



NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

LESSONS LEARNED & LOOKING FORWARD

School Years 2020–2021 and 2021–2022

TUESDAY, APRIL 20 | 7–8 PM ET

View panelist bios, conversation recording, and more at www.arteducators.org/community/town-hall

The school year 2020–2021 presented unique challenges that initiated tremendous innovation, creative problem solving, taking a deeper look at our society and selves, and bridging the gap of connectivity during this time of isolation. We each have a one-of-a-kind story from the past year, as well as great takeaways that emerged from the necessity of creating a “new normal” that was unlike anything we’ve experienced. How do we make the most of what we’ve learned?



Anna Pilhoefer

Elementary Art Teacher
Santa Barbara Unified School District
Santa Barbara, CA



Karen Rosner

Director of Visual Arts
New York City Department of Education
New York, NY

TIPS FOR LOOKING FOWARD

- Spend more time building on students’ social-emotional learning (SEL) skills to help in creating a stronger community of artists that are able to have courageous conversations across differences. The fifth core belief of restorative justice states: “Everything we need to make positive change is already here. We just have to let our students, families, neighbors and friends tell us what they need. And we show up. And we learn together.” This hope is driving me to reimagine new ways of structuring student learning around their lived experiences and present needs.
- I have to remain focused on current affairs and our response to them through the curricula. It is the curricula that students need, especially now as our country reckons with its identity. I have to remember that art is built into our understanding of and response to events every day.

GO-TO SUPPORT RESOURCES

- NAEA toolkits
- Social Justice Standards, Learning for Justice; in conjunction with the Principles of Ethnic Studies
- My students and their families as funds of knowledge. It is critical that I inventory the gifts of my students and building on the strengths they already possess.

SELF-CARE SHARE

Besides keeping my body moving, finding time for mindful meditation, and being in community with my affinity group of teachers, the most important thing is to give myself self-compassion! Being kind to myself helps me to control anxiety and remain in calm state of being. As teachers we play a special role in making a difference in the lives of young people, every day.

TIPS FOR LOOKING FOWARD

- Rethink how and what we were offering in terms of professional learning for our visual arts teachers. While in-person professional development lends itself to collegiality among art educators, consider the benefits of hybrid offerings as well. In planning content of each session, place greater emphasis on students’ social-emotional needs.
- Consider how the pandemic has placed front and center the deep inequalities in our society and let that make all of us more cognizant of who our students are, and help to inform our teaching.
- Integrate the museum educator community more deeply into arts instruction. Rising to the occasion, museums now have online resources related to remote learning, and provide virtual tours.

GO-TO SUPPORT RESOURCES

- Craig Haen, cochair of community outreach for the American Group Psychotherapy Associates on helping students cope during the pandemic: <http://craighaen.com>
- Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Remote Education: <https://crehub.org/remote-learning>
- The education departments in our city museums; Zev Slurzberg and Heather Maxson

SELF-CARE SHARE

When the Metropolitan Museum of Art reopened, I was there! The drive along the Hudson River was grand, and an intense hour or two of close looking, sketching, making new discoveries, and thinking how to share new ideas with teachers, energized me. We all need to feel good about our work; what also helped me was staying in contact with our visual arts teachers and doing my best to maintain a sense of community.



Ray Yang

Visual Art Teacher and
Grade Level Dean
University Prep
Seattle, WA



James Wells

Innovative Teaching and
Learning Manager
Crayola
Cordova, TN

TIPS FOR LOOKING FOWARD

- **Stay flexible.** This is an easy one for art educators, because it feels like we've always had to live our careers within flexibility. We're constantly adapting and adjusting in our classrooms, schools, and organizations. But more than ever, we've had to rely on that skill and expertise in adjusting and adapting.
- **Keep it simple.** It sounds deceptively easy to do, but I don't mean necessarily going back to basics, though that is part of it. Looking at the tools your students have at accessible and adapting projects to those resources is important. But also not overthinking things, and when it makes the most sense, shifting towards what is most efficient and effective. It might mean utilizing digital tools in a new way, or adapting expectations.
- **Center students and their experiences.** The last year has been rough for everyone. But when we keep our students, their needs, and their interests at the center, we are most effective as teachers. Meet them where they are right now. Give them grace. And they will respond.

GO-TO SUPPORT RESOURCE

- **The Art of Education:** Tools, articles, and tips! They do a great job of putting things in bite-size morsels and are an endless resource for ideas. <https://theartofeducation.edu>
- **Amplifier Project:** One of my favorite go-tos right now to think about the way that art impacts and reflects the world around us. Be an artist and an activist. <https://amplifier.org>
- I've also been going back to books that help recenter and focus me. Ronald Takaki, bell hooks, Ken Robinson, Adrienne Marie Brown, and Grace Lee Boggs, to name a few.

SELF-CARE SHARE

I get outside and go for a run, or I spend time with my family, who help ground and center me. I pull out some comics to read, do some drawing, and cook a good meal. But mostly I disconnect from the work, at least for a moment. It's the only way to recharge and keep going, because if we never take a pause, we'll get lost and depleted.

TIPS FOR LOOKING FOWARD

- **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion** is the path forward and requires many champions. Windows, Mirrors, and Sliding Doors is a great metaphor often used in the Windows, Mirrors and Sliding Doors to bring more diverse content into the classroom. This would be quite useful in art education. Whether educators are viewing works of art, designing curriculum, or starting EDI work in their state associations, this metaphor is a great on-ramp to starting and reflecting upon our practice.
- **Leverage technology** to connect with students, families, and colleagues. The pandemic has created opportunities for art educators to bring our curriculum and learning opportunities home. As a result, parents are more aware of the "happenings" in the art classroom. Additionally, many art educators were or are isolated before, during, and after the pandemic. Building professional learning communities with colleagues through platforms such as Twitter is a game changer.
- **Social-emotional learning + arts**—it is no surprise that the Arts meet the social-emotional needs of students. In a year where students have experienced or witnessed trauma resulting from the virus, social injustice, food insecurity, etc., we have to continue to leverage the arts as a medium to heal and make us whole.

GO-TO SUPPORT RESOURCES


- Rudine Sims Bishop is credited for- Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Doors. It has been widely adopted in the ELA world and now in art education.
- Learning for Justice (formerly known as Teaching Tolerance)
- CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning)

SELF-CARE SHARE

I have made an effort to wake up early in the morning (4:30/5) and spend time reading scripture and meditating. In a year of chaos and technology overload, I have found this moment of peace refreshing, energizing, and cleansing. Additionally, I make an effort to walk/run outdoors. Hearing nature and taking in fresh air is quite soothing.

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The NAEA Remote Learning
Toolkit is a repository of resources
to help visual arts educators
navigate the 2020–21 school year!


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