

Melanie Cohn

Summit Board of Education

Melanie Cohn was appointed to the Summit Board of Education in May 2021. She is the Chair of the Policy Committee and a member of the Operations Committee.

Ms. Cohn is the Executive Director of the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey, an AAM accredited museum, where she has led the organization in growing its community programs -- including the establishment of an art therapy program with New Jersey Veterans Affairs. Under her leadership, the Art Center has received three NEA grants and two IMLS grants. Previously, she led Staten Island Arts, deepening its programs in art and healing, education and folk art. Before that, she spent seven years at the New Museum of Contemporary Art as an administrator in the Curatorial Department.

She has served on the Advisory Committee for the Urban Art Program for the NYC DOT, and on panels for IMLS, the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, NJ State Council on the Arts, and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. She led Staten Island Arts in receiving a 2009 Rockefeller Foundation Cultural Innovation Fund Grant, 2010 and 2013 NEA Grants, and a 2014 Design Trust for Public Space “The Energetic City” award. In 2013, the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce awarded her the Louis R. Miller Business Leadership Award.

Ms. Cohn is active in arts advocacy and policy, and has served as a New York State Captain for National Arts Advocacy and on the Steering Committees of the NYC Arts Coalition and NY Culture AID (Active in Disaster). She serves as secretary on the board of the National Organization for Arts in Health, is a member of the Summit/New Providence Rotary Club and serves on the board of the Suburban Chamber of Commerce.