



NATIONAL
ART EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION

An Open Letter to Principals and School Leaders

Dear Principals and School Leaders,

I hope this message finds you healthy and in good spirits as you begin the 2021–2022 school year and continue to navigate the impact of COVID-19 on your school community. As a former elementary and secondary school principal, I have the utmost respect and admiration for the many roles you perform daily: curriculum leader, community leader, parent liaison, and student motivator, among others.

When I was last in this role, I remember using every resource at my disposal to support my entire school community, and I often found myself relying on those unsung heroes—the art teachers—within my school to step up and make an impact. These individuals often know the entire school community; can expertly manage finite resources; and bring creativity, spirit, and social–emotional care to the overall school environment.

In addition to being a former principal, I have been a visual arts teacher/educator and am currently a higher education professor in this field. I have a passion for equity, diversity, and inclusion for all. I know from these roles that the visual arts teachers in your buildings have much to offer, and I hope you'll join me in supporting their continued professional development and growth.

Please consider providing an annual membership for your visual arts teacher(s) to their professional community, the National Art Education Association (NAEA), as well as supporting their attendance at our annual 2022 NAEA National Convention (with in-person and virtual options) through covering registration costs. And remember, you can utilize Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds toward both of these opportunities.

Through a very affordable investment of \$70* a year, visual arts teacher members gain access to:

- Hundreds of hours of professional development through [webinars](#), [webcasts](#), and [Town Halls](#);
- Monthly resources and publications on key issues and education trends, ranging from [equity work](#), social–emotional learning, and assessment to access and inclusion;
- Relevant in-the-moment lesson ideas and teaching strategies through our [Art Educator Toolkit](#).

I know that you invest in reaching and serving every one of your students. An investment in art education ensures that we prepare the next generation of creative citizens for the greatest future success.

In partnership,

Wanda B. Knight, PhD

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*Additional dues vary by state