

WINTER
2026



e-STAR
A TEXAS ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

OUR MISSION:

The purpose of TAEA is to promote quality visual arts education in Texas by promoting visual arts education as an integral part of the State of Texas' curriculum. This support will be through professional development of knowledge and skills, representation of the arts educators of Texas, service and leadership opportunities, and research and development of policies and decisions relative to practices and directions in visual arts education. Concurrent purposes are to sustain and advance professional development and to encourage and promote the advancement of knowledge and skills in the art field.

TAEA  14070 Proton Road, Suite 100 Dallas, TX, 75244.  972.233.9107  info@taea.org

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Be a part of the next

e-STAR

We invite members to submit
articles and events by submitting
them to the editor.



Deadline for the next issue:

March 13th, 2026

The e-star is the official newsletter of the Texas Art Education Association and is published four times a year: Fall, Spring, Summer, Winter.

For more information, visit:

TAEA E-STAR

Cover Art:
“Bed Heads”
Eloise Darnall
2025 Platinum Medal Winner
Kealing Middle School
Austin ISD



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Gratitude, Grace, and Growth

Hello friends and fellow art educators.

As your new president, I am filled with deep gratitude—for the trust you've placed in me, for the mentors and colleagues who have shaped my journey, and for the tireless work each of you does every day to nurture creativity and artistic intelligence across Texas. Together, we are part of something bigger than any single classroom or conference—we are a community that believes in the transformative power of visual art education.

As we move forward, I hope we work together with grace—grace for ourselves as we navigate challenges, grace for one another as we share ideas and perspectives, and grace for our students as they learn, experiment, and grow through art. Grace allows us to stay connected, compassionate, and resilient. And finally, this is a season of growth—for our organization, for our programs, and for each of us as educators and artists. Growth happens when we listen deeply, take creative risks, and support one another's visions. My hope is that, together, we continue to cultivate a vibrant, inclusive community where every member feels seen, valued, and inspired.

Thank you for the work you do every day—your passion shapes not only students, but the future of art education in Texas. I am honored to serve alongside you, and I can't wait to see how we grow...together gracefully and with gratitude for the work.

Thank you. I am honored to serve you.

- Sandra Newton



SAVE THE DATES!

VASE is just around the corner!

[CLICK HERE](#) for dates and directors

Youth Art Month

March 1st - 29th

Big Art Day

March 5th

YAM Exhibit

March 9th

NAEA Conference

March 5-7

State VASE

April 25

Are you following us?

Click below to follow our accounts!



Upcoming NAEA Professional Learning Webinars



Universal Design Learning: Time-Saving Strategies for Building Inclusive Art Classrooms



Building Thriving Ceramics Programs: Practical Strategies, Creative Possibilities, and Real-World Classroom Insights



Mindful Creativity in the Art Room: Simple Practices to Support Well-Being and Authentic Expression

Wednesday, February 6th | 6pm CDT

Wednesday, March 18th | 6pm CDT

Wednesday, May 13th | 6pm CDT

JOIN US AT THE NEXT TAEA CONFERENCE
NOVEMBER 12-14, 2026



MOODY GARDENS, GALVESTON TX



FALL CONF



RENCE 2025

















TAEA's 2025 Districts of Distinction

7 Year Awardees

Aldine ISD, Alief ISD, Austin ISD, Comal ISD, Frisco ISD, Humble ISD, Klein ISD, Lake Dallas ISD Lubbock ISD, Manor ISD, Round Rock ISD, Spring ISD, Texas City ISD, Tyler ISD, Victoria ISD Waco ISD

6 Year Awardees

Bryan ISD, Channelview ISD, College Station ISD, Del Valle ISD, Edinburg CISD, Georgetown ISD Huffman ISD, Hutto ISD, McAllen ISD, Northside ISD, Pasadena ISD, Plano ISD, Prosper ISD Redwater ISD

5 Year Awardees

Abilene ISD, Cypress-Fairbanks ISD, Ector County ISD, Fort Worth ISD, Katy ISD, Richardson ISD Socorro ISD, Spring Branch ISD

4 Year Awardees

Burleson ISD, Chisum ISD, Clear Creek ISD, Conroe ISD, Dallas ISD, Deer Park ISD Duncanville ISD, Garland ISD, Glen Rose ISD, Mansfield ISD, New Caney ISD, Pflugerville ISD Pine Tree ISD, St. Joseph Catholic School, Texarkana ISD

