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ARTS & LEARNING REVIEW

Arts — Every Child, Every Day

Welcome to the third edition of the *Arts & Learning Review*. Its purpose is to inform arts and education leaders across the state and nation of important initiatives in arts education practice, research, philanthropy, and policy.

FROM NALC

The Critical Role of Advocacy in Support of the Arts in Schools

By Meredith Eppel Jylkka, NALC Executive Director

NALC is proud to present this third issue of the *Arts & Learning Review* on the Critical Role of Advocacy in Supporting the Arts in Schools. In it you will learn about the status of the arts in education from a variety of perspectives.

NALC has recently become the state representative of the Kennedy Center's Alliance for Arts Education Network. Taking on the advocacy mission of the Massachusetts Alliance for Arts Education, NALC's enhanced mission is *to transform learning experiences for children through the arts by developing partnerships to create model programs, to advance the field of arts education, and to engage in public advocacy.*

It appears we are in a transitional moment along the arts education path in Massachusetts and across the nation. Our nation's focus on reading, writing, and math has pushed the arts out of the curriculum. According to the Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, this practice has increased the achievement gap and has especially hurt students in high-poverty, high-minority schools. "It has been a disaster for social justice," declares E.D. Hirsch, Jr., author of *The Knowledge Deficit* (2006).

As policy makers debate the No Child Left Behind Act, presidential nominees are developing positions on education and have been called to formulate arts education views as well. There is increasing consensus on the importance of educating the whole child through a well-balanced curriculum that includes rigorous arts instruction. There is a growing awareness that to provide students with skills for the 21st century workforce an emphasis on creativity and innovation must be included among learning and thinking skills.

In Massachusetts, Governor Patrick and The Readiness Project are developing a ten-year strategic education plan. The Commonwealth recently joined other New England states in adopting MassCore, a recommended high school curriculum that includes an arts graduation requirement. While the arts is a core subject in the state, statistics reveal that there is insufficient accountability for subjects that are not tested.

This moment of transition is where opportunities exist. Advocacy can transform an opportunity to a reality. Advocacy can make the difference in the placement of the arts within the broader educational context; advocacy can also influence whether there is educational equity among schools.

Alongside local efforts such as the development of Boston's first arts-focused elementary school and an inventory of arts resources in the city of Melrose, Jessica Hoffmann Davis calls for a new approach to advocacy – a "non-apologetic study of what's timeless about arts learning." Dan Serig's book review of *Studio Thinking: The Real Benefits of Visual Arts Education* commends the authors for their analysis of teaching and learning specific to an art form. Of course, understanding what constitutes quality arts learning is the essential foundation that precedes any advocacy. Finally, Klare Shaw underscores the importance of educating the public in the sustainability of arts education.

We hope that you will be inspired to continue supporting the arts in schools and to educate those who may not yet be convinced. ■

Be in Touch with NALC

Send us your contact information and we will include you in future mailings and e-mail advocacy alerts.
info@artslearning.org

NALC National Arts & Learning Collaborative at Walnut Hill
12 Highland Street Natick, MA 01760 **tel** 508.650.5044 **fax** 508.653.9593 **www.artslearning.org**

NALC's mission is to transform learning experiences for children through the arts by developing partnerships to create model programs, to advance the field of arts education, and to engage in public advocacy.

Model Programs: NALC is assisting the **Charles Sumner School** in becoming Boston's first arts focused elementary school. NALC with **Lesley University** has embarked on a three-year plan to train all Sumner teachers to integrate the arts into the curriculum in order to engage students in learning and improve personal and academic achievement. **Boston Public Schools** has supported the program by providing two additional arts teachers to provide students with sequential and integrated arts learning experiences in dance, music, theater, and visual arts.

The **Arts and Learning Collaborative Model** supports public schools' efforts to build an instructional focus on learning in and through the arts to improve student literacy, engagement in learning, and academic and personal achievement. The model serves schools by addressing Whole School Improvement Plans, school-based priorities, arts and non-arts curriculum frameworks, and national arts education standards. The model includes a mentorship program for elementary school students to create art alongside arts-talented teens, and professional development to guide educators in using the arts as teaching tools. The public/private partnership includes Boston Public Schools, Lesley University, independent high schools with strong arts programs and commitments to public service, Program Evaluation Research Group, and NALC.

Advancing the Field of Arts Education: NALC publishes the *Arts & Learning Review*, which seeks to bridge the gap between national initiatives, policy, and resources, and regional arts in education efforts. NALC presents the annual *Massachusetts Arts Education Partnership Institute* with **Lesley University** and the **Massachusetts Cultural Council**. The Institute highlights the importance of partnerships in arts in education programming and features presentations on research, funding, and model programs. NALC provides arts education resources such as research and publications by **Jessica Hoffmann Davis**, founding director of Harvard University's Arts in Education Program, and other articles of interest.

Public Advocacy: NALC has merged with the **Massachusetts Alliance for Arts Education**. As a result of the merger, NALC is the primary arts education advocacy organization in the state and has become the state affiliate of the **Kennedy Center's Alliance for Arts Education Network**. NALC has formed the **Massachusetts Arts Education Committee** to spearhead needed arts education advocacy work in the state. The merger was made possible by support from **The Boston Foundation**.

For more information, go to: www.artslearning.org

Letters to the Editor

Thank you for sending the latest edition of News. It always provides food for thought and keeps me on my toes! And congratulations on the wonderful examples of children's art work on your Web site. It offers a wonderful index to what is meant by quality work!

Dr. Carol Fineberg
Arts and Education Consultant
New York, NY

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NALC would like to acknowledge the contributions of many individuals and organizations that assisted in this issue. We especially would like to thank the Massachusetts Cultural Council for providing us with resources and information for publication. Contributors are listed below.

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What Do You Think?

Please submit comments by e-mail to: info@artslearning.org; by post to: Editor, *Arts & Learning Review*, NALC,12 Highland Street, Natick, MA, 01760; or by fax to: (508) 653-9593. Submissions should be 150 words or less, and if featured, may be edited for length and clarity. Please include contact information. Upon receipt, letters will be considered the property of NALC.

NALC, Advocacy, and the Massachusetts Arts Education Committee

NALC has expanded its mission to include arts education advocacy as a result of its merger with the **Massachusetts Alliance for Arts Education**. With support from The Boston Foundation, NALC has finalized what was originally an office merger into a legal organizational merger.

Last fall, the boards of both organizations voted unanimously in favor of the merger, which enables NALC to include advocacy as part of its enhanced mission: *to transform learning experiences for children through the arts by developing partnerships to create model programs, to advance the field of arts education, and to engage in public advocacy.* The merger includes NALC in a national partnership with the Kennedy Center for the Arts in Washington, D.C., as the state designee for the **Kennedy Center's Alliance for Arts Education Network**.

To steward the advocacy work, NALC has created the Massachusetts Arts Education Committee (MAEC), chaired by trustee **Kathy Tosolini, Unified Arts Director of Plymouth Community Intermediate School**. The chair, NALC staff and several trustees have been working on the merger transition, which has included strategic planning for the organization.

The committee, which includes arts education advocates who represent schools, teaching artists, arts and cultural organizations, higher education and research, and foundations, begins its work in January 2008.

