for jobs, or admission to schools requiring portfolios.**
- **Many high school stage lights are halogen/incandescent fixtures instead of LED/intelligent instruments.**
- **School sound boards are often analog rather than digital.**
- **Theatrical curtains contribute to theatre safety, but are susceptible to dry rot in NM and are very expensive to replace.**



# Proposal #4

Create a fund of \$10 million to assess our schools' theatrical facilities for their readiness to teach the use of professional-level theatrical technology and upgrade the equipment/facility as necessary.

**Goal:** Provide opportunities in our high schools for students to learn the skills necessary to go on in theatre and/or work in the film industry.



# Programs around the state exist to assess technical capacity and student education proficiency



2022 New Mexico Thespian Festival

Courtesy New Mexico Thespians

- **New Mexico Thespian Festival, sanctioned by NMAA**
- **ENMU's High School Drama Festival, now in its 67th year**
- **APS's George Nason Festival, organized in the 1980s**
- **The New Mexico High School Musical Theatre Awards, the only program to evaluate programs and performances in the school's home theatre**

# In summary



**The 2023 Enchantment Awards**

The 2023 Enchantment Awards, photo by Hank Henley

- **Careers are available in dramatic storytelling, whether on stage, in film or TV projects, commercials, or video games.**
- **We support the dreams of those who seek any career in this field.**
- **We support the teachers who help make those dreams possible.**

# In summary



The 2023 Enchantment Awards

The 2023 Enchantment Awards, photo by Hank Henley

- **The lessons from drama apply in so many fields:**
  - **Cooperation**
  - **Commitment**
  - **Creativity**
  - **Community**
- **We are not just teaching students to be theatre artists; we are educating citizens.**



**Thank you!**

NEW MEXICO HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL THEATRE  
**ENCHANTMENT!**  
**AWARDS** ★

**2023 Enchantment Awards Act One Finale**

The 2023 Enchantment Awards, photo by Hank Henley

# Contact Information

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