



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Raine Valentine of Ridgely Middle School selected as one of only 15 national teacher leaders representing art educators in Connected Arts Networks**

Towson, MD – Raine Valentine, a visual arts educator at Ridgely Middle School, was selected by the National Art Education Association to serve as one of just 15 national teacher leaders representing art educators in the newly established [Connected Arts Networks](#).

In partnership with the Educational Theater Association, National Association for Music Education, and the National Dance Education Organization, the National Art Education Association received an \$8.5 million federal grant to launch the Connected Arts Networks. The goal of the initiative is to create nationwide virtual professional learning communities to support art educators in better serving their students.

Each of the four participating organizations has selected 15 teacher leaders. As a teacher leader, Valentine has participated in a project orientation. She will attend a Virtual Summer Institute on July 7, 8, 26, and 27. From September 2022 through July 2023, she will engage in monthly meetings with the other teacher leaders. Then, beginning in June 2023 and continuing through July 2026, she will facilitate her own professional learning community of 10 arts educators from throughout the nation.

“The new NAEA Connected Arts Networks program is designed to bring more inclusion, diversity, and social-emotional learning into arts classrooms,” says Valentine. “I am super excited about this opportunity and excited to be able to share it with the BCPS visual arts community!”

Valentine has been a BCPS visual arts educator since 2008. She also serves as an adjunct faculty member at Notre Dame of Maryland University. Through her side business, she offers community arts education and paints murals in commercial and residential spaces. She is a middle school representative to the National Art Education Association and serves as chair-elect of the association's Caucus on the Spiritual in Art Education. Her educational background includes an associate degree in art studies from Harford Community College and a bachelor's degree in art education and a post-bachelorette certificate in arts integration, both from Towson University.

*(Editor's note: A photo of Raine Valentine accompanies this release.)*

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