



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: February 28, 2024
To: Local Educational Agency Leads
Route To: District Directors of Special Education, Principals, Assistant/Vice Principals, Special Education Teachers, Child Study Team Members
From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Services
Deadline: March 22, 2024

Autism Acceptance Virtual Art Expo Submission

In celebration of Autism Awareness Month, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), Office of Special Education (OSE), will be hosting an online virtual art show for the month of April 2024. The OSE is extending an invitation for art submissions for the virtual art show from now through March 22, 2024.

2024 Virtual Art Show Theme: *What's in a Dream?*

This theme can be widely interpreted, and it is an excellent way to encourage students to think about any kind of objects or subject matter that expresses their own identity and dreams. This theme will capture the acceptance of autism through the creative expression by, and in support of, individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Students with ASD and those who want to support Autism Acceptance Month are encouraged to submit artwork of any medium to be displayed online as part of the 1st Annual Autism Virtual Art Expo. Group submissions are also encouraged. The Virtual Art Expo will have its own website, which will be hosted on the Office of Special Education website, where the public will be able to access and view the art. A broadcast will be released announcing the Virtual Art Expo for the month of April with the website link. In addition, the website will be featured on the Learning Resource Center (LRC) bulletin board and distributed through the external stakeholder list serv.

Types of Art

All artworks must be photographed; however, that does not limit the medium and type of art that can be submitted. For example, photography, drawings, paintings, sculptures, sketches, computer animations, are all acceptable.

Submission Information

School personnel (e.g., teachers, administrators, supervisors, directors) will submit photographed artwork via email to OSEInfo@doe.nj.gov. In your email submission, you must include the following information for each photographed work of art you are submitting:

1. Picture of the students' artwork
2. Title of the artwork
3. Students' first name
4. School district
5. Grade level
6. Brief description of each artwork (max 100 words)

You may submit more than one work of art; however, please be clear on labeling each photograph with the information (above) that corresponds with each piece of art. If you are submitting more than one piece, please send in separate emails.

Tips for Photographing Your Artwork

To ensure optimal presentation, please adhere to the following photography tips for artwork submission:

- Utilize a high-quality camera or smartphone for clear images.
- Ensure ample lighting in the photo-taking environment.
- Eliminate shadows and light glares by adjusting artwork and camera placement.
- Capture images straight-on, minimizing angles for a true representation.
- If needed, place the artwork flat on the ground and shoot from above to avoid leaning against the wall.

Note that only submissions featuring clear and legible images will be considered for selection.

c: Members, State Board of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group