This fall NALC set the stage for advocacy work by conducting a survey to ascertain priorities of advocates and by launching a redesign of its Web site to promote community through technology. NALC drafted policy recommendations for **Governor Deval Patrick**, which were presented to the **Whole Child** subcommittee of the **Commonwealth Readiness Project** in late November. NALC alerted the public to policy and legislative news such as the passing of **MassCore**, and pending national and state legislation. NALC has been reaching out to district arts curriculum coordinators, arts specialist professional associations, funders and other nonprofits, with the goal of developing advocacy activities that reflect a range of interests and needs.

This year's advocacy activities include the development of an arts advocacy toolkit led by arts curriculum coordinators around the state and the **Champions of Arts Education Award Ceremony** that will be held during NALC's annual **Massachusetts Arts Education Partnership Institute** on May 29 at Lesley University. This year's institute will focus on advocacy. Finally, the committee will oversee a membership drive to help build constituency to guide future work. ■

Let us advocate for you!

Become a member of NALC's Massachusetts Arts Education Committee. For membership benefits and rates, go to What's New at: www.artslearning.org

How Can We Serve You?

Tell us how we can best serve you through our programs and state-wide arts education advocacy by taking our online survey. To learn more, go to What's New at: www.artslearning.org

Massachusetts Arts Education Partnership Institute 2007

NALC presented the Massachusetts Arts Education Partnership Institute on May 31, 2007, in partnership with the **Massachusetts Cultural Council** and **Lesley University**, which hosted the event. The institute provided an opportunity for nearly two hundred arts in education practitioners, experts, and funders to share ideas, program information, recent research and funding trends in relation to creating successful arts education partnerships.

Presenters included: Keynote Speaker **Dick Deasy,** director of Arts Education Partnership; funders from the **National Endowment for the Arts**, **U.S. Department of Education, Massachusetts Cultural Council** and **Barr Foundation**; researchers **Steve Seidel** from Harvard University and **Larry Scripp** from New England Conservatory; and representatives from many Massachusetts programs that have received national and local funding. Participants reported that they appreciated the mix of advocacy, theory and practice; panels with experts speaking on timely topics; and the opportunity to network.

Two primary themes emerged from the day's proceedings: 1) the critical role that partnerships need to take in sharing information and resources to ensure greater impact and success within the field; and, 2) the importance of appropriately-presented research and evaluation results to demonstrate the need for arts education to policy-makers and funders.

The conference culminated with the **Champions of Arts Education Awards Ceremony**, which recognized the accomplishments of individuals and organizations that have worked to support arts education in their communities.

2007 Champion of Arts Education *Award Recipients*

Irene Buck Service to Arts Education Award
Mary Kelley

Legislative Leadership Awards
Representative Daniel Bosley

School of Excellence
Patrick O'Hearn School, Dorchester

Distinguished Educator Awards
dance: Dawn Lane, CATA and Jacob's Pillow
music: César Villalobos, Inca Son

Outstanding Artist-in-Residence
Underground Railway Theater

Outstanding Cultural Institution
South Shore Art Center

Outstanding Community Arts Collaborative
Art All-State

PERSPECTIVES:

A New Approach to Advocacy for the Arts in Education

By Jessica Hoffmann Davis

Jessica Hoffmann Davis founded and was first director of the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Arts in Education Program, holding the university's first chair in the arts in education. Her book, *Framing the Arts as Education: The Octopus has a Good Day* (Teachers College Press, 2005) suggests ways to make non-arts education more like the arts. Her most recent book, *Why Our Schools Need the Arts*, was published by Teachers College Press, 2008.

Thank you for inviting me to comment on connections between the subject of collaboration addressed in the Winter 2007 edition (Vol. 2, Issue 1) of NALC's *Arts & Learning Review* and the current topic of advocacy. The arts education advocate is an attentive connection maker, finding in the rich fodder you provide both new fuel and stubborn challenge for the relentless wheels of advocacy. Take, for example, arts integration—an initiative that relies on partnership and promises place for the arts in our schools. We read in the last issue about NALC's arts integration collaboration involving teachers and students in the **Boston Public Schools** and teaching artists from **Lesley University**. Artistic production (as in the making of books with artist teacher Robert Shreefter) was the medium for sense making across the curriculum. Constituents reported that arts integration, in which the arts are cast as equal partners with non-arts subjects, both amplified individual student voices and enriched the broader culture of school. Enter the wary arts advocate, who asks of interdisciplinary partnership, "at what cost?"

Are students engaged in integrative initiatives also studying the arts in depth? Veteran arts advocate **Jane Remer** dusted off the age-old question of "art for art's sake" that asks whether the arts are valued as agents to non-arts learning (e.g., transfer across the curriculum, raising test scores) and not in and of themselves, rejecting such "either or" discussion. Surely students who seriously study the arts are better prepared to "use" them to make meaningful connections within and across other subjects. A letter to the editor cautions that arts education must "fit in" to current education trends. And arts advocates worry that a view of the arts as "partner" subjects, like the constraints of "fitting in," may obscure the recognition of arts education as independently valuable.

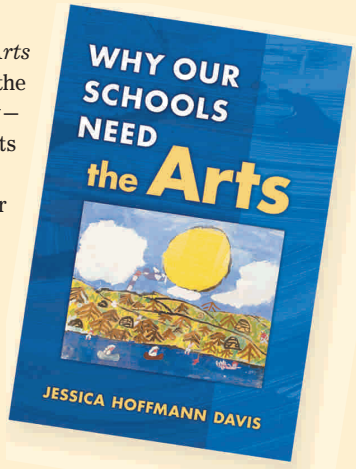
We were updated in the last issue on Executive Director **Arnold Aprill** of **CAPE (Chicago Arts Partners in Education)**, innovative arts integrators since the early nineties. With the help of **Dr. Gail Burnaford** CAPE is breaking new "layered" ground in collaborative assessment of what and how students learn in arts infused or arts integrated settings. The challenge of measuring arts learning is a constant concern for advocates who worry that by pointing to obviously measurable aspects of arts learning (e.g., factual information that can be right or wrong), they limit rather than advance the case for equality with core subjects. Might advocates instead suggest that other subjects learn from the arts about inquiry and assessment that transcend simplistic response? Some folks claim that if you can't measure a thing, it's worthless. Others defend "beyond measure" as reserved for things we value most.

The **Arts Education Partnership (AEP)** has fought tirelessly for the inclusion of the arts in the nation's educational goals, valued subjects, and arenas for standards. We read in NALC's last issue about AEP Director **Dick Deasy**, who, with **Lauren M. Stevenson**, is investigating examples of the arts transforming schools in economically disadvantaged communities. From fighting for inclusion to studying infusion. Arts advocates in various venues have moved from claiming defensively that the arts achieve whatever gets a foot in the door, to reporting proudly on what the arts consistently provide.

In 2000, NALC supported researchers at the **Arts in Education Program** at the **Harvard Graduate School of Education** in their study of Boston-area schools that focus on the arts: **Walnut Hill**, the **Boston Arts Academy**, and the **Conservatory Lab Charter School**. Employing the methodology of portraiture, researchers identified particular features of these vibrant learning communities—imprints of the arts on educational settings in which they thrive. In recent research in two of these settings, **Lois Hetland** and **Ellen Winner** of **Project Zero** identified particular benefits of visual arts learning from close study of studio classes. We are all gathering data for an authentic conversation that points to what the arts particularly do in and for education.

