

April 2022

If one was asked “why” Andrea Newman has won awards in the past and is being nominated for this award, the basic things, of course, come to mind. Ms. Newman is familiar with and dedicated to her curriculum. She is well-planned, a team-player, and goes “above and beyond” in time and effort in carrying out her job. But, these traits would surely be true of everyone who leads an exemplary program. There are many other traits that describe Andrea’s approach to the art program at her school. The most poignant, in my opinion, would be her creativity, her compassion, her connectivity and her pursuit to stay current.

The art program at Andrea’s school includes drawing and painting with natural resources, standard supplies, textiles, recycled products, clay, etc. After working with paper towels as a medium, a well known artist who began the concept visited her school and worked with the students. There is no end to the creativity that Andrea uses in her classroom.

While a huge proponent of art education, Andrea is a vital part of the school’s overall mission and she shows that by volunteering her planning time, lunch time, and after school time to working with students as well as chairing and participating in various committees. She employs methods that use art to help students in the academic and emotional arenas. She has worked with the school counselor in a journaling and art program for students experiencing emotional issues and has devised professional development activities for teachers on how art can be aligned with academics in the classroom. Andrea works with students to create the school yearbook, guides students in preparing props for school programs, and hosts special events throughout the year. Her co-workers, her students, and the parents at her school know that she cares about them – in and out of the art room. Ms. Newman is a compassionate educator.

Ms. Newman connects the art program to the community and beyond in an exemplary way. She often employs the use of guest speakers/demonstrators in her classroom, works with the University to bring more “hands” to the art room, and creates correspondence between famous artists and her students. In addition, she takes her program and her expertise into the community. Dean Road’s art is often displayed in various art shows and competitions, Ms. Newman attends and supports many area art initiatives, and she teaches extended art classes at local venues.

Lastly, Ms. Newman works diligently to stay current in her profession. She is an avid reader and researcher. She attends and leads workshops. She writes grants to bring new materials, experiences, and concepts to her classroom. Andrea is a perfect example of a teacher who continues to have “passion” in her career. After many, many years in the teaching profession, she exhibits the same enthusiasm and wonder as when she began.

It would be great for Ms. Newman to receive recognition for her hard work and dedication. There is no doubt that this honor would bring even more attention to the arts program at her school and, if I know Andrea, that is what would excite her the most about being chosen.