

## Acceptance Speech for 2017 Art Educator of the Year

**Jodi Brzezinski**



How can I accept an award that states I am an outstanding educator?

I am not the outstanding educator.

Everyone who has blessed my life with knowledge, advice, guidance, an ear to bend, a shoulder to cry on, a shared lunch, a good laugh, deserves this award. These are the people who are outstanding. My students, my colleagues, my friends, my family, my team – they deserve this award. By accepting this award, I do so on behalf of these very important people in my life.

To my students who share our studio space, make each day a new journey and have taught me that art is a verb.

To my colleagues who truly see value in what we do in the art room, who treat me like a real teacher, even though we use pictures not words so I should not have to use the copier.

To my friends who have helped shape my teaching practice as well as continue to art with me (yup, it's a verb).

To my action research team who give me new life and value to all I do.

To my family, a sister who colored with me and made mud islands in the back yard, my mom who let us play with her buttons when we woke up from our naps and made us Halloween costumes – all the way through college and then taught me how to sew my own, and my step-dad who I think started the whole ball rolling, who bought my very first art kit, with real drawing paper, with real art supplies, from a real art store, of which to this day still buys me art supplies for my birthday and Christmas.

This award is for all of these people who believed in me and took the time to help shape who I am.

Thank you.