This "new approach" to advocacy, the non-apologetic study of what's timeless about arts learning is a pendulum swing away from wrapping the arts in timely objectives. My latest book *Why Our Schools Need the Arts* (see sidebar) aims to serve as a handbook to this new kind of advocacy. At a time when standardized testing is sapping both the energy and excitement of our teachers and the independence and passion of our students, arts advocates cannot simply package the arts in the values and trends of mainstream education. We must resist and help. The time is now for shedding many cloaks and claiming the day for the unsung superheroes of education. I trust the current issue of NALC's review will add steam to our flight. ■

Why Our Schools Need the Arts is an inspiring book that leads the way to a new kind of advocacy—one that stops justifying the arts as useful to learning other subjects, and argues instead for the powerful lessons that the arts, like no other subject, teach our kids. The book discusses what the arts uniquely provide to students, includes useful resources for advocates, and weaves personal narrative throughout to bring the topic to life.



"I applaud Dr. Hoffmann Davis for being America's conscience and reminding us that if we leave the arts behind, we will not only leave our children behind, but our nation as well."

— Bill Richardson, Governor of New Mexico

Purchase your discounted copy of *Why Our Schools Need the Arts* through NALC at a special rate of $18.95 plus shipping. For ordering information go to: www.artslearning.org or call (508) 650-5044.

A School in Transformation: Sumner Arts & Learning Collaborative

By Lisa Donovan

From the moment you enter the **Sumner School** you feel warmth, joy, and energy. Teachers, administrators, and parents greet you in the hall. Children smile and chatter in English and Spanish. **Principal Lourdes Santiago** is at the heart of the bustle, welcoming the children, engaging students in conversation, talking gently with a child in her office. The energy of this place is positive and palpable.

Lourdes believes that the arts are the solution for creating a successful learning environment for her children. Teachers and administrators work together to create a full service school where the arts are integrated into the curriculum and taught in their own right by arts specialists

Sumner School teachers reflect on their artmaking during a professional development training by Lesley University.

and also appear during after school in collaboration with the **Boys and Girls Club.** The school has partnered for the last four years with **NALC** and **Lesley University's Creative Arts in Learning Division** to provide professional development for teachers to help them develop art integration skills.

This year the project received a $50,000 grant from **EdVestors**. The school also received support from **Boston Public Schools** for two additional art teachers for a complement of four (dance, drama, music and visual arts).

The partnership's focus this year is on arts and literacy, exploring storytelling, drama, poetry and movement. The program launched this fall with a day of arts immersion for all teachers and administrators. Workshops provided hands-on opportunities to explore how the arts can enhance learning. The work has continued as Lesley faculty, along with **Sumner's Literacy Coach Nicole Smith,** have facilitated professional development in arts integration through Boston Public School's Collaborative Coaching and Learning (CCL) model. Fourth and fifth grade teachers collaborate with art specialists, and explore arts integration through classroom demonstrations. Teachers have launched work in their classrooms with coaching and feedback from artists. The partnership has expanded to include **VSA arts** to support efforts for inclusion.

Discussions in the CCL sessions have identified inquiry questions such as, "How can arts integration enhance students' ability to write more descriptively and comprehend material more successfully?" Using drama strategies such as visualization, tableaux and pantomime, teachers learned how the arts allow students to enter into the world of a story, embody story concepts, consider emotional positions of characters, and explore multiple perspectives. Teachers explored the use of metaphor to enhance understanding, and worked on sensory connections to prompt more descriptive writing. These and other techniques for accessing a text can provide students with a comfortable entry point that then leads to stronger written explanations. Teachers created a list of strategies in an "Artists' Toolbox" that serves as a reference as they develop arts integrated curriculum for their classrooms.

Lesley's Creative Arts in Learning's approach expands the notion of literacy to encompass forms of expression that move beyond reading and writing. Teachers' pressing need is for successful test preparation, which creates a narrow focus on literacy that the arts push to expand. Students need to have access to many ways of showing what and how they know and learn and the arts provide a powerful means for this. The arts invite students into the interior of an experience: the world of a story, the inner life of characters, the relationship between concepts. If students experience a story from the inside out they are more likely to be able to describe it from a firsthand perspective.

Our approach continues to evolve into a unique team approach linking artists, literacy coaches, teachers, art specialists, and administrators. The result is an emerging professional learning community that questions, advises, considers, explores and inquires together in ways that meet the needs of all learners.

Lesley faculty member **Priscilla Harmel** notes,

> **"The real success of a program like this is that the teachers are invested and have a voice in the transformation process as they help to guide and shape their curriculum to include the arts. They hold the essential knowledge about the learning needs of their students."**

She continues, "When they have the opportunity to experience arts integration firsthand they will succeed in understanding the efficacy of how the arts can be truly transformative as a way of knowing for all children."

This approach embraces the many areas of expertise in the room and pushes current boundaries of the status quo to imagine new possibilities. Teachers consider how they can most effectively use the ideas and techniques presented in their own classrooms. Together we work through scaffolding, adaptations and reflection. The result is fresh thinking, honest reflection, and crossing boundaries. Together we move across zones of discourse where artists grapple with educational goals and criteria, challenges in achievement gaps, and the specific needs of the Sumner School. ■

National Recognition

The Sumner Arts & Learning Collaborative has received national recognition! Read about the program in *Working Partnerships: Professional Development of the Arts Teaching Workforce*, and *Working Partnerships Addendum: Professional Development Partnership Profiles*, published by the Arts Education Partnership (February 2007) and available at: www.aeparts.org/resources/partnership.htm

Governor Patrick's Readiness Project

Last June, during a commencement address at the University of Massachusetts in Boston, **Governor Deval Patrick** commented that his administration would develop a ten-year statewide effort to "get ready for our future." He explained: "I commit my administration for the next ten years to a statewide and sustained effort to change fundamentally the way we think about and deliver public education, to get ready for our future."

"Being ready means public education that is about the whole child not just set on a single standardized test. It's about education that fosters creativity of every sort and that develops the ability to apply those kinds of problem solving skills to challenges of a whole range and variety."

Patrick's statement earned the praise of the **Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ACSD)**, which recognized his "bold vision for education reform." His comments reflected many of the goals set forth in *The Learning Compact Redefined: A Call to Action,* which ACSD released as part of its Whole Child Campaign (www.wholechildeducation.org). ASCD has proposed a broader definition of achievement and accountability beyond reading, writing and math—one that is defined by a well-balanced curriculum that includes rigorous arts programs, among other subjects.

During his address, Patrick described the **Readiness Project** and its mission to develop a strategic plan to continuously improve public education. Among other essentials, Patrick's vision includes extended learning time to make room for students' daily engag ith music and art and the restoration of esteem for learning and creativity.

In August, the Readiness Project's **Leadership Council** was appointed. The Council is co-chaired by **Jackie Jenkins-Scott**, President of Wheelock College; **Tom Payzant**, Former Superintendent of the Boston and Oklahoma City Public Schools; and **Joe Tucci**, President/CEO and Chairman of the Board, EMC Corporation. The Leadership Council represents thirteen subcommittees addressing a variety of important issues. The Project will complete a draft plan by March 2008 and final recommendations will be made public in June.

The **Whole Child Subcommittee** is developing recommendations for **creativity and learning**, health culture and infrastructure, special education, and parent community connections. Subcommittee Co-Chairs **Mark Culliton**, CEO, Federated Dorchester Neighborhood Houses, and **Nancy Tyler Schoen,** Director of Music for Franklin Public Schools and 2005 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year, had one month to draft a report on creativity and learning. The report is being reviewed by the Governor's Leadership Council.

