



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: December 10, 2025
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: February 13, 2026

Call For Art Submissions: Autism Acceptance 3rd Annual Virtual Art Expo

Each year, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), Office of Special Education (OSE), presents a virtual art expo to celebrate artwork created by students with autism who utilize art as a means of expression, as well as pieces created by peers to celebrate autism acceptance. This popular event is held annually in April.

2026 Virtual Art Show Theme: *Autism in Action*

OSE is now accepting art submissions for the 3rd Annual Autism Acceptance Virtual Art Expo! This year's theme, '*Autism in Action*', is a showcase that will highlight the ways individuals with autism actively contribute, create, and engage in their schools and communities. This theme encourages students to share their unique strengths and perspectives through creative expression, celebrating both individuality and inclusion. Students with autism and those who want to support Autism Acceptance Month are encouraged to submit original artwork of any medium to be displayed online as part of the 3rd Annual Autism Virtual Art Expo. Group submissions are also encouraged; however, note that if the submissions are part of a school project, upload one (1) submission as a collage with all students' work.

Types of Art

All original artworks must be photographed; however, that does not limit the medium and type of art that can be submitted. Photography, drawings, paintings, sculptures, sketches, and computer animations are acceptable. For classroom art projects, please create a collage of student work and submit it as one submission.

Submission of Information

School personnel (e.g., teachers, administrators, supervisors, directors, etc.) will submit photographed artwork by filling out the [Autism Acceptance Art Expo Submission form](#) and uploading the photographed artwork. Please note that JPEG, PNG or PDF files will be the only accepted formats. In your 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. Student's first name
4. School district

5. Grade level
6. Brief description of each artwork (max 100 words)

Only one submission per student will be considered for display, and only original artwork will be considered. Please do not include any submissions that contain a picture of the student's face. The deadline for all submissions is February 6, 2026, at 4:30 pm.

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.
- Place the artwork flat on the ground and shoot from above to avoid leaning against the wall if needed.

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