

September 2023

# Visual & Performing Arts Program Review and Five Year Plan

**Presented by**

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Trumpet Practice, 1950 by Norman Rockwell



# RPS Arts Overview



# Program Review



# Next Steps







# Ridgewood & the Arts

Ridgewood has demonstrated a long-standing tradition in supporting and celebrating the Arts.



1935: RHS band plays at graduation for the first time





# Program Overview

## Elementary

Art  
General Music  
STEAM  
5th Instrumental

6 Art Teachers  
6 Music Teachers  
2 Instrumental Teachers

### Program Highlights

- Arts instruction in dedicated Arts rooms once a week
- Foundational elements developed within practical applications, theory, and history
- Recorders in 4th grade
- Vast array of art shows and concerts
- Off site museum visits
- 5th grade instrumental pull-out lessons
- Enrichment programming

## Middle

Art  
Band  
Choir  
Orchestra  
Music Technology

2.6 Art Teachers  
7 Music Teachers

### Program Highlights

- Arts instruction required in 6th & 7th grades with students taking a quarter of art instruction and a year long music class
- Small group pull-out instrumental lessons
- Range of Arts elective choices in 8th grade
- Focused on continued development with their art and music growth.
- After school ensembles & clubs

## High

Art  
Dance  
Music  
Technology  
Theater

5.7 Art Teachers  
4.2 Music Teachers  
0.7 Dance & Theater Teachers

### Program Highlights

- Vast array of semester and year long art courses
- Music performance classes as well as non-performanced based
- Extensive co & extra-curricular programming
- Music students are regularly accepted to honor ensembles
- Extensive investment into Art & Music technology
- Marching Band continues to regular place in National Championships





**Growth**

# Where have we grown over the past 5 years



**K-5**

**STEAM 3rd - 5th grades**



**6-8**

**Soundology I & II**



**9-12**

**Acting  
Art Mentors  
Design Thinking  
Fashion Design  
Interior Design  
Music Production**



**Significant curriculum work to align all our K-12 Arts courses to the new 2020 NJ Arts Standards**



# Visual & Performing Arts 5 Year Program Review Plan

**This outline of objectives articulates an overarching plan to continue to review, monitor, and improve our Arts programming.**



'22-'23

## Execution of a Strategic Plan

We worked to establish a shared vision of our department, collect feedback from our community, review our curriculum and pertinent research, and develop goals for year 2.

'23-'24

## Program Support & Audit

We plan to work as a department, along with outside guidance, to develop support elements for our teachers and to review our program with the goal of reaffirming strengths and identifying areas where we can improve.

'24-'26

## Implementation, Monitoring, & Revising

We will look to share findings from our audit and to strategically identify a district plan for implementation, along with monitoring and revising current practices.

'26-'27

## Prepare for next Program Review

We will work to synthesize our progress and reestablish new goals and visions.









# Reviewing Research

Integration and support for the Arts is more relevant and critical in today's world







# The Value of Robust Arts Education

## 21 Century Skills

According to the Partnership for 21st Century Learning, the four major skills students need are Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and Creativity. Arts education inherently promotes and hones these skills.

## Strengthening Academic Performance

A 2019 study by Rice University found that students of schools that have adopted arts-rich curriculums have significantly higher writing scores, are more compassionate, and are more engaged in school.

## Transferable Skills

A study from Michigan State U. revealed that STEM graduates who have an arts-heavy educational background tend to be more innovative, with more patents, businesses, and honors than non-arts peers.

## Human Elements

The Arts remind us that at our core, we are beings with emotion, connection, legacy, curiosity, and individuality that both reflect our humanity, but also help shape and celebrate it.

## Emotional and Social Benefits

Arts education can improve self-efficacy, motivation, and self-esteem. The confidence gained from mastering an art can be transferred to other areas of study and life.

## The AI Future & the Arts

Jobs that require a human touch, empathy, creativity, and abstract thinking - skills cultivated through the arts will be in demand skills.

**Up at Minton's, 1980 by  
Romare Bearden**





# Collecting Feedback

We surveyed our K-12 community, 6-12 students, and our Arts staff.







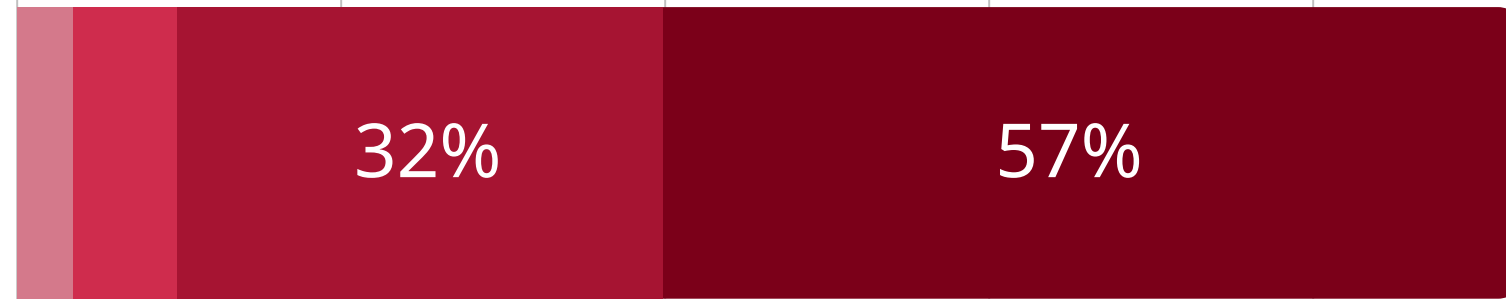
# Parent Survey Results

Arts Education is an essential part of my child's development.