Schoen comments, "Ideally, every child in the Commonwealth will have access to a comprehensive sequential arts education. The arts are an instrumental part of educating the whole child." In their report, Culliton and Schoen presented relevant research, exemplary arts education models, and strengths and weaknesses of the current state of the Commonwealth's public schools. They cited research that recognized the role of the arts in: developing students' arts-based knowledge and skills, and cooperative skills; relating to project-based learning and technology; and addressing an array of learning styles and multiple intelligences to allow students broader access to meaning. Strengths cited include the state arts curriculum framework and a committed arts community; weaknesses include an academic focus that excludes arts learning, inadequate funding, and lack of arts learning assessments.

Last fall the Whole Child Subcommittee convened a public meeting in Worcester that was attended by **NALC Trustee Roger Shoemaker**. Shoemaker shared a letter submitted by NALC to the Governor and subcommittee members that explained that NALC is dedicated to having the arts be a central part of every child's educational experience in the state. He read, "We stand by to join in this conversation, and we add our voice to a rising chorus insisting on action in this long-neglected area." ■

The Massachusetts Special Commission on After School and Out of School Time has published an issue brief on arts and cultural programming in after school.
www.massafterschoolcomm.org/issuebriefs.htm

New Website Unveiled: Route 21

Partnership for 21st Century Skills has launched Route 21 to provide an online interactive tool that demonstrates how 21st century skills can be supported through standards, professional development, assessments and curriculum and instruction.
www.21stcenturyskills.org/route21/

Massachusetts Named Leadership State

The **Partnership for 21st Century Skills**, a national advocacy organization made up of business and education leaders and policymakers, is working to ensure that every child masters content standards as well as the skills and competencies needed to be engaged and productive citizens and employees in an increasingly competitive global society.

Last June, **Massachusetts was named a Leadership State** alongside Maine, North Carolina, South Dakota, West Virginia and Wisconsin. "The vision our administration has laid out will guarantee that Massachusetts students graduate with the tools to allow them to compete not just on the national stage, but with their peers across the globe," Governor Patrick said.

The Partnership has identified six key elements of a 21st century education: core subjects; 21st century content; learning and thinking skills (critical thinking and problem solving skills, communication skills, creativity and innovation skills, collaboration skills, information and media literacy skills, and contextual learning skills); information and communications technology literacy; life skills; and 21st century assessments.

The Partnership includes the arts among core subjects, and emphasizes the role of interdisciplinary learning. It calls for creativity and innovation to be in the forefront of our educational systems and sees creative spirit and innovative capacity as requirements for personal and professional success. ■

For more information go to: www.21stcenturyskills.org

Visualizing the Arts in Education

MassCore Approved

Last November, the **Massachusetts Board of Education** approved ***MassCore***, a recommended program of studies for high school graduation, which includes one credit in the arts. Acting Education Commissioner **Jeffrey Nellhaus** said high schools and districts are encouraged to review MassCore and either adopt it or enhance it to meet the needs of their students. The passage of the credit brings Massachusetts in line with other New England States.

How do Massachusetts school districts fare?

In Massachusetts, the arts are considered a core subject in Common Core of Learning and in No Child Left Behind. However, research suggests there is room for improvement in our public school districts.

4% offer instruction in all four arts disciplines (compared to 30% in New Jersey)

12% have no arts instruction at any level

30% offer arts instruction in three arts disciplines

33% have an arts graduation requirement

45% are seriously deficient in providing an effective sequential arts education for students

Figures based on DOE data and compiled by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, 2006.

in MASSACHUSETTS / across the NATION

1993

Massachusetts Education Reform Act passed
Arts Education Advisory Council established

1994

Massachusetts Common Core of Learning passed
Educational goals for students that included visual and performing arts

Passage of Goals 2000: Educate America Act
Arts written into Federal law as a core academic subject in K–12 public schools

National Standards for Arts Education for K – 12 Students created

1995

Goals 2000 Arts Education Partnership Created with the National Endowment for the Arts, U.S. Department of Education, Council of Chief State School Officers, and National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

1996

Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework (1st Edition) released

1997

National Assessment of Educational Progress administers an arts assessment

1998

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) first administered

1999 – 2000

Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework (2nd Edition) released

National survey of arts education by U.S. DOE with NEA using the Fast Response Survey System

2002

Federal No Child Left Behind Act signed into law
Arts maintain status as a core academic subject in K – 12 public schools

2007

Arts graduation requirement approved as part of MassCore

2008

Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework Revision

NAEP administers arts assessment in music and visual arts

Creative Minds for a Creative Economy

Last September, the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) announced a new, broad-based education initiative called **Creative Minds for a Creative Economy**, which seeks to expand learning opportunities for young people in the arts, humanities, and sciences through in-school and out-of-school programs. Creative Minds combines new initiatives with established grant programs, teacher training, and advocacy in local communities and statewide.

The **Creative Schools** program awards two-year grants to schools and districts working to strengthen the arts, humanities, and sciences in the curriculum, in partnership with cultural organizations and artist and science educators (Deadline: February 27, 2008). MCC's nationally renowned **YouthReach** initiative supports partnerships between cultural and community organizations that integrate rigorous out-of-school arts and science opportunities for youth at risk. (Deadline: February 6, 2008).

The **Creative Transitions** program will work with the state's Division of Youth Services, community and cultural organizations, to engage teens in the juvenile justice system with intensive experiences in arts and culture during residential custody and after release with a long-term goal of integrating the arts into the juvenile justice system statewide.

Using a model established by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, MCC helps communities inventory arts education programs and staffing in their school district and develop 3-5 year plans to strengthen arts learning. Nine communities to date have been involved in the inventories with positive results.

The next round of **Arts Immersion Teacher Institutes** will expand a pilot program MCC developed with the National Endowment for the Arts to immerse teachers in exemplary works of art to improve classroom instruction and help integrate the arts into other curricular areas (Deadline: January 22, 2008). Through its new **Creative Teaching Partner Fellowships**, MCC provides grants to support the work of master teaching artists in schools. ■

Learn more about the MCC and additional programs at www.massculturalcouncil.org

Melrose SchoolSmarts Creative Community Inventory

By Dinah Olanoff

Melrose, Massachusetts, is a city that prides itself on its history, architecture and strong community spirit. The town boasts a brand new middle school, an acclaimed symphony, and a strong resident artist community. With that in mind, you might never know that here, as in many communities across the country, there seems to be a drought when it comes to the arts.

Melrose's schools struggle to fit the arts into a school day already crammed with test-oriented curricula. While direct cuts to the art program have been avoided in the past, in some cases the School Committee has been forced to leave art educator positions vacant as teachers retire. These difficult decisions reflect a strategy to manage a school budget that loses ground each year. Parents in Melrose discover too late that once their children go beyond elementary school, art and music are relegated to "time-permitting, elective" status. Staff levels in middle and high school art departments have diminished. While the situation is not yet alarming, the result has been that students are denied access to sequential art education and miss out on the expertise of highly qualified teachers.

How is it that a city so seemingly rich in the arts can shortchange our students and the community when it comes to offering the enriching opportunities that only the arts can provide?

That is what a local grass roots advocacy group asked itself as they embarked upon what would be a learning process like no other. With funding and technical support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, **SchoolSmarts**, a Melrose-based arts education advocacy group made up of parent, educator, and community volunteers, has begun the process of administering a community-wide arts inventory that has been adapted from the **Kennedy Center Community Audit for Arts Education**. By surveying parents and students, educators and administrators, as well as the business community in Melrose, SchoolSmarts volunteers hope to create a clearer picture of the needs and opportunities within this community. The result, compiled into a final report, will be presented to the School Committee, the Superintendent, the Mayor, and will be available to the public.

