Position Statement on Pre-service Education and its Relationship to Higher Education [Adopted March 2011; Reviewed and Revised April 2014]

NAEA supports quality pre-service education taught by experienced visual art educators as a required foundation for the development of professional practices. Accredited higher education institutions in partnership with schools, museums, and community organizations provide the best models of pre-service preparation. Such programs should include: clinical experiences, pedagogy courses, visual arts content courses, professional development opportunities, and student associations. NAEA believes that comprehensive pre-service education engages learners in inquiry, advocacy, and leadership in relation to the following domains:

The Profession:
Pre-service art education programs prepare art educators to -

- Recognize and enact their role as leaders in schools and communities.
- Exhibit professional dispositions defined by current state, national, and professional standards.

These include exemplifying professional values and qualities, engaging in reflective practices associated with life-long learning, advocating for excellence in their schools and communities, and participating in, as well as taking on leadership positions in their local, state, and national associations.

The Learners:
Pre-service art education programs prepare art educators to -

- Understand their students from theoretical and practical perspectives.
- Understand factors such as diverse learning styles, developmental variance, social conditions, and family and cultural values that might affect learner performance in the visual arts.
- Be effective in a variety of learning settings including students who are at risk and have special needs.

NAEA recognizes the importance of clinical experiences in mastering the art of teaching. Teaching is a practice skill, requiring the hands-on application of theory. As student teachers, pre-service educators should have experiences in the classroom with diverse students and explore different approaches to teaching students with special needs.

The Teaching Contexts:
Pre-service art education programs prepare art educators to -

- Understand that community values can contribute to the guiding principles of the educational settings.
- Become highly skilled in curriculum development, assessment procedures, standards application, and instructional strategies.
- Deliver curriculum through both historical and emerging technologies.
- Understand, appropriately develop and apply a variety of student engagement and classroom management strategies.

The Content:
Pre-service art education programs prepare art educators to -

- Have a strong knowledge base in traditional and emerging visual arts practices.

- Explore the complexity of art making.
- Become fluent in interpreting works of art and other visual images, objects, experiences, and environments in relation to various cultural and historical contexts.
- Prepare students with skills that will enable their success.