A RESOLUTION

Designating the month of March 2021 as "Music in Our Schools Month," "Theatre in Our Schools Month," "Dance in Our Schools Month" and "Youth Art Month" in Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, Arts education experiences have substantive effects on student academic, social and emotional outcomes; and

WHEREAS, Social and emotional learning skills are more necessary than ever as the world emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Research and studies have shown that engagement in arts education has a positive impact on student discipline, standardized writing scores and compassion and empathy for others; and

WHEREAS, The Every Student Succeeds Act recognizes fine arts programs as fulfilling the requirement that each school provide a well-rounded education to their students; and

WHEREAS, In this Commonwealth, students in grades K-12 must be provided with instruction in fine arts disciplines, including music, dance, theatre and visual art; and
WHEREAS, Students who took four years of art classes in high school scored an average of 92 points higher on their SATs than their peers; and
WHEREAS, Students with high levels of arts involvement are less likely to drop out of school; and
WHEREAS, Disadvantaged students who receive an arts education are three times more likely to earn a bachelor's degree than students who lack those experiences; and
WHEREAS, The study of music engages students in their creative, cultural, aesthetic, intellectual, social, physical and emotional development; and
WHEREAS, Music education helps develop students' skills critical to 21st century learning for success in school and life; and
WHEREAS, These skills are integral to the economy of this Commonwealth; and
WHEREAS, The National Association for Music Education is leading the conversation nationwide on the importance of quality music education in our schools; and
WHEREAS, Theatre education teaches invaluable skills needed to be successful in the workforce, including the ability to listen, artistic sense, nonverbal communication, enthusiasm and storytelling; and
WHEREAS, Drama instruction integrated into elementary classrooms improves students' social and emotional development and contributes to a positive classroom culture; and
WHEREAS, English language learners in kindergarten through second grade who received weekly drama lessons demonstrated increased listening and speaking skills on standardized tests; and

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WHEREAS, Reading play scripts out loud has been found to help at-risk middle school students become better readers; and
WHEREAS, Only 28% of public high schools in high-poverty areas offer theatre instruction; and
WHEREAS, The Educational Theatre Association envisions every student will have access to theatre taught by qualified educators as a vital part of a well-rounded education and is dedicated to shaping lives through theatre education; and
WHEREAS, Education in the art of dance develops the knowledge and skills required to create, perform and understand movement as a means of artistic communication; and
WHEREAS, A comprehensive education in dance includes improvisation, technique, choreography, performance, observation and analysis; and
WHEREAS, Dance education engages the artistic processes of creating, performing and critical analysis by requiring students to read symbol systems, use critical thinking skills, excel in nonverbal reasoning and communication, exchange ideas, work cooperatively and collaboratively with others and interact in a multicultural society; and
WHEREAS, Student achievement, teacher satisfaction and school culture are improved through dance education as demonstrated by increased reading and STEM test scores, improved memory retention and cognitive connections and enhanced teacher and school morale; and
WHEREAS, The National Dance Education Organization is dedicated to advancing dance education for individuals of all backgrounds; and
WHEREAS, Visual arts education is valuable in developing divergent and critical thinking, multicultural awareness and
technical, communication and expressive skills among students; and

WHEREAS, The Council for Art Education promotes quality school visual art education programs in grades K-12 across the United States; and

WHEREAS, The Council for Art Education "Youth Art Month" theme for 2021 is "Art Connects Us"; and

WHEREAS, "Youth Art Month" exists to recognize art education as a viable factor in the total education curriculum and to direct attention to the value of art education for divergent and critical thinking; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate designate the month of March 2021 as "Music in Our Schools Month," "Theatre in Our Schools Month," "Dance in Our Schools Month" and "Youth Art Month" in Pennsylvania; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Senate recognize schools and certified arts educators in their efforts to provide more robust, comprehensive arts education curriculum for students in grades K-12; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Senate recognize the positive impact that music, theatre, dance and visual art education has on communities and students across this Commonwealth to help raise awareness regarding the need for access to quality programs for all students regardless of socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity or ability.