Joe Messina, the Melrose Public Schools' Director of Fine Arts, underscores the importance of the community's advocacy for the arts:

> "When it becomes apparent that a large majority of the community is asking for arts programming for their children, then and only then will the City and the School Committee begin to prioritize the arts differently."

Melrose SchoolSmarts co-coordinator **Arleen Frasca** agrees, noting the widespread success of the audit process. "We have seen the positive results of this audit in other communities in Massachusetts," she says. "It's a first step, and it has been a time consuming process, but we believe it is a really important tool. We have found the hardest part to be developing questions that are relevant to the various segments of our community. Mass Cultural Council has been a huge partner for us in this endeavor, and we are grateful."

An art exhibit by students involved in the SchoolSmarts program in the Melrose Public Schools.

Diane Daily, education programs manager at the MCC, concurs with Frasca about the value of the audit process. "Developing new creative minds is the most important work we can do in Massachusetts," says Daily. "It takes the combined efforts of parents, community leaders like SchoolSmarts, and school district leaders like Joe Messina to ensure that students get the high quality arts education they need from kindergarten through high school. This is the best way to develop the imagination, innovation, and critical thinking skills our young people will need to succeed in the 21st century." ■

For more information on the Melrose Inventory, contact Dinah Olanoff at dinaho@comcast.net. To learn more about SchoolSmarts go to: www.melroseschoolsmarts.org

Arts Education Policies

Artscan and the **State Arts Education Policy Database** are excellent resources for raising awareness about state and national arts education policies. Artscan was created by the **Education Commission of the States** to help identify policy options that states may want to adopt or incorporate into their existing initiatives. Search for "Arts in Education" at the ECS website.
www.ecs.org

The State Arts Education Policy Database was created by the **Arts Education Partnership** to provide information on the standards, assessments, professional development, certification and licensure, graduation requirements and funding for arts education.
www.aep-arts.org/database/

CANDIDATES' ARTS POLICIES

Check out the **ArtsVote2008** Web site, recently launched by the Action Fund of Americans for the Arts to view arts policy proposals from 2008 presidential candidates.
www.artsactionfund.org/artsvote/001.asp

National PTA & Arts Education

National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) believes that art, music, literature, dance, drama, and the visual arts are central to learning. In an article titled, "The Creative Bridge" in the August/September 2006 issue of the PTA magazine, author **Michael E. Sikes** states: "Arts programs hold the potential for greatly improving the roles of schools within their communities, and the opportunities for parents to help school perform their vital work."

He describes an "arts effect" and its relevance for school administrators in meeting the parent-involvement and student-achievement requirements of No Child Left Behind. He notes ways in which the arts engage families and make schools more welcoming places. He also outlines research that indicates that "the arts significantly impact learning by enhancing student engagement and thinking," and provides resources for building an arts program.

National PTA runs two programs that are designed to promote arts education for students, parents, and schools. Since 1969, the **Reflections** program has invited pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade students to create original works of art in a variety of media around a chosen theme. Submissions are judged on local, state, and national levels.

> "**The Massachusetts PTA** supports arts education in the public schools. As school funding is decreased, it is important to continue focusing on the importance of building confidence and creativity through arts education. We encourage our local units to advocate for arts education as well as participate in the Reflections program. Parents can help by engaging their children on a daily basis through listening to music, finger painting, coloring, writing poetry or taking pictures."
>
> – **Michelle Tremont**
> *President, Massachusetts PTA*

Every October, the PTA sponsors **Start the Art** week to encourage schools to immerse their students in the arts. Parents receive a Start the Art guide, containing program ideas including artists' residencies and exhibitions of student work, along with an advocacy guide.

On the national advocacy front the PTA participates in the **Arts Working Group**, led by **Americans for the Arts** and the **American Symphony Orchestra**. The group published a white paper entitled *Strengthening Arts Education in No Child Left Behind: Helping Children Achieve in School, Work, and Life*, available on the Americans for the Arts Web site. PTA lobbies for funding for federal Arts in Education programs in the Labor/Health and Human Services Education appropriations bill. PTA encourages its membership to advocate within their schools. Last March, the letter writing/drawing campaign called 'Dear Mr. President, Please Save the Arts,' brought 1600 student letters to **The White House**. ■

Visit www.pta.org for information on the National PTA; for the Massachusetts PTA, visit www.masspta.org

NJ Arts Education Census Project

The **New Jersey Arts Education Census Project** is described as "one of the most comprehensive efforts ever undertaken by any state to gather, evaluate and disseminate data regarding arts education in every public school." The collaborative project has involved the **New Jersey State Council on the Arts, New Jersey State Department of Education, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Playwrights Theatre of New Jersey**, and **Music for All**, and has created a unified voice for arts education in the state.

A statewide arts education survey was conducted that had a 98.3% response rate. A variety of data points were collected related to policies, students, teachers, resources, and community. School districts were given a grade on an **Arts Education Index** and were mapped to economic and demographic information. One of the most interesting findings was that a district's economic status does not influence arts education success; the will of the leadership is a key factor.

The final report (September 2007) generated recommendations that will be implemented through the stewardship of the newly-created **New Jersey Arts Education Partnership**.

The project provides a national model for other states that are considering conducting similar surveys, including New Hampshire, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin. **Last November, NALC Executive Director Meredith Eppel Jylkka and Massachusetts Cultural Council staff met with key individuals involved in the project to see how the census might be adapted in Massachusetts.** The report and other resources are available at www.artsednj.org. ■

Handmade book created by Sumner Elementary School student.

The Qualities of Quality: Excellence in Arts Education and How to Achieve It

By Steve Seidel

What constitutes quality in arts learning and teaching experiences, as defined by the literature, theorists, researchers, and practitioners in the field?

How do practitioners and policy makers achieve and sustain quality arts learning experiences for young people?

Which decision makers and decision points may be critical to insuring quality in arts education?

The **Qualities of Quality** project at **Harvard Graduate School of Education's Project Zero** is conducting a multi-faceted study of what is currently understood about the critical elements of high quality arts teaching and learning for children and youth, both in and out of school. What constitutes high quality arts learning and teaching—and how to achieve and sustain it—are questions that all arts education programs address to some degree. Efforts to define and achieve quality take place on many fronts, including program design, professional development, program evaluation, student assessment, and others. There is no single way of defining and creating quality arts learning experiences across the array of programs serving young people in America. Through this study, we hope to synthesize the central challenges, identify effective practices, and distill policy and decision-making implications related to achieving and sustaining quality.

The research study is comprised of three strands: *a review of relevant literature; interviews with leaders and key informants in arts education; and case studies of exemplary or illustrative sites.*

We are developing several conceptual frameworks for representing the complex dimensionality of quality in arts learning experiences. At this time, one framework identifies four dimensions—*engagement, environment, teaching, and relationships*. Within each of those dimensions there are multiple elements or "qualities" of that aspect of quality learning in the arts. We are also refining a tool for thought and dialogue that aims to help practitioners and policy-makers examine their own assumptions and values about which "qualities of quality" are most important to them in the context of their settings and programs. Further, we are developing additional frameworks and tools related to the decisions and decision-makers who influence the likelihood that quality will be achieved and sustained in any setting. These include an analysis of who makes decisions, what kinds of decisions are especially important, and what might be some of the causes when quality is lacking in children's arts experiences. Among the early insights revealed by our analysis is the critical role of the decisions students make in the final determination of the quality of the experiences for themselves and others. In examining the nature of critical decisions, we found four broad and basic critical questions at the root of many, if not most, of the decisions that make a difference in quality: *Who teaches? What is taught? Where does the teaching and learning happen? How are the arts taught?*

Mather Elementary School student's "Self Portrait in a Dream" as part of NALC's Arts & Learning Collaborative Program with high school partner, the Cambridge School of Weston.