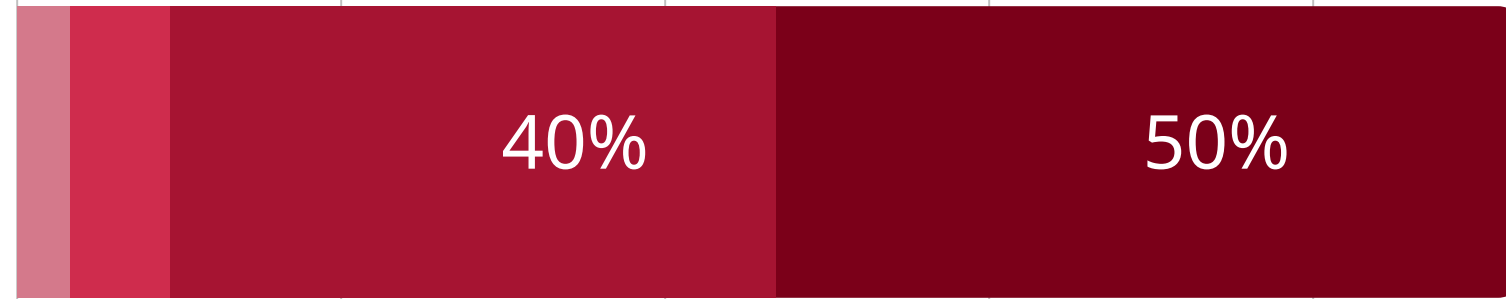
97% Agree or Strongly Agree

My child looks forward to going to their Arts classes as part of their school day.



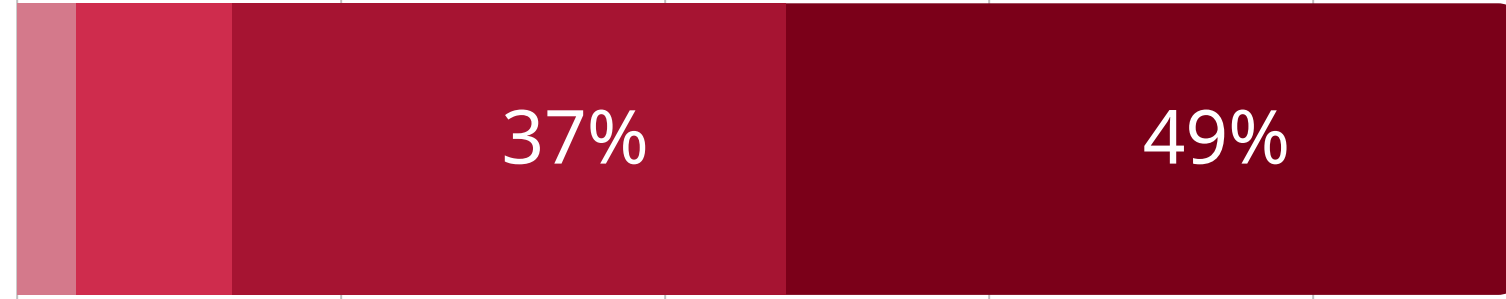
89% Agree or Strongly Agree

The Arts staff has positive interactions with my family.



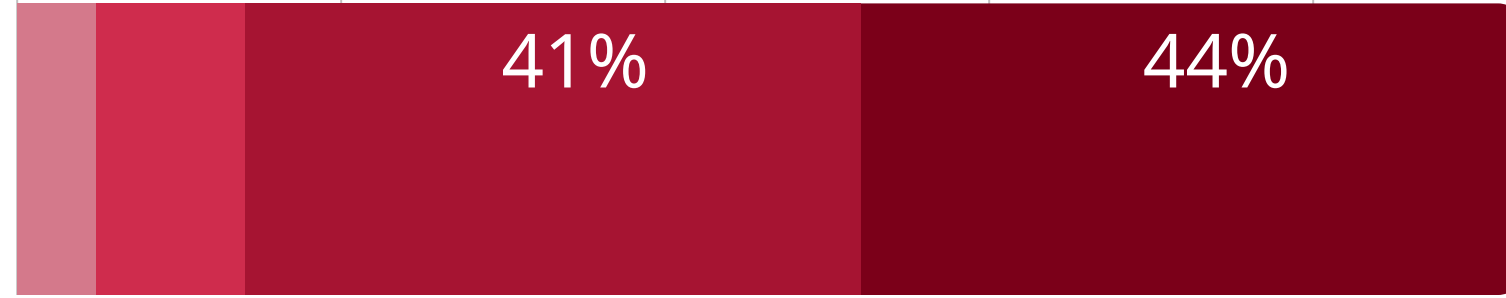
90% Agree or Strongly Agree

The Arts program has helped my child improve their arts abilities.



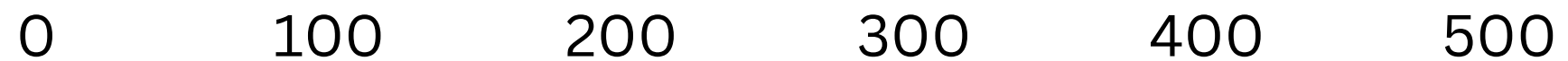
86% Agree or Strongly Agree

I am satisfied with the Arts program at my child's school.



