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Press Contact: Lauren Wagner
lauren@longislandartsalliance.org

**Regent Roger Tilles and Long Island Arts Alliance (LIAA)
Announce the Formation of the Long Island Arts Education Coalition to Build Capacity
and Support Across the Arts Education Field**

LONG ISLAND, NY— The Long Island Arts Education Coalition (LIAEC), an initiative of Long Island Arts Alliance, is a network of individuals from Nassau and Suffolk Counties dedicated to advancing arts education on Long Island and in New York State. Chaired by Regent Roger Tilles, this appointed network of arts administrators, arts educators, college and university leaders, and state agency representatives will aim to build capacity within and across the arts education field, as well as advance policy change in ways that benefit all youth on Long Island.

The LIAEC has been established to join the growing number of regional and statewide coalitions designed to ensure that our legislators and Governor are aware of the essential need for every school to provide opportunities for kids to express themselves through study in the arts. Where arts programs thrive, students are learning in the arts with high engagement, expressing ideas in a variety of arts languages, and engaging in creative and reflective work. We also see students learning through the arts—meeting objectives in both an art form and another subject area and constructing and demonstrating understanding in highly creative and personal ways. But quality arts programs don't thrive on their own. One of the keys to their success has been the active involvement of arts advocates with a powerful and strategic message.

"I believe in grass roots advocacy" says Hon. Roger Tilles, Long Island's representative on the Board of Regents, Founder of Long Island Arts Alliance, and Chairman of LIAEC. "The most effective tool for action is to galvanize leading citizens to affect change as advocates of a common mission. And I have seen in Albany that the loudest voices are those best positioned to win the day. At this crucial time, when our representatives are setting educational policy with long term implications, it is our intent to join with counties across New York to guarantee that children will continue to enjoy the peace and fulfillment that the arts can bring to their lives. We can do no less".

The LIAEC will work to develop systems and infrastructure that expand and sustain accessible arts education for all students, of all ages, within all 125 public school districts. It will focus on building and strengthening partnerships and collaborations between schools and arts and culture programs led by local arts organizations and artists.

Dale Lewis, Vice Chair of Long Island Arts Alliance, and member of LIAEC said, *"Members of Long Island's arts community have long been champions for arts education in our schools and beyond. They have done so as individual advocates and as heads of organizations large and small. Now, a coalition of arts partners will allow our community to speak with one voice. We will do so to advance a mission of equity in State and school district funding for performing, visual and digital arts programming."*

LIAA and LIAEC will host a free webinar on Wednesday, March 15th at 4:00pm for arts educators, school administrators, teaching artists, and local cultural institutions presenting the [Arts Education Data Project](#), a free resource that has gathered data on arts education availability and participation across New York State and transformed it into a publicly available interactive dashboard. This work is vital in the conversation about the importance of arts education, providing factual evidence in order for educators to develop programs, enhance curriculum and produce authentic measures that support arts programs. For more information and to register for the webinar, visit: longislandartsalliance.org/arts-education-data-project

ABOUT LONG ISLAND ARTS ALLIANCE – www.LongIslandArtsAlliance.org

Long Island Arts Alliance (LIAA) is an alliance of and for the region's not-for-profit arts, cultural, and arts education organizations. LIAA boasts a membership of more than 100, including major arts institutions and arts education organizations, working artists, and universities. Formed in 2003, LIAA offers leadership and diverse support services to arts organizations, serves as an advocate for arts education in our schools and develops collaborative strategies for economic development and community revitalization.

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