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Advocacy Information Provided by New York State Alliance for Arts Education.

DEFENDING THE ARTS IN CRISIS

What is Gained by Exposure to the Arts?

Brain

Arts education encourages nonalgorithmic reasoning, i.e., a path of thinking and action that is not specified in advance, a characteristic that often leads to novel solutions. *-Education and Learning to Think, 1987*

Novelty is the crucial ingredient for sustained brain development. In addition to synaptic development, the flexibility and adaptability that results from novelty has positive evolutionary survival value. *-Live Arts Experiences: Their Impact on Health and Wellness, 1996*

Arts education asks students to use multiple criteria in creating a work of art, which sometimes conflict with each other, as when artistic goals fight with clarity of communication. *-Education and Learning to Think, 1987*

Live arts experiences are multi-sensory. The brain perceives, encodes, and recalls then in a different way than it does reproductions. *-Live Arts Experiences: Their Impact on Health and Wellness, 1996*

Body

The arts can provide insight into ourselves and our world, insights which can help facilitate coping and growth- two hallmarks of physical well being. People intuitively turn to the arts for this restorative power. *-Live Arts Experiences: Their Impact on Health and Wellness*

When the body shifts from passiveness to activeness, a different level of learning and knowing emerges. *-Sarah Howes, Goals 2000, 1997*

The national "wellness movement" suggests that there is a universal desire and capacity toward progress and toward constantly improving our states of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health. The arts are a vital, economically viable source of inspiration. *-Live Arts Experiences: Their Impact on Health and Wellness, 1996*

Sense of Self

The single most important thing about a live arts experience is the sense of participating in an exchange with the performing artist and being part of life rather than absent from life. *-Live Arts Experiences: Their Impact on Health and Wellness, 1996*

While increased self concept is not, in the eyes of some educators, a high priority objective for education in the arts, the evaluation team maintained it is one of the most important outcomes of any educational program. *-Arts Impact, 1996*

Art is one of the only ways that people can reflect upon feeling. Because of this, art yields insight into the mind and soul...art enables people to understand the world of feelings and with that comes an understanding of self. *-Communication Theory of Art, 1995*

Arts education is not about public support for the arts, but about learning, learning both in the arts and about one's self. -*Arts Education Policy Review*, 1996

Educational Reform

The arts are essential to the education of all children and a comprehensive education in the arts (visual arts, dance, music, and theater) provides a powerful means of engaging children in learning and improving student achievement. The arts help teach students many skills they need to succeed in life. -*Official Policy Resolution, 63rd Annual Conference of Mayors*, 1995

The process of studying and creating art in all of its distinct forms defines those qualities that are at the heart of education reform in the 1900s- creativity, perseverance, a sense of standards, and above all, a striving for excellence. -*U.S. Secretary of Education, Richard Riley*, 1995

Students of the arts continue to outperform their non-arts peers on the Scholastic Assessment Test, according to the College Entrance Examination Board. In 1995, SAT scores for students who studied the arts more than four years scored 59 points higher on the verbal and 44 points higher on the math portion than students with no course, work or experience in the arts. -*The College Board, Profile of SAT and Achievement Test Takers*, 1995

In schools almost everything is focused on individual work; in the work place almost everything happens collaboratively. The arts are capable of bridging this transition as they encourage both individuality and group interaction. -*How We Think and Learn*, 1992

Social/Economic Issues

Archaeologists, when they study past civilizations, study the artifacts of pottery and cave paintings and musical instruments to determine the quality of life of a culture. -*Ernest Boyer*, 1995

Cultural studies of the arts challenge people to respond to the world, to look beyond themselves and see the connectedness of human society. The arts foster understanding of other cultures, their histories, symbols, myths, values and beliefs. -*Eloquent Evidence:: Arts at the Core of Learning*, 1996

There are jobs in the arts. It is an industry that provides substantial employment opportunities, about 1.3 million jobs per year, a fact sometimes overlooked by educators. The economic dimensions of the nonprofit arts sector are extensive at \$36 million. It jumps to 314 million when the commercial arts sector is added. -*Arts in the Local Economy*, 1994

The budget for military bands is \$20 million more than the National Endowment for the Arts receives annually. The U.S. per capita expenditure of the arts is 68 cents per year- compared to the French who spend \$32 dollars and the Germans who spend \$27 dollars per capita per year. The U.S. per capita expenditure for national defense is \$1,137 dollars per year. If we want to discourage violence in our schools, the national government must set an example and take the lead. -*Resources for the Arts*, 1996

In March 1997, the NYS Alliance for Arts Education hosted a New York State National Conversation as part of the Kennedy Center's Creative Ticket for Student Success Campaign. Designed to open communication between the arts education fields, educational reformers, and national and state policy makers, the panel discussion on the arts and students success brought many crucial issues to the forefront. These quotes are part of a written transcription from the video documentation of the meeting. The Alliance hopes they will help individuals or organizations who seek funding, community, or programmatic support.

