**Arts Education**

The Woodstock Board of Education believes that a high quality arts education is a core component of the comprehensive curriculum provided to all students in every grade. An understanding and appreciation of the arts, and the ability to participate in the arts, are essential elements of a full and meaningful education. The Board supports a strong arts program (including both visual and performing arts) both as a rigorous academic subject and in its integration across disciplines. We support an arts-rich environment in the schools which motivates students to make connections among subject areas and ideas and which inspires individual creative inquiry and expression.

The arts contribute to students’ education and preparation for life in many ways. For example, the arts:

* Provide a primary means to communicate concepts, ideas and feelings;
* Cultivate essential skills including problem solving, creative and critical thinking, effective planning, synthesis of information, application of technology, discipline and time-management, teamwork and effective communication;
* Foster self-efficacy and self-esteem;
* Facilitate an awareness and understanding of diverse cultures and heritages, to foster tolerance, respect and appreciation for these cultures;
* Offer areas for students to identify and develop their individual gifts;
* Provide opportunities for interdisciplinary learning, thereby increasing student motivation and achievement across the curriculum; and
* Open avenues for students to develop rewarding lifetime pursuits whether vocational or avocational.

The Board’s goal in supporting a vibrant, arts-rich school environment which encourages students to create, perform and respond to the arts, is to enhance student achievement and individual potential. The Board will support this goal through clear and consistent policy direction, communication and coordination with administration and staff, resource identification, long range planning, budget support, and cultivating support and involvement from parents and the community.

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