85% Agree or Strongly Agree

464 survey returns:

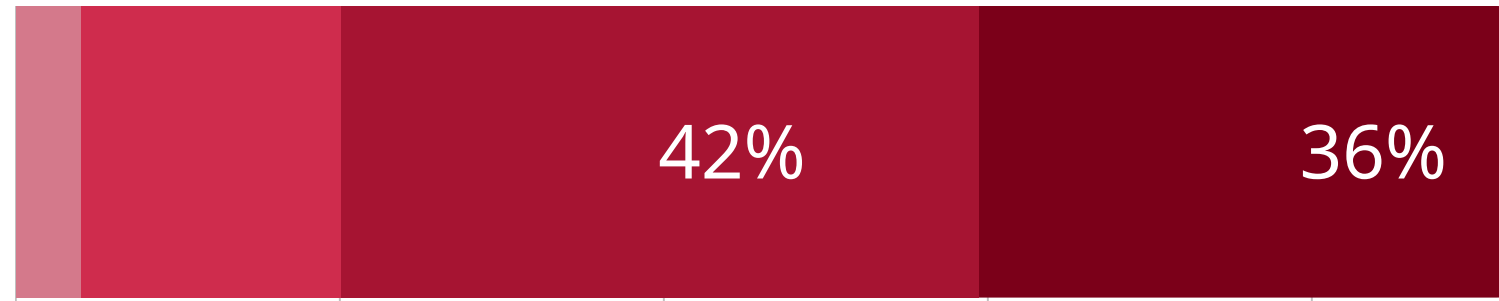






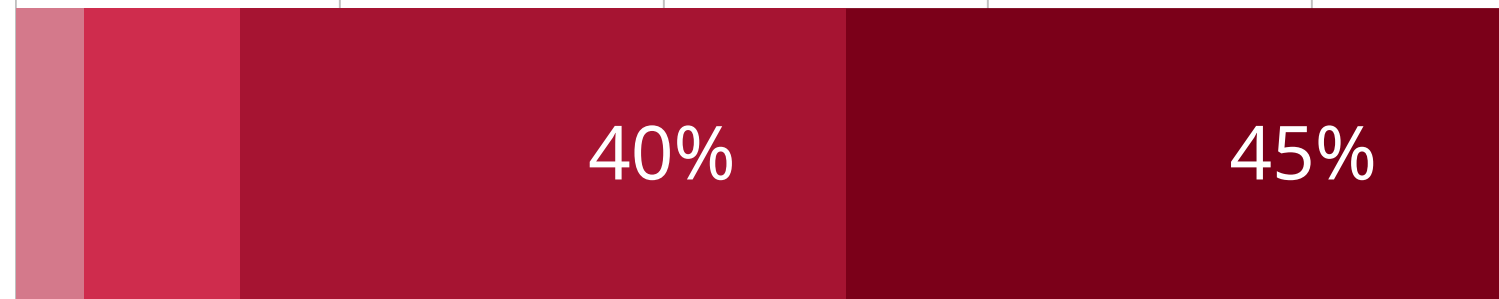
# Parent Survey Results

The Arts program has helped my child develop important social skills.



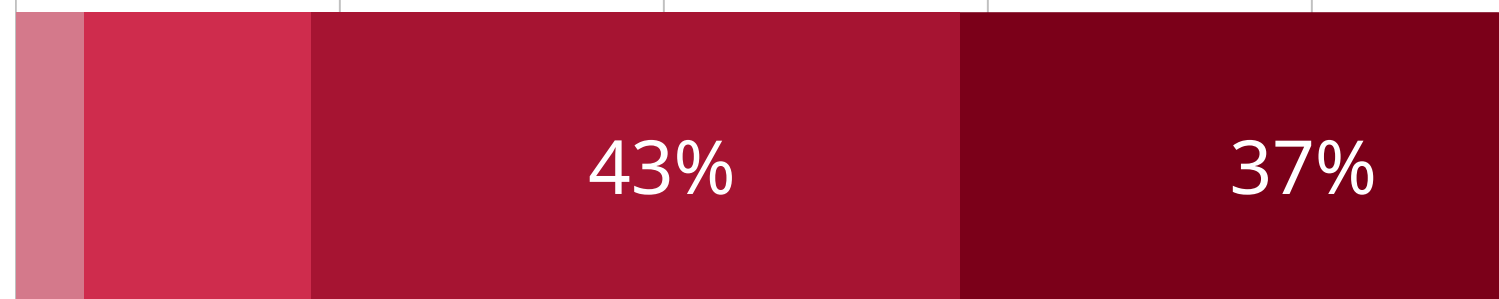
78% Agree or Strongly Agree

The Arts program has helped my child build confidence in their abilities.



