

## **Community Commitment**

Updated January 2022



At Arts for Learning WNY, we are a community of staff, board, Teaching Artists, and volunteers working in a spirit of inquiry so that, individually and collectively, we may achieve our full potential. Our community extends to the many youths, families, educators, artists, and others who remain actively engaged in advancing our mission and values to inspire and expand learning through the arts.

Located in the territory of the Haudenosaunee/Six Nations, we at Arts for Learning have an obligation to recognize all who, through history or identity, have been marginalized or oppressed, made invisible or silenced. We recognize that our own identities are many and varied, forged by culture, circumstance, and choice. Some of us inhabit multiple identities where histories of exclusion or injustice intersect.

We are here to listen, learn, teach, change, and grow. Together, we commit ourselves to cultivating a community that respects difference and promotes a sense of inclusion and belonging. Together, we will work to sustain and expand the diversity of our community and to make equity for all members of our diverse community a measure of our success.

Arts for Learning is continually undergoing several initiatives to advance these goals and adjusting as needed to best serve the community. In 2021, Arts for Learning launched our *Meet the Artist* series. This is a series of video interviews that uplift diverse, artistic voices throughout Western New York, to celebrate the innumerable contributions of people of color in our community. In addition to this series, Arts for Learning launched our JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Innovation) Training Series for Teaching Artists. The training offered to our roster artists focus on topics such as racial equity, social justice, adapting/modifying lesson plans for learners with developmental differences, and trauma informed care. Teaching Artists on our roster are also working with a diversity, equity, and inclusion specialist to evaluate program offerings through facilitated conversation, coaching behavior, and traditional evaluation tools that drive inclusion and elevate a feeling of belonging for the youth participants.

We share responsibility for achieving these goals, and for making Western New York a place where each of us may contribute to and realize the promise of the arts and arts education.