3 Year Awardees

Alvin ISD, Arlington ISD, Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD, Castleberry ISD, Cedar Hill ISD Fort Bend ISD, Fort Worth Academy of Fine Arts, Galena Park ISD, Hallsville ISD, Hays CISD Irving ISD, Killeen ISD, Lake Travis ISD, Little Elm ISD, Magnolia ISD, Rockwall ISD, San Marcos ISD

2 Year Awardees

Argyle ISD, Cleburne ISD, Coppell ISD, Denton ISD, Elgin ISD, Forney ISD, Gainesville ISD Hearne ISD, Judson ISD, Lockhart ISD, Lorena ISD, McKinney ISD, Merkel ISD, Nacogdoches ISD New Braunfels ISD, Quinlan ISD, San Antonio ISD, San Saba ISD, Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City ISD, Seguin ISD, Sheldon ISD, Tomball ISD, Weslaco ISD, White Oak ISD, Wylie ISD, Ysleta ISD

New Awardees

Grand Prairie ISD, Harlingen CISD, Kerrville ISD, Leander ISD, Marshall ISD, Martin's Mill ISD Mesquite ISD, Mission CISD, Mount Pleasant ISD, San Felipe Del Rio CISD, Splendora ISD Temple ISD, West ISD





Awards



Texas Art Education Association
Educator of the Year

Cristina Correa

Plano ISD



Outstanding Art Educator
Elementary

Natalie Harris

Humble ISD



Outstanding Art Educator
Middle School / Junior High

Cruz Ramirez

Northside ISD



Texas Art Education Association
Friend (s) of Art Education

Larry Berger

Pearland ISD



Outstanding Art Educator
Retired

Debbie Nicholas

UAHT



Outstanding Art Educator
Higher Education

Dr. Kevin Jenkins

Texas State University

Winners



**Outstanding Art Educator
High School**

Matthew Wright
Lubbock ISD



**Outstanding Art Educator
Supervision / Admin**

Theresa Yasger
Northside ISD



Principal of the Year

April Nilson
Round Rock ISD



**Outstanding Art Educator
Museum**

Stephanie Niemeyer
MFA Houston



**Outstanding Student of
Art Education**

Grace Atchison
Sam Houston State University



**National Art Honor Society
Sponsor**

Keri Reynolds
Alief ISD

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Scan the QR Code to
connect with us!

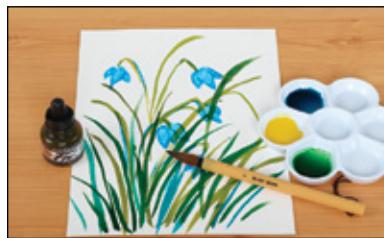


Sumi-e Tempera Resist

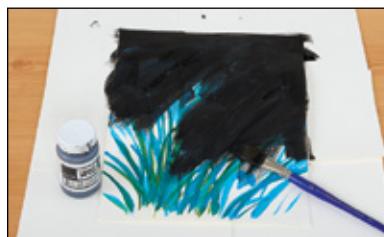
Lesson Plan for Grades 5–12



Mask the areas to remain white by brushing with *Blick Essentials Washable Tempera*.



Add strokes of color using acrylic ink and mask them with washable tempera paint.



Cover entire image with a coat of *Blick Black Cat India Ink*.



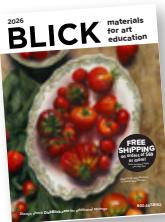
Remove tempera resist by rinsing it under running water over a sink.

Experience this expressive style of brush painting through a simple pattern design and masking process.

CHECK OUT NEW lesson plans and video workshops for students of all ages at [DickBlick.com/lesson-plans](https://www.DickBlick.com/lesson-plans).



SCAN TO VIEW
LESSON PLAN



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DISTINGUISHED FELLOWS

2025

Congratulations to the following Outstanding TAEA Members for their nomination and acceptance as a TAEA Distinguished Fellow.



Rosalinda Champion

"There is an absolute need for the comprehensive development of a well-educated person in any society and intellectual environment, to the fulfillment of a well-rounded and matured mind. Art is the base for teaching the philosophy and process of creative thinking as well as the sensitivity and respect for human diversity which are necessary for successful intellectual and social progress. The importance of Art education is not what your mind learns - it is how your heart learns to respond".