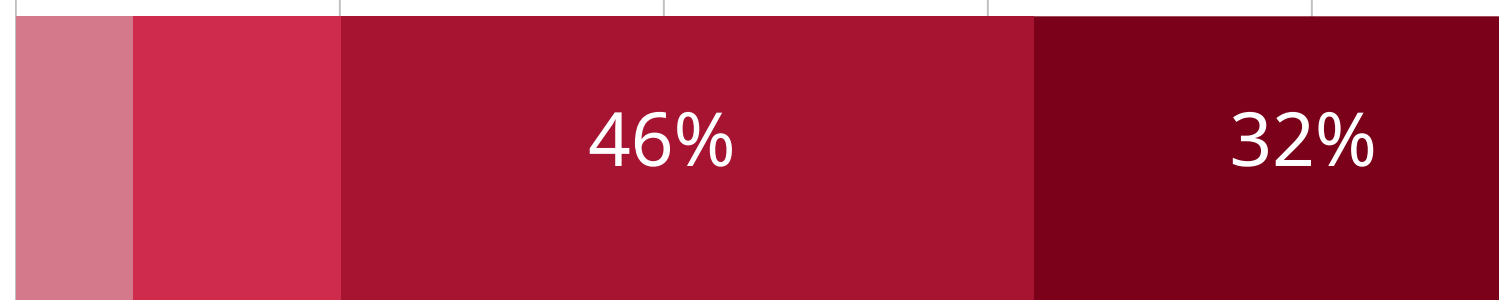
85% Agree or Strongly Agree

The Arts program has helped my child develop a sense of community.



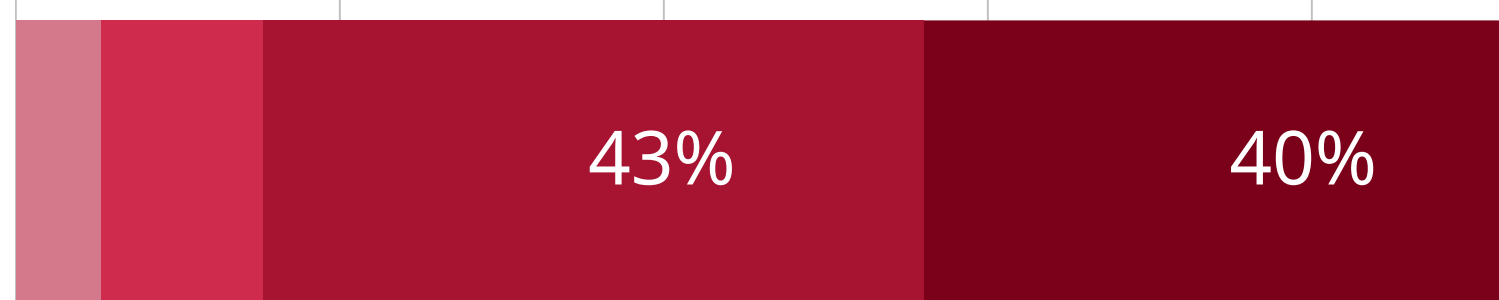
80% Agree or Strongly Agree

My child has access to courses and electives they wish to take in school.



78% Agree or Strongly Agree

I am satisfied with the Arts facilities in the schools.



83% Agree or Strongly Agree

Survey returns: 0 100 200 300 400 500



# Reviewing the parent narrative survey data

In reviewing the narrative data submitted by the parents, here are the main topics that are repeatedly mentioned.



## Summary of strengths:

- Highlighted the strength and creativity of the Arts programs and often mentioned how teachers have fostered a sense of creativity and appreciation for the Arts.
  - **"My teacher does a great job of tying artwork to the concepts of expressing ideas."**
- Expressed the value and appreciation of displaying artwork and showcasing student performances.
  - **"My son's work has been exhibited at the BOE which made him feel so validated."**
- Arts classes serve as an outlet for self-expression and personal growth.
  - **"Art has helped my child express their feeling and foster an appreciation for art."**



# Reviewing the parent narrative survey data

In reviewing the narrative data submitted by the parents, here are the main topics that are repeatedly mentioned.



## Summary of areas for improvement:

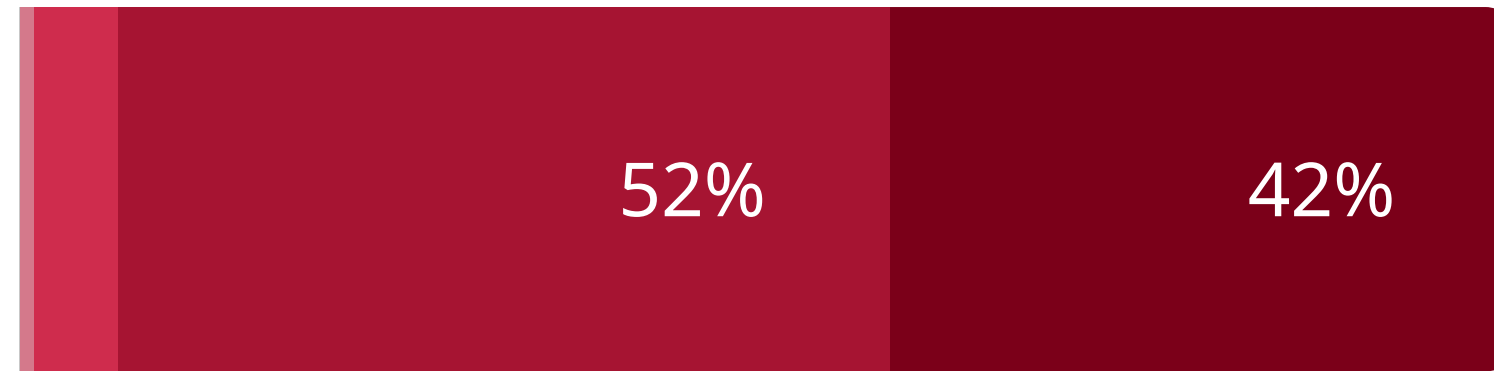
- Look to expand art offerings at the middle school level.
  - **"I wish my child could take more than one quarter of art at the middle school."**
- Find a better balance between academics and the importance of the Arts.
  - **"The focus in school is much more on academics and testing and that doesn't seem to leave much room for the integration of the Arts as part of a full life."**
- Improve communication between teachers and community.
  - **"It could be helpful to better know the specific skills teachers are working on with my child at school so I could look to support those elements at home."**
- Improve HS music performance space.
  - **"It would be nice if the HS music performance space wasn't also the school lunch room."**