We have been examining how the four dimensions framework might focus consideration of these four basic questions, and vice-versa. For example, when the question of "what arts should be taught?" is seen through the lens of "relationships," we start to focus on ways in which a teacher's developing knowledge of her students might well inform her choices of which works of art to include in lessons and as objects of study. When the teacher tries to include works that are, in some way, related to the students' backgrounds, cultural traditions, or particular interests, she customizes the "repertoire" of art brought into the classroom as the term continues. This brings teachers and students into a situation in which they can simultaneously learn and teach each other both about the works of art and about themselves, potentially building a more equal, respectful, and intimate relationship between them. Building on this kind of analysis, we are also in the process of developing strategic analytic tools for the examination of the dynamics and health of the decision-making processes that so strongly influence the quality of arts learning experiences.

The research team is concluding simultaneous and coordinated analyses of these three strands and synthesis of the findings across the components. Based on these findings, the team is developing a set of tools for decision-makers that will assist in their efforts to understand and improve arts learning experiences for young people.

This project intends to produce a report that is aimed at decision-makers positioned to create arts learning opportunities for young people in any community in the United States.

This study, funded by The Wallace Foundation, is part of an initiative to develop effective ways to bring high-quality arts experiences to more young people inside and outside of school. The Foundation has also funded a study on how collaborative system-wide efforts can develop and sustain high-quality arts learning experiences for children in local communities. The latter study is being conducted by **RAND Education**. ■

For more information about Qualities of Quality, visit www.pz.harvard.edu/Research/Quality.htm

***Steve Seidel**, Lead Principal Investigator (Case Studies)*

***Lois Hetland** and **Ellen Winner**, Principal Investigators (Literature Review)*

***Shari Tishman**, Principal Investigator (Interviews)*

***Patricia Palmer**, Project Manager*

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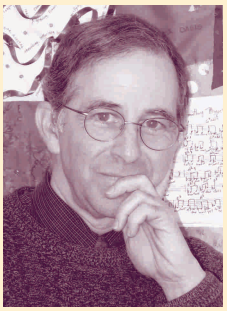

Steve Seidel, Ed.D., holds the Bauman and Bryant Chair in Arts in Education at the **Harvard Graduate School of Education**, where he is Director of **Project Zero** and Director of the **Arts in Education Program**. Steve has worked in the areas of the arts and education for over thirty-five years. He is a professional actor and stage director who has worked with theater companies in Baltimore, New York, and Boston. Steve has also worked on short and feature-length films as acting coach, writer, and script consultant.

Steve began working in schools in 1971. He was an acting and language arts teacher and coordinated the arts program at The Group School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, an alternative high school for low-income and working class youth. He also taught for eight years at South Boston High School.

Since 1988, Steve has worked on numerous projects at Project Zero that have examined issues in arts education, alternative assessment, project-based curriculum, and school reform. Two of his current projects are *Making Learning Visible* and *The Qualities of Quality: Excellence in Arts Education and How to Achieve It*. He also convenes a monthly discussion group on collaborative assessment for educators, called ROUNDS at Project Zero.

Steve has also recently been Director or Principal Investigator of the Shakespeare & Company Research Study; the Project Zero/Massachusetts Schools Network, a collaboration of the Massachusetts Department of Education, eleven Massachusetts elementary and middle schools, and Project Zero; The Evidence Project; the Arts Survive Research Study; and the Project Zero/International Schools Consortium Partnership. In addition to his research, Steve has worked as a consultant and evaluator to numerous arts and education organizations. ■

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Arts Education & NCLB Reauthorization

The **Arts Education Working Group**, a coalition of arts and arts education advocacy groups co-chaired by Americans for the Arts, has released the **Congressional Arts Handbook**. The Handbook includes legislative recommendations for strengthening the role of the arts in the reauthorization of the **No Child Left Behind Act**.

The Group begins by saying: "We urge Congress to ensure that all American students reap the benefits of a full, comprehensive education in the arts. As Congress begins reauthorizing NCLB it must provide support for state and local education agencies to ensure that arts education is fully implemented as a core academic subject." The document includes issue briefs related to FY2008 Interior and Labor-HHS-Education appropriations, e.g., National Endowment for the Arts, Arts Education through the U.S. Department of Education, Education Reauthorization including Strengthen Arts Education in No Child Left Behind, and more. Other resources include Voting Records, Facts & Figures, and Congressional Contact Information. ■

To access the document, go to: www.americansforthearts.org/get_involved/advocacy/aad/handbook/2007.asp

From Anecdote to Evidence: Assessing the Status and Condition of Arts Education at the State Level was written by Sandra S. Ruppert and Andrew L. Nelson (2006) for the Arts Education Partnership. This research and policy brief draws on the experiences of five states with various approaches and methodologies for conducting statewide arts education research. Visit: www.aep-arts.org/publications

The National Assessment of Educational Progress will be conducting its first arts assessment since 1997. It will be conducted at grade 8 in schools across the country from January through March of 2008. The assessment will measure skills in music and visual arts. Results will be reported in 2009. Visit: nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/arts/

FUNDER'S CORNER:

Klare Shaw and The Barr Foundation

Klare Shaw, Senior Advisor for Education, Arts and Culture at **Barr Foundation**, oversees aspects of its work in arts and elementary education. An anonymous private family foundation created in 1987, Barr has a mission to enhance the quality of life in the Greater Boston region by supporting the operational, capital, program, and technical assistance needs of nonprofit organizations that serve the region. The Foundation makes grants in the areas of education, environment and the arts.

According to Shaw, "The Foundation believes that arts are critical to a well-rounded education and that experiential learning in the arts should be part of the school day and out-of-school time. Barr has a special interest in supporting cultural diversity through the arts." Because proposals are by invitation only, Shaw explains, "We try very hard to become aware of what is happening in the city."

Extensive experience in Boston's philanthropic world has given Shaw a deep knowledge of arts programs and the funding landscape. She has worked for a range of corporate, private, and state funders including the **Massachusetts Cultural Council** (MCC) and **Boston Globe Foundation**.

Shaw's dedication to philanthropic work was inspired by the visionary arts leader Elma Lewis and early artistic experiences at the **Elma Lewis School of Fine Arts**. Shaw, whose mother also took dance classes at the Roxbury school, comments, "Early and regular exposure to high quality art and world class artists had an impact on me. Even if we're not destined to become creative artists, we can still develop lifelong enjoyment and appreciation." Lewis, who also founded the **National Center of Afro-American Artists**, received a **Presidential Medal for Art** and a **MacArthur Fellowship** in recognition for her efforts to empower and dignify black creative and intellectual development and to celebrate black artistic genius.

Shaw has seen public funding for arts education diminish over the decades as the MCC has fought to sustain its budget allocation. "With the current Governor and Legislature the MCC is winning more support which is critical to its work throughout the Commonwealth. **Anita Walker**'s leadership has helped reinforce the case for broad support in the arts." Corporate mergers have also had an impact on local arts giving, and many more contributors are from mid-sized companies. Shaw says, "Applicants need to do more research now to access corporate funders."

