

# Postcard Art Contest

## Weld Re-5J School District

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In the 2024-2025 school year, Weld RE-5J offered an art contest to PK-12 students on the topic of #BetterTogether. The main goal was to increase positive home-school contact. A winner was chosen from each school and postcards were created for all teachers and staff to send to families.

The district Family, School, and Community Partnership (FSCP) leaders came up with the idea and facilitated the implementation. Principals and administrative teams facilitated postcard campaigns at each building. Elementary PTOs and FSCP leaders acted as judges for the contest. The superintendent, assistant superintendent, and Board of Education (BoE) honored the students with the winning artwork at a BoE meeting.

The intention was for postcards to go to every household, not just select students. Another goal was to recognize artists, as athletes are often valued and large clubs find recognition as well, but artists can feel left out of the limelight. Students were encouraged to share any art form that could be printed on an oversized postcard. A local company printed 500 postcards of each winning design. Each school received an equal amount of each design. Schools were encouraged to keep track of the postcards so that every student was contacted, rather than one student receiving multiple postcards.

Feedback from the schools was that they preferred their own student's winning artwork, so school leaders traded postcards. Families loved the positive notes sent home, appreciated the art contest, and are excited to have their students' artwork considered again next year.

Challenges included timing, advertising, and implementation across buildings. Elementary schools had a great response to the art contest. Secondary schools had almost no submissions. It took longer than anticipated to edit and print the postcards, get on a BoE agenda, and notify contest winners. The practice was evaluated in a qualitative way, where each FSCP leader shared their experiences and brainstormed ways to improve the practice for next year. The group believes that there will be more buy-in from students after receiving postcards in the mail, and more buy-in from teachers after hearing positive feedback about the notes on their postcards.

Recommendations for implementation are to have a timeline determined before starting; use a quality scanner for the artwork; line up your judges and get on the BoE agenda early; offer prizes to entice art contest entries; give art teachers a heads up; and have a collection plan for entries.

