

## **Hedy Blatt/Oakland Schools Fine Arts Council Bio**

Since 2004, Hedy Blatt has been the Fine Arts Consultant for the Oakland Intermediate School District (Oakland Schools), providing and facilitating staff development and as-needed services in the area of fine arts education throughout the 28 school districts in Oakland County and beyond. Thanks to a supportive school board and administration, commitment to arts education is strong. The Oakland Schools Fine Arts Advisory Council, comprised of an art and/or music representative from each of the districts (a few districts have three representatives, including theatre), is at the heart of her arts programming and initiatives. Meeting four times per year, it is the function of the Council to give input, to help plan Fine Arts opportunities, and to dispense pertinent information to their K-12 fine arts colleagues throughout their district throughout the year. Advisory Council meeting agendas include a business meeting, cohort discussions regarding a variety of best practices, group sharing, and a variety of guest presenters from metro Detroit arts organizations and the greater arts community. In addition to the Fine Arts Council, Hedy developed three annual conferences to which all arts educators are invited (one does not need to live or work in Oakland County to attend) – ARTS FIRST! (just prior to school starting); Election Day in partnership with Oakland University when many schools are closed; and Transforming Minds (the second Saturday in January). She also administrates the Oakland County Treasurer Andy Meisner Financial Literacy Arts Contest in partnership with the treasurer's office, which has donated over \$40,000 in student scholarships since its inception in 2012. Oakland Schools proudly hosts the MAEA Region 7 Young @ Art show, as well as monthly student art exhibits and many district art receptions throughout the school year. One of her prides and joys is the annual Faculty-Staff Art Show during the summer months, featuring the creative talents of all Oakland County school employees, including teachers, custodians, bus drivers, administrators, support staff, etc. Hedy believes in sharing, and the over 600 on her fine arts listserv receive a gazillion arts-related email communications throughout the year.

During her over 30 years in education, Hedy has taught all levels of music, theatre, and English in both public and private school settings. Prior to Oakland Schools, she was the fine arts director for the Troy School District for 20 years, also simultaneously serving as the district's community relations director for 12 years. Under Hedy's leadership, the Troy School District garnered many arts education grants from the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs, was selected a Governor's Arts Education Award finalist and earned *Best 100 Communities for Music Education in America* designations, among many others. In addition, she has won a variety of community relations awards from the Michigan and National School Public Relations Associations and was selected Troy's Teacher of the Year in 1987 and Administrator of the Year by the American String Teachers Association Michigan Unit for 1998-1999. Hedy has also taught on the university level, wrote for and performed in professional children's theatre, presented at multiple fine arts and public relations conferences, and is a published composer and writer.

Hedy is thrilled to accept this honor on behalf of Oakland Schools and all the hard-working, dedicated arts education staff she represents throughout the 28 school districts in Oakland County and beyond.