Conversely, she has seen individual support increase. "Organizations seeking funds have gotten more innovative in their campaigns to involve donors. Accessing funding is always about outreach and developing relationships." However, The Foundation Center shows an increase in arts education funding nationally. Shaw notes, "I'm starting to see an up-tick of people with an interest in the arts. The level of funding could always be increased."

Currently, she sees organizations "grappling with how to provide programming during school hours. Bridging programs or out of school time provide an unbroken stream of arts education that doesn't end after forty minutes." She comments, "We'd like to see the arts enhanced as part of the core curriculum. A real plus of school day activity is that arts activities can be offered at times when teachers can be involved so that co-teaching and arts integration can occur more easily. However, we know that schools have financial and time constraints."

Boston's committed and inspired arts community has helped shape Shaw's view of what's possible. "We have great allies that are shaping public opinion," including higher education institutions with strong programs and a desire to connect with the community. She notes that the involvement of **ProArts** in the development of the **Boston Arts Academy** is an example of that commitment, particularly with the ongoing work of **Berklee City Music**.

Shaw has found that foundations are increasingly coming together to look at the arts and education scene more comprehensively. For example, Barr collaborates frequently with **The Boston Foundation** on initiatives and research. Boston area arts funders have been meeting for more than a decade, with more pointed conversations occurring in the last four years. Some foundations have begun to pool money for the arts through organizations like **EdVestors**, a Boston-based collaborative funding group focused on improvements to urban education.

The Barr Foundation believes it has an important role to play in supporting education and the arts in schools and in the community. "Arts is one area where the support in terms of dollars is not a public responsibility at this point." Shaw states, "We need to support broad, community, multi-lingual discussion so voting constituents and parents understand the benefits of the arts. The public education piece is critical to the sustainability of arts education." ■

Learn more about the Barr Foundation at www.barrfoundation.org

Passion & Industry: Research on Schools that Focus on the Arts

Dr. Jessica Hoffman Davis, founding director of the Arts in Education Program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, researched three Boston area schools that focus on learning in the arts to identify distinguishing features and common characteristics. To order a copy, go to: www.artslearning.org

Walnut Hill Hosts Symposium in D.C.

By Matthew Barone

Hosted by the **Walnut Hill School** in Natick, Massachusetts, experts from public, private, and higher education were joined by policy makers and advocates at the nation's Capitol for the symposium **"Art, Adolescents, & the Transformation of Society."** Participants included **Dick Deasy**, Arts Education Partnership; **Steve Seidel**, Harvard Graduate School of Education/Project Zero; **Ellen Winner**, Boston College/Project Zero; **Lourdes Santiago**, Boston Public Schools.

"The fundamental requirements in education have changed," said **Stephanie Perrin**, head of Walnut Hill. "Arts education in the United States is marginalized, yet it develops capacities to imagine and innovate, abilities necessary in a global economy driven by creative problem-solving, flexible thinking, and entrepreneurship. Our purpose here is to illustrate this point by lessons learned through our years of experience in arts classrooms."

Perrin defined five cogent challenges our children will face in a global culture and delineated how the skills developed by education in the arts can meet these challenges: declining engagement and a culture of division; failure of the American education system to provide direction and purpose to its young people; inadequate emphasis on the impact of the globalization of culture; loss of competitive advantage to nations that effectively utilize arts education; and the spiritual crisis, or a hunger for meaning, facing us in this century.

Following the speakers' panel, Senator Kennedy addressed attendees and spoke about the importance of the arts and the state of American education. Kennedy commented that the Senate is discussing the **No Child Left Behind (NCLB)** bill.

He stressed that a re-authorization of NCLB should "include a new program to provide funding for states, districts and schools...to provide more time for arts and music education and experimental learning." Kennedy went on to say that "a student whose life is enriched by the arts has a better chance of staying in school, achieving in school and succeeding...after school." ■

For more information about Walnut Hill, go to: www.walnuthillarts.org

NALC's Community Partners

FUNDING PARTNERS:

The Boston Foundation
The Dolphin Trust
Eastern Enterprises Foundation
EdVestors
Fund for Nonprofit Partnerships
Grantham, Mayo, van Otterloo, LLC
Keyspan Energy Delivery
Margaret S. Lindsay Foundation
Massachusetts Cultural Council
National Endowment for the Arts
Public Welfare Foundation
A.C. Ratshetsky Foundation
Marjorie H. Reynolds Foundation
Robbins-de Beaumont Foundation
Sally Whitaker Memorial Fund

PROGRAM PARTNERS

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Cambridge School of Weston
Charles Sumner Elementary School
International NETWORK of Schools for the Advancement of Arts Education
John Marshall Elementary School
Kenny Elementary School
Lesley University
Massachusetts Cultural Council
Mather Elementary School
VSA arts of Massachusetts
Walnut Hill
Winsor School

NEWSWORTHY

Keep Arts in Schools

A project of the **Ford Foundation**, this site is described as being "born out of the belief that the arts are a vital component to every student's public school education." It provides information on national program models, relevant research, arts education news in the media, resources for families, advocacy, messaging and talking points, assessments, and more.
www.keepartsinschools.org

Student Opportunity

MAEC is accepting student applications for the National Symphony Orchestra's Summer Music Institute. Students from across the nation will meet in Washington, D.C. (June 30 – July 28) for private lessons, rehearsals, coaching and lectures. Students also will perform a series of Kennedy Center Millennium Stage concerts. Applications due: February 8, 2008. For more information call: (508) 650-5044, or go to:
www.massartsalliance.org/maae_projects.html

Make a Gift and Become a NALC Arts Partner

NALC relies on support from individual donors, community partners, and foundations to provide high quality programming, advocacy and resources. Forging partnerships with like-minded individuals and organizations is the most effective way to support our mission. We are thankful to all of our partners and hope to interest you in becoming a NALC Arts Partner so that you can give the gift of creativity! To find out how to make a gift, please visit:
www.artslearning.org

2008 NATIONAL CONFERENCES

American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD) 2008 National Convention & Exposition
April 8–12. Fort Worth, Texas.
www.aahperd.org/Memberweb/convention/

American Alliance for Theatre and Education: Walking the Dream: Creating Footprints in the Arts of Theatre and Education
July 22–28. Atlanta, GA. www.aate.com/conferences.asp

Americans for the Arts Annual Convention: American Evolution: Arts in the New Civic Life June 20–22. Philadelphia, PA.
www.americansforthearts.org/events/2008/convention/proposals/default.asp

College Art Association Annual Conference
February 20–23. Dallas-Fort Worth, TX.
http://conference.collegeart.org/2008/

Educational Theatre Association Annual Conference
September 25–28. Chicago, IL.
www.edta.org/educational_events/conference/conference.aspx

International NETWORK of Schools for the Advancement of Arts Education Annual Conference
Arts + Business = Collaboration. October 30–November 1. Charleston, South Carolina. www.artsschoolsnetwork.org/annual_conference.htm

National Art Education Association Annual Convention
March 26–30. New Orleans, LA. www.naea-reston.org/pdf/08_naea_convention_highlights.pdf

National Association for Music Education Biennial Conference
April 9–13. Milwaukee, WI.
www.menc.org/connect/conf/wi08/wi08.html

National Dance Education Organization Annual Conference: The Dance of Personal and Public Change
June 25–29. Towson, MD. www.ndeo.org/conferences.asp

National Storytelling Network Conference 2008
August 7–10. Johnson City, Tennessee.
www.storynet.org/Events/Conference/2008/callforproposals.html