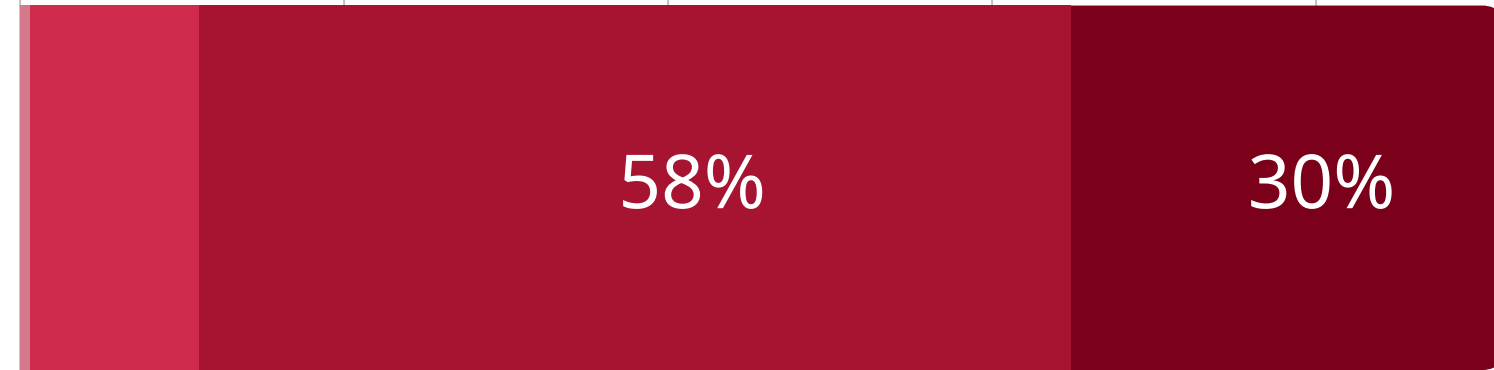
# Student Survey Results

I have had a positive overall Arts experience in Ridgewood Schools.



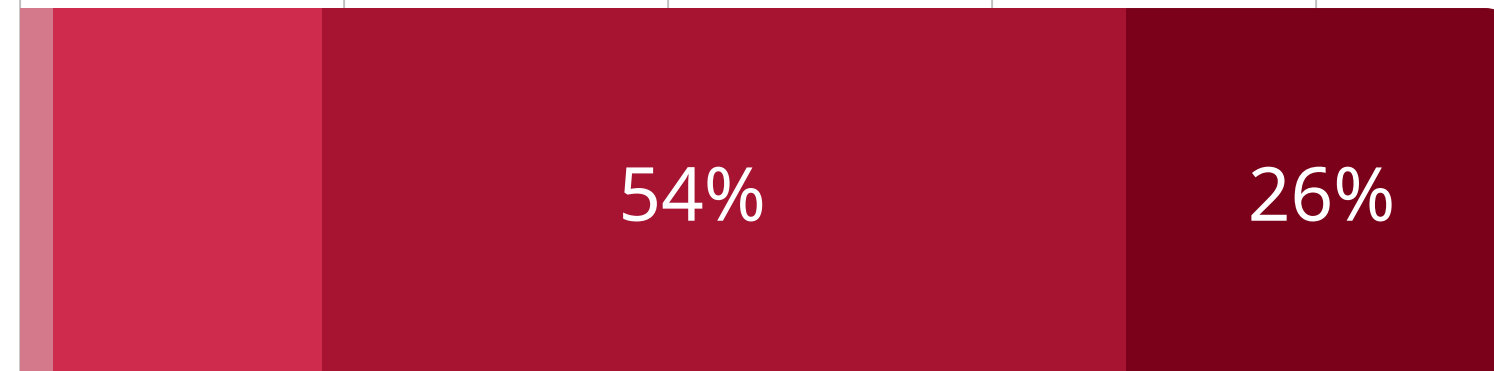
94% Agree or Strongly Agree

I have been appropriately challenged in my Arts courses in Ridgewood Schools.