Julie Gallow

"As an art educator I am one in a long line of changemakers; Josef Albers who pioneered color theory education and Anni Albers who revolutionized fiber as a fine art medium, O'Keefe who paved the way for females artists in higher education, Ringgold who taught at UC San Diego and was a pioneer in art and activism, my father Vince Semary who taught art at all levels and started an after school art program in our community, and all of the TAEA Fellows who have dedicated their passion, time and energy to the advancement of art education. As art educators we are leaders, inspirational figures, advocates for raising awareness, creating opportunities and influencing policies. We fight the good fight. I am proud to be an art educator and to be a member of this incredibly important lineage".



Jen Holsinger-Raybourn



"Visual art is an essential part of a well-rounded education. Art education encourages creative thinking, supports student engagement in all subjects, and provides a safe space for experimentation, problem-solving, and learning through mistakes".



Tracey Hall

"Art education is essential for helping children develop the skills they need to succeed in all areas of life, from childhood through adulthood. Through art, students become creative thinkers, problem solvers, disciplined learners, and confident in self-expression. Being part of the Texas Art Education Association (TAEA) connects me with a passionate and supportive community of educators who inspire and encourage one another. TAEA has provided opportunities for me to gather new ideas, share my own, and grow professionally alongside others who are committed to doing what is best for children".

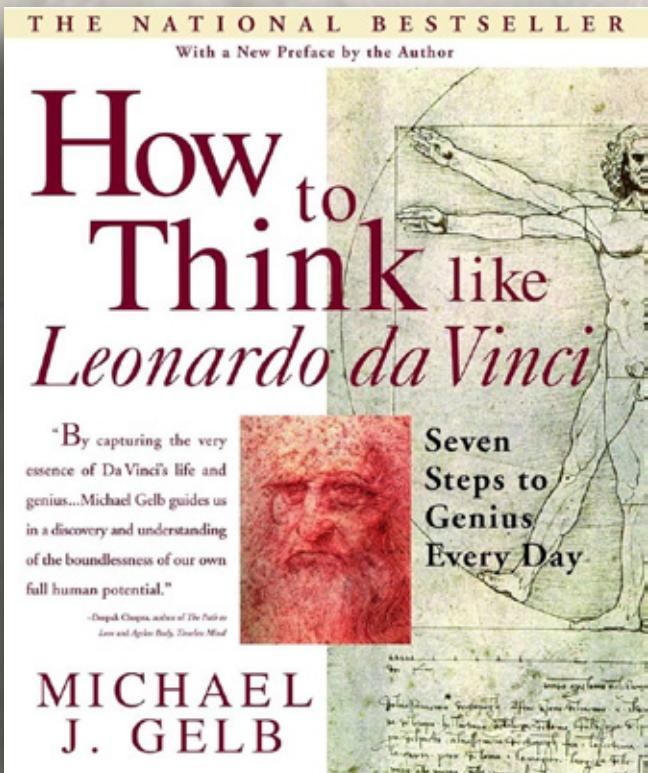
Kelly Quinn McGee

"Art education is essential for helping children develop the skills they need to succeed in all areas of life, from childhood through adulthood. Through art, students become creative thinkers, problem solvers, disciplined learners, and confident in self-expression. Being part of the Texas Art Education Association (TAEA) connects me with a passionate and supportive community of educators who inspire and encourage one another. TAEA has provided opportunities for me to gather new ideas, share my own, and grow professionally alongside others who are committed to doing what is best for children".



Spring BOOK STUDY

Join Us!



How To Think Like Leonardo da Vinci: Seven Steps To Genius Every Day

by Michael J. Gelb

Step by step, through exercises and provocative lessons, you will harness the power- and awesome wonder- of your own genius, mastering such life-changing abilities as:

- problem solving
- creative thinking
- self-expression
- enjoying the world around you
- goal setting and life balance
- harmonizing body and mind

Join us and delve into how to use these abilities for ourselves and our students

For more information contact book study chair Stephanie Coody

scoody@crossroadsisd.org
captaincoody2004@gmail.com

The study will begin February 8, 2026 and go through April 10, 2026.

SIGN UP HERE

VASE season is here!



The mission of the TAEA Visual Arts Scholastic Event (VASE) is to recognize exemplary student achievement in the Visual Arts by providing art students and programs a standard of excellence in which to achieve.

