

The Art Room East Announces Addition of Choice-Based Classes to Fall Schedule

“You’re the artist.” I’ve been saying this to children for years. When young artists come to me and ask permission to make a move in their artwork that is in some way unexpected, I always reply: “You’re the artist.” They pause briefly to absorb my meaning, do a quick about-face and skip merrily back to their workspace marveling at their good fortune that they’ve just been told they actually have the freedom to CHOOSE. It’s a powerful message to a young person craving creative autonomy, a young person who is bursting with ideas and feelings, and equipped with the energy and motivation to express these things through art-making.

Vision for Art Education

Lately, I haven’t been able to shake the feeling that I could be offering *even more* freedom in the studio. Until now, I’ve been the one coming up with the ideas. I consider state and national standards, the materials, processes and subjects that might interest my students and I design projects for them, all the while giving as much freedom as possible within these guidelines. And for some young artists this is just the ticket! (As evidenced in our [gallery](#)... Look at these kids go!) But, for others, this may not be the best fit. It is this realization that motivated me to expand my approach to art education.

New TAB Class Option | “In the Studio: A Semester Inspired by Student Choice and Agency”

I am so grateful to have found a wonderful group of educators in the Teaching for Artistic Behavior (TAB) community who are motivated by “choice and student agency” and this fall I will be offering classes that have been designed with the following [TAB principles](#) in mind:

- What do artists do?
- The child is the artist
- The classroom is the child’s studio

When your children arrive this fall, there will be six “studios” within our classroom, each equipped with all the materials students might need to explore their own individual interests within the disciplines of drawing, painting, collage, fiber arts, sculpture and printmaking. Students will be taught how to use the materials responsibly, they will be given the time, space

and support to see an idea through, and they will learn how to clean up after themselves when they are finished for the day. Above all, students will be given the freedom to choose!

Both class models will be available this fall so I welcome you to choose the one that is the right fit for your child.

I look forward to seeing you soon!

Susannah Robertson