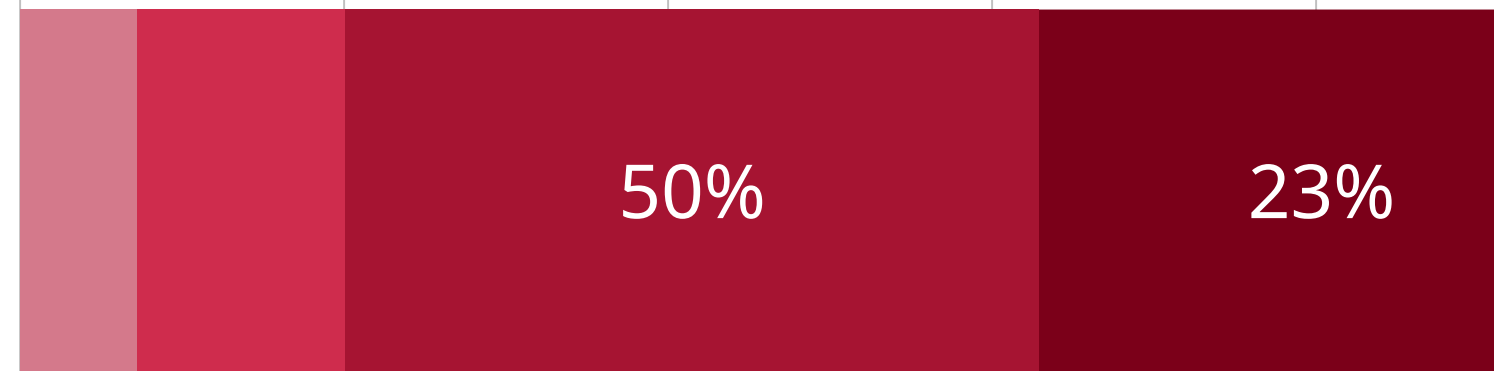
88% Agree or Strongly Agree

I believe that my experiences in my Arts classes have significant benefits that fall outside of the Arts arena.



80% Agree or Strongly Agree

The topics covered in the Arts courses feel relevant to today's world.



73% Agree or Strongly Agree

461 Survey returns:





# Reviewing the student narrative survey data

In reviewing the narrative data submitted by the students, here are the main topics that are repeatedly mentioned.



## Summary of strengths:

- Students highlighted how the schools have nurtured their appreciation for the arts.
  - **"In my chorus class, we focus a lot on how music and choir connect to other things, this helps me appreciate how music connects us."**
- Students expressed feeling empowered in showcasing their accomplishments through concerts and shows.
  - **"My favorite day is Celebration of the Arts!"**
- Students valued the school's efforts in fostering a strong and supportive community.
  - **"RHS is always empowering their music and art students... We are given the opportunity to work together and celebrate our passions."**
- Many commented on the passion and dedication they felt from their teachers, pointing out that the staff is invested in their individual growth.
  - **"You have great faculty who are passionate about their jobs and help their students grow."**
- Students shared that they felt positively challenged and supported, helping them step out of their comfort zone.
  - **"I felt that improvising in orchestra this year really pushed me past my comfort zone, and it allowed me to take on a different and creative aspect of playing that I haven't done before."**



# Reviewing the student narrative survey data

In reviewing the narrative data submitted by the students, here are the main topics that are repeatedly mentioned.



## Summary of areas for improvement:

- Several students expressed a desire to better understand how specific tasks or activities supported broader growth goals.
  - **"It would be helpful to better highlight the learning we have done when we have big shows like Celebration of the Arts."**
- Explore how to provide more individual support
  - **"I've always felt that I flourish when I get a bit more individualized attention. I wish there were more opportunities for personal feedback in my middle school band class."**
- Highlight how the Arts have long-term value by showcasing alumni
  - **"Seeing older students take their passion for the arts beyond high school has always motivated me. I wish we had more interactions with them to understand the possibilities after graduation."**





# Staff Survey Results

I feel well-prepared in delivering a high-quality Arts education.