Don't miss out! Check your regional directors and dates [HERE!](#)



TAEA ANNOUNCES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ricia Kerber



Stepping into the position as Executive Director for TAEA I feel incredibly fortunate to have this honor to be a part of leading this amazing association. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve TAEA and embrace the challenges this position entails. This first year serving our members, I will work with our leaders to get a deeper understanding of TAEA's existing programs – how they function, contribute to our organizational strength, and support our members. This will give me an understanding of how all parts of TAEA work together to achieve a unified vision in TAEA's mission. I look forward to working side by side with our TAEA members.

I am honored to serve TAEA,

Ricia Kerber

Executive Director

YOUTH ART MONTH FLAG WINNERS

MINGJIA S.. FORT BEND ISD
YAM FLAG DESIGN WINNER,



LENA C., CASTLEBERRY ISD
ELEMENTARY DIVISION WINNER



YAZHINI P., COPPELL ISD
MIDDLE SCHOOL DIVISION WINNER





2025 TxEDCON (TASA/TASB)

Annual Student Art Exhibition & Advocacy

From September 11–14, 2025, the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston, Texas hosted txEDCON, the joint TASA | TASB conference. (txEDCON)

At the heart of the convention, the TAEA Youth Art Month (YAM) team installed an expansive exhibition featuring 567 student artworks from 125+ districts statewide. Spanning grades K–12, the display put students' creativity, discipline, and skill squarely in front of Texas superintendents, school board members, administrators, and vendors—clearly illustrating the deep learning art educators cultivate across the state.

Regional culture, student voice, and strong technique were evident throughout, offering a vivid snapshot of art education in Texas—from the largest urban systems to the smallest rural communities. The YAM Committee, led by Amber Forgey (TAEA Vice President of Youth Art Month) and Gretchen Bell-Young (Youth Art Month Facilitator), coordinated the exhibition's organization and installation with support from Ricia Kerber (Executive Director), Shannon Raygoza (Commercial Exhibits Director), Chris Cooper (High School VASE State Director), and Tiffany Silverthorne (Past VP YAM).

Across three full days, Amber Forgey, Gretchen Bell-Young, Chris Cooper, and Tiffany Silverthorne advocated in person for art education—meeting with decision-makers, sharing program outcomes, and using the exhibition's visibility to highlight the impact of robust K–12 visual arts programs.

Adding an interactive dimension, several districts brought students to demonstrate artmaking live and to guide attendees through hands-on activities. One of Anne Lynch and Natalie Harris' elementary art students was even overheard excitedly exclaiming, "I just taught my superintendent how to screenprint!" Participating schools included:

Pasadena ISD – Thompson Intermediate School
Tiffany Silverthorne, Art Teacher • Gabriel Flores, Fine Arts Director

Humble ISD – Bear Branch Elementary
Anne Lynch & Natalie Harris, Art Teachers • Sandra Newton, Fine Arts Director

Cypress-Fairbanks ISD – Cypress Lakes High School
Jessica Green, Art Teacher / TAEA Region 4 Rep • Rashid Lane, Art Teacher • Dr. Lee Smith, Fine Arts Coordinator

Participation in this statewide exhibition fulfills a component of the District of Distinction Rubric, and many districts captured photos and coverage for PR and social media. With minimal time and financial commitment—and outsized visibility among Texas education leaders—the txEDCON Art Show remains one of TAEA's most effective advocacy platforms. (txEDCON)

You can see the full gallery of artwork displayed [HERE](#).



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Matthew Wright

Coronado High School, Lubbock ISD

How did you get into teaching?

When I was in high school, I had a few influential teachers that helped inspire my love of learning and my love of Art. When I left for university, I was determined to be the first generation in my family to graduate from college. I wanted a way to be employed that was not just physical work when I graduated, and also wanted a job that would have a positive impact.

What is your favorite medium to work with?

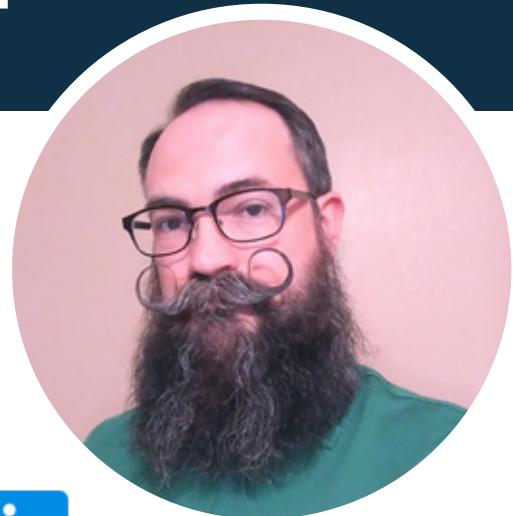
Clay is the way! When I first started in clay, it was another dimension to my work. Instead of creating the image with a simulated texture, I was creating the object with the real texture. Then I got into glaze chemistry and atmospheric firings of raku and eventually wood, soda, and salt..

