



**THE WHELAN FOUNDATION INC.**  
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## PRESS RELEASE

### **THE WHELAN FOUNDATION'S GRANT ENHANCES EAST ROCKAWAY HIGH SCHOOL'S SKILLS & ACHIEVEMENT ART PROGRAM**

March 6, 2017

While art is important for all children, it is crucial for kids with special needs. The Whelan Foundation is a firm believer in the integration of the arts with education for students with special needs. Art programs have proven to be beneficial in so many ways, as they help with literacy and physical coordination; artistic activities directly aid in the strengthening of cognitive and physical skills that so often challenge children with special needs. Above all, programs and activities in the arts give children with special needs additional ways to communicate, and also give them outlets for self-expression.

Recently, The Whelan Foundation became aware of the arts program at East Rockaway High School, and the opportunities the members of the Art Department were trying to create for their special needs students. Upon learning about this, The Whelan Foundation made a generous donation in order to enhance the Skills and Achievement Art Program at East Rockaway High School. The art staff members plan to use the donated money to purchase tablets with interactive technologies, supplies, and other manipulatives in order to enhance the art experience for all of the students with special needs.



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While visiting the school to present the donation, members of the board of The Whelan Foundation got to visit the Skills and Achievement art classes, and had the opportunity to interact with the students. While visiting with the students, they also witnessed the strides that the students have already made while being enrolled in an art class.

Pictured in the photo are: (L-R) Mrs. Laura Guggino-Hastings - Director of Pupil Personnel Services, Mrs. Debi Whelan – President/Founder of The Whelan Foundation, Mrs. Kelly Cabasso – East Rockaway Art Teacher, and Mr. Thomas Schloen – Board Member of The Whelan Foundation.