



John Odum

2021 Elementary Art Educator of the Year

John Odum is an artist and educator in his 24th year with Champaign Schools. He currently is the visual art specialist at Carrie Busey Elementary School. John holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a Masters in Art Education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. In 2008 and again in 2016 John was selected by his district to work alongside two other teachers in developing and writing the district's K-5 art curriculum. He was later selected to guide the creation of the 6th-8th district art curriculum. As part of a team in 2018, John also began facilitating professional development opportunities for the other art teachers in his district. John has been a co-presenter at the IAEA annual conference on the topic of teacher-led professional growth and at National Science Teacher Association (NSTA) STEM conferences on arts integration, teacher collaboration, and community partnerships. John finds inspiration in working with a variety of media and processes. His creative interests usually involve assemblage sculpture, paper manipulation, and painting. John is active in exhibiting his work in his community, and over the past 20 years has focused his creative practice on advanced and nontraditional techniques of paper folding. Where John finds his greatest joy is in his classroom working with children. His passion for art education is rooted in the desire to help his students grow confident in the creative process and in developing their artistic identities. John's art room is a place to experience the curiosity and fun that comes from engaging with art.

[John Odum Photo](#)