Who is your favorite artist?

My favorite artist is Antoni Gaudi. Visiting his buildings in Barcelona in person, with the attention to detail and all surfaces thought about was a life changing experience. It is a full immersive experience. It is a bit like Meow Wolf but includes the actual structure of the building and the concept goes throughout the entire space.

Share a special memory/moment from your time as an art educator.

I had a student who refused to work in class, and failed the course (twice). The next year the Administration and Counselor asked if he should be put in another content so that he could get his credit, I said if he did the work, he should not have a problem passing. Fast forward to the end of the school year, he comes up to me at graduation with his mother. And he says "Mom, this is Wright, he knew I could do it, he made me actually work, and didn't just pass me."



What does it mean to be a member of TAEA? How have you contributed to the mission of the association?

Membership in TAEA has lessened the feelings of isolation when we art teachers are "just different" within the building. I am blessed to have the other teachers within my district, but TAEA opens up relationships within the Region. Where we look forward to getting together at VASE and teacher mini conferences. My increased involvement in TAEA has increased my network of art teachers even further from the region to a statewide network that continues to grow each year. I have contributed to the mission of TAEA through serving in a variety of roles during my time in TAEA. In my previous role as Regional Representative, I put together the annual Mini Conferences for the regional art teachers. Currently, I serve the roles of being a Regional Director for both HS VASE and JR VASE, and also serving as the Executive Board Treasurer. With each role I remain focused on what is the best for our students, our membership, and the organization as a whole.

What do you love most about teaching art?

I enjoy mentoring students and seeing them push further in their skills than they thought they could achieve. The aha moment when a student understands the how or why is truly priceless.



SAVE THE DATE!

NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

2026 NAEA NATIONAL CONVENTION

 2026
CHICAGO

MARCH 5 - 7



KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Bisa Butler

Thursday, March 5 | 9:00am

Bisa Butler creates vibrant quilted portraits that celebrate African American life and history. Inspired by family scrapbooks, American folk traditions, and AfriCOBRA philosophies, she uses layered fabrics and quilting to create compositions with psychological depth. Her work is in the collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, the High Museum of Art, and the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, among others. Butler has exhibited internationally and received the inaugural Faith in the Arts Award in 2024. She lives and works in New Jersey.



Yvette Mayorga

Friday, March 6 | 9:00am

Chicago-based artist Yvette Mayorga transforms sugar-pink palettes and rococo-inspired textures into confectionary-based explorations of belonging, consumer culture, femme power, and the American Dream. As a first-generation Latinx, she draws from personal experience to inform her art. Her work has been featured in solo exhibitions at The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Museo de Arte de Zapopan, and The Momentary at Crystal Bridges, as well as in group shows at LACMA, El Museo del Barrio, and beyond. Her art is held in major collections including the Smithsonian Renwick Gallery, Crystal Bridges, and the City of Chicago's permanent public art collection at O'Hare International Airport. She is currently developing her largest public artwork to date for New York's Times Square Arts.



Jeffrey Gibson

Saturday, March 7 | 9:00am

Jeffrey Gibson is an interdisciplinary artist known for his bold synthesis of Indigenous and Western traditions across painting, installation, video, and performance. A citizen of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and of Cherokee descent, he represented the United States at the 2024 Venice Biennale with his solo exhibition *the space in which to place me*, later shown at The Broad in Los Angeles. Gibson's work is in the permanent collections of MoMA, the Whitney, and the National Gallery of Art. He is the 2025 Metropolitan Museum Genesis Facade Commission artist and lives in New York's Hudson Valley, where he is artist-in-residence at Bard College.