"The genius of America is the result of our investment in our creativity, large businesses depend upon it and small businesses clearly close their doors if they can't compete through innovation. There are engineers who say that invention, the conversion of an idea to an artifact, is more the product of an art than science. If there were a community perfectly equipped to meet business needs, it is that of the creative arts."
-*William Colburg, National Business Alliance*

"Business has got a crisis that they ought to be dealing with, and the arts are part of the solution, not part of the problem. I would hope that creative and intellectual capital is consistently valued. I would hope that the individual's vision is valued. I think people are coming around, but there are a lot more ways of supporting arts in the schools that we are presently seeing from the business community. I think we should challenge them in the same way they challenge us." -*Theodore Berger, Executive Director, New York Foundation for the Arts*

"Classical music station WQXR, in New York City, is a profit seeking commercial enterprise. When we interview for jobs, whether they be in programming or in advertising, in sales or promotion, we ask so 'What have you read recently? What movies have you seen recently? What concerts have you attended?' And the more articulate and enthusiastic the answers the more inclined we are to say, 'Let's bring you onto our team.' Because that person showed the ability to have a creative bent, to take in what they've read, to take in what they've seen and heard, and apply it to their own life. An arts oriented person is somebody that we really want to bring in whether it's in crunching numbers, inventing programs, or learning a clerical task." -*Warren Baclow, WQXR Radio*

"Art is not the problem, it is the solution. Art does not have to apologize to anyone, and I think that a wise business person today wants a 'well-rounded person.' A person who is able to think, able to explore, able to accept new ideas." -*Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, 28th District, NY*

"The work force today is changing with corporate downsizing. There are many small businesses that are springing up, many entrepreneurs, and through arts education people develop problem solving tools. They develop more flexibility and critical thinking. They have more imagination, they're more versatile, they can anticipate, they are better team builders and collaborators. All those things, we may call them the soft skills, but they are really integral to the work force and these skills are built by arts education." -*Carole Wolf, Executive Director, Mill Street Loft*

"The arts help to build skills, knowledge and capabilities that people need to stay productive citizens in our society. The arts teach you about being a producer and not just a consumer." -*Meryl Meisler, Art and Technology Teacher, Institute for Collaborative Education*

"From the position of the new global economy, we must vigilantly defend that the arts are a place for building a common language; they afford us a powerful way for communicating ideas and knowledge. In addition, they enable us to synthesize ideas and to formulate actions." -*Kristi Pierce, Assistant Principal, Booth Elementary School*

"I think the arts can help prepare students for the work place in the year 2000 because when you are working in a business you are not only going to be writing things. You are going to have to be using visuals, sounds, and the ability to speak and perform publicly." -*Nigh Mannassah, sixth grader, Institute for Collaborative Education*

"The arts enable us to look at things differently...the arts are about perception. Developing complex and unique ways of seeing will help us to develop the tools that are necessary for meeting workplace and social problems in new ways." -*Karen Helmerston, Associate Director, Educational Video Center*

"The workplace is always changing. Most of us now, and in the future, will have multiple jobs. The more we all know about ourselves, the more skills we have, the more we utilize and develop our multiple intelligences, the better our survival is going to be in the real world with multiple jobs." -*Theodore Berger, Executive Director, New York Foundation for the Arts*

"To work and live in a high tech society means being fluent in multi-media communication. This communication is visually based, as well as sound and text based. One must be able to figure out and navigate through very complex conceptual as well as technical terrain. Not only do children need the opportunity to develop skills in what would be known as the traditional modes of the arts, but they must be

able to communicate through various technologies." -*Nicolette Clarke, Executive Director, New York State Council on the Arts*