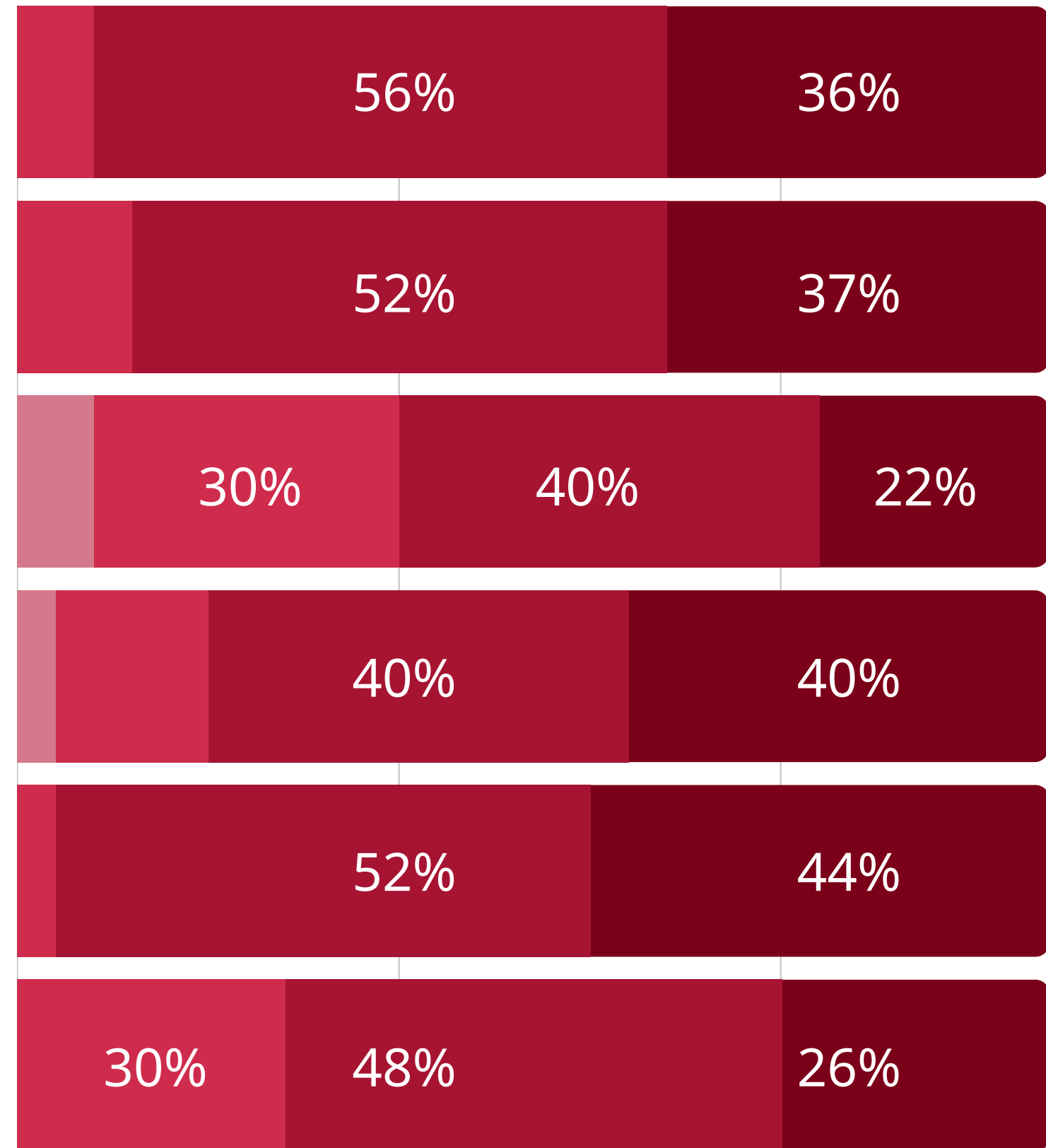
The Arts curriculum is well-aligned with the district's educational goals.

I have opportunities for professional development within the Arts program.

Our Arts program has strong community support and involvement.

The Arts program supports students with diverse learning needs & abilities.

I am satisfied with the overall direction and progress of the Arts program.



92% Agree or Strongly Agree

89% Agree or Strongly Agree

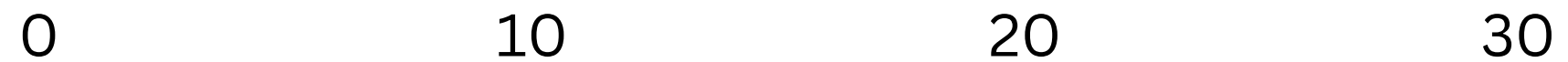
62% Agree or Strongly Agree

80% Agree or Strongly Agree

96% Agree or Strongly Agree

74% Agree or Strongly Agree

27 Survey returns:





# Reviewing the staff narrative survey data

In reviewing the narrative data submitted by the staff, here are the main topics that are repeatedly mentioned.



## Summary of strengths:

- Emphasis on Student-Centered teaching
  - **"Students are encouraged to explore their own interests and experiences and bring those elements into their work in the classroom."**
- Integration of Technology & Modern Resources
  - **"Technology is a valuable tool that can both be used to help support individual learning styles as well as a great way to showcase student work."**
- Interactive Collaborative Approaches
  - **"We often talk about how artists connect to their personal experiences and how we can develop our own ideas to be inspired by the world around us or even by our peers."**
- Integration of Historical and Cultural Context
  - **"We explore a range of different time periods and highlight the bonds between society and the arts are relevant and contextual."**
- Real-World Connections & Community Engagement
  - **"Students engage in public projects with permanent installations as well as community-focused performances that celebrate important events for our community."**
- Bridging the Gap Between Art and Other Disciplines
  - **"Students perform authentic tasks and learn the problem-solving and decision-making skills needed across other disciplines."**



# Reviewing the staff narrative survey data

In reviewing the narrative data submitted by the staff, here are the main topics that are repeatedly mentioned.



## Summary of areas for improvement:

- Look to expand art and music offerings at the different levels
  - "Look to offer various art courses at the middle school level while also enabling students to take art more than just one quarter per year."
  - "We should explore different approaches to middle school choir so that this class can support students who really love to sing."
  - "It would be great if HS students had more than just one elective block in 9th grade."
- Desire for improved PD training
  - "I would like the district to explore providing arts-specific PD."
- Improve communication between teachers and the community
  - "We have an amazing program but we could improve our connection to the community."
- Improve high school music performance space
  - "It would be nice if the HS music performance venue was able to showcase the students in a more professional music space."
- Concerns about class sizes and staffing
  - "We could give more feedback and support to our students if our class sizes were smaller."





# Reviewing Curriculum

Reflecting on the K-12 Arts Curriculum and the recent changes implemented by the NJDOE







Cr

### Creating

- Anchor Standard 1:** Generating and conceptualizing ideas.
- Anchor Standard 2:** Organizing and developing ideas.
- Anchor Standard 3:** Refining and completing products.