Acrylic Painting

- Plastic cheap cutting boards make great paint palettes
 - Acrylic can layer translucently just like watercolor
- Prep your canvas first with watered down acrylic or matte medium to reduce the white specs in your background.
 - Alcohol or ammonia is a great solvent for acrylic
- Use a round brush to “pound” white onto sky for clouds.
- Paint a layer of dark and let dry. Quickly paint a thin layer of lighter value onto the dark; before it dries, lift off with crumpled paper towel, lace, etc. to reveal an implied texture.
- Paint a layer of light and let dry. Quickly paint a thin layer of dark; before it dries, pull out thin lines by scratching into the paint with a toothpick.



Oil Pastels

- Using baby oil or vegetable oil on a cotton swab over your oil pastels can create an even and ultra smooth blend.
- Shoe polish is a great blender for oil pastels; just make sure you use it in a well-ventilated area

Clay

- Put your bags of clay into plastic totes and the clay won't dry as quickly while it waits for you to use it.
- If using cone 05 glazes, make sure your bisque temperature is to cone 04 so you do not have burnout occurring while your glazes are melting, this will potentially cause bubbles trapped in your glaze. Or fire your cone 5 glazes with a 15-minute hold to get less pinholing in your glazes.



Some om Tips

Communication

Position yourself where students can see and hear you, use for attention before giving instructions, and avoid talking over noise.

- Students forget procedures and expectations in a creative space. Kind reminders help correct behavior without embarrassment or confrontation.
- When giving instructions or addressing students, making eye contact shows that you are present and engaged.

Cleaning

- Zip Lock Bag with Rice will clean chalk pastels – drop in pastels, shake and remove pastels
- Shaving Cream cleans desk and you can make a print before cleaning using water colors
- Couple of drops of Dawn dish soap, will help keep your drains clean
- Strainers in the sink

Sculpture

- Organize and prep materials for easy access for students.
- For small tools, photograph on a sheet of copy paper, print, laminate, then have students return items on top of its picture.
- For cardboard projects, use Canary Cutters rather than craft knives for safety and control.
- Laminate instruction sheets with images to help students keep track of their progress.
- Baker's racks make for excellent rolling storage for small sculptures. They make excellent and inexpensive ware carts for clay projects as well (add plastic cover).
- Take time for in-progress group assessments...give students the opportunity to make suggestions or ask in depth questions.

THE POWER OF INVENTION EDUCATION

Where Creativity Meets Real-World Learning

In today's fast-paced world, students require more than just conventional academic abilities to succeed — they need creativity, resilience, critical thinking and the confidence to bring their ideas to life. Invention education uniquely cultivates all of these skills by inviting students to identify real problems, imagine solutions, build prototypes and share their innovations with others. It's a process that not only empowers young inventors but also transforms the way they see themselves as learners and creators.