"Through theater, growing up, I learned to play lots of different roles and see life from different characters' points of view. Working in government, I serve the public so I have to be able to imagine the conditions of their lives. I am grateful for my theater experiences' contribution to that and in the development of leadership skills. Every time a child steps forward to play a role or commit a vision to paper they are absolutely living the difference between passivity and activism. That is something the arts give and something I draw on everyday from my theater background." -*Sarah Howes, U.S. Department of Education*

"Society is evolving, the world is evolving- there is much, much more information that we have ever had to deal with before. As we amass this information, we must also reconstruct it, and make it work in ways that make sense to us individually, as well as to our community. Learning this skill, inherent in the process of making art, is why arts education is so critical at this point in our social and cultural development." -*Karen Helmersen, Associate Director, Educational Video Center*

"In my role as mother, teacher, teaching artist, and artist, I see the effects of the arts and technology in so many facets of our culture, but my three year old son put this question of technology so clearly to me the other day when he was sitting in front of the computer and he said, 'Mommy, why doesn't the paint on the computer get on my fingers and make them all red?' I think that we have to realize this isn't just offering them something for the future, we must offer them something for right now." -*Laura Reeder, Art Teacher*

"There's no question that every child in America should be exposed to the arts for many, many reasons. What we want for all of our children, no matter what part of the country they live in, is that they get a good education, that we cut down the dropout rate, that we stop absenteeism, that we try to teach some sense of justice and fairness, and that non-violence is part of what we're trying to do. I have seen reports of what's happened in the United States with arts programs. I've visited schools, on the lower East Side, where the only common language was art. They were sculpting heads out of clay with braids and meticulous little things that none of us had ever dreamed at my age that a child that age could even begin to do. But this was their common language. The report that I got was that the academic scores had gone up tremendously. That connection really needs to be made with every school district in the United States. If you want your kids to learn how to create rather than just destroy, you must teach them to value the process of creating. If you want to give every child some self-esteem, some ability to know the way he or she can be part of their time, then one must justify the spending for arts programs in every single school district in the United States." -*Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, 28th District, NY*

"I was reading the National Standards for Arts Education and I remember noticing in them that it was expected students would develop an arts specialty by the time they were done with the 12th grade. My next thought was to imagine the college parties or networking functions in the future when people would ask, 'So, what's your art form?' It would be the next big get-to-know-you-line instead of, 'What's your sign?' or 'What's your major?' It might seem far fetched to expect such widespread accomplishment in the arts but we have to dare to imagine it." -*Sarah Howes, U.S. Department of Education*

"City government is always looking to the arts for community revitalization and for economic development. They are really dependent upon the arts since many cities, urban communities, throughout the nation have been thriving because of the arts. So we really have to get the word out and communicate with our local government officials. We need to do more networking and create more linkages with our local business communities. The arts, and thus arts education, are part of our whole community revitalization. They create jobs, they enhance the quality of life, they attract tourists, and they encourage life long learning." -*Carole Wolf, Executive Director, Mill Street Loft*

"Martha Graham said, 'If I could say it, I wouldn't have to dance it.' This quote shows the value of multiple forms of literacy. Because Graham could dance, people could understand her." - *Laura Reeder, Art Teacher*

"One valuable skill that needs to be taught in our education system is a sense of responsibility to each other. What better tool do we have to teach this than band and chorus and dance? These disciplines require

that students work together, they have to be responsible for their role in the whole, or the performance won't work at all." -*Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, 28th District, NY*

Through data collections, self-assessments, and observation we're seeing trends in our children. One trend is improved attendance, they want to be at school, they want to be involved, and they certainly feel they belong. Second, behavior has improved. They have a way to redirect their energy that is positive as opposed to negative, that is about building rather than destroying. Third, their self-esteem is bolstered because they are discovering the artist within them. It is so rewarding as a teacher and administrator to watch that discovery happen for children. I think most importantly, though, is the notion that the arts help make interdisciplinary connections which in turn helps children see learning as a whole rather than fragmented parts and that makes the learning so much more profound for children." -*Kristi Pierce, Assistant Principal, Booth Elementary School*

"I experienced, in elementary school, a project with my social studies teacher and my literature teacher. They had the class make art projects in collaboration with the history, reading and writing projects that we did. It helped all of us interpret the book better and understand what was going on." -*Nigh Mannassah, sixth grader, Institute for Collaborative Education*

