



Visual arts educators collaboratively review student work during the MAEIA arts assessment field test. The MAEIA Project has created 350 arts performance assessments in visual arts, dance, music, and theatre for voluntary use by K-12 Michigan teachers.

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[Janine Campbell: The Lasting Impact of Quality Professional Development](#)
[Heather Vaughan-Southard](#) [ArtPrize](#), [arts education](#), [Byron Center West Middle School](#), [collaboration](#), [communicating an idea](#), [cutouts](#), [Grand Rapids](#), [Janine Campbell](#), [legacy projects](#), [MAEIA Blueprint](#), [MAEIA program review tool](#), [professional development](#), [professional learning](#), [Robert Rauschenberg](#), [The Lab School of Washington D.C.](#), [The Power of Art Conference](#), [visual arts](#)

Professional development is an impactful tool for teachers. When it is directed in ways that allows teachers to take what they have learned and apply it in their own classrooms to engage students, it becomes one of the most powerful tools we have. If you are interested in help assessing your district's or school's access to Arts-specific learning

opportunities for professional learning, use the Michigan Arts Education Instruction and Assessment [Blueprint](#) and [Program Review Tool](#).

I am fortunate that I have had the continued opportunity to participate in and even lead quality Arts-specific professional development throughout my teaching career. Each conference, keynote, and presentation has made an impact on my approach to teaching in big ways and small. A key approach when I attend any conference is to take one idea, tool, or method and find a way to weave it into my practice.

Last April, I had the privilege to participate in “The Power of Art Conference” at [The Lab School](#) in Washington D.C. This three-day event gave me the opportunity to meet teachers from across the country, hear from thought-leaders in Arts Integration, and tour a school in our Nation’s Capitol that puts the Arts in the heart of their instruction. The Lab School hosted the event because of their commitment to Arts Integration and their history of sharing with teachers what is possible when you bring content and classrooms together for big, bold collaborative projects.

Over the years, collaboration is something that I have pushed more and more with my students. It has looked differently depending on what our end goals were; sometimes we did small group projects and sometimes we planned events that included the entire school. Regardless of the end result, the goals have always been for students participating to not only learn about the content covered through the creation of the collaboration, but to also feel a connection to those who are a part of making it. I often call these projects, “Legacy Projects” because of their lasting, visual impact on the school.

At The Lab School, legacy projects are everywhere. From the mosaic columns and the dragon fountain in the courtyard, to the large installation works often created with the help of well-known artists like one of the key figures in the school, [Robert Rauschenberg](#), you can see something made by students in every area of the school. Each year before his passing, Rauschenberg would come and create a large collaborative work with the students for display in the school. Each time, something different was created and a new approach would be taken; each time, students knew they were creating something that would be left for others to view for years to come. This was something I knew I wanted to bring back to my school and weave into my teaching practice right away.

Fortunately, I did not have to wait very long before I was able to do just that. After returning home from “The Power of Art Conference,” I soon received an opportunity to use collaboration as a springboard into a large mixed-media piece my students made for one of the largest art competitions in the world: [ArtPrize](#). The 19 day competition is celebrating its ninth year and has opened up a Youth Collaboration Award for the first time this year with a classroom grant of \$5000 to those with the most votes. Our collaborative work, “Painting Under Paper Cuts,” involves three 4x8ft panels and is a visual reaction to a week of state testing that happened to be occurring during its

creation. Students started with choosing paint from a variety of colors. They were asked to paint how they felt and use brushes, sponges, and other tools, including their hands, to make marks overtop each of the panels. They then worked in pairs to create cut out images from separate pieces of colored paper that included images of their classmates and various symmetrical and asymmetrical circle patterns. These pieces were pasted on top of the painted panels. This work will be displayed during ArtPrize at Monroe Community Church in Downtown Grand Rapids from September 20th-October 8th. You can view and vote on site with your smartphone for the work at www.artprize.org/65259. Once the competition completes, the work will find a permanent home in our Library at our school.

I am thankful I work in a school that embraces the opportunities offered through quality Professional Development. Because I use what I have learned through these experiences in tangible ways in my practice, I am able to show my students and the greater school community what is possible when ideas are put into practice and when students come together to create a positive visual impact on their environment. These collaborations are one of the best parts of my job and one that my students often comment on as their favorite, too. If you would like more information on The Lab School of Washington D.C. or “The Power of Art Conference” and how to get involved, visit their [website](#).

Do you work with the principles Janine listed above in your Visual Arts classroom? MAEIA suggests looking at the following assessment items:

[V.T304 Applying Principles of Design to Paper Cutouts](#)

[V.T407 Collaborative Compositions](#)

[V.E404 Communicating an Idea](#)

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