Pr

### Performing/ Presenting/ Producing

- Anchor Standard 4:** Selecting, analyzing and interpreting work.
- Anchor Standard 5:** Developing and refining techniques and models or steps needed to create products.
- Anchor Standard 6:** Conveying meaning through art.

Re

### Responding

- Anchor Standard 7:** Perceiving and analyzing products.
- Anchor Standard 8:** Applying criteria to evaluate products.
- Anchor Standard 9:** Interpreting intent and meaning.

Cn

### Connecting

- Anchor Standard 10:** Synthesizing and relating knowledge and personal experiences to create products.
- Anchor Standard 11:** Relating artistic ideas and works within societal, cultural, and historical contexts to deepen understanding.





# Developing a Vision

Development of a district Mission Statement, Mantra, & Vision of a Graduate





# Mission

The mission of the Ridgewood Arts Department is to empower our student community to integrate aesthetic awareness as they create, appreciate, and reflect on the arts with the direct intention to be empathetic and creative lifelong learners.

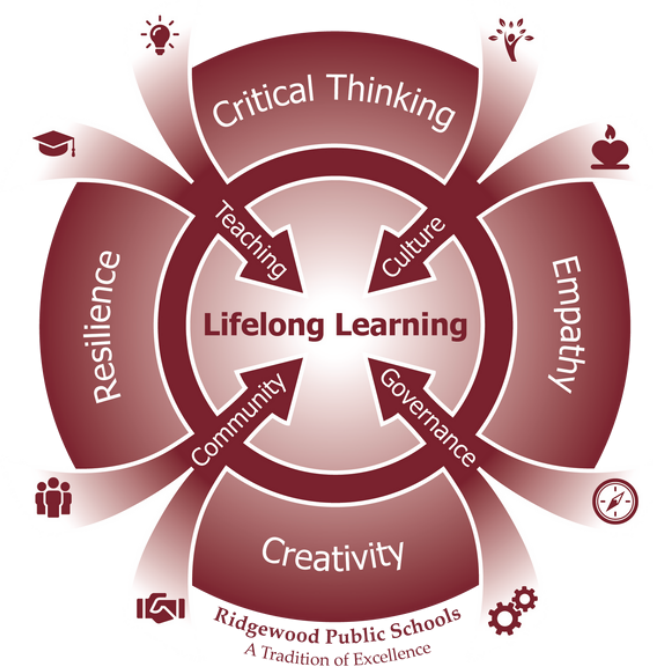
# Mantra

**Empower, Create, Appreciate**





# Vision of a Graduate



# S·E·L/ARTS





# Ridgewood Arts

## Vision of a Graduate



Problem-Solving &  
Critical Thinking

Collaboration &  
Teamwork

Resilience &  
Perseverance

Communication &  
Interpersonal Skills

Self-Awareness &  
Empathy

Self-Management  
& Independence

Responsible  
Decision-Making





# Year 2 plan



## Program Support & Audit

'23-'24

We plan to work as a department, along with outside guidance, to develop support elements for our teachers and to review our program with the goal of reaffirming strengths and identifying areas where we can improve.

This school year our goal is to:

- Act on feedback from our community, student, and staff surveys that are within short-term reach.
- Offer staff specific support in developing their craft through district-offered professional development opportunities and department meeting time.
- Use our work from last year to help guide an audit of our programming in an attempt to reflect on our district approach and programming in the Arts with the purpose of developing clear long-term goals.



# Year 2

Outline of Year 2 goals to help guide future program vision and implementation



Keith Haring: Cumulation of Works -1990

## Program Audit

- Leverage Department Vision
- Use outside Arts leaders to guide our audit
- Research other districts

## Targeted Arts PD

- Support and align our practices
- Provide content specific PD

## Goals

- Respond to survey feedback by implementing change this year
- Develop longer term goals for further investigation





# Takeaways



## Overview

9 Buildings  
38 Teachers  
4664 Students  
146 Courses



## Year 1

Overall very  
positive feedback  
from community



## Next Steps

Audit  
Targeted PD  
Goal Progress





Members of the Visual and Performing Arts Department for the excellent work they do every day.

Parents, teachers, and students who participated in the survey.

RPS school staff, teachers, and administration for supporting and advocating for the ARTS.

Ridgewood community and BOE who have continued to support the Arts thought the growth and development of public school education.

# Thank You







# Resources

## 21 Century Skills

Partnership for 21st Century Learning

<https://www.battelleforkids.org/networks/p21/frameworks-resources>

## Strengthening Academic Performance

2019 Rice University Study

<https://kinder.rice.edu/research/investigating-causal-effects-arts-education-experiences-experimental-evidence-houstons-arts>

## Transferable Skills

2013 Michigan State University Study

[https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/study\\_links\\_exposure\\_to\\_art\\_as\\_a\\_child\\_to\\_careers\\_in\\_adulthood](https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/study_links_exposure_to_art_as_a_child_to_careers_in_adulthood)

## Human Elements

Smithsonian Magazine: *Why we Make Art*

National Endowment for the Arts: *How the Arts Impact Communities*

## Emotional and Social Benefits

Edutopia: *Creativity and Academics: The Power of an Arts Education*

The Brookings Institution: *New Evidence of the Benefits of Arts Education*

## The AI Future & the Arts

Edutopia: *Art Education and the Innovation Economy*

Harvard Business Review: *The Soft Skills of Great Digital Organizations*