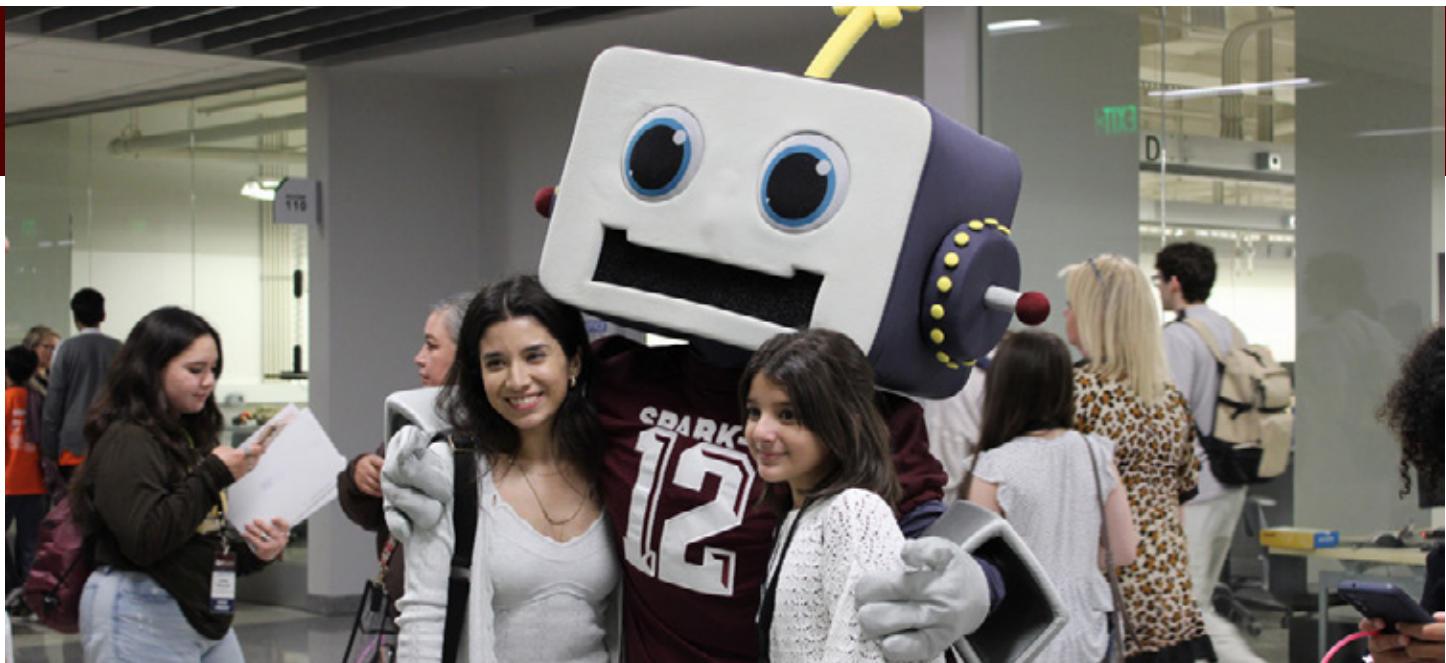
At its core, invention education is experiential learning in its purest form. Students begin by observing the world around them and identifying challenges they want to solve. From there, they brainstorm ideas, sketch designs, conduct research and prototype solutions. Throughout this process, they develop essential real-world skills, including problem-solving, collaboration, communication, persistence in the face of failure, and the ability to iterate based on feedback. These are the same skills we all rely on every day — making invention education a powerful stepping stone to future academic and career success.

"Invention education elevates all learners because it starts with their own ideas. When students design prototypes, sketch possibilities, play with color and form, and build and rebuild their ideas, they are thinking like artists and engineers at the same time," said Christine Lawlor-King, Chief Education Officer for Buzz Engine and an Invention Education Teacher.

Students who participate in invention education also have the exciting opportunity to take their ideas further through Invention Convention Texas (ICTX). ICTX is a statewide program and competition offered by Spark! PK-12 Engineering Education Outreach, powered by Texas A&M Engineering, in which young inventors pitch their ideas to judges for the opportunity to advance to the national competition held at The Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation in Dearborn, MI. As the new Texas affiliate for Invention Convention Worldwide, ICTX gives students the platform to shine, meet other young innovators and experience the pride that comes from bringing an idea to life. For many, it's the first time they see themselves as true problem-solvers and innovators — an experience that can shape their path for years to come.



"Invention blurs the line between science and art: it's drawing as a way to solve problems, sculpture with a purpose, and storytelling through the objects we create. Whether a student is working below grade level or is already high achieving, invention gives them a place to shine, to take risks and to see themselves as capable, creative problem-solvers," Lawlor-King said.



The invention process is inherently creative, and many of its steps mirror artistic practices — naturally aligning with art education. When students sketch their ideas, explore materials, build models and prototypes or tell the story of their invention, they're engaging in artistic thinking. Art education teaches students to observe, reflect, experiment and express — skills that are essential when developing innovative solutions. Invention education, likewise, gives purpose and context to artistic skills, showing students just how much creativity influences the real world and everyday life.

The two disciplines complement each other beautifully: art brings imagination, empathy and visual thinking to the invention process, while invention education provides a tangible, applied outlet for creative exploration. Together, they empower students to think boldly, design with intention and create with meaning.

“Art educators are powerful invention educators, because they already know how to guide students in turning imagination into something you can see, touch, and share,” Lawlor-King said.

Invention education isn't just about building things — it's about building confidence, curiosity and the belief that every student has the power to make the world a better place. And when students step into that mindset, supported by creativity, real-world problem-solving skills and art educators, extraordinary things can happen!

Visit tx.ag/ICTexas for more information or email ICTexas@tamu.edu with questions.

Writer and Photographer: Spark! PK-12 Engineering Education Outreach, Texas A&M Engineering Workforce Development
tx.ag/SPARKlinkTree



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Open Position

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REGION 11

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Thank you for reading the

e-STAR WINTER 2026

Submissions wanted!

CLICK BELOW to send student artwork and article submissions to the editor.