"We are constantly seeking better ways to motivate students and found that when engaged in interdisciplinary art programs students were motivated and engaged in the learning process. For instance, math concepts were co-taught with an art teacher and a math teacher. Students learned to set up a business to market their art. They developed entrepreneurial skills as they marketed the items they made. Included are records of sales, pricing items, inventory control, purchasing of materials, budgeting, monitoring of the business, making a sale, banking, profit margins, overhead, working a cash register, charging sales tax, and presenting salable items. Items which they made to the public. Students were willing to use and learn their math skills in this contextualized manner." -*Carole Wolf, Executive Director, Mill Street Loft*

"The economic news is so good. Art brings in money all over the United States, about \$3.4 billion a year to the Federal Treasury." -*Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, 28th District, NY*

"The arts have an incredible was of changing the hierarchy in a classroom. The child who struggles and is never shown any kind of leadership skills often emerges with talent during the residency and finds himself/herself in a leadership role." -*Amy Williams, Rensselaer County Council on the Arts*

"Many young people are dealing with so many issues on a daily basis such as crime, AIDS, teen pregnancy, unemployment, drugs, alcohol, abuse and neglect. And through role playing, through community meetings, through improvisational drama they could find more effective means of self expression. And we have found that they have learned to resolve conflicts much better without violence." -*Carole Wolf, Executive Director, Mill Street Loft*

"If we're going to have arts audiences, ten, twenty years from now, we must continue the work to advocate for strong arts education programs today." -*Karen Helmerson, Associate Director, Educational Video Center*

"Let's put the money into education and arts education not into prisons. Why are there so many new prisons and so few new schools? An ounce of prevention is worth a ton of cure!" -*Meryl Meisler, Art and Technology Teacher, Institute fir Collaborative Education*

"Many elected officials and many people in general still look at the arts as an isolated area. A lot of people still rely on stereotypes about what an 'artist' is. I think we all have to keep raising the consciousness of individuals. Elected officials, as well as the general public, must accept that artists are integral facets of everyday contemporary life." -*Carole Wolf, Executive Director, Mill Street Loft*

Defending the Arts in Crisis

- Find a Leverage Point: Who makes decisions? What are the motivations behind the decisions?

- Define Some Solutions: Crisis is often an opportunity for education. Create imperatives. Create a list of community resources and “experts” who can be called at the drop of a hat to speak to the community. Young people’s voices, and presence at meetings has a powerful effect. Build your case.
- Small Tasks, Many People = Big Results: Ask people to accomplish a small, manageable task like making a few phone calls, writing a few letters, or attending one or two meetings.
- Argue for the Arts: Be sure never to argue against other disciplines, or other programs. Be a source of solid statistics and information. Remember that the arts are listed as part of the core curriculum by the NYS Education Department. Keep to the facts, be specific.
- Focus Advocacy: Budgets and jobs are adult concerns, keep discussions focused on the development and experiences of young people. Bring audio/video documentation of meetings. Call statewide organizations for advocacy counseling and/or resource kits.
- Develop a Press Release: Send it prior to important meetings to leverage accountability through media presence.

Benefits of Arts Education

Poll by the American Council for the Arts, 1991

Statement	Arts Help	Arts do Not Help	Not Sure
Children become more creative and imaginative	97%	3%	0%
They develop skills that make them feel more accomplished	94	5	1
The arts make learning in school more exciting and interesting	93	6	1
They learn to communicate well (develop speaking & writing skills)	91	8	1
They become more tolerant of other cultures	90	7	3
They develop discipline and perseverance	85	13	2
They learn skills that can be useful in a job	80	18	2

Public funding to the arts has an impact:

- 1) Art enhances education, both academic discipline and as a means of enhancing learning.
- 2) Arts organizations almost universally reach out to their communities, especially to help children and the disadvantaged.
- 3) Arts encourage volunteerism and other forms of “giving back to the community.”
- 4) The arts can change attitudes and help to break down social barriers, stereotypes, and prejudices.
- 5) The arts play an important role in building community pride and responsibility and in reflecting, preserving and advancing our culture.

McKinsey & Company’s *You Gotta Have ART: A Profile of a Great Investment for New York State*, NYSCA, June 1997.

New York State Department of Education Learning Standards for the Arts

Standard 1: Creating, Performing, and Participating in the Arts: Students will actively engage in the processes that constitute creation and performance in the arts (dance, music, theater, and visual arts) and participate in various roles in the arts.

