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Embracing Our Differences Welcomes

Brian Hersh as its Sarasota County School District Liaison

Hersh is the program director for Sarasota County School District's Any Given Child initiative, a partnership with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. In this role, he will lend resources and perspective to EOD's education initiatives.

(Sarasota, Florida) Sarah Wertheimer, executive director of Embracing Our Differences, announced recently that the organization has welcomed Brian Hersh as its liaison with the Sarasota County School District. In this role, Hersh will be responsible to ensure all EOD programming and professional learning is aligned with the goals and priorities of the educators and students of the school district.

"I'm excited to be working with this highly creative person who is passionate about arts education and is dedicated to promoting community-school partnerships throughout our region," says Wertheimer. "Brian is well known for his approach to arts integrated instruction, and we're looking forward to the fresh perspective and expertise he'll bring to EOD's education initiatives."

Wertheimer adds that Dr. Bernadette Bennett, the school district's social studies program specialist, had served in this role since the inception of the Embracing Our Differences' education program 15 years ago. "Dr. Bennett helped shape the entire education program, developing curriculum, lesson plans, educator workshops and many more resources for our teachers," she says. "The Embracing Our Differences team will be

forever grateful for Dr. Bennett’s many contributions and we look forward to watching it all continue to grow and develop under Brian’s leadership.”

Hersh is the program director for Sarasota County School District’s Any Given Child initiative, a partnership with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, for which he oversees the district’s strategic approach to arts education. Through his leadership, the Sarasota County School District has launched new arts programs, built new relationships with cultural organizations, and created more sustainable, arts-integrated professional development programs. Hersh previously served as the education and outreach director of the Asolo Rep. He also worked at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts where he oversaw the Meet-the-Artist School Series. Hersh has a Bachelor of Musical Arts from DePauw University, where he also serves on the alumni board.

“I strongly believe that every student should experience all of the arts—in school and in the community,” says Hersh. “Embracing Our Differences has a clear mission to promote diversity through the power of art and education. Through art and naturally collaborative efforts, I look forward to working with EOD to help enhance positive culture, empathy, and understanding within our schools, community, and beyond.”

For more information about Embracing Our Differences, please call 941-404-5710 or visit www.embracingourdifferences.org.

About Embracing Our Differences

Embracing Our Differences is a not-for-profit organization that uses the transformational power of art and education to celebrate and promote the diversity of the human family. It accomplishes this through an annual, large-scale outdoor juried art exhibition and a comprehensive series of

educational initiatives, programs and resources designed for teachers and students. **Visit www.embracingourdifferences.org.**