



Newsletter | February 2026
 We bring learning to life every month!



Lowcountry, SC: **Move, Create, Remember**

Arts integration energized learning across H.E. Bonner and Hendersonville Elementary. Dance Consultant Simone Liberty helped kindergartners embody vocabulary and retell stories through movement. Music Consultant Dr. Rue Lee-Holmes guided students in rhythmic speech to find the beat within ELA standards. Theatre Consultant Barry Stewart Mann used improvisation and tableau to make academic content vivid. Students engaged their bodies and minds to anchor new learning, proving that active strategies help content stay with them long after the lesson ends.



Atlanta, GA: **Rhythmic Learning in Action**

Students at West Clayton Elementary explored rhythm as a tool for understanding science and literacy with Music Consultant Dr. Maribeth Yoder-White. Fifth graders created chants to remember the parts and functions of plant and animal cells. Third graders composed original pieces to represent types of pollution. Other classes retold stories, practiced sight words, and told time while keeping a steady beat. Teachers joined the energy as students discovered how rhythm strengthens memory and deepens understanding across subjects.



Williamsburg County, SC: **From Sculptures to Spotlight**

Students at Kingstree Middle explored the Civil War and World War I through visual literacy and descriptive drawing with Visual Arts Consultant Shannon Green. They created expressive sculptures that communicated specific historical themes. At Greeleyville Elementary, Theatre Consultant Barry Stewart Mann introduced educators to strategies such as Statues in the Garden and improvisation. Teachers discovered dynamic ways to integrate drama into

daily lessons, helping students make complex content more meaningful and memorable.



Winder, GA: Making Something Beautiful

Through support from the Georgia Council for the Arts Vibrant Communities Grant, **Holsenbeck Elementary** partnered with ArtsNOW for an arts-integrated residency. Visual Arts Consultant Shannon Green connected learning to the book *Maybe Something Beautiful*. After discussion and reflection, students created abstract art with tempera sticks and dot markers. Their artwork was cut into strips and woven into mesh to form a 14-foot installation displayed in the school hallway. Students experienced how creative expression can transform spaces and strengthen community connections.



South Carolina: Seeing, Doing, Understanding

Students at **Phillip Simmons Elementary** used the Claim, Support, Question strategy with Dance Consultant Simone Liberty to analyze movement through visual literacy. At **League Academy**, students choreographed geographic features and strengthened opinion writing. **Bells Elementary** launched its ArtsNOW journey with Theatre Consultant Susie Spears Purcell, where students used tableau to solve math equations and embodied characters from novels. These experiences empowered students to think critically and connect deeply with their learning.



Union City, GA: Arts in Action

Families gathered at **Gullatt Elementary** for a literacy-focused book distribution, with more than 200 students and family members participating. Students received Creativity Task Cards and explored connections between reading and writing. Visual Arts Consultant Shannon Green led arts-integrated professional learning aligned to literacy standards. Students created Word Art inspired by Martin Luther King Jr., responded to Alma Woodsey Thomas, and developed artwork that supported story retelling and theme identification. Creativity strengthened both literacy skills and family engagement.



Charleston, SC: **Think, Build, Create**

Teachers at **Johns Island Elementary School** engaged in hands-on STEAM professional learning aligned to engineering and design. Through inquiry-driven experiences, educators explored strategies that promote creativity, collaboration, and higher-order thinking. The session strengthened their understanding of how arts integration supports differentiated instruction and meaningful engagement. Teachers left equipped with practical approaches that connect thinking, building, and creating to deepen student learning across disciplines.



Augusta, GA: **Where Music Meets Math**

At **Deer Chase Elementary**, Music Consultant Lyn Koonce guided students in connecting rhythm and structure to math standards. Through soundscapes, raps, and the Hear, Think, Wonder routine, students explored patterns and shared their reasoning. Music echoed through classrooms as learners tested ideas and reflected on understanding. Teachers observed how musical strategies made thinking visible and strengthened conceptual connections across subjects. Students experienced math through sound, structure, and collaboration.





Atlanta, GA: Student Voices on Arts Integration

ArtsNOW received feedback from the Learn4Life Youth Council after students experienced a music-integrated ELA lesson facilitated by Music Consultant Lyn Koonec. Students analyzed lyrical and musical elements of two songs addressing the same theme, then created original compositions using body percussion. Their thoughtful reflections will inform future high school lesson development for the ArtsNOW digital resource library, ensuring student voice shapes meaningful arts-integrated content.



Savannah, GA: Creative Connections

The ArtsNOW Principals' Network Conference brought together educational leaders for a day centered on Creative Connections. Crayola's Education Content Manager James Wells opened with a keynote exploring creativity and how it shapes leadership. Breakout sessions led by ArtsNOW partner school leaders focused on content connections, community connections, and collaborative connections. Throughout the day, participants representing 33 schools across Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, and North Carolina engaged in dialogue and reflection. Executive Director David A. Dik from Young Audiences Arts for Learning guided a thoughtful close, and ArtsNOW President & CEO Pamela Walker joined James Wells for a collaborative final activity that reinforced the power of creative leadership.



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