Standard 2: Knowing and Using Arts Materials and Resources: Students will be knowledgeable about and make use of the materials and resources available for participation in the arts in various roles.

Standard 3: Responding to and Analyzing Works of Art: Students will respond critically to a variety of works in the arts, connecting the individual work to other works and to aspects of human endeavor and thought.

Standard 4: Understanding the Cultural Contributions of the Arts: Students will develop an understanding of the personal and cultural forces that shape artistic communication and how the arts in turn shape the diverse cultures of past and present society.

For a copy of the New York State Learning Standards for the Arts please call the State Education Department, your local BOCES, or a school district administrator.

Bibliography

Welsh, Nancy, and Green, Andrea, Senior Research Analysts. *Schools, Communities, and the Arts: A Research Compendium*, Arizona, Morrison Institute for Public Policy at Arizona University and the National Foundation for the Arts, 1995. (This text is a comprehensive review of current research on the implementation of quality arts programs in our schools.)

Gardner, Howard. *Art Education and Human Development*, Los Angeles, The Getty Center for Education and the Arts, 1990. (Gardner writes on issues relating to the fields of cognitive development and arts education. Also see Gardner's writings on Multiple Intelligences Theory and general writings from Harvard's Project Zero.)

"Educating for the Workplace Through the Arts," *Business Week*, Supplement, October 28, 1996. (This advertising supplement is an interesting segue between contemporary business skill issues and the ways in which the arts address these challenges.)

Phye, Gary., ed. *Handbook of Classroom Assessment: Learning, Adjustment, and Achievement*, San Diego, Academic Press, 1997. (Covers and development of assessment theory and translating theory into the classroom; the text is inter-disciplinary with special attention to the visual arts.)

Remer, Jane. *Beyond Enrichment: Building Effective Arts Partnerships with Schools and Your Community*, New York, New York, American Council for the Arts, 1996. (This book is about connections and community and the ways in which productive effective partnerships can be developed and maintained.)

Abridged Resource List

The Alliance of New York State Arts Organizations	516-298-1234
Arts and Business Council, Inc	212-819-9287
Asian American Arts Alliance	212-941-9208
Association of Hispanic Arts	212-860-5445
Chamber Music America	212-242-2020
Empire State Crafts Alliance	315-824-2510
Gallery Association of New York State	315-824-2510
International Agency for Minority Artists Affairs	212-749-5298
Media Alliance	212-560-2918
New York Foundation for the Arts.....	212-366-6900
Museum Association of New York.....	518-758-1352
Network of Cultural Centers of Color.....	212-627-3269
New York Folklore Society.....	212-273-9137
Poets and Writers	212-226-3586
New York State Art teachers Association	518-543-6132
New York State Council on the Arts.....	212-387-7000

New York State Theater Education Association.....	212-924-6256
New York State Dance Association.....	716-395-5303
New York State Media Art Teachers Association.....	212-678-3360
New York State School Music Association.....	315-635-1620

Online Resources

Empire State Partnerships Project	www.esp-artsed.org
NYS Art Teachers Association.....	www.li.net/~nysata/NYSATA.html
NYS School Music Association.....	http://oak.ait.fedonia.edu/org/nyssma/NYSSMA.html
The Educational Theater Association.....	http://etassoc.org/eta-home.html
The National Dance Association.....	www.aahperd.org/nda/nda.html
ArtsEdge.....	www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org
ArtsEdNet	www.artsednet.getty.edu
Artswire Network	www.artswire.org/Artswire/spiderschool/spider.html
Schools, Communities, and the Arts.....	www.aspin.asu.edu/~recomp/contents.html
The ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation	http://ericae.2educ.cua.edu/
Improving America’s Schools: A Newsletter	www.ed.gov/pubs/IASA/newsletters/assess/
Pathways to School Improvement Internet Server	www.ncrel.org/sdrs/pathways.html
President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities	www.pcah.gov
Coming Up Taller	www.cominguptaller.org

The New York State Alliance for Arts Education

The New York State Alliance For Arts Education (NYSAAE) is dedicated to ensuring that the arts become an integral part of every child’s education in New York State. The Alliance provides informational services and professional development programs; creates networking and partnership opportunities for educators, teaching artists and art professionals; and presents arts education programs across the state.

Become a Member of the Alliance today. In addition to the many tangible benefits of Membership, you can be assured that your support helps secure the arts as a central part of every young person’s educational experience in New York State

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