Position Statement on Freedom of Speech Through Visual Expression
[Adopted July 2011; Update of 1991 Statement on Censorship and the Arts Reviewed and Revised April 2014]

Freedom of expression is guaranteed by the Constitution. Free communication is essential to the preservation of a free democratic society and a creative culture. The visual, performing, and literary arts are among our most effective instruments of freedom. They are powerful means for making available ideas, feelings, social justice, the envisioning of new possibilities for humankind, solutions to problems, and the improvement of human life.

As the professional association for visual art educators, NAEA supports the following:

> Freedom of expression in the arts must be preserved.
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> The free individual has the right to accept or reject any work of art, but does **not** have the right to suppress works of art for or by others. Censorship is contrary to democratic principles.

Educator Responsibility:

> It is the role of the art educator to expose students to a diversity of art experiences and to help support students in developing the ability to interpret, to tolerate, and to think critically. The art educator need not like or endorse all images, ideologies, and artists made available to students, but should both allow and help equip the individual student to choose from among widely conflicting images, opinions, and ideologies. The art educator should responsibly support the right of every individual to freely express and create in his or her own way and to experience, accept, or reject any particular work of art.
>
> The art educator should impress upon students the vital importance of freedom of expression as a basic premise in a free democratic society and support students in guarding against efforts to limit or curtail that freedom.
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> In practice, art educators must consider age appropriate content, and be sensitive to the distinct nature of their community and education system, as they support their students in freedom of expression. Art educators engage students in identifying, understanding, recognizing, and acknowledging the power of visual art and valuing freedom of expression for all.

[Note: The April 2014 revision amended the title "Position Statement on Freedom of Speech" to "Position Statement on Freedom of Speech Through Visual Expression.]

Resources:
https://www.aclu.org/free-speech/censorship
http://www.ncac.org/

- ***censorship* - Legal Dictionary - The Free Dictionary**

legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/**censorship**
Censorship. The suppression or proscription of speech or writing that is deemed obscene, indecent, or unduly controversial. The term *censorship* derives from **...**

- ***Censorship* | American Civil Liberties Union**

https://www.aclu.org/free-speech/**censorship**
Censorship, the suppression of words, images, or ideas that are "offensive," **...** *Censorship* can be carried out by the government as well as private pressure **...**

- **What is *Censorship*? - Global Internet Liberty Campaign**

gilc.org/speech/osistudy/**censorship**/
Censorship -- the control of the information and ideas circulated within a society -- has been a hallmark of dictatorships throughout history. In the 20th Century, **...**