2008 REGIONAL CONFERENCES

Massachusetts Art Education Association Conference 2008
May 3, Boston. www.massarted.com

Massachusetts Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (MAPHERD) Spring Conference: Link Up for Fitness
March 7. Bridgewater State College. www.ma-hperd.org

Massachusetts High School Drama Guild
Boston Globe State Drama Festival. March 27–29. John Hancock Hall, Boston. New England Drama Festival 2008. April 24–26.
www.mhsdg.com/calendar.html

Massachusetts Music Educators Association Conference
March 27–29. Boston Park Plaza
www.mmeaonline.org/conference/teachers.htm

READING ROOM

Arts Integration Frameworks, Research and Practice: A Literature Review by Gail Burnaford, Ph.D. Released by the Arts Education Partnership with Sally Brown, James Doherty and H. James McLaughlin. Reviews U.S. and international literature written in the field between 1995 and 2007. www.aep-arts.org/resources/integration.htm

Beyond the Basics: Achieving a Liberal Education for All Children
Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2007. Features papers by more than a dozen contributors, based on the 2006 conference "Why Reading, Math, and Science Aren't Sufficient for a 21st Century Education."
www.edexcellence.net/institute/publication/publication.cfm?id=372

Choices, Changes, and Challenges: Curriculum and Instruction in the NCLB Era The Center on Education Policy examines time on core academic subjects in schools and how that allocation has changed since NCLB was enacted. The report encourages states to give adequate emphasis to art and music. www.cep-dc.org

Making a Case for the Arts: How and Why the Arts are Critical to Student Achievement and Better Schools This brochure created in 2006 describes the benefits of arts education based on new research published by the Arts Education Partnership.
www.aep-arts.org/files/publications/makingacaseforarts.pdf

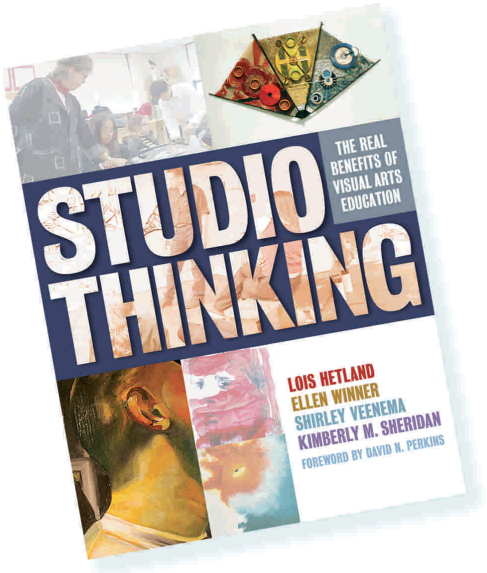
No Child Left Behind: The Impact of the Latest Federal Education Legislation on the Arts (September 17, 2007) Recommendations to strengthen the role of the arts in the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act by the Arts Education Working Group. Based on a unified statement titled, "Arts Education: Creating Student Success in School, Work, and Life," which was signed by over 60 education and arts education organizations.
www.artsusa.org/services/arts_education/arts_education_015.asp

Start with the Arts, by VSA arts This instructional program for pre-school and early elementary school students including those with disabilities includes a Start with the Arts Teacher's Guide with 54 lessons, a CD-ROM with lesson plans, and student learning logs and letters to send home with parents. www.vsaarts.org/x577.xml

Strengthen Arts Education in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Legislative recommendations to strengthen the role of the arts in the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act.
www.americansforthearts.org/pdf/services/arts_education/nclb recommendations.pdf

The Hidden Costs of Narrowing the Curriculum The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, August 2006.
www.centerforcsri.org/files/centerissuebriefaug06.pdf

Tough Choices or Tough Times: The Report of the New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce National Center on Education and the Economy, 2007. This report calls for a complete overhaul of America's education system so that students can compete in the global economy of the 21st century. The overhaul "depends on a deep vein of creativity" and a very high level of preparation in the arts, and other subjects as "an indispensable foundation."
www.skillscommission.org



Studio Thinking: *The Real Benefits of Visual Arts Education*

By Dan Serig

Due to the federal government's insistence on evaluation through standardized testing and experimental design, teaching and learning in the arts rely for their survival on the tenacity and creativity of their practitioners and supporters. Authors **Lois Hetland, Ellen Winner, Shirley Veenema** and **Kimberly M. Sheridan** (2007) demonstrate this tenacity and creativity in their insightful, innovative book, *Studio Thinking: The Real Benefits of Visual Arts Education*.

The authors immerse themselves in the practices of five teaching artists for a year of intense observation, interaction and interpretation. The rigorous, systematic methods employed result in a plausible conceptual model for teaching and learning in the visual arts. The authors substantiate their model with numerous practical examples from the studio classrooms that are informative for pre-service and professional educators alike.

The main purpose of *Studio Thinking* is to conceptualize a model of the teaching artists' practices. The doing of these practices involves the *what* and the *how* of teaching and the impact on student learning. From the data, a model emerges of Studio Habits of Mind (the what) and Studio Structures (the how). In creating such a model, the authors continue the dialogue in the field about a plausible hypothesis of teaching and learning.

Another underlying purpose of the research is to continue constructing the foundation for the possibility that dispositions in the arts transfer to other areas of learning. In the first chapter, *Making the Case for the Arts*, the authors situate their study within the context of research on transfer. They correctly, and importantly, stipulate that the cumulative evidence does not demonstrate that learning dispositions in the arts transfer to other disciplines. The research study described in *Studio Thinking* does not provide this evidence either; rather it posits a hypothesis for future research.

Organizing a book that attempts to reach a wide-ranging audience can lead to one that reaches no one in meaningful ways. This is not the case with *Studio Thinking*. The initial chapters may speak more pointedly to policy makers, administrators and advocates but these sections also expertly situate the study for teachers. Do not overlook the importance of the argument in chapter one; it should be disseminated to all decision-makers in education. The bulk of the book describes the Studio Structures and Studio Habits of Mind. Each structure and habit is explained through descriptive examples from studio classrooms. An explanation of the intersection of structures and habits follows, exemplifying the flexibility of the model.

I have a concern with the propositions made in the conclusion, A Common Language for Intellectual Growth. I re-read the conclusion after reading Appendix B, Conducting the Research. I understand from the appendix that the research is a qualitative, empirical study with a small sample of five teachers. As such, the findings are specific to the five teachers and cannot be generalized to all visual arts educators. The authors mention this in the conclusion, but I wish they had made the point even more strongly.

Much of the conclusion describes possibilities for uses of the model inside and outside the arts disciplines. I worry that some may read the conclusion as validating the model as one that can be generalized. While it may turn out to be widely applicable, it would be a mistake to jump to an explanatory model based on a single study with such a small sample. Models can too readily be imposed on other contexts before determining if different models are more appropriate. In the last paragraph the authors request readers to alert them about how they use the model. I would request additionally a systematic and rigorous study of the practices of other groups to build a large sample of models and, ultimately, a robust theory of teaching and learning in the visual arts.

Despite my concerns, *Studio Thinking* is a major contribution to the field.

This approachable text will serve pre-service and professional educators well in understanding teaching and learning in the visual arts.

The teaching artists highlighted in this study exemplify quality approaches to engaging students in dynamic learning experiences. Likewise, the model created by the authors displays the innovation, insight and creativity needed in research to understand the complexity of teaching and learning in the arts. ■

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