

Melrose Public Schools

Visual Arts Department

Staff Biographies

Gale Babin

A graduate of Massachusetts College of Art, Gale Babin has been teaching art in the Melrose Public Schools for more than thirty years. With an undergraduate minor in printmaking and a Master's of Fine Arts in art education, Mrs. Babin began her teaching career at the high school level. She taught elementary art for six years, middle school art for ten years, and fourteen years teaching high school students where she is currently teaching. Mrs. Babin founded the elementary enrichment program, which is still going strong. In addition, she was assistant director of fine arts from 1987 to 1989. Her interests include drawing, printmaking, and watercolor painting.

Dawn Benski, Department Lead of Visual Art

Originally from St. Thomas (VI), Dawn Benski moved to the Boston area in 1996. She attended Boston University for undergraduate school (major in Oil Painting, minor in Art History). She returned to Boston University for her Master's Degrees-first in Art Education, and then again in Educational Leadership. She also completed additional Fine Arts administrative coursework through Fitchburg State College. Ms. Benski moonlights in higher education, teaching Art Education in the Graduate School of Salem State College. She has been teaching elementary level art in Melrose since 2001, and was awarded the Melrose Excellence in Education award in 2004. She conducted a multitude of after school and summer Art programs for elementary-aged children in Melrose from 2005-2008. She currently teaches at the Winthrop and Horace Mann Schools.

Lynnette Buchanan

Lynnette Buchanan was born and raised in Massachusetts. She received both her BFA (2004), and her Masters of Science in Art Education, (2009), from Massachusetts College of Art and Design in Boston. One of her primary interests outside of school is her own art practice. Ms. Buchanan enjoys a variety of media including oil, acrylic, collage, printmaking and quilting. Ms. Buchanan has experience working both representationally and abstractly. Her most current work fuses the two. She references elements of landscape, still-life, and the figure while presenting imagery derived from the imagination. The invented subjects and places both reveal, and expand upon, her personal narrative and visual vocabulary.

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Meredith McGowan

Meredith McGowan attended Fairfield University in Connecticut for her undergraduate work. She earned her Graduate Degree (MAT) at Tufts University and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts. Ms. McGowan currently works in Elementary Art Education K- 5 at the Lincoln and Hoover Elementary Schools. She states that she enjoys having students year after year and getting to see them progress as people and artists! Ms. McGowan loves to make and view art whenever she can! She also enjoys running and playing soccer. She currently coaches two soccer teams!

Anna Maria Melito

Anna Maria has worked on set construction and design for many years in local and Boston theaters. Her work has been revered by Boston Globe Critics on several occasions. She holds a Master of Education Degree in Educational Leadership and a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Salem State College. Presently she teaches the Foundation Class, Art I at Melrose High School for grades 9-12. Her specialty is teaching 3-Dimensional Art to advanced Art students. She has worked for Melrose Public Schools for 21 years. Her favorite part of her job is when students are successful in their work. She lives for the “aha!” moment, when a student learns how to see. Her own art has revolved mostly around faces or portraits. She loves to recreate the human form whether it is in sculpture, drawing or cloth dolls.

Elizabeth Phillips

Elizabeth Phillips teaches Art at MVMMS, grades 6-8. She holds a Master of Arts in Teaching in Art Education (MAT) from Tufts University, in affiliation with the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Mrs. Phillips’ teaching experience includes the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA, Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, Deer Isle, ME, and Mudflat Studio and School, Somerville, MA. To view some of Mrs. Phillips’ artwork, please look for the book “500 Cups.” Her pottery is featured on the cover as well as inside (listed under her maiden name: Flannery). In addition to teaching and creating art, she enjoys being outdoors, spending time with family and friends, practicing yoga, and listening to music.